Codex Alera:

The Realm of Alera has been in a slow decline as the nobility have been played against themselves by the aging First Lord Gaius Sextus in order to keep them from overthrowing him since his heir (Gaius Septimus) died at the Battle of Calderon stopping the Marat horde. Without an heir, the 80+ ruler of the Realm has to juggle his normal duties (ruling a country, waging war, and averting sentient natural disasters) with averting civil war.

There's political intrigue, barbarian hordes, warrior wolf-men, animistic nature spirits, and some not-Zerg in your future.

You begin just as a furyless shepherd boy is gathering flowers when he should be tracking down the last few sheep. (Beginning of *Furies of Calderon*, you will end the jump some time during *First Lord's Fury*)

Backgrounds –

Drop-In: You aren't sure how, but you ended up in a very strange land. Some of the wildlife looks downright prehistoric, the locals seem to have a Roman cosplay going on, and your pretty sure you saw some ghosts during a thunder storm. At least the locals speak English.

Aleran (100 cp): The result of a Lost Roman Legion that ended up on the continent of Carna in another world (they were **VERY** lost) somehow learning to bind the animist spirits of nature to their will after many generations. Enough time has passed that using these spirits has become part of everyday life and replaced most scientific progress. Why invent a better sword when you can tell yours to be sharper? Or better medical techniques when you can just patch them up enough to last until the watercrafters get over?

Marat (100 cp): Physiologically similar to Alerans, Marat have pale skin, silvery white hair, and are feverishly warm compared to humans, they can go through snow in nothing but a loin cloth and not get frostbite (or even a cold). They have excellent night vision and are stronger & swifter than a human (that isn't using earthcrafting or windcrafting to boost themselves). Essentially they are neolithic wood elves, complete with cannibalism (as in “partaking of their enemies' strength”) being a social norm.

Cane (200 cp): Natives of Canea, the Canim are a warrior race of humanoid wolves that consider 7ft tall to be short, can live for hundreds of years, are absurdly strong, and also have excellent night vision. Even the Maker caste (their builders and farmers) can hold their own against a trained legion provided they have proper leadership. Enemies of Alera while being a culture that views enemies with importance and respect.

~~Vord Queen (9001 cp):~~

Age: 1d8 +13 (1d8/2 *100 for Canim) 50 cp to choose

Gender: Keep your dangly bits the same or pay 50 cp to swap

Location: Aleran/Drop-in	Canim
1. Calderon	1.Shvar
2. Alera Imperia	2. Alera Imperia (Canim Embassy)
3. Antillus	3.Molrar
4. Parcia	4. Morshog
5. Kalare	5. Narash
6. Aquitaine	6. Kadan
7. Riva	7. Rengal
8. Free Choice	

Marat may start anywhere in Maratae for free,

Perks:

Shepherd Boy/Girl (100 cp, Discount Drop-In): You know how to handle yourself on a steadholt and the wilds around them, putting you at the level of a decent Woodcrafter in terms of woodsmanship through skill alone. Your survivals skills also expand to deal with rather fantastical regions, including ones where knowing how to deal with self-aware mountains that don't like trespassers is an important thing. Additionally, your hunting and tracking experience grant you extraordinary insight into predator psychology and body language.

Steadholder (100 cp, Discount Aleran): Your furies have some more raw power compared to the average Aleran. While this may not help your delicate crafting, your strength and stamina will impress the city-folk, even if you have a tendency to name your Furies like a *paganus*. This also boosts the crafting you might find handy on a holt, like using Earthcrafting to handle animals or for barn-raising, and allows for better understanding of local nature spirits (like Furies).

Test of Wits Veteran (100 cp, Discount Marat): You have delved into the Wax Forest and brought back the Blessing of Night. Several times, actually. Your agility and stealth have been honed to the point where you can reliably evade the Keepers of Silence long enough to get in and out alive. As a Jumper, this means you have an improved ability to evade extraordinary senses like motion and heat sensing. You also have an uncanny sense of what surfaces can bear your weight without breaking (which would alert the Keepers) that applies to anything from *croach* to ice to even the floors of a burning building. And last but not least, you have a knack for transporting sharp/spined objects by hand without self-injury.

Gadara For Life (100 cp, Discount Canim): Just because someone's your enemy doesn't mean you can't be friendly with one another. Sure, they'll try their damnedest to kill you on the battlefield, but off it you might be discussing books or playing boardgames with them. You have a knack for picking up friendly enemies and have a better shot at convincing them to work with you as long as there is a greater mutual threat whether it is due to their honor in being the one to defeat you, enlightened self-interest, or you are just that much fun to fight.

He Followed Me Home! Can I Keep Him? (200cp, Discount Drop-In): You have the strangest luck of being found by potential allies when lost. While not a charisma boost, you simply find yourself in sympathetic company (or at least those with common interests) more often than not in a bad situation or stranded.

Fury-crafting (200 cp, free Aleran): You have a Fury of your own! Roll 1d8 or pay 50 cp to choose your starting Fury. Earth – 1, Fire – 2, Metal – 3, Water – 4, Wood – 5, Wind – 6, Free Pick – 7-8

See the Notes page for details on each Fury type. Again, that is just your starting Fury and like any Aleran you can bind more to your will through a mental struggle scaling to the level of power that Fury holds.

Chala Bond (200cp, free Marat, may only be taken once): You have made a life bond with one of the species on this world. With it comes understanding of that bond creature and a mingling of traits. You gain their eye color, among other things. For example, the *Sabot-ha* (Gargant Clan) gain tremendous strength and the *Kevras-ha* (Horse Clan) gain swiftness. For an additional 200 cp, you may gain a companion (imported or new) of a background other than your own or Drop-In that has 400 cp of their own to spend to be your Chala.

Canim Strength (200 cp, free Canim): The strength and endurance of the Canim are monstrous compared to a human and you are one to match a physically fit Cane. Canim battlepacks can outmarch even the Legions, their civilian caste can out-muscle an Earthcrafter, and even their children can nearly tear a man's hand of with their jaws (and will dislocate his shoulder while trying).

Quarrel With A Tavar (400 cp, Discount Drop-In): Escalation is the name of your game and you can almost always find the right way to play without sacrificing your morals (or at the very least keep enough of your own safe by claiming your pound of flesh). An army tries to take the town you are making your stand in and you've already turned it into a firebomb waiting for your trigger, someone holds a city hostage with a volcano bound to their will while trying to overthrow you and you set off the volcano yourself instead of getting your own troops caught in the blast. When you are bloodied, you leave your enemies crippled or worse.

Innovator (400 cp, Discount Drop-In): You excel at adapting existing knowledge or items to new purposes. That windcrafting trick of making a lens of air to see further is now a sun-focusing deathray when performed by a team in the sky. Those furies bound into spheres used for refrigeration make excellent ammo for a catapult. The things you can use in ways no one has ever thought of will give your enemies nightmares and fill your allies with awe.

Cursori Glance (400 cp, Discount Aleran): The Cursors, the First Lord's couriers (and spies), and now you have their training. While yes, you are accomplished in several methods of combat (unarmed, sword, staff, knife, etc) and your stealth skills are impressive, the main focus of the Cursor is their undercover espionage. You can maintain a cover identity for an indefinite length while still being "you" and your skills at deceit and manipulation are unparalleled in a society where being able to sense emotions and honesty is par for the course. With enough planning you could maneuver a high-ranked noble into drawing out an important enemy and receiving a mortal wound in order to leave someone politically unopposed all while covering your own ass from any reprisals. To quote the realization from the example noble as he was dying, “No one will ever be able to know for certain, of course, but I think the little man assassinated me.”

Legionnaire Extraordinaire (400 cp, Discount Aleran): You know how to get an army on the move and can make even the most pathetic group of new fish into battle hardened veterans that can hold to a standstill when woefully outnumbered. While skilled at battlefield tactics, setting up a defensible position is where you truly shine, including battlefield construction and fortifications. If you have Furycrafting, gain 1 more starting Fury and you have the crafting skill to easily rank as a Knight in the Legions.

I Believe You're Mistaken (400 cp, discount Marat): When you speak honestly people know you are being sincere about it. But more importantly: if you were to challenge something another has stated by claiming them to be mistaken and win, clearly you were right and their argument has little to no merit, a tie would mean everyone chooses on their own, and losing means they were clearly right. The challenge could be anything, a race, a duel to the death, a debate, just as long as it involves a witnessed confrontation between you and them, the results sway minds towards the winner's claim and evidence will be soon to follow if it is lacking.

Partake of Strength (400 cp, discount Marat): By performing a ritualistic sacrifice during which you consume your enemies (alive), you gain some of their strengths. Your allies may join in this ritual and gain the same boon. You may find yourself just a little bit stronger, a tad more cunning, a hair faster, depending on your enemy. Have some of their courage. Their tasty, tasty courage.

War Master (400cp, Discount Canim): Your skill in tactics alone could let you quickly climb ranks in a warrior caste society and your strength would be impressive even for a Cane, with more room to improve if you strive for it. More importantly, acts of valor both come more natural to you and are more recognized & rewarded, even if it is just with more respect.

Hunter (400 cp, Discount Canim): The Hunters of the Canim are actually their spies and assassins similar to the Cursors, but meant to either preserve the spirit of the law while getting around the letter or vice versa. Unlike the Cursors, the Hunters are focused explicitly on stealth. To the point where a small group can exit a shelter crafted by prisoners on a locked rooftop that no one ever saw them enter or even arrive on the rooftop.

Logic is a Fury of Its Own (600 cp, discount Drop-In): Your skills at deduction and logic are incredible. You can spot someone in a disguise that fools their spouse merely from noticing a lack of cold hands and the person being the only one who would dare set up such a situation. You could strategize around a mind-reading enemy by giving your subordinates written instructions. Most impressive is your use of controlled instinct. Knowing when you should trust your gut and dodge over when you would have been suckered into a feint is the least of your instincts, sometimes they seem like outright premonitions.

High Lord (600 cp, Discount Aleran): With a little effort you can be a match for the Aleran elite, the ruling class of the nation, the High Lords. You could certainly reach First Lord levels, but it would take a more serious effort of training and study (maybe 7 years, give or take). You have at least one of each type of Fury and know how to bind Furies in more advanced methods, like setting up Fury-based wards with gargoyle sentries and roving patrols of hounds made of fire. And finally, you know how to handle yourself politically, especially in the presence of those with extraordinary abilities.

One In All (600 cp, discount Marat): All who follow you before the One find themselves simply better then they could be on their own. This scales with the number who follow you, at a base each member of the same group finds themselves with an increase of ten percent of your physical capabilities, and for every one hundred following you this increases by one half of a percent. These followers must be in your presence or actively following your orders.

Ritualist (600 cp, Discount Canim): You have been trained in the blood magic of the Canim Priest caste. Using the blood of living (or formerly living) sentient beings you can perform their sorceries anywhere from the military functions, for example raining fire and acid from the sky or summoning blood-cloud monstrosities with acidic tentacles to guard the skies, to the civilian, granting luck or plentiful harvest or blessing family lines. The Old Way of their magic is using their own blood, but using the blood of others (including scavenged corpses from battlefields) is a path finding more common use.

Gear & Companions:

Weapon and Armor (free): You get the standard weapon and armor of your starting background. It is of average, widely available make, whether it is a Legion-issue gladius and uniform, Canish sword and armor, or Marat spear and bow (and loin cloth). The Marat really don't wear much unless it was a present.

Signature/Advanced Weapon (50 cp): You have a weapon that is better than most. It could be any mundane weapon, for example a sword made of unusually strong black metal or a bow that requires Earthcrafting enhanced strength to safely string. Other races examples include a “club” that requires enhanced strength to pick up, let alone swing, but is strong enough to withstand that strength and the Balest, the first crossbow Alera has ever seen (invented by the Canim).

Jar of Blood (100 cp, discount Canim): A jar of blood capable of being used for Canim Ritual magic that fully refills every night and safely stores its contents for indefinite lengths of time. No opening this jar to find a scab. It can replicate the blood of any mortal creature that you that have encountered as well as specific blood types. If the jar is broken, a replacement will appear by your side next night.

Mount (100 cp): A pack gargant, a swift horse, or a surprisingly tame taurg (it rarely tries to kill you) belongs to you and if ever lost somehow finds its way back to you.

Fury-Bound Weapon (200 cp): You are in possession of a fury-bound weapon, whose exact effects and nature depend on the fury bound into it. A sword that causes wounds to smolder or rot, a shield that seems to pull itself into blocking attacks, etc.

Fury-bound Vehicle (400 cp, discount Aleran): You are in possession of a vehicle (a wooden ship by default) with a moderately strong fury bound into it. The benefits of this include a more durable, self-aware vehicle loyal to you.

Chala Import (400 cp, discount Marat, only taken once): You may import a companion/pet of a species other than your own (during this jump, of course) to act as your Chala. Like the normal perk, you gain some traits similar to the imported species along with the other advantages, this import option allows for options that aren't on this world.

Blessing of Night (600 cp, discount Marat): A mushroom that grows in the Wax Forest (and any Vord hive), eating it heals all short of total death. Being Mostly Dead is fine, that means slightly alive. It cures any poison, heals any injury, it even slows age.

Discipline Collar: (600 cp, Discount Aleran): A box of 10 with instructions for how to properly bind furies to make more. When you place the collar around the target's neck and mark it with both your blood and theirs, serving you is their life, their drug, their carrot and stick. A kind word delivered harshly from you is better than any joy normal life could provide, just as a cruel word said sweetly by you causes pain they've never imagined possible. If anyone but you removes the collar, the wearer will die.

Drawbacks:

Bastard (100 cp, Aleran only): You are the illegitimate child of a High Lord or some other noble. You can expect to be mired in treacherous family politics, and seen as a tool by others to advance their interests. Be wary of "accidents".

Dull (100 cp): While not unintelligent, you are still predictable and always think inside the box. Your battle strategies are by the book, your political maneuverings can be read a mile away, and in general you think in lines while the world thinks in curves.

Unwanted Gadara (100 cp): There is just this one person who just never seems to get killed, desperately wants to be your respected enemy, and always seems to have the resources to pull something off. They either try way too hard or are just terrible at it, but somehow their timing will still disrupt your plans even if it's just from their unexpected arrival during a surprise attack.

Collared (200 cp): While not a discipline collar, you still are marked as a slave, and have the appropriate social standing of one. You can buy your freedom if somehow you can gain the necessary wealth through payment, but until then you are not even a citizen. If not human then you are socially stigmatized in some similar manner, and will have trouble dealing with your low status.

Invidiae Erit (200 cp): For the duration of this jump, treachery is in your nature. People will begin to plan for your inevitable betrayal. Even with those whom you believe you will not stab in the back, you'll find yourself automatically preparing to do so at the earliest convenient opportunity.

Murder of Bloodcrows (300 cp): High Lord Kalarus Brencis' personal answer to the Cursors, the Bloodcrows have you marked as a target. While not exactly the most skilled of spies and assassins, their training process (involving discipline collars) gives them unbreakable loyalty, makes them more than happy to die or be maimed for their mission, and they have fairly strong furycrafting. And with this drawback, they never seem to run out entirely. Even if Kalarus is killed,Kalare is destroyed, or your knee-deep in Canea's Vord hives, somehow there are still fully trained reserves of Bloodcrows preparing to act on their orders regarding you.

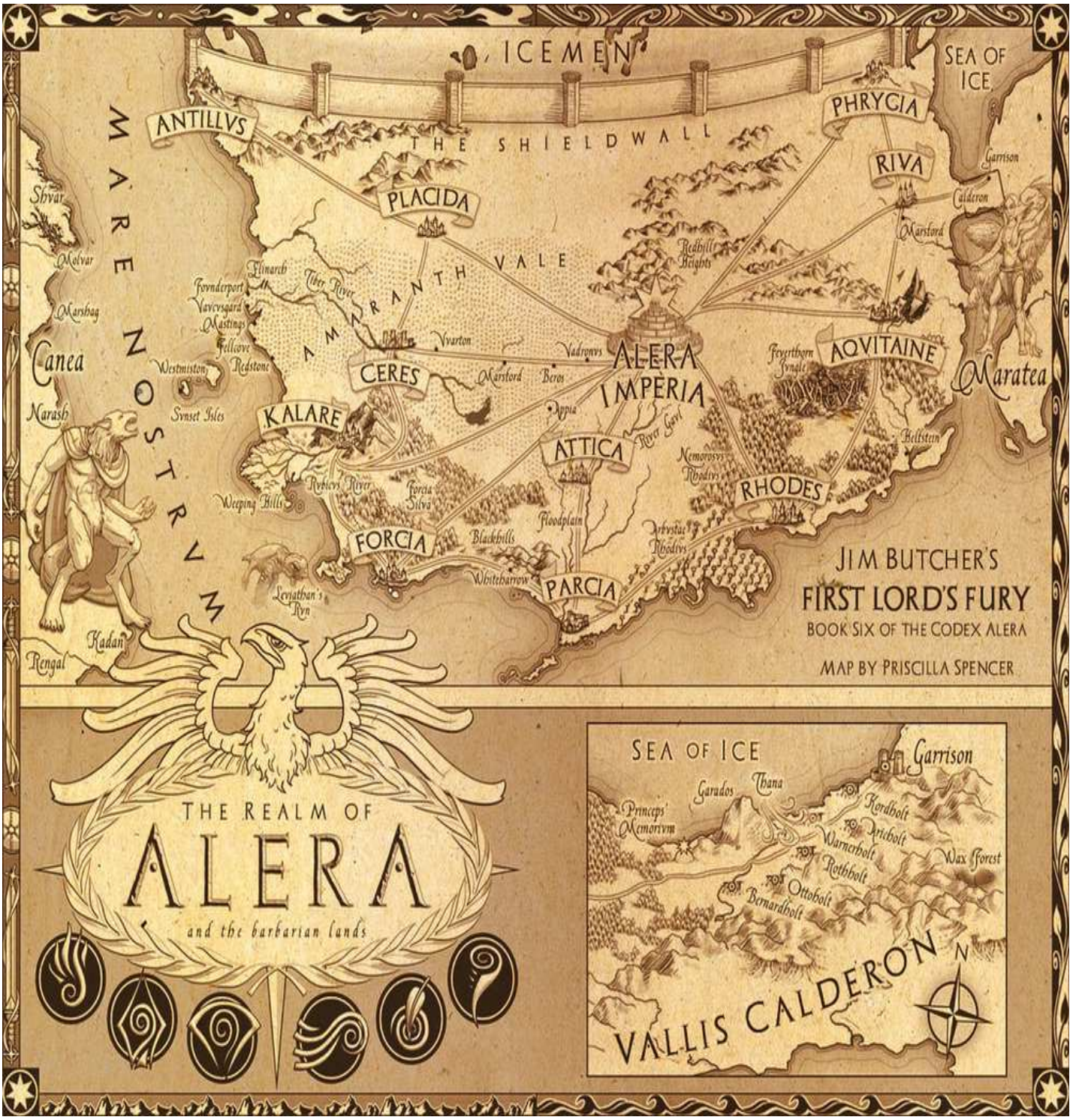
Great Furies! (300 cp): There's a reason Alerans swear by them. The Great Furies are awe inspiring, majestically terrifying forces of nature in the most literal sense. And they just seem to hate you. Volcanoes seem to get agitated just by you being in their blast radius, furystorms keep on being centered on you, and good luck trying to get through woods that actively try to get you lost and trapped. Nature just hates you.[1]

Vord Jumper (600 cp): So that one nest Doroga took care of at the start of Academ's Fury? One infant Queen managed to slip away. It managed to evade notice and through a series of events (Jump-chan), it sampled some of your blood and gained your powers and a sizeable amount of memories. And because it is a Vord Queen, it is setting up a nest and already experimenting with forms and powers. Oh, and minions to fight you.

1 Luckily your starting furies are unaffected, but the greater the wild fury is, the more it will actively try to harm you.

Notes:

The Known World -



Fury Types:

Earth- Earthcrafters display tremendous strength when drawing upon their Fury, but require contact with soil and stone (earth, in short) to do so. They can also manipulate earthen materials, shaping soil and stone with their will, track through ripples of earth, and induce calmness or lust. Earth Furies are understandably strong and durable, given their nature.

Fire- Firecrafters primarily create and manipulate fire and heat while in the Legions, but many politicians utilize their ability to manipulate passionate feelings like joy, anger, and fear with their speeches (sometimes without meaning too). Remember, manipulating heat also means freezing things (it is just moving heat elsewhere, after all). Firecrafting is disrupted by water.

Metal- Metalcrafters are the greatest swordsmen and smiths of Alera, with incredible speed and accuracy in combat while wielding metal weapons. They can sense metal around them and control its hardness (along with manipulating it as well), additionally they can ignore pain and fatigue (but that doesn't mean it's gone). If a metalcrafter has a severely damaged leg, they could ignore the pain and think clearly but if it physically can't support their weight it will still slow them down. But by god they'll keep limping onwards. The most powerful act of metalcrafting involves actually becoming metal (skin-deep) with all the advantages of being a steel colossus among men (or wolfmen or neolithic wood elves or whatever)

Water-The greatest powers of watercrafting are healing and reading emotions, which may become overwhelming to those without metalcrafting or strong enough wills. Truthfinders are watercrafters employed specifically to detect truth or lies through their empathic abilites (sincere truth is the hardest to hide, but falsehoods can be masked even without metalcrafting). Healers require healing tubs to submerge their patients in, although very powerful watercrafters can heal without. Powerful watercrafters typically age physically slow (Gaius Sextus looks to be in his forties despite being double that) and can also shape-shift (though taking on forms with different dimensions than their own gets painful after a while). In fact their healing ability is much like their shape-shifting, just with their fury in another body and focusing on damaged sections. Watercrafters may send communications through liquids and of course can manipulate water.

Wind- Most commonly used for flight by manipulating the wind to bear the crafter aloft or increasing their speed and reaction time to superhuman levels (although it doesn't provide the durability to handle those highest speeds by itself). A windcrafter can manipulate the air into powerful gusts, bending light around them in a “veil” to seem invisible or into a lens to see further (and focus light, for other purposes), carry sound further or to specific people (or halt sound to prevent eavesdropping). Windcrafting is disrupted by earth, typically by being underground or coated in it, although salt does directly harm wind furies.

Wood- The greatest archers and woodsmen of Alera, Woodcrafters can control plants and wood living or dead. In archery, their bows bend further without issue to launch their arrows further, their arrows are more accurate (able to shoot through chaotic melee without friendly fire), all when using wooden bows and shafts of course. They can accelerate the growth of plants and most impressively “camouflage” themselves and others so well that merely standing in scattered hay renders them invisible.

Marat: These are some of the tribes mentioned in-canon.

Fox: Now extinct as a Marat tribe.

Gargant: Descendants of giant ground sloths, herd animals used as heavy work animals on steadholts or for pulling carts.

Herdbane: 8 ft tall predatory birds with powerful legs and flight best described as “falling slightly further and with a little more accuracy”, these are descendants of Terror Birds (and honestly didn't change much).

Horse: Herbivorous hoofed quadrupeds of an equine nature, typically found in a plain setting when in the wild.

Wolf: Specifically Dire Wolves, as in the prehistoric kind.

Marat in general:

Telling falsehoods is an unlikely thing from a Marat, to the point where their closest word for dishonesty is “mistaken”. The Marat tribes are native to Maratea, which lies east of the Realm of Alera and is connected by the Calderon land bridge.

The Vord:

Keepers of Silence/Wax Spiders: Wolf-sized workers with a venomous bite, their main duty is to protect the *croach* and seal any breaks in its surface.

Takers: About rat-length centipede-like creatures with an anesthetic venom that take over bodies. Any bodies. And can use those bodies' abilities once they work out how to (usually by getting a demonstration from others).

Vord Queen: The leaders of the vord nests, they design the forms of their minions and attempt to assimilate everything into the Vord.