Gothic CYOA

Welcome to the world of Gothic. It's a low fantasy setting with conflicts mostly among various human factions and orcs, usually tied to the three gods: Innos, Adanos and Beliar. Innos is the god of fire, order and justice and worshiped by most humans, he is at constant war against his brother Beliar, a god of death, chaos and destruction who is worshiped by orcs and some humans. Adanos is the god of water and balance, who rules the realm and keeps both of his brothers in check. Technology is basic, up to crossbows, no gunpowder. Magic exists, it is granted by the gods to their priests. Fire mages are the priests of Innos, water mages serve Adanos, black mages and orc shamans wield the powers of Beliar. Only mages can use magical runes and create spells, however, anybody can use some magic by using scrolls. Those can be expensive though, especially for powerful spells.

The main scene of events is the kingdom of Myrtana, united and ruled by king Rhobar II. It controls the central and most fertile, temperate region of the known lands on the main continent as well as an isle of Khorinis. Myrtana is currently fighting a bitter war against a large horde of orcs coming from the west, a war it is slowly losing. Rhobar's troops are well-trained and equipped, but the orcs are strong and numerous.

One the key advantages of Rhobar's army lies in the use of weapons made from magical ore. This a very rare material and only few skilled smiths can work with it, but weapons and other objects made with it are nearly indestructible, can be sharpened to an extremely fine edge and never dull. In addition it can hold magical energies, allowing those weapons to be enchanted. The knights and paladins who form the elite of Myrtana's army all wield weapons forged from this ore and consecrated on a shrine to Innos, which allows them to cut through the ranks of orcs. They are massively outnumbered, however, so getting magical ore to equip more knights and hopefully turn the scales is the kingdom's top priority.

You arrive in this world about 5 years prior to the events of Gothic 1. You have 1000cp to spend. Good luck!

Locations (roll 1d8 or pick one for 100cp):

1. **Vengard:** The capital of the kingdom of Myrtana and the seat of king Rhobar II. This city is home to the elite of the kingdom, some of the best craftsmen and traders can be found here, the order of paladins calls it home and the local Council of Fire, made up of some of the wisest and most powerful fire mages resides in Vengard's castle. The orcs are pushing inwards, slowly but surely taking control of surrounding lands, but the king's armies don't give ground easily, and Vengard's defenses are among the best in Myrtana.
2. **Northmar:** A cold, mountainous region to the north of Myrtana, it houses several barbarian clans worshipping Innos. Strong, tough people used to the cold and hardship, the current ruling dynasty of Myrtana hails from these lands, though no clan swears formal allegiance to any king. There are veins of magical ore in the mountain rock and a mine owned by the Hammer Clan is the only source of magical ore on the mainland. An ancient monastery dedicated to Innos lies on a mountain peak, it is considered holy by the fire mages.
3. **Bakaresh:** Very rich port town in the desert of Varant, all kinds of wares are traded here. If it exists, there is probably somebody here selling it. The Hashishin locals worship Beliar and everyone pays a donation to the ruling black mages to avert Beliar's wrath. Varant is allied

with the orcs attacking its northern neighbor, making a fortune selling supplies in exchange for captured slaves. Because of this the region is fairly safe, aside from some bandits and Adanos worshiping nomads wandering the desert, who have strong animosity towards the Hashishin.

4. **Khorinis:** The only town on an island of the same name, Khorinis is a wealthy port town and a crucial asset of Myrtana: it's the kingdom's only source of the rare magical ore. There is a lot of sea traffic, mostly supplies and prisoners being delivered to the colony and ore crates shipped back to the mainland. The surrounding farmlands are mostly safe aside from occasional bandit gangs hiding out somewhere, but there are rumors of dangerous animals and other things lurking the forests. The people warn to stay away from the deep woods, especially at night.

5-8.**Mine Colony:** The old Valley of the Mines near Khorinis is where Myrtana's magical ore is unearthed. Men from all over the kingdom are sent here for even minor crimes to mine ore for the king's armies. Several years ago a group of mages on the order of Rhobar II himself created a magical barrier around the colony. It instantly kills any living thing attempting to leave while letting people pass inside unharmed. The spell went awry and the barrier grew much larger than expected, covering the whole valley and trapping the mages inside. The prisoners used the opportunity to attack the guards and took over the colony. Since then it has been ruled by inmates. There are 3 camps among them: the Old Camp, which mines ore and sells it to the outside world for supplies, the New Camp where water mages attempt to gather a large pile of ore to destroy the barrier and the Swamp Camp, where some convicts worship a being called the Sleeper, who they say promised them freedom, while smoking a lot of swamp weed every day.

It's probably worth noting that, being a mine colony, the population consists of thousands of strong, burly criminals. There are only about 3 women in the whole colony, all of them sex slaves sold to the ore barons.

Age: 18+1d8, you can change gender for 100cp.

Origins:

- **Drop in** (free): you appear at your chosen location with any skills you have and a key to a chest nearby, containing whatever equipment you purchased here.
  +No new memories.
  -No history or friends in this world.
- **Militia** (100cp): You grew up in a family of a soldier, learning a lot about combat, weapons and honor. Following your father's footsteps, you enlist in the local militia, determined to climb through the ranks. You start with a bed in the barracks with your uniform and whatever equipment you purchased in your personal chest. If you start in the colony, you get dropped there after being convicted on false evidence, though your old friends might help clear your name.
  +Respected job as a city guard and friends in the military.
  -Expected to do your duty and follow orders.
  -There is organized crime in the area, and you've been too good for their liking.

- **Hunter** (100cp): You grew up on a farm, helping your parents with farm work and hunting in nearby forest. You recently moved out, earning a living by selling furs. You start in your log cabin with your equipment. It's comfortable and well furnished, but quite remote. If your starting location is the mine colony, you end up there for some random crime. Your family is disappointed, but willing to hear your side of the story.
  +Large, friendly family. Most are simple peasants or craftsmen, but really nice and helpful.
  -They also expect you to help your family however you can as well.
  -Rural areas aren't very safe in times like this.
- **Thief** (100cp): Growing up as a child of a whore, you learned to cut purses and break into homes to help your mother make ends meet, later joining a gang and moving on to a career in organized crime. You start in a small house in a poor, seedy district. The place is your legal property, as is any equipment you purchased. If you start in the colony, you get thrown in after being caught during a heist.
  +Plenty of underworld contacts, your gang takes care of its own.
  -The guards are suspecting you, though they have no evidence. For now.
  -There are a few people you owe a favor.

Skills:

- **Digger** (100cp, discount Drop In): You are skilled with a pickaxe and know how to efficiently find and mine various minerals like coal, gold and even magical ore. You're also pretty strong from swinging a pickaxe all day.
- **Hunting** (100cp, free Hunter): You can skin animals, pull claws and teeth, take horns from large game and shadowbeasts, cut off chitin plates from minecrawlers and get all sorts of useful trophies from slain animals and sometimes even other creatures.
- **Stealth** (100cp, free Thief): You can hide, move silently and pick locks.
- **Acrobatics** (100cp): You get advanced climbing and parkour experience, able to easily scale cliffs and safely jump from moderate heights.
- **Combat training** (100cp, free Militia): You are a skilled fighter with all common melee and ranged weapons.
- **Smith** (300cp, discount Militia): You are professional smith with all the skills to craft any tool, weapon or armor. You even know the rare smelting and forging techniques needed to work with magical ore.
- **Alchemy** (300cp, discount Hunter): You can identify local plants and their properties and create magical potions. Healing and mana potions are the most common on the market, but with some unusual ingredients you might be able to create potions that permanently improve the drinker's body. You also know how to brew or distill various alcoholic beverages.
- **Nimble fingers** (300cp, discount Thief): You have extremely dexterous hands and can empty people's pockets without them noticing, even while they are looking right at you. This coordination also allows you to perfectly copy other's handwriting and forge signatures.
- **Scribe scroll** (300cp): Using a certain writing technique, regular ink and a few additional ingredients you can inscribe the magical energy of a spell onto a scroll. Each scroll can be used to cast the spell written on it once, as it disintegrates in the process, but using magic this way requires little effort from the caster. You can only copy existing scrolls at first, if you become a mage you may also learn to make your own spells and create magical runes.

Casting with a rune is taxing in proportion to the power of the spell, but unlike scrolls, runes last forever.

- **Blessing of Innos** (600cp, discount Militia): Innos, the god of fire, order and justice blessed you with burning courage. You will never fully lose hope or fall into depression, and you are unwavering in the face of any fear or horror (including mental manipulation and magical attempts to induce terror). All your abilities are slightly increased while fighting against evil beings or for a cause you truly believe is right. This also grants increased aptitude towards the magic of Innos. If you become a fire mage or a paladin, you'll be able to learn how to cast spells from memory, without any runes or scrolls.
- **Blessing of Adanos** (600cp, discount Hunter): Adanos, the god of water and balance blessed you the calmness of a mediator. You always remain calm and focused under any stress, never losing your bearing. Your perception and empathy towards others is greatly increased, allowing you to notice even seemingly minor details and easily understand how others feel, what they truly want and what they are trying to say, seeing their real intentions through any attempt to deceive. In addition, you gain an increased aptitude towards the magic of Adanos. If you become a water mage or druid, you'll be able to learn how to cast spells from memory, without any runes or scrolls.
- **Blessing of Beliar** (600cp, discount Thief): Beliar, the god of death, destruction and chaos blessed you with unyielding determination. Your will is strong enough to ignore pain that would have crippled most men and you can stay on your feet even with wounds that would have broken other warriors. All your offensive abilities are slightly increased when fighting an enemy you hate. This also grants increased aptitude towards the magic of Beliar. If you become a black mage, you'll be able to learn how to cast spells from memory, without any runes or scrolls.

Items (all of these except the Dragon Slayer and Staff of Power can be taken multiple times):

- **1000 ore** (50cp): A heavy bag with 1000 small pieces of magical ore, used as currency by convicts in the mine colony. A really good amount inside, worth a fortune outside of the barrier.
- **Leather armor** (50cp): A full set of light, comfortable leather armor.
- **5 healing potions** (50cp): Will heal any moderate wounds.
- **Melee weapon** (50cp, Militia gets one free): A close combat weapon of your choice, made with good quality steel.
- **Hunting bow** (50cp, Hunter gets one free): An average bow, strong enough to hunt common animals like deer or scavengers. You also get a quiver full of arrows.
- **A set of lock picks** (50cp, Thief gets one free): Enough to open any lock, if you know how.
- **Pack of scrolls** (100cp, discount Thief): 10x Fireball, 4x Sleep, 2x Transform: snapper.
- **Enchanted ring** (100cp): Comes in strength, dexterity, stamina, health or magic boosting versions. Benefits from wearing multiple rings of the same type stack.
- **5x Black ore** (100cp): 5 small pieces of rare, black ore. Can't be used for crafting, but it can be safely ingested. Doing this vastly speeds up reactions and thoughts for a short time, making everything around you appear as if moving in slow motion.

- **Light crossbow** (100cp, discount Thief): A compact, high quality crossbow with adjustable string tension capable of using specialized ammunition. Comes with a set of steel-tipped combat bolts, soft-tipped knockout bolts and explosive bolts.
- **Embarla Firgasto** (300cp): A potion that significantly increases either the strength or agility of the drinker, whichever was higher. The effect is permanent.
- **Ring of Invincibility** (300cp, discount Drop In): Doesn't actually make you invincible, but provides protection equivalent to a set of chainmail.
- **Rune of greater Healing** (300cp, discount Militia): A rune inscribed with a spell that instantly heals severe wounds of the target. Runes like this are given to paladins and don't require mage training to use.
- **Pack of rare scrolls** (300cp, discount Thief): 10x Ice Block, 4x Destroy Undead, 2x Army of Darkness
- **Master rapier** (300cp): An ornate rapier, masterfully crafted from magical ore. Perfectly balanced, incredibly sharp and nearly indestructible. Never chips or dulls.
- **Dragonhunter bow** (300cp, discount Hunter): A powerful bow, can punch through elite orc armor with ease. Comes with one quiver of arrows with serrated heads which cause heavy bleeding on hit.
- **Dragon Slayer** (500cp, discount Drop In): A master crafted 2-handed sword made from magical ore and tempered in dragon blood. Extremely sharp and almost indestructible, in the hands of a skilled swordsman can even chop a dragon's limb off or damage a stone golem.
- **Staff of Power** (500cp, discount when blessed by any god): This magical staff provides rapid mana regeneration when held and can extend a barrier that blocks spells cast at you. This barrier only appears in one direction, so magic coming from any other direction can still go through.

Drawbacks (take up to two):

- **Crippled** (100cp): An accident left you with a lame leg. You can still walk, but don't expect to run or jump. If taken with Possessed one of your hands is crippled instead.
- **Cursed** (100cp): You suffer from strong headaches that don't go away and have frequent nightmares. Smoking swamp weed dulls the pain for a while, but doesn't remove it. Healing potions and magic don't help.
- **Hunted** (200cp): Some very resourceful and influential individual is really pissed at you, and will do everything in his power to ensure you end up dead. He will not show himself openly, preferring subterfuge and assassination.
- **Outcast** (200cp): Something about you rubs people the wrong way. Everyone you meet tends to distrust you and react with hostility. Earning trust will be a lot harder than usual.
- **Allergic** (300cp): Health potions cause an allergic reaction and any kind of magical healing doesn't affect you. Better hope you don't get any health issues you can't sleep off.
- **Possessed** (300cp): Through some magical accident on your arrival you ended up in the wrong body. The good news is that your new body is supernaturally strong, tough and has wings. The bad news is that it's the body of a demon. The really bad news is that the demon is powerful, commands an army of undead it can summon at any time and likes your body, using it to blend into human society and do evil demon things. The extremely bad news is that your soul can't handle controlling a demonic body and slowly withers. If you can't

subdue your old body and drink a fresh drop of your blood to switch back within 5 years, you die.

If you survive in this world for 10 years all drawbacks are removed and you are offered a choice:

- **Return home**: You return back to Earth with all your equipment, memories and abilities.
- **Stay**: You stay in the world of Gothic and live out your life here. Time back on Earth is unpaused and you're considered to be missing without a trace.
- **Move on**: You move on to the next world, keeping your items and everything you have learned.

Notes:

- The demon from Possessed will start in the same region as you. If it's the Colony, it's trapped there as long as the barrier stands, just like everyone else.
- Demons are otherworldly beings that usually serve Beliar. They are typically inhumanly tough and strong, have claws capable of piercing armor on each of their two hands and no legs, only moving or hovering using their wings. They are unable to speak normally, but can communicate telepathically.
- Any Jumpchain companions you might have know of all drawbacks you took and can still recognize you if you took Possessed. Outcast drawback affects them same as you, but you don't feel anything wrong about each other.
- Possessed start in a remote cave somewhere in the chosen location with purchased equipment scattered around. You still get your origin memories. The demon starts in the normal starting place for that location, but has no idea whose identity it just assumed.
- Blessings are not mutually exclusive, so it's possible to bear several, if you can afford it.
- Stat-boosting potions and items always work. The boost isn't huge, but you get the same boost whether you are an untrained slacker or already at superhuman level.
- The special ingredients for scrolls and rune crafting depend on the spell. For a fire arrow it's a bit of sulfur, for an Army of Darkness rune you need a human bone, a black pearl, heartstone of a stone golem and a demon heart.
- Sleep spell puts the target to sleep, but can be resisted if the target is agitated (e.g. trying to put a guy asleep as he is attacking you won't work, but cast it on a guard keeping watch but not alerted about anything and it most likely will)
- A snapper is about waist-high carnivorous dinosaur, similar to a velociraptor.
- Ice Block encases a single target in ice, preventing it from doing anything and slowly dealing light damage from the cold.
- Destroy Undead does exactly that, every time. It doesn't matter if it's a basic zombie or a dracolich blessed by Beliar, if it's undead it goes down in a single cast of this spell.
- Army of Darkness summons a dozen skeleton warriors at once, which are easily a match for a veteran soldier in melee. They will obey any order and last until they either destroyed or dismissed by the caster.