

Hidden within **a large atoll** on the Northern edge of **The Talons Archipelago** lies the settlement of **Fathen** home of the **Merfolk**.

A most curious polis, the settlement sits nestled with a rocky outcropping surrounding a **volcanic vent**. The warm water nurturing nearby sea life and the **Merfolk** themselves.

Lacking access to conventional building materials the locals fashion their dwellings from **coral** and the shells of **giant sea creatures** that they hunt for food.

A tribal people, their society revolves around a **Chieftain** who, along with the **Priestesses of Eadro**, administer the day to day lives of the inhabitants. The latter performing daily rituals at a circle of standing stones, I am told, in order to glimpse the future.

The lack of 'traditional' beasts of burden have spurred the the **Merfolk** to utilise the seas bounty. I myself witnessed several of their number ridding large **Sea Horses** and **Manta Rays** that I was told they would use to travel long distances when needed. I was also informed that **Merfolk** have been known to train **Sharks** that they rode into battle, mercifully however, I did not witness that myself.

The strangest thing about **Fathen** however is arguably that which I know the least about. Large doors, constructed of solid stone and bearing **great glyths** stand at one end of town embedded in the rock face. Quite unlike any of the surrounding structures, the local refer to it as the **Vault of Ja'Cor** but all seem either **unable** or **unwilling** to tell we **what it is** or **what is housed within**.

Excerpt from *The Deepest Waters: A History of the Crystalline Sea* by **Gared Marak**