

Book IV

SOLAR WARS

THE DAWN OF TWO SUNS

A long time ago, in unmeasurable eons of time... not in some distant galaxy, far, far away... but right here, in our own cosmic backyard... in our solar system... there was no earth!

Preamble



Kael'Ryn
MERCURY



Princess Lysara
VENUS



General
Vaelor Krynn
MARS



VX-17 (Vex)
Combat-Droid
JUPITER



The
Shallit'Biru



Xal'Zirath
MERCURY

DEE DOWNING

Preamble

A long time ago, in unmeasurable eons of time; not in some distant galaxy, far, far away; but right here, in our own comismic backyard; in our solar system... there was no earth.

Wait... Think about that. We assume the earth was always here since the beginning of time, but the truth. It wasn't. That means there are stories never written, stories never told, and heroes lost to the void.

Look around today: barren planets, drifting debris, silence where life should thrive. But these aren't just empty spaces... They're clues! Fragments of a puzzle.

This is where we begin: connecting the dots, filling the gaps, and uncovering what the universe is still trying to tell us.

To grasp our place in cosmic time, imagine the galaxy as a vast clock. Its minute hand sweeps through twelve constellations; the Zodiac, marking a celestial cycle so immense, one full rotation spans roughly 26,000 earth-years.

We live our lives within a single *astronomical hour* of this cycle. An '**Age**,' lasting approximately 2,160 earth-years. Right now, the cosmic pendulum hovers at the twilight of the *Age of Pisces*. The dawn of the *Age of Aquarius* glimmers on the horizon; though some argue its first light has already broken through the darkness.

With this in mind, our saga begins in the *Age of Gemini*. Though *which* Gemini age, even the stars might hesitate to say.

Backstory

By earth's mortal count, the last age of Gemini dawned near 6,500 BCE, when early humans etched twin gods into temple walls. But the cosmic clock grinds deeper: 26,000 years prior, another age of Gemini spun its tales of duality. And so it stretches back, epoch after epoch, a hall of mirrors reflecting infinite twins.

So mark this well. I do not claim to know *which* age of Gemini birthed our story. Only that it was forged not in millennia, but in the breath of galaxies, ages upon ages ago.

You doubt me? The proof has been watching you since you were born. *Look up into the night sky!*

Contrary to popular belief, our moon is no natural satellite. It's the corpse of an ancient war machine; a weapon of unimaginable power, a shell of its former self cloaked in cosmic dust. Whatever fate it had covered it with a hail storm of debris. Those craters pocking the surface? Not a single one is fresh. No wind blows there to bury the past. Every scar was carved eons ago, frozen in silent testimony.

And consider this: Its rotation is *too perfect* to be chance. Locked in precise sync with earth; one moon rotation to every thirty earth rotations, it always shows us the same side. While the far side... the dark side... remains in perpetual night. Its programmers called it "*Month*," for its thirty-earth-day cycle. This isn't a quirk of geology. It's engineering. Someone programmed this. ***But why?***

That same someone also ensured that we never learn what lurks on that endless dark side. Could there be surviving remnants of past ages? Perhaps, what's left of some civilization(s)? Think about it. If the moon is artificial, it's also mostly hollow. There is not only the dark side of the surface but also the dark (unknown) inside. This could house a civilization(s) that's been around for ages and want nothing to do with savage humans.

But once... before time rusted its gears... this artificial leviathan thrummed with power and had a much nobler purpose. It even traveled between worlds; back when our solar system pulsed with life on every planet... *before there was an earth.*

Now. As I was saying: *A long time ago, in immeasurable eons, not in a distant galaxy far, far away, but right here in our own solar system, there was no earth.*

Crucible of the Sun

Our saga begins many ages of Geminis ago, on the first planet in our solar system: *Mer'Kuri* (mer-KOO-ree), the Scorched Jewel, the Crucible of the Sun.

Mer'Kuri was a planet of extremes: one side bathed in the scorching heat of the relentless sun, while the other was gripped by frigid, perpetual darkness.

Centuries ago, the Mer'Kurians adapted to this harsh landscape, evolving dark complexions that allowed them to absorb the sun's radiation in minuscule amounts. This was a survival mechanism; but it came at a cost. Prolonged exposure in the elements led to death, an inevitable fate for many.

The Mer'Kurians live in magnificent underground cities, each carved into the planet's rocky core. The ceilings stretch miles above, glowing with the light of the sun, but without its searing heat and radiation. These vast chambers illuminate the city below, while the air is thick with the scent of metal and burnt ozone; a constant reminder of the battle between life and death.

They emerge only at dawn and dusk, when the surface temperatures are bearable. Over time, they developed domed cities equipped with advanced shielding technology that provided complete protection from the sun's extreme heat and radiation. Beneath the surface, a network of rail systems connects the underground cities to the domed ones, offering transport at all hours. The royal elite, however, have access to an exclusive teleportation system, a privilege that keeps them separated from the masses.

Mer'Kuri's vast solar energy reserves have drawn the attention of neighboring planets, leading to the rise of mining colonies and industrial outposts. These reserves consist of stored solar power, harnessed through advanced energy-absorbing technology. The collected energy can fuel cities, power technology, and serve as a highly sought-after resource for trade and industry across the system.

The Mer'Kurians permits outer-world mining colonies and industrial outposts only under stringent conditions, harboring deep resentment toward the outsiders' presence. To maintain diplomatic relations, planets like Venus and Mars comply with the ruling council's demand for a solar energy tribute. In contrast, the warlords of the distant planet Xirath perceive this as extortion and conspire against Mer'Kuri.

The Kurai Resistance/The Eclipse/The Shallit'Biru

Among the Mer'Kurians, the Kurai Resistance believe their planet is being exploited and advocate for the expulsion of all outsiders. At the same time, the ruling council secretly benefits from off-world

trade. So, they demonize the Kurai resistance while pretending to fight for Mer'Kuri rights and independence.

The Kurai Resistance harbors an elite group of assassins known as "**The Eclipse**." These practitioners of the **Sha'darii** (a secretive warrior group that operates in the shadows) view the Sun (That Mer'Kurians call "**Ra**") as a gateway to a more formidable, enigmatic, and malevolent force. One that is preparing the universe for a great reckoning.

The true nature of the power of Ra is known only to the highest-ranking Sha'darii zealots. They claim to hear the whispers of the **Shallit'Biru** (their Savior, the Dark Overlord); a sound like a roar, distant yet close, like a storm on the horizon. They believe it is only a matter of time before their Shallit'Biru's return.

The Eclipse will assassinate politicians or anyone else who stands in their way. However, they are more than just killers. They are fanatics who believe each assassination is a sacred act to prepare the solar system for the return of their Shallit'Biru.

Eclipse Training

The Eclipse apprentice undergoes a rigorous and transformative training regimen designed to harness the formidable power of Ra. This training is both physically and mentally demanding, ensuring that only the most resilient individuals ascend within their ranks. It has three basic stages.

The **Solar Exposure Trials** is designed to acclimate the body to extreme solar radiation. Initiates are subjected to controlled periods on Mer'Kuri's surface during peak solar intensity. This process aims to stimulate latent adaptive traits, enhancing their ability to absorb and channel solar energy.

The **Ascetic Practices** are designed to cultivate discipline and spiritual attunement. Trainees engage in prolonged fasting under the relentless heat of Mer'Kuri's sun. This practice is believed to purge physical and mental impurities, fostering a deeper connection with the Sha'darii faith.

Meditative Immersion is designed to achieve heightened states of consciousness and resilience. Through intense meditation sessions, initiates confront their deepest fears and desires, often experiencing

visions interpreted as guidance from the Shallit'Biru. This mental fortitude is crucial for executing their sacred missions.

Those who endure and emerge from this grueling regimen exhibit near-superhuman capabilities:

- **Enhanced Physical Prowess:** Increased strength, agility, and endurance, enabling them to navigate and survive Mer'Kuri's harsh environments.
- **Heightened Sensory Perception:** Sharpened senses that allow for acute awareness of their surroundings, essential for stealth and combat.
- **Solar Energy Manipulation:** An adeptness at channeling solar energy, facilitating the use of specialized weaponry and techniques unique to the Eclipse.

Signature Equipment of the Eclipse include:

- **Solar-Infused Blades:** Weapons that harness stored solar energy, capable of cutting through the toughest materials with searing heat.
- **Shadow-Daggers:** Tools designed to absorb ambient light, rendering them nearly invisible and ideal for covert operations.
- **Stealth Cloaks:** Garments woven with advanced materials that bend light, allowing wearers to blend seamlessly into their surroundings.

Eclipse are notorious for blinding their enemies with sudden bursts of light and burning their opponents from within. The culmination of this training not only forges unparalleled warriors but also devout adherents to the Sha'darii faith.

The Solari

The Solari, known as the "**Warriors of the Light**," are a clandestine order of Mer'Kurians dedicated to harnessing solar energy's benevolent aspects to maintain balance and renewal within the solar system. Their philosophy stands in stark contrast to that of the Eclipse, who perceive the sun as a tool of destruction.

The Solari do not worship the sun. Instead, they seek to responsibly harness its power, viewing it as a source of life and

equilibrium. Central to their doctrine is the aspiration to embody the virtues of *Ata'rai Raenor*, the *legendary first Sunwalker*.

According to ancient lore, Ata'rai Raenor traversed Mer'Kuri's scorching surface at high noon without harm, having unlocked the true secrets of solar mastery before vanishing into the sun itself. His legacy serves as both inspiration and a solemn reminder of the profound connection between the Solari and the solar forces they revere.

Solari training emphasizes defensive techniques and the responsible use of solar energy. Key components include:

Solar Synchronization designed to attune initiates to the sun's rhythms and harness its energy harmoniously. Practitioners engage in meditative practices during sunrise and sunset, aligning their physical and mental states with the solar cycle to enhance their ability to anticipate and counteract threats, particularly those posed by the Eclipse.

Defensive Mastery designed to develop techniques that utilize solar energy for protection and preservation. Training involves the use of kinetic energy shields capable of absorbing and redirecting attacks, as well as the development of strategies to neutralize the Eclipse's aggressive maneuvers without resorting to lethal force.

Artisan Craftsmanship to create weapons and artifacts from condensed solar matter that embody the Solari's principles. Skilled artisans within the order forge sunlight-reflecting armor and weapons designed to absorb and channel solar energy, ensuring that their tools serve as extensions of their commitment to balance and protection.

The Solari's secretive nature and formidable abilities have led to mixed perceptions among the Mer'Kuri populace and ruling council. Some view them as guardians and stabilizers within the system, while others, noting that some Solari members are defectors from the Eclipse, question their true intentions and fear they may incite conflict akin to their counterparts.

This ambiguity compels the Solari to operate with discretion, striving to demonstrate through their actions that their primary goal is the preservation of harmony and the prevention of chaos.

The Solari's dedication to the responsible use of solar energy, their rigorous training, and their complex role within Mer'Kuri society

underscore the multifaceted nature of their order as they navigate the delicate balance between illumination and shadow destruction.

A significant aspect of both Solari and Eclipse belief is the prophecy that at the dawn of each age, a champion will emerge to guide the balance between light and darkness. This leads us to our story.

During one notable Age of Gemini, twin sons were born to the Solari: **Kael'Ryn** and **Xal'Zirath**, known as "**The Two Suns**."

The Solari interpreted their birth as the fulfillment of the prophecy, heralding a new era of enlightenment. Conversely, the Eclipse sought to claim the twins, believing they could be instrumental in ushering in their vision of transformation through destruction.

Although the twins, Kael'Ryn and Xal'Zirath, were born Solari, the Shallit'Biru wanted them badly.

