

The Diviners

The Diviners are (or, were) one part cult, one part technological society, and one part governmental branch. They originated as a group of six street magicians of mild repute operating in the Kingdom of God, who claimed to tell fortunes and commune with God through Tarot.

The Diviners began to gain momentum when one of the six mysteriously came into possession of a packet of technology far beyond anything manufactured before, along with cohesive documentation on how to build more. In a world of swords and horses, the Diviners began appearing with laser weapon technology, self-propelling vehicles, and technologies so astounding they could only be classified as magic. Though their act improved dramatically, their schtick never changed; they were holy men, communing with God himself through wondrous technologies.

The exact story of how The Prophet (as he came to be known) came into possession of this technology is a mystery. The Prophet's story is that it was gifted to him from God himself, in the form of a sealed box floating down from on high. A few dissenters and theorists have other ideas, such as aliens, an ancient civilization, or any number of other hypotheses; unfortunately for them, such theorizing is largely illegal in the Kingdom of God. And so, unfortunately for us, the true story is lost to history.

By popular request, the Diviners began bringing others into their ranks: at first only a few worthy acolytes, but then as their numbers grew, floods of smaller hopefuls vying for a chance to speak with the divine. They started renting a few warehouses to manufacture more gear, and later began purchasing them by the dozen. In a few months they had swelled from a cabal of street charlatans to a kingdom-spanning cult the likes of which had never been seen before.

Lest they overtake her in power, the reigning monarch of the Kingdom of God elected to formalize the Diviners as a branch of the government and offer them her blessing. The Prophet accepted the offer, and the Kingdom of God was changed forever. The cities were vitalized with new technology, the military rapidly became the strongest on the planet, and whole industrial districts were erected to keep up the pace. The Diviners were a presence in every city, every town, and every district, and the Kingdom of God became a dominating presence worldwide.

At the height of their power, after years of gradual building, five of the original six of the Diviners completed a project they had been working on in secret, which they named only The Machine. The Machine was a vast amalgamation of steel and mysterious fluids, standing as wide and high as a small tower, and, unlike all the previous technologies, entirely of the Diviners' own design. Its only function: to bring God himself down into the mortal plane. At the unveiling of The Machine, the leader and major political figures of every country were present, along with hordes upon hordes of citizens hoping to catch a glimpse of God, or at least curious as to what would happen. The entirety of the upper echelons of the Diviners were also present, barring two: Miranda Grey, a high-ranking acolyte who had opted to stay home for the last moments of her ill son's life, and Jack Lockwood, the missing sixth original member, who had been absent for the last year, citing moral objections.

As nobody in attendance, or in the surrounding cities and districts, made it out alive, we cannot be certain what exactly transpired when The Prophet threw the lever. All we know is what the townsfolk on the outskirts of the blast zone found when they investigated; the entire capital of the Kingdom of God, and the surrounding environs, had been replaced by a miles-wide crater. At the center of the crater lay a hideous and titanic mass of burnt and twisted flesh, stretching almost a mile along the dirt and punctuated at weird angles by jutting and misshapen limbs: the corpse of God.

In the chaos and madness that followed, the Kingdom of God somehow managed to survive, though the size of its government was greatly reduced, and many towns ravaged by rioting. The popularity of the Diviners, especially abroad, plummeted like a stone. The Diviners themselves split into two factions, one led by Jack Lockwood and the other by Miranda Grey.

The Old Diviners

Jack Lockwood, along with several other low-level acolytes who were fortunate enough to be absent, was racked with such guilt and shame he felt the need to live at the foot of God's corpse, paying penance for the rest of his life. Lockwood and his followers became known as the Old Diviners. As the corpse of God decayed and fouled the air, their bodies began developing strange mutations, so they covered themselves in long tarps and donned gas-masks, hiding their skin from the rot around them. They remain there to this day, though nobody ever dares visit them; the only sign of their continued existence is the hush that falls over the crowd when a few venture out of the crater for supplies. If someone were to visit, however, they would find themselves in the company of the largest and most accurate collection of the history of the Diviners than exists anywhere else, and the only living man who knows The Prophet's name.

The New Diviners

Miranda Grey also felt the need to do penance, though this feeling intermingled with a desire to leverage her new standing as the highest-ranking survivor of the Diviners other than Lockwood. Grey quickly organized what she called the New Diviners, a rebranding of the Diviners with a new purpose: to bear the burdens of God in his stead, and ensure His plan comes to pass as intended. What was left of the Diviners' infrastructure was re-mobilized towards this goal. Grey began mobilizing squads of NDs, some unarmed, some militant, issuing them advanced gear and standard-issue Tarot cards. Their mission: to roam the countryside, use the Tarot to read God's plan, and ensure it comes to pass by any means possible, lest the universe tear itself apart.