

# The Nexus

*Location · Region*

**Population:** Unknown

**Government:** None

West of the Barrier Isles, past the point the islanders call the Thinning, reality becomes unreliable. It does not shatter. It does not announce itself with thunder or supernatural fire. It simply thins -- the way ice thins before it breaks, the way a man's voice thins when he is about to say something he cannot take back. Colors are slightly wrong. Distances lie. A cliff that appears to be a hundred yards away may be a mile, or may be on the other side of the world, or may be nowhere at all. The ocean is still present, mostly. The sky is still present, mostly. Everything that should be solid retains its shape long enough to be walked on, landed on, trusted -- and then stops.

All who have entered the Nexus have disappeared. This is not legend or exaggeration. It is the one fact about the Nexus that scholars agree on with absolute certainty, because it is the only fact that does not require anyone to have returned in order to report it.

The elders of the Barrier Isles say that at the center of the Nexus stands a tower. Around it grows a field of roses. No one alive has seen this and come back. The detail persists anyway, passed down through generations of islanders who have never gone past the Thinning and never intend to. It has the quality of information that arrived from somewhere and refused to leave.

Whether the Nexus is a wound in Kyrell's reality, a deliberate construction, a consequence of the Spirit Dragon Wars, or something that predates the world entirely is not known. The Orders of Wizardry have classified all research into the Nexus as a closed inquiry, which is as close as the Orders get to admitting that something frightens them. The connection between the Nexus and the instability that makes long-distance teleportation dangerous across Dracomere is a theory that several Conclave members hold privately and none will publish.