

UNLIKELY HEROES

**A race supplement for OSR games
By Nordic Weasel Games**



Welcome:

Role playing is about the fantastic and mystical. Players assume the role of a completely different person and venture forth into dank dungeons. What could be more fantastical and exciting than a completely alien species?

To this end, we present several new playable races for the GM to review in their games.

These races can be slotted into most OSR games, with a minimum of work, but are written with an eye towards Swords&Wizardry and other “classic” fantasy role playing games.

Note that OSR games can vary greatly. Therefore, the below should always be interpreted and adapted to your specific rules set. For some OSR games, dropping ability score requirements may be appropriate, while for others, additional details may be needed.

Structure:

Each entry features the following sections:

Description – Physical and mental descriptions as well as general theories as to the origin of the creature.

Ability scores – Requirements to play a member of this race. Unlikely Heroes does not use any ability score modifications, but in many cases, points may be relocated, if a score exceeds what is permitted. No gender differences are assumed.

Class and level – Permitted character classes and levels achievable. These are almost always given in relation to an existing race, since different OSR games have different concepts of level limits. If you have non standard classes, review them individually and decide if they would be appropriate for a given race.

Combat and traits – Special rules and exceptions that apply to a given race. Read these carefully. Note that many of these races will have more special rules than the main races, as befits their highly unusual nature.

Notes on balance:

These races are not carefully measured for balance. Hence, in any given situation, a member of one race may be stronger than another. Over the course of a campaign, this will level itself out. In the end, I wrote the races with an eye towards creating interesting and memorable characters, rather than attempting to navigate ways to ensure each character can kill the same number of orcs every round.

These races are more detailed than the ones provided in the core of most OSR games, and thus could be considered as “advanced” options in a campaign.

What if it isn't covered?

It's impossible to account for every circumstance. For mundane questions, such as sleep required, food required and so forth, exercise common sense. Large creatures need to consume more food, and physically active creatures will tend to want more rest.

The GM and players can apply whichever solutions seem reasonable. This applies to unusual situations in the adventure as well.

When making rulings, be cautious not to overdo it however. These races all have multiple rules and exceptions applying to them, and adding too many additional special cases can make the game cumbersome.

Of course, feel free to modify these races in any manner you see fit.

Poor old humans:

If the group feels that the poor, old human race is being left behind a bit, take heart. We have added a few new takes on fantasy humans, that can be used to spice up things a little as well.

Open content:

All content in this supplement is open gaming content, and may be utilizing wherever you see fit.

THE NON HUMANS

The races discussed in this section are completely non human, and thus can provide a completely unique experience for a player. Each entry includes suggestions for incorporating them in a campaign.

Note that if you want to make these races a more integral part of a campaign, you should add them to your custom encounter tables. Of course, an individual member or a small colony could be found almost anywhere, and this makes a great way of introducing the race to an ongoing campaign.

As these are player character species, I have avoided conventional monster manual entries. A group of such creatures should be constructed like any adventuring party, with the majority of encounters being first level specimens.

FELIDS

Description:

Felids are essentially intelligent cats. In some worlds, they may be the result of a divine (or demonic) meddling in mortal affairs, magical experimentation, the servants of a feline deity or they may simply always have been there.

In physical stature, Felids tend to resemble a rather large cat with shaggy, long fur. The fur coat lengthens and thickens with age, granting a level of protection. While maintaining the graceful movements and reflexes of more mundane cats, their eyes have a piercing intelligence to them, obvious to anyone knowledgeable in magical arts.

Personality wise, Felids can vary significantly, but their feline instincts are hard to shake. They tend to be curious about anything and everything, and while they appreciate social situations, tend to approach them on their own merits. Felids have an extremely hard time entering into vows and bonds, doing so under nearly physical discomfort.

Ability scores:

To play a felid, the player must have average (10) or better intelligence and constitution and good (13) dexterity.

Due to their limited stature, any strength rating above 15 is reduced to 15, but the lost points may be relocated to dexterity and intelligence.

Felids may have any alignment. They appreciate an orderly society as long as it doesn't encroach on them.

Class and level:

Felids may play as fighting men, thieves and magic users and can advance to the same level limits as elves in each class. In games permitting multi classing, they may multi class in any 2 of these 3 classes.

Felid thieves use the skill modifications of halflings.

Other classes should be viewed and judged individually.

In games based on the original "0 edition" fantasy game, they may switch each session between acting as thief, magic user or a fighting man. They must then track advancement separately for each class, using the best hit points available.

Combat and traits:

Due to their thick fur coat, felids have a natural armour class equivalent to leather armour. They inflict damage as a dagger with their claws and fangs, attacking twice per round in melee combat.

Lacking proper hands, they cannot handle weapons or many magical items, such as rods, staves and wands. They can generally open potions (with their teeth), may wear magical rings (and can wear one on each leg, for a total of four), and if equipped with a suitable harness, can carry equipment around and retrieve it.

Due to their particular body shape, they can't wear any types of armour made for other races. A leather harness could be specially crafted for 20 gold pieces, providing them a +1 bonus to armour class.

Felid magic users will generally use a harness to carry material components, and use their teeth to retrieve and manipulate them.

To compensate for their lack of fine manipulation, felids can see in the dark out to 180 feet, they are very rarely surprised (Roll D20 versus dexterity to foil any surprise or sneak attack attempt. Success negates all bonuses) and their sense of stealth gives them a +10% bonus to sneaking and moving silently.

Lastly, a felid may find hidden items on a 3 in 6 chance, including traps and doors, though they have no natural ability to disarm such obstacles.

Felids in the campaign:

Felid's could conceivably be encountered just about anywhere, and in any circumstances, due to their small stature and intense curiosity. It would be rather unusual for more than one to be encountered, unless something particularly interesting was going on.

It is rare for a Felid to be simply waiting around for something to happen. They should be tied into something interesting in the area.

Felid NPC's will make normal reaction rolls, but will tend to be curious on neutral results. They are somewhat unimpressed by the theatrics of other races. All reaction roll modifiers are moved by 2 points towards 0, whether positive or negative.

KHARN

Description:

Originally created as a warrior race in ages past, the Kharn rebelled against their creators and fled into our reality, where they now live. Being possessed of a lengthy, racial memory, the Kharn are almost universally fierce pacifists, going to great lengths to avoid warfare where possible. They rarely speak of the reasons why, but scholars theorize that their creators used them as shock troops or enforcers carrying out the wills of evil masters. They have a strong sense of morality and will often venture into the world to pursue goals of peace and freedom. This often puts them in contact with adventuring groups, though it can put them at odds just as often.

Most Kharn seem to feel some level of guilt over this, even generations later.

Visually, Kharn are hard to miss in a crowd, despite their general, humanoid form. At 8-9 feet, they tower over humans, and their skin has a rough, sand coloured texture, feeling much like rock. Exceptionally heavy, they often have trouble using furniture intended for humans. At a distance, they are sometimes mistaken for a golem or other living statue, but as the observer comes closer, their nature becomes clearer.

Kharn can often seem to lack emotions as they prefer evaluating situations carefully before acting. If presented with information that drastically changes what they believed to be true, they will attempt to isolate themselves while processing the information and coming to new conclusions.

Kharn seem to have a knack for honesty and will only lie or deceive in exceptional situations.

Ability scores:

To play a Kharn, the player must roll exceptional (15) scores for Strength and Constitution. Dexterity cannot exceed 12, but excess points may be shifted to Strength and Constitution. Kharn tend to be cautious in a crowd, and as a result may not exceed 16 Charisma. Excess points may be moved to Wisdom.

Kharn are almost always neutral or good, but can tend in any direction as regards law and chaos. Evil Kharn are exceedingly rare, and are hunted ruthlessly by their former brethren. A Kharn turned evil through magical will slowly become insane, unless allies can find a way of curing the affliction. Typically, a saving throw versus spells is required every week to fend off insanity.

Class and level:

Kharn may only play as fighting men, but may advance to the same level as Dwarves. No Kharn cleric has ever been found, possibly a result of their origins, and they seem to be intensely disinclined towards the magical arts.

Combat and traits:

The skin of a Kharn is incredibly tough, providing a natural armour class equal to plate armour. They may not wear any additional armour however, other than a shield, which must be specially crafted for them (see below).

Due to their great resilience, Kharn receive 1 additional hit point with every level of experience. They also receive a +2 bonus to all saving throws, except purely mental intrusions (such as charms, suggestions and hypnosis). Against mental attack, they must take their saving throws at a -2 penalty.

When fighting, Kharn inflict crushing blows that can harm almost any target. This permits them to strike creatures that normally require silver or +1 weapons to affect.

The fists of a Kharn inflict 1D4 damage, and count as a weapon strike.

Due to their weight and form, any items used by a Kharn must be specially crafted or they will shatter with use. This requires double the regular cost for all item. As they must consume huge amounts of food, all costs for food and living expenses must likewise be doubled.

Due to their intense dislike of violence, Kharn receive no experience points from any battle they initiated, unless the lives of their friends were in danger. When attacked, or left with truly no choice, they may fight normally, and often fiercely.

Kharn in the campaign:

Kharn groups will tend to be in somewhat remote locations, sometimes constructing small communities. On occasion, they have been known to live near, or even in, demihuman societies, though often keeping somewhat to themselves.

They often follow solitary pursuits, with many attempting to take up crafts or arts, despite their poor natural inclinations towards such.

Kharn will take reaction rolls normally, though members of a race known to be evil will have a -1 penalty to reaction rolls.

VARG BORN

Description:

Often mistaken for werewolves, the Varg Born may in fact have similar origins. Some theorize that they are in fact werewolves who mastered their curse, while others speculate that werewolves were the first flawed attempt to create a hybrid race.

Varg Born look very similar to a werewolf in it's hybrid form, with a humanoid shape, slightly hunched over, covered in fur, and with a wolf's head. In areas where werewolf attacks are common, this often leads to immediate violence. Upon closer inspection, the battle rage of the werewolf is lacking and the eyes of the Varg Born are calm and serene, though with a mystical touch to them, often having startling and unusual colours.

The Varg Born tend to be very loyal to their friends but unlikely their canine relatives, they find pleasure in solitude or small groups. It is very rare for them to form connections outside their travelling companions, and acquaintances left behind are often forgotten about.

They tend to appreciate physical challenges, and while they are rarely blood thirsty, they often relish a battle, provided it's a cause they find worthwhile.

A Varg Born will never attempt to convert another character to their beliefs. If they find a character's views to be incompatible but not a threat, they will simply ignore or leave the character.

Ability scores:

Varg Born must have Dexterity and Constitution scores of 12 or higher. Due to their solitary nature, they cannot have Charisma scores higher than 15. They are often rash and impulsive, and may not have Wisdom scores higher than 15 either.

In both cases, excess points may be moved to any other ability score.

Varg Born are never Lawful, but may have any other alignment desired. Evil Varg Born are somewhat unusual.

Class and level:

Varg Born may play as fighting men, thieves, druids and rangers. They may advance to the same levels as half elves in any class permitted.

Varg Born thieves receive the same skill modifiers as half elves.

Combat and traits:

Due to their thick fur, the character will have a natural armour class equivalent to leather armour. The wearing of leather armour will result in a +1 bonus to armour class.

Varg Born dislike metal armour intensely, and must suffer a -1 penalty to initiative rolls when wearing it. They will use shields without hindrance.

Varg Born have an exceptional sense of smell, and can follow tracks with a 30% chance of success. This is increased by added their Wisdom scores and experience level to the basic chance. Thus, a level 3 character, with a 12 Wisdom would have a 45% chance of success. They can follow tracks up to 1 day later, per level of experience.

Due to their mystical origins, Varg Born can see through illusions, invisibility, magical darkness and similar. When faced with such, a saving throw versus spells permits them to see through the deception. If the source already permits a saving throw, varg born will take it at a +2 bonus. They receive a +2 saving throw bonus against any attack that attempts to blind them, whether natural or magical.

For arcane reasons, possibly tied to their origins, shapeshifters react very poorly to Varg Born. Creatures of an evil alignment will go berserk and attack immediately, while those of neutral alignments will react negatively and may attack if provoked. Good aligned shapeshifters may interact normally but will avoid prolonged contact.

Varg Born in the campaign:

Except in extremely tolerant societies, they will only be found in the wilderness, though some elf and halfling colonies have been known to associate with them. They tend to live as hunter-gatherers in most cases, though some will hire out as scouts or trackers where permitted.

Varg Born will take normal reaction rolls, reacting to elves and halflings at +1, and other demihumans at -1.

HIVERS

Description:

Primarily an underground species, in recent years, the hivers have been emerging into the surface world in several locations. Some colonies are pushed upwards by wars with underground species, while others seek expansion, living space or contact with surface dwellers.

While colouration and individual details can vary from colony to colony, Hivers generally resemble a man sized ant, with the two front legs capable of manipulating items. Within each colony, imperceptible changes in colour or pheromones identify the individual, while outsiders have an incredibly hard time identifying a particular hiver in a group. Adventuring parties who interact with hivers regularly, often insist on their hiver companion carrying a recognizable item, such as a piece of cloth tied to a limb.

Hivers are intensely curious, and seem to hold a fascination for all living forms they come across. They tend to be practically minded, to a level that can cause confrontation. For example, eating a fallen comrade would be perfectly acceptable, if the body cannot be easily resurrected.

Lacking a morality inherent in their own species, hivers in their natural state are driven by survival and exploration. Finding new, empty spaces will eventually serve to benefit the colony, as will eliminating enemies. Hivers tend to avoid confrontation where possible, as they find the death of any members of their colony distressing.

Hivers that travel with non-hivers will tend to adopt elements of their morality, often in a confusing manner, as they rarely understand the rationale behind it, and will approach things in a very literal manner. A hiver travelling with a thief and a paladin may well steal from a victim, only to attempt to give the money to the same victim later, as a good deed.

The one exception is that hivers have an almost irrational loathing of the undead, and will push towards actions that further the destruction of these creatures.

Ability scores:

Hivers tend to be naturally resilient, and must possess Constitution scores of 11 or better.

Intelligence must be 10 or better.

They cannot have Wisdom or Charisma scores above 14. Excess points can be moved into Strength, Constitution or Intelligence.

Unusually, hivers do not possess alignment in the conventional sense. For the purpose of magical effects, they are always considered neutral. They will follow the general attitudes of their companions, and thus may appear to be good natured in a group of predominantly good characters, or chaotic if their closest companions are so.

Any attempt to change or permanently install a non-neutral alignment in a hiver is doomed to fail

Class and level:

Hivers may play as fighting men, thieves and magic users, advancing to the same level as Elves.

They have no concept of religion, and due to their lack of understanding of morality, most deities find no interest in them.

Hiver thieves receive no skill modifications.

Combat and traits:

The chitinous exoskeleton of a hiver provides good protection from harm, granting a natural armour class equivalent to chain mail. They may wear armour providing additional protection, but this must be manufactured specifically for the character at triple cost. They tend not to appreciate defensive combat manoeuvres, and will not wear shields. They may not use purely defensive options that may be available in the rules (such as foregoing attacks to gain a defensive bonus).

When attacking, hivers may strike twice per round, inflicting 1D6 damage per attack. Hivers can use weapons, but they never feel quite comfortable doing so. A hiver fighting with a weapon does not receive multiple attacks unless permitted by character class. They can never use bows or crossbows, but may use slings and thrown weapons as normal.

Hivers are incredibly resistant to toxins, receiving a +4 saving throw bonus against any poison or disease.

When subjected to any form of mental influence or control, including *charm*, *geas*, *suggestion*, *confusion* and similar, the hiver will go berserk, attacking the origin of the intrusion, and then any other living things in range, until either are destroyed or 10 minutes have passed.

Hivers in the campaign:

When hivers are encountered, 25% of the time it will be a travelling party, with the remainder indicating a party of workers, gatherers or scouts. In such cases, there will be a nearby colony or larger group looking for suitable terrain to colonize.

Hivers will trade frequently and can be found in many societies though usually as temporary residents.

They will take reaction rolls as normal, but hostile results will tend to result in avoidance, unless the hivers or their colony is threatened.

RATLINGS

Description:

Physically small, ratlings look like a humanoid rat, averaging a bit over 2 feet in length. Their faces tend to resemble an expressive rat, and they retain the long tails of their kin. Often considered to have evolved from an unfortunate magical experiment in the underworld, the ratlings have spawned and spread rapidly. They tend to prefer urban environments but have travelled virtually everywhere.

Ratlings tend to have short lifespans and have had hostile relationships with most races, both from territorial disputes, the fact that many evil humanoids prey on them, and their resemblance to wererats. As a result, they tend to view life as cheap and as something to be engaged in as fully as possible.

A ratling will throw themselves into near certain death with cheerful abandon and will pursue almost any endeavour they get into their little heads with passion and drive.

They have a reputation as being erratic and unpredictable but they have intensely strong ties of loyalty to anyone they consider part of their pack.

Gregarious, they prefer to find companions as quickly as possible, both for protection and company. Ratlings isolated for too long have been known to go insane.

Ability scores:

Dexterity scores must be 12 or better. Charisma score must be 10 or better.

Ratlings may follow any alignment, tending towards Chaotic Good when in a group, or Chaotic Neutral if isolated for extended periods of time.

Class and level:

Ratlings may play a thieves, advancing without limits. No other character class suits their demeanour and stature. They count as halflings for skill modifications but receive no penalty to climbing.

Combat and traits:

Due to their size, they can only wield small, single handed weapons such as short swords, knives and small spears, and must have armour specially made for them, at double cost. They are unable to set a spear to receive a charge.

Ratlings move at the same speed as halflings, though if fleeing, and not concerned about their material possessions, they may move as humans. They can squeeze through tight spots and small holes extremely well, having a base chance of 75% to succeed in doing so.

If tied up or otherwise restrained, they can free themselves 50% of the time, in less than 2 minutes. If they can reach the restraints with their teeth, the chance goes up to 75%.

Man sized creatures attempting to fight a ratling must suffer a penalty of -2 to all attack rolls, due to their ability to dodge and evade. This is increased to -4 for monsters of ogre size and beyond.

On the downside, while flexible, ratlings are also fragile. When rolling for hit points, apply a -1 modifier to each die rolled. This may result in a new level not providing any additional hit points.

Ratlings suffer no penalties for darkness or enclosed spaces. They may even navigate through magical darkness with no ill effect.

They may subsist on virtually any food stuffs, no matter how disgusting or decayed. They receive a +2 saving throw bonus against any poisons or diseases.

Ratlings in the campaign:

Ratlings will always be encountered in a group, though often only 1 or 2 will be visible, the rest lying in wait or hiding.

They take reaction rolls at +1 when in a group, being fundamentally good natured, unless threatened. Individuals will roll at no modifier.

HISHAR

Description:

Often mistaken for scrawny dwarves, at least until closer inspection in broad daylight, the hishar arrived in this world from realms beyond. Coming from a doomed world hundreds of years ago, they have sent out expeditions and colonies to find new worlds to inhabit. They are intensely interested in magic, and while they are almost invariably stranded in the current realm, most will attempt to garner magical items and contraptions at great cost.

As a race, the hishar pride themselves on their almost uncanny knack for diplomacy. Hishar traders have been observed dealing with anybody from wood elves to mind flayers, and they are adept at setting up connections that both serve to let them trade for useful gadgets, and obtain valuable protection at the same time.

Compared to a traditional stout dwarf, hishar are somewhat shorter and far more slender, often seeming somewhat emaciated. Their skin have a blue tone to it, varying from light tones for a younger hishar and to a dark, near purple for an older specimen.

Exhibiting a wide range of personality traits, hishar tend towards the more cautious. They realize that there are few of them, and that their home may be long gone, and tend to be unwilling to risk their lives for little gain.

Ability scores:

Hishar characters must have a minimum of 11 Intelligence and 9 Wisdom. They will never have an Evil alignment. Younger Hishar tend towards Good, while many drift towards Neutrality as they grow older.

Class and level:

As Dwarves in all respects. Hishar thieves count as dwarves for skill modifications.

Combat and traits:

In combat, Hishar may use only single handed weapons, due to their limited size and posture. They can wear armour intended for dwarves or halflings, though it will often fit poorly.

Hishar seem to have a natural sense for the magical. They can detect whether an item is magical by sniffing and inspecting it. The chance of this succeeding is equal to their Intelligence+Wisdom+Character level as a percentage.

Uniquely, Hishar seem to be resistant to curses. Any Hishar subject to a curse, whether inflicted by a spell, a cursed magical item or a curse laid by a monster, may roll a saving throw versus spells every morning when sun light first touches his body, and if successful will shed the curse.

Despite their resemblance to dwarves, hishar are quite frail. They suffer a -1 penalty to all saving throws against poison and death. In addition, a hishar that is paralyzed or stunned must make a saving throw versus paralysis to be able to act, upon the normal end of the effect. One save is permitted by round.

When interacting with other races, a hishar that does not have a weapon at hand, receives a +1 bonus to all reaction rolls.

Hishar in the campaign:

It will be extremely rare to encounter more than 5-6 in one group. Hishar will never open hostilities unless threatened. Treat negative reaction rolls as a lack of interest or evasive behaviour.

WARDENDS

Description:

Appearing very similar to dryads or a man-sized treant, Wardends have guarded the ancient woods for millennia. In recent years though, they have started venturing into the world, for reasons and purposes that are hard to determine by outsiders.

A wardend will join a group of adventurers for reasons they will not explain, and may even be unable to articulate, though undoubtedly serving some purpose. They are intensely attuned to nature and seem able to communicate with plants in quiet, intuitive way. They will fiercely oppose chaotic forces, possibly speaking to a mystical or divine origin.

Physically, they resemble a humanoid form, though never with a discernible gender. Their skin is similar to a birch tree, covered in thin bark, and with hints of leaves that become more prominent with age. Their limbs can twist in unexpected ways, and are incredibly strong. Overall mass is usually similar to a well developed male human.

Ability scores:

To play a Wardend, the player must have Strength and Constitution scores of 11 or better. They must have a Wisdom score of 9 or better. Charisma and Intelligence cannot exceed 15. Excess points may be reallocated to any other ability score.

Wardends must be true neutral. They are completely immune to any influences that would alter their alignment.

Class and level:

Wardends may pursue the same classes and levels as elves. They count as elves for thief skills.

Combat and traits:

Wardends have naturally tough, resilient skin, giving them the same armour protection as chain mail armour. They cannot wear any other forms of body armour, though a Wardend fighter could use a shield.

A wardend can deliver crushing blows in combat, and attack with great flexibility, due to their lack of bone structure. Add melee and thrown weapon damage rolls are increased by +1, and they receive a +1 bonus to hit with all melee attacks.

They are rather vulnerable to fire based attacks, receiving a -2 penalty to saving throws against such.

With age, they grow stronger and tougher, as well as appearing more and more tree-like. Every level of experience gained, a Wardend rolls 1D6 each for Strength and Constitution. A score of 1 indicates a +1 bonus to the ability score.

They are not particularly fast, and move only at half the speed of a human character.

Warden in the campaign:

They will react to elves, druids and other woodland demihumans at +1. They react to any creature of chaotic alignment at -1, and will fiercely oppose openly chaotic characters and monsters.

SIHIL

Description:

While most creatures evolved fully in one reality or another, the Sihil somehow came into existence in the gaps between realms. Over the eons, they moved from one realm to another, moving, travelling, exploring and interacting as they please. As a sihil goes through life cycles, they will find themselves drawn to a certain realm and will spend several years there. Eventually, they will find themselves drawn to another realm and will find ways to travel there.

Physically, they appear similar to elves in features, with very pale skin, and hair that frequently takes shades of blue or green. When they walk, their shadows appear erratic and fluid, while a stationary Sihil will slowly become shrouded in gloom, unless in direct, bright sun light.

Sihil tend to be somewhat flighty and erratic in their behaviour, until something magical or monstrous catches their attention, in which case their fascination and interest will find no limit. They appear to have an almost complete lack of appreciation or stomach for physical violence, often becoming disoriented or even ill when inflicting harm on another creature by hand. Curiously, magically directed attacks seem to cause them no such problems, or indeed moral concerns.

Ability scores:

To play a Sihil, a player must roll scores of at least 11 Dexterity and Intelligence. They have no maximums. They will never take a lawful alignment.

Class and level:

Sihil may play as magic users and thieves, and advance to the same level permitted to elves. They use the thief skill modifiers for elves.

Combat and traits:

Sihil have difficulties conducting themselves in physical combat. In addition to being unable to play as fighting men, they are at a -1 penalty to all attack rolls in melee combat or with thrown weapons. They may use longer ranged weapons without receiving this penalty.

Due to their natural talents for stealth, Sihil thieves receive a +10 bonus to their chances to move silently and hide in shadows. Sihil magic users may hide and move silently as a first level thief.

Their affinity for the areas between worlds gives them some unique qualities: They can see completely without hindrance in the dark, and can sense living things within 20 feet, even through solid walls. To sense, they must stand still and concentrate for one round. When mired in one realm, as a player character Sihil is, this ability is usable twice a day.

Sihil in the campaign:

Groups of travelling Sihil could conceivably be encountered anywhere, though they tend to keep to themselves. When wishing to avoid attention, they often try to pass themselves off as elves, particularly in regions where elves are somewhat rare. They have no special modifiers to reaction rolls.

SOMEWHAT HUMAN

The races in this section are essentially characters that are “human with a twist”. While they will usually appear, act and in most situations consider themselves human, they have something about their origins that sets them apart.

Whenever an encounter indicates humans, a D6 roll of 1 will mean that one prominent character in the group belongs to a random choice of these races.

It would be exceedingly rare to encounter more than one of these, in one location, in the majority of cases.

GOD-BLOODED

Description:

From time to time, the gods take avatar form and wander in the worlds they oversee. Some times they take an interest in lesser matters, or wish to implement their will in a subtle manner, other times, they simply want to experience the thrills of the mortal form.

As a result of such excursions, many children have been sired. While these god blooded are assuredly mortal, they have many unique characteristics that set them apart.

While most never realize their origins, and the gods seem content to forget or ignore them, all feel compelled to seek out adventure and glory, feeling a burning urge to fashion the world in their image.

They often have a hard time interacting with servants of the gods. The gods expect far greater from a god blooded than an ordinary mortal, and this expectation can often manifest as subtle resentment.

They tend to be fiercely independent and resent being subjected to authority though they will enter the service of worthwhile individuals.

Ability scores:

To play as one of the God Blooded, a player must roll ability scores that are all at least average (10) or better.

God Blooded may tend towards any alignment, but will never be true neutral.

Class and level:

God Blooded may pursue careers as any class that does not rely on divine magic (clerics, paladins, druids and such). The gods will never answer the call of a god blooded.

They may advance to any level permitted by the class, similar to a human character.

Combat and traits:

The God Blooded are possessed of excellent health, allowing them to re roll any 1's rolled for hit points. This also makes them resilient to diseases, permitting chance of 50% plus Constitution score each day of shaking off any disease currently suffered.

Mortal men feel a strange attraction to God Blooded, subtly sensing their origins. For the purposes of follower and henchman loyalty and morale, count the character as having a Charisma score 2 points higher than the actual score possessed.

However, followers of a deity will feel a strange revulsion towards the character. Those who follow deities opposed to the characters alignment will seek the characters ruin whenever possible, and even those of neutral or aligned deities will often react poorly.

The God Blooded may never have followers or henchmen that follow a divine character class, and must pay double cost for any divine spell casting performed for them, as a service.

Player characters are assumed to be able to overcome their distrust.

God Blooded in the campaign:

Individual God Blooded could be encountered almost anywhere, usually in the form of some champion or villain.

STRANDED

Description:

Sages have long speculated on the nature of the boundaries between different realms of reality. Much is uncertain and even those mages who have travelled them, tend not to understand more than what they need to know. What is known though is that every once in a while, two points in different realms connect, and whoever happens to be there, will end up on the other side.

While appearing like ordinary humans, it is not unusual to find strange and unnatural colourations of hair and eyes, as well as even skin tones.

Stranded can exhibit almost any personality traits. Some adapt to their new worlds rapidly, while others are desperate to find a way to return home. Due to their peculiar situation and unusual circumstances, they almost always end up as adventurers or travellers in some fashion.

Ability scores:

Any ability scores and alignments are acceptable.

Class and level:

Being essentially human, stranded may pursue any character class to any level possible. Divine classes such as clerics and paladins tend to be rare, but not impossible.

Combat and traits:

The dimension bending effects that left the stranded in this reality tends to leave certain side effects, as follows:

Whenever a stranded is subjected to any form of teleportation or other magical instantaneous transportation, they will become violently ill. A successful save versus paralysis will leave them incapable of action for 1D3 rounds. On a failed save, they are ill for 1D3 minutes.

Creatures originating from other planes of reality will feel the stranded as a kindred spirit. While this will not avoid an obvious threat, it will serve as a +1 to reaction rolls. This only affects the stranded, and can result in a creature reacting to the stranded in a manner different from the rest of the adventuring party.

Stranded are lodged in time. This means they cannot be *hasted* or *slowed* and are completely immune to any magical influence on their age, whether beneficial or harmful.

Any attempt to actually travel in time would result in the stranded vanishing permanently, forever lost in nothingness.

Stranded are vulnerable to mental influences. They save at -1 against all attacks on their mind.

Stranded faintly radiate magic to any characters capable of detecting such.

Stranded in the campaign:

By definition, stranded tend to be loners, and could show up almost anywhere, at any time.

FEY TOUCHED

Description:

While they normally stay apart, the realms of the fey have always had a strange attraction to mortal men. This can have unpredictable results, but it is not unknown for a family to have a touch of otherworldly blood in their family tree.

While fey touched are mostly human in appearance, they will tend to have very slight features that set them apart, upon close inspection, such as slightly pointed ears, or unusual eye colour.

They can possess any demeanour and personality, though they will tend ever so slightly towards being light hearted and somewhat flighty.

Ability scores:

Players must score at least 9 Charisma and 9 Dexterity to play as a fey touched.

They may have any alignment desired, but have a slight disinclination towards Law.

Class and level:

Fey touched may play as any class available to half elves, and may progress to the same levels.

Combat and traits:

Fey touched tend to be subtly resistant to hostile enchantments, giving them a 10% chance to resist any magic used on them, if the magic intends to do harm. If the resistance is effective, this does not negate the same magical effect affecting others. For example, resisting an area of effect spell would leave the fey touched unharmed, but it would still strike other characters in the area.

Likewise, due to their nature, a fey touched may harm creatures requiring silver or +1 weapons to strike, with mundane weapons.

Throughout their lives, fey touched are subject to premonitions and visions. Every morning, when the character wakes up from a night's rest, the GM should roll 1D6, and on a score of 1, give the character some hint about what lies ahead. This may be relating to a possible encounter, a particular trap or monster or the motives of a character.

Hints should be rather vague and may refer to potential events. A character may receive a warning that rope can hurt him, referring to a rope trap in a dungeon, but the party may never find this particular room of the dungeon.

The curious mixture of human blood with that of their traditional enemies means that goblinoids such as orcs, goblins, hobgoblins and similar can often sense fey touched. Any goblinoids will have a 30% chance of noticing fey touched that are within 30 feet. This goes up to 50% if actively searching for the character.

Due to their connection to the forces of life, undead creatures receive a +1 attack bonus when striking fey touched.

Fey Touched in the campaign:

Normally found in rural areas, fey touched will usually react to elves and half elves at a +1 modifier. While a pure fey touched community is unlikely, some communities may have several. Such villages are usually under the protection of woodland forces.

HUMANS

The races listed in this section are essentially human, interpreted through different lenses of history and fiction.

They can be used if you feel that regular humanity is being overshadowed a bit by the new races.

COMMON FOLK

Description:

The vast majority of mankind are the common folk. The people who build and work and farm and march and die to make the world go around. While they lack the impressive stature and ambition of their counterparts, they are not without their own edges.

Common folk can be found almost everywhere in the lands, and quite a few of them end up in adventuring careers. They are by far the most widespread strand of humans, and can exhibit almost any combination of physical and mental characteristics.

Ability scores:

No ability score requirements apply to common folk. They can have any alignment though the extremes of lawful good and chaotic evil tend to be less common.

Class and level:

Common folk may pursue any character class and advance to any level permitted by the class.

Combat and traits:

While most common folk can be simple people, those who set out to adventure tend to have a very articulated desire to experience the world, on their own terms.

Common folk receive a +1 bonus to saving throws against mental intrusions such as *charm*, *suggestion* and similar effects. The exception is any type of fear or illusion, against which they save at a -1 penalty.

Due to their knack for learning and adapting to new experiences, common folk earn a 5% bonus to all earned experience during an adventure.

The stubbornness and determination that is often a trademark of common folk also helps them persevere against odds. When fighting a monster that has more hit dice than the character, they receive a +1 bonus to all attack rolls.

Lastly, common folk will begin the game with 2 additional hit points, to account for what fate may have in wait for them.

Common Folk in the campaign:

Common Folk can be found anywhere, forming the mainstay of ordinary humanity.

IRON FOLK

Description:

Across the realm, a new breed of people have begun to emerge. These people are crafters and builders, that look to the skies and the horizons. They rely less on magic and faith and more on their science and knowledge.

The Iron Folk have spread everywhere, ever exploring, building and forging onwards. This expansion has earned them countless enemies, as well as multiple allies and trading partners. Many of the elder races speak of the iron folk with both loathing as well as well hidden admiration.

Ability scores:

No ability score requirements. Iron Folk are rarely chaotic in alignment.

Class and level:

Any class is permitted, and they may advance to any level. Magic using classes are less common however.

Combat and traits:

Iron Folk are champions of reason and logic. They receive a +1 bonus to all saving throws against spells. However, any spells or magical effects used by an iron folk also grants a +1 bonus to the targets saving throws.

Iron folk tend to be pragmatic in combat. As such, characters belonging to a class with restrictions on weapons may pick up to 3 weapons not permitted to their character class, and may use these normally. If using weapon proficiencies, this only grants the ability to use the weapon. The character must still follow the normal proficiency system to avoid penalties.

In any campaign using a skill system, iron folk will begin the game with an additional skill. This should reflect their profession or occupation before becoming an adventurer. If your campaign does not use skills, simply decide on a profession or area of expertise, and let the character accomplish tasks that fall under that with relative ease.

Due to their detachment from the magical realms, any healing magic will restore 1 less hit point per die rolled to an iron folk. However, due to their drive and determination, they recover hit points as if they were resting every day, even while adventuring.

Iron Folk in the campaign:

Regions of iron folk will often be leaders in science, crafting or exploration, in their respective game world.

THE UNTAMED

Description:

As civilization spreads and encroaches on new regions, culture clash is bound to occur. In frontier regions, it is common to see groups of the men known as the untamed. Tall, strong and somewhat feral in their appearance and demeanour, many untamed are barbarians and primitives, emerging from their ancient lifestyles to travel, adventure and do battle with what the world has to offer them.

Some are intensely suspicious of the often corrupt ways of the world around them, while others take to the new worlds with excitement and a thirst for adventure.

While it's often said that untamed are only slightly more domesticated than wolves, they often value honour and integrity to a great extent. Trickery and deception is permitted, though only against one's foes. Untamed are valued as bodyguards, soldiers and mercenaries, but this always bears a risk, as those who seek to master an untamed must prove their worth as leaders.

Ability scores:

No ability scores are required. Untamed tend away from Lawful alignments but any are possible.

Class and level:

While stereotyped as distrustful of magic and stealth, untamed will pursue any profession, to any level of experience. They do tend towards martial types however.

Combat and traits:

Due to their upbringing in the frontiers and wilderness, untamed tend to make excellent trackers. They have a base chance of 25% to follow tracks that are less than a week old. Add their Intelligence score to this total. Fighting men and thieves may add their experience level to the total as well.

They may use the same chance to cover the tracks of themselves and their party. One check is required each day, whether tracking or covering.

Due to their fiercely independent nature, when subjected to attempts to dominate or sway the mind of an untamed such as charms or hypnosis, a +2 bonus to saving throws is applied.

Untamed characters may not begin the game knowing more than 2 languages, and must learn to read and write in the campaign. As a result, they have difficulty using written magical items. Even when reading skill has been acquired, any written magical item has a 10% failure rate in the hands of an untamed.

Due to their vigorous upbringing, when rolling for the characters first hit die, untamed may roll twice, picking the better result.

Untamed in the campaign:

The untamed are your classic barbarians and may be found anywhere civilization has not reached and encroached fully.

HIGH FOLK

Description:

Standing tall over their brethren, the high folk are striking in their stature and noble demeanour. Their blood lines hailing from great heroes and subtly touched by the gods, they are natural leaders of others.

While other breeds of humans have often supplanted them, many kings and rulers are still of high blood, and they can be found almost anywhere, pushing the attainments of mankind ever onward and forward.

Even elves speak favourably of the high folk, if sometimes a little patronizing. Many of the ancient alliances between men and elves were forged by high folk, and the long lived elves remember it to this day.

Ability scores:

Despite their appearances, no ability score requirements apply to high folk characters. A character with low physical characteristics will still appear somewhat formidable to a casual observer.

They will pursue any alignment but tend away from neutrality. Whether good, evil, lawful or chaotic, they tend to embody their morals strongly.

Class and level:

Any class and experience level is permitted.

Combat and traits:

Natural leaders, high characters receive a +1 bonus to all reaction rolls. In addition once a day, they may inspire their followers, allowing them a second roll if they failed a morale or loyalty test, or failed a saving throw against fear.

Regardless of individual characteristics, high folk tend to have sturdy physiques, granting a +1 bonus to saving throws against poison and paralysis.

However, their bearing makes them stand out on a crowd. Intelligent enemies that feel confident in their skill will tend to prefer targeting or challenging high characters, while cowardly or sneaky ones will tend to avoid them.

The chance of a high character disguising themselves will generally be poor. Any such attempt is only 25% likely to work, increased to 30% if the character is a thief.

High Folk in the campaign:

While whole communities of high folk can be found, they are often concentrated in royal blood lines or similar.

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