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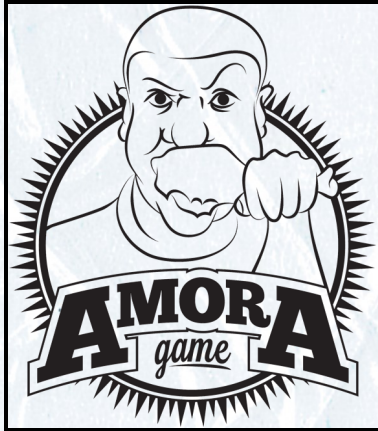
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XENO FILE:

Azan & Ker-Azan



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Xeno Files: Issue 9

Table of Simple Contents

Azan. XF-3

Ker-Azan XF-8

Xeno File is an electronic “magazine” designed to add content for science fiction entertainment and play for multiple roleplaying systems.

This issue focuses on the intellectual and magically influenced race known as the Azan.

Enjoy the read and issue 10 is on the way. See you in the Void, Cowboy!

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XENO FILE: AZAN

Azani are an ancient race of child-like magician-scientists, driven across the universe by their curiosity and their overconfidence. Ages ago they became adepts of both magic and technology, using them together to shape themselves into a form they deemed intellectually superior.

NOUNS AND VERBS

Azan is singular, azani is plural of the race's name, azant is adjective/possessive when referring to singular azan, azanti is adjective/possessive when referring to plurality of azani (like azanti physiology), and Azanatar is the name of their home world.

Ability Adjustments: +2 Int, +2 Cha, -2 Str

Hit Points: 2

Size and Type: Azani are Small humanoids with the azan subtype.

Apprentice Affinity: Azani have a knack for a set of skills reflecting the role their progenitors intended embedded in them during their growth. Each azan gains +2 racial bonus to two skills selected from Computers, Culture, Engineering, Life Science, Medicine, Mysticism, and Physical Science.

Neurocomm: Each azan has a custom communicator implanted while grown. Neurocomm works like a personal comm, except it is a hybrid device that is tuned to the owner's soul, making it immune to hacking attempts. It can be upgraded to act like a higher tier computer at 110% cost, and does not occupy any implant slot.

Technomagical Solutions: Azani have innate understanding of basic magi-tech principles. An azan who has access to a set of tools and some parts, can spend 10 minutes assembling a device that will duplicate effects of a 0-level spell, chosen when the device is constructed. An azan can use the device at will or hand it over to another character. This

device breaks down after being used once by anyone other than its creator. An azan can construct another device during the same 10 minutes rest needed to regain Stamina Points. This replaces the previous one; which breaks down if it has not yet broke. A technomagical solution is a spell-like ability that uses its creator's character level as its caster level, and the creator's Intelligence bonus to calculate any saving throw DC.

Low-Light Vision: Azani can see in dim light as if it were normal light.

PLAYING AN AZAN

You likely...

- Are prideful of your intellect, your skills, and your academic achievements, as well as scientific and magical expertise.
- Avoid physical activity and close combat, preferring to use technological devices, spells, long range weapons, and minions to deal with threats and problems.
- Appreciate comforts of advanced civilization and care little for "natural".
- Combine tendency to over-design and over-complicate your plans with pragmatism and occasional ruthlessness when it comes to reaping the benefits of success or salvaging remnants of failure.

Other Races Probably...

- Expect you to either solve major academic and technological problems with ease or fail spectacularly complicating matter even more.
- Consider you either arrogant and blunt or detached and patronizing (or both).
- Don't expect you to fight, or deal with physically demanding activities.

RACE	AVG. HEIGHT	AVG. WEIGHT	AGE OF MATURITY	MAXIMUM AGE
Azan	4-5 ft.	60-120 lbs.	7 - 10 years	150+2d20 years

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Azani look a bit like hairless children with totally inhuman beady black eyes. They tend to be on the chubby side, with rounded faces and slightly pronounced bellies. Their skin is very smooth with wide array of colors ranging from chalk white, ashen gray, pale pink, sandy, yellow-green, turquoise, rust red, deep purple, to bluish-black. The color is determined by some the chemical compounds used in the growing process and is shared by all the batch-siblings. Uniquely this color is completely independent of the skin colors of the batch-parents. Sexual dimorphism was breed out ages ago, as purposeless—while azani retain sexes on a genetic level, they have little external, psychological, or cultural difference between them.

The modern azanti appearance is the result of deliberate tampering with the body development processes, stopping at an early, pre-teenage stage—deemed to be biologically optimal for their desired intellectual superiority. Mature ancient azani grow to be lean Medium-sized humanoids slightly shorter than typical human.

Azani have a purely natural lifespan of approximately 150 years. With widely available dietetic supplements and anti-geriatric treatments, a fine-tuned to vat-grown physique, azani can easily reach 300 years of age. Still, many azanti scientists and magicians pursue means of extending their life further, via medicine, magic, and less savory methods.

HOME WORLD

Azani started to spread from Azanatar tens of thousands of years ago, using magic, followed by waves of sublight generation station-ships, often constructed out of hollowed asteroids, expanding their reach in a slowly growing sphere. Trying to locate azanti home world seems futile now, however. Analysis of trajectories of the eldest of those bases backtrack to an abandoned planetary system with a number of dead planets orbiting a brown dwarf. That is not a navigational or mathematical error, though, and the calculations are correct indeed. What is missing, is the azanti home world itself—shifted into a pocket dimension together with its moons and a significant supply of spare asteroids and dust, safe from majority of imaginable galactic cataclysms and potential invasions. Azanatar is not completely severed from the rest of the universe, however, for azanti station-ships and colonies bear a network of dimensional portals leading to their native planet.

The world itself is warm, with small polar caps, covered in shallow seas dotted with multiple small continents and thousands of islands. It's orbited by an artificial miniature sun giving enough light and heat to maintain stable climate and provide energy for orbital and planetary industries. A multitude of domes and arcologies spread across the surface, both on land and over the seas. Factories and other economic facilities are either hidden underground, submerged in seas,

or orbiting the space around the planet. Much of the land remains vacant, either kept in pristine garden-like state or, surprisingly—when taking into account azanti disregard for nature, as semi-wild preserves for azanti amusement and to harbor control groups for various long term biological and genetic experiments.

Two moons orbit the planet. One is habitable, with an array of different climatic zones, ranging from temperate forests to cold deserts, and the other remains mostly barren, bearing scars of an ancient war and habitable domes. There is also a ring of dust and asteroids, remnant of the third moon shattered in the same long-finished but not forgotten conflict.

More asteroids form a sphere around Azanatar beyond the orbit of its sun, at the edge of the pocket dimension, with mining stations, portals suitable for starships, and other installations spread through out.

SOCIETY AND ALIGNMENT

Early in their long history azani reached level of magical and technological advancement that allowed them to avoid physical labor, passing it to summoned minions, bred-to-purpose servants, and work-dedicated constructs. Since that time they focus on intellectual pursuits. Their dedication to mastering magic and technology, and blending them into a combined hybrid science borders on obsession. Advances in these fields allow them to offset their minuscule population with

their creations used as tools and workforce that tend to the needs of azani; freeing them to pursue higher callings.

Because of extensive adjustments made to their biology, azani aren't capable or interested in natural procreation anymore. Instead, any azan wishing for a progeny must build, purchase, or otherwise acquire a growing vat, as well as numerous alchemical ingredients required for the reproduction process.

Multiple azani often pool their resources to share burdens, responsibilities, and benefits of breeding, acting together as "batch parents". Such cabals often grow single azanti progeny for each of the batch parents. The growing process produces a fully functional young adult and implants basic knowledge of azanti language, culture, and the skills needed for the individual's planned apprenticeship—

with batch siblings sharing tint of their skin and their skill predisposition.

Many azani have little love for their progeny, considering them an investment into procuring a desired assistant and a potential junior colleague more than a child. Azanti culture considers a newly grown azan an apprentice indentured to its batch parents until its servitude repays the costs of its creation, usually with a hefty interest (especially if the batch parents suffered



from failed growing attempts before). Apprenticeship on average lasts for 7—10 years. Afterwards the progeny might be retained as an assistant, sent as an agent to perform services away from its parent, or dismissed to live independently.

Adult independent azani organize themselves into cabals (small groups that share interests, goals, and resources), colleges (larger networks that share information about related interests and exchange information), or corporations (groups that control specific resources or technologies). Majority of azani live in small outposts where all the activity focuses around a cabal or two. Larger azanti settlements are usually governed by a college or corporation serving primarily as a focal point for interest of the group. Azani are free to change their allegiances as they please as long as they have fulfilled their contractual obligations.

Azanti settlements are marvels of engineering and magic, using short-range portals, extradimensional space, guardian constructs, mechanized factories, and mutated flora and fauna whenever possible.

The closest thing to a centralized authority across the azanti civilization is The Science Council. It operates from Azanatar, functioning as the primarily peer-review group, recording claims of scientific discoveries and engineering inventions, overseeing exchange and archiving of information, holding copies of contracts and azanti lineages. Most of their power is derived from the respect given to an individual members' achievements, although they also have the codes allowing them to disconnect

portals linking their home world with out world stations and colonies, severing selected settlements from Azanatar. This power is almost never actually used, but more like an unspoken threat. They also command Azanatar's significant automated defense systems and its fleet, which is sometimes called to mediate between various azanti groups as mutually respected third party.

RELATIONS

Azani see themselves as intellectually and culturally superior to other races. Individual and group attitudes range from patronizing benevolence to shameless exploitation, with isolationism being the dominant policy among cabals and colleges. While the azani often consider other races inferior in the field of science, research, and culture, they are aware of their own need for raw resources and occasionally trade with non-azani. They prefer to control sources of materials, though, building their outposts in locations allowing them to oversee harvest and refinement of resources without relying on others.

Still, most azani see maintaining contact with other races as having great potential, especially when it comes to exploration and fighting against larger threats, for it allows joining exceptional azanti intelligence with brute strength, violence, stubbornness and other qualities present in other species for a shared cause—preferably under azanti subtle guidance. Many young azani join groups either during their apprenticeship missions, or while going independent after finishing their services to their parents. At least for a while until they gather enough prestige and capital to join a college or a corporation.

ADVENTURE

Azani adventure *for science*! Either directly, seeking information, performing experiments, gathering samples, experience, and components. Or indirectly, by gathering funds to finance further research and materials to develop research infrastructure. Many azani taste adventuring life during their apprenticeship, either by aiding their parents in their endeavors, or being sent on minor missions in service to their parents. Even as adventurers, azani prefer to avoid mundane labor, using drones, robots, summoned minions, and more burly allies for activities that require exertion of physical strength.

NAMES

Azani have a first name that is short and often sharp sounding, usually composed of one or two syllables. This is, followed by a batch name that is composed of the first names of all the parents and the number of the batch they created together. It is then followed by ranks and organizations they belong to. Azani that are still in their indenture period are expected to precede their name with term such as "apprentice", "disciple" or "student", depending on whim and title of the parent(s) they serve. Respected azani may claim the honorific of master, doctor, or professor before their name.

Sample Name: Zix CortValDax III, fractalist of Pyromantic College, inductor of ValDax Corporation.

LANGUAGE

Azanti language is an ancient and complex one. Like their biology, it is subject to deliberate shaping, maintaining single unified dialect between all the colonies connected to their home world, with any irregularities

rooted out to maintain its scientific accuracy, information transfer efficiency, and dedication to intellectual pursuits.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- You were grown by your parent with a very specific purpose in mind. During your apprenticeship you are expected to fulfill that purpose, be it exploring a facility, a planet, or a whole system, test a newly constructed device, or discover full functions of an ancient one. Until you finish the task placed before, you won't be freed from your obligations. Thankfully, you are not alone in your challenge—you are accompanied by a number of batch-siblings and minions mercenaries hired by your parents to accompany you in your mission.
- Your parent (or all of them) left a strange message before vanishing without trace. Their cabal knows not what happened. You and your current crew have to follow the clues, track them down and find out what happened to them.
- A major threat looms, endangering a whole system or a cluster... Local authorities assemble an emergency response team and they picked you for your superior expertise and intellectual prowess, (*along a bunch of representatives of other species and groups*). Or were there other reasons for your selection, reasons that were not disclosed to you?

XENO FILE: KER-AZAN

Ker-azani are azanti batchlings who manifested various biological defects during their growth, but were good enough to be supplemented with synthetic replacement parts instead of being salvaged for biological components.

While nominally considered azani, there is a degree of social bias against them, for they are a reminder that even azanti creations can be flawed. One difference Ker-azani endear is being bound via apprenticeship to their batch-parents for longer amount time than the typical for azan. This extended duration is due to repaying the costs for not only their growth but of the synthetic augmentations received.

Once they are released from apprenticeship, they are expected not to participate in the breeding cycle. While not exactly forbidden from growing their own progeny, they are unlikely to find co-parents. A majority of ker-azani are socially conditioned not to pursue it. However, some do obsess at improving the growing process so they can procreate without risking genetic defects passing to the next generation.

Ker-azani are not often seen in managerial positions in colleges or corporations. Although that can be self-fulfilling prophecy brought by their lower confidence in their ability to oversee other azani.

Ability Adjustments: +2 Str, +2 Int, -2 Con

Hit Points: 2

Size and Type: Azani are Small humanoids with the azan subtype..

Constructed: For the purpose of effects targeting race, ker-azani are treated as both humanoids and constructs (whichever effect is worse). They receive +2 racial bonus to saving throws against disease, mind-affecting effects, poison, and sleep, unless those effects specifically affect constructs. In addition, ker-azani do not breathe nor suffer the normal environmental effects of being in vacuum.

Neurocomm: Each azan has a custom communicator implanted while grown.

Neurocomm works like a personal comm, except it is a hybrid device that is tuned to the owner's soul, making it immune to hacking attempts. It can be upgraded to act like a higher tier computer at 110% cost, and does not occupy any implant slot.

Technomagical Solutions: Azani have innate understanding of basic technomantic principles. An azan with access to a set of tools and some parts can spend 10 minutes assembling a device that will duplicate effects of a 0-level spell, chosen when the device is constructed. An azan can use the device at will or hand it over to another character. This device breaks down after being used once by anyone other than its creator. An azan can construct another device during the same 10 minutes rest needed to regain Stamina Points. This replaces the previous one; which breaks down if it has not yet broke. A technomagical solution is a spell-like ability that uses its creator's character level as its caster level, and the creator's Intelligence bonus to calculate any saving throw DC.

Low-Light Vision: Azani can see in dim light as if it were normal light.



XF-8

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