

Races of Tephra

Happy Accidents &
Haudi Experiments



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The supercontinent of Rilausia is a constantly shifting and changing world for its inhabitants. Singularly gifted scientists and the nature of the world have given birth to an unimaginable variety of races. From the glorious winged farishta of Dalvozzea's Day Society to the horrifying crazaks that haunt Old Paldorus, these races are often generated by calamity, science, or sheer blind luck. Few races, like the elusive obezyany and arguably demented metal-deranged gnomes, occur naturally. These races are all a part of what makes Rilausia such a fascinating place to live in.

This book covers many races that inhabit the world of Tephra. These races are either sparsely populated or so isolated that they are far less common than the core six races in the *Tephra Playing Guide*. Along with these races, this book will cover their origins, their cultures, and how they fit in the world around them. This book will also cover the origin of the Sapience virus, an essence virus that enabled the core races to crossbreed and reproduce with each other in the first place. This has led to the hybrid races, a collection of races that result from the union of two of the core races. This book will cover their implementation and their treatment by the world.

All of these races are in the minority and their presence will always draw attention. On top of that, many of these races have unseen abilities that can drastically alter the course of a story. It is up to the narrator if these races are available to be played, and any player wanting to play them should speak with their narrator first.

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Chapter 1.

New & Bizarre Races

Playing with the New Races

The variety of races in the world of Tephra strongly influences how the game is played. These races affect how NPCs treat the players, how the players treat the NPCs, and even sometimes how the players treat each other. These races are a focal point for many interactions and beliefs within the world. Some people are racist while others may have race fetishes. Some may use race politically and some may abuse their unique physiology for personal gain. These should all be deciding factors when allowing players to choose their race. Under the right conditions, an adventurer's race can be the source of an entire adventure. Because of this, here we will cover how to handle the implementation of these races and their impact on the game.

Managing a Multi-Racial Party

Unless your players are all interested in the same race, there will likely be people of various races in the party. While this diversity is encouraged, there are aspects of adventurers that must be handled appropriately, especially when dealing with player interaction. Some adventurers are racist; it's an unavoidable fact. Some are even more prone to racism than others, such as farishtaas to elves. Because of this, having a racist adventurer in the same party as the race they dislike can create quite a bit of drama that can make for a fascinating narrative. However, since both adventurers are being played by actual people the interactions need to be monitored. Everyone at the table should be sure they understand the roles of their adventurers and their personalities. Everyone should also keep racial comments in character and should ensure that no animosity escapes the game.

The narrator should keep a close eye on any racist interactions to ensure it stays acceptable and that no one leaves the table with hurt feelings. If a player takes their adventurer's racism too far, the narrator needs to step in and either talk to them or remove them from the table to avoid ruining the experience of the other players.

That said, racism in the world of Tephra opens the door to many amazing roleplay opportunities. A party of do-gooders can have their morality challenged by a racist victim that they save, or by a racist benefactor that employs them. Racist adventurers can also be challenged when witnessing racist events that conform to their own racism but not the party's. Racist adventurers in a party with the race they dislike have a chance for extreme character growth as they learn to embrace their party members and even trust the other race of adventurer with their lives. If a farishtaa party member has overcome their racism towards elves thanks to an elven party member, how will they react when another farishtaa begins degrading their fellow adventurer? Will they stand up for them and try to enlighten the other farishtaa, or will they fall back into old habits? These types of questions and encounters can prove to be dramatic and tense moments within the game that can tear a party apart or help them to forge greater bonds. If a party with a satyr adventurer travels to Siyesh where slavery is still legalized, will they help the government maintain order to prevent the collapse of an entire society or will they allow the government to fall to riots to help free the satyrs around them? Racism gives the narrator chances to pose questions about the greater good to players and can create moral dilemmas that are both engaging and enlightening.

While the racial tensions can present both great roleplay experiences and hazards, it should also fit into mechanics. A party of mixed-raced individuals will stand out in a town, as even one member of an exotic race will instantly draw attention. Players using exotic races or players using uncommon races for the area may receive stealth penalties for standing out, and in some cases, like crazaks and other races resulting from mutations, may be the target of attacks in combat more often because of their frightening appearance and their opponent's cultural bias.

Exotic Race Availability

While many players will be interested in trying out all the new races in this book, it is up to the narrator if a player may use one and if any are available. Because many of these races are incredibly small in number they are often locked to specific regions. Crazaks, ezka and daemons are almost never seen outside of Pal-dorus, and true-melds are rarely seen outside of Izeda. Because of this a narrator might restrict the use of specific races depend-

Racism at the Gaming Table

Members of exotic races face racism in their lives. This is a given. However, the other players' adventurers are people of Rilausia, too, and they often have prejudices as well. The expression of these prejudices can cause tense, dramatic moments between the adventurers, but they can also cause rifts at the table between players. Before beginning a campaign or other adventure, a line should be established for the players of what is and is not appropriate for the table. All players at the table should agree on how they plan to handle the racism between their characters and what is not acceptable. It should be established that a player may never use their adventurer's racism as an excuse to pick on or offend another player. Generally, racism should always be something that the adventurers overcome or learn from, and a character that starts off as racist should ultimately end up not being racist -- for the sake of the story. This does not bar a character from becoming more racist, but generally this should be a temporary result of circumstances and events and may even be an opportunity for more character growth if handled well.

ing on where the adventure will take place.

Playing an exotic race will also dramatically affect the story and character interactions, as these races are unknown by most and will draw quite a bit of attention. For example: The players may wish to play a mercenary campaign, but one of them wants to play a karshin. Because karshin are mutated ayodin they will not be well received by almost anyone. Ayodin are already hated or at least distrusted by many thanks to the Hurricane Wars, but since most karshin are feral monsters that eat people they will be even less welcome. A player playing a karshin may prevent the party from getting certain jobs due to the employer disliking the karshin member, or them being afraid the karshin will stand out too much. This can be resolved by the party either trying to disguise the karshin adventurer, barring them from meeting the employer, or possibly even playing up the benefits of employing the "savage" for dangerous jobs.

Either way, the above scenario can cause problems for the party, and other similar problems can come up if someone chooses to play an exotic race. Whether the narrator wants to or feels comfortable handling these situations is up to them.

As mentioned before, not all the races get along, and picking a race like a karshin while someone else is playing a veteran of the Hurricane Wars can lead to a breaking down of the party and potential aggression at the table if the players take their adventurers' feelings too far.

Roleplaying Exotic Races in Society

Exotic races and societies other than their own usually do not go together. They are often at odds with each other as most exotic races are found in the wilds of the world, with some like the obezyany simply being too far away to see much contact. As such, whenever a member of an exotic race visits a city they will find themselves gawked at by many. Some will even come up and question them incessantly, or will hide from them if they are more terrifying (such as karshin, crazak, and ezka adventurers). Due to their rarity an exotic race adventurer will be easily remembered by anyone they interact with. Most people will not trust these adventurers because they are so unknown; people often fear what they do not understand. This also means that if a member of an exotic race commits a crime or does something socially unacceptable, everyone will remember them, and any others of that race will be treated worse for what they did. If a fight breaks out, anyone playing an exotic race is more likely to be attacked as they represent an unknown threat that others will be quick to target, due to the fear of what they could do.

Even when not in physical combat, socialization can feel like combat for members of exotic races. As they are naturally distrusted by most average citizens, they find it difficult to convince people of their points of view and that they do not have ulterior motives for their actions. They can often find themselves accused of theft, counterfeiting, and plotting. Players choosing an exotic race will need to be aware in advance of the racism they will face from their choice. This can extend to the point of confrontations with the police and/or military in some countries where their race is not granted citizenship and seen as either monstrous or worthy of slavery. Even in the countries that grant them citizenship they can often face Jim Crow-like laws that drastically reduce their freedom. In some places the threat of imprisonment is the least of their worries. Members of exotic races must also worry about scientists trying to capture and experiment on them and the occasional hunter wanting to add such a rare creature to their collection - alive or dead can depend on the hunter. This is especially true with races like crazaks, ezka, karshin, simulacrons, and fluoforms who tend to not be recognized as sentient beings by most people and most nations. For some, the greatest threat is being fetishized and sought after expressly for more physical reasons. To many this is extremely insulting and can make members of exotic races feel almost as objectified as they would be if facing a lack of rights or outright hostility.

Racial Interaction

While it is true that members of exotic races are treated differently across the board, it is also a simplification. The interplay between races is extraordinarily complex and varied. While

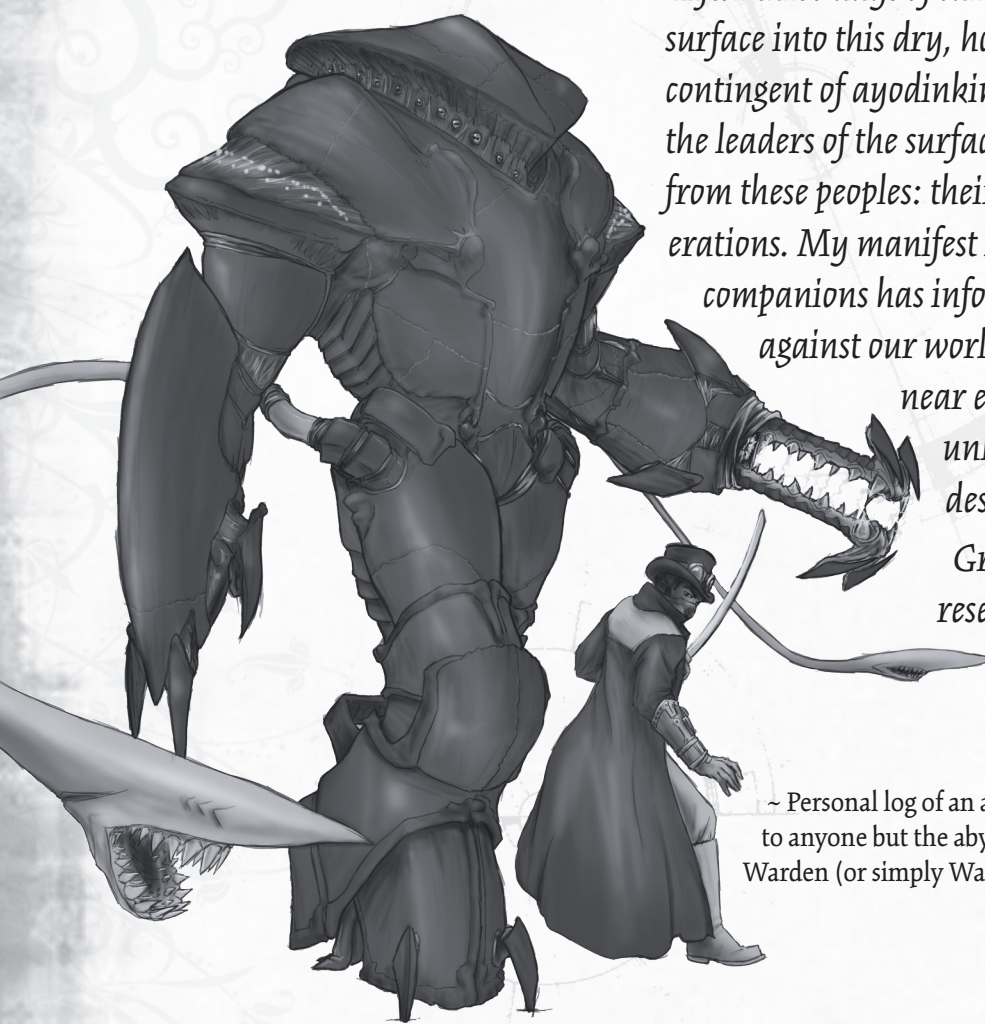
many exotic races face racism, it is not always from every race. This is true between the exotic races and even the common races. Some races, such as elves and farishtaa, have great animosity between them, but elves and gnomes are rather friendly. Similarly, helps (human-elf hybrids) are respected by humans and gnomes but disliked by farishtaa. It is important for someone playing an exotic race to keep in mind their race's culture and mannerisms when interacting with other races as well as remembering the other racial cultures so that they might respond properly to their differences. Sometimes racism comes from location more than racial tension. Haud Satyn (satyr-human hybrids) are treated abysmally in Zelhost and even worse in Siyesh, though they are treated fairly in Evangless. Similarly humdin (human-ayodin hybrids) are treated poorly in almost any nation, as memories of the Hurricane Wars are still present in most people, but are treated fairly in Zelhost where the Hauds have come to respect the ayodin.

There exist rare places, such as the city-state of Haulington and The Graves, where nearly every race is treated equally, even including simulacrons and fluoforms. Even though these places treat nearly all races equally, these races can still face discrimination amongst the residents. Even in safe places racism is still present, though more subtle. Hybrids are especially varied in their reception by other races. For the most part, hybrids are viewed as abominations or, in some religious circles, as proof of sin, especially by members of the contributing races. However, many people of races not involved in their creation have few issues with them. While a humdin might be viewed harshly by a human or ayodin who sees it as a betrayal of their kind, a satyr is more likely to be neutral to this joining as it does not concern their own race.

Some races actively choose isolation and will have little knowledge of other races when interacting. Obezyany live on a secluded island which reduces their interactions except with satyrs and humans who live close enough to travel there. Similarly, manticores hide in Siyesh and are unlikely to know what a farishtaa or ayodin is, but will easily recognize humans, satyrs, elves, and gnomes. This also means that in these areas a manticore adventurer will merit a reduced reaction on their own part when dealing with humans in a city in Siyesh but will warrant a much stronger reaction when dealing with ayodin or a farishtaa of Daion.

These interactions and reactions form one of the foundations of Rilausia and exploring them can create a fuller and grander experience for all involved. However, these subjects can be touchy and should be approached respectfully. These strong interactions also provide the narrator with an abundance of potential adventure hooks that reel in a close party in a very personal and exciting way.

Abyssals



“After three days of careful ascent, I have finally breached the surface into this dry, hot void. I have elected to surface with a contingent of ayodinkin that kindly offered to help me contact the leaders of the surface governments. Much can be learned from these peoples: their technology, their international cooperations. My manifest is full, however, as one of my ayodinkin companions has informed me of several clear infractions against our world by the land walkers: species hunted to near extinction for sport or fuel, monstrosities unleashed in the depths, and the wholesale destruction of our ayodinkin’s habitats.

Granted, my mission is one of peace and research. However, I will not return to the black without righting several wrongs. One way, or the other.”

~ Personal log of an abyssal diplomat. Though this log was never known to anyone but the abyssals, the one who made it is called the Cerulean Warden (or simply Warden) on the surface.

Little known by land dwellers and a guarded secret among the tribes of salt water ayodin, the abyssals make their life in the crags and canyons of the deep ocean. In the crushing pressure of the depths, this cabalistic race of incredibly advanced and intelligent beings work strange and powerful technologies. Many an ayodin scientist has attempted to pierce the mysteries of abyssal motivations, only to be rebutted in a gentle but firm manner. Often the “ayodinkin” is told that some things are not ready for the world, and the world is not ready for most things.

While easily one of the gentlest and most serene races, choosing diplomacy to resolve nearly all problems, abyssals are not beyond using violence in a frankly ruthless fashion in answer to aggression. This is usually with weapon technologies so advanced they can’t be adequately described by the survivors. Some compare them to aether-linked weapons, others to the magnetech weapons of Torydryon. Neither adequately matches the devices the abyssals bring with them.

History

Mainly filled in by rumors and dim accounts from the abyssals themselves, it’s believed that the abyssals have been around since from the time of the angels or maybe even from before their rise to power. One particular scientist has supplied evidence that the abyssals may have been the first sentient life on Tephra, traveling here from distant stars using long-forgotten technology. Supporting this is a number of incredibly ancient monoliths that the abyssals won’t allow anyone near - monoliths that upon stolen inspection are clearly an incredibly advanced form of technology similar to angel waystation ruins found deep in Dalvozzea.

Ayodin are known for having mastered graviton technology long before the people of Rilausia’s surface, even the Paldorans. Among saltwater ayodin, it is well known that all of the ayodin advancements in graviton levitation and overall adaption to hundreds of oceanic climates are connected to the abyssals. Indeed, the majority of ayodin history over the past few centuries has shown the subtle influence of the abyssals in it.

Physiology

When any land-dwelling Rilausians see an abyssal, it will be in a massive suit of biomechanical armor standing at least 12 feet tall. Bulky and stiff, they’re often made of a strange chitinous material harder than the best Rangston steel, known simply as mantle. Due to the immense pressure that abyssals must be kept at, if the suit were to rupture, explosive decompression would occur. Nothing but paste would remain of the abyssal itself and

the suit would be spread about an impressively large crater. Collateral damage from such an explosion is guaranteed.

An abyssal pressure suit is huge and heavy, but with advanced graviton levitation technology it can move in any direction with startling rapidity. On top of the typical two arms and two legs, the suit will also have at least two long tentacles that terminate in fanged feeding mouths that allow the abyssal within to take in sustenance without breaching the suit. The mouths also feed the interface organism that shares the suit with the abyssal.

As for the abyssal itself, only the bravest ayodin have ever seen them outside of their suits in the darkest depths. Using their own protective suits, several ayodin scientists have been able to meet the abyssals in their own habitats. They have been described as delicate, translucent humanoids with a structure very similar to numerous black ocean fish. You would be able to see through the creature’s skin to the underlying organs and skeletal structure. Every variety of the abyssal cabals communicates through natural bioluminescence, similar to some tribes of ayodin that have either evolved the trait or used their knowledge of bio-flux to give it to themselves, but with more inherent complexity. There is a bifurcation amongst the abyssals, however. Put simply, while all are carnivorous, roughly half are mouthless filter feeders surviving on micro creatures, with the remainder toothed hunters similar to angler fish using their natural light to lure prey.

Psychology

Abyssals are truly alien in the way they see the world. Even less is known of their thoughts or motives than their physiology and appearance beneath their suits. They are distant and mysterious even with the ayodin who act as the envoys between their tribes and the cabals of the abyssals. They appear quite passive and sagelike, but display a fierce devotion to the well-being of the planet itself. However, they do not seem to have the same shamanic connection to life that gnomes and elves have and are not wholly consistent with what does or does not count to them as an affront to nature. They have apparently taken on the roles of distantly observant guardians of some kind, but their methods and true views are not understood by outsiders.

Abyssals are clearly an incredibly advanced people. Their technologies baffle the mind and their society does not appear to suffer from the same destructive tendencies as the ayodin or surface nations. An abyssal’s specific motivations are known only to them and perhaps other abyssals. Some ayodin theorize that they use their telepathic communication to operate as a variation of hive mind, though there is no method yet developed that can confirm or deny this theory, and the abys-



sals have not chosen to answer. Regardless of whether they are interconnected by their minds, they show a level of cooperation, coordination, and instantaneous understanding between each other unmatched by any race or society yet known to the other peoples of Rilausia.

Playing an Abyssal:

Rules and Roleplaying Tips

When considering playing an abyssal as a character, it is important to keep in mind that they are explorers in a strange and hostile land. They are also incredibly powerful when compared to almost any other character of the same level due to their size. There is a virtually unknown culture that has never before evidenced direct contact with the surface. Most abyssals that go to the surface say that they are on diplomatic missions to contact and connect with the surface nations, but only you (and your narrator) would know the particulars of this mission.

The survival of an abyssal is intrinsic upon its pressure suit. Individual physical characteristics, like bioluminescence and such, are only relevant in the black ocean. All abyssal biosuits are made from a stupendously strong material whose name is most easily translated to “mantle.” It’s pulled directly from the molten seas beneath the planet’s crust and forged with rare metals from fallen meteors like aeonium. The suits possess this layer of armor not just for defense but to contain an incredibly high pressure solution of specially treated seawater that the abyssal breathes. In fact, the outer shell’s role as armor seems more as an afterthought due to the mind-boggling engineering required just to hold the pressure inside the suit at a livable level for the abyssal. Any rupture of this layer of armor will result in a horrifically powerful decompression, similar to the boiler of a steam locomotive exploding. This mixture of protection and vulnerability should be kept in mind at all times.

Beneath the armor is what amounts to a purpose built organism that moves the suit and keeps the abyssal alive. While the suit doesn’t have true sentience, it’s nearly as intelligent as an octopus, and can solve simple problems with the abyssal unconscious or incapacitated. This usually boils down to doing anything required to remove the abyssal from immediate danger as quickly as possible. Using an incredibly advanced direct brain interface allows for instantaneous control and movement of the suit with just a thought from the abyssal. All suits, being technically biological, need food to survive and are mostly carnivorous with a preference for fish.

Abyssals communicate with each other through both bioluminescence and an advanced telepathic system, though their pressure suits limit them to only their telepathy while

inside them. Telepathic control systems are built into various abyssal technologies, including some of their pressure suits. This interface allows for communication with no language barrier. As long as a person is openly perceptive (and conscious), the abyssal can speak directly into their minds. A dedicated attempt to close off the mental channel can be achieved with an opposed Spirit roll, with success requiring the one closing the channel to roll highest.

Abyssals, or at least their suits, count as massive-2 creatures. As such, they follow the rules outlined in the Narrator’s Accomplice (pages 102 and 103) for creatures of their size. Because of this, abyssals take up an area of 4 mutually adjacent spaces, have a physical reach of 10 feet, and use special rules for weapons and damage classes. Weapons made to scale for abyssals have a damage class 4 higher than regular for their category. Additionally, abyssals have an unarmed damage class of 6 and can wield weapons made on a more human scale as if they were two categories smaller. For example, a standard-scale heavy melee weapon would be treated by an abyssal as a light weapon for the purpose of specialties and such. Abyssal characters act as if they have a starting Brute of 10 for the purpose of moving, lifting, or otherwise physically manipulating objects as well as resisting the same actions. This does not count towards resists against poisons and similar effects.

Pressure suits have two feeding tendrils that terminate in toothed mouths. These tendrils can be used in unarmed attacks and grabs just like normal hands but cannot be used to use items. For all intents and purposes (such as for called shots and wounds), treat these as an extra pair of hands. If an abyssal character suffers a wound to a feeding tendril, it retreats into the suit and cannot be targeted. The abyssal may choose to retract their feeding tendrils at any time for 1 AP even if they are not damaged.

Abyssal names are physically impossible for land dwellers to pronounce. Because of this and the fact that they communicate exclusively through telepathy while on the surface, an abyssal will commonly assume a name pulled from the mind of a land dweller. This has resulted in names like Bastion, Stalwart, and Ridge, or miscellaneous names common to ayodin.

Traits of an Abyssal

Speed: With your standard graviton-assisted armor, you can move with a nimbleness that belies your mass. Your movement speed is 30 feet per AP on land and underwater. Only the continued functionality of your suit’s embedded graviton technology allows you to climb at a speed of 20 feet per AP. You are able to move horizontally while falling as if you were walking, though you do not fall any slower or more safely.



Augmenting the Mantle

Abyssal pressure suits are the single most impressive pieces of technology that they have brought with them to the surface, even counting their defensive weapons. These suits essentially grant abyssal characters unrestricted armor at character creation. The armor can be modified as if it were metal armor (even though it is technically organic) through either the Armsmith or Engineering armor crafts, but not both. However, abyssal pressure suits act as if they are Marque 3 armor even when unmodified for the purpose of understanding them enough to augment them. This effective marque increases by the marque of the highest marked augment they have. (Meaning that a pressure suit with a Marque 2 augment would require a Sciences roll of at least 40 to understand.) Abyssals treat their pressure suit like any other piece of armor when augmenting it themselves. Abyssal pressure suits are classified as massive-2 armor, meaning that the material and DIY costs of augmenting them are doubled. They can also be augmented like a normal organic character with essence manipulations, but this must also account for the massive-2 cost increase. Abyssal pressure suits cannot be synced with an engine.

All of the limbs on a pressure suit besides the feeding tendrils can be modified with prosthetic augments as well as if they were metal prosthetics. They still must follow the pricing rules for massive-2 items and the inflated marque effect of all abyssal technology. Modifying a suit's limb like a prosthetic still lowers its wounds like having a normal prosthetic, but this is negated if all of the prosthetic augments on a limb are removed.

Subnote: Abyssal pressure suits normally come with a weapon mounted on one hand. This is a massive-2 weapon and as such is treated normally by the abyssal in the suit. The weapon can be augmented normally, but follows the same pricing modification as all massive-2 items and also has the same limitation as the armor itself for non-abyssals trying to augment it. Abyssal ranged weapons function mechanically like any weapon type you choose at creation.

Vital Armor: Your pressure suit acts as your body for the purpose of hit points, called shots, wounds, and other such concerns. Running out of hit points renders you unconscious, though. In this event, the interface organism in the suit will attempt to flee on your behalf, removing you from danger until you recover your hit points. Taking any fatal wound damage results in a suit breach. This terminates in a catastrophic and highly explosive decompression and the demise of your character. Being an organic entity, the suit is still affected by poisons, bio-zappers, certain acids, and other assaults on biology. You start with a “natural” soak of 3 and cannot wear armor as you are technically already wearing some. However, you can augment your suit as outlined in the Augmenting the Mantle sidebar.

Circumspection: With a combination of advanced light detection and echolocation, you can perceive everything in 360 degrees. However, you cannot see through cover heavier than Poor by this means.

Arctic Affinity: You suffer no penalties from subzero temperatures. As such, you are immune to cold damage, cold environmental conditions, and the effects of augments like Cryothermal.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Astral Control:** You were never in the suit to begin with, but were controlling it from an ancient abyssal spire deep in the abyssopelagic zone. No one will be the wiser, even after your suit takes enough damage to decompress and they find biological remains inside. For the purpose of the character you are playing, this still counts as death - at least, until the narrator deems it possible for you to haul another biosuit out of the depths and re-encounter the party. Needless to say, this is not a trait to be abused to render a character functionally immortal. Narrators must stay aware of the large delay in getting an abyssal suit back to the surface and the party as well as the massive roleplay fallout of the abyssal character's apparent death and resurrection. The destruction of a remote biosuit can also cause mental trauma to the abyssal piloting it.
2. **Collapsed Mantle:** Your suit's armor is far more resistant to attack than is the standard. The soak class of your pressure suit starts at 4 instead of 3.
3. **Defensive Photocells:** Your suit is one of the few implanted with bioluminescent clusters in its mantle. These clusters can be used to light up any space within 10 feet of you and can be repressed at will. They can also be overcharged for 1 AP to release a blinding light towards a target within 25 feet. The target must resist your Sciences with their Cunning or be blinded for one turn.
4. **Enhanced Graviton:** You have a much more powerful array of graviton technology built into your suit. Your movement speeds are all increased by 5 feet.
5. **Galvanic Sense:** At the end of your suit's tentacles are rostrums similar to a shark's nose, containing natural sensors that can detect the bioelectric field of any living creature within 15 feet outside of water and within 30 feet inside of water. This can also detect electrically active objects.
6. **Gravity Well:** You can render yourself nearly unmovable at will by shifting the graviton controls in your suit. You can spend 1 AP at any time to grant yourself a +10 against efforts to move you. Doing so lowers your movement speeds to 5 feet and you sink like a rock, but you can stop this by spending another 1 AP.
7. **Intumescent Mucus:** A thick coat of gel covers your suit and when hit with fire-based damage, will thicken and swell to push the fire away from you. The damaged gel will recover during your next breather, but will automatically negate one instance of you being set on fire.
8. **Invasive Relay:** Your telepathy interchange has enhanced espionage capabilities, allowing you to barge into someone's mind uninvited. Doing so cannot be concealed from the target. Spirit rolls against you to close a telepathic channel suffer a -5 penalty.
9. **More Mouths:** Your suit has an extra pair of feeding tendrils which can be used identically to the two you have normally.
10. **Paralyzing Lancets:** Your suit is covered with microscopic injectors that administer a paralytic nerve agent on contact. Your unarmed attacks, unarmed grabs, and any other direct contact with your suit lower the Brute and Dexterity of your target by 2 each time you come in contact with them. This effect can stack a number of times equal to the normal maximum AP of your current level.
11. **Self-sealing Membrane:** On the inner edge of your suit's armor is a viscous semi-intelligent gel that fills minor punctures and hardens enough to avoid shocking your system when you take significant damage. You remain conscious when you run out of hit points, but are still instantly killed when you run out of wounds.
12. **Truly Omnivorous:** Your suit's biological systems run on anything biological and several minerals. The suit's feeding mouths can rip and crush virtually anything, given enough time, to allow consumption of everything including soft metals. This sustenance is filtered, treated, and delivered to you as well to keep you fed.

Anura



Philosophy of the Anura

The anuran philosophers' musings have centered on one's relationship with nature, in particular the morality and ethics of using natural resources to advance one's own interests. While they do not worship nature, they recognize their dependence upon it and devote much time to helping nature grow alongside their society. As a result, anurans are secretly the most adept herbalists (in an area that doesn't sound implausible). This mentality also extends to their interactions with each other sentient species. If a person or group is beneficial, they seek to cultivate a mutually beneficial relationship. Those that have nothing to offer and don't pose a threat are typically ignored. However, if a person's actions are seen as invasive, the anura are quick to respond with extreme prejudice.

The land of Valdru is largely a mystery to the outside world. Those who have never travelled to this secluded woodland nation hear the tales of the reclusive gnomes that live there, and believe that they hold dominion over these lands. The truth of the matter is that there are territories within its borders that even the Valldruids dare not to explore. The rumor mill would have you believe that the dense forests runs thick with mutated monstrosities, creatures with bulging bloodshot eyes that have wandered from the wastes of Old Paldorus. The few scientific minds who have investigated these reports hypothesize that these "monsters" may be an evolutionary cousin to the ayodin. Nobody knows their origin for certain. What they do know is that anywhere the forest meets the water in Valdru belongs to the anura.

According to gnomish records, the anura have inhabited Valdru as long as the gnomes themselves. Like the gnomes, they were largely unperturbed by the Haudi Empire for many centuries due to their small population, primitive technologies, reclusive demeanor, and their significant distance from Haudi outposts. In recent history, rediscovered records suggest that Haudi scientists may have taken an interest in the species for a short time, but there is little indication as to why.

After the collapse of the empire, the anuran population continued to grow and their territory expanded until it met the edges of gnomish lands. The two species had small border conflicts and occasional trade interactions in early recorded history, but things escalated as the gnomish armies joined in the Hurricane Wars. Though the anura have no ties to the ayodin to this day, gnomish settlers that bordered anuran territory could not help but notice their similarities. A concoction of uncertainty, fear, and pride brewed in the minds of the people as they collectively concluded that the anura would undoubtedly come to the aid of their aquatic brethren once word had reached their ranks. While the council did not consider the tribes of anura a threat, they did send basic equipment to the borderlands to ease their anxiety and provide them with some defense. This gesture

was interpreted by local leaders as a mandate to rid Valdru of the amphibian menace.

Reports from the self-appointed "Gnomish Border Patrol" chronicle the adventure. The first wave of strikes by the Gnomish Border Patrol caught small settlements off-guard and the anura there were quickly slaughtered, emboldening the force. They pushed farther into the forests in search of greater glory. For four days they scoured the forest, but every anuran camp they found was abandoned. On the morning of the fifth day, a thick fog rolled down from the mountains and covered the forest floor. No further reports arrived in gnomish lands. None of the members of the force returned. With the bulk of their resources dedicated to the war effort and the complete lack of retaliatory action by the anurans, the gnomish council chose not to investigate the matter further.

Shortly after their withdrawal from the Hurricane Wars, and before retreating to their underground havens, the gnomish queen sent a diplomatic envoy to make amends for the unprovoked aggression of her people. They returned with an exotic flower the likes of which were never before seen. Historians and scholars argue over the meaning of this gesture to this day.

Physiology

The anura are bipedal amphibians, like the ayodin, though their traits more closely resemble frogs than fish. They only live in freshwater environments and are more comfortable traveling on land than in water. Anura come in many different shapes and sizes, ranging from squat masses of muscle to slender frames with spring-loaded legs. Anurans who live in the warmer wooded areas in lower elevations tend to have liquid membranes that form a protective film around their bodies, while those in higher elevations typically have adopted rough, leathery skin. When their legs are fully extended, they range from 6-8 feet in height. Taller, lighter anurans typically walk upright, while heavier members of the species tend to squat down and use short

hops to move. They come in a range of colors, from dull browns to vibrant blues and greens. Some anura secrete poisons that can be applied to weapons or transmitted through skin contact. Others have fingers like suction cups, allowing them to attach to surfaces and even hang upside down.

Lifespan

The diversity of anura physiology is in part due to their short lifespan of 25 years. Because the anura go through generations more quickly than other species, mutations occur rapidly, which has allowed the anura to develop traits to suit their habitat. While many anurans are able to speak the languages of other species, some have tongues which make it difficult to produce hard sounds like T and K.

Anurans typically engage in monogamous relationships during a mating season, and hatchlings are raised and educated by the entire tribe. Some couples continue to mate together season after season, others may switch partners from one season to another. For anurans, reproduction is more of a civic duty than an emotional or pleasurable activity, but many do engage in romantic relationships and activities similar to other species.

Psychology

Anura are tribal by nature, but they acknowledge that there are some issues which require wider range cooperation to resolve. During such occasions, tribes select one representative as a candidate. Representatives then play a game known as Talki. The exact rules of Talki have not been shared with outsiders, but the rare few who have witnessed it report that there appears to be a primitive game involving wooden plaques, similar to trading cards. The result of this game determines the nature of a secondary game. Examples of secondary games include things like wrestling, singing, jumping, and riddles. Some hypothesize that

the challengers use strategies in the primary game to arrange a secondary challenge that suits their personal strengths. The loser of the second challenge is eliminated, though only from the competition rather than the land of the living like some would assume from “primitives.” This process is repeated until only one representative remains, who is then appointed temporary leader until the crisis at hand is resolved.

Social norms vary slightly from one tribe to another, but individuals frequently visit and sometimes move from one tribe to another without conflict. Some groups have tribal leaders while others have councils. Some have no discernable leaders at all.

Playing an Anuran

Anuran society is very insular and few of its members choose an adventurous lifestyle. As such, they are a novelty in almost every part of the world. They’re frequently mistaken for bio-flux experiments or mutated ayodin. Their mysterious origins can sometimes grant them audiences with inquisitive individuals that might otherwise ignore a lowly adventuring party. Anuran physiology makes them more mobile than other species, making for interesting possibilities when combined with the right specialties.

Racial Traits

Speed: Anurans have an average land speed of 25 feet, a slightly improved swim speed of 20, and a climb speed of 10 (though they normally jump more than climb).

Spring-Loaded Legs: All anurans automatically tier up checks involving jumping.

Anuran Technology

Like the gnomes of Valdru, anura have learned to shape and influence the growth of trees. In addition to crafting tools and weapons, anurans also tend trees from saplings to form structures that the anura make their homes. There are some reports that claim they can also influence the development of other flora and fauna to take on special properties as they reach maturity. Researchers have not had the chance to study how or why these methods work, but their results cannot be denied.

One remarkable product of these techniques is a larvae that secretes a slime that violently repels water. It is so stubborn that when dropped in a filled bowl it glides along the surface. The anura thicken this slime into a paste which they apply to the bottom of their flat water vessels. The result is one of the fastest and hardest to control methods of freshwater travel in the world.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Animal Husbandry:** Using tricks passed down over centuries of anuran culture, animals that you rear grow in unusual ways. The animal must be fed a specific diet and receive special conditioning at least twice per week. Animals raised in this way take on one of the following traits:
 - **Hearty Build:** The animal gains 1 Brute and 4 extra HP.
 - **Slimmer Design:** The animal receives a +2 bonus to Dexterity and requires half as much nutrition as normal.
 - **Acclimated:** The animal tiers up all resists while in the climate for which they were bred.
 - **Combat Trained:** The animal gains a +1 to accuracy or evade and a +2 to strike or defense (choose any two).
 - **Mobile:** The animal adds +10 to its primary method of movement and +5 to another movement mode of your choice.
2. **Bellowing Bravado:** Your croaks are the stuff of legend and can be heard in a wide radius. When you choose to croak, you may select what kind of tone the croak expresses. Examples include challenging those nearby, warning others to stay away, distress, calling for assistance, or asking who's around. Specialties that require you to be very loud, such as Deafening Roar and Lion's Roar, gain a +5 to rolling for their effect.
3. **Dart Tongue:** You can launch your tongue an exceptional distance and use it to snatch small items. Choose a target within 25 feet and in your line of sight. If the item is in the hands of an enemy, roll accuracy against the target's Dexterity. If it is on their person but not being held, roll the same opposed check but with a -10 penalty to the target's Dexterity. If the item is unattended, your accuracy roll serves merely to see if a natural 1 is rolled, otherwise the check automatically succeeds. If you succeed, the object is pulled back to you and is held in your mouth. You can take something out of your mouth with your hand(s) for 0 AP. Narrators may require a Brute roll for heavier objects.
4. **Guiding Herbalist:** Using traditional anuran techniques, you can influence the growth of plants over time. You must tend the plant one hour per week and ensure that it receives adequate nutrients and water. Plants grown in this way develop faster, are bigger in size, and take on special properties. Concoctions made with these ingredients either never expire, grant a +3 bonus to the next resist after ingestion, or act as if they have the Contact augment without taking up an augment slot (your choice when you begin growing the plant).
5. **Leap Frog:** Your spring-loaded legs make it easy to hop over obstacles where others have to go around. You do not receive a penalty for rolling a natural 1 when jumping. Additionally, when you take a move action during combat you may make a single jump action for 0 AP without interrupting your movement to avoid an obstacle or difficult terrain. If this obstacle is an enemy, you gain a +3 bonus against any reflexive actions your movement may trigger.
6. **Master of Games:** In preparation for representing your tribe in Talki, you have developed skills and tactics that can be applied to nearly anything that could be considered a contest. You tier up any checks that would determine the outcome of a game or non-combat competition.
7. **Momentous Mass:** You are a very large and squat mound of muscle. This makes you hard to move and to resist being moved by. You gain a +2 to Brute and an additional +5 to resist being moved against your will or to move somebody else against their will.
8. **Poison Skin:** Glands on your skin secrete a substance that is poisonous to most living creatures. If this substance is ingested or comes into contact with a wound, the afflicted target suffers a -2 penalty to their next accuracy or evade roll. This substance can be applied to melee weapons, thrown weapons, and ammunition for bows and crossbows outside of combat to apply the same effect upon hit. Having had this quality since birth, you know the ingredients to make an antidote and can prepare it with ease even if you do not have the Medicine Brewer specialty or any points in Alchemy.
9. **Porous Skin:** Your skin absorbs chemicals it is exposed to faster than other beings. Effects caused by contact chemicals, both negative and positive, are more effective when applied to you. If the effect is positive, you treat the effect as one tier or marque higher. If the effect is negative, this tiers down your resist by one or doubles the effect if it does not have a resist.
10. **Protective Membrane:** Your body produces a mucus-like membrane which protects you from liquid or gaseous effects. You tier up your resists against attacks of this nature.
11. **Puffed Up:** Taking in a gargantuan breath, you inflate your throat and body to twice their normal size for 1 AP, granting a +8 bonus to your next intimidation roll against anyone or thing around you when you inflated. This bonus doubles when used against non-sentient targets, though automata are unaffected at all unless they have a personality.
12. **Tree Dweller:** Suction cups on the tips of your fingers and toes allow you to cling to most surfaces with ease. You may climb on any ceiling or wall in any direction as per your normal movement speed.

Excerpt from Trent Langley's "The Exotic and Exceptional"

Upon hearing the rumors of these strange "anurans," we set forth to investigate. As we made our way northwest from Ethengraud, the tales of these elusive creatures grew from whimsical stories of playful tricksters to cautionary tales of child-snatching imps. While the maps will tell you that Valdru extends to the border of Zelhost, the reality is that there are no settlements or roads more than two days' travel north of Devonwald or east of Miyaun. As we approached Devonwald, we began to hear the tales of the Gnomish Border Patrol and the vicious slaughter of the defensive force when it wandered too far north. While experience tells me to season these morsels with a dash of salt, the effect it has on the younger members of the expedition shows.

Tales are a duke a dozen, but scholars are not prone to exaggerate or speculate. Word is that they won't associate with gnomes after their unfortunate dealings in the past, so Ditzle was forced to stay behind. He put up a good front, but something tells me that he's secretly looking forward to the downtime after the close call in Old Paldorus. He's getting a bit old for this lifestyle; but then again, so am I.

The bookworms also made it clear that we'd need to bring interesting and useful items with us, and that our presence would only be tolerated as long as we could hold their attention. Luckily, Trent Langley just so happens to specialize in interesting things.

Having obtained such valuable information, we were all the more confident as we hiked north into the forest. For the most part, the terrain was standard fare for a forest at the foot of a mountain range. The ground sloped slowly skyward towards the east, and rivulets of snowmelt flowed westerly. The flora and fauna were typical of the area. The weather was delightful, with a clear sky and a cooling breeze, as we continued at a light pace for several days, until we spotted our first sign of the anura: a small hunting camp nestled under a fallen tree. Their tracks indicated three long, slender, webbed toes. Since there were still visible signs of the webbing, I determined that these were moderately fresh, likely one or two days. Having seen our first sign, the expedition became excited. That night at camp, young Hamber speculated wildly on what they had seen that day. His imagination gets away from him sometimes, going on and on about Haudi conspiracy theories

and secret societies. It could be tedious over time, but in short doses the lad's passion and exuberant delivery helped pass the evening hours.

The next morning, the mood changed subtly. Conversation grew hushed and broken up by long periods of silence as our attention turned outward. We were on their turf now, and there was little doubt in my mind that the anura knew we were here. We continued until mid-day when I spotted a clearing of a decent size and ordered that we camp for the day. There was some confusion, but the old-timers knew the drill, and began to unpack the mules.

First contact with a new people can be a tricky process. Everyone has their own codes of conduct and inflammatory behaviors. One misinterpreted gesture could ignite a hostile conflict faster than a lit match in a powder keg. The greybeards passed down the rules to the greenhorns.

1. Don't speak unless spoken to directly.
2. Stay where you are and keep your hands to your sides until instructed to do otherwise.
3. Do not draw a weapon unless you hear the signal.
4. Do not give the signal unless you are about to die.
5. Do not expel gases of any kind. Seriously, hold it in.

I went to the packs and stowed my weaponry, with the exception of my hunting knife, and dug out a wooden case, my first secret weapon. I opened the case and removed the round polished stone pieces from inside. Flipping the case over revealed a checkered board, eight squares by eight squares. The rules were simple: move your pieces in diagonal fashion to positions where you can "hop" over an enemy piece, capturing it in the process. The game ends when one player runs out of pieces. The name of the game changes depending on where you're playing, but pieces and rules were recognizable just about anywhere. Considering carefully, I selected Hamber as my opponent. He was bright enough to keep the game entertaining, but young enough to make a few over-eager moves.

Some of you might be wondering why I decided to take a respite; others already know where I'm going with this.

Every species is different. Some will come running at the first sight of excitement to see what's going on, while more timid people prefer to scope things out before risking anything. Others take things to extremes, avoiding contact at all costs, and considering their reputation it seemed likely that the anura fell into this category. The best way to coax such creatures from hiding is to pretend that you don't know or care that they're around, and do something interesting.

I took the first few rounds with simple traps and tactics, always trading in my favor, but as the match continued, Hamber began to recognize and avoid them. A few hours passed and the human lad managed to take a game or two, soliciting a bit of applause and jeers from the expedition who followed the match intently. As the bout continued, I began to see sure signs that we'd attracted some attention. They blended well with their surroundings, but to a well-trained eye the shifts in foliage and blurs of movement in the corner of the eye were unmistakable. This was a key moment. Acknowledging their presence too soon would cause a panic. As luck would have it, Hamber picked this very moment to play the game of his life.

The lead sung back and forth in a flurry of exchanges as the crowd murmured in amazement. The lad deftly avoided every trap I laid, springing a counter attack of his own. The game came down to the wire, and I had officially reached the bottom of my bag of tricks. There was only one gambit left to me. I made what appeared to be a terrible mistake, leaving myself vulnerable to a chain of moves that would leave me with but one piece. With the taste of victory already on his tongue, the youth greedily took the bait. Looking up from the board at the youth, I grinned and said, "Looks like I'm still the best, young man." Then I proceeded to close out the game. The boys roared out in excitement at the climactic finish!

A subtle glance around told me that the Anurans had taken the bait. Their broad faces poked out of from their cover to get a better view of the commotion. "Well, do we have another challenger abouts? How about you, friend?" I said to the nearest amphibian spectator as I gestured to the spot across the board with open hands, palms to the sky and a slightly bowed head. In the universal language of the body, these motions communicate submission and respect.

There was a moment of profound panic. Everyone fell silent as the veil of secrecy was shattered. I held my pose, and waited for the anuran to make the first move. A few moments passed before a low, nervous-sounding croak rumbled from the unusual creature. I asked Hamber to make room for our guest, and he stood slowly, mimicking my gesture as he backed away

from the spot. He was a good boy; he would do well, I thought.

The anuran stood from his hiding spot to reveal a relatively small body atop lean, muscular legs. He wore a wooden vest of armor that fit exceptionally well, and carried a body-length staff with a bladed end. I slowly removed my knife from its sheath with only a thumb and index finger, and gingerly laid it aside. It was a gesture only. His friends were still armed, as were mine, but adherence to these traditions was important to communicate our peaceful intentions. The anura hesitated and looked back over his shoulder for reassurance, then put down his weapon. He squatted down in front of the board and inspected it with curiosity. It would seem that the old fishing adage applies to frogs as well. If you wanna catch something big, you've gotta have the right bait.

From there, it was just a matter of reeling them in. I reset the board and mimed the movement of the pieces to demonstrate the rules. Then I made the first move. The anuran picked up on the basic concepts fairly quickly. His compatriots slowly closed in and watched him fumble with the pieces. After a few bungled attempts at picking up the stone disk, he pressed a single digit on the top and, to my amazement, the piece clinged to it as he lifted it. Getting it to come lose was another matter, however, and both sides shared a chuckle.

Once we settled in I began to converse with him, cycling from one language to another, hoping to find a common tongue. The anuran responded in a language that sounded strangely familiar, but the meaning was lost on me. Luckily, Yellnat was able to identify some of the words as Old Haudi in origin. Given that this was Haudi empire turf some centuries ago, it seems reasonable that they might share a tongue. After some back and forth, we were able to establish some basic communication. The anuran identified himself, though the spelling of it is a bit of a mystery to me, as there is a croak in the middle. The closest I can get is "Lambrrram". Lambrrram struggled with my name as well, as it became apparent that pronouncing T was not an option. We decided that Brrrempp was close enough.

We continued to play as Yellnat translated a few words here and there. As we did, the other anura approached the camp and began to inspect the other members of the expedition. Those that knew a bit of Haudi tried their hands at greetings with varying levels of success. As evening approached, Lambrrram invited us to join him for a meal. We graciously accepted.

He croaked out to the forest, and even more anurans revealed themselves. I praised my luck that things had not gone south, as it became clear that we were ridiculously

outnumbered. We unpacked some provisions and traded fare back and forth. There were no vegetables to be seen, but most common game was represented. Like many people on the fringes of society, they did not shy away from insects. I have travelled in lands where the eating of insects was a necessity for survival, and even some where they are considered a treat, but the methods of preparation and the complimentary seasoning made the anurans' take on the dish a delight.

With permission, we made a few fires and continued our exchanges. We told Lambrrram of our occupation as explorers, and expressed to him our desire to learn about his people. He seemed a bit apprehensive at the idea, but it seemed to grow on him when we told him that we had more items and tales to offer in exchange. As the sun set, Lambrrram agreed to guide us to his tribe so that we might discuss the terms of our arrangement, then bid us goodnight. The anurans hopped back into the forest to make their own camp.

The sound of croaking frogs in the waning light took on a new significance and a drastically higher volume than your normal night in the wilderness, but rather than random bursts of sound, there was a rhythm to it, like an improvised symphony. I might have appreciated it more if I hadn't been trying to get to sleep at the time.

As we travelled the next day, the conversation continued regarding our origins and intentions. It seemed that Lambrrram had difficulty understanding the concept of exploration for exploration's sake, but luckily he didn't press us on the subject. Certainly there was much to be gained in our line of work, but acknowledging that might lead some to believe our motives to be exploitative in nature, which couldn't be further from the truth.

I gently steered the discussion towards games without much effort, but before long we were interrupted by excited shouting from young Hamber. "Chief, chief! You'll never believe what I just saw. Quickly, this way!" he shouted as he raced from the path into an area thick with trees. The atmosphere became very tense, very quickly, and the anuran were visibly on edge. The damn boy was about to get himself killed. "Start apologizing now, I'll retrieve the whelp," I said to Yellnat as I took off after him.

Going off script with a people you don't know or understand never ends well. Inevitably you end up breaking some taboo or insulting someone's dignity, and leniency is a luxury not often afforded to outsiders. Had it been anyone else...damn that boy! I cursed as I made my way through the foliage, catching only brief glimpses of Hamber as he passed between the thick tree trunks. "I almost didn't see it at first

but it looked just a little too square you know? It must have been here for some time for it to be grown over like this!" he shouted.

When I finally caught up with him he was kneeling down in front of an enormous rock, frantically scraping moss from it. I grabbed him by the shoulder and turned him around. "Boss, this could be it! Maybe they--"

His rambling was abruptly interrupted as the back of my hand met his face with a fleshy-sounding smack. I locked his head between my hands, stared him in the eyes, and whispered, "What you just did may have killed you, me, and everyone under my command. If you survive this, you will personally apologize to their families. Do you understand?" The boy's face went white as a vesper, excepting the red mark on his cheek, and he nodded in agreement. "Now, stand up, turn around and drop trow." His eyes grew wide with confusion and terror. "If you don't want to die, do it now." Hamber's hands trembled as he fumbled with his belt. I turned and walked back the way we'd come. "If you haven't pissed yourself already I suggest you relieve yourself now."

Lambrrram and the Anurans were first to arrive on the scene and immediately began speaking to me. I didn't need to know the language to pick up on their displeasure and concern. Yellnat arrived next, breathing heavily from trying to keep up with the frogs leaps and bounds. "Please explain to our hosts that our companion here suffers from shy bladder. Also, find out exactly how screwed we are." A few exchanges back and forth revealed that while we hadn't broken any laws, that this area was home to a spirit known for abducting unsuspecting anuran, particularly children.

Looking back towards the rock I saw Hamber still standing on the spot, full moon still on display. "Best finish your business quickly, word is there's a spirit about that has a thing for misbehaving children." Taking a second look at the rock behind him, there was something strange about it. There were too many straight lines, and smooth edges. Hamber's clearing of the mossy camouflage had uncovered a recognizably unnatural mechanism. I felt a touch of pride as I realized the boy had remembered the telltale signs of an old Haudi empire secret stash that I had taught him months ago. A cache like this could have just about anything inside, but there's one thing they all have in common: the people who have found one are either unbelievably wealthy or very dead. I turned to Lambrrram, put on my best smile and said, "So, which way is the village?"

Crazak Transcendents

Their bodies look like ash, their skin constantly sloughing off and turning to dust. They are hungry. Food nourishes but does not fulfill them. The crazaks were once Paldorans hit hard by aether radiation. Their bodies were dissolving from the radiation, and their lives were due to end. The Insurgence, which saw Jayro-Tiin mutating the land, rebuilt the Paldoran survivors and caused their bodies to adapt to the radiation. But, like much of Paldorus, it drove them mad. The crazaks became at first uncivilized, then crazed, then savage. And now, most frightening of all, they've made that savagery work for them.

Crazak society has grown and evolved. Most crazaks are wanton bands of marauders, little better than starved hyenas. There are a few crazak settlements but, surprisingly, these more closely resemble well-defended fortresses. Rudimentary and violent commerce keeps these communities alive, and they are quick to move and adapt. Those who have witnessed these communities say that you can see the humanity left within the crazaks here, as somewhere underneath their brutality is a human attempting to be cordial. The most terrifying of the crazaks become clan leaders. These crazaks are bloody visionaries, as cruel as they are inspiring.

The transcendent is the rarest of crazak: one that has rediscovered his or her own humanity. Most transcendents were marauding crazaks for many years prior to transcending. Some Paldorans became crazaks but retained their memories and personality from the time before the Insurgence. Crazak transcendents have a civility in their eyes that sets them apart. Some non-mutated people living in Old Paldorus can even pick out a transcendent just by looking in their eyes, and might notice a crazak that is becoming a transcendent.

Physiology

Crazaks stand at an average human height. Their skin is gray and appears to have cracks running along it. Their eyes are often gray or silver with a black sclera. Many have little to no hair, and

what they do have is sparse and coarse.

Crazaks constantly shed a mist of ash around them, and moreso when they become angered or are on the hunt. Their skin rapidly grows and ages, creating an excess of dead skin cells that form the ash cloud. Many non-mutated people in Paldorus know to run when the ashen mist creeps into an area. Their bodies are often heavily mutated by the radiation and sport bizarre additions. Some have gained wings, others additional limbs.

Lifespans: Their exact lifespans are unknown, as there have been no observed deaths due to natural causes. Most crazaks are killed by adventurers or other various threats found in the jungle.

Psychology

Crazaks are naturally feral with only the rare transcendent moving past this state. Transcendents are naturally distrusting of others and prone to violent outbursts. They have a strong hunger for violence, making it hard for them to fit in with regular society. Many transcendents try to fight the urge, but they are rarely able to overcome their craving for meat; often preferring it raw and made from other, more civilized people.

Younger crazaks have little control over their violent outbursts and hunger for flesh, making them difficult to be around for non-crazaks. As they age many crazak transcendents are able to reign in their more basic impulses. Most crazaks prefer to live in caves or heavily fortified areas that allow them to stay out of the light. Due to their horrifying visage they resent the way they look and dislike looking at one another. Some have adapted to this and are mostly comfortable with themselves.

Roleplaying Tips

Most crazaks are not welcomed in society and reflect this in their suspicion of others. Your crazak will most likely distrust others

that are not also crazaks. They will also have issues controlling their tempers and will be prone to violence. While they were once feral, they have regained their humanity; unfortunately, this allows them to apply their newfound morality to their past actions. Few will talk about their feral past, and can be aggravated or guilty when it is brought up.

While they are now in control of themselves, the old hunger for living flesh never leaves, and can make them uncomfortable in situations with large crowds. They especially feel uncomfortable around people who elect to wear little clothing, as so much exposed flesh can be too tempting for some crazaks.

Some crazaks try to hide their features beneath layers of clothing, but many find this too uncomfortable as it leads to a build-up of their ash.

Sample Adventurers

Below are three crazak adventurers that you can use as inspiration when creating your own.



Zell Pharos

Zell belongs to one of the notorious Ghoul Squads of the Graves, a militia comprised of crazaks and behemoths that dwell in the underground city known as the Graves. He joined shortly after he found the city and the Abyss, a sub-city of the Graves for crazaks, ezka, and behemoths. He is part of Squad 12 along with Kett, Scer, and Blut. Together they scout out new areas for potential reclamation and supplies. Zell was one of the crazaks who developed a third eye, making him the team's most relied-upon scout.

Though he's a crack shot with a gun, he prefers to use his axe. Zell believes that guns served little purpose in the dense jungles of Paldorus, and has been heard criticizing their habit of being so loud they attract every predator in a mile radius.

Zell is a silent sword fighter and will have the following specialties: Silent Kill (under Espionage), Phase Step (under Agility), and Merciless (under Frenzy).

Keds Marik

Keds is a wanderer who lives out in the jungle by himself. He's not a fan of people or their judgmental stares. He lives near Lichzig and challenges himself with fighting the horrid monsters that live around there. He is adept at living off of the land and has developed a special skin--which the crazaks call a water skin--that allows him to neglect his need for water and instead draw moisture in from the air. A reason he has never bothered moving to the Graves is because of how little control he has over his aggression. He can't help but go into a frenzy when riled up.

Keds uses two sickles and pure instinct to guide them. His connection with nature has given him further strength and ruthlessness. He will not attack a person on sight, but he is exceptionally reluctant to work with them.

Keds is a frenzied shaman and will have the following specialties: Berserker (under Frenzy), Crimson Weapon (under Frenzy), and Topographer (under Shamanism)

Kalen Schun

Kalc is a crazak that lives in the Graves and acts as a negotiator between the crazaks of the Abyss and the "regular" people of the Graves. She can be stern but it is out of love for her people. She was once a wealthy merchant before the tragedy of Paldorus made her into what she is now. Her mind, however, is just as sharp as it once was. Her eye for value and deep understanding of trade allows her to ensure her people are given fair deals when

dealing with non-crazaks.

She is not a fighter, but has trained herself to keep a calm mind in a fight and avoid enemy attacks. Her greatest role in a fight is assisting those around her, as her analytical mind allows her to pinpoint an enemy's weakness.

As a non-fighter Kalc will have the following specialties: Appraisal (under Expertise), Weak Point (under Expertise), and Inner Calm (under Grace).

Traits of a Crazak Transcendent

Speed: You have the average 25 foot movement speed, a swim speed of 15 feet, and a climbing speed of 15 feet.

Unsettling: Your cracked appearance unsettles most who talk or interact with you. Whenever you roll Cunning to instill fear, you may roll twice and take the higher result.

Ash Body: Your ashen mist constantly surrounds you, making it difficult for others to aim their attacks. You receive a +1 to all evade rolls.

Immunity to Radiation: Having been primarily formed by the intense radiation, your body is immune to the effects of radiation.

Natural Aggression: You are prone to violent outbursts and find it difficult to resist provocation. Whenever you roll to resist being provoked, you roll twice and take the lower result.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Additional Arm:** Your mutation manifested in an additional arm coming out from your side. It functions properly and can be used to make grabs or wield weapons.
2. **Claws:** Your nails have grown long and sharp, making your bare hands far more dangerous. Your unarmed damage class is now 3.
3. **Endless Rage:** Crazaks are easily provoked to violence. Your body produces an excess amount of adrenaline, driving you to hit harder than normal. You gain a +2 to all strike rolls.
4. **Excess Ash:** Your body generates so many additional skin cells that you can shake them loose to generate a larger ash cloud around you, causing others to choke. You can spend 1 action point to cover your space in ash. Anybody targeting you with a ranged weapon is treated as being blind for the purposes of the attack. The ash cloud will last until the end of your next turn.
5. **Justified Paranoia:** You are naturally distrusting of people--but you tend to be right. When rolling Cunning to



determine if someone is secretly against you (such as when trying to catch a lie), you may roll twice and take the higher result.

6. **Natural Frenzy:** Being so prone to rage you tend to give in to it more than others, and your fighting style reflects this. You can voluntarily go into a frenzy, reducing your accuracy by -2 but increasing your strike by +3. You can decide prior to any attack to make this swap.
7. **Ogre Body:** As a crazak you are more akin to the ogre than the regular crazak or the fury. You gain a +4 to all Brute rolls.
8. **Resolve:** As a crazak you have endured quite a bit of tragedy in your life. The fact you are still around is a testament to your inner strength. You gain a +4 on all Spirit rolls.
9. **Sloughing Skin:** While your ash cloud is not as large as some others, this is only because the skin does not fall naturally. However, it is easily pulled off, making it hard to keep a hold of you. You gain a +5 to evade grabs or to break out of them.

10. **Third Eye:** You have mutated to possess a third eye, usually in the middle of your forehead. You receive a +1 to accuracy and a +2 on notice rolls.

11. **Water Skin:** Your body has mutated a special gland that allows it to draw water from the air in humid environments. When you are in a humid environment you do not require water so long as a lot of your skin is exposed.

12. **Wings:** You have moth-like wings similar to those possessed by furies. Unless bound, unconscious, or in inclement weather, you take no falling damage as your wings will gently guide you to the ground. Unfortunately, it seems that only furies forever lost to madness are capable of real flight due to their further twisted biology.

Daemons

Archduke Zimarati is the son of Archduke Faziik VII, who is often considered one of the greatest conquerors and builders in Zelhost's history. His high-standing reputation is what molded Zimarati into the man he is today, as Zimarati was (and in some ways still is) constantly attempting to live up to his father's legacy. Faziik VII had a satyr valet that was a dutiful servant but also a talented personal guard. His name was Leszek and he had served the archduke since before his horns came in. Faziik VII was a conqueror, and he spent much time working on war plans. Duchess Aluna Zimtar, a bio-flux scientist noted for her numerous customized satyr strains, was privy to many of Faziik VII's plans to invade Paldorus. She made a proposal: to drop the world's largest satyr manufactory straight into Paldorus's territory, giving Zelhost a secret entrance into Paldorus.

Over the years as this factory was built, and with Faziik VII's blessing, Duchess Aluna Zimtar experimented on Leszek, twisting his body and making him more closely resemble the recovered bodies of several ayodin prisoners. Her goal was to turn Leszek into the template for a race of bio-engineered slave soldiers much like the old Haudi Empire's manticores, but more versatile and without their uncontrollable bloodlust. Zimtar eventually got ahold of an aeon daemon, an enormous and massively altered ayodin warrior, and it became the basis for her experimentation on Leszek. Faziik VII loved the slow, painful manipulations used on Leszek and would often joke about how Leszek's loyalty was so strong that he would never attack his masters, despite the extreme loathing Leszek had for them. Faziik was mostly correct.



Malediction,
a daemon brawler
adorned with trophies
from Paldorus

The custom satyr strain Zimtar used for the new army was heavily mixed with ayodin to enhance its versatility, and thousands of these spliced together individuals were incubated in the mountain range on the border between Paldorus and Zelhost. Faziik and Zimtar planned on digging through the mountain range, allowing free access to supply the facility via Zelhost and to attack Paldorus from an unexpected direction. Then the Hurricane Wars started, with Hagshil the Holocaust invading Khemli and killing Archduke Faziik VII at the very on-

set of the war. Freed of his loyalty but accustomed to the violent conditioning that made him who - or what - he now was, Leszek fled to the one place where he knew he could find more people like him: the manufactory that was incubating his new race of warriors.

At the secluded facility, he found Duchess Zimtar still toiling to finish her warriors in the hopes of deploying them against the invading ayodin. He convinced her that he was still a loyal servant, willing to help in any way necessary so that the ayodin would be driven back. In between sessions of even more extensive essence manipulations, Leszek studied the duchess's notes and helped her with those experiments she did not perform on him. In addition to the rapidly growing but still incubating race, Zimtar was developing war beasts and battlefield augmentations to try and give Zelhost an edge. She tested many of the more promising augmentations on Leszek, stretching and thickening his skeleton, swelling his muscles, and granting him both limited regeneration and flight capable wings. Despite the constant agony he endured, Leszek displayed a surprising mental acuity that only expanded as he was further enhanced, allowing him to advance Zimtar's progress far faster than expected.

On the very cusp of completing the army she had set out to build under the old archduke's command, Duchess Aluna Zimtar fell victim to Leszek's long-awaited revenge. Without warning and right after awaking from yet another modification, Leszek lashed out and shattered the duchess's jaw and one of her legs. Quickly, he slaughtered the assistants present within the facility before returning to the crippled duchess's side. He watched her writhe in agony much like the agony she had subjected him to and tormented her further by exposing her to the failed essence manipulations that she had tried. By the time she died, Duchess Aluna Zimtar was not recognizable as a human being and Leszek was long removed from his past as a slave and servant to others.

Renaming himself Loathing after his long-standing hatred of humanity, the creature once known as Leszek gutted the upper floors of the facility before burning them down to hide the rest. He sent a single messenger sphere out to the acting capital of Zelhost with a message he forged in the duchess's handwriting. It spoke in panicked letters of a complete meltdown of the facility's enormous aether-powered generator and a loss of the incubating army. Loathing waited for any potential answer, but Archduke Zimarati was far too busy with the war to investigate and had not known nearly as much about the project as his father. When no search party or relief team came to the half-destroyed manufactory, Loathing awoke his brethren. He had taken steps to ensure that the first to awake would be far more suggestible, making his first act of brainwashing much easier. Fabricating the details of his past life and the extent of his

involvement in their creation, he convinced them that it was he that freed them from a life that would have been defined by service to pathetic humans incapable of fighting for themselves. He made himself out to be a fatherly figure protecting them from a cruel world that deserved the wrath he had instilled in them, before setting out to convert the facility into what became the city of Chasm.

Now a massive complex reaching deep into the mountains, Chasm is where all new daemons come from and where kidnapped satyrs and ayodin go to become daemons when Loathing needs new stock for the various strains he tests. Dae-

Loathing

Loathing, the first finished daemon, reigns over his kin as an unquestioned tyrant. Since his transformation into the enormous daemon he is now, he has lost the ability to empathize with anyone and is long past caring for anything but his own plans of conquest. His authority and power are absolute within Chasm, primarily through his social conditioning of his kin but also through the merit of his incredible stature, combat prowess, vicious cunning, and scientific genius. Most daemons see him as their god and he does nothing to contradict this. The supposed fact that he is the one who spliced them into being is a major contributor to this belief. He keeps his full power and bio-flux laboratories hidden even from the other daemons and only reveals his projects when they are completed. Many of these "projects" are referred to as his Brood as they are chimeric clones of Loathing himself and they serve as his personal guard, enforcers, and agents. The Brood's main duty is to ensure that no daemon leaves Chasm without his permission, but they do not catch all of those who leave. Some daemons, usually mated pairs or individuals who have resisted mental conditioning, flee from Chasm to try and find a new life as far from Loathing as possible. For most, it is never far enough.

mons are frequently sent out to harvest resources from the most immediate sources, namely the twisted Paldoran wilderness. This has become a frequent haunt for chosen bands of daemons tasked with bringing back food and supplies scavenged from the ruins of Paldoran towns, taken from the corpses of other abominations and seized from the cold, dead hands of the stubborn fools who still live in Paldorus. Over the few years since its rechristening, Chasm has found additional means of supplying itself and has grown almost exponentially. There Loathing waits, building his army of daemons, bio-monstrosities, and collaborators in preparation for the time when he will force all of Rilausia to kneel before him or burn.

Daemons and Ayotyr

Ayotyr are the natural offspring of ayodin and satyrs, whereas daemons are a race bioengineered from the same two races. Though physically similar to the point that most cannot distinguish between a daemon and an ayotyr if they are dressed the same, their enormously different origins and cultures separate them into two distinct races. Daemons are frequently mistaken for ayotyr because of their close physical resemblance. Because of this as well as their shared status as outcasts when outside of Chasm, daemons and ayotyr will typically congregate together despite their difference in temperaments. Though there are records of daemons and ayotyr becoming couples (usually with the ayotyr assuming the daemon is one as well), it is unknown if the daemons' ability to procreate can override the normal infertility of hybrids that ayotyr suffer from.

Physiology

Daemons are a physically balanced combination of satyrs and ayodin. They have the furry legs, cloven hoofs, and horns of their satyr half and their torso, hands, arms, and head appear human. From their ayodin component, they inherited wing-fins, gills on their ribcage, a thinness of frame, and their dark coloration as well as their stripes of color. However, these features are slightly altered from the average of each component race. Daemon horns are long and typically very straight or with a mild curve. Many sport a single tight curl at the base of the horn and almost all are glossy black, though some are bleached white. Their hooves are heavy and also normally pitch black, as is their hair, both on their head and legs. Their gills are ragged like the slashes of bright color that cross their skin, particularly on their forearms. Their wing-fins are slightly smaller than the typical ayodin's and appear tattered and torn even though they function well enough. Daemons are slightly taller than the average human and weigh about the same. As far as fashion, they will normally wear minimal clothing due to their near total lack of physical modesty, though they usually also see heavy armor as cowardly. Daemons see no point in frivolous decoration such as jewelry, but wholeheartedly enjoy displaying trophies that they have seized from powerful foes or earned through harsh trials.

Lifespan: Daemons, being a secluded and rarely seen race, do not have a publicly established lifespan. However, their exceptionally slow rate of aging implies that they can live well into their second century if they survive their usually violent lifestyle. It has been proven that they can reproduce, but they do so at a slower rate than humans. Of the few known natural daemon births all are born fully as daemons and mature rapidly, reaching full physical and near complete mental and emotional

development in 12 years before their growth rate slows to a crawl. Daemons develop their horns within the first three years of their life, though their emergence does not seem to mark any special change in their mindset like it does in satyrs.

Psychology

When a daemon is formed, the satyr and ayodin whose flesh and genetic material is used to make the daemon are blended together and heavily seasoned with undying rage while most memories are eradicated. Duchess Zimtar did successfully splice an ayodin with a satyr, but she failed to make the result as obedient as she intended. Satyrs are known for their rambunctiousness after their horns come in, and those familiar with ayodin know that below their calm, passive surface lies a tumultuous tide of withheld emotions. These combined emotional states when mixed with the essence manipulation required to splice the two races together created a race prone to constant emotional upheaval and violent action at the earliest excuse. Daemons experience a constant state of agitation and restlessness and will typically lash out without considering the consequences. There seems to be no difference between those daemons who are formed through bio-flux and those born naturally to a mated pair of daemons.

Daemons feel an intense loyalty to their race and will normally withhold their anger and aggression when dealing

Morality and Daemons

The descriptions of daemon physiology and psychology both imply that the daemons are an inherently evil race. As a narrator (or a player), remember that both are due to them being literally made for war by someone who hates anyone not under his thrall, humans in particular, and cares nothing for those who stand in his way. Loathing's daemons are meant to strike fear in the hearts of their enemies in every possible way as a means to enact his revenge. Indoctrination and biological tampering both color the minds of the daemons. Neither is perfect and there are several instances of daemons fleeing from Chasm, but both of them together make it near impossible for any daemon born or made in Chasm to escape the brainwashing. At the end of the day, daemons are slaves to a master that they believe cares for them in his own twisted way.

with members of their own race or anyone to whom they feel a close bond. This sense of loyalty seems more of a cultural phenomenon though, as all daemons of Chasm are indoctrinated by Loathing's vision of a superior warrior race utterly beholden to

him and him alone. While many daemons have begun to learn how to control their inherently violent emotions, all daemons are forced to live with intense bouts of unexplained and unexpected rage. All of this holds true for natural born daemons as well.

Roleplaying Tips

You are constantly filled with a rage you have either embraced or gained some control over. Your unnatural origin (bio-flux or birth) and appearance frightens or repulses many people. Elves and farishtaas both find daemons inherently repulsive, though for different reasons, as do any who are not knowledgeable about them upon first seeing one (though this is pretty much anyone in Rilasia). It is likely that you are one of the few who have successfully fled from Chasm or one of their children rather than a daemon who is still loyal to Loathing and his plans. However, it is entirely possible that you are one of the daemons still brainwashed to Loathing's doctrine of superiority and still look to him and his agents for guidance in whatever mission you have been sent on.

Daemon names for those who are born or made within Chasm are typically taken from mythological figures of war, chaos, and supremacy to reinforce their culture of warfare and domination. Many others follow along the lines of Carnage, Wrath, Set, Malediction, Rampage, Rent, Malfeasance, and Calamity. Daemons who flee from Chasm typically rename themselves and any children they have to distance themselves from Loathing's influence and to blend in more with those around them.

Traits of a Daemon:

Speed: You have an improved land speed of 30 feet, an impressive swim speed of 25 feet, and an average climbing speed of 15 feet.

Amphibious: You can breathe both on land and in water.

Alcohol Immunity: Daemons are not negatively affected by alcohol.

Bestial Strength: Daemons are all very strong, though each in a slightly different way. You gain 2 additional skill points in any one Brute skill. You may add your starting skill points there as per normal.

Inflammatory Appearance: While daemons are not (usually) inherently hideous, they are very off-putting to most people because of their outlandish appearance and clearly withheld fury. You suffer a -3 to all rolls in which you are attempting to pacify somebody or have them follow commands without overt displays of force.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Blindsense:** You have developed a limited sense of echolocation. You can "see" with your ears just as well as you see with your eyes. As long as you aren't deafened, you can see regardless of lighting conditions.
2. **Blood Horn:** You keep the points of your impressively long horns razor sharp, making unarmed attacks with them deal 1 point of unsoakable bleeding damage.
3. **Built-in Bulwark:** You've become accustomed to defending against attacks through superior use of your fins. Your fins can act as shields (allowing you to use them for deflections).
4. **Great Vitality:** You are tireless and hardy, granting you 6 additional hit points.
5. **Horrifying Combatant:** Your hooves, horns, and poisonous fingertips make every inch of your body a weapon. Your unarmed damage class is increased to 4.
6. **Infectious Fury:** You seem to radiate anger and it agitates everyone around you. You gain a +4 to intimidation or provocation rolls.
7. **Off-Guard Adrenaline:** Daemons are hard to sneak up on. Not because they see their attacker coming, but because their attacker usually doesn't survive more than a couple of breaths. Whenever you are attacked outside of regular combat, you gain a +5 to strike until the end of your turn.
8. **Passionate Blows:** When you attack, you attack with great fury. You gain a +2 to strike.
9. **Shrouded:** The membranes of your wing-fins are even more tattered looking but are also very long, dark, and exceptionally handy. By partially wrapping yourself in your wing-fins, you can treat poor lighting as total darkness for the purpose of being seen or attacked.
10. **Soulless Stare:** Your eyes look like chasms of darkness and seem to pull those who meet your gaze towards you in fatalistic wonder or push them away in fear. When you look someone in the eyes within 25 feet, you may force opposing Spirit rolls for 2 AP. If you win the roll, the target is forced to move either toward or away from you 5 feet (your choice which). This movement can only be harmful to your target (such as causing them to fall off a cliff) if your roll exceeded your target's by at least 20.
11. **Unnatural Touch:** The poison in your touch disrupts the nervous system. Whenever you touch somebody, they suffer a -2 on their next accuracy roll (this penalty will go away at the end of their next turn if not expended).
12. **Warrior's Itch:** You are constantly on edge, ready to fly into bloody battle at a moment's notice or the slightest provocation. You gain a +3 to priority.



Ezka

When the aether disaster ripped Paldorus apart, many chose to stubbornly cling to their homes rather than try to find room on the stormships or flee on foot. Thinking they could outlast the turmoil on the surface by retreating underground, some fortified themselves in disaster shelters, while others hid in the comfort of their own basements. Many of these people came to populate the subterranean Paldoran city, the Graves. Dissatisfied with living in the cramped tunnels and longing to reclaim lost homes and property, some left to find a better region of Paldorus to try and reclaim away from its radioactive heart. Unfortunately, they happened to attempt this at the same time that Jayro-Tiin flew his essence-twisting ships over Paldorus, forever altering both the landscape and its inhabitants.

Caught out in the open by a blast from a massive bio-zapper, these poor souls were twisted and mutated by the foul machine. Those who survived their alterations and were able to flee from their now-feral brethren retreated back into the earth for safety. Still horrified by their drastic physical and psychological changes, the newly formed race dug out a new tunnel for themselves well-removed from the rest of the Graves. These individuals took the name ezka for themselves from a burrowing beetle once native to Paldorus, though the beetle has been eradicated by ram-

pant mutation. Once the lingering effects of Jayro-Tiin's manipulations within them settled and the ezka became more accustomed to their new forms, they were able to establish a close-knit society much like a hive. Utilizing their new digging appendages, they hollowed out a tightly-packed burrow and began to build a new Paldorus of their own. Before long, they again made contact with the Graves in an attempt to seek out friends and allies among those that they had once known. The initial meeting was not what anyone who was involved would call a success, since the people of the Graves thought the ezka to be an invading force of monsters. Once this misunderstanding was worked out, largely due to the actions of the charismatic crazak Zerom Nills, the ezka rejoined what remained of Paldoran society. Leading some of the major efforts to expand the Graves, many ezka have begun venturing out into the wilds of Paldorus to see what new world is in store for a people so changed by tragedy. The most adventurous among them have made limited forays into lands beyond Paldorus, though they regularly face far stronger social opposition.

Physiology

Ezka stand slightly taller than their original human selves.

However, they are drastically lighter in weight due to their nearly skeletal bodies which are covered in smooth chitinous plates. Typically in shades of gray and brown, these plates are slightly flexible and segment both at their joints and at semi-regular intervals along their bodies. Ezka lack any form of hair, but sport quill-like growths on their heads that are similar to hair and can grow quite long, but tend to stay short. Their large eyes are not compound, but have a yellow tint to the sclera and normally have gold, yellow, orange, red, green, or white irises. Shaking hands with an ezka can be an unwieldy experience due to their exceptionally long and thin four-digit hands.

Their most noticeable features are their shetoras; digging scythes that come out of their shoulder blades. Shetoras look vaguely like inverted skeletal wings studded with short ridges of chitin. There are so few differences between the two sexes that it is nearly impossible for other races to determine which is which until they have been told.

Lifespan

Ezka are assumed to have slightly shorter lifespans than humans, most putting the estimate at about sixty before succumbing to the lingering effects of Jayro-Tiin's meddling. Some have begun researching ways to prolong the lifespans of their offspring or at least mitigate the frailties that they suffer more intensely than humans. The scarce few children of the ezka that have been born were laid half-formed in soft eggs before emerging and were normally laid in twos or threes.

Psychology

Though once human, the ezka's transformation and trials have altered their perceptions of society and the world. They are highly communal, owing to the extreme emphasis modern Paldorus puts on survival. The ezka have a reputation for being rather clingy. They always huddle close to friends, even when danger isn't imminent. This does not mean that they are easily scared or overly paranoid, but they do feel acutely uncomfortable when alone. Their straightforward but cautious attitudes can be halting when meeting someone strange. Having come from a close community that relied on intensive cooperation, they are quite open in relationships, information, feelings, and desires.

The ezka easily embraced their physical forms and their new biology. They are completely unconcerned with physical appearances and only bother with things like clothes and aesthetics to avoid problems with other races (though some still don't care enough for even that). They treat their shetoras as both tools they use in everyday life and a way to distinguish themselves both visually and by their skills and abilities. Uncomfortable with long periods of downtime, ezka are constantly contributing to some higher goal or overarching project.

Roleplaying Tips

Most ezka find the farishtaa to be too high and mighty, and too proud of appearances. The ezka are neither glamorous nor excessive, and they tend to scorn such things. All ezka feel a kinship with crazak transcendents and other victims of mad science due to their shared backgrounds of involuntary mutation, and view elves more favorably than most other races. They are leery of ayodin because of the Hurricane Wars and distrust gnomes because of what happened to themselves and Paldorus at Jayro-Tiin's hand.

Traits of an Ezka

Speed: You have a standard 25 foot land speed, a lowered swim speed of 10 feet, and an incredible climb speed of 30 feet.

Unnatural Appendages: You sport two extra versatile limbs called shetoras. You can use these limbs to brace yourself against surfaces, granting you a +4 to resist being knocked prone or moved against your will. Your shetoras grant you a 15 dig speed and you may tunnel through sand and soft soil. They can be used in unarmed attacks, dealing the same damage as your fists.

Creepy Crawly: Most people already have an aversion to insects and other chitinous creatures. Ezka are not only chitinous but humanoid as well, exacerbating this. Ezka gain a +3 to intimidation and provocation rolls.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Almost:** Your genes proved more resilient to the method of your mutation, making the fact you are ezka easier to hide. You lose your Creepy Crawly trait, and, if

you wish, you can conceal your shetoras as if they were medium items (though they remain attached to you). They must be drawn for 1 AP to use them again, which can be done reflexively. While your shetoras are stowed under your clothes, armor, or some similar cover you can pass yourself off as human. When somebody is trying to determine that you are not human (assuming your shetoras are stowed), you can roll your Cunning against theirs to try and maintain the “disguise.”

2. **Burrower:** Your shetoras are stronger and more durable than most, allowing them to dig into harder surfaces. You may dig through packed earth, clay, and loose gravel at half your dig speed, rounded up to the nearest power of 5 (normally 10 feet). You can climb sheer walls and end your turn at any place on them that your shetoras can dig into. Additionally, your base dig speed increases by 5, from 15 to 20 feet per AP. Speed penalties to swim and climb speeds are applied to digging speed as well, though they can never bring it below 5 feet.
3. **Dense Plates:** The chitinous plates that cover your body are naturally tougher than your brethrens’ and thus can take more damage. You have a natural soak of 1 when not wearing armor. When you are wearing armor heavier than minimal, this point of soak does not stack with it and instead grants a +4 to your defense.
4. **Expanded Diet:** You are capable of fully digesting wood and other tough organic substances such as bone and deriving nutrients from them. This also comes with the benefit of hardening your stomach against harmful substances, tiering up your resists made against ingested poisons and other toxins.
5. **Faux Hands:** The digging claws of your shetoras sport multiple finger-like appendages, allowing you to hold onto more things at a time. Though they cannot be used to wield two-handed items, you can treat your shetoras as extra arms.
6. **Half Crazak:** Not only were you horribly affected by Jayro-Tiin’s twisted experiments on your homeland, you have been personally mutated by the lingering radiation common in Paldorus. Though your body is physically frailer than others, you are able to more easily resist the effects of aether and radiation sickness. You automatically tier up all resists you make against radiation or effects caused by aether.
7. **Hive Mind:** Ezka and others who are accustomed to you can “feel” your emotions even if you say nothing. Those who know you best can sense any extreme emotion you experience from nearly a mile away. This does not allow you to speak telepathically to others, though ezka that also have this trait share a greater level of understanding with you and vice versa.
8. **Poison Barbs:** Each of your shetoras sport a needlelike barb near their tips. These barbs are loaded with an intensely painful nerve toxin. Whenever your shetoras make contact with a living creature, you can reflexively inject this toxin for 0 AP. This toxin inflicts 4 unsoakable damage and once you have used the dose stored in each of your shetoras, it must be “recharged” for 1 AP to use again.
9. **Serrated Plating:** Your shetoras are lined with blade-like spurs of hardened chitin, granting them an unarmed damage class of 3. Additionally, unarmed attacks that you make with your shetoras bypass 1 point of soak.
10. **Skittering Terror:** In Paldorus, staying unnoticed by the (other) abominations which live there is key to staying alive. You are exceptionally skilled at this by carefully shifting your weight and carefully using your shetoras to balance against surfaces, causing your rolls to sneak to be tiered up one.
11. **Tunnel Sense:** Living underground with very little light has given you an innate sense for the vibrations around you. While touching solid ground, you can feel footsteps and other things that cause the ground to vibrate within 15 feet. If somebody is attempting to keep their movement hidden, you and that person can attempt opposed Cunning rolls for you to notice them. If you win, you sense their location. This ability does not negate any penalties you would take for being blind, but it does tell you where enemies could be standing.
12. **Twisted Kinship:** All ezka feel a slight connection to the mutated and those shunned for similar afflictions. You in particular are exceptionally skilled at establishing trust very quickly with the outcasts of society. You gain a +6 to your Cunning for social tells when interacting with chimeras, abominations, bio-corrupted people and creatures, and any other being that is the result of extensive, unwholesome biological alteration.

Fluoforms

Fluoforms actually refer to three separate, artificial races; the khemics, amorphides, and homunculi. Each born, or rather brewed, from various alchemical means, these exotic and relatively new “species” all trace their variably short histories to the labs of Zelhost.

Several years ago, the Zel Haud company Moltenlife Chemicals took the world of alchemy by storm when it introduced living liquids, small creatures brewed from alchemy that could follow basic commands during their short lives. Living liquids became immensely popular, as they could serve as temporary sentinels, protectors, traps, and assistants as needed. It became fashionable among the upper class to collect and brew unique living liquids and show them off at parties. Needless to say, Moltenlife Chemicals became instantly successful, and its owner, Malian Romesey, became quite wealthy. His success served to spur the efforts of Sashura Ivashin, a woman who believed herself to be an intellectual rival to Malian and also his social superior due to her gender. However, Sashura’s primary field was bio-flux rather than alchemy, and their rivalry was not a direct comparison of their arts but of their abilities to create new and exotic forms of life that defied normal conventions.

After Romesey’s invention of homunculi, high-end living liquid servants that persist much longer than their forerunners and can even act as simple-minded assistants and servants, Sashura began even more radical experiments requiring vast stores of whole essence. She would go on to invent amorphides, beings made almost entirely from essence, while at the same time Romesey would secretly invent the humanlike khemics. An independent team of scientists from both Zel Host and Evangless would later take the homunculi and reinvent some of them into fully aware and far more capable alchemical beings.

Khemics

During the Hurricane Wars, Malian Romesey’s son was drafted into the war. As happened to many other young men during the early years of the war, Iosif Craven Romesey was killed during a brutal ayodin attack. Struck with both grief and inspired genius, Malian Romesey retired into the Moltenlife lab and emerged a year later, his son born anew. Though it was clearly not his son (and Malian never attempted to claim that he was), this new alchemical being was almost identical to his son and even had a similar - though far from identical - personality.

With this process, Malian and his new son, who simply took Iosif’s middle name, Craven, created more of these human-like living liquids. Unlike normal living liquids, they appear to be entirely solid, and their only truly distinguishing trait from humans is their somewhat pronounced veins. The Romeseys gave them a new name due to their chemical nature. They dubbed them “khemics.”

Moltenlife Chemical Company has become one of the most profitable companies in Khemli since the city’s rebirth. It keeps khemics largely a secret, instead attributing its enormous wealth (often rightfully so) to the living liquids it sells. However, much of the facility is now dedicated to creating new khemics and helping them adjust to life. The company is housed in a large domelike building that sits on the plateau overlooking the river that runs through Khemli. It is ringed in tubes that are used to strain and brew the living liquids and other chemicals that the company keeps.

While the dome largely shows the living liquid brewing areas, Moltenlife has an entire underground labyrinth that it bought from a bankrupt mining company and turned into a maturing area and school for khemics. Khemics are constantly being born and then taught how to survive, often living for years under the Moltenlife plant. The original founder, Malian Romesey, is often ill and can’t watch over the company like he once did. In his place, Craven has taken the company’s mantle

and ensures that the best education is offered to his khemics. He pays scholars exorbitant amounts of money to live among the new khemics and teach them, all the while keeping their secret.

Once a khemic decides to leave Moltenlife, they are introduced into society and taught how to blend in. They are taught how to easily cover their veins with makeup and given a slew of excuses to use if the clearly alchemical substances in them spill out. Many khemics have since become very wealthy, and almost all khemics give money back to Moltenlife, helping to grow their secret race and ensure a solid education for all khemics to come.

Khemics are becoming increasingly common. They've entered every level of human society and taken up every profession. Though most people don't even know of their existence, the khemics form a unique organization of people willing to come together, strive toward similar goals, and ensure that their race continues to survive - and thrive.

Physiology

A khemic is brewed using advanced alchemical procedures to create a chemical heart, a small stone that carries the khemic's essence and physical blueprints. The heart then grows the body around it, forming the human-looking khemic. Fully formed, a khemic is indistinguishable from a regular human minus their more pronounced veins and greater possibility for exotic eye colorations.

They must take great care to avoid injury as even though they recover from damage with exceptional speed their artificial "blood" steams and bubbles when released. Most excuse this as being a form of essence manipulation, or move quickly to hide their injuries and tend to them themselves. More drastic injuries, such as the lost of a limb, have been the most telling breach in the secrecy of the khemics. Khemics, like other fluoforms, are also immune to almost every form of conventional illness as they lack normal organs and biology.

A few rare khemics that have been created recently are made to resemble races of Rilausia other than humans. These are still regularly seen as prototypes at Moltenlife's underground compound and as such, few if any have actually gone out into the wider world.

Lifespan

Though still a young race, khemics show no indication of being a short-lived one. The earliest of them, Craven, does not seem to age normally or even at all according to some. When first formed, khemics do experience a near-human growth pattern, though at a vastly accelerated rate. After this point though, they

seem to halt in their physical aging, looking much like a human in their mid-to-late twenties. Romesey and his scientists have developed an artificial, cosmetic aging method for khemics, though they must routinely visit Moltenlife's labs to keep the process going or reverse it.

Psychology

Khemics are tutored in and virtually indoctrinated into Zel Huad society. They do know more than many southern Hauds about Evanglessian society as well, and are far more accepting of Archduke Zimarati's recent drastic reforms. A khemic behaves most like a typical modern-minded Zel Haud in any given situation, though their greatest weakness is that they far more frequently fit the stereotypes of the newest generation of Zel Hauds and vary less in their individual personalities. Even given that fault, khemics still have enough individuality to pass as human to all but the most perceptive or paranoid.

Amorphides

Though khemics were technically created before Sashura Ivashin publicised amorphides, amorphides are far better known. This is mostly because they cannot hide their true nature like a khemic must. Sashura has also been far more public with her work on them and practically parades the most successful of them around her estate.

While still drafting the initial formulas for the amorphides, Sashura had to move from one of her labs to another to avoid the encroaching ayodin forces. She was finally able to complete her project while hunkered down in her most well-defended facility, known today as the Soul Forge, and guarded by a small army of her own experiments. The amorphides were formed mainly from specially-treated collections of essence rather than alchemical substances. Unlike khemics, which were made to mimic humans to near perfection, Sashura's amorphides were made to fulfill a radically different goal: to give the soul the ability to take on its true form rather than bind it inside a shell of flesh.

Amorphides are made from whole essence refined and treated so that it can maintain a cohesive structure. The first wave of amorphides utilized essence harvested from ayodin invaders as their primary base, but most of these prototypes were eradicated after their confused memories of killing the surface peoples led them to attempt the same on Sashura and her assistants. Due to the limited availability of sufficiently purified essence, the specific alchemical supplies needed for

creating amorphides, and their exceptionally obvious nature, amorphides have only seen limited exposure to the wider world. What exposure they have had has proven their effectiveness and potential in many fields, at least inside of Zelhost.

The Fountain of the Soul Forge

The vast majority of all current amorphides originate from Sashura's primary lab, the Soul Forge. There, she takes the distilled essence that she and her associates have acquired from fresh corpses (that they are usually not the cause of) and mixes it with specialized versions of the chemicals used in the creation of living liquids. Rather than becoming something like Malian Romesey's khemics, which consist of an essence-filled core surrounded in an alchemical body, this treated essence constitutes the entirety of the amorphide and lacks any centralized core.

Physiology

While living liquids can come in any shape (or lack thereof), amorphides are all humanoid because the vast majority of the essence used to create them comes from the humanoid races of Rilausia. However, amorphides vary greatly as their forms are both semifluid and a mixture of the forms of the individuals the amorphide's essence comes from. The height, weight, and general appearance of each amorphide has no norm, but they do all share a few features. They still appear to be made of the same slimelike material that standard living liquids are made of, though amorphides have colorations more closely resembling that of the persons their essence came from and their skin-like outer membrane is substantially thicker. Amorphides are a bit lighter than humanoids of equal size due to their semiliquid state.

Amorphides resemble chimeric humanoids due to their patchwork features. An amorphide might have thick, powerful elven legs holding up a lean human frame with arms that seem a bit too long for their body. Their features can shift between those of the individuals that their essence comes from, slowly changing color and shape. Most of the time this seems to happen without the amorphide's intent. An amorphide's face may resemble that of a human one moment then shift into the face of an elf, depending on the stability of that particular amorphide and how much of each race's essence it contains. Amorphides' features seem to shift faster when they are excited or under duress.

Amorphides have voracious appetites to maintain their large stores of essence. They must also consume substances

laden with heavy chemicals to stay cohesive and at least semi-stable. The combination of these two requirements has led many amorphides to carry large sacks of chemically-soaked meats with them when they travel. As this is an expensive practice, many amorphides instead resort to more questionable methods of sustenance.

Lifespan

Though they do not appear to evaporate like normal living liquids, amorphides slowly deteriorate just like most alchemical substances. Based on current average calculations, an amorphide will begin experiencing chemical degradation after about sixty years. They start to behave even more erratically and their features will become even less distinct and more unstable. It is theorized that it can take as long as ten more years for the amorphide to completely fall apart physically and mentally after this point. However, with the varying lifespans of the races from which the amorphides' essence is harvested, these calculations are not entirely reliable.

Amorphides are entirely incapable of reproducing, neither with each other nor any other race. However, they are exceptionally good carriers for the essence virus created by Zulu-ria Lutrixen that allows for the birth of the hybrid races. Coming from mixed vats of refined essence, many amorphides are made with the Sapience virus already inside them and can easily pass it on to others. If they are not already carriers and come into contact with a person who is, an amorphide is guaranteed to become a carrier.

Psychology

The personalities of amorphides are just as patchwork as their bodies. Many amorphides have multiple and shifting personalities. This is all due to the mixed backgrounds and origins of the essence from which the amorphide is made. Some may be quite normal according to their primary race, while others may resemble another race but act almost like the feral animals that comprise most of their essence. Amorphides universally have bizarre perspectives in social interactions with their mixed-up personality/personalities, making them a bit unpredictable at times. Amorphides are a living cocktail of random personalities, and their behavior reflects this.

Amorphides are "born" fully formed from the cradletubes of the Soul Forge. They are initially isolated from those they could harm and are given time with a well-armored veteran lab technician to adjust to their ever-shifting biology and to work through the issues of their discordant memories. Those who fail

to adjust are typically liquidated, re-filtered, and distilled back into a new amorphide. For those who pass the initial tests, they receive a rudimentary supply of clothing and other basic needs and are shipped off to one of Sashura's few "foster homes" for amorphides.

There they learn and adjust more until deemed fit enough to operate on their own without increased supervision. Some choose to stay and take more time to either acclimate themselves to their reality or to help other amorphides in their transition. Most choose to leave the facility and try and make a new life for themselves. The most noteworthy and compatible are taken to Sashura Ivashin's estate to be used as shining examples of their creator's brilliance. Some have even come to view themselves as her true children, a notion she actually finds flattering and reinforces her feelings of superiority over traditional alchemists and other bio-fluxxers.

The single greatest failure that amorphides have is that the majority of their "first drafts" are entirely insane, typically from the horrifying amalgamation of personalities within them. A single amorphide may go through a dozen iterations before being deemed cohesive enough to function. This does not mean that the amorphide is free of defects, just that they are stable enough to make the remaining defects not necessarily crippling. There are plenty of "finalized" amorphides that still have major manias, phobias, delusions, and/or "quirks" that affect them severely, though usually not enough to prevent them from getting through an average day.

Homunculi

Homunculi are technically the oldest of all of the fluoforms, with their original invention having occurred within little more than a year before the beginning of the Hurricane Wars. They are also the most populous of the fluoforms, though the newest in their ascension to sentience. This is because they are the least sophisticated or ambitious fluoform made to date.

In their original design, homunculi are simplistic and simple-minded, but near-permanent, humanoid living liquid servants. These types of homunculi still outnumber their sentient brethren because they are easier to make. However, a team of both Zel Haud and Evanglessian sci-

entists near Essenbrooke in Evangless saw the potential of improving their formula with essence to grant homunculi a greater degree of autonomy and intelligence. They did so by engineering essence cores much like those in khemics and implanting them in existing homunculi to serve as a control cluster.

To expand further on the standard template for homunculi, they also instilled them with the ability to produce extra chemicals that could be used immediately. This has allowed the scientists to contract out some of the homunculi they have made as medics, advanced laborers, and even soldiers at times. Having this option and how well it has paid off has led to the creation of even larger numbers of intelligent homunculi by other scientists, with mixed results. Some have simply ended up making regular homunculi that just perform their assigned tasks faster or are only able to mimic real awareness to some degree.

Physiology

Fluoform homunculi are normally formed much like the living liquid servants from which they take their name. Vaguely human in shape, they also resemble them closely with their large eye sockets and lack of many human features. However, they still have a significant amount of essence in them, just not nearly as much as amorphides or even khemics. This essence is held in the core embedded in their chests. Their core is different than the ones in normal homunculi in that it is both larger and more rigidly structured; some even sport bone-like plating for protection. Fluoform homunculi also stand straighter, are far more obviously aware of their surroundings, and typically move much faster and with more direction.

They also differentiate from regular homunculi in that they all can be further modified alchemically so that they may act as miniaturized alchemical factories on their own. This changes their internal formula significantly and actually makes them vulnerable to conventional, physical attacks, unlike normal homunculi, which are only vulnerable to damage from energy such as electricity or heat.

Lifespan

Fluoform homunculi do not physically grow and are the same shape and size throughout their lives. Some do

undergo modifications to alter their appearance, though, usually to add actual physical features to their body to better fit in with the other races. Homunculi are believed to be much like khemics in that their lifespans are only limited by their ability to maintain internal stability. They are also incapable of normal reproduction.

Psychology

Fluoform homunculi are typically mild-mannered, not normally expressing extreme emotions. Some have become touchy about others assuming them to be mindless due to their physical resemblance of actually mindless liquid servants, though this is entirely understandable. Homunculi stay focused on whatever they are doing at the time, occasionally to the exclusion of everything else. Though this makes them exceed at fulfilling assignments given to them by both themselves or others, it can lead to severe obsessions over difficult tasks without clear completion conditions. Aside from these typical traits, homunculi actually display an impressive range of personality archetypes, though not as many as amorphides; however, they are decidedly not nearly as likely to gain derangements or disorders as their essence-cocktailed kin.

Roleplaying Tips

Playing as one form or another of what is essentially living alchemy brings with it unique considerations for roleplay. Most people do not recognize fluoforms as people at all and treat them like walking experiments or possibly affronts to nature in some cases. Khemics can avoid these issues almost entirely, but must always keep up their act as a human without slipping, and quickly cover up mistakes. A khemic who is found out to be an artificially created being can cause enormous fallout and can potentially face extreme violence or forced experimentation should their mask slip.

Things are always complicated for an amorphide. Both your appearance and personality (or personalities, as the case may be) are unique. You likely suffer from one or more forms of mania, phobia, and/or delusion. Most other races see you as an extremely odd form of living liquid at best. Many people hate amorphides due to their origin, and removing the essence needed to create them from both the living and dead is illegal in most countries other than

Zelhost. This makes violent prejudice towards amorphides practically guaranteed in regions most against bio-flux. Elves and gnomes in particular find amorphides unnatural, though Haudi humans and farishtaas are more likely to treat amorphides as wonderful advancements in science and as living proof of bio-flux and alchemy's potential for generating unique creations.

Homunculi face constant bias for their resemblance of the original, simple-minded liquid servants of the same name. People will typically assume you incapable of proper reasoning or of having emotions at all. Some don't like the surprise of finding out just how mentally and physically capable you really are and may try to belittle or degrade you. As a potential upshot to people assuming you of not being aware, you can get away with a lot of things by playing dumb and staying quiet. You may also simply not be noticed in areas where regular homunculi are more common.

Handling Lasting Injuries

All called shots, wounds, and fatal effects act the same way for fluoforms as they do for other races. Fluoforms can still lose limbs and replace them with prosthetics with the same effects as they have for the other races. Bleeding effects take the form of leaking internal material while broken bones are simply lingering disruptions to the inner membranes of the limb or body. Khemics react to such effects more similar to a real human, though this is mostly from their being taught how to act almost perfectly human.

Note: All three types of fluoforms share much of the same internal characteristics and many of the same substances are used in their creations. As such, they share the most of the same basic traits and have access to the same random racial traits.

Traits of a Fluoform

Speed: You have an average land speed of 25 feet and an average swim and climbing speed of 15 feet.

Scorch Proof: Your makeup is slightly more fireproof than the standard for living liquids. At least you retain some

increased resistance, granting you a +3 bonus to resisting burns and being caught on fire.

Conductive Dispersal: Your unusual biology makes you an excellent grounding point for electrical energy. You take half as much damage as you normally would from electrical attacks. For example, if an enemy hit you with a weapon with a Marque II Electrical augment you would only take 1 electrical damage from the augment.

Choose one of the following racial traits.

Amorphide: Being basically made of purified essence, your essence is much easier to manipulate simply because there is more of it. You gain an extra essence augment slot, bringing your normal count up to four. Additionally, your physical features are constantly subtly shifting between those of the various individuals your essence is from. Your inconsistent shape and semi-fluid body grants you +1 to evade, but you suffer a -2 penalty to defense.

Khemic: Made to mimic humans, you can easily pass for one. Well-versed in social graces, you gain a +3 to Cunning whenever interacting with people. You regain two wounds per day rather than one, recover from wound effects twice as quickly, and can regrow a single called shot location during a downtime.

Homunculus: You are made of far more chemicals than essence, causing you to have only two essence slots. However, you have the ability to modify yourself to produce alchemical substances. Choose between acids, gases, medicines, or poisons. You can apply alchemy augments of that type to yourself, though they take up slots on your essence. This choice cannot be changed after character creation without narrator approval. You can produce a substance with any combination of the augments that you have applied to yourself for 2 AP. This substance acts as a contact potion or single-space gas. You are immune to any alchemical substance that you produce from your body, both good and bad, and must use 6 AP before emitting another “dose.” See the Alchemical Abilities sidebar below for more details.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Alchemical Oddity:** Not only are you sentient slime, but you are unreactive to products of alchemy (at least the harmful sorts). You gain a +4 to resisting acids, poisons, and gases.
2. **Combustive Grasp:** You were made to burn. You lose your Scorch Proof trait but gain the ability to set a target you are grabbing on Tier 1 fire for 2 AP. The tier of this fire increases to 2 when you reach level 8, though the AP cost increases by 1 AP to generate this higher tier. When you activate this ability, the target can reflexively attempt to break your grip for 1 AP to avoid the fire (using their Dexterity or Brute, as per normal for breaking free of grabs).
3. **Fearsome Form:** One or two parts of your physical features come from animalistic essence. Conveniently, they are also quite handy for ripping through enemies with your bare something-or-others. Your unarmed damage class increases to 4.
4. **Grounded:** Your creator found a way of making you even less conductive without compromising your formula completely. You can soak electrical damage like normal damage and gain a +1 to your soak to do so.
5. **Hydrophobic:** Your outer membrane repels water, letting it roll off of you as well as allowing you to skim across bodies of water without sinking. You can move at your normal land speed across the surface of water as long as you aren't weighed down too much, but you cannot swim faster than 5 feet per AP if submerged as your membrane continues to repel the water around you.
6. **Lightning Rod:** While you still ground electrical charges like any other fluoform, you are just slightly more conductive. This lets you vent electrical energy into people or objects you are in contact with, causing them to take the same amount of electrical damage that you do.
7. **Pure Strain:** Your essence came exclusively from a single major race of your choice: ayodin, elves, far-ishtaas, gnomes, humans, or satyrs. Your movement speeds change to match that race's speed and you may roll for one trait from that race's random traits. You gain all physical features typical of that race or that are required for the random racial trait you receive.

Non-khemics still are clearly slimelike, but can try to disguise this with concealing clothing and lots of makeup. Khemics with this trait perfectly mimic their chosen race, at least externally.

8. **Rigid Design:** Your physical form is highly stable and does not shift, ooze, or change at all (unless you get an arm chopped off or something). You are also more resilient due to this heightened state of stability. Amorphides lose both their evade bonus and defense penalty and instead gain a +4 to defense. Non-amorphides gain only the defense bonus.
9. **Slick:** Whether it's from your slimy secretions or just having your outer membrane be near frictionless, you are very hard to grab hold of or keep a grip on. You gain a +2 to evading grabs and a +5 to breaking out if them.
10. **Squeezer:** Normally the bodily material of the different fluoforms is nearly incompressible, but yours was made with a squishier formula. You may fit yourself into or push yourself through any gap wider than a couple of inches while you are unarmored or in unrestricting minimal armor. Any movement made while squeezing suffers a -15 speed penalty per AP, but your speed cannot go below 5.
11. **Unsightly Undulations:** Your face and some other features can distort and rapidly fluctuate on command. Using this to your advantage, you gain a +4 to intimidation and provocation rolls.
12. **Viscous Veins:** The substances within you are thick and syrupy, unable to escape easily even when you are cut badly. You tier up all resists against bleeding effects and stop an additional 3 points of bleeding when you use an AP to patch yourself up. It also costs one less AP to stop you from bleeding out from a fatal effect.

Alchemical Abilities

Fluoform homunculi can have their essence augmented with alchemy augments by any alchemist who knows the augment(s). The augments must be made using proper materials rather than DIY. A homunculus is not affected by any substance they produce from their own body, but can be affected by the same augments if they are from a source outside of their own body (such as a bottled potion).

If the alchemist adding the augments has the prototype specialty for the related craft, they can treat the homunculus as if they have four augment slots for alchemy. If the homunculus is the alchemist applying the augments to themselves, they only need the beta specialty for the related craft to gain these two extra slots. These extra slots still take up the same slots added by the beta or prototype essence manipulation specialties.

Triggering acid, medicine, or poison augments coats a portion of a homunculus's "skin" that they choose in a contact medicine with those augments, making the next person they touch, grab, or make a successful unarmed attack against receive the excreted dose. Triggering gas augments releases a gas with those augments either within the homunculus's space or in one space adjacent to them.

Acids, poisons, and medicines secreted by the homunculus expire at the end of the next turn after they are secreted. Gases expelled by a homunculus dissipate at twice their typical rate. Specialties that expand the number of effective slots for essence augments the homunculus has does not increase the number of slots available for alchemical augments. Poisons emitted in this way can be used to coat a weapon for 3 AP as per usual, but still expire at the end of the homunculus's next turn.

Gleedrin

The Ember Knight

Born into the royal Haudi territory of Siyesh, Alara Sibrikov's interest in the science of bio-flux started at a young age. Her family owned a factory where she was free to experiment, but she quickly enlisted into the imperial military to learn more. Her first assignment was guard duty in a bio-engineering factory much like the one owned by her parents. The assignment furthered her thirst for knowledge in the field of bio-flux and over the next two years she proved to be invaluable to her post. Afterwards, she requested to be assigned deeper into the factory as the personal guard of Dr. Sokorov. There she served more as an assistant than anything else, learning the doctor's methods and sharing insights into their designs.

In the year 680 RE, Duke Alzitroi VIII of Siyesh created the first steam engine. Alara was granted special access to the unveiling in Malvalla due to her incredible performance over the years. As she watched the Duke, she became enamored with him. Impressed by his charisma and his genius, she requested reassignment to be his personal guard the next day. Largely in part to the personal vote of confidence by Dr. Sokorov, Alara was granted her request and became the personal guard and assistant to Duke Alzitroi VIII. As the duke worked to improve and integrate his steam engine into the rest of the Haudi Empire, he moved across Rilausia to the province of Zelhost. Alara dutifully followed him, acting as his right hand and the head of those factories they visited that he did not have time to watch over himself. Great war machines began to be built in these factories for the glory of the Haudi Empire. As Alara oversaw their construction, rumors began to spread of nearby villages within western Zelhost becoming restless and wishing to break free from haudi rule.

Alara was given orders by Duke Alzitroi VIII to quell the unrest on behalf of the Empress. She took a minimal military force with her to the town of Ostburn. She walked among the

people in the town, meeting them, becoming friends with them. She appropriated military funds to order some very peculiar, very unique synthetic foods to be created within the factories of nearby cities and had them shipped en masse to Ostburn. For six months, she gave those foods to the people of Ostburn, gaining their trust. But the whispers continued and plots were still being overheard in town of ways to throw off their Zel Haud oppressors. A small rebellion occurred in the town of Handreven just a little ways to the east and orders came down from the top to ensure that no rebellion happened again. For the glory of the Empire, Ostburn was commanded to be made an example of. In honor of Duke Alzitroi VIII, Alara was ready to comply.

Alara Sibrikov ordered Ostburn put to the torch. She called in the military contingency she had stationed nearby to burn everyone in the town alive. The whole of the city was engulfed in flames and screams broke the soot filled sky. However, once the fires had whimpered out many of the people of Ostburn still lived. They had been transformed.

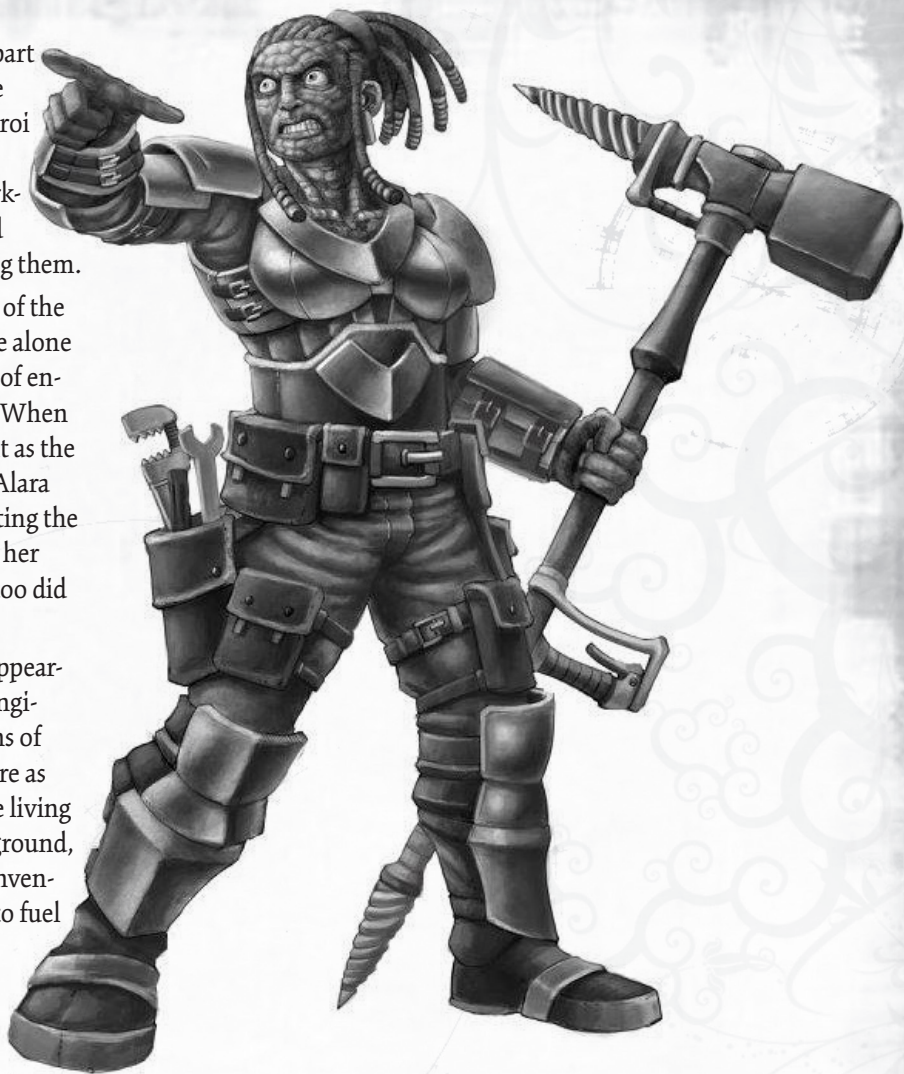
Alara had known all along during her months of occupation about the continued whispers and plots. The food she had been feeding the people was bio-engineered to slowly alter their anatomy, preparing them for the moment when Alara's grand experiment was ready to be completed. The final step of the process was burning them, triggering a horrifically painful reaction within them. Their skin smoldered like coal, but the fire did not seriously harm them. It weakened them, their skin was scorched black, and their nerves lit up with pain - but they survived. Alara's experiment proved successful. She had created a new type of people; the gleedrin.

Still burning, the gleedrin tried to retaliate but found themselves still vulnerable from their transformation. They quickly realized that they now needed a massive amount of food to sustain themselves due to the fire's damage to their bodies. With only Alara being able to supply them with food befitting their new diets, they became dependent on her. They worked and burned as

human coals in the engines of the haudi war machines, part of Alara's masterful plan to create a twofold powersource and workforce that would please her beloved Duke Alzitroi VIII. The gleedrin worked in the engines and mined the deepest caverns for Alara, becoming an unstoppable workforce that could handle the harsh conditions. They could burn like coal; hurting their bodies, but rarely ever killing them.

Alara Sibrikov was knighted and given the title of the Ember Knight. She alone controlled the gleedrin and she alone swore loyalty to Duke Alzitroi VIII, giving him an army of engineers that could be used as fuel in his massive engines. When his son Alzitroi IX mistakenly allowed Vasylis to be built as the beginnings of the Evanglessian rebellion, the duke sent Alara with her gleedrin to tear down the walls of steam protecting the city. Alara disappeared shortly after the order was given, her location and fate unknown. With her disappearance so too did the gleedrin vanish.

Nearly two centuries have passed since the disappearance of the Ember Knight and her army of smoldering engineers. Sightings of the creatures still permeate the taverns of Zelhost and southern Evangless, but they are treated more as myth or are assumed to be long dead. Unknown to those living in the light of the sun, the gleedrin still live deep in the ground, mining ever deeper and creating powerful engines and inventions based heavily on those that they were once forced to fuel with their transmuted bodies.



An Escape into

the Cradle of the Earth

Although even the gleedrin do not remember the exact events of the Ember Knight's disappearance or their own retreat from the surface, it is assumed that the original gleedrin killed the Ember Knight and fled into the bowels of the earth to avoid the Haudi Empire's wrath. Little history from this time exists, but the gleedrin know that few of them survived the first few years after their descent into the depths. Their incredible appetites were not able to be fulfilled by the scarce sustenance they could find and fear kept them from returning to the surface. Fortunately, the survivors came across an underground cavern where they found a plentiful supply of hearty and thankfully edible fungus as well as animals who fed on it. Over time, the gleedrin learned to cultivate these and other underground plants and animals to sustain themselves.

As the gleedrin secured their immediate survival, they began to recover and grow their numbers. While excavating and expanding the original cavern they came to call home, they

discovered that a second stroke of incredible luck had befallen them. The depths they had fled to contained vast stores of useful minerals and ores. They began digging deeper and further outward, creating vast networks of tunnels and reinventing the technologies they had known on the surface. Though able to utilize their own bodies to fuel their machines, progress was still slow at first to replicate the more advanced technologies of the surface that they had been unable to bring with them.

Over time, clans formed within the gleedrin population. With the best gleedrin for the job being appointed leader(s) of each clan, these clans took names from the various minerals and metals most commonly found around them. Becoming fiercely loyal to their own clans, many small wars were waged among the gleedrin under the feet of those on the surface. In recent years, peace has blossomed as large locomotives were built to connect their underground passageways, facilitating communication, travel, and trade between the clans. Fights between clans still occur from time to time, though many have

gotten past this due to the increase in trade and the availability of resources and crafting materials caused by the locomotives. Inspired by the engines that power these trains, the gleedrin have become accustomed to placing engines on everything they can to enhance its abilities.

Gleedrin remain largely removed from the societies of the surface, though some limited contact has been made. No surface dweller has yet to visit the underground cities of the gleedrin, but some gleedrin have finally dared return to the lands that know the warmth of the near mythical sun. As their tunnels expanded, the gleedrin reached past the borders of Zelhost into Evangless and it is in these two nations that the rare gleedrin can be found the most.

Physiology

The gleedrin as they exist now are a stocky humanoid race, though they are decidedly not human. Their skin sports the shades of smoldering charcoal and cracks where creases and folds of skin should be, glowing from the fires underneath. Hearty and stout, they are accustomed to the dangers of the caverns they mine. In the depths of their tunnels, the air is not always safe for a human to breathe yet the gleedrin find little difficulty dealing with oxygen deprivation or sulfurous fumes. Assumed to have excellent sight in the dark, their proclivity to burn and glow actually has prevented them from developing this trait.

Both male and female gleedrin can grow thick heads of hair quickly and some even grow enormous beards. The other races assume them to take great pride in their hair, but this is utterly unfounded as gleedrin care nothing for the mass of flammable growth sprouting from them. The various metal headbands and apparent decorations they place in their hair are actually meant to keep their hair out of the way before it is consumed when they are burned in their work. They also incorporate a large amount of metal into their everyday garb to keep it from burning away from their skin. Treated leathers and thick, heat resistant materials are a must for a gleedrin to maintain their decency. At least, what a gleedrin considers decent.

Those gleedrin who do venture to the far off surface feel lighter (and sometimes vulnerable) without the weight of the earth firmly above them. They are also invigorated by the richness of the air. Not accustomed to having to cover great distances on foot, gleedrin still benefit from an incredible endurance and swiftness unknown to them in the cramped, thin aired confines of their tunnels. One curiosity common to all gleedrin is how they react to the cold and waters not heated by nearby pools of magma. For them, cool breezes and streams are a bizarre yet almost intoxicating concept. Some react to these sensations with fear, others with childish glee at the novelty. Intense and sudden

Gleedrin Technology

Gleedrin possess much the same technology as that of the surface nations. They have focused on metalworking, magnetism, and utilizing crystalline materials more than the other races though. Most gleedrin have an intuitive grasp of how any given metal can be shaped and utilized. At the same time, they lack an understanding of graviton spheres or conventional alchemy as well as certain aspects of bio-flux. As such, gleedrin will treat the technologies of the surface with either extreme familiarity or singular bewilderment and curiosity. Additionally, many gleedrin tools and weapons are interchangeable in their uses to save on materials and time. Swords that can drill into and pry open cracks in the rocks as well as pickaxes and war mauls that shiver with pulverizing vibrations are relatively common in gleedrin society.

cold is highly painful to them though. High winds can act as bellows to their inner fire, setting them alight and potentially burning everything around them.

Lifespan: Gleedrin share the same lifespan and aging process as the humans they once were. At least, this holds true for those who do not burn too often or too fiercely. For such individuals, life can be as much as twenty years shorter than the average.

Psychology

The fire inside their body fuels a gleedrin's passion and creativity. Though reserved and stoic around those outside their home clan, gleedrin can be as rowdy and boisterous as any satyr among friendly company. Some may even share the strange fungus-based ales of their people with somebody worth sharing it with. Intensely proud yet curious, gleedrin prefer handling things themselves, especially when it comes to technology they are not familiar with (which is rare). Used to consuming parts of themselves to fuel their machines and progress, gleedrin see martyrdom as just another part of life and make no special note or ceremony about it. This trend of self-consumption also makes them insanely devoted workers, tireless and stubbornly efficient. As with the concept of martyrdom, gleedrin see hard and near endless work as the norm. A life of luxury and ease does not suit them and encountering others in such positions confuses them. Nobles of the surface and their ilk are likely to be seen as lazy, soft, and stupid, all traits seen as taboo within the various gleedrin clans' cultures.

A gleedrin finds any challenge difficult to back down from, especially one that allows them to show off the strengths of their

clan and people. They face their problems head on, but not recklessly. Every gleedrin tries to ensure the survival of their legacy, be it their spouse(s), children, inventions, or personal ideals. For them, death is not sorrowful because of the loss of a life but because of the loss of the many things yet to be built, unfinished work left behind, or plans left unfulfilled. A gleedrin who dies doing what they love and who leaves behind a grand legacy of inventions and family is celebrated as a hero of their clan. Gleedrin do not bury or inter their dead, but place them into the bellows of the furnaces or engines that they worked on so their body may fuel the fires one last time.

As of the current time, gleedrin view the other races with only mild curiosity. They do not hold themselves above or below the others, though they can be dismissive of racial issues that do not involve them. The various clans each have their own methods of education, governance, and industry. Some clans are ruled by a single gleedrin, others form councils or work on a fully communal basis. As such, the gleedrin are almost as culturally varied as humans.

Roleplaying Tips

Transitioning between the tunnels below and the surface above is almost like traveling to an entirely new world with oddly familiar traits. You are not used to the sun or the regular cycle of day and night. Nothing is stopping you from adjusting to this, but it can be disorienting at first. Your mindset can be greatly different than those around you, especially since they are far more likely to overreact to your appearance than you are to theirs. You must always be mindful of the drastic increase in flammable materials around you and strive to keep your inner fire contained to avoid burning the surface dwellers or their less metallic constructs.

Traits of a Gleedrin

Speed: Gleedrin have a slightly reduced land speed of 20 feet and a lowered swim speed of 10 feet, but have an improved climb speed of 20 feet.

Accustomed to Fire: A gleedrin who is on fire or takes heat damage suffers only half of the normal damage. They can swim in lava, though this does not let them breath if sub-



merged in lava. Gleadrin are entirely immune to burns from fire or heat. Heat damage causes you to catch on Tier 1 fire. When on fire, anything you come in contact with can potentially catch fire as well. Living creatures can roll a Dexterity resist to tier down the fire you try to spread to them.

Buried Breath: The frequently dangerous atmospheres in the bowels of the earth have rendered your lungs far more effective at keeping you alive regardless of what you breathe. You tier up resists against gases or rolls to hold your breath.

Shocking Cold: Though cool temperatures are intoxicating to gleadrin, bitter cold causes them far more pain than the other races. The effects of ice or cold-related conditions and/or augments is always treated as one tier or marque higher for you.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Beacon:** Your inner fire shows through your cracked skin more than other gleadrin, allowing you to light up the area around you without much effort or even actually burning. You can illuminate 10 feet around you and also create a small amount of heat while doing so. This effect is repressible at will and cannot overcome artificially created darkness (like that created by an item). When alight, your illumination increases 10 feet in range per tier of the fire affecting you.
2. **Born Engineer:** Understanding the inner workings of engines and constructs powered by them comes easily to you. You begin with 2 skill points in Engineering and may add your starting points there as per normal.
3. **Branding Touch:** Your body radiates blistering heat at all times. Anyone coming in contact with you or anything metal that you have been in contact with for at least a turn takes heat damage based on your level, starting at 1 heat damage. This increases to 2 damage at level 4 and 3 damage at level 8. Specialties and augments like Hot Iron under prosthetics or Body of Flames under essence manipulations stack with this.
4. **Cavern Carver:** You know the toil of manually excavating tunnels with the might of your muscles, a tradition carried on in your clan. Even without a tool, you can dig through the earth barehanded. You gain a 15 foot dig speed and you may tunnel through sand and soft soil with ease. You may roll Brute to try and dig through tougher materials as determined by the tier of your roll and the Narrator's call.
5. **Coal Dust:** Your skin sheds fine soot slowly but constantly. This soot is highly flammable just like yourself, but its powdery form makes it burn much faster. You can cause yourself to shed extra dust at will for 1 AP, causing whatever you coat in this dust to be far more susceptible to burns and fire. A living creature can try to avoid this dust by rolling their Dexterity against your accuracy. Anything coated in your dust tiers down any resist against being burned or set on fire and is caught on Tier 1 fire if it takes heat damage. Once the target is burned or set on fire, the dust is consumed.
6. **Efficiency Above All:** Nothing matters more than using everything you have to the fullest extent. As such, you and all nearby companions gain a +1 to DiY. This does not stack with multiple gleadrin with this trait.
7. **Extinguishing Experience:** You are used to putting out fires on your skin so you only burn for a brief period of time. As such, it costs you 2 fewer AP to put out a fire, effectively allowing you to put out Tier 1 fires for 0 AP.
8. **Inert Coal:** You stand apart from your kin in that your skin no longer burns at all and the glow of the cracks in your skin is dull and almost nonexistent. You do not catch on fire for any reason but still take damage from it if exposed to something else that is burning or if you are engulfed in it (such as swimming in lava).
9. **Living Wick:** You are able to draw fires into yourself and then expel them elsewhere. When you successfully extinguish a fire, you can absorb it for 1 AP reflexively. At any given time before your next breather, you can spend 2 AP to unleash this fire onto an adjacent space. If the space is occupied, your target can try to dodge the fire like a regular attack. If they do not evade, they are subject to the effects of the tier of fire you absorbed.
10. **Tunnel Sense:** Tight spaces and dark enclosures suit you better than open areas anyway. You are attuned to the movement of air in tunnels as well as elevations and angles of ascent and descent, allowing you to navigate enclosed spaces easily even without being able to see. You tier up all rolls to navigate inside or underground.
11. **Work to Do:** Even when it hurts, you get the job done. You can spend 1 AP each turn to ignore the effects of a single called shot or wound and can ignore an additional effect per additional AP spent to do so. You cannot ignore wounds to your chest or groin.
12. **Worthy Challenge:** Facing something worthy of your clan's strength gets your blood really pumping. When using Heroics (found under the Spirit attribute), roll twice and take the higher result.



Karshin

During the Hurricane Wars, the armies of the surface utilized massive aether resonators to superheat seawater in an effort to wipe out great swaths of the invading ayodins' armies. Not all of the massive ships housing these enormous aether lances survived their battles, leaving many radioactive hulks split open on the shores and in the depths as well. Both sides of the war also unleashed bio-fluxed abominations, engineered diseases, and other crimes against nature upon each other. Within one particularly bloody region in Paldorus where these methods were widely used, an aggressive trend of mutations arose amongst the ayodin fighters. Ayodin survivors of the frequent battles began mutating into more monstrous forms, regardless of whether they were ayodin of the Exodus or those of the invading forces. Rapid physical

degradation claimed most of them, but a portion of the afflicted survived their mutations, at least at first. The vast majority of these afflicted ayodin became feral and were slaughtered or abandoned by their allies. The survivors and descendants of these remaining few are the karshin.

The karshin are shunned by most of the saltwater ayodin tribes, as well as many of the ayodin of the surface, for their more savage physical forms and in fear of their possible violent insanities. Now mostly residing in either secluded shallows, unclaimed inland lakes and rivers, or the deepest reaches of the ocean, the karshin strive to find a place where their fierce impulses can be contained. Some still seek to treat their physical and mental maladies, risking violent discrimination in the cities of the surface or the sea in exchange for help in their plight. A small portion of karshin indulge in their warped instincts, allowing themselves to follow the path their feral brethren were forced into rather than try and fit into the societies that banished them.

Physiology

Karshin resemble the ayodin they once were, but they have become more like sharks after their exposure to radiation and bioengineered toxins. Karshin have tiny, tooth-like scales all over their bodies and rows of serrated teeth in their wide jaws. Most karshin appear to have pointed fingernails, but these are in fact simply larger scales at their fingertips. Their wing-fins appear more like fish fins in and out of the water and do not actually assist with their evasiveness like the ayodins' jellyfish-like wing-fins. Some karshin have an additional, smaller dorsal fin between the shoulder blades of their wing-fins, but it does not seem to assist them with swimming. There are some karshin whose wing-fins have mutated into masses of tentacles, though these karshin are feral more often than not. Karshin are colored similar to saltwater ayodin, but tend to have a much lighter coloration on their abdomens and the undersides of their arms and legs. If you were to stand an ayodin next to a karshin, you may notice the mild skeletal distortion of the karshin and the slightly higher muscle mass. All karshin have blank black eyes with a metallic sheen and no pupils.

First generation karshin tend to suffer from degenerative diseases, as their biology was directly altered by exposure to radiation and biochemical weaponry. These exposures also left many burns, scars and other unsightly marks on the original karshin. Second generation and on karshin do not tend to have this biological weakness or markings, as their biochemistry is more stable than that of their parents and they are rarely exposed to the lingering contamination left by the war.

Lifespan

The karshin have slightly shorter lives than humans, but they physically mature with extreme speed, becoming fully developed within only half a year. Their mental maturity still takes about the same time to fully develop, but it is not unheard of for an eight-year-old karshin to have the same level of cognitive acuity as a teenaged human. First generation karshin do not breed often as many were rendered sterile, and a large portion of those who weren't either lack mates or refuse to subject any possible offspring to the lives they themselves are forced to lead. Karshin still experience a modest population growth due to their rapid maturity and the instinctive endeavors of feral karshin, who are fully capable of producing both feral and stable offspring. The

Transformed in Tempests

A little less than two thirds of the karshin alive today are those transformed directly into karshin during the Hurricane Wars sixteen years ago. The majority of them are feral, but those with minds still intact still remember the weapons both sides wielded against each other. Karshin who were once ayodin of the Exodus as well as those who fought against the surface are both well aware of the horrors of war, and this knowledge has left marks on not just their bodies. Karshin were driven off and in some cases exterminated by those who had been closest to them. Playing a first generation karshin brings with it the difficulties of trauma in your character. Second or even conceivably third generation karshin (as rare and young as they'd be) would still have to contend with the marks left on their personalities by societies that see them as little better than monsters, though they do not have firsthand memories of war and the beginning of exile.

latter occasionally seek out others capable of reason due to the disconnect they have with their mindless parents.

Psychology

Karshin are aggressive but not necessarily violent. If they become involved in violence, however, they throw everything into it and will typically not stop until the opponent is a bloody mass. They are aware of their frenzy in battle and will hold it back in public areas, but will consciously unleash it in battle. Overall, karshin behave much the same as ayodin, but are more brash and prone to sudden passionate outbursts. They also hold grudges for longer and with more anger and resentment, but this is more due to their treatment by the other races than any

biological cause.

Sane karshin are divided between those who wish to live the remainder of their lives away from the rest of the world, resigned to their condition, and those who strive to find a cure or at least something to counteract their illnesses and instabilities. Karshin in the first camp hold a slight majority as the world has proven itself to be arguably more inhospitable to them than even the elves. Some of this first group have taken their isolation to the extreme, traveling across the vast oceans to find a place where even their ayodin brethren do not live. Those in the second camp are subdivided into two more groups: those who work alone or with other karshin and the more open-minded ayodin, and those who brave the potential cruelties of the surface and seek help from any who would be capable.

Most first generation karshin were once warrior ayodin, usually those who were on the front lines of the Hurricane Wars. They may have been part of the forces that attacked the surface or those who had fled during the Exodus. These karshin frequently feel betrayed by their ayodin kin as they gave themselves up for the cause (whichever one it may be) and were driven out and discarded when their bodies and minds were altered. Of course, there are those karshin who were changed into what they are now because they were among the fighters rather than fighters themselves, tending to the wounded and refusing to leave their patients when the changes began. These former battlefield medics and doctors are more likely to have a more extreme bitterness or a stubborn sense of duty driving them than those who were active combatants.

Roleplaying Tips

Karshin are considered abominations by most, and therefore possess a constant distrust of non-karshin. Similar to crazaks, the karshin find it hard to ignore their baser instincts, especially around non-karshin and non-ayodin. Though they can control themselves around ayodin, they are often shunned by them. Karshin harbor a lot of anger and pain, as many are rejected by their own extended family. They find it exceptionally hard to trust others, and stay near other karshin for companionship and safety. A karshin in any other environment will face discrimination and paranoia. Karshin braving the light of day can be confrontational and defensive, learned reactions to their outcast nature.

Traits of a Karshin

Speed: You have an average land speed of 25 feet, a great swim speed of 30 feet, but only a 10 foot climb speed.

Sharkskin Grip: Your scales have small barbs on them,

making it easier for you to maintain your grip on anything you are grabbing, giving you a +3 bonus to do so. You are also easier to grip, granting anyone grabbing you a +3 bonus to maintain their grab.

Predatory: You are more likely to get carried away by the thrill of fighting and bring more to bear against your foes. You gain an additional +2 strike.

Blood in the Water: You are capable of tracking any organic creature or material by smell and gain a +2 to Cunning to do so. This bonus increases to +4 if you are using fresh blood to track the target.

Glint in the Void: Your eyes are blank plains of darkness which constantly gleam with a seemingly sinister light. Regardless of your actual disposition, you are capable of disturbing those around you with a simple look. You gain a +2 bonus to all intimidation and provocation rolls, but suffer a -2 penalty to all pacification rolls.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Biting Scales:** The barbs on your scales can extend at will (reflexively) for 1 AP, allowing you to counter-grab anyone that is grabbing you, as well as inflicting 3 unsoakable damage to them unless they reflexively release you for 0 AP. You gain an additional +2 bonus to maintain such a grab. You cannot use this ability more than once during a single incidence of being grabbed.
2. **Black Spot:** For 2 AP, you can issue a spray of black ink from a small hole in your wrists at a creature within 10 feet. The target must resist a called shot to the eyes or the legs depending on if you aim at their head or feet. This resist is against your accuracy, and if they fail they either receive blurry vision or slip and fall prone. Under water, this affects a cone-shaped area starting in the space in front of you, extending a total of 15 feet and spreading to a width of 15 feet, and acts as if it is a gas with the Fogging augment.
3. **Dead Rock:** You have coral-like plates of natural armor, increasing your soak class by 2. However, if you wear metal armor or any armor heavier than medium the armor will grate against these plates, lowering your evade by -4.
4. **Deep Scale Slimer:** Down in the deepest trenches of the ocean there is little need for tooth-like scales, but there is a need for methods of escaping that which lives there. You lose your Sharkskin Grip trait but gain a +3 to evading or breaking grabs due to a slimy secretion that covers your body.
5. **Eel Sense:** Some eels can sense the electromagnetic emissions of other living things in the water. You share a similar

ability. In water, you can sense the location and relative electronic power of living creatures or powered mechanical objects within 50 feet. Outside of water, this range drops to only 15 feet. Pinpointing the location or electronic power of something you sense this way functions the same as a regular Cunning roll to notice something.

6. **Feeding Frenzy:** Your nature is far more predatory than most non-feral karshin, and you tend to submerge yourself in the haze of battle to the point that you are not much more than a raging beast. You gain a bonus to strike equal to twice the number of enemies you kill in melee. This bonus is reset to zero after combat is finished. You also gain the compulsive urge to consume the flesh of your kills, even though others (including karshin) are extremely disturbed by this.
7. **Fhtagn:** Your wing-fins mutated into a disturbing arrangement of six tentacles bunched in two sets of three tentacles apiece. While this does lower your swim speed to only 15, your climb speed increases to 25. Each tentacle can hold a small item, but it takes three to hold larger items or grab a called shot location. It takes all six tentacles to wield two-handed items. You cannot use your tentacles to operate any ranged weapons aside from thrown. These tentacles can be targeted three at a time by called shots and act as both arms and hands for the effects, but use either Brute or Dexterity for the resist (your choice).
8. **Great White Flight:** Great white sharks have been known to leap out of the water at great distances when attacking their prey. You automatically tier up all of your jumping rolls.
9. **Imposing Majesty:** Many predators inspire a partially fear-driven sense of awe. The way you hold yourself coupled with your frightening appearance makes those who oppose you less sure of themselves. Enemies adjacent to you suffer a -2 to their defense rolls.
10. **Killing Claw:** One of your hands is a large chitinous claw similar to that of a crab, but larger and far more deadly. Your unarmed damage class with that hand increases to 4 and that hand gains a +3 to resist called shots as well as an additional point of soak for damage caused by called shots there. The affected appendage cannot wield or use items without your second hand, but can hold or grab items and targets.
11. **Partially Boneless:** Your skeleton is made up of mostly cartilage, making you extremely flexible. You gain a +1 to all evade rolls.
12. **Shark and Awe:** When you catch an opponent off-guard, you slam into them with great force and make it hard to respond quickly. When you melee attack an unaware enemy outside of combat, you disorient them for a number of turns equal to the damage tier of your surprise attack.



A wandering Ezka (page 26)

Manticores

When the Haudi Empire sought to create the perfect slave species, their failed experiments numbered in the hundreds. Of these, the most infamous and numerous were the manticores: a blend of the best traits of animal and sentient beings. First created by the Haudi Empire in 382 RE, the manticores' main purpose in life was to be the Empire's most brutal and expendable soldiers. Made to be berserkers beyond compare, manticores originally stood at fifteen feet tall and combined the physical strengths of various animals and the mind and bipedal form of humans. However, the enslaved gnomish scientists that were forced to help create them implanted genetic time bombs in all of the manticore strains before they went into mass-production. These engineered defects did not show themselves until after at least two years of Haudi conquest spearheaded by the manticores. Such constant embroilment in violence triggered the manticores' flaws. After too much time spent in their berserker state, the manticores became rabid and incapable of ending combat or obeying their Haudi masters' orders. What had been the tip of the spear soon turned against the hand that wielded it and anything else within reach. Quickly deemed uncontrollable, the manticores were almost entirely wiped out. If it had not been for the Satarran rebellion of 389 RE, the campaign to eradicate the manticores would have been completed long ago.

The manticores who survived the purge, though still carriers of their racial instability, were mostly those still sane enough to run and hide. Unfortunately for them, many were sterile and so their population suffered a slow but inevitable decline. This was somewhat mitigated by their extremely long lifespans, but exacerbated by their continued persecution by the other sentient races. As time has passed and manticores became less and less hunted, their reproductively viable strains have stabilized. Though their tendencies towards madness and berserker furies have not lessened, there are many manticores who have learned to control these using strict personal training and exotic alchemy developed by the Fury Walkers clan. This clan, being

the largest and most prolific clan of manticores, is also the only known population of manticores with a permanent settlement and self-governing society. There, manticores learn to control their racial curse and those who have succumbed to it are cared for by those still sane enough to do so.

Nowadays manticores are more of a boogeyman tale to frighten children into behaving than a real and immediate presence in the wider continent. Though there are still thousands of manticores living their own lives, they remain isolated from the general population of the various nations, minus the few who go out of their way to keep the boogeyman stories circulating. It has been 461 years since manticores were first created, but nobody can really tell for how much longer they will remain in their current state. Perhaps a new purge will be demanded to supposedly rid the world of such dangerous creatures, or perhaps the Fury Walkers, other manticores of like minds, and the few allies the manticores have found among the other races will establish a better understanding between the manticores and at least some of Rilausia. Maybe manticores will only remain hidden for the next few years; maybe they will always exist just outside the eye of the public.

Physiology

Manticores, unlike satyrs, were engineered from the animal side first: take an animal and add some human bits. With manticores' primary purpose being intense warfare, the Hauds used large predatory animals as the base of their design. Typically, their bodies were made to resemble upright, humanoid lions with humanlike faces. They frequently sported bovine horns and many of them also possessed magnificent batlike wings and vicious scorpion tails to enhance their combat abilities. The manticore strains that endured to the modern day still retain their scorpion tail, but it is usually not venomous. Virtually none of them grow the massive batlike wings that made early

manticores seem so monstrous, though there are a rare few that sprout wings during their adolescence.

With their animalistic features, manticores average a bit taller than humans but are much heavier due to their enhanced musculature. The combination of their human and animal features also exaggerate their sexual dimorphism. The males have glorious manes and large bull-like horns, and are normally a few inches taller than the females, who sport short nublike horns and more frequently retain some form of venom in their tails. Manticores do not share their satyr cousin's immunity to alcohol; however, some rare strains have a miraculous capacity to regenerate from injuries and occasionally even lost body parts. This amazing capacity is a holdover of the Hauds' initial desire to create shock troopers that could drive through enemy lines regardless of whatever was thrown at them.

Lifespan: Manticores can have long but chaotic lives. The natural limit to their age stands close to three centuries, but no known manticore alive in the modern day has proven to be even close to this age. Regularly killed by other predators or even their fellows once their creeping madness consumes them, most manticores only last to about 60 years old before their mind breaks under the strain and they hurtle into suicidal frenzy. Manticore children are born at a modest rate and develop much like humans do until they reach early adolescence. At that point, their bodies and minds develop rapidly, far faster than human adolescents. It only takes a month for a manticore youth to develop as much as a human of the same age does in a year. Matched with their vastly larger bodies, this gives the impression that manticores go from cub to behemoth overnight.

Psychology

The ancient Hauds thought that their manticores were made to obey. They believed that their minds were manipulated to ensure that they would be pliant. The older and more powerful the manticore became, the more pliant and obedient the Hauds wanted them to become. What happened instead was a disaster brought about by the gnomish scientists that the Hauds had forced into creating their animalistic warriors. Unfortunately, the one trait that has remained completely intact for all manticores to this day is their tendency to develop violent mental instability as they age. This is not simply infirmity of age, but the remnants of the enslaved gnomes' genetic tampering in their ancient masters' tools of war. Though this instability can be combated with specially formulated medicine, it is a curse that all manticores must either master or be mastered by.

A manticore in the heat of battle is a terrifying image of unbridled fury that builds ever higher in ferocity. This tendency for their emotions to escalate, frequently into increased vio-

lence, still plagues the manticore people even in non-combat situations. At least, it does for those who cannot procure enough of their medicine or are too old for the medicine to work. There are the rare few who can master techniques of self-control and forgo heavy medication, but it takes a singular will to keep the encroaching madness at bay without help. This trait above all others is the leading reason why manticores are normally forced to stay hidden from the world, and why their population remains so small, as bloodlust clouds their minds and makes them reckless when stirred.

Modern manticores are aware of their endangered status. The majority hide away from the world, either in the few manticore settlements far from "civilized" folk or out in the untamed wilds. For those who try to live among the peoples of Rilausia, most try to hide their horns and tails when they can along with the more obvious signs of their animal nature, attempting to pass themselves off as large, exotic satyrs. Younger manticores, being more adaptable in their mentality and less plagued by rage, can be accepted by some societies. This hasn't stopped the vast majority of Rilausians from assuming that manticores are still all little more than mindless beasts. Occasionally and always with great scandal, young manticores are accepted by scientists as experimental assistants and they show all the bright-eyed enthusiasm of any other race's young. On the other hand, some manticores find enjoyment in enterprises in which shedding blood is accepted. As soldiers, mercenaries, highwaymen, thieves, and blood-sport competitors, these manticores are free to embrace their savage side.

Manticores in the Narrator's Accomplice

Within the Narrator's Accomplice book, there is an Encounter profile listed for manticores. These manticores are the descendents of a handful of strains that proved to be of mixed stability. They are massive, able to breed, and almost all have the functional wings and venomous tail of their ancestors. However, they are all entirely feral and incapable of rational thought. They are little more than frenzied animals and should be considered a separate branch of the manticore species from the playable race in this book.

Traits of a Manticore

Speed: You have an improved speed of 30 feet. You have a swim speed of 15 feet and an impressive climbing speed of 20 feet.

Stigma of Fear: You receive a -4 penalty to all Cunning rolls to pacify or positively influence people. You gain a +2 on Intimidation rolls if you publicly reveal yourself for what you are.

Progressive Madness: You receive a penalty to resists against provocation equal to your current level. While provoked, you gain a +2 to strike against the person(s) who provoked you, but suffer a -1 to all evade rolls. This effect can stack with itself if multiple successful provocations are made against you. This also includes both intentional and unintentional provocations.

Bestial Form: Your body is almost entirely animal, and a large predatory one at that. You sport more muscle mass than most humanoids and possess a number of natural weapons. You gain a +2 to Brute and have an unarmed damage class of 4 regardless of what part of your body you use in an unarmed attack. You can also eat raw meat with no side effects.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Animal Reflex:** You are a predator and know how other predators strike, allowing you to react faster when caught off guard. When attacked in melee outside of combat, you may make a priority roll against your attacker's priority to negate the surprise and have your hit points up before the attack hits. This does not allow you to evade the attack.
2. **Carried on the Wind:** Your animal traits give you enhanced senses. Your smell and hearing have a range equal to your natural sight, though you don't need a line of sight to use them to locate sources of sounds and smells.
3. **Dedicated to the Cure:** You devote much of your time to constantly refining the various concoctions meant to reduce your race's curse of violent madness. You gain two skill points in Alchemy and can add your starting skill points there as per normal. You also start knowing the Rage Suppressant medicine augment and can make it in stand-alone potions even without having the Medicine Brewer specialty.
4. **Eyes of the Hunter:** Even in the dead of the night, all you need is the light of the stars to pick out your prey. You ignore the penalties of poor lighting and treat total darkness like others would treat poor lighting. Artificially created darkness still affects you normally.
5. **Feral Roar:** With a great intake of breath, you unleash a bone-shaking roar that emboldens your allies and discourages your enemies. For 2 AP, you can roar to grant yourself and all allies within 25 feet a bonus to strike equal to your maximum AP as determined by your level until the end of your next turn. All enemies within 25 feet of you when you roar suffer a penalty to strike of an equal amount until the end of your next turn. This effect does not stack with itself.
6. **Furious Backlash:** You refuse to be beaten into submission, rising up to tear down your opponent even if they try to run. You enter a frenzy after you have lost all of your hit points, gaining +5 to strike and +5 to all movement speeds until you recover at least half of your maximum hit points.
7. **Hardened Stomach:** Your animal metabolism tiers up. Brute resists against ingested poisons, whether intentional or from eating rotten food.
8. **Hooked Tail:** The stinger on your tail sports a large, wicked barb that can easily snag onto any surface or target and hold on tight. You can make grabs with your tail and gain a +4 to sustaining grabs with your tail. You cannot wield items with your tail.
9. **Pack Mentality:** You are used to working alongside your kin, whether for protection or hunting. When you are adjacent to a manticore ally, you both gain a +2 to strike or defense (your choice). This effect does not stack if the other manticore also has this trait.
10. **Restrained Rage:** You have spent a long time training yourself to contain the bloodlust within you. You only suffer half of the penalty to resisting provocation caused by your Progressive Madness trait, rounded down. You can also reroll your resist against any successful provocation once each turn for no cost.
11. **Savage Strength:** Your thick body is packed with even more muscle than most of your kin. Though this enhanced musculature grants you an additional +3 to Brute, it comes at the cost of some flexibility, lowering your Dexterity by 2.
12. **Takedown:** You can smell weakness and know how to bring down anything that has already suffered grievous injuries. You increase your melee and unarmed damage class by 1 when attacking a target that has taken damage to their wounds or is suffering a fatal effect.

Manticore Medicine

Some manticore leaders, seeing the horrors caused by their people when their creeping madness takes them, began experimenting with alchemical potions and exotic plants to curb the effects of their genetic instability. Over time, the Fury Walkers clan of manticores has developed an assortment of rage-tempering alchemical products and continues to refine them to this day. They pass on those formulas that have been proven effective with the fewest side effects to any and all manticores who they encounter. Hoping to unite their peoples through cooperative action and dedicated effort, they continue to seek out methods of stabilizing the minds of themselves and their children on a more permanent basis so that they and those around them have nothing to fear from them.

Many manticores tired of lurking in shadow and living off of scraps are slowly making their way to the Fury Walkers' settlement in the dense southwestern woods of Si-yesh. Those who revel in their bloodlust, of course, mock the effort and maintain control of their bands with an iron claw.

Rage Suppressant

Medicine Augment

A special concoction developed by the Fury Walkers clan, this medication helps stabilize the mind of a manticore and keeps them from giving in to their bloodlust. Manticores who consume this medicine at regular intervals tier up their resists against provocation. Members of the other races will only gain this benefit until their next breather unless the medicine is altered to work specifically for their race. If this augment is combined with the Slow Heart augment, the effectiveness of the Rage Suppressant is doubled, though the user becomes vulnerable to addiction to Slow Heart.

Note: This augment can be crafted as either a one-slot augment on a normal potion or a standalone potion of its own. If made as a standalone, you can make three times the normal amount for the same cost (material and/or DIY).

Manticore Racial Specialties

Though uncommon, manticores will sometimes develop the traits and abilities of their ancestors during their adolescence or, more rarely, spontaneously later in life. These manticores are seen in a different light than their kin as they resemble their feral cousins more closely. However, the emergence of these traits does not seem to affect their mental stability.

The following are traits given as specialties that a

manticore character can take at character creation or whenever they level up as long as they get approval from their narrator. Alternatively, a narrator may let a player add these traits to their character as just extra traits rather than specialties, though they do not gain the accuracy/strike/hit point/et cetera bonuses of the specialty version of the trait. Either option should not be considered lightly as any of these traits grants significant boons to a manticore character while at the same time influencing all roleplay involving their character.

Venom Carrier

Cost: 1 AP reflexively.

Your stinger drips with an intensely painful and debilitating venom. After making an unarmed attack with your tail that deals damage, you can reflexively inject your target with this venom. The strength of the effects of this venom are dependent on your level and are resisted with Brute similar to a normal poison/venom. The venom is treated as Marque I at levels 1 to 3, Marque II at levels 4 to 7, Marque III at levels 8 to 11, and Marque IV at level 12. You have one "dose" of this venom at any given time that replenishes itself at the end of your next turn after using it.

Mq I: Inflicts 4 unsoakable damage and lowers accuracy and evade by 1 for one turn.

Mq II: Inflicts 8 unsoakable damage and lowers accuracy and evade by 1 for two turns.

Mq III: Inflicts 12 unsoakable damage and lowers accuracy and evade by 2 for two turns.

Mq IV: Inflicts 16 unsoakable damage and lowers accuracy and evade by 2 for three turns.

Note: Your venom can be harvested like a normal animal venom as per the rules for harvesting venoms outlined in Pets and Predators.

Airborne Threat

Enormous batlike wings have grown from your shoulder blades. You gain a flight speed of 20 feet. This speed is affected by the swim/climb speed penalties of armor. Unless bound, unconscious, or in inclement weather, you take no falling damage as your wings will gently guide you to the ground. Additionally, you have two new called shot locations due to your wings. Called shots to the wing(s) are resisted with Dexterity. A successful called shot will prevent you from using your wing for one turn, causing you to fall out of the air if already flying. If this happens, you can spend 2 AP reflexively to land safely. Wound damage to

the wing results in a sprained wing, preventing you from using your wing at all until your next breather. You cannot use your wings to safely fall if suffering a wound to a wing. A fatal effect to a wing permanently removes the wing and you begin bleeding out. The bleeding from a severed wing will cause you to die in 3 turns if you do not spend at least 3 AP bandaging it up.

Massive Stature

You are a truly enormous humanoid, towering above even elves and farishtaas at a little more than nine feet tall. Your tremendous height lengthens your melee reach by 5 feet and your raw mass grants a +1 to the damage class of your unarmed, melee, and thrown attacks.

Self-Replenishing

You developed the most fearsome trait of the original manticores: the ability to regenerate gruesome injuries at a startling speed. Instead of regaining 1 point of wounds per day, you regain wounds equal to your maximum action points (based solely on your current level). In addition, you recover from wound effects at twice the normal rate. You can fully regrow one called shot location that you've lost in the span of a few weeks.

Manticore Racial and Cultural Stories

Fury Walker

Requires: Manticore

You are a member of the Fury Walkers clan and as such can find help and support within Bloodwood Village at any time that you're there. Any manticore but a Crimson Claw is easily befriended by you. Also, you can regularly get a hold of a few doses of medicine with the Rage Suppressant augment while in Bloodwood Village. The marque of this augment is up to the narrator.

Crimson Claw

Requires: Manticore

You stand apart from the Fury Walkers. Yours is the path of rampant bloodlust and violent independence. Though this does not guarantee that all interactions you have with others end in bloodshed, you are quite aggressive and revel in combat far more than most other manticores. You have the option to willfully fail any resist against being provoked and suffer a -3 penalty to such a resist if you do roll it. Additionally, you must roll to resist the Rage Suppressant and Slow Heart medicine augments as if they were poisons.

Walks with the Furious

Requires: Any race besides manticore.

Though not a manticore yourself, you are one of the few who have earned their trust enough to be allowed into Bloodwood Village. Manticores of the Fury Walkers will recognize you as a friend of their people, as will many other sane manticores who aren't Crimson Claws.

Obezyany

The center of the obezyany culture lies on a large volcanic island off the west coast of Evangless called Ognennyve Nedra. Often referred to as “lava monkeys” by other races due to their practice of having heated magma on their fur and their extreme resistance to heat, they live in the deep tropical jungles that surround active volcanos.

They were discovered four years ago when a cargo ship travelling from Suulrai to Izeda crashed onto the shore. The workers discovered the intelligent primates, and the two groups began communicating. It wasn't long before more groups came to see the new species, and there were skirmishes between the obezyany and the Suulrai government until the obezyany won their independence. They now keep to their island, although some will travel to Evangless and other countries for their own adventure, bringing honor and respect to their people.

In the four years since meeting the other races, the obezyany have worked common language into their natural education to ease communication with the other nations. They have had a stable relationship with the other nations, since their access and immunity to the volcano's intense pressure and heat allows them to excel at forging metals and rare stones. Obezyany jewelry has become very sought after due to its craftsmanship and purity.

The obezyany are a proud race and consider themselves great warriors. All actions taken by an obezyany represent the entire race. They consider the image of their race a top priority and will exile those who disgrace them. Despite the obezyany's focus on their image, they are open to other cultures, embracing them and encouraging their individuality. They place the utmost importance on politeness and respect. Unlike most of the other nations, there is no monarchy in Ognennyve Nedra. Instead, the obezyany are governed by a spiritual leader commonly referred to as a Shaman. Ognennyve Nedra is split into twelve areas governed by a separate shaman, while the Master Shaman resides inside the volcano. He or she only comes out when an argument between areas must be solved, or when there is a major crisis that requires the united strength of the nation.



Physiology

Obezyany average slightly over four feet with hunched backs and bent knees, but can reach five and a half feet tall when standing upright. Their fur ranges in color from dark brown to bright red and orange. Many male monkeys have a large mane of hair that they grow out to show age. Like regular monkeys obezyany have four hands (rather than two hands and two feet), but they still walk relatively human-like.

Adult obezyany can be discerned by the spots on their fur where molten rock is attached. It is a rite of passage for both men and women to go into the heart of the volcano, take some of the molten rock, and hold it until it fuses to their skin. While painful, it symbolizes that they are an adult and are one with the volcano and nature. Magma spots are often located on the back, outer forearms, and the front of the legs. Many obezyany carry multiple spots to show their worth and strength.

Over time obezyany have evolved with the volcano, so many now have powerful traits that show their connection with the mountain of fire. Some monkeys can generate enough thermal energy to light up the magma on their fur, while others have even been born with the ability to breathe fire. Some obezyany who do not find the volcano to be their calling are more at peace in the forest surrounding it. Despite this, all obezyany have the magma patches that show their adulthood and have some resistance to fire.

Obezyany wear few clothing. They do not find it particularly important, being covered in fur, but wear it to avoid making outsiders feel uncomfortable. Recently many have taken a liking to armor for its added protection. The common style for obezyany is leather armor or leather with metal plates, and they favor medium armor over heavy. Their armor is often kept light and separated to allow them more freedom of movement and show their magma spots.

Psychology

Obezyany are often polite and open as well as proud and resolute, yet rarely are they vain. In a culture where image is everything, most obezyany compose themselves with gravity and treat every encounter as representing their species as a whole. Obezyany are raised to argue in a calm, polite fashion so that both sides may learn from each other. Becoming angry in an argument, even when one side insults the other, is highly frowned upon and seen as unruly behavior, so most obezyany are able to keep their cool even when insulted.

Obezyany love to learn. When travelling off the island they are expected to learn a great amount before returning so that they may share this information with the community.

Because of this many obezyany join research groups or other jobs where they can learn new things. Obezyany will always listen to another species tell stories about their kind or their history, as they feel excitement at the prospect of bringing new knowledge to their home and making their family proud.

Aside from their love of learning, obezyany are great warriors, although few are skilled with a gun. Most obezyany prefer to fight with their bare hands or melee weapons. They feel it is more honorable that way, and will often try to force ranged enemies into close combat. Most accept losing with dignity, although there have been some who have gone mad with fear of shaming their people. An obezyany will not take a fight personally if the opponent is only fighting them due to circumstance.

Despite their calm attitudes, it is often easy to anger an obezyany by mocking their people or their honor. Although anger over such insults is discouraged, many obezyany can't help it, as they have been raised to respect and love their people and their ways.

Roleplaying Tips

An obezyany will be calm and patient. They will usually mind their manners and show respect to all they meet. You can be a lava monkey who is more in touch with the volcano and its raging fires or with the jungle and its widespread life. A lava monkey will be more at peace when there are fewer people around and relish solitude. A forest monkey feels more alive in big crowds with lots of people and activity.

An obezyany will almost always be willing to listen to a person's story or lecture with the intent to learn something new. Obezyany are new to the rest of the world since first contact with them four years ago, and so many are naïve to the customs and physiology of other species and nations. An obezyany will almost always accept a duel from someone, as it is a chance to show their species' prowess in combat.

Sample Adventurer

Vuur Kasai

Vuur Kasai is an obezyany blacksmith. He focuses his life on working on swords, and is quite good at using them, too. He carries five swords with him at any given time and wears medium metal armor. When a fight breaks out he balances on his tail and fights with one sword in each hand and one in his mouth. Vuur carries himself confidently and often looks for chances to show his wares to others. He is always asking around at other sword shops and blacksmiths for advice and other methods to improve

his own weapons.

His adventures started when he first met an adventurer who used a unique sword-fighting style he had not seen before. Hearing that there were so many unique styles in the world, he set out to see the world and learn these styles. He quickly discovered that he could not master them, and so he decided to craft a unique sword to embody each style he came across. Using his technical genius, he is now able to utilize five special swords that each embody a unique style of fighting.

Vuur Kasai would probably have the following specialties: Weapon Smith (under Armsmith), Fight Anywhere (under Swashbuckling), and Tough Stuff (under Resilience).

Traits of an Obezyany

Multi-Dextrous: Your feet are the same as your hands. Growing up in the jungle, you know how to use them both, even your tail. You may use your feet and tail as extra hands for holding items although at least two hands must be free for you to move. You also gain a +4 on Dexterity rolls.

Speed: You're okay on land, but you were meant to climb. You lived in a jungle and that's what you know best. You have a land speed of 20, a poor swim speed of 10, and an amazing climb speed of 40.

Frail Body: Your body is meant to swing on trees, not swing the trees. You take a -4 to all Brute rolls.

Life with a Volcano: Living with the volcano has made you resilient to heat and fire. You take no penalties from high temperatures and reduce the tier of fire you are caught on by 2.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Clever Monkey:** It has always been said that monkeys were clever little bastards, and you practically embody this notion. You gain a +3 to all Cunning rolls.
2. **Firebreather:** You were born in a special family known for breathing fire. You have practiced and honed your firebreathing into a fine weapon. You gain a Flame Breath attack that costs 2 AP, boasts a 10 foot range, and has a 4 damage class; with damage determined by strike. (This does not count towards your essence slot count.)
3. **Geothermal Concentration:** You have always been able to feel geothermal energy and have managed to use some inside of you to make the magma spots on you glow. You may light up an area with a 10 foot radius around you when you are not fatigued.
4. **Gorilla Build:** Despite what the others think, you actually were not built to swing the trees. Your body has more in common with a gorilla than a monkey. You switch the bonuses and penalties of Frail Body and Multi-Dextrous so that you have a +4 Brute and a -4 Dexterity.
5. **Hard Back:** When your rite of passage came, you made sure to find the strongest piece of magma you could and held it until it became one with you. It is harder and thicker than most, making Super-Heavy armor uncomfortable to wear. You gain a natural soak of 1 but cannot wear Super-Heavy Armor.
6. **Hyper-Dextrous:** You have worked to ensure your feet are perfectly in sync with your hands. If you are disarmed and have one of your feet available you may attempt a Tier 2 Dexterity roll to catch the item in your foot.
7. **Living in a Volcano:** When it was time for your rite of passage you decided to take it further. You stayed in the volcano until you were able to completely submerge yourself in the hot liquid magma. This has made you vulnerable in colder climates. You are immune to heat and fire damage and to being set on fire, but you take double penalties from cold weather and double damage and effects from cold weapons, such as those that have the Cryothermal augment on them.
8. **Monkeys are Bastards:** Anyone who has ever tried to catch a monkey can tell you that it's annoying as sin with their constantly moving around and bending out of the way. You happen to prove them right on all accounts with your own dodging skills. You gain a +2 to evade rolls against melee attacks and grabs.
9. **Numerous Spots:** When your rite came you decided that "less is more" is nonsense and slapped on as much magma as you could stand. Less of your fur is showing but you have more magma on you to help defend you from attacks. You gain a +4 to all Defense rolls.
10. **One with the Volcano:** You have spent a great deal of time near or in the volcano so that you feel more at home in extreme heat. When you are in extreme heat in areas such as deserts or volcanos you can still add bonuses to natural 1s.
11. **Shaman-in-Training:** You began preparing to be a shaman at a young age and have always had an affinity for nature. You begin with 2 points in the Shamanism skill and can still add other points normally.
12. **Strong Tail:** Your tail has always been one of your greatest allies and strengths--so much so that you can balance on it. You can balance on your tail, allowing all four hands for combat; however, you cannot move around while on your tail.

Simulacrons

Life Imitation System (Alpha)

LISA

Why do the simulacrons exist? What are they? Who created them?

There is no easy answer, for nearly every simulacron is a different story. Simulacrons are automatons evolved—they are not merely steam-powered humanoid contraptions, and they are considerably more advanced than the high-functioning fuse boxes. Simulacrons are automatons that rival and often surpass other organic and sentient beings.

While some automatons are steam-powered, electrically-powered, or powered by complex clockwork, simulacrons use the one power source that can make them what they are: essence. Farishtaas have figured out the science for creating synthetic essence, but simulacrons are rarely made using anything synthetic. They are born from pure essence, often harvested from another sentient being, dead or alive.

This essence gives simulacrons something more than other automatons. While an intelligent automaton might seem like it is alive, its ability to learn and thrive are often stymied by its creator. Simulacrons have no such limitations. The essence that powers them gives them the ability to surpass any limits, out-think any barriers, and constantly improve. Simulacrons use pure essence to power themselves, and that power allows them to not only think, but to thrive.

Many simulacrons are alone. Many were born from the whims of crazed creators, and they were their creator's



sole scientific achievement. Some find solace among the other sentient races, while a few are able to find a place among other rare simulacrons. However, every known simulacron is quite nearly a miracle, and the odds of a simulacron finding others like him or her is quite rare. Most people will never meet a single simulacron.

Simulacrons face constant bias in society. While some blend in, acting like subservient and simple automatons, most are unable to lower themselves so far. Most people are terrified of the mere suggestion of a highly sentient automaton, and the world is so full of rogue automatons that the fear is founded in reality. A few simulacrons are able to pass themselves off as human (or at least mostly human). It doesn't make them easily accepted, but it can often help.

Most simulacrons find people who accept them and stay. Many find travellers or adventurers and make their home on the road, never staying long enough for people to become too uncomfortable with the idea of a sentient machine powered with the soul of another person.

Physiology

Looking into the physiology of a simulacron is a vague or difficult study. Every simulacron is unique, as each is a representative of the mad science that led to their creation.

What simulacrons do share is that they are all powered by essence. In some way, essence courses through their mechanical body. While most simulacrons are made of metal components, the essence flows through those components in a mimicry of blood. Simulacrons have a sensory array in their heads, connected closely with their own brainworks. The combination of the brainworks, sensory array, and essence processors is what makes the simulacron alive.

Beyond that basic analysis, simulacrons vary widely. Some simulacrons might have enormous arms with tiny legs, while other simulacrons might have metal fragments sticking out of their body like hellish horns. Some simulacrons have other internal systems, like furnaces or electrical generators, and some have been spliced with organic components.

While simulacrons are immune to diseases, poisons, and most bio-flux alterations, they do bleed and feel pain. The "blood" is not the normal red affair spewed by other naturally occurring creatures. Rather, simulacrons bleed out their own fuel source: their essence. When they lose limbs, some die due to the amount of essence they lose.

Simulacrons require most of the things that humans require. They process most foods in order to absorb the food's essence as well as use the food as fuel; in this way, they eat. At

night, they tire and require rest. Their internal systems require oxygen to fuel their internal fires and keep things cool, and thus they must breathe.

Lifespans: The lifespan of a simulacron depends entirely on how well it was built and how well it is maintained. Hypothetically, a simulacron could live for hundreds of years. Further scientific studies will be necessary to understand the lifespan of simulacrons.

Psychology

Simulacrons do not have easy lives. They are often born with an unusual set of awarenesses. Where humans spend years developing the ways that they function with the world, most simulacrons come with pre-programmed biases that they must either adapt to or replace entirely. While their creators are able to replicate life, they rarely understand it. Because of this, simulacrons are often born into nightmares: dark laboratories, in the basements of factories, or beside the corpses that have been sacrificed to gather enough essence to create the new simulacron.

Simulacrons are often logical beings, but sometimes the logic is a defense mechanism more than a reflection of any programming. Because of how dramatic their births tend to be, many simulacrons become cold and rational about the world at large.

Of the few known simulacrons, some studies have been done trying to link the essence that was used to create them with their personalities. Many people believe that essence is the soul in liquid form, and that using essence to create a new creature will imprint them with memories of the person that the essence was stolen from. Some simulacrons don't understand how their personalities developed or how they can be capable of dreaming, and thus they blame it on the essence that flows within them. It is possible that the original person who provided the essence is still alive, or that it was a large mixture of essences that created the lifeblood for the simulacrons. It is unsure yet if the essence has any effect on the simulacron.

Simulacrons tend to default to referring to themselves by a certain gender, though it is often arbitrary. Some perverse creators will sexualize their creations, at which point the gender tends to be easily determined. Many simulacrons will simply accept being an it, and other more politically-savvy simulacrons will even choose third-gender or intersex pronouns for their own use.

Simulacrons have a rough relationship with the world. Most people distrust them, if not downright despise them. Very few simulacron creators are properly sane or caring (though exceptions exist). Because of this cruel life, many simulacrons earn

people's hatred by performing fully inhumane acts. Among an already rare species, it is a truly unique simulacron that becomes a hero.

Roleplaying Tips

You are a robotic humanoid born from the stolen lifeblood of another creature. Many simulacrons will begin their adventuring days fairly new to the world. You will be akin to an amnesiac, learning the ways of the world and how it works. You might be overly emotional or overly rational. You might be extremely mechanical, having a monotone voice and mechanical movements. Or you might be doing everything that you can to be as human as possible.

When you build a simulacron, you have a lot of options in front of you. You might be tempted to disguise yourself as a normal human, even going so far as to deceive the players at your table. That can be a fun option; just make sure that the narrator is in on the gag.



Necrid

Sample Adventurers

Below are three simulacron adventurers that you can use as inspiration when creating your own.

Art Silexco

Art was the masterpiece of Silex Whittaker, one of the city's premiere weapon manufacturers. The Silex Company had been in a downward spiral since the end of the civil war, and it needed something new to really boost things up. Silex took it upon himself to make the ultimate high-functioning artillery platform. He was so devoted that he began sacrificing his own employees in the scientific pursuit. Their deaths were the foundation upon which Art was born.

Art was an extremely well-armed automaton. His first memory was being unveiled before a line of military defense bidders. He was quickly purchased, and Art spent his first two days in a crate on his way to a military manufacturing plant. A group of bold anti-government terrorists ensured that Art never made it there.

Art recovered from the wreckage unsure of what he was or what to do with himself. He wandered for days before

Why Humans?

Almost all simulacrons emulate or come from human society. While that's not a rule, and certainly the other races would be more than equipped to create simulacrons, most simulacrons tend to come from human society. There is something about the rampant mad science and the perverse essence trade that has made it more likely that simulacrons will appear amid human society.

Some simulacrons will appear outside of human society or come from non-human creators. Farishtaas will make simulacrons from the same forms of essence they use on themselves, often attempting to make a deity of sorts. Satyrs tend to have too much empathy to make a simulacron by accident, so a satyr-made simulacron is often the most well-rounded sort of simulacron.

Gnomes are perhaps the best suited for making simulacron; they just generally have no interest in the essence-gathering required for it. In the event that you are a simulacron that was created by a gnome and are also gnome-sized, you gain the gnomish traits: Small Stature (gaining +1 on Evade rolls), Light Build (suffering a -2 on Brute rolls), have a land speed of 15 feet, and use Smaller Weapons (causing your unarmed attacks to drop by 1 damage class and making it difficult to conceal light weapons on your person).

encountering a farming family that tentatively helped him. But Art could never pass as something human: he looked more like a tank than a man. Their assistance was all because of a little boy who was fascinated by Art. Art spent the next few years helping at that farm until people from the nearby town became too disgruntled—they attacked the town and that little boy died in the attack. Art's revenge was swift, terrible, and unlawful. He had to leave. Now he vows to never settle down again.

Art Silexco would probably have the following specialties: Gunsmith (*under Armsmith*), Itchy Trigger Finger (*under Marksmanship*), and Living Barrier (*under Resilience*).

LISA

LISA is the Life Imitation System (Alpha). She was told that the acronym was a great name for little girls, so she decided that she was probably a little girl. Her creator had slowly been using his own essence to create her, and so LISA's early days were fairly benign for a simulacron. But, after only a few weeks of life, LISA was discarded in favor of creating an even better system: the beta design, LISBET.

LISA found herself tied back down, ready to be dismantled for parts, when she discovered a new emotion: fear. Fear caused her to take actions she didn't fully think through, like breaking her bonds, killing her creator, and escaping the burning laboratory (she doesn't remember setting it on fire, but she must have done it by accident). Now LISA just wants to be a little girl, or—at the very least—forget what she did.

LISA might have the following specialties: Fire Fighter (*under Expertise*), Lucky Number 7 (*under Luck*), and Praise (*under Showmanship*).

Necrid

There is no question: Necrid was born from insanity and death. His creator was an old and especially efficient soul merchant, tasked with the underground trade of finding victims, draining their essence, and selling it on the black market. During a market decline, the soul merchant found himself with an excess of product and no way of moving it. He began experiments, and Necrid was his single success. Necrid was alive for only two minutes before he reached out and crushed the soul merchant's windpipe.

Necrid fed himself on the corpses and rotting food in the laboratory for weeks before venturing out into the world. There he became a vampire, eating people at night and fleeing from them in the day. Eventually, he saw them eating. He stole food and tried it himself. It tasted no different, but it was easier.

Over the months, stories of Necrid began to follow him. He picked up on language and realized that people knew

about him. He had to escape. He had to blend in, somehow. He fled the city, cowered and with enough stolen money to buy off anybody he needed to.

On his travels, Necrid didn't do well with people. He didn't trust them and—though he would never say so—he began to feel guilt for his early murders. He read often, and soon realized the mistakes he had made. He had to fix this. He had to make amends for his sins.

Necrid would probably have the following specialties: Critical Hits (*under Espionage*), Merciless (*under Frenzy*), and Phase Step (*under Agility*).

Sample NPCs

Below are three simulacron non-player characters (NPCs) that a group of adventurers might run into on their travels.

Green Eye

Also known as the Automaton of Downthresh Junkyard, the few people who have spoken to Green Eye know him by that name. The single large green sensor in his head makes it an easy name to remember. Green Eye is not social, and few people know where he came from. People suspect that the old owners of Downthresh Junkyard somehow made him from the trash they had collected. Now Green Eye just watches over the junkyard, tinkering and playing with the random items that come into his possession. But if you're ever looking for something weird, there's a good chance Green Eye knows where to find it. Good luck getting over his incredible shyness.

Mary O'Mary

Everyone loves Mary. Mary is the flower of the town. She always looks lovely, she's always smiling, and she's always quick with a compliment. She has many suitors, but she seems perfectly happy just living alone at the cottage outside of town. The only funny thing about Mary is that she spends her weekends helping out the town mechanic... and she is surprisingly talented with everything.

Nobody knows that Mary is a simulacron (and if they do, they don't live in this town anymore). Mary moved to this town a few years ago after her creator went too far with his fantasies. Now Mary lives a quiet, happy life in a quiet, small town, and she will do whatever necessary to protect her identity and her quiet, simple life.

The Progeny

Many people, whether they like it or not, have dealt with the genius entrepreneur, May Helvenos. May, now nearing her 60s, is unmarried and—with a personality like hers—nobody expects

her to marry any time soon. Yet she has a single son known as the Progeny. He is an essence-powered automaton that she has created purely to be her heir. He fills many roles: he is her silent and intimidating guardian, her constant apprentice, and her one companion. The Progeny is normally quiet, simply standing nearby and observing. Extremely intimidating, his vaguely human appearance is overshadowed by his 8-foot-tall stature and inhuman proportions. And nobody wants to deal with the massive claymore magnetically clung to his back. He is highly protective of his “mother,” and nobody sees her without his say-so.

Traits of a Simulacron

✧ Inorganic Immunities

Bio-Flux Immunity: While you are powered by essence, your essence cannot be altered in the same way that other creatures’ essences can. You cannot be affected by essence manipulation, bio-zappers, bio-invigoration, or other bioflux effects that change organic structures.

Deficiency Immunity: You cannot be affected by medicines, poisons, gases, diseases, or venoms.

✧ **Speed:** You have a 25-foot movement speed. You have a climbing speed of 15 feet, but you cannot swim. You sink any time you are in water.

✧ **Augmentable Body:** Any part of your body can be augmented by prosthetic augments. In effect, every part of your body has 3 empty slots to which augments can be applied. If an augment is placed on you using DIY that is not maintained, it will stop functioning during your next period of downtime. Because of your augmentable body, additional prosthetic limbs can be placed upon you without the use of nerve crafting (which lowers your wounds).

✧ **Metal Body:** You are made primarily of metal. You take damage from electric and similar attacks as if you are wearing metal armor (regardless of the armor you’re wearing).

✧ **Effectively an Automaton:** While you might be as sentient as any human, you are still an automaton. Any ability that affects automatons in a specific way will affect you in that way as well.

Random Racial Traits

1 Armed for Battle: You have a limb or body part that is capable of converting itself into a weapon for 1 action point. This is a standard weapon (such as a melee weapon or firearm) that you would normally be able to have at first level for free. You can place augments on this weapon. You cannot be disarmed of this weapon unless it is amputated (which, if the weapon is part of your torso, can be a rather painful process).

2 Bio-Mechanical Components: You have a slew of organic or semi-organic components that have your essence coursing through them. You have 1 essence slot that can be augmented. You can now be affected by bio-zappers, bio-invigoration, and other forms of bio-flux.

3 Buoyant: You are capable of functioning in water. You no longer sink when you hit water, and you can swim at a speed of 20 feet. Since your internal essence engine requires oxygen to keep functioning, you must “hold your breath” just like any other organic being.

4 Easy Maintenance: Repairing portions of your body isn’t rocket science. You are capable of restoring one of your own wounds during any breather. (Normally you can only restore wounds during downtime.) This does not affect wound effects.

5 Electrical Shielding: You are designed with rubbers and non-conductive metals so that your system does not take extreme damage from electrical attacks. You take damage from electrical attacks like a normal human would. (If you decide to wear metal armor, however, you will suffer regardless.)

6 Engine Starter: You can choose one power source, such as combustion, cold, or electrical. You are able to restart an engine powered by that energy just by touch, which requires 1 action point.

7 Exoskeleton: Your armored exoskeleton keeps you fighting longer. You begin with +4 defense.

8 Heat Generator: You are constantly emitting heat. Anybody who travels in your company is immune to the effects of long exposure to cold. You are also able to remove the negative effects of cold from other organic creatures, such as stuns and frostbite, by touching them for 1 action point. This does not remove actual damage.



Humanlike: You do not have a mechanical appearance and can pass for a human in a human society. You likely have some trait that gives you away (such as mechanical or glowing eyes, a monotone voice, stilted walking patterns, or an enormous furnace burning in your right arm), but you can cover that up. People attempting to recognize you as anything other than human must first be suspicious of it, then roll a Tier 2 Cunning to notice that you are actually a simulacron.



Illuminating Sensors: You are capable of casting light out from your sensor array. You can shine light forward 25 feet, illuminating your path. You can freely turn your illuminating sensors on and off.



Logical Being: You reason through and deconstruct all situations. You can use your Sciences attribute in place of any Spirit resist.



Mechanical Knowledge: You know 2 augments, which can be chosen from any crafting skill that you take at first level. If you do not take any crafting skills, you can instead choose to know 2 prosthetic augments at marque 1. You begin with these already built into you, at your discretion.

Chapter 2.

Hybrids



Tephra

Races of
Tephra

Hybrids are the Tephra term for those born of mixed race and form a tiny percentage of Rilausia's total population. Hybrids represent the product of a relationship that defies orthodox traditions and biology itself. Their parents instead chose their own path and own rules for who they would and would not love. In that sense, hybrids are the living embodiment of rebellion, born from two people who shed society's restrictions to create a family their way. Some hybrids are made through a different method: the direct splicing of two unique individuals, or at least their genetic material. These hybrids are quite similar to those hybrids born to parents of differing races, but can show drastically more extreme features.

History

For most of Rilausia's history, hybrids could only be achieved using in vitro bio-flux methods to forcibly fuse the essence of different races together. The Hauds engaged in many of these early experiments to create the manticores and, later, the satyrs. Until the advent of satyrs who could reproduce, hybrids were largely sterile, though the rare strain of hybrids did occasionally have the capability. Today, most lab-created hybrids are still unable to reproduce independently due to the circumstances of their creation.

The advent of hybrids occurring through natural unions of two different races did not occur until the Laquaian Civil War in 613 RE. The Sapience, Zuluria Lutrixen, unleashed a new essence-based virus in an effort to unify the nation and overcome old racial biases. Those exposed to it had their essence subtly altered, making them capable of reproducing with all other known Rilausian races without the need for in vitro bio-flux assistance and allowing them to spread the change to others through sexual contact. Unfortunately, the effort failed and the nation collapsed, plunging Izeda into centuries of insular deprivation.

As a result, the self-perpetuating essence alterations of Zuluria - technically labeled hybridotropins, but more commonly called "cross mixers" - were kept internal to Izeda. This containment has changed, as Damien Vultureclaw has reunified the country and outside trade and emigration with the other nations is on the rise. As Izeda reconnects with the continent, their people carry with them one of Zuluria's last legacies of brotherhood - and the increasing frequency of hybrid births promises a transformative age for centuries to come.

Physiology

Hybrids will have a mix of physical traits from both parents. Sons will tend to take after the mother more while daughters will tend to take more after the father. The exact blend is up to the player, allowing for a wide range of customization. Some hybrids look more like one side than the other, while many are a perfect blend that are just generally humanoid. However, hybrid pairings do follow some general trends. These would be the descriptions of the hybrids in their individual profiles.

Psychology

Hybrids will typically resist being categorized as one or the other of their parents' races, often preferring both. It is not unusual for them to favor a part of their heritage, however, depending on physical characteristics and on the preferences of their parents. A human-farishtaa hybrid, for example, is likely to favor their farishtaa half if their parents frequently praise and exalt farishtaa culture over human culture.

Hybrids will often dismiss and disregard social norms. After all, their own birth shows how arbitrary and random those norms can be, so they are unlikely to take appeals to tradition seriously. This makes them the most free-thinking of any race in Tephra and the most likely to think of strange or innovative ideas.

National and Religious Views

In most nations, hybrids are not treated with a great deal of acceptance. The violation of custom committed by the parents translates to a disdain for the hybrid as a symbol of disrespect or defiance of authority. This is especially true in Siyesh, Zelhost, Tordryon, and in some of the regions of Paldorus that are still stubbornly settled, which have very regimented cultures. The Hauds in general see hybrids as second-class citizens, thanks to their views of human supremacy. This hasn't stopped human-satyr hybrids from cropping up in Haudi territories, but those hybrids suffer more complicated parentage issues.

In Arakrith, Valdru, and Dalvozzea, there are no outright bans on interracial marriages, but hybrids are not generally accepted into the mainstream culture. This is due to each of these nations having established itself as "a country for our race." Hybrids represent a dilution of that nationalistic feel. However, hybrids can still prove themselves worthy of acceptance.

Evangless is at best ambivalent towards hybrids. In Evangless, human-farishtaa marriages are becoming more common, with several celebrity humans marrying farishtaa partners and vice versa. This has caused the topic of interracial marriage to become an issue of hot debate. The nation seems to be slowly shifting in favor of it - at least as long as both parents are attractive.

Of all the nations, Izeda and Suulrai are the ones most welcoming of hybrids. Hybrids are treated with no special animosity or favor among the Izedan caravans. Part of this is due to age: the first hybrids in Rilausian history to be born from natural unions (as opposed to in vitro) were in Izeda during the time of the Laquaian Civil War when Izeda was still the Laquai Empire. The hardships faced within the still recovering nation has created an atmosphere of brotherhood that transcends biology.

Suulrai, having been founded by immigrants from another land far away, does not have any of the same concepts of racial separation as the rest of Rilausia.

None of the major religions outright oppose interracial marriage, but mainly because it is still uncommon enough that they haven't considered it. As human-farishtaa marriages gain more notoriety in the press, however, this may change.

Roleplaying Tips

Every hybrid is going to be unique in some manner. Not even two hybrids with the same heritage will have all of the same attitudes or personality traits. This is a direct consequence of the strong independent background of their parents. After all, the hybrid wouldn't be born to anyone who just went with the flow!

That said, there are several common elements to the life of a hybrid that you can utilize in your characterization. In most nations, almost all hybrids are social outcasts like their parents. This leads to many hybrids developing a strong loner streak in order to survive, making them independent thinkers who may struggle to get along socially. They will have difficulty trusting others not of their kind since their early experience is likely to be one of rejection from both sides of their heritages. In the more accepting nations and regions, hybrids still face a noticeable amount of prejudice, though it is slightly less out of being an outcast and more from being strange, uncommon, and in some views exotic. This still elicits similar reactions to and treatments of hybrids in these areas, though it is typically less severe than in the less progressively minded nations.

Optional Rules:

Hybrids of the types given here should use the racial charts supplied. In general, hybrids are infertile due to the mixing of differing chromosomes and cannot have children barring a few scarce exceptions. However, bio-flux is able to overcome this limitation in certain cases.

In these cases, adventurers playing as the descendants of fertile hybrids may choose the racial chart they feel best represents the character. For example, a character who has a parent that is a human-farishtaa hybrid and another parent who's an elf can choose to use either the human-farishtaa hybrid racial chart, the human-elf hybrid racial chart, the human racial chart, the farishtaa racial chart, or the elf racial chart. This selection allows the adventurer to customize their character in the way they see best. Of course, these options should depend on narrator approval and could even be expanded on by the narrator if they come up with new and unique options resulting from the mixture of so many races.

These hybrid racial charts are based on the races as described in the Playing Guide. If a hybrid character is the child of alternate versions of the core races (such as true-meld farishtaas or sandgeist elves from Izeda), the narrator may allow them to substitute certain random racial traits from those charts as appropriate. Hybrids resulting from relations between the less populous races introduced in this book, even if one parent is of a race from the Playing Guide, would be both rarer than any other hybrid and purely up to the narrator to decide what base traits they inherit from their parent races.

For hybrids made through bio-flux, both those by in vitro alterations or direct physical splicing, it is probably easier to treat them as a natural hybrid for their racial traits and so forth. The effects of their origins should impact their roleplaying in a significantly different way than natural hybrids. Many people who know of their origin would treat them very differently due to bio-flux's mixed reputation. They may also be different than normal hybrids, particularly if they were spliced together from pre-existing persons or material rather than fused in vitro. Being made in a lab rather than a womb would definitely change one's views on the world and also how the world views you.

Ayodin-Farishtaa Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Ayotaa/Ayotaas

Ayodin-farishtaa hybrids are possibly the most alluringly exotic hybrids and one of the rarest of all natural hybrids. Appearing to many like aquatic angels, ayotaas as they are called, have an almost eerie and alien charm while still being fully capable of destroying their opponents in very non-charming ways.

Rare due to the normal incompatibility of both personality and biology between ayodin and farishtaas, ayotaas somehow give off the impression that they are a modern revision of something ancient and forgotten. Every single ayotaa appears regal and strangely imposing despite their almost disturbingly slight frames. They, like most of the human-elf hybrids, almost never come from particularly affluent backgrounds. However, they typically come from the small middle class rather than the lower class due to the normal social elevation of their farishtaa parent.

In spite of and in some ways because of their incredible allure, ayotaas suffer some of the worst discrimination of all hybrids. Many people find them too alien and despite resulting from regular, natural breeding, there are many who see them as even more unnatural than their farishtaa parent. On the other side, some people discriminate against them because they assume that they use their alien charm to get through life without having to actually do anything for themselves. Their physical appearance along with their oftentimes beguiling personalities has also unfortunately led to the same problem that human-farishtaa hybrids suffer from, with multiple sub-cultures objectifying them and being made targets for the slave trade.

Physiology

Ayotaas appear very much like tall and exceptionally fair ayodin, though there are other telling differences. Slightly taller than humans but drastically thinner, they appear almost stretched

but still somehow entrancing. Their wing fins are just as large as their ayodin parent's, but more dainty and finely shaped. Their large, almost luminous eyes are often sighted as their most fetching feature as they seem to light up their smooth, fair face. Like most ayodin hybrids, they lack the facial fins ayodin possess, but do have the long, straight ears of farishtaas. Though these ears are shorter, they still normally come to a point like their parent's. They do not possess hair, but the tendril-like growths on their heads that serve as "hair" for ayodin are typically both longer and thinner than those of their ayodin parent. Both male and female ayotaas are able to grow exceptionally long hair tendrils, which can either be extra long and straight or slightly shorter but oddly curly. Ayotaas run the entire spectrum of both farishtaa and ayodin colorations, though many have an iridescent, metallic, or porcelline like sheen to their skin and their most common eye colors are violet, orange, and green.

Lifespans: The very first known ayodin-farishtaa hybrids have still yet to show any signs of aging past their first twenty years of life. Considering that ayodin typically live close to a century old and farishtaas can live well past that, it is theorized that ayotaas could easily outlive gnomes or even be immune to the passage of time like the winged farishtaa seem to be. The full length of their lifespan is as of yet not truly known, but their extremely accelerated initial growth has been well observed. Ayotaas mature just barely faster than ayodin, but this puts them at physical adulthood as soon as age nine. Their mental development seems to closely match this within a few years.

Psychology

It would seem to most that the exuberant and frequently eccentric personalities of farishtaas overcomes the apparent passivity and patience of ayodin when it comes to the behavior of a child born to the two. However, much like their ayodin parent, ayodin-farishtaa hybrids are well practiced in wearing

a mask to hide their inner thoughts and feelings. Outwardly, they are playful and love joking and pranks, but can easily move from harmless fun to potentially dangerous manipulation in the blink of an eye. Most believe this ability to make apparently instantaneous changes in mood is indicative of their farishtaas parent's racial instability masked over by their ayodin parent's ability to control their outwardly displayed mood. Ayotaas do normally take great pride in their physical appearance and go to great lengths to ensure that they look their best, even when not strictly necessary. Due to farishtaas' origins and ayodin's ancient and continued use of bioengineering, ayotaas are also probably the most accepting race of bio-flux.

Traits

Speed: You have a normal land speed of 25, and improved swim speed of 30, and a standard climbing speed of 15.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against ayodin and farishtaas.

Infertile: You are unable to have children due to the radical genetic differences between ayodin and farishtaas.

Amphibious: You can breathe both on land and in water.

Agile Frame: Your wing-fins and farishtaas inheritance grant you an impressive limberness and fluidity to movement. You gain a +2 on evade rolls and +2 to Dexterity.

Delicate Structure: Unfortunately, your lithe body cannot support too much weight. You suffer a -3 to Brute.

Masked Emotions: You are even harder to get a read on than your parents, making the efforts of those trying to manipulate you or predict your actions almost pointless. Cunning rolls against you for social tells suffer a -3 penalty.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Blindsense:** You have developed a limited sense of echolocation. You can see with your ears just as well as you see with your eyes. As long as you aren't deafened, you can see regardless of lighting conditions.
2. **Comfort of the Waves:** You are at home while dancing through the water. Your swimming speed increases by 10 feet.
3. **Halo:** You have an aura of light that slightly illuminates 10 feet around you and also creates a small amount of heat. This effect is repressible at will and cannot overcome artificially created darkness (like that created by an item).
4. **Hardened Structure:** Your seemingly delicate body is made of tougher stuff than people would expect. You negate your Delicate Structure trait and gain a +2 to defense.

5. **Hidden Fury:** In combat, you flicker from jovial banter to violent fury and back in a heartbeat, hiding the true strength of your attacks until you are right next to your target. You gain a +3 to strike for attacks made against targets adjacent to you.
6. **Instant Motion:** You're always moving, always in motion, and nothing catches you off-guard. You may spend 1 action point reflexively in order to gain a +8 on your priority roll when combat begins.
7. **Master of the Mask:** Your mask does not slip, even when being screamed at by a four armed monstrosity. You gain a +2 to resist against provocation, intimidation, and fear.
8. **Seizing Stingers:** You possess poisonous stingers in your skin that causes brief muscle cramps, preventing those affected from putting their all into their blows. Whenever you touch somebody, they suffer a -4 on their next strike roll (this penalty will go away at the end of their next turn if not expended).
9. **Sky and Sea:** Your wing fins are actually slightly larger than the average ayodin's and strong enough for aerial use. Though not strong enough to propel you skywards, your wing fins allow you to glide to the ground safely. Because of this you take no falling damage unless bound, unconscious, or in inclement weather.
10. **Superiority Complex:** You exude an aura of pure, unstoppable confidence regardless of how hesitant you really are, causing foes adjacent to you to doubt themselves. Foes adjacent to you suffer a -2 on their defense rolls.
11. **Tinge Of Insanity:** Deep behind your mask lies a series of violent quirks that you normally keep in check. While it most likely doesn't affect you at all in your daily life, your mental quirks begin to come out after a harsh beating. Whenever you have lost all your hit points, you receive a +4 to both accuracy and strike.
12. **Wounded Pride:** You are very touchy about being injured, particularly when somebody aims at your best features (all of them). After receiving a called shot, your next roll against your attacker gains a +3.

Ayodin-Satyr Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Ayotyr

Ayodin-satyr hybrids, though perhaps frightening to some for their appearance and short tempers, are definitely an interesting race. Referred to as ayotyr, they combine the full list of their parents' most distinctive physical traits, making them one of the most memorable hybrids in Rilasia.

In some ways more common due to their parent races' personal tendencies being so different, ayotyr are a very uniform blend of both mind and body between ayodin and satyrs. However, they do face the same, if not increased, discrimination that most hybrids suffer because of their appearance. The few ayotyr in Rilasia normally congregate together and keep close to the ayodin and satyrs that accept them despite their tempers. Representing a physical and social bridge between ayodin and satyrs, ayotyr are more often accepted by members of their parents' races than the other races, but this is not universal due to the social stigma of hybrids.

As an unfortunate byproduct of their physical appearance, ayotyr suffer the greatest discrimination from religious groups and those who have suffered from the actions of the daemon race from the city of Chasm in Paldorus. For many surface religions, ayotyr and daemons resemble creatures of evil and darkness quite closely. For this, ayotyr, those who brought them into the world, and many of those who defend them publicly are regularly removed from any religious group they are a part of and persecuted for their supposedly dark origins or corruption. It does not help that ayotyr share an exceptional closeness in physical likeness and a limited closeness in psychological tendencies with the daemon race. Though public knowledge of the daemons is still limited primarily to Paldorus and southeastern Zelhost, rumors of a bloodthirsty race of savage warriors have spread and have been frequently and inaccurately connected

with the ayotyr for their exceptional resemblance to the stories' depictions.

Physiology

Ayotyr are rather physically balanced in their combination of satyr and ayodin physical traits. They have the furry legs, cloven hoofs, and horns of a satyr and the upper body an ayodin. They also inherit the wing-fins, gills, thinness of frame, and coloration of their ayodin parent. These features display the full range of variation of each parent's race. Their skin can be pale, dark, blue, green, purple, or any other color common to either ayodin or satyr, though they typically favor that of their mother. Their horns almost never match the appearance of their satyr parent's horns, but they are always undeniably impressive in their almost crafted looking shapeliness. Their wing-fins are slightly smaller than the typical ayodin's, though they function well enough and appear almost identical to their ayodin parent's. Ayotyr average in height and weight about the same as humans, though frequently dip slightly lower on both.

Ayotyr, as they typically congregate together, do share a cultural inclination for certain types of dress and adornment. Partially in defiance of the bigotry they face daily, ayotyr normally favor very vibrant and frequently provocative clothing and regularly adorn themselves with flashy or bizarre trinkets that represent their rather exotic combined heritage. Of course, there are also ayotyr who favor more subdued and concealing attire to avoid unwanted attention and criticism.

Lifespans: Ayodin live slightly longer than humans and mature faster, but satyrs share a very close growth pattern and lifespan to the humans they were originally formed from. From this and the known lives of the preexisting ayotyr, the average lifespan of ayodin-satyr hybrids has been established as ap-

proximately ninety years. Ayotyr mature by around age twelve, though this normally marks the emergence and rapid growth of their horns. The phrase “the devil’s in the horns,” normally associated with satyrs’ tendency to become more rambunctious when their horns come in, is frequently used in a more derogatory manner for the way that ayotyr’s tempers become their shortest when their horns first come in.

Psychology

With ayodin known for their stoic continence covering up withheld emotion and satyrs for their rambunctious and wild natures, it comes with only little surprise that ayotyr normally display an almost endless state of high energy and passion sprinkled with impressive moments of self control. Constantly moving about or actively doing something, they have already gained a reputation for spur of the moment decisions and constant involvement in one endeavor or another. They have also well earned a reputation for short tempers and a confrontational approach to criticism and discrimination. Frequently angry at the world for the treatment that they and their parents face and combative about their heritage, ayotyr are also fiercely loyal to their own and will die before letting harm come to those who accept them.

Traits

Speed: You have an improved land speed of 30 feet, an impressive swim speed of 25 feet, and an average climbing speed of 15 feet.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against ayodin and satyrs.

Infertile: You are unable to have children due to the radical genetic differences between ayodin and satyrs.

Amphibious: You can breathe both on land and in water.

Alcohol Immunity: You are not negatively affected by alcohol.

With Speed and Passion: You are invigorated by your own constant movement and filled with occasionally violent passion. You gain 1 skill point in both Frenzy and Agility at character creation. You may add your starting skill points to these skills as per normal.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Born Hero:** When using Heroics (found under the Spirit attribute), roll twice and take the higher result.
2. **Brothers-in-Arms:** The hardships and prejudice that ayotyr have faced have brought them close together in brotherhood and fuel their inner fires. When you are adjacent to a ayotyr ally, you both gain a +3 to strike. This effect does not stack if the other ayotyr also has this trait.
3. **Built-in Bulwark:** You’ve become accustomed to defending against attacks through superior use of your fins. Your fins can act as shields (allowing you to use them for deflections).
4. **Endless Energy:** You can keep going long after everyone else has passed out. You can choose not to sleep for up to 3 days without suffering any penalties from fatigue. You also tier up resists against effects that cause drowsiness.
5. **First in Line:** You are always looking out for trouble and frequently the first to leap into the fray. You gain a +4 to all priority rolls.
6. **Flowing Speed:** You run across, swim through, and climb up everything you can with effortless ease. You tier down all penalties for moving across difficult terrain.
7. **Great Vitality:** You are tireless and hardy, granting you 6 additional hit points.
8. **Horrifying Combatant:** Your hooves, horns, and venomous fingertips make every inch of your skin a weapon. Your unarmed damage class is increased to 4.
9. **Poison Immunity:** Maybe your ayodin parent was a chemist or maybe your satyr parent was just made from more stubborn stock. Whenever rolling to resist a poison through Brute, your roll is one tier higher than it otherwise would be.
10. **Unsettling Touch:** The poison in your touch disrupts the the body’s response to pain, making targeted strikes harder to resist. Whenever you touch somebody, they suffer a -5 on their next resist against a called shot (this penalty will go away at the end of their next turn if not expended).
11. **Unstoppable:** Nobody can keep you back or halt your momentum. Attempts to move you against your will, stop your movement, or to resist being moved by you suffer a -4 penalty.
12. **Weather the Storm:** Like your waterborne parent, you know how to keep your inner fury in check when others try to bring it out. You gain a +2 on Cunning or Spirit whenever under duress or being intimidated or provoked.

Human-Ayodin Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Humdin

Human-ayodin hybrids, though rare due to the events of the Hurricane Wars and the slow spread of the virus that enables hybrids to be born naturally, combine the somewhat exotic appearance of ayodin with the headstrong and passionate attitudes of humanity. Called humdin as a shorter reference to their race, their vibrant bodies and personalities make them one of the more expressive hybrids.

Legend has it that human sailors out at sea first thought manatees to be mermaids. Imagine what they thought when they first ran into the ayodin. Though the oceanic ayodin ruined the general opinion of ayodin by starting the Hurricane Wars, the ayodin of the Exodus were able to establish good will and kinder standings for at least some of their race. Since the end of the Hurricane Wars in 837, the so-called 'freshwater' ayodin have endeavored to prove themselves worthy of equal treatment to the peoples of Rilausia. Almost all land-dwelling ayodin live by the sea or major rivers and as such generally maintain constant close contact with fishermen and other seafarers. This close contact combined with the efforts of these ayodin to be fully accepted by their fellows has produced a somewhat unexpected outcome many never considered to be possible.

Recently, a tiny portion of the rare ayodin-human couples have successfully procreated because of the spread of Zuluria Lutrixen's essence virus. These children are clearly neither human nor ayodin, though they inherit far more obvious traits from their ayodin parent. Though rare, humdin have already begun to distinguish themselves by more than their unusual heritage. The most famous of these hybrids is the as of yet unborn child of Duchess Relaine XIV and Professor Quaziim Torish of Malvalla, Siyesh because of the parents' continental prestige for ruling the ancient college city.

Physiology

Physically, humdin draw from their ayodin heritage the most heavily. Sleek-bodied and somewhat thinner than the average human, they also average about three inches shorter than humans. They possess the abdominal gills and wing fins of their waterborne parents, though in a somewhat different fashion. Their gills appear to be partially recessed into their ribcage, making them harder to spot but no less uncomfortable to cover. Their wing fins are slightly smaller and sport thicker membranes, contributing to the strength of the limbs. Humdin also lack the facial fins of ayodin and are proportioned very closely to humans.

Strangely, the mixture of human genes with ayodin genes has resulted in some of the most exotic skin colorations in Rilausia. Though saltwater ayodin can be quite vibrant, it would be assumed that children of their freshwater kin would have a more muted coloration like their ayodin parent. This is not the case with human-ayodin hybrids. Only partially determined by their parents' skin colors, humdin come in virtually every color of the rainbow. The paler the parents, the lighter shade the child's own skin is. The same goes for darker skinned parents as well. Eye coloration seems to be a complete luck of the draw, just like the color of the stripes and/or spots that sometimes appear on human-ayodin hybrids.

Lifespans: Humdin have not yet been around long enough to establish a definite lifespan, though they do seem to age at about the same rate as ayodin. They mature faster than humans, reaching 'adulthood' at around twelve years old and also appear to physically age slower in later years than humans.

Psychology

Ayodin are known for their calm outer disposition, but anyone who fought in the Hurricane Wars can tell you that underneath their exterior is a tumultuous tide of emotions. Humans are typically characterised as both headstrong and prone to fits of passion. Children of such parentage tend to be stubborn, rather rambunctious, and of mixed excitability. In many ways, the behavior of humdin closely resembles that of satyrs, though with the tendency to calm down in later life rather than getting more rambunctious.

Traits

Speed: You have a normal land speed of 25, and improved swim speed of 30, and a standard climbing speed of 15.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against humans and ayodin.

Infertile: You are unable to have children due to the radical genetic differences between ayodin and humans.

Amphibious: You can breathe both on land and in water.

Versatile Wing-Fins: Your wing-fins grant you a limberness to movement that few other races can cope with. You gain a +1 on evade rolls.

Favored Attribute: The famous (or infamous) stubborn will of human beings has been passed down to you, manifesting in your lack of abject failure in one attribute of your choice. Whenever you roll a natural 1 with your chosen attribute, you may add your bonuses to the attribute.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Built-In Bulwark:** You've become accustomed to defending against attacks through superior use of your fins. Your fins can act as shields (allowing you to use them for deflections).
2. **Comfort of the Sea:** You feel far more natural in the water than anywhere else. Your swim speed increases by 10 feet.
3. **Dr. Omle's Fire:** On the high seas during a storm, strange green fire has been seen on the tips of ship masts and the rims of smokestacks without damaging them. Somehow, you are able to replicate this phenomenon, though in a far more impressive manner. For 1 AP, you can wreath yourself in a thin corona of ethereal green fire. This fire does not damage you, but will cause 2 unsoakable damage to anyone you grab or are grabbed by each turn that you continue being in direct contact with them. This 'fire' does not affect non-living matter however. You may reflexively extinguish this 'fire' for 0 AP at any time.
4. **Engineered Greatness:** All ayodin and many humans share

a long history of using bioengineering to create extraordinary things. You follow in this tradition and gain a +2 to either Alchemy or Bio-Flux at character creation (your choice). You may add their starting points there as per normal.

5. **Filtered Breathing:** You've figured out how to use your multilayered, recessed gills like a gas mask while on land. You can breath on land through your gills and tier up your resists against gases while doing so. If you do this for too long while exposed to toxic air, you will become violently sick with the side effects being determined by the narrator.
6. **Fluid Thought:** You are constantly thinking about how to get around or through the obstacles you face, usually in very unique ways resulting from your spur of the moment ideas and ever shifting thought process. When trying to solve an issue through improvisation, you gain a +4 to Cunning or Science.
7. **Hardy & Stout:** People know that it's going to take a lot to take you down. You have 6 extra hit points.
8. **Ice Veins:** The ocean can be cold, but you could walk around unprotected in a blizzard without being phased. Cold environments no longer affect you and you tier up any roll to resist effects caused by cold-related items or abilities such as the Cryothermal weapon augment.
9. **Reactionary:** You can quickly assess and react to a situation. You gain a +3 on all priority rolls, even when taken off-guard.
10. **Ruckus Rowser:** You raise people up, exciting them. Sometimes that's good, sometimes that's bad. You gain a +4 bonus to cunning rolls when attempting to intimidate or provoke a person.
11. **Sea Legs:** You remain steady even if the ground beneath you isn't. You also gain a +5 bonus to all resists against being nauseated.
12. **Wings as Weapons:** Your wing fins are thicker and stronger than usual, allowing you to use them in unarmed attacks with a damage class of 4.

Human-Elf Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Helf/Helves

Human-elf hybrids, commonly referred to as helves, combine the nobility inherent to their elvish heritage with the flexibility of humanity. Their unbowed bodies and physical presence lead some elves to thinking these helves could be the best way to reclaim their lost history as angels without suffering the side effects of the farishtaa conversation process.

Unfortunately, human-elf hybrids suffer a critical flaw common to hybrids: they cannot have their own children. The weak soul of an elf negates the reproductive system of a human, leaving helves sterile from birth. The discovery of this trait ended any romantic notions of half-elves in Rilausia and still haunts many elves and humans who might otherwise consider having children. The discovery of the farishtaa conversion process further pushed this kind of pairing to the fringes of elvish society.

Human-elf hybrids today are often from working-class roots. With many elves hired for labor-intensive tasks in Evangless and other regions, they interact with humans given the same work. Over the decades, this resulted in marriages built on a mutual respect, shared physical abilities, and compatible views on the world. These working class families have less consideration for the establishment of bloodlines, so they often do not mind if their offspring cannot bear children.

Some helves look to the legendary Oasis of Izeda for spiritual guidance or personal motivation. She was the first recorded and proven human-elf hybrid and is even better known for having had the Scarred One as her father before his betrayal and death. She lead the Izedan religion of the Severing that was founded by her father, which strikes a chord with many of her fellow helves with its teachings of enduring hardship and fostering cooperation regardless of background. Helping this is the

fact that the majority of helves are Izedans themselves simply because the hybrid virus started there and the humans and elves of Izeda have a long history of equality and cooperation.

Physiology

Helves combine the strength of their elvish side with the upright posture of their human half. This makes them nearly as tall as farishtaa on average (depending on their human parent) and much stronger than regular humans. Their ears will be shorter, with about half of them having rounded tips. A helf's skin tone will be lighter than their elvish parent, while darker than that of their human parent. Of course, the rare helf with a haudi human as one of their parents will have very dark skin. The hair colors of helves also vary widely, with their hairstyles and the composition of their hair usually having more body and smoothness to it thanks to their human side. Male human-elf hybrids are known to be able to grow beards - a rare sight among elves.

The blend of elven and human endurance has rendered helves tireless and incredibly hardy. Falling only a hair's breadth away from their elven parents in terms of raw natural strength, they also lack the deficiency of essence elves have. This, along with their more conventionally appealing features, allows them to fit in better (at least physically) in non elven societies. Of course, their natural size and towering stature do still distinguish them from the crowd. Their more rough-hewn features are also a clear sign of their elven heritage, though it is usually smoothed over a bit by their human heritage.

Lifespans: Helves can live to 80 or 90 easily, with some lasting even longer. They take longer than elves to mature, but are faster than humans, usually fully adult by the time they are 15.

Psychology

Helves are almost as varied in mindsets and personalities as their human parents. That being said, some trends are worth noting that appear to have come from either their elven heritage or the combined traits of both of their parents. The most common trait associated with humanity is their stubborn will, something that appears to be fully intrinsic to their hybrid children. The famous (and occasionally infamous) loyalty and passionate compassion of the elves also appears to have been passed on to their hybrid children as well. The combination of these traits leads many helves to become some of the most tenacious and outspoken champions of racial and labor equality as well as some of the most vicious crusaders of those causes. Since they are still frequently dismissed for either their elven heritage or their being a hybrid in the first place (or both), helves prefer handling things themselves or relying on a close band of friends and allies.

Sample NPC's

Harena "Oasis" Pulsu

Harena was the daughter of the Scarred One of Izeda and his mate, a Sunrage Elf. Blessed with the ability to see into people's souls, she rose to power as the leader of the Itandi Caravan and spiritual guide to every caravan when her father was killed. She is probably the best known human-elf hybrid on the continent.

Traits

Speed: You have an improved speed of 30 feet. You have a swim speed of 15 feet and a climb speed of 20 feet.

Infertile: Because of the essence deprived nature of elves, their hybrids are born sterile and unable to reproduce.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against humans and elves.

Partly Weak Soul: You suffer a -1 on all rolls with the spirit attribute (this does not apply to skills under spirit).

Tough: You gain an additional 4 hit points.

Tree-Ripping Strength: Unarmed attacks and melee weapons you wield as 1 damage class higher than normal.

Random Traits:

1. **Adaptable:** Extreme environments barely bother you. You take no penalties for extreme heat, cold, humidity, or other such environmental effects due to your surrounding area. (But if you're hit by a glob of lava, it still hurts you normally.)

Human-Elf Hybrids and Conversion

To date, no human-elf hybrids have undergone conversion to a farishtaa using Girazza's method. No one knows what would happen if they did. It's already known that helves do not have souls as weak or fractured as regular elves. The common theory is that they would die, with their hybrid physiology overwhelmed by the essence.

Still, research is ongoing. Some hope that by creating a conversion process for hybrids, it may give them the ability to have their own children. However, the importance of this research is considered minimal. Higher priority is given to the elf-farishtaa conversion process.

There are currently a handful of human-elf hybrids undergoing the melding process created by Sapience Ydralia which normally results in elves becoming true-meld farishtaas. The results are as yet inconclusive, but early results indicates her method results in these helves transitioning to human-farishtaa hybrids.

2. **Building Blocks of Nature:** Your connection to nature and your human ingenuity let you treat living organisms as some treat machines. You have 2 skill points in Bio-Flux (you may add skill points to that skill as normal).
3. **Favored Attribute:** Choose any attribute other than Spirit. Whenever you roll a 1 with that attribute, you may add your bonuses to the attribute. (This does not apply to the skills under that attribute.)
4. **Ecosphere:** Your elvish blood speaks to the world around you, fueling the scientific knowledge of your human half. You gain a +4 to Science rolls involving inspecting and understanding your surroundings and the biological aspects of it. You may use Disassemble on any biological item you sufficiently understand, as determined by the narrator.
5. **Great Height:** You are taller than both humans and elves, giving you more power behind your attacks. You gain a +2 to strike.
6. **Hardy and Stout:** People know that it's going to take a lot to take you down. Start with 6 additional hit points. This stacks with the hit points granted by your Tough trait.
7. **Innovative:** You gain +1 DIY and +2 Augments. The augments you gain can either come from any craft you learn at character creation or some craft you learn later.
8. **Like the Grave:** Elves are skilled and patient hunters who are accustomed to remaining hidden in the same spot for long periods of time. You have learned this patience from your elven parent. After being hidden for a full turn, you

gain a +5 to remaining unseen.

9. Long View of Time: While humans are normally very rushed and hurried about time, you inherit the patience of your elvish forefathers. This allows you to act with greater deliberation. When combat starts, you may choose to take a 1 on Priority. When you do this, you gain +3 to all Spirit attribute rolls and resists, including Heroics, for the duration of that combat.
10. Second Sight: You can use your Spirit to see inside people. This allows you to use your Spirit attribute for all Social

Tells in place of Cunning. You can ignore your penalty from Partly Weak Soul with these rolls.

11. Tenacious Grip: If you get your hands onto something, nothing can pry it from you. Whenever you attempt to remain holding onto something, you gain a +6 on the roll.
12. Tireless Worker: Long hours are just a way for you to keep busy. You gain a +4 to Brute rolls involving manual labor and take twice as long to suffer from the effects of Fatigue.

Human-Farishtaa Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Farin

Human-farishtaa hybrids, also called farin, are a close second to the most common hybrids in existence on Rilausia. The reasons are easy to explain. Farishtaa are seen as beautiful and desirable by human standards, sometimes intimidatingly so. Humans also have a high tolerance for the independent and quirky nature of farishtaa psychology. Farishtaa can become intrigued by human ingenuity and creativity and there are more than a few humans whose own beauty meet the high standards of farishtaa.

The pairings of humans and farishtaa are the least discriminated against in Rilausia, thanks to both races occupying positions of power. There have already been interracial marriages between humans and farishtaas for many years among wealthy and powerful people, as well as between several public starlets and actors. This has given it a certain respectability in Evanglessian pop culture, trumping much of the usual bigotry. A farin is unlikely to be rejected by humans from that nation, though some face a form of bigotry that holds them to a higher standard due to their glamorous background.

A notable exception are the members of the Fullborne Society, who have a heavy bias against farishtaa in general due to their ties to the angels of old and their challenge of the human-

dominated upper class. More than a few Fullborne members have family lines they can trace back to being enslaved by the angels and their focus on history makes those wounds as fresh as if it were only a few years ago despite the lack of historical records from the long passed Era of Chains. As a result, any member who marries a farishtaa is likely to face expulsion, no matter how distinguished their heritage.

Farishtaa culture is somewhat harsher toward hybrids, seeing them as lesser farishtaas; still better than elves, but not as good as the Night Society of Dalvozzea. However, this is only the case with the mainstream arbiters of what is acceptable. Many farishtaa find the farin exotic and interesting, though they would never admit that publicly. While the Day Society and Winged Farishtaa have a gravitas born of their regal and above-it-all demeanor, farin exude a sense of oneness and relatability. To a race that seeks companionship, those traits make for an interesting push-and-pull between popular attitudes and personal desires.

Like farishtaa, farin are banned from Adoipa by order of Girazza. Despite this, farin frequently develop a more open minded personality than traditional farishtaas, with some celebrity hybrids at the forefront of elven equality efforts. Critics and the jaded assume these few to be playing the part for the

attention it gets them, but these farin normally do actually hold the beliefs they proclaim to the public.

Physiology

Farin are only a little shorter than farishtaas on average, but taller than humans. Their ears will be pointed and straight, but shorter overall than a farishtaa's. Some may have rounded tips, but this is less common. No matter the eye, hair, or skin coloration of the father, farins will always favor their mother's coloration and tones. Exceptions do exist though.

Human-farishtaa hybrids are stunningly beautiful. The farishtaa angelic quality increases the best of their human traits to a high degree, resulting in flawless skin, perfectly proportioned features, and a natural elegance that others spend years training to acquire. By some measures, farin are seen by humans as even more attractive than farishtaas! Most claim that when a human and a farishtaa copulate, only their most flawless features are allowed to go into their child. Biologists don't really bother pointing out the many flaws with this idea.

Female farin in particular are highly regarded for their radiant beauty, though many consider male farin just as attractive. Unfortunately, this has resulted in several sub-cultures that objectify them and made them targets for the slave trade. Somewhat more so than their farishtaa parent, a farin has to deal with this objectification and potential predation simply because they are rarer, increasing the attention their smaller but no less prominent numbers draw.

Lifespan: Like farishtaas, no one is certain how long the farin will live as none of the know farin show any telling signs of age. A longer lifespan than humans is expected, with some estimates putting it at over 120 years. Farin reach full maturity at very different paces, though they tend to take longer than humans and less time than many second-generation farishtaas. Some mature by age 20, others not until 28.

Psychology

Human-farishtaa hybrids cover a much wider span of mental conditions than farishtaas. In most cases, the personality tics of the farishtaa parent will be evened out with the mind of the human parent. If the human parent is calm and balanced, the hybrid is unlikely to have any quirks. In cases where the human also exhibits abnormal psychology or exceptional bursts of insight - especially in the realm of scientific or artistic creativity - this can actually push the hybrid toward an even higher state of mania.

Even when a farin does not inherent quirks biologi-

cally, they may acquire a tic from their farishtaa parent through simple mimicry as a child, making it a matter of nurture over nature. The connection of farin to the sky will also vary depending on their human parent.

Their view on elves will largely depend on the parents. There are farin who view elves as beneath them, inheriting the biases of their surroundings. Others, having experienced the judgemental nature of farishtaas first hand, are less likely to subscribe to this and are more likely to deal with elves as equals.

Sample NPCs

Orlen

Orlen is known as a star of the stage. A human-farishtaa hybrid, his beautiful voice and elegant frame has earned him popularity among numerous human females who turn out in droves to watch him perform. He is best known for his performances in the plays by Francisco Rasher, who has taken to writing his characters specifically for Orlen.

Traits

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against humans and farishtaas.

Speed: You have the average 25 foot movement speed. You have a swim speed of 15 feet and a climbing speed of 15 feet.

Infertile: You are unable to have children, due to the radical genetic differences between farishtaas and humans.

Choose any two of the following:

Innovative: You gain +1 DIY and +2 Augments.

Favored Attribute: Choose any attribute. Whenever you roll a 1 with that attribute, you may add your bonuses to the attribute. (This does not apply to the skills under that attribute.)

Piercing Scrutiny: Even in the heat of battle, you can keep your calm and fixate on your target. You gain a +1 to accuracy.

Unpredictable: Farishtaas can be difficult to anticipate and manipulate and though somewhat different, you are still hard to get a read on. Whenever interacting with people, you gain a +2 on your Cunning roll.

Random Traits:

1. **Airflow Sense:** You can sense the eddies and flow of air around you, allowing you to also sense where they move. You gain a +4 to find concealed doors, traps, and other hid-

den things.

2. **Born to be Airborne:** You begin with 2 free skill points in Ace. You may add your starting points there as normal.
3. **Dancer's Body:** Your sleek, slim body is far more flexible than any of the other races could ever hope for, even your farishtaa parent. You gain a +3 on your dexterity rolls, but suffer a -1 to your brute rolls.
4. **Emotional Availability:** You project an aura of connection and oneness with everyone you meet, making them much more receptive to listening your point of view. You gain +4 Cunning when trying to convince someone of something or to pacify them.
5. **Energetic:** You can go longer without sleep. You can choose not to sleep for up to 3 days without suffering any penalties from fatigue. You also tier up resists against effects that cause drowsiness.
6. **Fleet Footed:** You gain 10 ft. to your land movement speed, bringing it up to 35 feet.
7. **Inspiring:** Your mind is constantly churning with new and amazing ideas. Your activity inspires others to feats of greatness and flexibility of mind. This makes those around you far more adept at handling the unpredictable - both circumstances and people. You and those within 25 feet of you gain +4 Cunning when dealing with scientists, inventors, and other technically-oriented people or when confronted by a mechanism that uses augments you've never encountered before.
8. **Reactionary:** You can quickly assess and react to a situation. You gain a +3 on all priority rolls, even when taken off-guard.
9. **Rocket Science:** Your love of flight gives you insight into the tools that let you take to the air. You gain a +4 to Science rolls involving understanding any flying machine or machines that rely on similar principles.
10. **Skin-Deep Values:** Farishtaa culture values beauty, so you've learned how to protect your appearance. You gain a +2 to evade and resist called shots to your head, eyes, and ears.
11. **Spark:** Your mind sizzles with new innovations and ideas for science. You have 2 skill points in any single Science skill of your choice. You may add your starting points there as per normal.
12. **Unafraid to Bond:** You are free of the normal social anxiety of meeting new people and of many fears in general. When you would be affected by fear, lower the fear effect by 1 tier. (As such, you are immune to tier 1 fear effects.)

Human-Gnome Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Hume/Humes

Human-gnome hybrids combine the scientific ingenuity of humanity with the natural affinity for nature that nearly all gnomes possess. There are those who suffer the same metal deranged mentality of their gnomish parent though if they have such a parent. No matter which of these two camps a hume (as they are called) falls in, they display the adventurous and stubborn will of humanity tempered with or exacerbated by their the

tendencies of their gnomish heritage.

Humes are the most polarized of the human hybrids. Public opinion of them sits at either very positive or rather hostile depending on the individual hume's disposition. One thing that the public can agree on completely is that they are frequently geniuses with biological sciences, mad or otherwise. Their very human appearance helps keep bigotry towards them relatively minimal, though there are always those who see their hybrid nature as unnatural.

Physiology

Humes appear very much like short humans with a more enduring youth. Averaging around four and a half feet tall, humes take after each of their parents rather strongly in different ways. They inherit the facial structure and body type of their gnomish parent, but the eyes, hair and voice of their human parent. Very little other than their diminished height physically distinguishes them from humans. The stubborn endurance of humans and the long lives of gnomes seem to have given their children a vast store of physical vitality though.

Lifespans: Just like with their physical appearance, the lifespan and growth rate of humes is a near perfect average of those of their parent races. While it takes nearly 24 years for their bodies to mature, their minds mature within seven years at most. It seems that the average lifespan for humes should come very close to 150. On top of that, they are also one of the few hybrids able to give birth without outside assistance. This has been attributed to the genetic flexibility of humanity as well as the effortless ease that gnomes connect to nature.

Psychology

Hume culture and mentality varies almost as widely as that of humans, though there are two common stereotypes and a relatively accurate trend. The first stereotype depicts them as modern naturalists in all senses of the word, the other as scientifically demented techno fiends. Both have good and bad reputations, but the latter is what they are more well known for since those who reinforce the stereotype are possibly louder and more eccentric than metal-deranged gnomes. More commonly, humes fall within some realm between these two. More outgoing than gnomes but normally more restrained and amiable than many humans, the majority of humes devote their lives to studying some facet of life. Whether it be through scientific studies, philosophical pondering, or raw and repeated experience, this pursuit frequently defines a large part of who they are. What they study, how they study it, why they chose to study it, and how they react to others' opinions of their study tells you nearly everything you need to know about a hume.

Traits:

Speed: You have a land speed of 20 feet, a swim speed of 15 feet, and a climb speed of 15 feet.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against humans and gnomes.

Random Racial Traits: In addition to rolling for their random racial trait, humes may select one random racial trait without rolling. If they roll the same trait that they chose, re-roll.

Random Traits:

1. **Adaptable:** Extreme environments barely bother you. You take no penalties for extreme heat, cold, humidity, or other such environmental effects due to your surrounding area. (But if you're hit by a glob of lava, it still hurts you normally.)
2. **Artful Dodger:** While you aren't nearly as small as you gnomish parent, you take full advantage of your shortened frame. You gain a +1 to evade.
3. **Beast Friend:** You find interacting with animals as easy as interacting with people, if not easier. You gain a +4 to social interactions with both wild and tamed animals.
4. **Big Voice, Little Body:** You are capable of being resoundingly loud despite your size. This can work to your advantage in social situations, making it very hard to ignore you. You gain a +2 to Cunning for social interactions.
5. **Boundless Will:** You are full of life and practically nothing can force you to do anything. You gain a +3 to Spirit.
6. **Earthen Sustenance:** Drawing on your gnomish heritage, you can sustain yourself in a pinch by drinking in the vitality of life around you. You can ignore the effects of fatigue or hunger when you do so. However, over use of this ability can cause detrimental effects to the plantlife around you and yourself.
7. **Favored Attribute:** Choose any attribute. Whenever you roll a 1 with that attribute, you may add your bonuses to the attribute. (This does not apply to the skills under that attribute.)
8. **Hardy and Stout:** People know that it's going to take a lot to take you down. Start with 6 additional hit points.
9. **Implausible Pockets:** Nobody else really knows how, but you can pull massive objects out of seemingly nowhere. You tier up any attempt to conceal an item you are carrying.
10. **In for the Long Haul:** You can just keep going no matter what life (or your enemies) throw at you. You gain a +3 to Brute and Spirit resists.
11. **Innovative:** You gain +1 DIY and +2 Augments. The augments you gain can either come from any craft you learn at character creation or some craft you learn later.
12. **Natural Affinity:** Bio-Flux almost seems to come to gnomes as second nature and humans have a reputation for scientific ingenuity. You inherited both. You have 2 skill points in Bio-Flux (you may add skill points to that skill as normal).

Human-Satyr Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Satyn

Possibly the oldest hybrids in historical age, human-satyr hybrids originally rose from illicit relations between satyr slaves and their human masters. Though these offspring were exceptionally rare before the wider spread of Zuluria Lutrixen's essence virus, the virus's spread into the Haudi Empire revealed much of the true extent of these relationships. Nowadays, the satyn as they are known are the most common hybrid race in Rilausia.

Being so similar in appearance to satyrs, satyn face comparatively little discrimination versus the other hybrid races. At least, outside of Siyesh and certain parts of Zelhost that is. Of course, they still face the same bigotry that all hybrids face from those who look down upon their parents for challenging social and racial tradition.

Stubborn and hardy like their parents, satyn have been quite strong in their support of labor and hybrid equality. With their historical background and generally high acceptance allowing most to take them seriously, they have actually achieved a significant amount of progress in these fields. Despite their contribution, few normally consider them the poster-children for hybrids due to their extreme similarity to satyrs. That role normally falls to the farin. Most satyn do not have any issue with this and simply seek equality for themselves and their fellow hybrids.

Physiology

Satyn come in two general shapes. There are those who look exceptionally like regular satyrs, but others can pass for human if they hide their horns. They come in just as many physical variations as their parents, with every natural body type under the

sun being represented in their numbers. One obvious difference is that all satyn's horns remain small throughout their lives, barring a few exceptions. Another trait that holds true for all satyn is that they all retain the immunity to alcohol's adverse effects that their satyr parent possesses.

Lifespans: Satyn appear to share the exact same lifespan as their parent races, averaging at 60 to 80 years. They do share their satyr parent's growth pattern, with the appearance of their horns marking the shift from their youth to adulthood. They even share a similar shift in mood, getting more rambunctious after their horns come in. Satyn are among the few hybrids that are able to give birth to their own children without outside intervention. Most assume this to be due to the genetic similarity of humans and satyrs.

Psychology

The minds and personalities of satyn are just as varied as those of humans. One major trend that is seen among satyn is that they are frequently quite stubborn and driven, a trait that is very commonly seen a point of pride among humans. However, their satyr heritage bleeds through in their rambunctious and a love for social gatherings. The combination of these inherited tendencies has been the leading social factor in their widespread acceptance and personal successes as they carry themselves with determination and with a natural sense of comradery. Typically a tight knit people and steadfast friends, satyn can form lifelong connections even with those whom they have barely met.

Traits

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against humans and satyrs.

Alcohol Immunity: You do not suffer negative effects from consuming alcohol.

Relentless: Satyrn are tireless and hardy and very little can take them down and keep them that way. You start with 3 extra hit points and gain an additional hit point for every specialty that you have.

Choose one of the following:

Cloven: You inherited the goat legs of your satyr parent. Your land speed is an impressive 35 feet, but your swim and climb speeds are only 10 feet.

Iron Foot: You have regular human legs, but your feet have extremely tough soles. You have the standard land speed of 25 feet and normal swim and climb speeds of 15 feet.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Adaptable:** Extreme environments barely bother you. You take no penalties for extreme heat, cold, humidity, or other such environmental effects due to your surrounding area. (But if you're hit by a glob of lava, it still hurts you normally.)
2. **Born Hero:** When using Heroics (found under the Spirit attribute), roll twice and take the higher result.
3. **Brewmaster:** You are an experienced hand at brewing not only intoxicating drinks but other concoctions as well. You start with 2 free points in Alchemy and may add your starting skill points there as per normal.
4. **Favored Attribute:** Choose one attribute. Whenever you roll a 1 with that attribute, you may add your bonuses to the attribute. (This does not apply to the skills under that attribute.)
5. **Inner Resolve:** You stubbornly stand in the face of adversity and let nothing phase you. You gain a +4 to resisting being stunned.
6. **Natural High:** Alcohol is a stimulant for you, not a depressant. You can ignore the effects of fatigue if you've consumed alcohol in the past few hours. If you remain fatigued for more than a few days, even alcohol won't help.
7. **Poison Immunity:** Your body can hold up against even hazardous chemicals and other toxins with ease. Whenever rolling to resist a poison through Brute, your roll is one tier higher than it otherwise would be.
8. **Reactionary:** You can quickly assess and react to a situation. You gain a +3 to priority rolls, even when taking off-guard.
9. **Speed Freak:** Hooved or not, you were made to run. You gain +10 to your land speed.
10. **Undying Loyalty:** Nobody gets past you when a friend is in need. You are able to ignore the effects of fatigue in combat when a close ally is in danger.
11. **Universal Language:** Knowing how to read and control body language is key to making people think and feel what you want them to. You have an eye for these details and know how to control your own body language. You gain a +2 to all social rolls.
12. **Unstoppable:** Even more than the rest of your kin, you just keep going in spite of whatever is thrown at you. You gain an additional 6 hit points.

Elf-Ayodin Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Eldin

Ayodin-elf hybrids are hands down the rarest of all the hybrids. This comes primarily from the truly extreme biological differences between their parent races. Even with Zuluria Lutrixen's essence virus allowing for cross breeding between the races, there is only so far that it helps.

Seen by many as frightening and twisted, these eldin are also easily the most discriminated against of all of the hybrids. Their physical appearance is the leading cause of this, an unfortunately narrow minded product of the current times.

Even with such social impediments, eldin have proved themselves capable in a variety of applications. From displays of physical prowess, to philosophical awareness, martial skill and scientific capacity, eldin have proven at least to some that they are far more capable of exercising both mind and body than prejudice would claim they are.

Physiology

Eldin are tall, averaging at six feet, and posses a curious mixture of leanness and power in their build. Their skeletal structure is slightly thicker than an ayodin's, but still not quite big enough to look like the significant amount of elvish musculature they inherited should fit on it. As such, many wrongly believe that they are more brutish and mindless than many stereotypes makes elves out to be. The only real physical disadvantage that their heritage saddles them with is a deficiency in essence much like a pure blooded elf. Most believe that this is due to both the elves' depleted essence as well as the extreme differences in biology between elves and ayodin.

Eldin have tendrils on their head in the place of hair much like ayodin, but theirs tend to be longer and thicker than

their parent's. Another trait that these tendrils have that those of ayodin do not is the presence of thin wires of muscle and nerve within them that cause them to move about slightly according to the eldin's relative level of emotional excitement. A calm eldin's head tendrils may sway or quiver occasionally while an enraged or particularly joyous eldin's tendrils may flail about wildly. Their wing-fins are also significantly thicker than ayodin's and can support their own full weight much easier. While doing so, they can unfurl their wing-fins to "stand" at twelve feet tall, though most cannot hold the position for very long.

The skin of an eldin is frequently very dark, unevenly colored, and vaguely unhealthy looking even compared to an elf's. However, they can display a seemingly endless variety of patterns and colorations even within these trends. Some eldin have been mistaken for exceptionally large oceanic ayodin due to their more extreme colorations. The membranes of the gills on their lower ribcage is regularly quite vibrantly colored and oftentimes matches the vibrant hues of their eyes.

Lifespans: Eldin are rather long-lived, easily seeing through to a full century before their bodies begin failing. They also develop rapidly, reaching full adulthood as early as age 10.

Psychology

Eldin, for those who bother knowing them, are known well for their near unfailing patience. Though not passive, they do not rise to unnecessary challenges or take to personal insults or jabs easily. Of course, there are those who take a more proactive rather than reactive stance on such affronts to their people, but even they do not allow themselves to appear brutish or overly aggressive.

With all of the adversity that eldin face, it is surprising that they remain patient and collected, or at least most of the

time. Many are less surprised by this considering their parentage, but even those familiar with both elves and ayodin can be taken aback by the raw primal rage that eldin can summon when they are finally pushed past their impressive patience's limit. Veterans of the Hurricane Wars claim that it is the eldin's ayodin heritage, not their elven which is the most responsible for this burning fury hidden beneath a typically calm exterior.

Eldin are also very much like their elven parents in a few ways that show themselves quite thoroughly. First, they are practically incapable of going back on their word or betraying a friend. An eldin's word may as well be self imposed law for them. The second is their strong connection with the natural world. An eldin can feel the currents of the water and wind around them, the strength of the earth beneath them, and the vibrancy of life in the plants and animals they are near. For most this is really just a vague feeling, but some eldin feel a real connection to nature that is more on par with that of a gnome.

Traits

Speed: You have an average land speed of 25 feet, an incredible swim speed of 30 feet, and an improved climb speed of 20 feet.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against ayodins and elves.

Infertile: You are unable to have children due to the radical genetic differences between ayodins and elves.

Amphibious: You can breath both on land and in water.

Corded Strength: You gain a +1 on all Brute rolls and gain a +2 to strike.

Depleted Essence: Eldin have one less slot for essence manipulations.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Blindsense:** You have developed a limited sense of echolocation. You can see with your ears just as well as you see with your eyes. As long as you aren't deafened, you can see regardless of lighting conditions.
2. **Built-in Bulwark:** You've become accustomed to defending against attacks through superior use of your wing-fins. Your wing-fins can act as shields (allowing you to use them for deflections).
3. **Expressive "Hair":** Your head tendrils accentuate your expressions, giving you means of communication that few can even try to duplicate. You gain a +3 on Cunning rolls for social situations.
4. **Feel the Flow:** You tap into the flow of life around you and

feel it far more keenly than most of your brethren. You begin with 1 skill point in Shamanism and may add your starting points there as per normal. You also gain a +4 to Cunning or Spirit when looking/feeling for anything out of place in a natural environment.

5. **Hardened Will:** Nothing will shake you for you have the will to push past adversity with a calm mind. You gain a +3 to resist the effects of fear or when being intimidated or provoked.
6. **Land and Sea:** Whether in the water or on land, you are built for speed. You gain a +5 to all of your base movement speeds.
7. **Natural Advantage:** With the cords of muscle in your arms and the poison in your touch, you can forgo any weapon and face your foes with only your fists. Your unarmed damage class increases to 4.
8. **Self-Catapulting:** By taking advantage of your powerful wing-fins, you can fling yourself across further distances or land far more gracefully by using them like an extra pair of legs. You tier up all rolls for jumping or resisting fall damage.
9. **Silent Stone:** Whether in the deepest reaches of the ocean or the thickest grove, you know how to blend in by simply ceasing to move. After being hidden for a full turn, you gain a +5 to remaining unseen.
10. **Unstoppable:** Despite whatever anyone throws at you, will not stop moving. When you would normally suffer a speed penalty for movement caused from a wound or status effect, that penalty is reduced by 10 feet.
11. **Wings as Arms:** Your wing-fins are strong and dextrous enough to hold one-handed items in them or to make grabs. You cannot use them to hold anything two-handed even if you try to use both.
12. **Withering Touch:** The poison in your fingers causes temporary cramps and distracting pain. Whenever you touch somebody (and choose to release your poison), they suffer a -4 on their next defense roll (this penalty will go away at the end of their next turn if not expended).

Elf-Gnome Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Elm/Elms

It comes as a surprise to noone that the hybrid race resulting from the physically unlikely union of an elf and a gnome would be the hybrid most in tune with nature. Called elms half as a joke, these hybrids are undeniable masters of the outdoors.

Elms face a more unique form of bigotry than other hybrids. This stems mainly from the drastic difference in physical appearance of their parents rather than anything about the elms themselves. Most people do not believe that two beings of such disparaging size and form would be capable of copulating and contemplating the particulars makes many uncomfortable. The personal appearance of elms is actually rarely the target of the bigotry they face.

The vast majority of the existing elms live in the more “untamed” regions of Dalvozzea or Valdru where the largest populations of their parent races live in relative peace as the majority. That being said, there are a few notable exceptions who have moved at least closer to more conventionally modernized centers of civilization with mixed reception.

Physiology

It is undeniable that elves are quite large and gnomes are quite small. For those couples of the two who are able to produce children, they find that their children are quite unique. Elms stand at near five feet tall and are built much like humans of comparable size thanks to the mixing of their parents' physiques. Their skin reflects much of the dark, bruise-like coloration of their elven parent, but toned down and smoothed out by their gnomish inheritance. The eyes of elms take much after the near crystalline quality of gnomish eyes and are frequently a piercing verdant green or take on the look of preservative amber. Their

ears, though not nearly as long as elves', come close to half a foot in length and still come to a narrow point. Elms stand upright, without the hunched stance common to elves.

Lifespans: Elms can almost claim to be the longest lived hybrids of them all. On average, they can normally live within forty years of their second century and retain their physical capabilities almost entirely until the end. However, it does take their bodies around twenty years to mature. Their minds develop significantly faster, putting them at the mental capabilities of a human teenager by age eight.

Psychology

Elms see the world through their own eyes, observing everything and judging it thoroughly by their own personal measures. Frequently calm and amiable people, elms are still fully capable of emulating the primal fury so many elven stereotypes rise from. This anger is slow to rouse though and an elm is more likely to withdraw from negative situations than to allow themselves to be pulled into matters that they are uninvolved in. That being said, elms are near fanatical in their loyalty and devotion to those they call friends. They stay close, both physically and emotionally, with all who they hold dear and will stop at nothing to ensure that their loved ones are safe and cared for. Almost more so than their elven parent, elms have a reputation for enacting vicious retribution for harm done to their friends and family.

When among their more secluded communities, elms and the elves and gnomes they usually live with keep to themselves and remain the quiet caretakers of their region's wilderness. When out in the wider continent, elms exhibit a strong but passive curiosity, observing new encounters slowly before approaching or taking action while still giving their full attention to anything novel to them. Once they become fascinated with

some new experience or object, it consumes their attention for hours on end until they understand every facet of it. This, along with their obvious physical differences from their elven parent, is one of the largest reasons that elms face far less discrimination than elves as they are seen as calmer and more understanding. Of course, this is only because of the regularly inaccurate stereotypes associated with elves, a point that most elms will address with firm arguments (or armaments) against.

Traits

Speed: You have the standard land speed of 25 feet and the normal swim and climb speeds of 15.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against elves and gnomes.

Infertile: You are unable to have children due to the radical genetic differences between gnomes and elves.

Attuned to Nature: Elms have an unmatched connection with nature and everything within it. You start with 2 points in Shamanism and may add your beginning skill points there as per normal.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Beast Speech:** You can converse directly with creatures of the wild, uttering noises very close to each being's own natural call. You are able to understand and communicate with animals on at least some rudimentary form with little effort, granting you a +5 to interaction rolls with animals.
2. **Earthshape:** You can speak with the earth and ask it to move for you. For 2 action points, you can cause the earth to either raise or lower by 5 feet in a 5 foot area. Once raised or lowered in such a way, it cannot be shaped by an elm again until it naturally levels out (which will occur within a couple days).
3. **Feel the Earth:** You can feel the earth through your skin, knowing what it feels. While barefoot or in some way touching solid ground, you can feel footsteps and other things that cause the ground to vibrate within 15 feet. If somebody is attempting to keep their footsteps hidden, you and that person may attempt opposed Cunning rolls. If you win, you sense their location. This ability does not negate any penalties you would take for being blind, but it does tell you where enemies could be standing.
4. **Gears of the World:** You see how even the most insignificant life fits into the larger ecosystem. You gain a +6 to Cunning when trying to discern if an area has recently been disturbed by nonorganic forces.

5. **Keen Observer:** Every detail is important and must be understood properly. You gain a +2 on Cunning rolls when attempting to gather or recall information.
6. **Noiseless:** You walk as though you are on a pad of air, completely unheard. When you are sneaking, you are entirely silent and cannot be heard due to your footsteps alone. You still make noise from the equipment that you are carrying and wear. When you are trying to sneak, you automatically receive 1 tier higher.
7. **Parts of Nature:** You may speak with nature, and nature will lend you its aid. You may, for 3 action points, request a tree or the earth to lend you a piece of itself. You draw a simple tool out of a tree or a patch of dirt, coming in the shape of a light (or smaller) weapon, a tool such as a hammer or wrench, a torch, or any other light-sized basic equipment. This does not warp or deplete the wood or earth that the item was drawn from, and that area of nature cannot lend a piece of itself again for quite some time.
8. **Piercing Sight:** You can see a fly 300 feet away simply by focusing in on it, and this ungodly sight has given you a great precision with ranged weapons. Whenever firing a ranged weapon, you can shoot it twice as far as normal, and you gain a +2 on accuracy rolls with that weapon.
9. **Quiet Observation:** You know that it is best to wait and watch before acting. You gain a +2 to Cunning rolls to notice something and may choose to go last when priority is determined. If you choose this, you gain a +2 to the first roll you make against someone whose actions would directly affect you.
10. **Tree-Ripping Strength:** Unarmed attacks and melee weapons you wield are 1 damage class higher than normal.
11. **Unbound Willpower:** Yours is a will that knows no limits nor acknowledges any restraints. You gain an additional +1 to Spirit and another +3 when using it for Heroics.
12. **Unmovable:** Your patience knows few limits and your resolve is absolute. You gain a +2 on rolls to resist being intimidated, frightened or provoked.

Elf-Satyr Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Eltyr

Hands down the most heavily built hybrids of them all, elf-satyr hybrids remind many of the manticores of old. As such, these eltyr, as they are called, face some of the harshest bigotry of all the hybrids. They are seen as simple brutes, perhaps more so than their elven parents, and are ostracized in multiple regions (namely Siyesh and Dalvozzea).

Most eltyr originate from Izeda, as most hybrids do, and are often mixed between sandgeists and satyrs of Clan Flanagan. As the virus made its way north, it allowed many of the elves and satyrs in Siyesh and Dalvozzea, who had often come together under a joined sense of hardship, to produce children. These individuals now represent nearly 40% of eltyr population.

Eltyr are a people well versed in hardship. Coming from the two races most prone to forced labor in some parts of the continent, eltyr are an understandably strong willed and hardy people. They bear the burden of their heritage with both pride and strength and have already proven themselves capable of far more than mere physical labor. Like many things touching on matters of race and social change, progress is still slow, but the eltyr have learned to endure and, just like their bodies, their spirits are prepared to weather the social storm until they succeed.

Physiology

Eltyr are exceptionally large. They tower, straight backed, at about six to six and a half feet tall (not counting their horns) and weigh in at at least fifty pounds heavier than a human of the same height. Their height, heavy builds and impressively large and thick horns make them very physically intimidating. Their skin retains much of their elven parent's bruise like coloration, but slightly smoothed out by their satyr heritage. All eltyr posses

goat legs, which combined with their natural physique makes them the fastest race of Rilausia. Getting tackled by one of these is often considered to be as painful as getting hit by a train at full speed. Despite their goat legs, most eltyr have bull-like horns and bull tails, traits of a less common strain of satyrs.

Lifespans: Eltyr have an average lifespan of 80 to 90 years, though there are some examples of those who live well past this point. Eltyr mature slightly faster than humans, reaching adulthood by age 15. Though they lack the shift in demeanor that the adage "the devil's in the horns" says about satyrs during adolescence, they experience an enormous growth spurt during the same time.

Psychology

Eltyr are stubborn, loyal, friendly, and utterly sick of how their parents are treated, particularly the way that elves are seen as second class citizens. They are also exceptional workers, being both physically resilient as well as unwaveringly loyal to contracts and agreements when they and their fellows are treated fairly.

Eltyr are very approachable for those who ignore their naturally intimidating appearance and easily form strong friendships with the understanding. However, they are utterly intolerant of bigots and frequently become confrontational with them. Loyal to a fault, an eltyr will kill or be killed before turning on a friend or allowing them to be hurt. The easiest way to enrage an eltyr is to tell them that they, their parents or their friends are somehow beneath anyone else because of their race. Many see eltyr as too quick to judge people they hardly know, but this stems from many eltyr's almost unnaturally accurate perception of who people really are behind the front they put up in public.

One trait of eltyr culture that is very well known is that

they almost surpass their satyr parents' love of alcohol. Eltyr bartenders and brew makers are renowned for their ability to work long, hard hours and still provide exceptional service and products. Some have even invented new brews and mixes. Frequently heavy, dark and warm, these drinks can sometimes actually be substitutes for meals with the large quantities of grains and spices they are laden with. The most popular eltyrian brews are jokingly said to be hearty enough to feed a man for a week even if they leave him reeling the whole time from the heavy kick of spice.

Traits

Speed: You have a ludicrous land speed of 40 feet, an average swim speed of 15 feet, and an improved climb speed of 20 feet.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against elves and satyrs.

Infertile: You are unable to have children due to the radical genetic differences between elves and satyrs.

Heavy, Hearty Frame: You gain a +1 to Brute and start with and extra 3 hit points.

Alcohol Immunity: You do not suffer negative effects from consuming alcohol.

Partially Weak Soul: You suffer a -1 to Spirit roles.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Internal Resistance:** Your body shrugs off the effects of toxins with ease. You tier up all resists against poisons.
2. **Living Weapon:** Your sharp, thick horns, almost iron like hooves and great strength turn your whole body into a weapon. You have an unarmed damage class of 4.
3. **Longstride:** You are easily one of the fastest sentient beings

on land. You gain +10 to your land speed.

4. **Loyal Resolve:** Nothing gets between you and a friend, even blades and bullets. You keep your eyes open for danger, granting all adjacent allies a +2 to defense.
5. **Primal Mobility:** Jumping, crouching, swinging through openings, and using your arms as extra legs gets you around a lot of obstacles. You tier down the penalties for moving through rough terrain.
6. **Red Nosed Appetite:** Some satyrs treat alcohol as a stimulant. Your biology is slightly different, turning grain alcohol into sustenance when food isn't available. You can forgo food and water for a day if you consume a few glasses of alcohol.
7. **Resolute:** With your size and heavy hooves it is nearly impossible to move you or knock you down. You gain a +3 to resist being physically moved against your will or knocked prone.
8. **Stubborn Strength:** You pull through no matter what. When rolling for Heroics (found under the Spirit attribute), tier up your result.
9. **Tireless Effort:** Long hours and hard work mean little to you and you can keep going long after everyone else. It takes you twice as long to suffer from fatigue regardless of the conditions.
10. **Tree-Ripping Strength:** Unarmed attacks and melee weapons you wield are 1 damage class higher than normal.
11. **True Sight:** You can see through the facades people present to the world, looking past their exterior and seeing what lies within. When rolling for social tells, you can roll twice and take the higher result.
12. **Wingless Flight:** Your legs are like springs, able to fling you high into the air and land with surprising grace. You gain a +5 to rolls for jumping or resisting fall damage.

Farishtaa-Gnome Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Gnishtaa/Gnishtaas

Farishtaa-gnome hybrids are rather uncommon, but have begun making their way into public knowledge along with the emerging populations of hybrids across Rilausia. Easily mistaken for youthful humans by most, gnishtaas are also easily the least discriminated against hybrids of them all because of this, even counting the farin since they face a different type of discrimination.

Gnishtaas, being both visually similar to humans as well as not very populous, have had little known exposure. As such, there exists only a cursory public opinion on them. This is mostly limited to mistakenly viewing them as a less noteworthy hybrid. Though not seen as entrancing as the farin or full-blooded farishtaas by most, there are many who find their gaze almost mesmerizing. The only well known gnishtaa to date is an Izedan marksman of the Sapience caravan simply called Quiver. They seem to enjoy the fact that their real name has become a guarded secret and that many snipers from other nations cannot believe that they can be outmatched by someone with a crossbow of all things. A large number of gnishtaas, especially those also hailing from Izeda, look to Quiver as an example of what they can accomplish with many following the path of marksmanship themselves.

Physiology

Gnishtaas appear exceptionally human-like save a small handful of minor features. They average around five feet tall, possess softer and more youthful characteristics, and have slightly elongated and pointed ears. Their skin, hair, and eye colorations run the full gambit of human, gnomish, and farishtaan hues and variations with very little indication of a true average. Typically lean, gnishtaas retain the physical grace that seems so effortless

to farishtaas without the imposing stature.

Their eyes, like gnomish eyes, are their most striking feature. Almost crystalline in appearance, they seem to shine with an inner spark that even gnomes lack in their gaze. Most gnishtaas' eyes reflect light like a cat's and some even possess an enhanced night vision that goes exceptionally well with their eerily keen sight. A gnishtaa can pick out details missed by somebody standing within arms reach of the object of their attention even while they themselves are hundreds of feet away. Many of the bizarre visual capabilities possessed by gnomes are inherited by their gnishtaan children, though this does mean that the majority of gnishtaas are heavily farsighted and require assistance viewing objects up close.

Lifespans: Gnishtaas are believed to be the longest lived hybrids of them all. Likely capable of living to see their second century while retaining their apparently infallible youth, there are some who believe some gnishtaas may be capable of hitting the 300 year mark if they avoid risky behaviors. While they take a full thirty years to reach physical maturity, their minds mature within only ten to twelve years.

Psychology

Gnishtaas can be seen as a rather balanced combination of gnomish reclusiveness and patience with farishtaan exuberance. They are not as reclusive as gnomes typically are, tending to enjoy the hustle and bustle of city life to some extent, but they are normally not quite as socially outgoing as farishtaas seem to be. This is one of the many reasons that many people do not immediately recognize gnishtaas as hybrids but rather very youthful humans since their average personality fits well alongside the various archetypes of humanity.

In a way, gnishtaas are much like elms with their habit

of (mostly) patient observation, though they are somewhat more excitable and obsessive. For the most part, this normally manifests as a few moments of intense examination before acting when faced with a situation or contemplating a decision long after having made it. Since these habits are relatively common among the other races, most do not take much note of them aside from those who recognize how deeply ingrained these seemingly minor habits are in a gnishtaa's psychology. One side effect of this is that for those gnishtaas who pursue a field of scientific research, they will constantly revisit concepts and data until every aspect of it satisfies them.

One habit of gnomes that has been either unmitigated or exacerbated by farishtaan influence in their children depending on who you ask is their penchant for trickery and pranks. Regularly something done all in good fun, it is also something that has earned certain gnomes and gnishtaas a level of infamy. Gnishtaas at least have the benefit of blending in far better with humans even if they can't just duck behind anything taller than a foot or two to hide. Gnishtaas do have a natural grace helping them out in these impish endeavors, making their touch light and their footsteps soft if they want them to be.

Gnishtaas regularly share a mindset common with their gnomish parents and the more progressive farishtaas when it comes to their generalized views on the various races. Being hybrids themselves, they find little to no problem with any of the other hybrids. Elves, normally treated as second class citizens in many regions, are treated like anyone else by them. This is primarily due to gnomes' long standing relationships with elves as well as the fact that most farishtaa parents of gnishtaas are themselves more progressively minded due to their clear break with tradition in choosing their romantic partner.

Traits

Speed: You have an average land speed of 25 feet, a normal swim speed of 15 feet and a standard climb speed of 15 feet.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against farishtaas and gnomes.

Infertile: You are unable to have children due to the radical genetic differences between farishtaas and gnomes.

Artful Form: Gnishtaan movements are graceful and sure. You gain a +2 to Dexterity.

Zero In: Your vision is flawless at a distance, allowing you to see every detail of something as small as a pea 300 feet away simply by focusing in on it. This makes it very easy to fixate on far away targets, granting you the legendary precision many gnomish marksmen are known for. Whenever firing a ranged weapon, you can shoot it twice as far as normal, and you gain a +2 on accuracy rolls with that weapon.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Absolute Study:** You pick at and worry over data that you have collected long after others would have moved on. Though this makes for somewhat slower work, yours is far more thorough and grants you a more complete understanding of the fundamentals of your craft. You gain a +2 to the Science attribute and begin with 1 skill point in one Science skill of your choice and may add your starting points there as per normal.
2. **Bend Sight:** You can bend your sight - literally allowing you to see around a wall or over a building. You can bend your sight up to 90 degrees.
3. **Cateye:** Gnishtaan eyes do not have slit pupils, but your vision matches that of many nocturnal animals. While you can see clearly even in total darkness, you are more sensitive to bright lights and suffer a -4 to resisting flashes of light and similar effects. Blindness and other environmental circumstances still affect you normally. Artificially created darkness, such as that created by certain trinkets or aether blacktraps, still affects you like anyone else.
4. **Cheeky Sneaky:** Gnomes have a reputation for frequently producing pranksters. Your farishtaan heritage does nothing to stop this. You gain a +3 to attempt to pick both locks and pockets.
5. **Cherub:** It's harder to mistake you for human with a pair of stunted wings sprouting from your back. Though nowhere near large or strong enough to grant you flight, they do protect you from falling to your death. Unless bound, unconscious, or in inclement weather, you take no falling damage as your wings will gently guide you to the ground.
6. **Cloud Deranged:** Resulting from the combination of farishtaan yearning for the sky and the rare gnomish derangement, you have a clear and unsurmountable fixation on upper altitudes. You begin with 2 skill points in Ace and may add your starting points there as per normal.
7. **Effortless Motion:** You walk without a sound and without thinking about it. When you are sneaking, you are entirely silent and cannot be heard due to your footsteps alone. You still make noise from the equipment that you are carrying and wear. When you are trying to sneak, you automatically receive 1 tier higher.
8. **Halo:** You have an aura of light that slightly illuminates 10 feet around you and also creates a small amount of heat. This effect is repressible at will and cannot overcome artificially created darkness (like that created by an item).
9. **Pirouette:** Though more than twice the size of a gnome, your reflexes and flexibility keep you out of harm's way. You gain a +1 to evade.

10. Truly Luminous: The spark in your eyes shines brighter than that in other gnishtaas', ensnaring those who match your gaze. Their distraction makes it easier to convince them to do as you say. You gain a +4 to Cunning rolls to pacify or manipulate someone who can see your eyes. This does not include rolls to intimidate or provoke somebody.
11. Unyielding Soul: Nothing breaks your spirit. If you roll a 1 with the Spirit attribute, you may still add any bonuses to it as if it were a normal roll. (This does not apply to skills under the Spirit attribute.)

12. Wandering Eye: Though you tend to fixate on singular objects a little, you keep an eye on everything in your vast field of view. You gain a +4 to Cunning to notice things visually. Keep in mind that you can see several hundred feet with perfect clarity and a good deal past that dependably.

Farishta-Satyr Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Sashtaa/Sashtaas

Tall, loud, and proud, farishta-satyr hybrids have thrown themselves into the spotlight whenever it shifts from the farin. Known also as sashtaas, they are one of the most well known hybrids in Rilausia despite not being even the third most populous of the various hybrids.

Graceful yet highly emotional, sashtaas can also be counted among the earliest members of the new wave of hybrids. They found their start in Izeda like all hybrids with the invention of the hybrid essence virus, though the virus would incubate in what at the time was the Laquaian Empire for many years before spreading far enough to reach the main populations of farishtaas in Dalvozzea. It is because of another invention of the Sapience of Izeda that the sashtaas found their start before the virus spread with earnest outside Izeda; the True-Melds. The True-Meld farishtaas of Izeda were the first farishtaas to produce hybrid children. With one type of farishta serving as the parent race of these hybrids for so many years, there is a significant divide in sashtaas based on the form of farishta they are born by.

Physiology

Sashtaas are only a few inches shorter than farishtaas, standing at an average of six feet and change. All of them sport goat-like legs and horns of one sort or another, though many have compared these two features with those of deer more than goats. In particular, their horns frequently resemble an exotic combination of goat horns and deer antlers with a handful of curling branches. Some also cite how their hooves tend to be narrower than most satyrs'. Sashtaas are typically lean and fair, though all exude an almost frantic energy that shows itself most thoroughly when they run. Most see a sashtaa's form of running more akin to extremely rapid skipping or a series of coordinated leaps rather than true running, granting them the appearance of hardly touching the ground as they race across it.

Sashtaas match both of their parents in the array of coloration and physical features possible to them plus some more unique to themselves. Their skin frequently displays a golden sheen in certain lights regardless of their base skin tone. Their eyes are normally among the brighter possible colors, with vivid hues of blue, green, light purple and orange being among the most common. Their hair grows quickly from their heads and is regularly just as curly as that of the hair on their legs. Of course, there are exceptions to these trends as with all races though sashtaas seem to have fewer deviations from this average.

Lifespans: Sashtaas average just above one hundred years for their natural lifespan. They have a relatively sporadic growth pattern, with some reaching physical maturity by age fifteen and others taking a full thirty or forty years before their body matches that of an adult. Sashtaa age well, retaining their youthful spirit and appearance far longer than humans or satyrs. However, the last year or two of their natural life is often marked by a sudden and extreme degradation of their body. Many blame this burnout on the strain that their high-energy lifestyles causes their body and claim that even the resilience of satyrs and near immortal youth of farishtaas cannot withstand such constant abuse.

Psychology

When it comes to the matter of psychology, sashtaas are divided in two broad groups based loosely on the nation in which they are born. Izedan sashtaas normally have a true-meld farishtaa parent whereas sashtaas born in other nations have a farishtaa parent who either underwent the immediate and more damaging farishtaa conversion process or was born to farishtaas who had. This divide in parental origins actually changes the baseline personality of the child quite drastically.

Sashtaas of Izedan heritage (or at least true-meld parentage) are much closer to their satyr parent in mindset. They tend to be high energy, make for steadfast allies and miss no opportunity for testing themselves in friendly (or more serious) competitions. They also have a high inclination for being clingy to things, places and people that are important to them. This last trait is attributed to true-melds' pairing with the eygor vultures along with their love for high altitudes and precarious perches.

Sashtaas without a true-meld parent unfortunately suffer greatly from both sides of their parentage when it comes to their psychological makeup. Satyrs are renowned for their rambunctious personalities. Conventional farishtaas display many markers of mental and emotional instability, with quite a few developing full blown manias and dangerous quirks. Sashtaas born to traditional farishtaas, though far more energetic and even more erratically social than their meld-born kin, are utterly unpredictable and far more likely to experience psychological collapse. They still share the core characteristics of rambunctiousness, loyalty, competitiveness, and clinginess that most sashtaas display but are far more likely to take them to greater extremes in both good and bad ways.

Traits

Speed: You have an impressive land speed of 30 feet and average swim and climb speeds of 15 feet.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against farishtaas and satyrs.

Infertile: You are unable to have children due to the radical genetic differences between farishtaas and satyrs.

Watchful, Wandering Eye: Your attention shifts constantly, but you tend to key in on small details that others would normally miss. You gain a +4 to notice rolls.

Alcohol Immunity: Sashtaas are not negatively affected by alcohol.

Choose One of the Following

Meld-Born: Having a true-meld parent impacts you greatly in both mind and body. You see the world with more focus, stand more surely and move with more coordinated grace. You gain a +2 to Dexterity as well as a +2 bonus to all social interactions.

Explosive Wonder: Though many see you as eccentric in the extreme, your boundless energy and adventuring spirit see you through many challenges regularly deemed foolhardy. You gain a +3 to Spirit and start with 4 extra hit points.

Random Racial Traits

1. **A Small Madness:** Those without a true-meld parent and even some meld-born are capable of suffering from some form of minor mental instability. While it most likely doesn't affect you too notably in your daily life, your mental quirks come to the forefront after you get pushed too far. Whenever you have lost all your hit points, you receive a +4 to both accuracy and strike.
2. **Bladehoof:** With your hooked antler-horns and surprisingly sharp hooves, your body is practically a weapon in its own right. You have an unarmed damage class of 4.
3. **Boundless Vitality:** You always have energy to spare. You gain 6 extra starting hit points.
4. **Bronze Shimmer:** The golden glint of your skin resembles polished metal and your vividly colored eyes practically glow with the light of the setting sun. This glint and glow is indicative of possibly the rarest and least expected result of the farishtaa-satyr hybridization. Sashtaas with this trait seem to never suffer physical illness and recover from injuries with incredible speed. You recover from wound effects twice as fast and regain 2 wounds per day rather than the normal one.

5. Cloven Angel: Though your horns and legs may not seem very angelic, every other inch of you begs to differ. This includes the small wings sprouting from your shoulder blades. Unless bound, unconscious, or in inclement weather, you take no falling damage as your wings will gently guide you to the ground.
6. First in Line: You are ready to move at a moment's notice. You gain a +4 to priority rolls.
7. Halo: You have an aura of light that slightly illuminates 10 feet around you and also creates a small amount of heat. This effect is repressible at will and cannot overcome artificially created darkness (like that created by an item).
8. Living Blur: No matter the terrain or environment, you show a speed not easily matched. You gain a +5 to all of your movement speeds.
9. Natural High: For you, alcohol is a stimulant, not a depressant. You can ignore the effects of fatigue if you've consumed alcohol in the past few hours. If you remain fatigued for more than a few days, even alcohol won't help.
10. Resounding Resolve: You never buckle under strain, both internal and external. If you roll a 1 with the Spirit attribute, you may still add any bonuses to it as if it were a normal roll. (This does not apply to skills under the Spirit attribute.)
11. Skybound Soul: You yearn to reach the clouds themselves and onward, an instinct that your farishtaa parent understands quite well. You begin with 2 skill points in Ace and may add your starting points there as per normal.
12. Unending Glory: Whether it's out of raw determination, hubris, or a need to perform above and beyond, you put your all into it when it matters most. When using Heroics (found under the Spirit attribute), roll twice and take the higher result.

Gnome-Ayodin Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Gnodin

Ayodin-gnome hybrids are one of the rarest of the hybrids. Most cite the reason for this being the reclusiveness of both of their parent races and the difficulty of finding their children who wish only to live alone in peace. This leads to the fact that few know all that much about them, though most who know of their existence call them gnodin.

Coming from two peoples well versed in communing with and/or bending the natural forces of the world, gnodin are exceptionally well accustomed to shaping what they need directly from the world around them. By their efforts, the ayodin crafts of coral, stone, and fish-warping as well as tidal manipulation have been blended with the earthshaping and shamanic bioengineering practices of the gnomes. The results are incredible feats of on-the-fly restructuring and reordering of biology and geography. Locales settled by these secretive and reclusive

hybrids are marvels of natural science, largely in part due to just how hard to find they are and how well defended they can be if needed. With their affinity to both the land and the waters that run through it, gnodin tend to congregate in small communities around naturally occurring ponds of algae or in pockets of swampland and similar environments. There, they attune themselves to the mixture of terrestrial and waterborne life. This has led to some conflict between the gnodin in Valdru and the anura who are native to the swamps there. With both peoples being exceptionally reclusive and isolated, little is known about these clashes or how severe they actually are.

Physiology

Gnodin, like most gnomish hybrids, appear much like a smaller version of their non-gnome parent. As such, they are frequently mistaken for adolescent ayodin in the event that they are

encountered. Standing at an average of three and a half feet tall when fully grown, gnodin are also rather thin framed. Though physically frail, their thin frame along with their slightly oversized wing-fins (at least compared to their bodies) grants them a limberness and evasiveness utterly unmatched by even their parents.

Gnodin retain the gills and facial fins of their ayodin parent, though they are proportionally smaller than those of a full blooded ayodin. Their gills sit on their lower ribcage like an ayodin's and function just as well, though some say that extreme depths are more problematic for them. With their facial fins and generally more conventionally expressive demeanors, they have rather expressive faces. Their eyes, though not as striking as a full blooded gnome's, are the only thing aside from their size that sets them more clearly apart from ayodin. Much like ayodin, they can support their full weight on their wing-fins and even extend them while doing so, allowing them to reach up to an impressive height of six to seven feet when fully extended.

Gnodin coloration, while slightly more muted than ayodin colorations, still displays the full spectrum possible to ayodin with a few differences. The most obvious difference is that though they still lack hair, the tendrils on their head are colored differently than the rest of their skin, giving the illusion that they do have some form of hair. Another difference is that some display a natural ability to alter their pigmentation at will. Gnodin eyes are exceptionally vibrant and are normally some hue of blue, green, purple, or even red.

Lifespans: Gnodin are believed to live to around 150 years on average. They take between 10 to 15 years before they are considered fully grown, but mature mentally about 5 years faster. Gnodin are among the few hybrids able to have children of their own, a feat regularly attributed to the life weaving practices of the ayodins and gnomes.

Psychology

Gnodin are very reclusive in general, preferring to remain by and tend to their ponds and swamps. They take the long view of things, considering lingering ramifications of their actions and weighing their options with care. They are a very calm people, rarely suffering from the fits of passion associated with humanity. For them, patience is a cornerstone of their culture. Patient to a fault, gnodin are quietly kind and courteous even when faced with adversity. They know that life, especially for a hybrid, can be horrifically unfair and that a constant but calm response of resistance to conflict, danger, and outside pressures is the surest way of overcoming them. That being said, gnodin are cunningly vindictive when finally roused to anger. Just like their parents, seeing a gnodin pushed past their incredible patience and capac-

ity for understanding is like watching a hurricane suddenly breaking forth on a clear day.

Gnodin borrow from both of their lines of heritage and are closely attuned to both the plants and animals around them as well as the waters they live by. Theirs are cultures tied inextricably to the land they inhabit. Most shape it to better their own lives without destroying the natural order, others adapt themselves to better fit into the untainted and unaltered wilderness. Whichever of these or other paths a community of gnodin follows, they always consider themselves the guardians of the land they settle. Even those of them who travel outside their hidden communities maintain their deep connection with the world around them.

Traits

Speed: You have a 20 foot land speed, an improved swim speed of 25 feet and a slightly reduced climb speed of 10 feet.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against ayodins and gnomes.

Amphibious: You can breath both on land and in water.

Fluid Motion: You are small and your large wing-fins enhance your limberness greatly. You gain a +2 bonus to evade.

Diminutive Form: Gnodin suffer a -1 on Brute rolls and must take a footing stance to wield heavy weapons without penalty just like super-heavy weapons. Anything that allows you to negate the requirement of taking a footing stance to wield a super-heavy weapon also negates the requirement for a heavy weapon.

Random Racial Traits: In addition to rolling for their random racial trait, gnodin may select one random racial trait without rolling. If they roll the same trait that they chose they must re-roll for a different one.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Adaptive Coloration:** You are one of the gnodin who were born with the natural ability to shift your skin, eye, and hair pigments and textures consciously. It costs you 1 AP to do so and can even be done reflexively. This grants you a +3 to Cunning to disguise yourself. This bonus can also count for hiding, but this requires you to be mostly if not completely unclothed.
2. **Blindsense:** You have developed a limited sense of echolocation. You can see with your ears just as well as you see with your eyes. As long as you aren't deafened, you can see regardless of lighting conditions.
3. **Blood Draw:** Your touch is laced with a toxin that causes

blood vessels to rupture. Your unarmed attacks also cause 1 point of bleeding damage which can stack with itself. Unarmed grabs and even simple contact with your bare hands can also inflict this bleeding if you choose.

4. **Built-in Bulwark:** You've become accustomed to defending against attacks through superior use of your wing-fins. Your wing-fins can act as shields (allowing you to use them for deflections).
5. **Expressive Flair:** Your facial fins lend themselves to your expressions, giving you an exuberance and range of expressions that few can match. You gain a +3 on Cunning rolls for social situations.
6. **Layered Lids:** You have something called a nictitating membrane, a transparent extra eyelid that can protect your vibrant eyes from contaminants or even harsh light. You gain a +3 to resist things that would damage your vision such as called shots, bright flashes of light, or contaminants like dirt or blood.
7. **Life Shaper:** You are well versed in the ways of your people when it comes to molding life around you. You begin with 2 skill points in either Alchemy, Bio-Flux, or Shamanism (your choice) and may add your starting points there as per normal.
8. **Parts of Nature:** You may speak with nature, and nature will lend you its aid. You may, for 3 action points, request a tree or the earth to lend you a piece of itself. You draw a simple tool out of a tree, a patch of dirt, stone, or even coral, coming in the shape of a light weapon, a tool such as a hammer or wrench, a torch, or any other light-sized basic equipment. This does not warp or deplete the source that the item was drawn from, but that area of nature cannot lend a piece of itself again for quite some time.
9. **Still Waters:** You do not rise to provocation or cower from shows of strength or cruelty easily. You gain a +3 to Cunning or Spirit resists against provocation, intimidation, and fear.
10. **Talon Tendrils:** Some gnomes can alter their shape and size to match that of an elf. What you do is significantly different and far more specific. For 1 AP while touching the ground or a source of water, you can toggle your wing-fins between their regular form and that of massive claws sprouting from your shoulders. When in the form of claws, you can use your wing-fins like hands for the purpose of grabbing things or making unarmed attacks, but you cannot use items with them. Your unarmed damage class with these claws is 4.
11. **Windcatcher:** Due to the massive size of your wing-fins in comparison with your body, heights hold little danger to you. Unless bound, unconscious, or in inclement weather, you take no falling damage as your wing-fins will gently guide you to the ground.
12. **Wounding Will:** Your will and connection to living things grants you power over them. Your foes know this in one of the most painful manners. For 1 AP, you can try to cause the effects of a called shot to an enemy within 25 feet without touching them. This does not cause damage and is a roll off between your strike and the regular attribute resist for the called shot location. Alternatively, your target may use their Spirit instead of the regular attribute for the resist.

Gnome-Satyr Hybrid

Common Racial Name: Gnotyr/Gnotyrs

Gnome-satyr hybrids, known as gnotyrs, combine the amiable and patient natures of gnomes with the often rowdy and vigorous natures of satyrs. Though they have very little of a reputation besides their fast and lasting friendships, this also means that they have not built up any negative stereotypes.

Gnotyrs are not very populous, but are rather popular among non hybrids in the regions where they have a significant presence. This is mostly due to their generally friendly nature and marginal physical difference from regular satyrs. As such, they face little racism aside from that faced by all hybrids. The only less favorable reputation that they have garnered is that of sly tricksters, though they have yet to have any proven tales of anything properly malicious associated with them. Most gnotyrs come from Valdru, as children of native gnomes and satyrs fleeing Zelhost. Many come from Miadru in Dalvozzea under a similar situation, with a great number of their satyr parents having at one point escaped from Siyeshi rule.

Physiology

Gnotyrs appear very much like diminutive satyrs. Just like the way that gnomes look like scaled-down humans, gnotyrs resemble scaled down satyrs. They average near four feet tall, minus their short horns. Gnotyrs all retain their satyr parent's goat legs, but most lack an immunity to alcohol's adverse effects. From their gnomish parent they inherit some semblance of the famous gnomish eyesight, though for most it's merely a matter of appearance with just a vaguely crystal like gleam to their frequently green eyes.

There are some more unique results that have been seen from this hybrid. It seems as if the shamanic heritage of

the gnomes interacts in strange ways with the bio-flux origins of satyrs. Many gnotyrs display traits and abilities more commonly associated with actual goats than satyrs as well as a number of variations on the iconic earth-shifting capabilities of the gnomes. Most assume that this is all a result mainly of their gnomish blood emphasizing a correlation between their goat portions and nature. Some believe that the gnomes' involvement in the original creation of satyrs may have some kind of influence over their progeny.

Lifespans: The average lifespan of a gnotyr sits halfway between that of a gnome and a satyr at 130 years. They develop physically the same as satyrs but like gnomes mentally. This makes for a rather interesting adolescence when the rambunctious tendencies of their satyr blood show through after they have already reached mental maturity. Most parents of gnotyr are unprepared for the trouble these hybrid children typically cause by this combination.

Psychology

A happy medium of gnomish reclusiveness and satyrian rambunctiousness, gnotyrs are possibly the most naturally friendly sentient race in Rilausia. That is at least for those more well advanced in their years. Young and even middle aged gnotyrs are rather fond of pranks and trickery, but they are reliable friends and loyal companions. Family and lasting friendships are cornerstones of their lives. A gnotyr quickly becomes a permanent fixture in the lives of those around them, always present in some way or another. With hearts that seem almost many times larger than the whole of their body, gnotyrs are a passionate people in both good and bad.

They love nothing more than a good laugh among understanding friends and strangers, but can be absolutely ruth-

less in getting back at those who wrong them or those they care for. An angry gnotyr is likely to ply their skill with either words or slight of hand to make a fool of or manipulate and trick the offender. Gossip rings and acts of thievery are well known to the more devious of them.

Gnotyr are a people who speak their minds. This goes equally for those things which they approve of and that which they disapprove of. Whether it be praise for the performance or fortune of a friend or stranger or calling out a bigot, gnotyrs let their stance be known. Gnomes, satyrs, and elves have shared a history of racial closeness, a history that is a direct reason for the existence of the gnotyrs in the first place. Though the most diminutive possible hybrid from among these three races, gnotyrs are by far the most vocal on matter of racial equality between the different hybrids of these three primary races.

Traits

Speed: You have an average land speed of 25 feet, but slightly reduced swim and climb speeds of 10 feet.

Hybrid Vigor: You win all ties against gnomes and satyrs.

Small Frame: You suffer a -1 to Brute.

Hearty Soul: You gain a +2 to Spirit.

Random Racial Traits: In addition to rolling for their random racial trait, gnotyrs may select one random racial trait without rolling. If they roll the same story that they chose, re-roll.

Random Racial Traits

1. **Cliffside Strider:** Unlike standard satyrs and more like the Arakrithian cliff-jumping satyrs, you find it just as easy to scale sheer cliff faces as it is to run across a field. You gain an incredible +15 to your climb speed.
2. **Everyone's Friend:** You have a knack for making everyone come together and put down their weapons even when their blood is up. You gain a +4 to Cunning for any attempt to disengage from melee combat or to pacify somebody.
3. **Extreme Omnivore:** Natural goats are known to eat almost anything. The same cannot be said of satyrs with their far more civilized appetites, though you seem to have more in common with actual goats than even a pureblood satyr. You can eat inorganic material and have it sustain you like regular food, though toxic substances still require a Brute resist to avoid suffering from negative effects.
4. **Green Thumb:** You have a natural affinity for plant life in both science and by pure sense. You gain a +1 to both Alchemy and Shamanism and may put your starting skill points there as per usual.
5. **Implacable:** Everything just rolls off of you, leaving you unphased thanks to your inner resolve. When you are attempting to resist being stunned, you gain a +4 on the roll.
6. **Jolly Good Fun:** Life's a game everyone plays and you're in it for the fun. The most fun is watching people get really angry while trying to hit you. You gain a +1 to evade.
7. **Mini Minotaur:** Though small, you can pack quite the punch (or more often headbut). Your unarmed damage class increases to 3 and you gain a +2 to strike.
8. **Noiseless:** You walk as though you are on a pad of air, completely unheard. When you are sneaking, you are entirely silent and cannot be heard due to your hoofsteps alone. You still make noise from the equipment that you are carrying and wear. When you are trying to sneak, you automatically receive 1 tier higher.
9. **Parts of Nature:** You may speak with nature, and nature will lend you its aid. You may, for 3 action points, request a tree or the earth to lend you a piece of itself. You can draw a simple tool out of a tree or a patch of dirt, coming in the shape of a light (or smaller) weapon, a tool such as a hammer or wrench, a torch, or any other light-sized basic equipment. This does not warp or deplete the wood or earth that the item was drawn from, and that area of nature cannot lend a piece of itself again for quite some time.
10. **Rogue's Eyes:** There's an almost literal glimmer in your eyes that gives you an even cheekier appearance than most gnotyrs. You have an especially keen sense for openings and know how to turn the smallest of them into something either hilarious or more physically advantageous. You gain a +2 to Cunning for notice rolls and a +2 to priority.
11. **Rooted:** Your hooves can practically become one with the earth beneath you, fixing you in place and denying anything that tries to move you. You gain a +4 to resist being knocked prone or moved against your will.
12. **Surprise Immunity:** Unlike the vast majority of your kin, you retain your satyr parent's immunity to the adverse effects of alcohol. With your smaller body you can't push it quite as far due to a simple matter of volume, but for all intents and purposes you are just as resilient to alcohol as a satyr.

Chapter 3.

Core Race Variations

The Effect of Culture and Climate

Anyone can tell you that where you live and how you're raised can cause changes in your mentality and even your body. Some are quite drastic. In the world of Tephra, these changes are primarily aesthetic ones, altering only the appearance of a character and influencing their background and roleplaying aspects. Much of this is already covered in the Nationalities and Nationality Stories in both the Playing Guide and Outer Reaches. Izedans tend to be more adept at scavenging and survival tasks due to their need to do exactly that in the harsh environment of the Quist. Zel Haud humans are tall, dark, and sharp-toothed, with a penchant for alchemy due to their environment, connection to the Haudi Empire, and highly industrial society. Evanglessians are a melting pot of various cultures largely due to their nation's history of rapid and aggressive expansion and absorption of other nations or at least parts of them. They are also both highly scientific and religious as a general rule of thumb because of their history and culture.

Some alterations to a character can be represented in optional rules and mechanical traits that reflect the effects of extreme environments and certain cultural phenomena. It can even be argued that entire subspecies of each and every core race exist in modern Rilausia due to adaptation to specific environments and ways of life. Sunrage elves in Izedas look and behave quite differently than elves in Dalvozzea, and metal-deranged gnomes behave like polar opposites to what is expected of their more conventional kin. The following alternate templates for the core races found in the Playing Guide should be considered mostly for story potential and are up to narrator approval.

Sandgeist & Sunrage Elves

Before Izeda existed as a nation, there were elves that occupied its land. Outcasts from their brethren, they retreated to the inhospitable land in shame. When escaped human slaves fled to Izeda before the Revolutionary Era even started, they met these elves, called the Sandgeists. More elves came to Izeda after the rise of the Haudi Empire in the north. They worked as raiders for centuries and created a reputation as fierce desert warriors. Many of their fighting techniques are still practiced today.

The Sandgeist elves entered prominence beyond their role as warriors under the reign of the Acidic Queen, Asagnis Dahklarr. One of her key advisors was Jaared, a Sandgeist who had studied science under the gnomes of the Strangled Mountains. He would become the first Sapience, establishing a line of scientific advisors that would help the Laquaian Empire establish itself as a major continental power.

For centuries after, the Sandgeists served as the Laquai Empire's most effective fighting force. However, when the Civil War came, loyalties were sharply divided. The Sapience, Zuluria, had Hagromon, a Sandgeist elf, as her second-in-command. However, the Asagnu Royal Family was the source of many of the funds that had helped make the Sandgeists so profitable. In the end, the elves split in two: half the Sandgeists sided with the Sapience, while the others - now calling themselves the Sunrage - went with the Asagnu.

Today, the political division between the two remains. The Sandgeists continue to serve the current Sapience faithfully. They perform many roles, from research assistants to troops to terraforming settlers. The Sunrage are similarly loyal to the Asagnu, though they tend to be exclusively military in how they serve. The two have no special hatred or dislike of one another - a Sunrage and a Sandgeist are unlikely to cause trouble if they run into one another at a bar. However, they are unlikely to mix, due to the enmity that remains between the two caravans.

The Izedan elves that became the Sunrage and Sandgeist elves of today have actually been significantly affected by their cultures and history within the Quist. Living in the harsh desert has toughened their bodies just as having shared the land equally with humans and gnomes for centuries has affected the way they think.

Physiology

Physically Sunrage and Sandgeist Elves are the same, as their only differences are political, not biological. Being in the desert and away from their normal arboreal climate has made the elves' skin rough and leathery and their hair long enough to shade their backs from the harsh sun. Their mottled, bruised skin

tones are different, with the dominant skin color being a mix of reds, browns, and oranges. Both also typically have far more hunched postures than woodland elves, with many using their thick arms as an extra set of legs to cover ground faster.

Psychology

Due to their different traditions, Sunrage and Sandgeist elves disagree on a number of issues, the most significant being their differing views on farishtaas.

Sunrage elves regard themselves as part of the desert, their broken forms an embodiment of the Severing. They know the conversion process destroys the self. To them, this is the equivalent of betraying everything fundamental to being one with the desert. As a result, a miniscule number of Sunrage Elves have converted to farishtaas (called Windriders) and these converts are uniformly shunned by other Sunrage elves. A Sunrage elf will never show deference or even respect to a Dalvozzean farishtaas. True-Meld farishtaas are judged less severely by Sunrage elves due to their retention of their memories, but most Sunrage elves refuse to recognize them as the same person because of their shift in personality.

Sandgeists, on the other hand, freely convert to an Izedan variant of farishtaas, known as True-Meld. They use a method developed by the current Sapience, Ydralia Navid, that restores essence by filtering it through animal companions. Because the process does not destroy the original elf's memories and only slightly shifts their personality, they see it as a way to become one with the desert rather than a separation from its embrace. Sandgeists share the Sunrage's dislike for Girazza's process and will almost uniformly refuse to undergo it. However, Sandgeists who do undergo this far more rapid conversion are still welcome among their elven kin. Sandgeist elves are also not prone to showing special deference to Dalvozzean farishtaas, a view amusingly shared by farishtaas coming from the Sandgeists (both conventional and True-Meld).

Roleplaying Tips

Sunrage and Sandgeist elves are used to being fully accepted by those around them and will not expect the position of second-class citizen most elves are reduced to in other nations. This being said, they are not only physically resilient people but stalwart and proud at heart. Even when faced with extreme prejudice, Izedan elves can weather it like any of the many sandstorms they have faced. Their more "savage" appearance does make them exceptional targets for this bigotry, and a person can be pushed only so far before cracks in their armor start showing.

The following are optional traits that can be used by Sunrage and Sandgeist elves. They count as random racial traits and can be substituted into the standard list given for elves in the *Playing Guide*.

Ground-Eating Gallop: Down on all fours, you fly across the sands, letting all four of your powerful limbs catapult you forward. You can enter a quadrupedal stance for 1 AP. While in this stance, you add half of your normal land speed to your movement (rounded up). For example, if you have a 30 foot land speed and take this stance, your speed increases to 45 feet on land.

Punishment: Your body has been pushed to its limits - so it increased its limits. You start with an extra wound, bringing your total to 13 rather than the standard 12.

Wind Scarred: Your body shows the time it's spent in the desert. People know from looking at you that you are a hardened veteran of the desert and that commands respect even from outsiders. You gain +4 to all intimidation or provocation rolls.

Your Body is My Weapon: An ancient fighting technique of the Sandgeist is to use an enemy's own compatriots as a weapon against them to demoralize their forces. (This was most famously employed against gnomes.) You take no impromptu weapon penalties for using the dead bodies (or parts of bodies) of enemies as weapons (throwing or melee). Light weapons would be hands, feet, or whole gnome limbs. Medium weapons would be human-sized limbs or whole gnomes. Heavy weapons would be partial human-sized corpses. Whole corpses other than those of gnomes would count as super-heavy weapons and if thrown would only have a range of 15 feet. Keep in mind that using this fighting technique can demoralize even your own allies if they dislike your combat pragmatism.

Botched Farishta Conversions

Sometimes, the farishta conversion process just doesn't work right. With such an intense and horrifyingly painful method of transforming a person's entire body and mind, it isn't all that surprising. Some farishtas are formed incorrectly, either with holdovers from being an elf, some mutation evident in their body, or with far more obvious traces of insanity in their mind. Twisted limbs, strangely colored features, perpetually bloodshot eyes, and emotions and/or personalities that switch around at the drop of a hat count among just some of the effects a botched farishta conversion can have.

The severity of a botched conversion varies widely. Some just leave a little bit of elf behind, others a simple discoloration or minor quirk. These can be played off as cosmetic bio-flux or simply outright ignored. At the other end are the horrendous and debilitating mutations most farishtas try to rid themselves of or hide until they can find a means to compensate for them. The victims of badly botched conversions are called the Broken. As the name implies, many (though not all) of these farishtas are fractured in both mind and body by their imperfect conversions. The discovery that an elf has been converted into a Broken typically leads to security forces being called into the conversion facility to keep them from getting out and to hide the failure from public knowledge. This does not always work.

Some farishtas end up reverting back to being an

elf, even after what seems like a successful conversion. These reverted elves are likely to hold onto some new feature from their ordeal. Perhaps they lucked out and just had their spine straightened a bit. More likely, though, is that the personality blender of the conversion process may have left them with new views, habits, quirks, manias, phobias, or an entirely new mind even though their body returned to its previous form. Occasionally, reverted elves lose even more essence in the backlash and become bestial. Few remain sane after this, but some are able to live out their primal lives in seclusion.

Some of the random racial traits for farishtas in the Playing Guide already reflect imperfections common to the conversion process (Botched Surgery, Prominent Host, Tinge Of Insanity, and possibly Unexplainable Memories). The following extra traits are meant to expand upon this. All are subject to narrator approval, but provide new ways of diversifying the farishtas (and elves) in your game. It is not required for a farishta to have one of the random racial traits related to having a botched conversion to use these options. Should you devise more traits for the farishtas and elves who have undergone botched conversions, feel free to add those traits to this list and utilize them in your game.

Bloody Essence

The synthetic essence used in your conversion was faulty, causing your blood to boil and your skin to turn a dark red. Though the boiling of your blood has mostly ceased, the macabre pigmentation doesn't seem to fade. Your blood boils once more whenever it is spilled, impassioning your attacks with every drop. You gain a bonus to strike equal to however much bleeding damage you are taking at the time.

Contortion Trick

Your conversion shifted around some of the bits in your joints. This made you oddly double jointed, allowing you to dislocate nearly every single joint in your body without too much pain. Dislocating or relocating the joints in a limb takes 1 AP. Each dislocated limb grants you a +4 to Dexterity for the purpose of fitting through spaces or escaping grabs, but you suffer a -6 to any other roll to use a dislocated limb. A dislocated leg gives you a -15 penalty on your movement speeds (though you cannot be dropped below a minimum of 5 feet). Rolling a 1 while grabbed automatically dislocates the grabbed limb and stuns you for 1 AP from not being prepared for the shock of the dislocation.

Draconic

The synthetic essence you got came from a bad batch, giving you scales. Though these scales are small, fine, and incredibly smooth, you regularly shed your skin like a reptile. The far more troublesome side effect is the sulfurous tinge to your breath that tends to ensure people keep upwind of you when you talk. However, you can use this to your advantage against those who displease you. For 1 AP, you can exhale a plume of brimstone vapors into an adjacent person or creature's face. They must roll a Brute resist as if resisting a gas or suffer effects just like the Disorienting poison augment (page 174 of the Playing Guide). The functional marque of the effect is determined by your level, starting off at Marque 1, increasing to Marque 2 at level 4, then Marque 3 at level 8. The bad batch also gave you a strong urge to hoard valuables, occasionally getting so bad as to cause you to compulsively steal things that you want when near them.

Misshapen

The synthetic essence did not properly distribute through your body before the activating electricity was pumped into you. As a result, the conversion was even more agonizing than it should have been and left you with a patchwork of fully realized farishtaan flawlessness intermingled with horrifically distorted

limbs and features. Fortunately for you, this seems to have enhanced your original elven musculature even if it is hard to move quickly. While you take a -10 penalty to all of your movement speeds, you gain a +5 to Brute. This is the most common trait among the Broken.

Nerve Shock

The sustained blast of electricity used in the conversion process shorted out most of your ability to feel pain. Though you suffer a -4 penalty to Dexterity from having less tactile sensation, you tier up resists against called shots and rolls to overcome pain.

Paralyzed

The synthetic essence procedure disrupted your spine and nervous system, paralyzing you from the waist down. Though relegated to a wheelchair and incapable of properly fixing the permanent damage with bio-flux or prosthetics, being a farishta still has major perks. The wheelchair itself is likely to have been mechanized by one of the technicians at the conversion facility, drastically lessening your paralysis's impact on your new life. Though vulnerable to mechanical failures, this wheelchair can match your regular land speed even if it is neither buoyant nor able to scale vertical or irregular surfaces. Those well-versed in Engineering or the construction of prosthetics can convert your wheelchair into something far more versatile.

Twists of Insanity

It's hard for even you to know who you are some days. When you are in a conversation and role a 1, your personality immediately changes. This may require you to keep a list of various personalities ready at hand. If the narrator allows it, you can even have separate lists of specialties for each personality, though things dependent on your body (Brute, hit points, wounds, et cetera) should remain the same. Be cautious in using this last option as the details can be tricky to keep track of.

Wings of Death

For a moment, it seemed as if you would be chosen to join the glorious ranks of the winged farishtaas. Unfortunately, the synthetic essence pumped into you twisted and died before settling fully. You have large featherless wings bound in shriveled flesh with little to no feeling. They give you no flight, but they are quite handy in terrorizing others with their grotesque appearance. You gain a +4 to intimidation and provocation rolls,

though those opposed to winged farishtaas see you as one of them and will target you with the same fervor. Even those not rallied against winged farishtaas may tend to avoid you due to your incomplete pinions.

Imperfect Return

You are one of those who regressed back into their elven state. Everything you are has been affected by your failed conversion though, body and mind. Roll on the farishtaan random racial traits to determine your trait. You have to reroll for this trait if you receive the Botched Surgery or Prominent Host traits. Also keep in mind that this kind of trauma can change a person just as much as the personality blender of the conversion process.

Full Regression

Not only did you return to your elven form, you were sapped of even more essence in the backlash. You were fortunate (or unfortunate as the case may be) to survive the process and avoided plunging headfirst into bestial madness. Instead of the normal traits of an elf, use the traits below. You can still roll for an elven random racial trait, though feel free to choose one of the botched conversion traits above if you feel that it is more fitting to your character. Though not a farishtaa (anymore), most will count you as one of the Broken and the most horrific kind of them at that.

Speed: You have an incredible land speed of 35 feet. You have a grand swim speed of 25 feet, and an amazing climbing speed of 35 feet.

Swollen Skeleton: You gain a +4 on all Brute rolls.

Body of the Beast: You gain an additional 8 hit points.

Strength of Monsters: Unarmed attacks and melee weapons you wield are 2 damage classes higher than normal.

Broken Soul: You suffer a -6 on all rolls with the Spirit attribute (this does not apply to skills under Spirit).

Barren Essence: Fully regressed elves have two fewer slots for essence manipulations.

An Inevitable Struggle: Though you survived your regression with most of your mind and body intact, the scars of this trauma continuously threaten to tear open at the merest stumble. Whenever you roll a natural 1 on any attribute roll, you briefly lose your ability to control that aspect of yourself. The narrator decides what happens within this context, which may take the form of an attack against an ally, a sudden and unexplainable fear of all around you, delusions and visions of things not present, or a total loss of coordination and balance. Frequently, these compulsions and breaks from reality reflect inner fears and worries, self-doubts, and haunting memories (both real and imagined). You regain full control of yourself after these fits, but must deal with the consequences of them.



Winged Farishtaas

Though incredibly rare, winged farishtaas are exceptionally prominent wherever they go. Ever since the very first farishta was created it has been known that they occasionally grow magnificent wings as part of their transformation. This rapidly established a hierarchy within farishtaas based on their artificial biological luck (though some attribute it to divine grace). The Nine Wings of Divinity, with their incredible stature, superhuman strength, and range of practically supernatural abilities, sit firmly at the top. Farishtaas with wings capable of granting them true flight make up the members of the Day Society and reap the benefits of adoration and envy despite their lack of arguably occult abilities. Second to last on the totem pole are farishtaas with fledgling wings, only able to fall gently rather than rise to the heavens. At the bottom are the rest of the regular farishtaas, though they still typically hold themselves above the other races,

especially the elves from whom they came.

Within Dalvozzea, winged farishtaas are the uncontested elites of society. Even those incapable of flight enjoy elevated positions simply for appearing marginally more angelic. While no winged farishta is even close to being seen as an equal of one of the Nine Wings, they are pampered and adored. Elves waiting to undergo the conversion process pray that they are one of the rare few who gain what surely must be a sign of Jinzi's favor. However, elves and those who have set themselves against the hierarchy of Dalvozzea see winged farishtaas as even greater examples of the corruption gripping the nation.

The Ashen Angels and similarly minded organizations and activists frequently target winged farishtaas and make new examples of them. A protest at a conversion center can quickly

Limited Numbers

Winged farishtaas truly are incredibly rare. Farishtaas already have a slow rate of natural births and not all survive the conversion process in the first place. Thousands of farishtaas are successfully converted or born before a single winged farishtaa that can actually fly is formed. Keep this in mind when considering allowing a player to create a winged farishtaa character. Also consider how allowing a player to fly without needing a vehicle or trinket will affect your stories.

become a riot upon hearing of a winged farishtaa being “born” inside, culminating in the building becoming a raging inferno and the winged farishtaa being bound by their freshly formed wings to the burning wreck. As such, winged farishtaas have learned a measure of caution and paranoia on top of their enhanced sense of superiority, though this has mostly worsened their views by making them feel justified in their treatment of elves and their allies as less than filth.

For the purpose of creating or playing as a winged farishtaa character, keep the following notes in mind.

Physiology

Regular farishtaas are already tall, averaging at almost seven feet tall. Winged farishtaas push past this to an average of just shy of seven and a half feet. They are also unusually healthy, practically (and occasionally literally) glowing with perpetual youthful vigor. Of course, their most distinctive features are their wings. Large, splendidly feathered, and almost always stark white, these wings sprout from their shoulder blades and usually brush the ground with their tips. The most famous winged farishtaas are those with colored pinions, though some claim the more vibrant hues to be dyed. To back up these wings are powerful muscles in the farishtaa’s upper body, which allow them to catapult themselves skyward. A winged farishtaa taking off or landing with a flair can send up massive clouds of dust. One account even claims that gnomes have been sent flying by the gust of liftoff.

Lifespan: As stated in the Playing Guide, “winged farishtaas have shown virtually no signs of aging and many believe that they are almost immortal.” This is true of the vast majority of winged farishtaas created through the conversion process, with a rare few suffering from a more natural limit. Winged farishtaas born naturally from a pair of other farishtaas (an occurrence even rarer than the creation of a winged farishtaa through conversion) seem to stop aging sometime in their late twenties or early thirties. It has been proven that winged farishtaas can sire or birth children of their own, though it seems to be at a significantly slower rate than regular farishtaas and does not guarantee that the child will have wings of their own. Any notion that a winged farishtaa could possibly birth an elf like some regular farishtaa do

is dismissed out of hand as ridiculous and practically heretical.

Psychology

Raised to believe themselves almost as angelic as the Nine Wings of Divinity and pampered by Dalvozzean society, winged farishtaas possess an even greater superiority complex than their wingless kin. Somewhat exacerbating this is the fact that winged farishtaas are more psychologically stable than regular farishtaas. This makes them feel superior to other farishtaas on top of the advantage granted by their wings. Other than this, winged farishtaas are much like regular farishtaas in their mentality.

Roleplaying Tips

Due to their upbringing, winged farishtaas are often racist and classist as they believe themselves to be the closest things to heavenly beings on the planet, aside from the Nine Wings. They are exceptionally arrogant and often discount the opinions of non-farishtaa. They are also hunted by anti-farishtaa groups and occasionally face possible kidnapping by scientists wanting to unlock the secrets of their creation.

Flight as a Farishtaa

As a winged farishtaa, you have a flight speed of 25 feet per AP. This speed is affected by the swim/climb speed penalties of armor. Unless bound, unconscious, or in inclement weather, you take no falling damage as your wings will gently guide you to the ground. Additionally, you have two new called shot locations due to your wings. Called shots to the wing(s) are resisted with Dexterity. A successful called shot will prevent you from using your wing for one turn, causing you to fall out of the air if already flying. If this happens, you can spend 2 AP reflexively to land safely. Wound damage to the wing results in a sprained wing, preventing you from using your wing at all until your next breather. You cannot use your wings to safely fall if suffering a wound to a wing. A fatal effect to a wing permanently removes the wing and you begin bleeding out. The bleeding from a severed wing will cause you to die in 3 turns if you do not spend at least 3 AP bandaging it up.

Winged Farishtaa Hybrids

To date, none of the few Day Society Winged Farishtaa have had offspring with another race (at least to the public’s knowledge). It is known that wings are not typically inherited by hybrids even when the farishtaa parent has the more common, smaller flightless ones, as exceptionally few wings have been observed among farishtaa hybrids. A few scientists have expressed an interest in creating hybrids from Winged Farishtaa via artificial insemination, but their requests have been flatly refused.

True-Melds



In Izeda, there are two main tribes of elves: the Sandgeist, who walk with the Sapience, and the Sunrage, who walk with the Asagnu. The differences between them are largely cultural rather than physical, their division based on politics from the civil war centuries ago.

However, this political division has had a physical consequence: the farishtaa of Izeda. While the Sunrage elves largely eschewed the farishtaa conversion process of Dalvozzea, the Followers of Sapience were inspired by the discovery. The loss of memories and personality caused by Girazza's method did not appeal to the Sandgeists, but they took note of the problem he discovered: that the elves suffered from a deficiency of essence.

The Followers were long familiar with bio-engineering and the manipulation of essence in one form or another. Their solution was to change the nature of the essence infusion itself. Instead of a large quantity injected at once, traumatizing the body and mind, smaller quantities built up over a longer period could work. The problem was in devising a dependable method for gathering and infusing this essence.

The current Sapience, Ydralia Navid, chose their sacred bird, the eygor vulture, as the vehicle for this mode of conversion. A new breed was created, smaller than those typically mounted by the Followers but specialized in a manner ideal for facilitating this new conversion process. These vultures harvest essence from the carrion of the desert and filter it, where it can then be piped into a bonded Sandgeist elf. Over the course of months or years, the elf is steadily transformed into a farishtaa.

This slower and more gradual conversion meant the resulting farishtaa loses few if any of its memories as an elf. These farishtaas are known as the True-Melds. While farishtaas as a whole are rare in Izeda, True-Melds comprise the vast majority of their number.

Physiology

True-Meld farishtaas have few physical differences from those resulting from Gizarra's conversion process, but those differences they do possess are immediately evident. They are known for their darker, tanned complexions that blend in with the sand hewn rocks of the Quist. Additionally, because of their bond with the eygor vultures their noses are more prominent than other farishtaa, jutting out like

Windrider Farishtaa

The few Sandgeists who ignore their cultural mores and undergo Dalvozzeas conversion was known as Windrider Farishtaas. These farishtaas are racially similar to those further north, with a love of the wind, piloting, and dancing. They share the same fair skin and beautiful countenance as their northern peers.

Social outcasts, Windriders associate more with humans than their Sandgeist brethren. If an adventurer chooses to be a Windrider, they should use the racial traits chart in the core book, since they are created with the same process as "typical" farishtaa.

beaks. Some also have traces of feathers on their bodies, with some sporting long flight feathers rather than hair on their heads. True-Melds are also known for producing many more winged farishtaas, something highly desired among Dalvozzean farishtaas. Winged True-Melds are known to spend vast stretches of time merely gliding alongside their eygor companion.

Psychology

It is within their minds and by their mannerisms that True-Melds set themselves apart from more traditional farishtaas. While they value beauty, they are less obsessed with physical appearance than other farishtaas thanks to the influence of the Severing and their intact memories of life as an elf. They look more inward than outward and the slower process does not leave behind the quirks associated with conventional conversions. As such, True-Melds are much more emotionally stable than other farishtaas. Thanks to the retention of their elvish memories, there is greater continuity between Sandgeist and True-Meld society. A Sandgeist elf who converts will frequently still maintain the same friends and relationships they had before with little interruption, especially since the process takes so long.

The consequence of being linked to their vulture companion does change the minds of True-Meld farishtaas to some degree, though. While a regular farishtaa must deal with a jumble of emotions and possibly even personalities from their violent conversion, a True-Meld experiences a bleed through from their animal companion. The result is that the personality of a scavenger starts to filter into their minds, sometimes mixing in odd ways. The scav-

enging and survivalist culture of Izeda seems to be most present in True-Melds, who frequently take it to extremes. Loath to leave behind absolutely anything of potential use, many True-Melds are hoarders who practice garbage diving. Some also exhibit territorial behavior, something most assume to be a holdover from the essence filtered through their eygor companion from the beasts of the Quist.

The True-Meld Conversion Process

Ydralia Navid, the current Sapience, took fascination with the farishtaa conversion procedure. She researched into alternative procedures for the Sandgeist elves to use, hoping to correct the memory loss inherent in Dalvozzea's procedure. She created a procedure that was able to give elves the cosmetic resemblance to farishtaas, but struggled to correct their lack of essence.

Early experiments with essence collection proved disastrous. Ydralia first tried to use humans, but drained humans - called husks - resulted as she tried to find a way to collect genuine essence without draining the source as a way to make it a renewable resource. She had to find a way to balance the draw so as not to exhaust one living thing to revitalize another.

Ydralia realized that using living organisms as the injector for essence reduces the trauma of the essence infusion on the elf. However, it must be a creature with relatively minimal and stable essence stores. Humans and many other people are too sensitive to any fluctuations of their essence. The sacred icon of the Sapience, eygor vultures, ended up proving suitable. The symbolism of the sacred bird's compatibility is not lost on the Sapience or her Followers.

Ydralia's work finished successfully when created a system to deliver essence slowly into an elf, allowing them to become farishtaa gradually. The system uses specialized eygor vultures who collect the essence of the recently deceased, filter and purify it, then feed it to their elf host via tubes. The process creates a farishtaa with more elvish features, but memories and personality stay intact. These farishtaas are called True-Melds.

The procedure has several drawbacks, however. The first is time. While the elf-farishtaa conversion process of the north can be finished within a day, Ydralia's process takes years in order to become permanent. This is fine for

the elves of the desert, who take a long view, but for those used to the bustling industrial schedule of more "civilized" areas, the delay is a major flaw.

The second is the dependence on the vultures. The eygor vultures are so far the only animal that can be used for this procedure. Melding in general is possible with a wide range of animals, but only the eygor vultures Ydralia designed have proven stable enough in the long term to cause the permanent change from elf to farishtaa. The vultures' large hideous visages are repulsive to all but those in the Sapience Caravan, who revere them as spiritual avatars of the desert and the Severing. Because of this, elves in the process of conversion are limited in where they can go. Even Obelisk is reluctant to allow them in, since the eygor vultures can be used to attack or to carry out spying. Ydralia is currently working on finding other compatible animals, but the progress is slow.

Lastly, the bonding process between elf and vulture is very finely detailed. The biology of the two must mesh exactly for the process to succeed. This requires much time and effort to create an eygor vulture suitably compatible for the elf. If the elf loses their paired vulture, it can be months before they receive another. In that time, any progress made will be lost and the elf will have to start again from scratch. If the elf dies, the vulture can never again be paired with someone else and many vultures die soon after their partners. Worse, starting this process means that elf cannot undergo the Dalvozzean conversion process or they will die due to the conflicting essence types. This makes the procedure a weighty decision for many, since failure can bring with it permanent alterations to their essence.

Unlike the Sunrage elves, the Sandgeists have welcomed the True-Meld procedure, seeing their conversion process as a gift from their new Sapience. The rise of Damien Vultureclaw has also brought a period of peace and stability to Izeda that ensures a greater success rate for those who attempt it. As a result, many have undergone the procedure over the last several years, giving the Sapience Caravan the most farishtaa of all known Izedan caravans.

Traits

True-Meld farishtaas share the same basic traits as farishtaas in the Playing Guide, though the explanations for them are slightly different. The same goes for some of the

random racial traits.

The Born to be Airborne trait needs no alteration for True-Melds, who are arguably more in tune with the skies than traditional farishtaas due to their bond with the eygors. A similar point could be made for the Piercing Scrutiny trait with the keen eyes of an avian scavenger influencing the attentions of the True-Melds. The Unpredictable trait could be excused by their unique culture and the animalistic influence of their melding with the eygor vultures. The Unexplainable Memories trait can to some extent be explained away as strands of memories inherited from those their bonded vulture consumed to supply them with essence.

The Botched Surgery and Prominent Host traits make little sense for a fully realized True-Meld, but could represent a True-Meld still undergoing the final phases of their conversion. The Skin-Deep Values, Superiority Complex, and Tinge Of Insanity traits on the other hand make next to zero sense for a True-Meld farishtaa as they live under a vastly different culture and experience a vastly different conversion than typical farishtaas.

Additionally, True-Melds have the option of taking one of the traits below as a random racial trait as well as starting off with an eygor vulture as a companion animal.

Companion Vulture

You begin the game with an animal companion in the form of a medium-sized eygor vulture. It has 1 specialization point and 3 special traits you can choose as you wish (see Pets and Predators for options). The animal companion is considered tame and will obey your commands. Your eygor vulture cannot be melded with or commanded by anyone else.

Eygor

AP: 3

Medium Flying Animal (Bio-engineered, level 1)

Pack Size: Partnered to a True Meld or Elf

Domestication: Eygor Vultures are bioengineered for the true melding process, they are all domesticated.

Movement Traits: Swift

Special Traits: Customized (1 SP, Special)

HP: 13 | Wnds: 7 | Pri: +0 | Spd: 10 ft (*land*), 5 ft (*swim*), 55 ft (*fly*)

Brute +2	Cunning +0	Dexterity +3	Spirit +3	Sciences +0
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Guard

Eva: +2	Def: +3
Soak: 1 2 3 4	

Actions

Bite & Claws

2 AP Acc: +1 Stk: +2
Damage: 4 | 8 | 12 | 16

A Nose for Carrion: Just like your eygor companion, you can smell death lingering over wounded prey from a mile or more away. You may use your sense of smell to track down organic creatures and people and tier up your Cunning rolls to do so.

Homing: The earth is splayed out before you like a book. You always know where you're going, allowing you to find your way. You are always aware of which direction is north and gain a +6 when seeking a path to where your journey began.

Long Stride: Though you would rather soar skyward like your bonded vulture, you can settle for the rush of wind against your face as the sand beneath you flickers under foot. Your land movement speed is increased by 10 feet, increasing it to 35 feet.

Scavenger: You gain a +3 on resists vs. poisons and gasses and do not get sick from eating spoiled meat.

Upon Shifting Sands: You're used to terrain that is constantly shifting beneath your feet. You tier down the effects of difficult terrain and take no Dexterity penalty from hazardous ground.

Customized Trait

Animal Essence Augment

Requires: Bio-engineered Animal

This animal is especially made for a particular individual and cannot be tamed by or melded to any other. It begins play as if tamed by that character and only abuse or special circumstances will change this status. In addition if the animal is melded to it's specific individual then both gain an instinctive ability to know in what direction the other is. Finally a customized animal that is melded to its partner advances as if it was a bio-engineered animal with the melded partner as the bio-engineer, except that the non-animal partner need not have any bio-flux skill or specialties. The customized animal gains derived stats for every two levels the partner has. So a level 3 partner would have a level 2 animal, a level 6 would have a level 4, and so on. Acquiring specialization points does not level up a customized animal.

Cost: Customized animals cannot be made with DiY and require expensive components. As such the usual price reduction for making the animal yourself does not apply. This special trait also increases the cost of the animal to make by 600 princes, and anyone capable of making these creatures will generally charge an additional fee to do so, generally buying a customized animal costs upwards of 3000 additional princes.

Special: If an Eygor Vulture with this trait is beast melded to an elf it begins the process of true melding as long as the beast meld is maintained.

True Meld Process in Game Terms

Initially the True Meld process requires an elf to acquire an eygore vulture customized to their personal physiology. Right now, that means getting on the good side of the Sapience caravan of Izeda one way or another. Once melding begins, the initial process involves a rather drawn out physical conversion as the body of the elf is slowly reshaped by the essence infusion of the vulture. During the first month, the vulture must be well fed off live or recently dead animals that have not been completely frozen or dried or chemically preserved in order to gather essence. During this time the elf is slowed, vulnerable, and largely incapable of any great physical exertion such as fighting. After their body has mostly settled down it takes another month or two of rehabilitation to get used to their new posture and more responsive body, and to get over the giddiness that often comes from the new vitality and comfort in their own skins that most True-Melds begin to experience at this stage. During this time, the True-Meld loses its elven racial traits and replaces them with True-Meld traits. Your skills and specialties are not changed, though some might have their effects altered by your new racial traits.

Afterwards, the True-Meld is fully converted but must continue to maintain their beast meld with the eygor vulture for at least a few years. Allowing the meld to decay or having the bonded vulture be unable to continue harvesting essence from other creatures can lengthen this time. Any disruption longer than a few days can lose months of progress, which is usually pain for the burgeoning True Meld. However, even with unfavorable conditions the process is fully complete at the end of five years assuming the beast meld bond was never completely broken and both partners survived.

After the process is sealed the True-Meld no longer technically needs the eygor vulture, but will have formed an attachment with it the on a level regularly unattainable between man and beast. Even disregarding this bond, an eygor vulture is a versatile and powerful creature in it's own right, not even counting the modifications and training most True-Melds add or acquire for their birds in order to protect them while the process is still ongoing. Additionally, abusing or abandoning a bonded eygor is seen as both madness and sacrilege by the Sapience Caravan who provides them.

Metal-Deranged Gnomes

Gnomes love nature, the woods, and everything the world provides to them. The naturally occurring ores and metals help the gnomes construct greater machines and tools, but gnomes rarely use excessive amounts of worked metals in their creations. Many gnomes who have been embraced by human society, however, switch their allegiances away from the organic woods and vegetation and instead bond with metals. These gnomes are called metal-deranged.

Metal-deranged gnomes often speak with their metal creations, softly warping the metal with their brushing hands, and use almost exclusively large, metal tools. The most common metal-deranged gnomes will be machinists, working on oversized metal automatons or enormous metal artillery or monstrous metal-armored vehicles.

Metal-deranged gnomes forsake many of their gnomish traits, becoming loud, excessive, and oftentimes obsessed with material values, trinkets, and taking things apart. They rarely value staying hidden, as many gnomes do, and many metal-deranged gnomes can be rude, self-centered, and pay little mind to others. Whereas most gnomes are known for their hospitality and their inability to keep grudges, metal-deranged gnomes are the exact opposite.

Until recently, metal-deranged gnomes have been rare. A few were documented during the reign of the Haudi Empire

when gnomes served under the Hauds. Today however, metal-deranged gnomes are everywhere. The mental disorder (as normal gnomes are prone to think of it) has become widespread, and many humans, especially Evanglessians, have come to think that metal-deranged gnomes are the norm, not the exception.

Metal-deranged gnomes are well-known for having no compunctions about attaching metal limbs to themselves at the smallest excuse. Many of them are known oilbloods, people who willingly replace fully functional organic limbs with metal prosthetics. With their obsession with machines, some have taken a liking to the few religions that openly support industrialization and the advancement of science. Most of the time they join Free Will or one of its sects, but a significant number of these metal-deranged gnomes have joined the Disciples of the Cog, a younger religion that has been growing after its split from Free Will and that is also far more obsessed with advancing technologies.

Metal-deranged gnomes, having forsaken their shamanic heritage in favor of modern metalworking and machinery, possess a few differing traits from their more typical brethren. As such, the following alterations can be made to the traits of gnomes in the Playing Guide to reflect a gnome character's metal-derangement. These changes should be approved by the narrator or even expanded upon if the narrator wants to make

metal-derangement even more extreme.

All gnomes normally have the Greater Spirit trait, granting them a +3 to Spirit. Metal-deranged gnomes instead have the Metal-Minded trait, granting them a +3 to Sciences. Narrators could also allow a balance between the two traits, granting +2 to Sciences and +1 to Spirit for example.

The Earthshape, Growth Intensity, Parts of Nature, Waterwalk, and Windwalk random racial traits for gnomes reflect their in-depth knowledge and connection to the natural world. Having abandoned this in favor of metal constructs, metal-deranged gnomes do not normally have these traits as options. Instead, they have five new random racial traits to draw from that reflect their personal obsessions with machines and shaped metals.

Bones of the City

Stone, steel, and dead lumber feel oddly comforting to you with their hard, heavy coldness. They listen to you, yielding or refusing to yield when you tell them. For 2 AP, you can weaken or reinforce a 5 foot by 5 foot area of worked metal, quarried stone, or similarly shaped inert material with your touch. The next attack against this altered material has its damage either tiered up (if you weakened the area) or tiered down (if you reinforced the area). Once altered in this way, the area cannot be altered again by a gnome for several hours or possibly even days depending on the narrator's call. (Replaces Earthshape)

Ironblood

Some gnomes can change their size by force of will and a connection to the earth. You are no giant or sprite though, instead finding a way to mimic your beloved machines with their iron hides and immense weight. In a heartbeat, you can render yourself heavier than even an elf and even less able to be moved. For 1 AP, you can switch between your normal weight and a weight you would be if you were solid lead. While lead-like, you sink like a rock and suffer a -20 penalty to land and climb speeds (to a minimum of 0 feet). You also gain a +10 to resists against being moved and a natural soak of 1 that stacks with armor while leaden. (Replaces Growth Intensity)

Scrap Artist

While you cannot pull tools and simple objects straight from a tree or rock, your understanding of how things work and unconventional methods allow you to pull machines apart without destroying them. You may, for 3 AP, assemble a light weapon, a

tool such as a hammer or wrench, or any other light-sized basic equipment out of spare or redundant parts from nearby machinery. The machine(s) you pull parts from are not damaged or cease to function because of this, but cannot be scavenged from again until fully restored. You can replace the "borrowed" parts by disassembling your tool for 3 AP. (Replaces Parts of Nature)

The Magnet Touch

By balancing and focusing your bioelectric field, you are able to magnetize yourself. Specifically, you can make it so that your hands and feet adhere to metal like glue on contact. This costs you 1 AP per turn to do so, but allows you to scale metal surfaces without penalty while your hands and feet are magnetized. If you cease to spend that action point for even a turn, you fall off any metal surface you are scaling. You can also spend 1 AP reflexively to grant yourself a +4 to maintain your grip on a metal object. You cannot magnetize a hand or foot that is under the effects of a wound. (Replaces Waterwalk)

Boiler Rocketeer

Steam, glorious steam. It powers practically everything mechanical on the face of Rilausia. You've figured out the trick to twisting gnomish windwalking and bodily control to better fit the image of an exploding gust of steam from a pipe. Though not able to cover the same distance as conventional windwalking, it does let you fire yourself vertically. For 2 AP, you can launch yourself 15 feet in any direction. Though not technically flying, you can do this without touching a surface. (Replaces Windwalk)

Roleplaying Tips

Metal deranged gnomes are thought of as common occurrences. Though not actually true, this allows metal deranged gnomes to walk around more societies without drawing overly much attention. Gnomish communities and places where more conventionally-minded gnomes are common tend to see metal deranged gnomes as oddities and slightly shameful ones at that. As a metal deranged gnome, you will likely have to deal with being treated as a mentally ill mad scientist wannabe regardless of if such a description is actually accurate or not.

Chaparral Gnomes

The gnomes of Izeda, known variably as chaparral gnomes, Randruids, or sand-deranged gnomes, are a surprise to many who wonder that such diminutive beings can subsist in the harsh climate of Izeda. Few understand the full effect that these gnomes have had in shaping the desert itself.

By the end of the first few centuries of recorded history, the Haudi Empire had conquered a vast swath of the continent. Gnomish refugees fled the Haudi Empire when they could to avoid enslavement, and many of those refugees escaped to Laquai, trickling down from the forested northeastern borders of what would later be Izeda. As the gnomes delved further into Laquai, they found that their natural affinity with the land weakened, as if something in the desert resisted them. Their natural connection to vegetation was of no help in the Quist.

The gnomes were not above adapting, though. Many grew to have a new affinity - one with the desert and sand rather than the forest and soil. Within Izeda, they became known as Randruids, a name whose exact meaning and origin has been lost in the past few centuries. These gnomes also invented essentience, allowing them to shape the earth despite its near total lack of life. Using this strange form of bio-flux, the Randruids were able to make incredible progress in adapting to life in the harsh desert.

The Laquaian Empire did not tolerate the intrusion of refugees, though. After a series of conflicts, many of these gnomes were enslaved by the Izedans. Forced to share their

technology and science, they helped ensconce the power of the Laquai even further and ushered in the empire's golden age. Over time, the Randruids earned their freedom and lived as equals with the humans and elves of Izeda.

Today, chaparral gnomes remain almost entirely inside Izeda and stay mostly within three main locations. The Randruid Mountains in the north were named after them during their original forays into what had been Laquai and remain the primary center of the chaparral gnome population. A large number of chaparral gnomes can also be found in the Strangled Mountains alongside their brethren from Valdrú. The remainder are members of the Sapience Caravan based in Tacapan. Of course, with chaparral gnomes living mainly on the borders of Izeda there are plenty who have moved out of the desert and into greener nations. Most who have left the desert have reconnected with life where they go, but some bring with them their adaptations to the barren sands.

The following are possible traits for chaparral gnomes. These traits count as random racial traits and can be chosen as the extra random racial trait gnomes are normally allowed or substituted into the list of random racial traits and be rolled for.

Adjusted to Extremes

The desert bakes in bone-dry heat during the day and plummets to freezing temperatures at night. You have adapted to this,

allowing you to ignore penalties for extreme heat, cold, or other such environmental effects due to your surrounding area. Exposure to things like fire and lava still affect you normally, though.

Desert Fox

Like many animals who have adapted to desert environments, you know that the safest place to wait out the blistering sun and scouring sandstorms is underground. You gain a 10 foot dig speed and you may tunnel through sand and soft soil.

Lean Living

Chaparral gnomes still have the same love of food and drink as their more typical brethren. However, many have adapted to the scarce resources of the Quist, allowing them to go much longer without food or water. You can last twice as long as normal without sustenance.

Sandblasted

The sands of the Quist seem to have bonded to you, roughening your skin. Sand also seems to accumulate around you, helping you wear down structures and damage delicate devices on command. You tier up strike rolls for sunder attempts in melee.

Watchful Steps

The sands of Izeda hide both treasures and traps. The sand itself can turn on you without warning, swallowing up those who cannot spot the differences in the dunes. Due to your experience watching the earth for signs of danger, you gain a +5 to detecting ground-based traps and hazards.

Roleplaying Tips

Chaparral gnomes behave much like regular gnomes, barring a few exceptions and trends. Assuming that you are playing in a setting outside of Izeda, the greatest impact playing as a chaparral gnome will have on your roleplaying will likely come from others reacting to your more survivalistic habits.

As the gnomes would say, Izeda is a stubborn land. Nothing the gnomes shaped in the sands was permanent. The desert always reclaimed what was originally its own. This lack of permanence has trickled into the life outlook of Izedan gnomes, who view things as far more transitory than their north and eastern counterparts. Even those who have left the desert behind retain this outlook, setting them partially apart from other gnomes.

There is a whole troop of Randruids who adhere to the Severing, earnestly believing in its teaching of focusing on the land and being one united people. Though even more likely than other chaparral gnomes to remain within Izeda, some do leave Izeda to learn from other cultures or to share the less nationalistic teachings of the Severing to others.

Alternate Satyr Strains

Satyrs were first created by the Haudi Empire in 397 RE. Though the vast majority were a bioengineered hybrid of human and goat, there existed other variants of satyrs. Since these old times, the various strains of satyr templates have intermingled. As a result, the seemingly dominant goat-type satyr has almost entirely pushed out the other strains. However, like any recessive or dormant biological trait, these strains do still crop up from time to time, even from pairs of satyrs who are both goat-typed.

The full list of potential satyr sub-variants is incredibly long. It includes strains who have traits of bulls, deer, yaks, gazelles, bezoars, sheep, bharals, oryx, antelope, and many other animals. The two common traits among them all seem utterly intrinsic to satyrs as a whole: horns (on both males and females) and unguligrade legs. The rest of their features can vary widely. Some are massive and muscular, others are tall and lean. Some have short, wiry hair on their legs while others have long, curly hair that entirely removes the chance of wearing pants comfortably.

Beyond the simple matters of physicality, certain strains of satyrs have come to have cultural significance. Arakrith, a nation founded by satyrs for satyrs, has a culture and history particularly keen on exalting legendary satyrs and uplifting the rarer strains. Bezoar satyrs, with their enormous crescent-shaped horns, are seen among other satyrs as natural spiritual and military leaders. The current General Supreme of Arakrith, Corian os Arakrith, is a bezoar satyr herself and embodies the stalwart

and proud attitudes associated with her strain. Since her election into the office of General Supreme, bezoar satyrs have been considered almost ordained for greatness. The near-mythical satyr only known today as The Ox, believed by some to actually have been possibly a bull or yak strain, is best known for the tale of his headbutting a crater into an armored abomination known as a Haudite Guard and proceeding to beat another one to death with its own arm. Those familiar with Haudite Guard anatomy typically refrain from pointing out that the bones of Haudite Guards are functionally indestructible, to avoid a tongue thrashing.

With many satyrs, especially those in Arakrith, being raised with legends from among their people and in the presence of intensive cultural bias, there is heavy pressure on those of the uncommon strains to emulate their predecessors. As such, even when they only have an almost imperceptible inclination for certain traits and abilities, lifelong conditioning continues to reinforce these technically stereotypical ideals.

Specifics and Mechanics of the Different Strains

For the most part, the different strains of satyrs all share the same mechanical traits as the core satyr template given in the Playing Guide. However, some are known for slight differ-

ences in natural capabilities. As such, the following traits can be presented to players and NPCs as additions to the standard traits of satyrs. Narrators should emphasize the rarity of these strains to deter players from choosing them solely for the mechanical benefits.

Antelope and Gazelle Satyrs

Though by far not the fastest land animals on Tephra, especially if you start counting engineered creatures from before even gnomes figured out shamanistic bio-flux, antelopes and gazelles still reach incredible speeds even over sustained runs. The Hauds knew this and included them in their trials for finding the “perfect” satyr formula. The result turned out to be one of the biggest reasons that satyrs are the fastest humanoids in Rilausia. Even though they have been pushed out genetically by standard goat satyrs, the antelope and gazelle strains’ intermingling with the goat strains left behind part of their legendary speed and nimbleness. Those who exhibit the full force of this recessive strain can possibly start off with a +5 to land speed and/or an extra 2 points in Dexterity pending narrator approval.

Arakrithian Cliff-Jumping Satyrs

Though not technically limited to only Arakrith, this mountain goat strain of satyr is best known for its members’ impressive feats of upward agility. Soldiers of this strain have proven themselves vital in the conflicts within the Immortals’ Bones mountain range on the border of Arakrith and Siyesh, in which resides the infamous Imperial Pass. Though less capable of covering ground laterally, they are known for being able to climb sheer cliff sides with ease. Arakrithian cliff-jumping satyrs switch their racial movement speeds to 25 feet on land, 10 feet in the water, and 25 feet when climbing. They can also climb anything that possesses a ledge of nearly any width without assistance.

Bezoar and Oryx Satyrs

Bezoar satyr strains, and to a lesser extent others with impressively long and tall horns such as oryx, are seen as natural spiritual and military leaders. The exact reasoning behind this varies from region to region, but it cannot be denied that members of these strains have been exceptional satyr leaders throughout history. Ranking members of Jinzium and Tailemy have been satyrs of this type, as have well-known military leaders in Arakrith and Evangless. At least a few examples exist of a bezoar satyr accidentally starting a cult or a new denomination of an established religion, along with other, more common examples of them

simply being beloved by their fellow soldiers for one reason or another. Serious scientific studies have been unable to prove why this is with biology or genetics, but the prevailing theory is that at some point it was assumed that bezoar satyrs are just better at leading than other satyrs. It became the norm to expect and raise satyrs of these strains to be leaders, giving them the encouragement, cultural incentive, and environment that would make them leaders they were assumed to already be. Though this is almost exactly like a self-fulfilling prophecy, it has decidedly influenced bezoar and oryx satyrs’ mentality. Satyrs of these strains can possibly start off with an extra 2 points in Cunning and/or Spirit pending narrator approval. Generous narrators who have players with particularly appealing backstories for such satyr characters could go so far as to have these extra points be actual skill points in Tactical/Faith, though this is a massive step up from miscellaneous attribute bonuses and should not be taken lightly.

Bull and Yak Satyrs

Bull, yak, and bovine satyrs of various types were originally included in the initial ranks of early satyrs to ensure that no self-respecting Haudi duchess or duke had to worry about their slaves not being able to carry everything for them. Since then, many satyrs of these strains have striven to take full advantage of their burlier builds to prove just how much they can take on for their own wants and needs. Almost every story of members of these strains involves some Herculean task followed by pulverizing a Haudi royal bare hooved. Satyrs of these strains can possibly start off with an extra 2-3 points in Brute and/or 2-4 extra hit points pending narrator approval.

These are only some of the possible mechanical and lore-based incentives for playing atypical satyr types. If you as a player or narrator have any further ideas, feel free to test them out yourself. Just keep in mind that any mechanical and/or roleplay benefits granted by different strains should be within the same ballpark as those granted by the standard races’ traits to keep things fair. You could even think of a mechanical or roleplaying benefit to give standard satyrs an edge. The more obvious idea would be that they receive no special treatment, good or bad and can blend in far more easily. Rarer strains are more likely to draw attention, possibly even that of deranged scientists or “collectors.”

Another concept to keep in mind is that there were other animals used in the initial trials for the creation of satyrs. Who’s to say that there isn’t an unknown clan of human/canine hybrids or human/feline hybrids out there somewhere? Perhaps some mad scientist recently played around with those ideas and

started making a new race or two using the basic ideas behind satyrs. If you have ideas for “satyrs” using drastically different animals from those listed here, feel free to draft your own templates. After all, Tephra is already chock-full of mad science and bizarre and unique life. Anything new would obviously turn heads, but there are plenty of races that do that already. (See the Playing with Races intro for a refresher on this.)

