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# ShadowMyths

## - Kalan

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*a biomaggy journal by*

DOUG HOPPES

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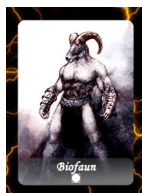
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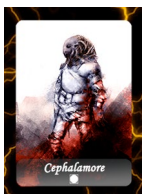
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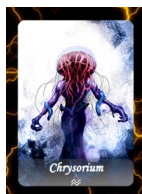
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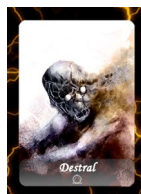
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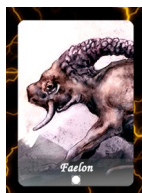
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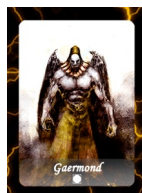
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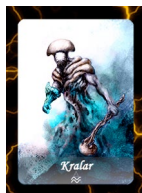
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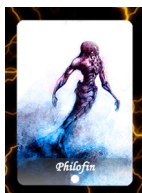
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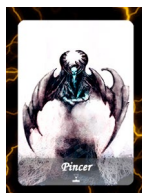
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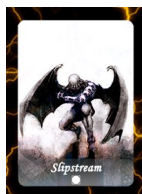
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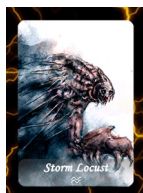
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# Monsters

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Monsters. They are in the games we play. In the books we read. In the movies we watch. Monsters are seen as horrible creatures that jump out at us in the dark and terrorize us. They are given every bad quality that has ever been seen in another person and amplified to the nth degree. Full of nasty claws and teeth, they seem like they could easily end a person's life.

Yet, even as horrible as we make them out to be, we do love them. In some ways, there's a fascination about them. Besides the fact that we loved to be scared, monsters are able to do things that we wished we could do. Many of them are incredibly powerful and can do anything they like. This is a freedom that we are unable to achieve as a human and contributing member of society.

Recently, though, we have started to change the fascinating ones into good creatures and not the horrors that plagued us. Take a look at a vampire. For years, they were the night stalkers who would capture someone and drain their blood. They were seen as callous, and humans were just cattle to them. That's being rewritten. Many of them just want to be left alone in peace and would rather feast on animal blood (no different from humans who eat meat). They use their powers to help others or prevent others from being harmed.

Additionally, there's the concept of aliens and how they look and behave. With the popularity of movies like Star Wars and Star Trek, what the early 20th century saw as monsters, we see them as unique

races. They are just like you and me, but look differently.

Nowadays, when we think about monsters, the line becomes blurred. The monster seems to be more in attitude and actions rather than looks. Sure, we're still scared by the things that jump at us in the dark and can hurt us. However, for many people nowadays, the thought is always... just because they look different doesn't mean that they will harm us.

There will always be monsters who plague us and make us fear the unknown. Also, there will always be monsters who help us and make our lives better.

## The Same as You and I

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In the beginning of my art career, I spent a lot of time painting landscapes, birds, and people. I would sell my work in small galleries or at plein-air events. However, I wasn't happy. I thought I was, but it wasn't true. It took a simple comment from my wife to show me that.

I kept having trouble coming up with a new landscape painting that seemed interesting. I would avoid painting in the interest of "finding the right landscape to paint." One day, we were talking about how I love landscapes and she immediately corrected me. "No. You don't. You LIKE landscapes, but you LOVE monsters. You send off two or three paintings to the galleries and then you paint one for yourself. It's always a weird painting with a monster in it. That is what you should

be doing.”

She was right. I love monsters and those creatures that differ from the norm.

When I started writing my stories based on my card decks, I also realized that my “monsters” were not scary and the more I thought about it, the more I wanted to represent them as actual people. These creatures were “people” and they had average lives like you and I. They had jobs. They went to soccer (or their equivalent of it) practice and had to coordinate dinner, school and their activities. They hit the morning alarm so they can sleep in or call in sick when they just wanted a day off. They were just like you and me. They just look different.

Whenever I told others about this, they saw my paintings and designs in a different light. The paintings were no longer scary and the situations were no longer horror-filled. The paintings now represented someone in a situation people could relate to. When you saw these creatures as you see each other, you realize we really are the same.

So, the world expanded. The monsters were not really “monsters” but people. However, for clarity’s sake, I still called them monsters since most people assume people are humans and monsters are anything that is sentient but different. Although the term alien could also be used, it is generally reserved for sentient beings coming from outer space.

# How to Use the Decks

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Now, I can hear you saying right now, “Okay. You have a deck of creatures. The art looks cool and interesting. What do I do with it other than just looking at the cards? Is that all there is to it?” Good question!

Yes. They are just cards with creatures on them. Imagine trying to think of a monster or alien creature for your story or game. You are going to draw back onto what you find familiar. If you are thinking of an alien, it’ll probably be some small thin grey or green humanoid with large eyes and a pair of antennas. If you try to imagine a monster in the woods behind your house, the first thing that comes to mind would be a hairy beast similar to Big Foot or a werewolf.

Like coming up with your own stories, you’ll always resort to whatever you are interested in or the last movie/picture that you saw. The problem is that, if everyone did this, there would be no variety. We would just end up with stories or games using the same thing everybody else does.

In addition, when describing the monster your players encounter in games like Dungeons and Dragons, you have to show them a picture from the Monster Manual (and hide all the detail information with your hands), describe the creature and, also, hope that the player hadn’t read the Monster Manual and memorized all the stats about the monster. Overall, the description is the hardest part. When the game master says that there is a “4 foot woman with a jellyfish head floating

towards you,” every player will have a different idea of what they are looking at.



However, if game master shows them a card with this person, the players know what is going on and what weapons or spells they may need in case they have to attack. Showing the picture of the creature is always preferable to the description. The image adds realism to the game that is just not possible with words alone.

First, a word about what the symbols on the cards mean.



## Card Layout

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In the ShadowMyths world (more information about this is later in this book), the novice mage, Kalan, with the help of outcast elementals, gathered and learned how to use many of the restricted cards. This deck contains many of his first cards he used to learn to communicate with those elementals and learn more about their world.

In your case, maybe the Kalan deck is a religious sect or a university that is studying other races.

The front of the card is composed of three parts: Image, Name, and Symbol. Naturally, the image and name are fairly obvious about their meaning. The symbol is another form of grouping. In my world, each creature is an elemental type and the symbols represent the base elemental structure of the creature. For example, the Bone Ghost is

a very religious Bone Elemental that is obsessed with collecting and reading bones they find in the wild. The bones that are special to them are mounted on their head.

The current set of symbols and their meanings that I use are



You are free to use your own meanings for each symbol. Now, let's see how you can use the cards!

## Writing Prompts

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When writing fantasy or science fiction stories that deal with non-humans, it's not just a matter of taking two different people and acting as if they are human. Each race will have their own thoughts and outlook on life, depending on how others treat them based on their

looks and abilities. For example, If you had a Halocen (Left) talking with a Knightmare (Right), they will not just talk about whether or not the Knightmare can make armor for the Halocen.



Since both are creatures of the dark, they may talk about how they are misunderstood among the other races. How other see them in a negative light. Of course, the Halocen is a creature of Chaos. So much of the hatred is justified. For the Knightmare, even though they are open and friendly, he may be sympathetic because he understands how people treat him because of his looks.

Using the cards will help you see the race that you are talking about and kick start your imagination about what their lives would be like. Just don't go for the usual ideas that everybody has. Really think about who they are. Give each one a name. Give them a life that differs from the average person. The easiest way to do this is to look at the creature and think about someone you know who is similar.

Besides thinking about how the race would behave, also consider how others would see them. Would the creature be common or are they unique? Are there many of them or just a single one? If there is only one, what happened to the others? Are they afraid of people or outgoing? The questions are infinite. The more questions you ask about how others perceive the creatures, a better understanding is developed. You may, like me, even start seeing them as people in your world and not just props.

Remember to treat the races that you see in your writing as actual people with problems and not just ornaments for your stories. It'll make your tales much more interesting. You may find out that your main character, although he looks like a human, is the real monster and the creature that looks scary is just a helpless child. Imagine how that idea would surprise your readers!

So, let's look at how we can use the cards to come up with a unique conversation!



When setting up a situation between two or more characters I've drawn from the deck, I try to understand who they are and what is happening. Here, we have Bii (Left) offering something to Neses, a Soul Stealer (Rights). So, what do we know about these two guys?

Bii is a Politoc. They have an intense hatred for all races other than their own. Being brilliant geneticists, although never proven, it is thought that they are responsible for many of the diseases that afflict any villages near their homes. Neses is Soul Stealer. This vampiric race lures victims into dark alleys to siphon off their neural energy.

In this situation, Bii has traveled to a nearby town, Batham, to bring a special "gift" to Neses. Naturally, Neses doesn't trust the Politoc but he has his own plans on what to do with the "gift". Rather than just enticing individuals to come to him at different feeding times, Neses has a plan where he will infect the entire city and coerce everybody to come for his help.

Now that I know who the members of the cast are, time to determine what is happening.

*"Hey! Soul Stealer! Come out. I've got what you asked for. Hey!" the Politoc shouted into the dark alley behind a run-down bar. "It's bad enough that I have to wait for one of your kind to show up. Get out here or I'm leaving! I'll find another rotting animal like you that would be more appreciative of what I've got. I don't have all night!"*

*Stepping out of the darkness, Neses just stares at Bii. He knew Bii's people hated everybody else, and wanted to get rid of anyone not a Politoc. Stupid people. They'll never accomplish their goal but, as long as they try, Neses had a use for them.*

*Gliding over to Bii, Neses kept staring. "Yes. I'm here. As agreed, No payment. You give me the diseased ball and I help you and your pitiful race eliminate more people from this world. I trust it won't kill people immediately."*

*So high and mighty these Soul Stealers are, thought Bii to himself. They think they are the true rulers of these cities and they can do whatever they like. They don't know that they are just like everyone else. Animals. Just animals that do not deserve to be alive. That's fine. I'll give him the disease. There's a little surprise waiting for him when he uses it.*

*"Yeah. The disease will do exactly what you want it to do. It'll take someone a good long time to die and they'll never know what's going on until near the end. Here you go." Handing the ball over to Neses, Bii stepped back and started walking away. Looking back over his shoulder, he said, "One last thing. We're watching you. If this doesn't do what you promise and there are still townspeople here by next month, we'll be coming back for you."*

*Animals, thought Neses. Temperamental but useful animals. Neses stared at the ball, faded into the darkness, and waited for his next victim.*

*It wasn't long that night when someone came near the alley and was enticed to enter it. Neses flowed out of the darkness and, in his soothing voice, said, "Come. I've been waiting for you all day. It is good to see you. This night is special and I have a present for you. If you hold this ball, you'll be blessed and riches will be bestowed upon you tomorrow."*

*The victim stared blankly at him, not knowing why he came back to the alley again tonight, but did as he was ordered. As he held the ball, the light from it moved up his hands and he could feel his body tingle. The ball disappeared as Neses laid his tentacles on the victim's head.*

*Suddenly, Neses felt a strange tingle along his tentacles. His brain felt on fire and the last thing he saw was the victim fading away into blackness. Falling dead, he never knew what happened.*

*The victim just stared blankly at the corpse of the Soul Stealer, and moved out of the alley. In the victim's mind, he only heard the phrase, "Go. Touch as many people as you can. Spread the love."*

## Role Playing Game Ideas

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Okay ... okay ... I'm an old-school gamer. I started playing Dungeons and Dragons around the late 70s and continued off and on for much of my life. If I wasn't actively playing the game, I was reading the monster manuals or other books related to gaming. I loved the books. Learning about the various creatures you can encounter and how they lived or what their special abilities were. As a fan of fantasy and science fiction, this game was perfect for me. What better way to imagine you as a hero fighting off weird creatures and monsters to save a village or town?

You see... I'm one of those people that this deck is designed for ... those who read the gaming books and know everything about the creature before the encounter could happen. No matter that I was just a level 1 character with limited knowledge.

For the gamer, the cards can be shown to them and there is no chance that they can know anything about the creature. The descriptions of

their abilities in this book provide the dungeon master with a broad overview of the creature and how they interact with the party. Even if the gamers bought this book to read, there are no established conventions that define how a creature should behave or their powers.

In any role playing game, the cards can be used in multiple ways:

## **Showing Players What They Encounter**



Imagine that your players are approaching a lake. Emerging from the water near the shore, an old woman covered in weeds and strange plants looks at the group and says, “What is it you desire? You may ask only one question.”

How would you describe her? You can't really say the woman has a kelp body. She's not really young or old. At most you can say that a woman wearing a plant dress floats on the water just out of your reach. As you enter the water and move closer to her, she moves away. Her



eyes seem wise and she is just calmly looking at the group waiting for an answer.

There's a reason why people say a picture is worth a thousand words. When you show them a picture of a creature standing on the water, they get an immediate sense of what they are looking at. They will notice that it is almost human. They will notice that there are no ears or hair. Maybe they have a map that has the creature's likeness on it and they know that they are in the right location.

With the direct visual information, they can accurately figure out what weapons or spells that they need if combat happens. In addition, since you can show them a card, they don't have access to any of the information about the creature. They don't know the armor class, special abilities, etc.

## **Props in the Game**

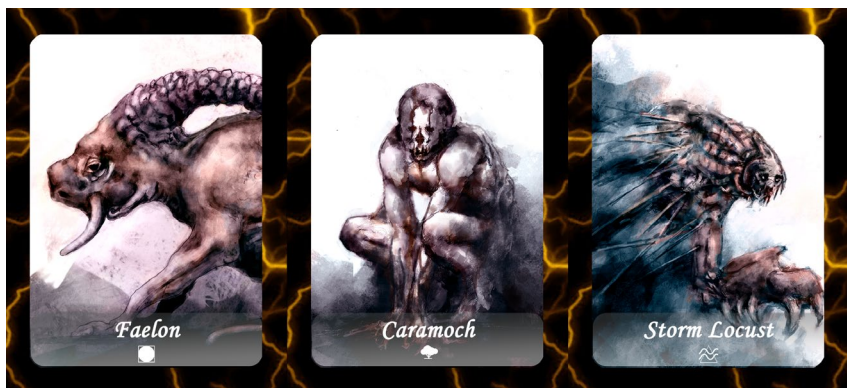
There are a variety of ways that the cards can be used as props in the game:

- 1) Tell the players that, while walking through the woods at night, there is a soft child-like laughter coming from the treetops. Acorns are being thrown at them and seem to be herding them to a particular location. When they enter a clearing, everything is silent and you draw three random cards to see what they encounter in the forest glade.
- 2) Use the cards as bounty cards that players can carry with them. Every time someone captures the creature on the card and brings them back for a particular crime, they are rewarded.

3) Maybe lay down four cards on a table in a dungeon. When the cards are turned over, the creature appears and answers a question. Different creatures could answer differently and give them new clues to their problems.

## Campaign Ideas

Unlike using the ShadowMyths Story Telling Cards, it IS harder to come up with new campaign ideas using the monster cards. Harder, but not impossible. So, how I do it is to draw multiple cards and see how the races relate to one another. Let's look at how this is done. Assuming that you drew the three cards:



You could have a campaign where the Camamoch sees a bunch of Faelon running through the forest. This is strange because the odd creatures are never seen there. As the Caramoch warns the others, they could see a set of dark clouds coming towards the woods. They know that this isn't just a normal storm. They could feel it in the air.

As the storm gets closer, a loud buzzing sound could be clearly heard. They know that sound! It's Storm Locusts. Those metal eating insects are known to wipe out large regions and cities.. Fortunately, they don't have any form of metal in the village, so the Storm Locusts will leave them alone. However, it's going to be bad when they do find a city.

## Teaching Tool

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In the classroom, teachers are always looking for fresh ways to engage their students and encourage class participation. This is especially true in creative writing classes where students can explore novel ideas. From the teachers I've talked to, several of them had mentioned that there are three methods that they can be used for classroom study: Writing Prompts, Vocabulary Lessons, and Environment lesson.

**Writing Prompts:** Like the writing methods and storytelling games mentioned earlier, you could give each student up to three cards to help start their own story.

You could also have each student draw a card. They would write one paragraph about the card to start their story. Next, they would pass their paper onto the next student. The next student will add onto the story using their own card. At the end of the lesson, each student will have their original page back and they see how their story evolved from what the others wrote using their own cards.

**Vocabulary Lesson:** Rather than just use a basic lesson to learn extra vocabulary words by memorizing or reading books, try having them come up with descriptive words based on the cards.

For example, have each student draw a single card. Once all students have a card, ask them to write down five adjectives and five nouns that describe what they see on the card. After the students have finished writing their words, collect all papers. Next, show all cards to the students, choose one of the papers, and start reading the adjectives and nouns listed. See if the students can guess what card is being described. Naturally, the one who described the card cannot take part.

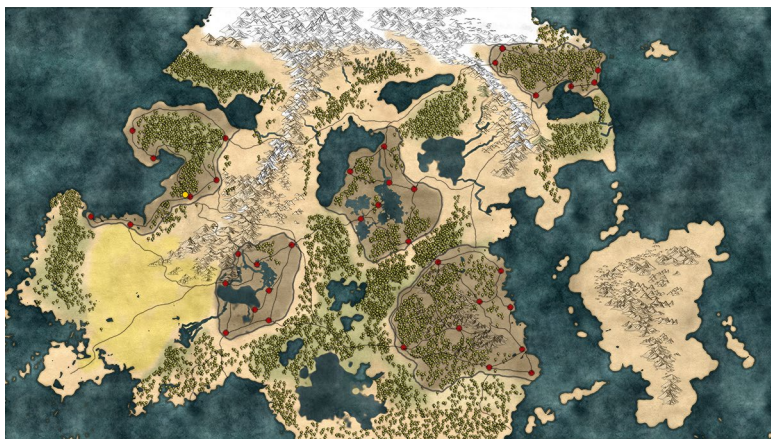
**Environment Lesson:** This is my favorite lesson. Given the creature on the card, try to figure out where they live, what their home life is like, and what they can do. Think of it like a zoology study. From the shapes of their bodies to the coloration of their skin, you can make all types of assumptions about the creatures. The best part is that you will notice similarities between them and animals in our world. Research similar animals and use that information to make your creature more realistic.

## How I Used the Decks

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Now that we've gone through a lot of different ways to use the decks, the big question I've always been asked is, "Okay, so you created the art for the decks, and you said that you use the decks in writing. What is this book about?"

This book is about wizards, elementals, magic and shadow creatures. The first book in the series is about a boy, Selik, who has this magic ability that everybody wants. He thinks he's pretty tough with this new ability but learns that thinking and doing are not the same thing.



In my world, Death created the universe from the darkness that was ever present. On Ozul, he brought the elemental gods into existence and they created the races who live there. Over the centuries, humans (also known as skin elementals) and other weaker races were being abused by the stronger elementals because they had no natural ability to protect themselves. Death had to balance the world or, eventually, humans and the weaker races would be eliminated. Creating the ShadowMyths decks, Death gave those weaker elementals means to access the magic of the world.

Now that we have the basics, I'll pass you onto Selik. He's young and

foolish, but ... well, you'll see.

## Calaban and Death (Third Age: Year 3126)

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Hey. My name is Selik Garrulus, and I've been asked to fill in what I know about the world. It's the year 3126, and I've just passed my 17th birthday. So, for a human, I'm still young. Now, you may say that I'm too young to know anything, but I'm a lot smarter than you think. Don't let my youth fool you. Also, I have a special trick up my sleeve that most people don't know about. It was something that happened to me when I was younger.

You see, my father passed away when I was 14. Now, that was tragic as things go, but that wasn't the worst part. I found out that my dad was hosting a creature called the Artifact. When he died, I happened to be near him at the time, and this creature entered me. Honestly ... kind of freaked me out at the time. But I'm pretty tough so I knew that I could handle it.

At the time, I didn't know that everybody wanted this creature that was inside of me. Now, I definitely understand why. Besides having direct and accurate access to the history of the world and all information known by previous hosts of the Artifact, I'm able to change into any elemental I want. The Artifact (or Calaban as I like to call him) also has a built-in defense mechanism so that nothing can harm me. That means I'm indestructible, and I can't be beaten!

Now, Calaban is amazing. Death created him long ago to help foster understanding between all the races of this world. In particular, after the War of Corruption, it became Calaban's job to help heal the wounds between the humans and the rest of the elementals. After all, it was my race that started it. I'm not saying that we were right to start the war, but I'm not saying that we were wrong, either.

One night, Calaban and I had a long discussion about who Death was. Long ago, there was nothing but Death. It's not that he was an entity floating in the void. He was the void itself. A sentient consciousness that had no form. After a period, he knew that it was time for the Beginning and time for the End. He had rested enough, and the Great Cycle must begin again. So, he fractured his essence into multiple parts. Some parts created the moons, planets, and suns. Other parts were sent to oversee the created worlds, and they had dominion over what was created. They were all part of Death, but separate from him. Their job was to create life, learn from it, and, after a period, destroy it ... bringing back that knowledge so that Death can rest and the cycle begin again.

On Ozul, my world, Death created the major gods for the earth, air, water, fire, and skin elementals. Their job was to create all the races on the planet so that Death may learn from them. When working with the elemental gods, he was very careful to let them know that all the races had to learn to work together and understand one another. This understanding and empathy between the races would lead to more knowledge for Death to absorb. However, Death knew in his heart, though, that there would always be a conflict between the races since they, ultimately, are a creation of him and he is a creature of chaos.

## War of Corruption (Second Age: Year 2368)

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As time went on, the creations of the major elemental gods fought and ostracized one another. Prejudices and jealousies erupted, and the different elementals began keeping to their own. One particular group of skin elementals, humans, were the ones who most often fought with the others. Humans, and other weaker elemental races, became targets of the stronger races since we did not have any special abilities to protect themselves. Because we were weaker we were taken advantage of for many years. This was known as the Time of Chaos.

Now, I know what you are thinking. If everybody is an elemental, why can't we humans protect ourselves? Well, it's simple, we can't alter our appearance. All the other elementals are mainly made up of their base element structure and can change the shape or density of that material. For example, water elementals can shift parts of their bodies into fins so they can swim faster or hide in the ocean by becoming transparent. We skin elementals can't do that. We're stuck in our single form. It's not like we have other special gifts, like being better at accessing magic from the Path or we're faster or stronger. Nope. None of that. So, we're definitely at a disadvantage against the stronger races. Even among other skin elementals, humans are definitely at the bottom of the power scale.

To help the weaker races deal with this imbalance of power, Death created the ShadowMyths decks in the year 2280. The decks provided access to the world's magic to help the lesser races defend themselves. They came in two forms: sacramancy and biomagy. The sacramancy



deck altered reality or allowed the card holders to draw energy from the Path, and the biomagy deck was used to establish a common language and foster understanding between the different races. As with many powerful items, this worked for a while but soon came to be abused. Humans used the cards and waged war against the other elementals to get revenge on the way they had been treated over the years.

In the year 2368, Malochi, the Destroyer and Corrupter, was ready. He had gathered as many of the ShadowMyths cards as he could. With both decks and help from a group of talented mages, he altered the magic in the cards and could capture many elementals and control them. Malochi had had enough of the world and desired to reshape it in his own image. He felt that humans AND elementals were at fault and sought to control everything.

So, the War of Corruption began, and no one could defeat him.

Eventually, he suffered the same fate that all creatures, humans and elementals alike, succumb to. He died from old age in the year 2432.

## Kalan

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It was time. Kalan slipped out the window of his room and made his way around the house and into the forest. As far as he could tell, his parents never knew where he went or even that he had snuck out. That was fine with him. They wouldn't like it if they knew where he

was going. It was the middle of the night and they would be there.

Losing the war was bitter sweet. Even though the other races left humans alone, there was also no magic. No beautiful lights or storytellers creating magical plays for everyone to watch. No more strange and wondrous non-humans to talk with. Everything was so mundane and dull. He knew that, over time, humans would forget that there were people in this world not like them.

His friends promised they would help him. They wouldn't let humans forget about the magic or the other races in the world. Not all elementals blamed the humans for the war. Even though some elementals helped Malochi with his plans, those races were never blamed. Only the humans. It was wrong.

Every night, Kalan's friends, a Pico named Sylvia and a Cephalamore named Kingston, brought him some ShadowMyths spell cards and creature decks to study. The spell cards allowed him to learn about magic in the world and look in on various villages to see how the other elementals lived. The creature cards helped him understand the language spoken and taught him about how they interact with one another. Every night, Kalan learned more about the world that was cut off. Every night, he hungered for more information.

Eventually, he was ready.

There were two approaches he could take. Quietly bring other people in and teach them how to use the cards and teach them the same way that Sylvia and Kingston taught him. At first, he thought that this was a good idea but, more he thought about it, the more he knew he would be long dead before enough people learned. Instead, he opened a

school in the middle of his town and announced to all that magic had returned to the humans. If the elementals were going to take magic away, he would fight them to the end.

## The Separation (Second Age: Year 2433)

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“No.” Death said flatly as the elemental lords looked upon the dark shape at the head of the table.

“No. And that’s my final word. I will not end the existence of the humans of this world. Not to satisfy your blood lust after winning the war. Many good humans had nothing to do with this war. They were just as victimized as you were. Plus, let’s not forget that each one of you elemental lords, not you Lord Mazram, is partly responsible for the actions of the humans. If you had treated them with proper respect as you do with each other and had controlled your races, the war would have never started in the first place.”

Lord Mazram, the skin elemental god, nodded briefly at Death and smiled inwardly. Good, he thought. Good. They are getting what they deserve. How dare they solely blame my children for their problems! Yes, my children were at fault, but they were pushed to it. Those other elementals deserved what they got.

“I will agree, though, that peace must be restored to the world. For their protection and yours, humans shall be quarantined to certain regions of the world. Only humans are allowed in this region. It is

forbidden that any other race, including other skin elementals, enter it without the expressive invite of one of the humans. This is their land and they should be able to live there in peace. Over time, they will learn to live harmoniously with everyone else. But right now, wounds need to heal. After a period, some of them will be allowed to leave the quarantine area. It is my hope that everybody can learn to live together peacefully. You will work out the details, among yourselves, about how to keep the people in the quarantine area. Lord Mazram, you shall oversee this so that your children are treated fairly.”

As Death faded away and the room became brighter, the elemental lords of water, air, earth, and fire started loudly complaining about Death's proclamations.

“How dare he order us around! We're not children! This is our world and these are our children that those filthy humans controlled and destroyed! To allow those humans to go out and threaten us again, is UNACCEPTABLE!” yelled Lord Faemir, the fire elemental lord.

As the earth elemental god, Lord Magnus, was about to join the conversation, he stopped. Studying Lord Mazram who was sitting quietly in the corner observing everybody, Lord Magnus understood that this was not the time or place to be discussing any problems that they had with Death's proclamations.

Quietly he said, “Hold, my fellow lords. Let us rest a bit and mull over what Death has proclaimed. It may be for the best right now. Nothing says that this has to be forever. I suggest that we meet again after we have thought about this.”

As the elemental lords faded away and returned to their domains, Lord

Mazram thought he saw the table shift and dissolve also.

## Quarantine Zone (Second Age: Year 2436)

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As Lord Mazram surveyed the world, he created five regions for the humans. Each district was thousands of miles in size and the humans had full access to natural resources to build their towns and live productive lives.



To separate the humans from the other elementals, he created special barriers, canyons on the earth side and formidable waves on the waterside. The canyons were to be inhabited by Death Mists, and the waves were to be managed by the Kai.

Lord Mazram enhanced both barriers by creating a magic field that allowed certain Kai and Death Mists to become far smarter, stronger and handsomer than the other members of their race. Over time, a religious organization was built that further enhanced the specialness of those members of their race that agreed to patrol the border. These unique individuals became known as maulers.

The final part of the agreement between Death and the elemental lords was that the humans had to have the opportunity to learn and associate with the elementals. On the land side, several bridges were created across the canyons. The only humans that could cross the bridges were human mages, and the individuals invited by them. Since mages were supposedly taught to understand the other races in their world, Death felt that they would have the best chance to bridge the gap between humans and elementals. If a human who was not a mage attempted to cross, a mauler would rise up and eliminate them. This also held true for those who tried to send ships across the lakes or the ocean.

When Lord Mazram presented the new world to the other elemental lords, they were strangely quiet. “So,” he asked, “Will this satisfy the rest of you lords? Humans are no longer a threat to anyone else. If, by some chance, they understand other elementals, they should be worthy enough to join the rest of the world community. This is what Death wants, and I think I have delivered a suitable solution.” No

response. The other lords just looked at him. No smiles. Nothing.

Finally, Lord Faemir, the fire elemental god, spoke up. "It looks all nice and pretty. How are we supposed to get the humans in there? Do we just ask them nicely and politely? Please, go in. You'll love it there!"

"No. They will be herded in by the Death Mists, thanks to Lord Graylar. Some humans will, of course, die, but I don't believe that will bother too many of you."

As the other elementals studied the map, they all seem to agree that the plan would work... for now. All understood that there really was no other option. Death would not allow the humans to be eliminated.

## Elementals in Zone (Third Age: Year 3126)

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"My job", Calaban continued, is to help a particular member of one race better understand the world and teach the world about empathy. I've been doing it for thousands of years, and that will be my task for thousands more. You, Selik, are the next human that will help me teach the world. Your father was not a good choice. He preferred to hide away from the world. I can see in you that you want to be part of it."

As I sat back, I thought ... well, why not? I'm smarter and stronger than the average person. Now, I've got this magical artifact that helps me be whatever I want and do what I want. Why not? I could do it.

“Calaban, I’m curious, though. If Lord Mazram didn’t allow other elementals to get into this quarantine zone, how did some get in? There’s the statue at the end of town which, I’m sure, is a captured elemental. Also, there are the ones that my dad and Jakob talk to when no one is around. Where did they come from?”

“Well, at the final meeting, after Lord Mazram left, I overheard some elemental gods talking.”

“Is everything ready? Your people know what to do?” asked Lord Faemir.

“Yes.” responded the air and water elemental gods. “We have given instructions to our priests that they will be visited by certain elementals. Some priests are loyal to our cause and will provide a way to bring in elementals out of sight of the Maulers. No one will know what is happening. We have to be careful not to let too many in or Death and Lord Mazram will notice.”

“Great! This will be a perfect opportunity to get rid of the troublemakers and criminals in our lands. Since Death and Lord Mazram love those humans so much, they can have them. They have provided us a perfect opportunity to cleanse our lands also.”

As the image faded, Calaban spoke again. “That,” Selik, “is why you have elementals here. At first, they were not the best examples of the other races, but most of them were good people. Nowadays, many of them have come to see the quarantine areas as a sanctuary and protection from others of their own race. They have a right to live safely and freely just like you humans. That is the true meaning of the quarantine zones. That is the idea Death had in mind.”



## The Guild (Third Age: Year 3127)

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I'm tired. I don't know what I'm doing. It's been a year since I started this journal. I don't know if I'll ever finish it. I don't know if I even want to finish it. Sitting with Kira at the breakfast table, I couldn't organize my thoughts. There were too many things going on, and I was losing touch with reality. As much as I thought I could do it all, I realized that it just isn't possible. However, there wasn't anyone else capable of doing it, so it all fell on my shoulders. So many people were counting on me to solve their problems. I needed to solve the riddle of changing the hybrids, like Kira, back into their human and elemental forms. I needed to repair the rift between the humans and elementals. I wanted to be out adventuring in the world and not in this old house studying dusty books, looking for clues to my problems.

I never noticed her watching me but her hand softly touched mine and, quietly, she said, "You're wrong, you know. You can't solve everybody's problems by yourself. I care for you deeply and I know that you feel the same for me. However, you have to make time for yourself and not worry about my problems. If you take care of yourself, everything will fall into place. Please... get help."

As I looked into her eyes, I knew that she was right. That was the moment that the Greywell Wizard's Guild, or more commonly known as the Center, was formed. The idea of the Center was to train people to become wizards and help them to understand the world around them.

We could teach others about the elementals they share the world with and show that they are not the horrific creatures that our parents told tales about to scare us.

The first instructors would be Kira and I. Jakob, Kira's father, spent most of his time with the Travelers and other mages, so he could not be relied on to make an appearance. He would be a guest instructor. We wanted to create a mentor/student type of system where an older mage would take a younger one under their wing and instruct them personally. The best way to learn something is to teach it, and Kira and I would provide the overall instructions. Over time, we'd introduce more visiting mages as guest instructors.

That part didn't quite work out the way that we wanted it to.

The next step was to determine who would attend the school. This was tougher. The people of Greywell, for the most part, are isolationists. They don't like new people coming into town or new ideas that may change their way of life. This guild definitely fell under that category. So, how did we find the students?

As I thought about the problem more and more, I realized that the best candidates were the ones who wanted to see the world. They were the ones who wanted to go beyond the everyday life of Greywell, and knew that there was more to life than this small town. They all flocked to the Travelers to hear their stories or welcome them into town.

They would be the first students and fortunately, most of them were my friends.

So, I went around town looking for them and quietly told them about the new guild that I was proposing. A lot of them loved the idea and wanted to participate. Some wanted to be part of it, but were afraid of how it would affect their standing in the community or what their parents would think. I was confident that they would tell no one but only time would tell. Either way, it looked like we had enough interest to start the guild.

Since we knew that the townspeople would not approve of our teachings, we purchased an old church building near the outskirts of town. This would act as a library and museum where people could come and spend time together learning about the world around them. We had unique items that were brought in by the travelers, and books that talked about other races in our world. Most people thought they were fantasy books but, nevertheless, they were popular. It didn't matter to me if they believed the material in it or not.

Secretly, though, in the back rooms of the Center, we would meet with prospective students who wanted to be mages. We would break the group into two areas of interests: biomagy and sacramancy. Biomagy is the study of the races who exist on our world, and sacramancy is the study of the magic in the world and how to access the energy from the Path.

The first group, biomagists, would study the various races and report all of their findings. Their focus would be to understand the elementals lives and why they act the way that they do.

By understanding others and their reasons, the mages would have a better understanding of who they were in the world. Naturally, they'd

have their own set of ShadowMyths cards to help them achieve this goal.

The second group, sacramancers, would study how the cards access the magic in the world and the best practices to use that magic. They will investigate existing magic and create new spell combinations. Their other main task will be to collect as many cards as they can for the guild.

## From the Children (Third Age: Year 3127)

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Gathered around the table, Jakob, Kira and I were not sure what to do. We needed ShadowMyths cards to teach the students, and we only had a handful. In the quarantine zones, the cards were fairly rare but seemed to be plentiful outside of it. At this time of the year, the traveler caravans were not seen that often and, more times than not, didn't include mages or magic merchants. Therefore, our only option was to purchase the ones we needed. It wouldn't be cheap to purchase the cards, and we really did not have enough excess funds to be doing that.

We knew that the best source of cards would be through the Balak Shifters, the ones who first introduced humans to magic. They were still around in many cities and still passing on their knowledge. However, the next closest city of any size or potential was Falard, and that was at least three weeks away. The caravans could get to it and bring back one priest, but that wouldn't solve our problem about

getting cards now. We had no idea when the next caravan would be arriving.

“Valchion has the cards that we need and they won’t be expensive,” said Kira. “The magic within the biomagy cards help different elemental races communicate with each other. When elemental children are young and don’t understand the common language, the parents use the cards to help the children communicate with those of different races. It’s common practice and the cards are pretty plentiful.”

Jakob seemed a bit worried. “Yes, but will they give them to us if they know we are going to teach humans? The last time the cards were in human hands, they were corrupted and enslaved entire villages of elementals. What could we do to change their mind about that? I’m afraid that suggestion is out of the question.”

“I think we can convince some of them to give us the cards. Not all elementals hate humans. Especially not the ones in this zone. Besides, you and the other wizards have made some friends who you can trust. All we need is a small set of cards so that we can teach the mages who want to learn. It’ll be slow but, once the elementals in the area learn that not all humans are bad and some can be trusted, they may help us more. Besides, no trust will ever be created if both sides avoid the other side.”

As I listened to Kira and Jakob, I knew we didn’t have a choice. We needed those cards to teach the other students. With no form of reliable communication, too many things can go wrong when we introduce the students to the different elementals. It’s hard enough

dealing with the racial prejudices, but having each side misinterpret what the other is saying will lead to disaster.

“Kira. Can you go over to Valchion and get some cards? Not too many. We just need some to practice on.” Turning to Jakob, “and Jakob. Can you go with Kira? I would like to know if there are some elementals who would be interested in teaching at our school. If you have some personal friends who could be trusted, that would be great. In exchange for their help, let them know we can offer some of our extra sacramancy and biomaggy cards as payment. The sacramancy cards will protect us against other elementals but, unless we can talk to them and foster that understanding, the school won’t succeed.”

Both Kira and Jakob nodded in agreement and left the room. I wasn’t so sure about sending Kira along on this trip. I had absolute faith that she could take care of herself and, with her father along, there would be no issues. However, I kept wondering if there was something I was missing. I know she cares about me, but she’s been more and more distant lately. Maybe we both need some time alone.

## ShadowMyths Cards

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Before checking out the journal notes from the wizards in the field, we should talk a little about the ShadowMyths cards, themselves.

When Death first created the ShadowMyths decks in the Second Age (Year 2280), he presented visions to the humans and weaker

elementals. These individuals, known as channelers, could create the cards and use them to a limited degree to talk with the other races, but they didn't fully understand what was going on. All they knew was that they could understand them and communicate with the elemental creatures when they held the card. Many of them were viewed as insane and, since the cards could not be destroyed, were thrown away or hidden. Death decided to present the dreams to some of the Balak Shifters, and initially charged them with helping everybody.

Since the Balak Shifters had the greatest connection to the Path, he felt that they had the best chance of instructing how to use the cards. So, in their dreams, he started sending visions of the decks and how they could be used to some of the shifters. It was a source of pride in the community if one received a dream. They were considered one of the chosen ones because it was felt they had a special connection with Death.

The channelers would create paintings of the various races, and when finished, the painting would shrink to a card. Every time they signed the original card, a thousand copies of the card would appear next to it. The signature on the original would disappear. After a certain number of signatures, the original card would also disappear. To protect the cards and their creator, only a handful of cards could remain in the creator's possession. Most of the other cards would disappear and randomly appear in different parts of the world.

Initially, the Shifters set up schools where they would teach the different races the common language using the cards. Over time, though, they realized that they would have to go out into the world and provide the cards and teachings to the different elemental villages.

In the beginning, most of the races had no interest in dealing with others who weren't like them.

Things didn't really take hold until the merchants and creators decided to learn. Rather than just learning the common language, the merchants felt that their products would sell better if they knew the language of each race. The more easily that they could communicate with the race, the easier it was to sell them goods. At this point, the mages and the Shifters started traveling with the merchant caravans.

Eventually, time came when the cards were very common and became a staple in almost every village school. All elementals other than humans were learning the individual languages of the other races. Humans were only taught the common language because the elementals didn't want their language to be soiled when spoken by a human.

Now, even though the cards were thrown away, they could never be destroyed. In the beginnings if humans were found to possess them, the cards were immediately confiscated. Over time, as more humans became mages, this changed. However, for many of the modern day elementals, it's still incredibly distasteful if a human could speak their language.

Using the cards, the biomagists began collecting information about all of the different races so that we may understand them better. Now, let's see what we've learned so far about the cards.



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# Biomagy Journal

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# Arachna

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Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Web
Habitat	Caverns
Height	3'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Low
Interaction	Shy and reclusive
Special Characteristics	Can create extremely strong webbing that can be shaped into any object.

## Description

Although beautiful to behold, the Arachna is very much spider-like and their form brings with it an unnatural fear to many people. Each Arachna has a special pattern on their body that marks them as a unique individual. Variations of blue and yellow show the male of the species, and black and red coloring represent the female. The Arachna can create any structure they have seen out of the

webbing that makes up their thorax. They will use their front and (sometimes) middle appendages to collect and shape the webbing to their desired need. As more and more webbing is required, the abdomen will glow and replace gaps in their thorax with new webbing.

The webbing is incredibly strong and can be molded into any desired shape. In addition, complex objects can be created by joining various smaller parts together. Although strong, the webbing only maintains its strength for several days. After that, the material will break down. Water and other liquids will easily corrode the webbing long before it breaks down.

Arachnas inhabit small underground holes where they create a single web portal for entry. When a suitable lair is found, large amounts of webbing will create a solid door over the entrance and the coloring of the web will be the same as the surrounding area. They will also lay down thin strands around the entrance. These detection strands will help determine if any other creature notices the newly constructed lair.

The first couple of days in the new lair, the Arachna maintains a watch at the door. Connected to the detection strands, they wait to see if anyone has noticed the entrance. Once they feel safe, they can enter the lair at will. As they approach the door, the abdomen will glow and the webbing on the door will separate so that they can leave. After going through the door, the webbing will resume its normal shape.

## **Interaction**

Understanding how terrifying they are to most of the world, the

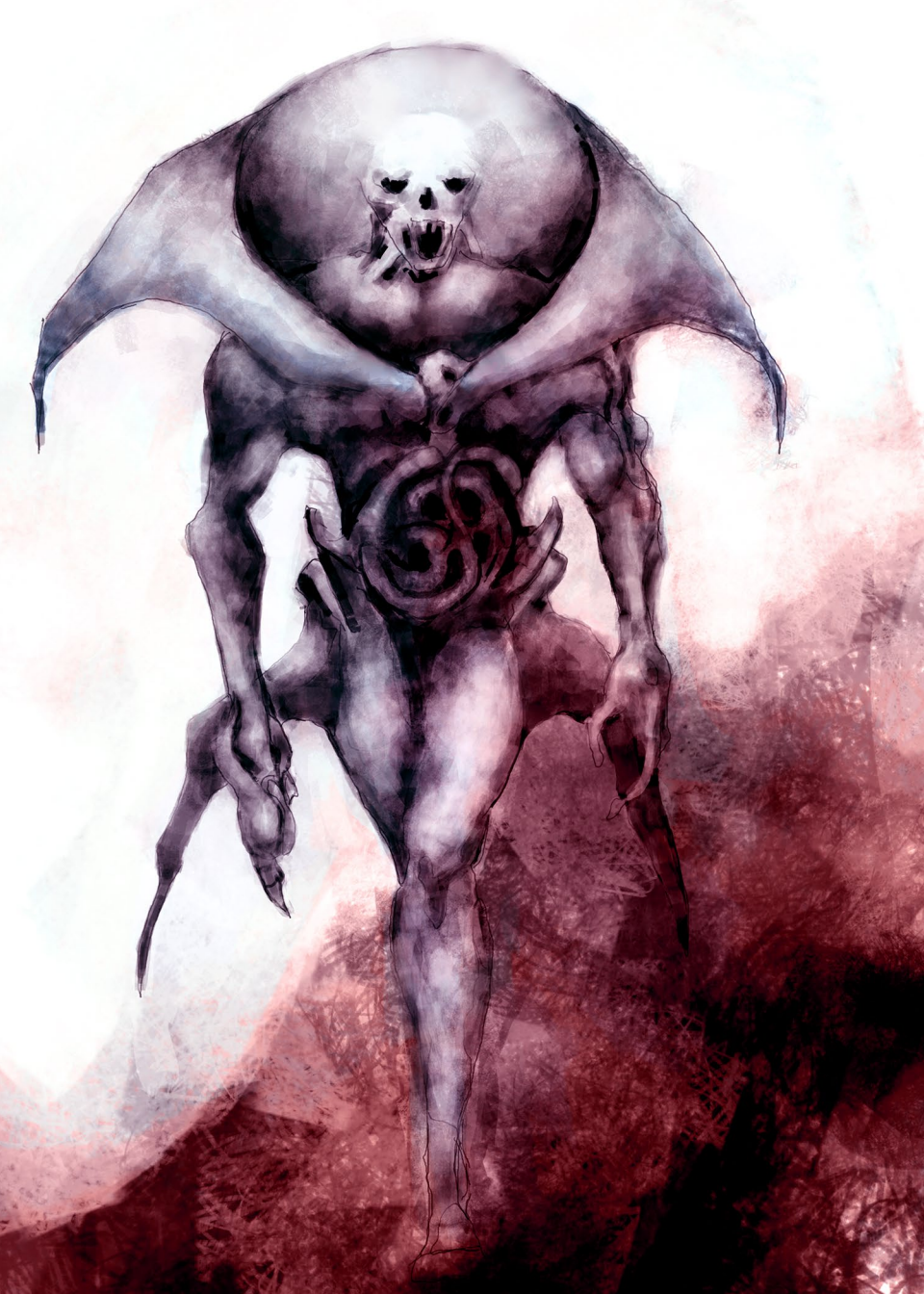
Arachna spends most of their time hidden from others. This quiet race of introverts is gifted artisans and understands the impermanence of the world. Like their web structures, they enjoy the moments they have and not worry about the past or the future.

If they do interact with someone, they can speak common Elemental, but the words are short and click-like. They are creatures of few words and prefer to talk through their art.

## **Combat**

The favorite tactic when facing an opponent is to lift the front legs and twist the web-like thorax into a vertical stance. This disturbing appearance, which resembles a spider-like centaur, allows the Arachna to move around on the back 4 legs but attack with weapons on its front legs.

During the attack phase, the Arachna will continuously create more weapons from its thorax and mold them onto their front upright legs. Since they are fantastic mimics, they will evaluate what weapon their opponent has and create a deadlier version of it.



# Baelor

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Lava
Habitat	Caverns
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Open and Friendly.
Special Characteristics	Able to convert any gas from one form to another through their biosuit.

## Description

The Baelor is considered one of the friendliest races among all elementals and the likeliest one to associate with the hated humans. They have a love for learning and will go to great lengths to gather knowledge. This gift for knowledge has led them to a greater understanding of the ShadowMyths decks and how the world understands magic.

Although they would love to travel the world to learn more, they are restricted to areas near their lava caverns since their environ suits need to be constantly replenished. In their lava caverns, the air is thick with carbon, sulfur dioxide, and trace amounts of hydrogen sulfides. This dependence on that mixture requires that they have a filtration unit in their chest to convert the surrounding air into something that they can breathe. The filtration unit is only effective for about a week before they need to return to the caverns and clean the pollutants out of it.

Besides allowing the Baelor to breathe, they can also use the filtration unit to convert one form of gas into another one. This is useful for many scientists who need certain gasses for their experiments. The payment for the service is usually new information or knowledge that the Baelor does not have.

In the security of their own cave system, the community is usually bristling with activity. They love sharing knowledge with one another and excited when a novel way to use a ShadowMyths card is discovered. Those among the race who are extremely adept at coming up with new card uses are seen as celebrities and awarded many accolades within the community.

## **Interaction**

Open and friendly, the Baelor will spend hours asking questions and learning. They feel that all knowledge should be freely available and will also answer questions (if they are able) that someone may have.

Sometimes, this has led others to take advantage of them, but they aren't too worried about that. If they feel that the information isn't



shared equally, they will politely stop conversation and go on their own way.

## **Combat**

With knowledge comes great power. Many of the Baelor are formidable mages with a large store of ShadowMyths decks always present on them. They are creative and can combine the magic of the decks into ways that most people have never thought of. In addition, when traveling, they always have one teleportation card so they can easily escape.

If they cannot defend themselves with the decks, as a last resort, they can defend themselves by removing one or both of their environ suit sleeves. The clamps near the shoulders will seal the suit while their arms are exposed. From there, they will form their lava arms into a variety of weapons and shields. It should be noted that this puts undo stress on the suit and they usually have to return to their caverns within a day or two.



# Biofaun

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	All Warm Habitats
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Strong
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Abrupt and Aggressive. Overly proud.
Special Characteristics	Horns glow when using protective shield around body.

## Description

Overly proud of their strength, Biofauns take pride in being able to outfight anyone in hand-to-hand combat. Traveling the world, they constantly look towards validating their fighting prowess against the other races in Ozul.

They, however, won't just fight anyone. The opponent has to be

worthy of their attention. If challenged by a lesser opponent, they will only fight if their life is in danger. Otherwise, they will ignore the challenger. Fighting is only worth their time if they respect the opponent.

During a fight, the Biofaun has the capability of using an energized body shield generated by their horns. Their horns grow back at a slow rate and the more times they use the energized body shield, the smaller the horns become. When mentally activated, a thin sheath covers their body and will protect them against all weapons and magic attacks. In addition, the shield softens physical blows and reduces any damage to almost nothing. The shield lasts for about 20 seconds and it becomes a matter of pride in the community for those who have the largest horns.

In the Biofaun's village, there is a central clearing where all disputes are fought. Each combatant understands that the fight is NOT to the death but will try their best. They also agree that no magic, weapons, or body shields are allowed in the ring. During the fight, the losing Biofaun has to acknowledge their defeat or the contest continues. If one of the challengers does not show up, no matter the reason, they are immediately ostracized from the village.

One point to make about the challenge in the village is that it is considered disrespectful to challenge an injured member of the community or one not capable of fighting. At that point, the Biofaun's consider this bullying versus respectful challenge.

## **Interaction**

Biofauns are very good about determining if someone will present them a challenge or not. In most cases, they will ignore taunts and treat other physically weaker people with disdain. They particularly hate those who are dependent on magic since they view the use of ShadowMyths cards as cheating and anyone using them is not worthy of respect.

When talking to a Biofaun, they are not good at hiding their feelings about someone. Being blunt to everyone around them, people know if the Biofaun respects them or not.

## **Combat**

They are very versatile in many hand-to-hand fighting techniques, and when challenged, they prefer both fighters to be wearing strictly loin cloths so that there are no advantages given with armor. Also, they are not sexist. They will fight any male or female and it doesn't matter who the challenger is as long as they seem to be capable of providing a good match.

During the grappling procedure, if needed, they will employ the magic of their horn to protect their bodies. Since they know the horn shrinks every time they use it and this adjusts their standings in the community, they are reluctant to use this magic unless the situation is dire.



# Bone Ghost

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Bone
Habitat	Caverns
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Strong
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Very interested in others but wants the bones when they die.
Special Characteristics	Able to read random memories by touching the bones of someone.

## Description

This very spiritual race is obsessed with collecting and reading bones they find in the wild. When they touch any bone of any race, in their mind, they see random events in that person's life for several minutes. They see and smell everything. They know how the person felt. They understand, mentally, what the person was going through.

There is no way they can predict which random event is chosen but, during one session, they will come across how the person died. When that happens, the Bone Ghost experiences the actual moment of death. This causes them to be careful about how often they touch bones randomly found. If they are lucky, the person passed away in their sleep. If they are not lucky, the Bone Ghost experiences the violent nature of the bone owner's death.

Once a memory has been experienced, they can recall that memory at a moment's notice. For the bones containing memories that are really special to them, they keep them and mount them somewhere on their body.

Over time, bones get replaced with newer bones and newer memories they enjoy. In the end, many of the elders appear as a nightmarish grouping of walking bones.

Like art, inside of their homes, the Bone Ghost adorns their walls with the bones they have collected over the years. The bones are shared with family members so that they can all experience random moments in the lives of the previous owners. These bones are also used as teaching moments so that the children can learn about the world around them and the other inhabitants.

## **Interaction**

When speaking with a Bone Ghost, they love to hear about someone's travels and life experiences. These stories fascinate them since they never leave the caverns and have very little experience in the larger world. There have been tales of Bone Ghosts using Transports to visit other places, but those are only tales. Most ghosts don't know of



anyone who has actually done it.

If the person is particularly interesting, the ghost will ask them if it is possible to receive a small bone when that person passes away. They are happy to pay for the convenience and promise that the bone would be cherished and placed in a spot of honor in their house or on themselves.

## **Combat**

Incredibly strong, the Bone Ghost is very hard to kill. During combat, the bones comprising their body are much stronger than normal bones. Their smokey interior coats the bones with a dense protective lining that allows them to move around and protect their primary body from harm. In addition, the internal organs are composed of some form of liquid and smoke that doesn't seem affected by any non-magical weapons.

The Bone Ghost will usually fashion weapons out of different bones they have collected and fused using their liquid smoke form. The weapons are usually used for blunt force but, because of their strength, they can move the weapon fast enough to actually cut a person.

If their bone body is destroyed, they will form into a mist and then slip away through any cracks in the surrounding rocks.



# Caramoch

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Wood
Habitat	Forests
Height	5'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Low
Interaction	Erratic and confusing, they appear to switch topics randomly.
Special Characteristics	Can blend into trees so they are not visible to any one other than wood elementals.

## Description

With child-like laughter, the woods at night take on a foreboding feeling when the Caramoch is at play. As those who enter after dark, they recount weird stories of rustling sounds coming from the trees above their heads. They see nothing but are sure something is there. Following them. Watching them. Every so often, acorns or small nuts may be thrown at these intruders. They aren't thrown

randomly, but in a pattern that gives the feeling that they are being herded to a location.

The Caramoch is the cause of such a disturbance. With the faces that resemble demented child clowns, they cause many people unease. In reality, they are just having fun and one of their favorite pastimes is to scare people and watch them panic and run around the woods. In their mind, they don't mean any harm but treat the situation as a simple prank.

When it comes time to rest, the Caramoch will find a tree to hug and meld into it. All that is noticeable is a slight discoloring on the bark that resembles a face. During this resting period, they feed on the nutrients within the tree and, in turn, clean out any toxins the tree may have absorbed from the ground or air.

At night, when the rest period is over, they take to the upper branches and play among themselves. They love chasing one another through the branches and finding unwitting victims for their pranks. The Caramoch's only purpose in life is to enjoy themselves and have fun with those around them.

## **Interaction**

If one can actually talk to a Caramoch, it is a maddening experience. They cannot sit still and will chatter about all sorts of random topics that are not connected to whatever their companion is saying. If they are in some sort of room, they have the tendency to explore all containers, open drawers, and try to see everything there is in the room. They are incapable of sitting still for any period.

The only effective way to get them to settle down is to have them focus on a particular object. Preferably something they can hold in their hand and play with during the conversation. This is not a long-term solution. After a brief period, they will become bored and start their erratic conversations and movement again.

## **Combat**

The Caramoch does not engage in any form of combat and will always try to run away if they are attacked. If they are given the chance, they will run around a tree and immediately meld with one when they are out of sight of their opponent. This gives their opponent the illusion that they have disappeared.



# Celluloid

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Symbiote
Habitat	Host
Height	Not Applicable
Speed	Not Applicable
Strength	Not Applicable
Intelligence	Not Applicable
Interaction	Only with host.
Special Characteristics	Rebuilds any missing organ necessary for an elemental.

## Description

Attaching a small set of organic balls to the elemental, the doctor lets the patient know that communication should soon begin. This is the life of the symbiotic race called a Celluloid.

In their initial state, the Celluloid exists as a small round ball waiting for a host to join with them. No one seems to know why there were

created in the first place and there is no known record when they first appeared on Ozul. What was discovered was that they could become any form they like and can easily communicate with their host. This led to enterprising physicians in the past feeling they would be the perfect species to help patients replace missing limbs or organs. The Celluloid seemed to like this idea.

The Celluloid is placed on the chest of the host and, after a moment, they will try to establish an understanding of who the host is. This is done through an internal conversation between the Celluloid and the host. Once they have determined what the physical ailment is and the desired change, they will move their way to the organ or body part and try to match the host's desire.

It should be noted that they can only make a change that is consistent with the host's body structure. For instance, they cannot create a wood elemental arm for a bone elemental body. In addition, the organ or replaced body part has to serve some function. When asked for cosmetic changes, the symbiote refuses to comply and remains in their natural state as a ball.

If the body part is a movable organ (i.e. arm or leg), it takes some time for the host and the Celluloid to become in synch so that the movement is natural. However, over time, the part can be manipulated as easily as any other body part. To maintain balance, the arm is no stronger or weaker than any other part of the host. If the host is killed, the Celluloid returns to its normal state and waits for another host to join with.



## **Interaction**

Only communication is with the host. Once the Celluloid understands its function, it will only communicate if there is an issue. Otherwise, the Celluloid is content to remain as a substitute body part.

## **Combat**

None



# Cephalamore

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	All Habitats
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Very religious and will try to convert anyone they meet.
Special Characteristics	Can sense someone's religious belief.

## Description

The Cephalamores are religious zealots that feel all skin elementals should strictly worship Lord Mazram, the Skin Elemental God. In order to spread the word of their god, they have established temples all over the world and use them as launching points for the “Embrace God Campaigns.”

This “Embrace God Campaign” has been going on for years and it is the primary method for recruiting new acolytes. The new acolytes can never achieve any significant rank held by a Cephalamore. The Cephalamores believe they are the only ones that have a genuine connection to Lord Mazram and the others are merely simple peasants who may hear HIS word but will never know the true meaning of those words.

During an early age, young Cephalamores are indoctrinated into the belief they are special and can only hear the word of the one true god. As they are taught the rituals of being one with their god, they are also shown how to manipulate those who are not yet believers. Using their sense of what a person believes in, they immediately understand which skin elementals are lying to them about their beliefs.

Once the young have reached a certain age, those who have potential are transported to a remote temple so that more serious training can begin. At the temple, they are taught to fight and how to force large groups to believe. Where talk fails in converting someone, the Cephalamore is not above using magic or other “harmful” methods to change a peasant’s mind.

Those Cephalamores who do not seem capable of spreading the word effectively remain at home and are to raise the other young ones. For some, this is seen as a disgrace and means that they are not good enough to serve their god.

The Cephalamore will actively avoid any encounters with non-skin elementals. They feel those elementals are not pure and are cursed

because, long ago, they turned their backs on Lord Mazram. So, as punishment, Lord Mazram altered their forms to show the folly of their ways. They do, however, believe in Death, but think that he is also just a servant to Lord Mazram.

## **Interaction**

If someone is a skin elemental, the Cephalamore is extremely polite and nice... up to a point. They will do anything for those who already believe in Lord Mazram as the primary god. If not, then the entire focus of the encounter is to convert that person. If they feel someone has the capability of providing great use to their religion, they will go to extreme measures to convert them.

If they are talking with a non-skin elemental, the Cephalamore will try to get away as soon as possible. Feeling that the person is tainted and cursed, they will rudely and violently force the non-skin elemental away from them.

## **Combat**

From the early age, the Cephalamore's are accomplished fighters and metal smiths. Their armor is usually ordained with symbols representing why they love Lord Mazram. Those in the community who are taught to fight, work on their skills with swords, maces, and other hand-held items.

During combat, their preferred method of battle is using a shield and sword. They are not known to use ShadowMyths cards since they believe that it is the just another example of the curse that non-skin elementals are stricken with.



# Chrysorium

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Water
Habitat	Oceans
Height	4'
Speed	Fast
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Quiet and distant.
Special Characteristics	Able to detect emotions floating like currents in the water.

## Description

Floating carefree in the ocean currents above their bright and colorful cities, the Chrysorium seems to not have a care in the world. Every morning, they wake up and watch the currents flow through and above the city. In their eyes, the currents glow with small bits of color that represent the emotions felt by the creatures who encountered the current.

As one, they rise up above the city, swim into the currents and feel the emotions pass through them. This is the world of the Chrysorium. A world very strange and different from the ones that most elementals see.

The Chrysorium is a quiet race who prefers to keep to their own. Mostly, they have no interest in the world around them but what they can see floating in the currents they travel. When they encounter other races, most just stare and go about their way. Ignoring any form of communication with them. It's as if the other races do not exist.

When Chrysoriums encounter a fellow citizen, there is a brief moment when they will interlock tentacles and communicate with one another. It's not so much as words that are spoken but feelings that are expressed. Within the feelings, each member understands what the other one is trying to communicate. During communication, they will constantly change their primary colors and alter the intensities to be bright or dull.

Like the people, the city is a strange collection of multi-colored buildings decorated with coral and other brightly colored objects found. Everything is rounded and seems to flow from one structure to another.

## **Interaction**

Outside of normal city business, the only time a Chrysorium will take an interest in someone is if they are exhibiting an intense emotion. It doesn't need to be anger. It can be admiration, love, grief, loneliness, or any other emotion that seems to radiate strongly. The more intense



the emotion, the greater number of Chrysoriums that will appear around them.

If there are more than one Chrysorium around someone, the eldest is designated as the contact point. They will slowly and lightly touch one thin tentacle to that person and use telepathy to speak through the connection.

The language that the recipient hears is their own native language and dialect. In their mind, the Chrysorium will ask them about what they are feeling and if that feeling can be shared among the group. If allowed, the Chrysorium will spread out his other tentacles so that the others may feel this emotion.

In exchange for this, the elder Chrysorium will answer most questions asked of them.

## **Combat**

The primary form of defense for the Chrysorium is an emotional attack. During combat, they will reach out with many tentacles to contact the attacker. Some tentacles are to attract attention while others are snuck in to gain some hold on the attacker.

Once they have touched their opponent, they will send waves of despair and, most of the time, cause their opponents to give up and weep. This affect usually lasts for several hours and the attacker has a general feeling that life is not worth living. The Chrysorium will then float away and leave the attacker alone.



# Deceiver

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	Cities and Villages
Height	5'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Smart
Interaction	Untrustworthy and cunning.
Special Characteristics	Able to create illusions that border on being real.

## Description

The race of Deceivers is another one that has a special connection with the Path. Using a special organ that is present on their hand, they can manipulate the energy of the Path and create illusions that are almost real.

When illusionists are using their innate ability or ShadowMyths cards

to create an image from the energy of the Path, the illusion is strictly visual and cannot harm anyone. This is different. Whatever is created will have a physical presence and the abilities of whatever is created, but none of the magic. The Deceiver's illusion can definitely harm someone.

The created illusion, though, is not all powerful. If struck with a metal weapon or the Deceiver loses their concentration, the illusion will disappear. In addition, spells that are used to dissolve the illusion will only show that it is an illusion but will not destroy it.

As the illusions are created, the veins on their forehead become more apparent. The component for creating the illusion is the Deceiver's neural energy. As more energy is consumed to create larger and stronger illusions, it takes longer for the Deceiver to regain their abilities. If too much energy is consumed at a rapid pace, they will pass out. Naturally, the older and more experience the Deceiver is, the less neural energy it takes to create the illusion.

In a village of Deceivers, laws have been established to prevent them from creating illusions in public. Being able to see through the illusions, it is considered a waste of their abilities and frowned upon. Most Deceivers will practice within their own homes or at the home of a friend, loved one, or family.

If one has been particularly cruel or committed a crime that caused the death of a fellow villager, they are immediately ostracized. Before being exiled, though, the organ on their hand is cut. Thereby removing their ability to create illusions.

## **Interaction**

The Deceiver, like their name, cannot be trusted. They are excellent manipulators and always try to take advantage of someone. For the most part, the illusions that they create are of simple objects like money or bags of valuables. These feel and smell real to others but will disappear after a couple of hours.

This use of magic and manipulation has made them popular with the darker parts of society and, especially, criminal organizations. However, even these groups do not trust the Deceiver and know that they only look out for themselves.

## **Combat**

Their primary form of attack is to create an illusion to distract an opponent. Where they know they are outmatched in the combat arena, they'll try to discard illusionary money or other valuables and run away.

If the attacker cannot be distracted and is focused solely on the Deceiver, it will create an illusion of several of the strongest creatures that it has ever seen. These monsters will block the attacker from reaching the Deceiver. Since they are semi-real, they can do actual damage to the attacker. Once the monsters block the path, the Deceiver will try to escape.



# Destral

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Earth
Habitat	Caverns
Height	3'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Weak
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Very submissive and fearful of others. Will do anything to get away from others.
Special Characteristics	Able to change into dust form quickly and vanish.

## Description

Destral. The name is spread throughout the world as the monster who would steal your children in the night or devour them as they slept. Destral. The nightmares that come to those who dare venture into the dark caverns beneath every major city. Destral.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The Destral is a shy and timid race who thrives in the dark caverns and their greatest wish is to be left alone. They live a simple life of searching the caves for food and providing for their family.

Who started the rumors about them? Well... they did. If people were afraid of them, then they wouldn't search them out. Mostly, this worked out pretty well. In cases where their village is somehow discovered, all the Destrals immediately change into dust and hide within their homes. Any intruders would just see an empty and dusty village. Once the intruders left, any damage is repaired and city life returns to normal. Naturally, sentries are sent out into the caverns to learn how the intruders discovered their village.

The Destral has the unique ability of converting their entire body into floating dust. This allows them to build their villages in small caverns that have no access other than thin cracks in the stone.

Completely safe and away from others, Destrals make very little noise and raise their families in solitude. A small village of Destrals is generally comprised of around 40 adults and 10 children. As an additional precaution, they also have innate abilities to dampen sound with just a touch. Once a week, the elders of the village will go along all crevices and touch the cracks. When touched, a sound dampening field is applied to the crack, causing no sound to escape from the village.

## **Interaction**

If someone can communicate with them (which takes quite a while



to gain their trust), they will find the Destral is very timid and nervous. The only reason they would communicate with someone is if they are in dire straits and need help.

During communication, their eyes constantly dart around to make sure they always have a safe escape route. Once their mission is completed, they'll vanish and return to their cities.

If captured, Destrals will lie and say anything that they think their captors would want to hear. Once they see any form of escape, they'll make the attempt as long as they think success is guaranteed. If they are unsure of the attempt, they will bide their time until the moment is right.

## **Combat**

The Destral has no form of attack and will always try to run away. Having no armor or weapons, if they cannot escape, they will immediately submit and beg for mercy.



# Dream Catcher

Classification	Sentient
Elemental Type	Symbiote
Habitat	Dreamscape
Height	Not Applicable
Speed	Not Applicable
Strength	Not Applicable
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Tries anything to increase dreamer's emotional state.
Special Characteristics	Able to alter form to dreamer's greatest desire or fear.

## Description

Living in the Dreamscape, a realm that exists between the Path and the ShadowScape, the Dream Catcher feeds on the emotional energy of a sleeping person.

As the dreamer closes their eyes and enters the dream state, the Dream Catcher senses their prey and follows the emotional waves that

are sent out by the dreamer. Once found, the Catcher subtly enters the mind of the dreamer and determines what is happening in the dream. From there, it will adjust the dream so that the emotional feeling can be enhanced. For example, if the dream is a nightmare or unsettling situation, the Dream Catcher will enhance the terror to create a stronger emotional state.

The longer the Catcher feeds, the stronger an emotional feeling is created in the mind of the dreamer. Eventually, too much emotion will force the dreamer to wake. The Catcher will then go off and feed off of other dreamers until they have enough emotional energy stored.

In the Dreamscape realm, the Catcher has built large cities off of the emotional energy they have gathered from the dreamers. Once feeding is finished, they will return immediately to the city and gather at one of the energy stations. Placing their hands on the station cube, the emotional energy they have stored will be transferred. This cube is the primary building and energy source for the entire city. The larger the cube, the bigger the city.

Although Dream Catchers have their own cities and activities, they are very much dependent on their special relationship with the other elementals. Without the dreams of the elementals, they could not exist. This leads some of them to be very greedy.

At times, a Dream Catcher will share some of their energy to allow a Shadow Elemental to enter their realm. Using the Shadow Elemental, the Catcher can easily enhance the emotional feel of the dreamer by creating nightmares regularly. Most Dream Catchers hate this because

it corrupts the city and the inhabitants. There is a dark and foreboding feeling to the energy.

There are rumors that several dark cities have a focal point in the real world. One such site is called the Tree of Sorrows. Anyone dreaming near this site will always have nightmares and the Dream Catcher city at that location is a scary place.

## **Interaction**

Dream Catchers always appear as a familiar person in anyone's dream. Being able to scour bits and pieces of a person's mind, they can piece together a fairly accurate semblance of a dreamer's friend or loved one. They will coerce the dreamer to a higher emotional state, since the dreamer cannot distinguish what is real or not.

## **Combat**

The Dream Catcher can only be harmed by magical effects that are dormant in the mind but unleashed during dreams. If attacked in the dream, it will always resort to shifting its form to someone that the dreamer cares about. If threatened and they think that there is no chance to come out unscathed in combat, the Dream Catcher will instantly break communication and retreat to its city.



# Ember

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Lava
Habitat	Mountains and Caverns
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Sensitive and wary of others. Does not want to harm anyone. Pacifists.
Special Characteristics	Can quickly regenerate any part of their body.

## Description

Mainly living near the lava rivers of the Malariel Mountain Range, Embers live a quiet and peaceful life. Due to their extremely high body temperature, they try to avoid other races so they don't inadvertently cause harm. This way of thinking has permeated their entire society and has led them to a life of pacifism.

One curious aspect of an Ember city is that they use their own body parts to create their living structures. Over time, the Ember's body smolders and creates a thick outer skin. This outer skin is incredibly tough and durable and they are constantly pruning off parts of their body to make way for new skin. If they don't do this, the body part will become stiff and, eventually, refuse to move. Without this special grooming procedure, the Ember will become encased in a living tomb of his own making.

As the outer skin is removed, they will use it to replace damaged parts of their home or add new rooms. Once completed, the houses look very similar to the Embers themselves. In many cases, an Ember could stand in front of one of their houses and no one could tell they were there.

The amount of outer skin that is produced is based on the age. It would seem that the younger ones would produce more, but that is not the case. Young embers are fairly small and constantly moving. This constant moving seems to retard the growth of the skin. As they get older, the movement slows down, and the skin has an easier time taking over the body. The oldest members of the village usually need help to remove their excess skin.

## **Interaction**

They are always welcoming to others as long as the stranger can visibly show they are not affected by the heat radiated by the Ember. They love playing games and talking about life and philosophy.

As a quiet race, they feel that life moves too fast and they would rather



spend their days talking about ideas and exchanging stories.

Naturally, most of the children and young adults feel the village is boring and can't wait to leave. However, they understand they are a danger to others and to cause pain to others is a great sin.

## **Combat**

Even having a naturally high body temperature, Embers can increase it even more. As their body temperature increases, so does the range in which it affects others. Their first combat mode is to increase this temperature to keep others at bay.

If the attackers ignore the intense heat, the Ember will dislodge sharp parts of their body and throw them at the attackers. A lot of the weapons will represent darts or disks. If the attackers get too close, then the Ember resorts to their ultimate weapon... grabbing their attacker. Their intense body heat can melt any non-magical armor and will cause leather and other materials to burst into flame.



# Faelon

Classification	Non-Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	Open Ranges
Height	4'
Speed	Slow
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Appearing slow and plodding, they are very cuddly with those they trust.
Special Characteristics	Shavings from their horns helps restore the magic in any magical item.

## Description

Hiding among the tall grass of the open plains, the Faelon goes about its day foraging for food and taking care of its family. This gentle creature doesn't seem to ever be in a rush and, if pursued, has a remarkable ability to disappear in plain sight.

In the world of black marketing, the Faelon is highly sought after for

the magic stored within their horns. These horns have a remarkable ability to restore any magical item or ShadowMyths card to full strength. This is achieved by grinding the horns into powder and then sprinkling it over the magic item. More powerful items need a larger amount of powder to fully restore their magic.

The grounded horn, though, does not keep its potency for very long. Usually it only lasts about several weeks. If the Faelon has not been killed, it will take about a month for the horns to fully grow back. This has created a trade in which some unscrupulous merchants have captured a Faelon so that they can continuously regenerate the horns. This rarely works. The Faelon does not do well in captivity, and will fall ill within a couple of weeks. As that happens, the horns lose their potency and take on a dull appearance.

In the wild, the Faelon appears to be slow and not very smart. This is an illusion. They are extremely elusive and hard to catch. Able to sense anyone within a 100' radius, if they feel threatened, they call on the magic of their horns and disappear. In reality, they have just adjusted their body so that they appear semi-translucent and impermeable. In this state, they are extremely hard to see and the only weapons that can touch them are magical items.

## **Interaction**

If approached by someone they deem safe, they will approach that person cautiously. Once they have determined the true nature of that person and find that they like them, Faelons will visit regularly to get food for their family or just because they enjoy the company.

They are extremely cuddly and love to take naps with those they trust. Even when they are asleep, the magic in their horns will alert them if there is danger around.

## **Combat**

When encountering opponents, Faelons will immediately become semi transparent and try to leave the area. If trapped, they will generate a Field of Despair around them hoping the opponents will give up and leave them alone.

If the Field of Despair doesn't work, they will resort to physical attacks. By whipping their heads in different directions, their horns send out a slashing wave of compressed air in the direction they are facing. The damage caused by the compressed air is the same as if someone was struck by an extremely sharp blade.



# Gaermond

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	Mountains
Height	6'
Speed	Fast
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Aggressive when their belief is questioned but soft-spoken when converging someone.
Special Characteristics	Manipulate someone's thoughts so they agree with them.

## Description

Carved into the side of the snowy peaks, the Gaermond have created magnificent cities of rock and ice. Most of the work in the cities was done by the Followers of Talath, a minor Air Elemental God and the primary god of the Gaermonds.

In reality, the Followers of Talath are people that the Gaermond have

coerced into believing that Talath is the one true and only god. The Followers of Talath comprise two groups: the messengers and the creators. Messengers are only Gaermonds and their job is to spread the word of Talath and indoctrinate new Followers. The creators (non-Gaermonds) are required to do all tasks to support the messengers and to create as much beauty so that Talath may notice the city and visit them.

Although it appears to be a sham, all Followers fully believe in it. Their prophecy says that Talath will, once a year, bless the city that He deems worthy of his love. When Talath blesses a city, a large sigil will be appear over it and all the ice and rock will glow. To date, no one has ever reported this happening, but they still keep their faith.

Within the cities, there is a strict hierarchy. At the top is the main eight member council of priests who have a direct connection to Talath. The council controls the city and, once a year, they rotate which member is the head of the council. Besides controlling the direction of the city, the council also decides if and where to send out the next group of Speakers to gather more Followers.

When sent out, the Speaker spread the Word and entice as many people as they can to become a Follower. Once convinced, the Follower makes the trek back to the city on their own (as a test of their faith) and report to the city's Assimilators. The Assimilators will show the Follower their living quarters and instruct them on what is required of them.



## **Interaction**

The Gaermond is only interested in one thing... for someone to become a Follower of Talath. They're smart, though. They won't just keep talking about how great their god is. Rather, they will spend time trying to understand who someone is and what issues they have in their life. They will also try to determine if there is something missing that will make their life more complete.

Once the Gaermond understands the person, they talk about how they had a similar feeling and how Talath showed them a better way to live. The goal of the Gaermond is **ONLY** to entice people to become Followers. Their soothing voice seems to have some sort of charm spell attached to it that makes their words more convincing.

If they know that someone will not convert and they are questioned about their beliefs, they will become fairly aggressive. They do not like to have Talath or their own ideas mocked.

## **Combat**

Besides any form of weapon they may carry, Gaermond's wings are incredibly sharp at the tips. The wings are also super dense and can form an effective shield surrounding their body. The primary attack is a form of strafing, where they will fly high above and dive towards their opponents with a sword or sharp knife extended. Flying towards their opponent, they'll strike and then fly away.

In air, they can briefly enclose themselves in their wings to protect themselves against all airborne attacks. During that time, they will plummet to the ground, but they have an innate sense on how far they can fall before needing to open their wings again and resume flight.



# Halocen

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Bone
Habitat	All Habitats
Height	5'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Smart
Interaction	Liars and manipulators whose only joy is to create chaos.
Special Characteristics	Extremely adept in using ShadowMyths Cards and can use shadows to travel.

## Description

Stepping out of the darkness, the Halocen gives the patrons of the inn a dark smile. He searches around the room for a “friend”. Those that know the Halocen know the only “friends” they have are victims of their plots or other Halocens. The smart ones quickly leave the inn because they know that only death and chaos will be there that night.

The Halocens have built their cities in all areas of Ozul that never see the light of day. Unlike many other cavern cities, their city is of pure darkness. There are no lights or any form of illumination. While most creatures use some form of infra-vision to see heat signatures in the darkness, the Halocen works on another spectrum that no one has determined. All that is known is that they can see corridors in the darkness for traveling and they can see in the dark as well as others can see in the light.

One unusual aspect is they can travel from one dark area to another instantaneously as long as there is a connection between the shadows. For example, they could start out in a room in one building and then be in another building if a dark path could be walked between each room. The path does not have to be man-sized. It could be a sliver of darkness. If light breaks the darkness while they are traveling, they are immediately exposed.

Halocens live for the joy of pure chaos. They are extremely untrustworthy (even to their own people) and always have plans that further the chaos. Being extremely powerful in using ShadowMyths cards, they constantly use them to disrupt the lives of everyone around them. When they are young, they are extremely reckless and cause disruption all around themselves. As they grow older, the plans become more complex. They become better at waiting for the right moment to unleash their ideas.

## **Interaction**

Interacting with a Halocen is a maddening experience. At one moment, they may seem sane and like everybody else. Another

moment, they may appear to be crazed and will harm everybody around them. The madness happens at random times and it is never known if the act is intentional or not. Either way, it always puts someone on the defensive.

Those who think that they are smarter than a Halocen quickly learn that this is never the case. Halocens don't really care for their own welfare and will go to extremes to create chaos. Their random acts always move towards a larger purpose that they only know. Even the highly intelligent races avoid them, since they cannot predict their behavior in a given situation.

## **Combat**

The primary weapon of the Halocen is their extreme use of ShadowMyths cards. They are quite adept at combining the cards to create even more magical spells. On hand, they will usually have several dozen cards they can draw from and, without even looking, know what the card can do by just holding it.

In addition, rather than standing in the same spot to use the cards, their favorite tactic is to use a card, drop into the shadows and appear at a new location instantly. From the new location, they will use another card. This method of random jumping is extremely disorienting since the opponent never knows where the attack will come from or what type of attack.

In addition to the cards, Halocens are also adept at using knives and other small sharp weapons. When popping in and out of the darkness during combat, they will also randomly use a knife or a card.



# Knight Blade

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	All Habitats
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Strict believers in order, they are not tolerant of those who sow chaos.
Special Characteristics	Wields special light blades that can cut anything.

## Description

Sworn enemies of the Halocen and other chaotic races in the world, Knight Blades have taken upon themselves to rid the world of chaos. Wherever they go in the world, their only solution to get rid of chaos is to eliminate the person who is creating it. Many of them will happily hire themselves out as mercenaries to perform such a task.



Within the villages of Knight Blades, the sound of metal being worked on can be constantly heard. It seems that the city is always on the alert and they are constantly mentally or physically training. The only form of games that the children engage in is a variation of combat, where they track down and eliminate someone causing chaos.

The problem that observers of their society see is that each individual Knight Blade has their own definition of chaos. What one defines as a major issue, another will see it as a minor offense. This leads to issues within their society and within their own selves. The unfortunate part is... they don't see it. They have their rules they live within and, many times, those rules conflict with other rules. However, the Knight Blade is extremely obedient to their own way of life that they rarely question those rules.

In their pursuit of ending chaos, they have developed two unique magical items, armor and a light blade, that can only be used by them. The magical items are attuned to a Knight Blade's physiology and will not work with anyone else. This is especially true if someone is using magic to impersonate them.

The first distinguishing feature is the armor. Their head piece allows them to see in pure darkness. Extremely light, it cannot be damaged by anything other than a magical weapon. The open area in the center of their armor is impervious, and no weapon, magical or not, can penetrate it. From this center area, a Knight Blade can roll out a fog of dense darkness to cover an area of 100'. The darkness extends upwards to twice the height of the Knight Blade and, unless magically dispelled, will remain until the Knight is killed or decides he no longer



needs it.

The second feature is their unique sword. When willed, the blade will appear in the hand of the Knight at a moment's thought. This light blade can cut through any non-magical material as easily as cutting water. If the material is magic, the blade acts as a normal sword. If the Knight Blade is killed, the sword immediately disappears.

## **Interaction**

Knight Blades are extremely stubborn. They feel it is their duty to get rid of all chaos in the world. They are single-minded and will tolerate no person who they feel is chaotic. Sometimes, they may force themselves to work with a chaotic person in order to get rid of a stronger enemy but that is always short-lived. Once they have accomplished their task, they will turn on the chaotic person.

## **Combat**

During combat, the Knight will always summon their blade and physically attack their opponent. They are not known to be brilliant strategists and will rush head-on into battle at a moment's notice. All that is important is to get rid of the chaos, and the best way to do it is to confront it immediately.

During combat, if the battle is going against them, they will, from their chest, emit an area of darkness. They don't care if any of their companions are within that wall. They only think about themselves.



# Knightmare

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Air
Habitat	Caverns
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Friendly and hard-working.
Special Characteristics	Excellent machinists that can silence any noise.

## Description

In their small villages deep underground, Knightmares are well known for their metalworking and the special armor they create. Although non-magical, their armor is far superior to that of many races and will last a lot longer.

Without their armor, Knightmares are extremely weak, mist-like

humanoid people. They don't seem to have any distinguishing features other than a semi-solid body. Any disruptions to their mist form is the equivalent of someone being cut or hurt. In order to prevent any damage to their body, they have further their skills as metalsmiths and created a unique armor that allows them to travel the underground caverns in safety.

Creating armor is a noisy business and they would prefer not to attract undesirables to their village. To reduce the noise, Knightmare has a special ability to emit a thin mist film from their hands and cover any area that they are working on. Like the Destral, this film prevents any sound from escaping when they are manipulating the metal. The thin film is also used to cover their tools so that, if accidentally dropped, no sound is made. This film is not permanent and must be replenished every week.

Besides their armor being incredibly strong, it has the unique ability to grow with the Knightmare. Over time, they may adorn the armor with decorations and special features, but the basic armor can grow. This allows them to create armor for a child when it reaches walking age and will be with them for their entire life. When they make armor for other races, the armor does not have this growing feature.

A strange feature that is present within the armor is the ability to synch itself with the distortion field surrounding the village. This distortion field, to keep intruders out, looks like a rock wall, but it cannot be damaged. When the armor gets within a certain distance of the distortion field, the Knightmare fades away and appears to have walked through the wall.

Inside their homes, Knightmares will remove their armor and relax. All furniture is rounded and there are no sharp implements anywhere in the house. They love playing games, reading, and other activities any standard family would engage in.

## **Interaction**

When wearing their protective suits, Knightmares are extremely friendly and talkative. They will talk about any subject that is not related to how they create their armor or where their village is located. They love exploring the cavern systems around their villages, but feel most comfortable in their own homes without the armor.

If someone tried to follow them back to their village (even using magical spells for scrying), the armor senses the intrusion and warns the Knightmare. For magical scrying, it will continue into the village since it knows that the distortion field around the city will block the magic scrying. If someone follows them, they will try to elude them until they get near the field and disappear.

## **Combat**

Knightmares don't really engage in combat unless they have to. Knowing that the armor will protect them, they prefer to escape until they get near their distortion field and disappear. If they are forced to fight, they do have a limited supply of sleeping needles that can be shot from their gauntlets. They are extremely accurate with this weapon.

If the needles fail, the gauntlet can encase the opponent in an impenetrable field similar to their distortion field. The field dissipates once the Knightmare is over 100' away.



# Kralar

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Water
Habitat	Ocean
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Smart
Interaction	Always willing to share any knowledge and very inquisitive.
Special Characteristics	Able to remember any detail about an area that they visit or a book that they've read.

## Description

Ever wondered what a society of scientists would look like? Well, the Kralar is a perfect example of that world. They believe that all knowledge should be available to anyone and everyone. As an open society, they freely share any information they have with anyone.

The Kralar is a very open and studious race. They love gaining knowledge for the sake of learning and regularly work with the Kai race to collect all knowledge about the ocean world around them. On occasions, they will hire Transports to take them to other realms, but this is rarely done. The main reason is because they can only gain superficial information unless they are able to touch and closely study their subject.

Most Kralars pick a discipline or subject they are most interested in, and during their younger years, they are encouraged to study everything until they find something fascinating. This race lives extremely long and takes their time to find out where their desire resides. Once they have settled on a discipline and subject, they will spend the rest of their lives learning as much as they can.

The knowledge gained by the Kralar is stored in Memory Balls, that reside in the central repository. This vast repository makes up the center of their city and goes for miles and miles underground in all directions. In addition to the storage of the memory balls, they carry a knowledge staff with them and the staff can access any information within the central library at a moment's notice.

The purpose of the research is two-fold: 1) verify that the existing information is correct and still valid, and 2) add any new information to the subject. They do not have any ego and do not feel any jealousy or anger if their information is found to be incorrect. All that matters is that the information is accurate and reliable.



## **Interaction**

At times, Kralars tend to be a bit blunt for most people's liking. They will always correct people when information is wrong or misleading. They feel that, if they don't know the correct answer, any answer is not acceptable and will phrase their discussion based on what they know. If someone asks them a question they don't know, they will always consult their staff to find the right answer. If they are wrong, they will easily admit that they were wrong and continue on.

Kralars have a love of asking questions and learning. If they find someone who can answer their questions, they will continuously prod that person to the point of being annoying. If they find a library, they will scan all the material in that library to a temporary location. Then, over time, other Kralars can inspect the information for accuracy and, if correct, it is added to their central repository.

## **Combat**

Although they may seem weak, they are formidable mages. They understand many of the ShadowMyths cards and have their own innate water elemental abilities. During combat, they will always control the situation by using their staff to stir up the water. With the water visibility being reduced, they further enhance themselves by becoming translucent so that they are hard to see.

Once they have created the surrounding conditions to their liking, Kralars always resort to their use of ShadowMyths cards to combat opponents.



# Leech

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Bone
Habitat	Ruins
Height	4'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Quiet and skittish. Loves art and sculpting.
Special Characteristics	Able to dissolve tissue with a single touch.

## Description

The Leech is one of the few races that have turned their love of food into an art form. As they feed on the tissue of their prey, Leeches will study the bones that are left behind and decide if they could use them in their latest project. For many of them, they will choose their prey based on what their current project is rather than how hungry they are.

Although their communities are not very large, they are exquisitely beautiful if someone has a taste for the macabre. Taking over abandoned ruins, they decorate their own rooms with a wide variety of bone sculptures made from their victims. Some sculptures range from tiny delicate work that is smaller than a human's hand to large pieces that are over 20 feet tall. In addition, most times, they have used their bone tools to carve decorations and sigils into the bones themselves.

It should be noted that this is an extremely tough race and they are even feared by the Banathar. If Leeches inhabit a ruin, they allow others to live there as long as the other inhabitants respect the Leeches' space.

When hunting, Leeches are extremely silent and move very well in the dark. They will sneak up on their prey and drape themselves over the victim. Once they have latched onto the victim, their body releases a pool of acid that dissolves the flesh. Internal organs then collect the acid so only bones are left of their victim. The bones are inspected and, if any appear to be interesting or useful for their latest sculpture, the Leech will carry it back home.

Every so often, other Leeches may follow their brethren during a hunt. After the hunting Leech has consumed their prey and left with the bones they wanted, the other Leeches will inspect the leftovers to see if there is anything they could use for their own work.

## **Interaction**

Quiet and skittish, Leeches will only converse with other bone elementals or those races that do not have any internal bone structure. If an elemental has an internal bone structure, the Leech is too distracted to talk and will spend most of their time wondering if the person has a bone they could use in their latest work.

For those races who can talk to the Leech, the conversations revolve around art and techniques. They will also try to learn new methods for creating their art and the latest fads others seem to be interested in.

In their community, they are thought highly of if they can create a sculpture that no other Leech has ever seen before. The more they learn from outsiders, the more unique their work can become.

## **Combat**

The Leeches' primary weapon is the acid they produce with their body. If they cannot envelop an opponent to apply the acid, they can project a small stream of it up to ten feet with some accuracy. Once an opponent is disabled with the stream, they'll rush upon them and try to grab their opponent.

If attacked, they will always try to have the weapon strike an area inside of their chest. When the weapons strikes, the acid will cling to the weapon and eat away at it.



# Medium

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Water
Habitat	Lakes
Height	3'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Giving cryptic answers, they only speak with whomever asks a question.
Special Characteristics	Cannot be harmed in water form.

## Description

Legends tell that, when called upon, a woman will rise out of the water of a lake and answer any question asked of her. These witches seem to know everything about a person but will answer no question other than one that relates to the questioner. Their answers are always cryptic and usually are not understood until the situation they predicted happens.

The Mediums, also known as Water Witches, are a race of water elementals composed of water but do not live in the water. In reality, they live in the same realm as the Path but can enter our realm through water. They are partial energy creatures that can only take the form of water when they are in our plane of existence. When searching a lake, no one has ever found a Medium or ever seen how they appear from the water.

In the Path's plane, Mediums do not have any form of life that is normally understood. They exist as energy beings that form the various decisions shown on the Path. When a request comes in from one of their lakes, the energy coalesces and forms into a woman that rises out of the lake. Rising out near the questioner, their watery voice is a bit disturbing, but they will always ask: "What is it you desire? You may ask only one question." as they touch the questioner.

Each person can only ask one question of the Medium at a particular lake. Once the question has been answered, the Medium recedes back into the water. No matter how many times a person calls, after their first question, they can never ask that particular lake a question. It should be noted that not all lakes have Mediums.

If the Medium is disturbed while answering the question, they will automatically recede back into the water. No form of magic can hold them since they are, in reality, magic themselves.

## **Interaction**

When rising out of the water, they will extend a long water-like tendril to touch the forehead of the questioner. A connection is established



and they ask the question. The point of touching the forehead is so that they understand what type of answer the questioner will understand and is looking for.

The answer is then transmitted to the mind of the questioner and they are the only ones that can hear the answer. Those who are mind linked via magic or telepathy will not hear the answer. It is only for the questioner.

## **Combat**

Mediums do not engage in combat with anyone. If they are threatened, they will immediately recede back into the lake. No magic can stop them from returning and any magic that tries to read their minds does not affect them.



# Mossling

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Wood
Habitat	Swamps and Marshes
Height	2'
Speed	Slow
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Reclusive and not very friendly.
Special Characteristics	Expert at camouflage and can blend in seamlessly in the swamp.

## Description

Traveling through swamps in small boats, it is not uncommon to see the base of mangrove trees shimmer and move. The colors of the roots shift from green to brown as if the moss near the water was receding. This is the home of the Mossling.

They are a quiet race of introverts that prefer no outside contact. If required, they will send an emissary to speak with outsiders, but no one has ever seen more than one at a time.

The Mossling have made their home in the center of the mangrove tree. Within their home, the lower parts of the tree are rooms for the elders and the upper parts are for the children. This layout allows the elders easier access to the waters below and allows the children freedom to move between other mangrove trees so they can visit their friends.

Not having a traditional doorway opening, the Mossling can move their body through the pores of the trees to get to their rooms. So, when a Mossling approaches their room, they lay flat against the tree. Any observer would just see them disappear into the tree. Apparently, this ability propagates to any items that they are touching when they enter.

During feeding time, Mosslings will work their way to the base of the tree and lay on the water facing upwards. Any observer would just see a large bed of moss near the trees. With this direct connection to the water, they can determine if someone is approaching. If so, they discontinue the feeding and meld back into their rooms.

## **Interaction**

Having no mouths, Mosslings will communicate with any outsider using telepathy. Even inside of someone's mind, they will "hear" the Mossling voice as a watery sound with a slight lisp. Showing no expression, it is extremely difficult to tell if a Mossling is irritated,

happy, or angry since they don't seem to show their emotions outwardly. It is not known if this is true for their entire race or only for those chosen to speak with outsiders.

If someone tries to enter their homes, a Mossling can easily meld through the tree and move onto other trees.

## **Combat**

Mosslings are pacifists and will rarely fight back if attacked. They prefer to run away to other trees or into the water. If forced to fight, they can use the moss on their body and attack someone.

The standard attack is to take parts of the mossy body and fling them onto opponents. Once the moss attaches to their opponent, it first works its way to their eyes and covers them. After that, a portion of the moss will work its way into the opponent's mouth. Moving inside the mouth, the moss splits again and part of it will block their airways and the other part moves to the stomach. The moss then invades other body organs and prevents them from working.



# Nephalem

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	Canyons
Height	4'
Speed	Fast
Strength	Strong
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Fun-loving and very open.
Special Characteristics	Incredible dexterity and able to leap long distances.

## Description

“How do they do that? It’s impossible!” When other elementals watch the Nephalem at play in the canyons, the agility and careless attitude of this race astounds them. Jumping from one side of a canyon to another, the Nephalem is able to leap about 100 feet or more and stick to any wall they touch.

The Nephalem is an incredible acrobat and spends their time jumping between canyon walls and engaging in a lot of daredevil activities. They love the excitement of movement and just running around having fun. They always seem to be happy and do not have a care in the world.

Built into the side walls of the canyon, the Nephalem has created a unique home in which anyone entering cannot tell what is the floor or ceiling. Their furniture is mounted on the walls, ceilings, and floor and, depending on their whim, they decide where they want to rest. With their strong claws, they can sleep in any position. Even when they eat, they hold their fruit at different angles.

It is apparent that their society is based on the concept of living life to the fullest at the moment and not caring for the past or the future. They are not bothered by anything and welcome all newcomers to their village. They love to play pranks on newcomers but always assure them that it is in great fun. The motto is "Life is a great gift and should be enjoyed at the fullest!"

## **Interaction**

Very open and friendly, it is hard to keep a Nephalem from moving. They are constant balls of energy and, even sitting down, they will fidget and move around. They love to talk about everything and will constantly interrupt someone to ask a question or interject a comment. It's hard to stay mad at them because their good nature is quite infectious and they are extremely good at putting most people at ease.



It is also quite common that someone will be asked to join an ongoing celebration. It feels like, somewhere in their town, someone is always having a party. They need no gifts since the Nephalems are non-materialistic. They just enjoy the company of others.

## **Combat**

When attacked, the Nephalem has the special ability to neutralize all opponents through their singing. Using their ability to leap far distances, the Nephalem will get out of range of any weapons. Once out of range or in their homes, the entire village will begin singing a merry song.

The song carries the weight of magic and will instantly neutralize any violent thoughts in their opponents. As soon as the Nephalem sees their opponents are under the spell, they will invite them to their celebrations so that they can reinforce the spell. The spell will affect the opponent well after they leave the Nephalem village.

If the song is only sung by a single Nephalem, it will have milder effects and will just cause their opponent to be slow and confused. This allows the Nephalem to get escape.



# Phalofin

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	Oceans
Height	4'
Speed	Fast
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Open and Friendly. A bit naive.
Special Characteristics	Able to raise the temperature of different parts of their bodies.

## Description

Spread across the bottom of the ocean floor, the cities of the Philofin glow in a vast array of colors. Their glass cities created by them are considered some of the most beautiful cities in the world. The glass is extremely thin but is as strong as any metallic armor.

The Philofin has the special ability to raise the temperature of different parts of their body in order to create this tempered glass. For large areas, they will mark out the size of glass they need and increase the temperature of their tail. This causes the tail to become bright white and fuses the sand into a single sheet of glass. When working on a small area, they can easily scoop up the sand and mold it in their hands using this special technique.

The coloring of the glass is done by embedding different minerals in the sand and spreading the minerals around as they create the glass. Most of the time, it looks like clear marble, but some of the more gifted Philofin can adjust the mineral pattern so it creates a picture of a scene.

The Philofins, themselves, welcome all visitors to their city. They even have created special rooms and corridors so elementals that are air breathers can walk around and enjoy the view. A majority of the corridors pass by small arenas where Philofins, who have rented space, can show off their techniques and any art they are creating. The art is always for sale and highly valued in the air breathing world.

## **Interaction**

Being very friendly and open, the Philofin love when people come to visit them and watch them work. They see the beauty of the world around them and many of them try to figure out how to incorporate that look into their world and art.

When talking with them, they have a fascinating ability to make someone feel they are the center of the universe. They will listen to

that person and ask many questions about their lives and their family. They are especially excited when encountering another artist. Talking about art and different techniques they can incorporate into their work is one of their greatest joys.

## **Combat**

As friendly as they seem, this is an extremely deadly race. Due to their ability to raise their body temperature. They can quickly sculpt weapons or armor from the surrounding sand. Like the walls of their cities, their tempered glass armor is extremely strong and the weapons, knives and swords being their favorite, are sharp enough to almost cut through steel.

Coupled with the fast swimming speed in the water, they are quite deadly. Their favorite attack is to speed up to their opponent and slash as they swim by. When attacking, they will almost always go for any breathing apparatus or, if the opponent is a water creature, the arm that is holding the weapon.

Another formidable attack is that they can raise the temperature of their body and create a blinding white light. Many times, they may do this before their swimming attack. The bright light in the deep ocean will blind most opponents and give the Philofin extra seconds to attack.



# Pico

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	Cities and Villages
Height	3'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Very polarizing and extremely manipulative.
Special Characteristics	Able to charm most people and convince them to do anything.

## Description

You either love them or you hate them. This very polarizing race seems to bring out the best or worst in people... and they know it. Matter of fact, they count on it.

Pico's are extremely good manipulators and will always take advantage of others to get their way. For those who love them, they can subtly

suggest any favor and convince someone that it is in their best interest to help them. For those who hate them, they can convince them it is in their best interest to remove them. It seems counter-intuitive, but they love people who hate them. This subtle manipulation allows any fans of a Pico help them against the haters.

It is not uncommon to find that Pico's like to be behind the scenes of many organizations. Rather than being out front and a target of those who are jealous, they prefer to "pull the strings" from the back and control the situation with no one knowing they are there. They always have plans within plans within plans.

"Never trust a Pico" is an excellent motto to live by. Even if they seem destitute and begging for money or food, they are really using others' emotions to get what they want. These wanderers do not live in a community of other Pico's since they don't even trust each other. They prefer to live a nomadic life in search of comfort and power as they move from city to city.

## **Interaction**

When first met, Pico's are very polite with a small bit of timidity. They are assessing whether or not a person likes them. During this conversation, the Pico will flatter someone and tell them how great or generous or kind they are. They are experts at conversation and know how to steer it in the direction they want.

If the person does not like the Pico, they will try to make the person angry and force a physical attack. This is really done for the benefit of



others who are watching the interaction. They want others to notice everything and they can steer the conversation in a direction that makes the other person seem evil or intolerant.

Once the Pico has found someone they can charm, they will look deep in their victim's eyes and enlarge their own. The charm spell that is cast is powerful and may last the entire victim's life. Under the influence of the charm spell, the Pico can easily convince that any action needed is a good and reasonable one. The victim will always try to justify the action in their mind before helping the Pico.

## **Combat**

Although their principal weapon of choice is the manipulations of others, it is not their only weapon. In most cases, a Pico will try to get others to defend him and attack his opponents.

If there is no one around and their attacker cannot be influenced, then they can spit a stream of venom up to 20 feet. The venom is highly poisonous and the Pico will always send the stream to their attacker's eyes. Once blinded, Pico's run away and, if pursued, try to entice others to help them.



# Pincer

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Sand
Habitat	Desert
Height	4'
Speed	Fast
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Obedient to those who summon them and hostile to others.
Special Characteristics	Able to turn other's body parts into sand.

## Description

Lying dormant far below the surface of the sand, the Pincer spends most of their time alone and dreaming of a world of death and despair. In the cocoon formed by their metal wings, the Pincer awaits to be summoned so they may return to the surface and feed on those who live there.

No one knows how or why this race evolved, but it appears they are only present in the world when a mage summons them using a ShadowMyths card. Some think that this was a punishment brought upon them by a god for a past deed or indiscretion. One thing that most people know is that, whenever a Pincer is around, people die. When summoned, the Pincer closest to the mage receives the call and wakes. Deep underground, they unfurl their wings and swim through the sand in the same manner as a Sand Demon or Root Siphon. The sand around their wings becomes water-like and the wings propel them to the surface.

Once reaching the surface, they will fly to the location of the summoning mage. In most cases, they prefer to stay in the sand until the last possible moment and, after reaching the mage, they will only perform a single task. In payment for the task, they require a sacrifice of a body part and, if the mage refuses, they are released from the summoning and will attack any non-mage on their way back.

When a non-mage is found, the Pincer will only touch one body part of their intended prey. The body part, usually an arm or leg, is converted to sand and ingested by the Pincer. Satisfied, the Pincer returns to its sleeping location and awaits the next summoning.

## **Interaction**

The only people that can interact with a Pincer is a summoning mage. In that case, as mentioned earlier, the Pincer requires a fresh, still attached body part from the mage or someone within the summoning room. If agreed, the Pincer will collect the body part before performing the task. If they are required to kill someone, they also

request the body of their victim before bringing back proof that the task has been accomplished.

The Pincer does not talk about anything other than the task required. They seem to be very sure of themselves and feel others are fools and not worth their time. Once summoned, the spell is broken but they will obey the initial command. After that, they are free to do whatever they wish to complete the task.

## **Combat**

The Pincer's primary attack is to lunge at their opponent using the pincers on their head and try to snap the person in half. The pincers are extremely strong and, even if they fail in severing their opponent, the grip is strong enough to hold them while they use their hands to convert body parts to sand.

If the person is covered in armor and clothing, the conversion takes a little more time. If they were summoned to kill someone, they will always leave the head or other distinguishing feature intact so that they can return with evidence that the task was completed.



# Politoc

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	All Habitats
Height	5'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Smart
Interaction	Cruel and Vicious. Wants to wipe out all of the other races.
Special Characteristics	Able to generate energy balls on command.

## Description

Hatred of others permeates every fiber of their body. The Politoc's only purpose in life is to eliminate the other races. They are not tolerant of anyone that is not a Politoc and will not work with them. They, however, understand that they are far outnumbered by the other races and cannot blindly go out and eliminate everyone. So, they bide their time and slowly expand their empire.

In their desire to eliminate the other races, it is believed, rightfully or not, that they are engineers of many of the diseases present in the world. It is no accident that more people are afflicted by a rare disease if they live near the edge of a Politoc city state. It also seems to go hand-in-hand with the exceptional skills as mages.

Specializing in many biological sciences, Politocs have used the ShadowMyths cards to enhance their manipulation of others. It is interesting to note that the only cards they will use are the ones that appear in their city or in another Politoc's deck. They will never accept cards from a different race.

Performing studies very similar to what Malochi did to elementals during his reign of terror, Politocs learned the lesson of what happens if they overreach their desire and bring down the wrath of others. The society is heavily focused on a scientific study of the world around them. The racial prejudices get the better of them, though. They know other races like the Kai and Kralar have vast stores of information they could use, but they won't. Everything has to be done by a Politoc or the information is tainted and unacceptable.

They won't even use the Memory Balls since they understand that the symbiote is still another life form that is not a Politoc. They have developed a crude form of writing in books that is like what the Humans are using even though they won't admit that it is the same.

## **Interaction**

When trying to speak to a Politoc, they will slander and call someone every vile name that they can think of. They will talk about how the



other person has tainted the air and some will even go to the point of discarding weapons or clothing if touched by another individual.

If a Politoc is alone with someone and in a particularly bad mood, they have no problem about killing that other person if they are sure there is no retribution. They justify to themselves that the world is better off now that their duty has been done.

## **Combat**

Besides their armor and weapons, manufactured by their own race, they are extremely powerful mages that heavily use their genetic skills and ShadowMyths cards.

A lot of their weapons have an internal cache that contains any variety of diseases found in the world. When attacking with their edge weapons, they will press a button on the hilt and a liquid containing the disease will coat the edge of the blade. Their attacks are focused on ensuring a strike against exposed skin.

A favorite tactic of theirs is to use a ShadowMyths card to hold an opponent and then cut them with their diseased blade. They release their opponent so he can go back to wherever he came from and spread the disease to others.



# Root Ghoul

Classification	Non-Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Wood
Habitat	Forest
Height	7'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Deadly carnivore.
Special Characteristics	Infects other elementals and turns them into Root Ghouls.

## Description

This undead creature has caused more people to fear the woods than any other race. They are very hard to spot and, if they get ahold of someone, the chance of escape is slim to none.

In the darkest parts of the forest, the Root Ghoul quietly lies at the base of a tree and blends in with the surrounding. All a person notices is

that there is a semblance of a face on the bark and the large number of roots. The roots are the main sensing system of the Root Ghoul, and like a spider on a web, the Ghoul has sent its tendrils in all directions, waiting for prey.

The Ghoul will ignore animals that touch the root but will take notice of a sentient person entering the area. Like other races, the Root Ghoul feeds on the neural energy of their victim and, if there is more than one in the area, they are smart enough not to attack until everybody is within their grasp.

Once their prey has gotten close enough to their tree base, the roots rise up and entwine everyone. Dragging the victim, more and more roots are redirected so the prey can be wrapped up neatly. At the base, the Ghoul now rises and buries the neck tendrils into their prey, draining them of their neural energy.

Once all the neural energy is absorbed, the Ghoul waits. There is a twenty percent chance that the prey will become another Root Ghoul. When that happens, the new Ghoul is now beholden to the one who turned him. Over time, this means that the newly made Ghoul will always give up their hunting location and victim if the primary Root Ghoul so desires. In exchange, the primary Ghoul will teach the new Ghoul how to hunt and capture prey.

New Ghouls will inhabit trees near the area they were turned. Over time, when they get stronger, their hunting area expands.

## **Interaction**

There does not seem to be any meaningful interaction with a Root Ghoul. If captured, they are violent and will try any means to escape.

## **Combat**

The primary attack of the Root Ghoul is the use of their tendrils to entwine their prey and opponents. They are highly susceptible to fire and will try to escape when it is present. If waiting for prey, they will not attack one if fire is present.

The Root Ghoul also exudes a numbing agent from the tips of their roots. When they have captured someone, one or more of the root tips will pierce the skin of their prey and cause them to go catatonic. The person knows what is going on but cannot move their body.



# Semalink

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Wood
Habitat	Cities and Villages
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Strong
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Rowdy and Belligerent. Very forceful when talking to people.
Special Characteristics	Able to roll up body into dense fast rolling ball.

## Description

Obnoxious and loud, many Semalinks think they are the life of the party and everybody wants to hang out with them. "Rolling Thunder comin' in to show everybody a good time!" is something that is typically said when one enters a tavern or local gathering.

The Semalink is pretty oblivious to the way others think of them. They love to have a good time and, as long as they're not hurting anybody, they don't mind a little mild damage here and there. Unfortunately, many tavern owners and establishments take the brunt of this lifestyle. These owners often hire personal guards to keep them out of their establishments or, at least, redirect them to their competition.

As nomads, their goal is to travel to all the cities across Ozul. They want to spread joy to all peoples and teach others that life is meant to be enjoyed. Traveling from city to city, they always live on the outskirts of towns in their caravans and, when the opportunity arises, try to sneak into town. Many of the towns know about them and make sure that the sentries prevent them from entering.

Inside the city, they will always head towards the darker parts of town since they know that the city security rarely goes there. In addition, they also know that is where most of the uninhibited people hang out so they can enjoy themselves more. Usually, by the end of the night, their drunkenness and partying have gotten on most people's nerves and they are forcibly escorted out of town. It usually takes about a week before it becomes impossible for them to re-enter without being noticed.

## **Interaction**

The Semalink is loud, rude, obnoxious, and belligerent when they have had too much to drink. When they are sober, they are just loud, rude, and obnoxious. They think that everyone is their friend and will constantly try to get someone to engage them in drinking games, brawls, and many other forms of physical entertainment.



Those of the opposite sex will find the Semalink even more annoying than usual. Both male and female Semalinks are notorious for boldly propositioning others with no regard to anyone around. This has led to a lot of brawls between them and their intended partner (both male and female).

As much as some people love Semalinks when they first arrive, by the end of the night, they find they wish the Semalink would just go away and leave them alone.

## **Combat**

At first, the Semalink prefers to brawl, primarily using head butts and other traditional wrestling methods. Both male and females love nothing more than a bar fight or wrestling match to prove their strength.

If things get out of hand and they see themselves losing (they are sore losers), they can curl their entire body into a large ball. In this state, their head and back armor plates extend and cover the entire body so that they are a solid ball with a small set of pins at the base. The pins are used to help push them along so that they can roll at high speeds towards their opponents.



# Slipstream

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	Mountains
Height	5'
Speed	Fast
Strength	Strong
Intelligence	Low
Interaction	Friendly and open. Loves to show off.
Special Characteristics	Wings are almost indestructible.

## Description

Extremely agile and fit, it is well known that Slipstreams are not the smartest elementals in the world. They are very proud of their physique and love to show off to others.

During the Spring and Fall, the Slipstreams engage in a highly unusual mating ritual. The single females gather near a large wall they call The

Impressions Wall. All eligible males looking for a mate will hover high in the air and wait their turn. One at a time, they'll use their powerful wings to rise up and gather speed towards the wall. During the flight, they'll wrap their wings around the body so that they simulate the look of an arrowhead and slam into the wall. The larger the indentation they make on The Impressions Wall, the more appealing they look to the females.

Although their near indestructible wings absorb most of the damage, they can get hurt during this ritual. Those who cannot close their wings about them before hitting the wall will suffer. No known case of anyone dying during this ritual has been reported but some of the Slipstreams have been crippled for life.

Another of their favorite pastimes is to use the same mating ritual technique, but hurl themselves to the ground as fast as they can. It is a game of dare in which the one closest to the ground without pulling up is the winner.

Because of their reliance on physical purity and strength, when becoming an adult, those who do not meet the basic strength criteria are exiled from the village. As they age, they are also tested yearly. It is said that there are nearby mountain villages where the exiles have moved to but no one has reported seeing one.

Slipstreams have developed an effective communication method when they are separated by a large distance. Rapidly shifting the color of their heads and the adjoining shoulder connections, they can pass on general information from thousands of feet away. If detailed

information is required, they must be within speaking distance.

## **Interaction**

Speaking with a Slipstream is a little disconcerting. They have a small mouth structure near the base of their head dome so someone doesn't get the sense of where the voice is coming from.

Conversations revolve around their work out regime, things they have accomplished or how someone can get into better shape. They are pretty one-dimensional and see that life is only about physical body perfection.

Those who have been exiled are usually not willing to talk with others and have a depressed mentality.

## **Combat**

The primary attack is to fly towards their opponent, enclose themselves within their wings and strike with their bodies. This is especially effective if they are flying towards a group of opponents.

In the air or on the ground, they can fold one wing around their body and use it as a shield. If they are in the air, flying is more difficult when they do this but they can maintain their position for a little while.



# Soul Stealer

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Air
Habitat	Cities and Villages
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Suave and sophisticated. Able to charm anyone.
Special Characteristics	Radiates waves of charm spells that can easily put people at ease.

## Description

Stalking the dark alleys and hidden recesses of a city, the Soul Stealer waits for their prey to walk alone at night or the early morning. When the subject appears, they form out of the mists and radiate a calmness as they approach. The victim does not know that they are now part of the dinner menu.

These dark creatures, Soul Stealers, make their home in basements or abandoned buildings that are always present in every city or village. Within these homes, they spend their time resting as mists in dark corners. To a casual observer, the room seems damp and musty. When the evening hour approaches, still in mist form, they move off to their favorite hunting ground.

As a person approaches a Soul Stealer's hunting ground, a dark shape walks out of the shadows. The Soul Stealer releases a wave of energy that contains a charm spell and this wave immediately comforts the victim so they see the Soul Stealer as a friend or just someone in need of help.

The Soul Stealer will then entice them towards the shadows and attach their tendrils to their victim's head. Extracting a little of their neural energy, they lay a mental suggestion that the victim must come back again the next night. If possible, they can also bring a friend or two. The victim has no memory of the encounter, but will recognize the importance of returning at the required time.

A curious aspect of this feeding is that, if the victim is with child and the Soul Stealer has fed on more than half of the neural energy, the child she bears will become a Soul Stealer. As the child grows, the ability to transform into mists will become more apparent. Other Soul Stealers nearby will sense it and approach their new brethren.

## **Interaction**

The only communication with a Soul Stealer is when the person is about to become a victim. When the victim is under the influence



of the charm spell, the Soul Stealer seems very sophisticated and wordly. They can quickly establish trust with their victim before leading them off to feed.

Although they mainly prefer to use their charm waves in alleys or rarely visited dark areas of a street, Soul Stealers have been known to apply their charm waves to those who are walking nearby. This is especially true when they sense a pregnant female is near. In those situations, they will try their best to entice the female so they can eventually create another Soul Stealer.

## **Combat**

Soul Stealers do not use conventional weapons during combat. The primary weapon is to use their charm spell to entice their opponents to not attack. If that fails, they will transform into mists and vanish.

If they are forced to attack, they will always try to turn parts of themselves into mists and leave parts in solid form. This is usually done by surrounding their opponent in their mist form. Once they have them surrounded, they will solidify their tendrils and attach them to their victims' head to feed. During feeding time, the victim is always paralyzed.



# Storm Locust

Classification	Non-Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Air
Habitat	Clouds
Height	1'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Destructive and constantly hungry.
Special Characteristics	Able to strengthen their body using the metal they consume.

## Description

As dark clouds pass over, there is an unmistakable buzzing sound in the air. This could only mean Storm Locusts are coming. These deadly creatures consume all metal wherever they go and, when the cloud stops overhead, dark tendrils rush towards the ground. They can sense metal nearby and they are hungry.

The Storm Locust is a plague that no villager ever wants to see or hear. They've been known to destroy entire cities within a matter of hours. These voracious creatures feed on any metallic substance and only magical items survive their fury.

When a Storm Locust consumes metal, their body processes the mineral, and it alters their composition. Their bodies take on the form of the last metal that was ingested and, as more and more metal is processed, their bodies become heavier and heavier. Eventually, they'll fall to the ground and are easily killed.

However, before death, several of them will lay down eggs in the soil. The eggs gestate over a period of several years and, when Spring return, they'll emerge from the ground and take off. The new locusts do not eat immediately. Their first task is to get as high as they can and absorb the moisture in clouds. As more and more of them enter the clouds, the cloud changes to a dark and more ominous shade. Once filled with enough moisture, they move along to look for metal to consume.

Like moths to a flame, the Storm Locust can smell large concentrations of metal from great distances. The smell lures them to the metal and the cycle of life begins again for them.

## **Interaction**

Not Applicable.

## **Combat**

When attacking, the Storm Locust always overwhelms opponents with superior numbers. Once they have consumed all metal on an opponent, though, they leave to look for more metal. On average, it only takes a couple of minutes for a swarm to completely devour any metal. For those metal elementals, an attack by Storm Locusts is guaranteed death.

The Storm Locust, themselves, is fairly easy to kill. Especially when they've consumed too much metal.



# Tanker

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	All Habitats
Height	6'
Speed	Moderate
Strength	Strong
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Friendly, humble and very open.
Special Characteristics	Able to see 360 degrees at once and very hard to sneak up on.

## Description

Distant relatives of the Slipstream, Tankers are very strong and fit individuals. They work hard to make sure those in their society are in peak physical condition and healthy. If a member of their society is not up to their standards, they are not ostracized like what the Slipstreams do, but their stature and influence in the community is diminished.

The Tanker's home is fairly plain, with little or no decoration. All of their possessions have some purpose that helps them with maintaining a physically healthy lifestyle. There is always one room dedicated to training and, in this room, they are taught a lot of different wrestling and martial arts techniques. This allows them to tone their body without the reliance on traditional weapons such as swords, maces, or daggers.

Surrounding the home, Tankers prefer to grow their own food for their family. Each Tanker has a special diet mixture they think is better than everybody else. Central to town, the entire community takes a hand in raising the livestock, and although they prefer not to, they understand that meat is a necessary requirement for some of their nutrients.

When necessary, they will hire themselves out as bodyguards for merchants or other travelers. They prefer not to be away from home long but do understand that sometimes it is necessary. On the road, they maintain their strict training regimen and try to forage for all natural foods.

Once a year, in the center of town, they have a ritual where they elect a leader for the upcoming year. This is a physical grappling match in which the strongest fighter, male or female, is crowned the leader. This leader has a final decision in any matter relating to the city, but does not have to make them all on his own. They have a group of counselors that are present through each transition. The counselors never change unless they step down from their position or die.



Because of their healthy lifestyle and positive attitude, their body heals at twice the normal rate of any other creature. They are immune to most diseases and they can sometimes heal others by laying their hands on the afflicted person. The healing only restores their health and cannot cure any diseases.

## **Interaction**

The Tanker is very personable and likable. Unlike Slipstreams, they prefer to talk about others rather than themselves. They are humble and always show that they owe their successes to others around them.

They are always happy to help someone unless it takes them away from their home too long. When hiring themselves out as bodyguards, they only charge enough to satisfy what they need. If any more is given, they will always donate the excess to a charity or someone in need.

## **Combat**

The Tanker excels in hand-to-hand combat. They do not like using any weapons other than their body. When attacking, they can see everything around them in 360 degrees at the same time. With their remarkable agility, they can change positions quickly to meet threats from any direction.



# Ticklet

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Skin
Habitat	Caverns
Height	4'
Speed	Slow
Strength	Weak
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Skittish and scared of others.
Special Characteristics	Telepathic and tentacles are tipped with acid.

## Description

Slowly moving among the dark caverns, it seems this harmless race could never survive on their own. However, survive and thrive it does. With a large bulbous body, the Ticklet slowly drags its facial tentacles in front of it to mop up any nutrients it can get from the rocky floor.

As the Ticklet moves along, some tendrils dissolve parts of the rocky floor while others scour the liquid for any nutrients it can consume. As the rest of the body walks over the liquids, the individual tracks are removed and the surface becomes flat. This method allows large groups of Ticklets the ability to travel with no one having an idea of how many there are in the group.

Living in small groups, the Ticklet doesn't seem to engage in any tasks other than finding food or taking care of their young. If it wasn't for their telepathic ability, it would be impossible to determine if they were sentient or not. They don't seem to have any home other than where they search for their food.

It has been found that the telepathic bond between Ticklets is quite strong and they can communicate up to a mile from each other. A more remarkable feat is that they do not need to be in sight of each other when talking. They can easily "speak" between walls, ceilings and floors. Mostly they talk about new food sources and the caring of their young but have been known to joke around.

## **Interaction**

When first encountered, the Ticklet is usually skittish and will stay away from others as much as they can. They can sense others from a distance but will not talk unless they desire to. Sometimes, they try to act as normal herd animals so that others don't know if they are sentient or not.

When they are comfortable, they will speak with them, but not for very long. The distrust is always there and cannot be assuaged.

## **Combat**

Although they may not seem like it, the Ticklet is a formidable fighter. The primary weapon is the tendrils they used to feed. These tendrils can be wielded like whips, but they have highly concentrated acid at the tips. They are not strong enough to grab and drag someone, but they are numerous. Many times, they can attack at the same time with ten to twenty of those tendrils.

If someone can get past the tendrils, the opponent is in for a surprise if they use a sharp weapon against the creature. When the body is punctured, it will explode and spew acid in all directions. The acid will not bother the other Ticklets but will do considerable damage to everyone else.



# Time Slicer

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Dimension
Habitat	Nii Dimension
Height	200'
Speed	Slow
Strength	Strong
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Can only be understood by other Time Slicers.
Special Characteristics	Transport people instantly between dimensions.

## Description

Deep within the vast mist-like Sai Dimension, Time Slicers stand on massive cliffs watching over the gates travelers used to go back and forth between different dimensions. These titans don't seem to move, but they are aware of everything going on in their area.

Each Time Slicer receives people at their gate and then sending them on their way. When entering their domain, a traveler would provide a colored ball to the Time Slicer. The ball would rise and stick to one of Slicer's legs. Moving up the legs, it secures a place in one of the open holes in the creature's head. Steam pours out of the other open holes in the head and forms a path from the traveler is standing to another open gate in the sky. At the base of the path where the traveler is standing, there are several packs containing food, additional weapons, and another blue transport ball.

Although their physical dimension is the Sai Dimension, their mind exists in all dimensions and they can see any aspect of the world they are looking at. This allows them to locate where the traveler wants to go and potential items they need for their journey. In addition, they can evaluate everything the travelers have to see what is missing for their journey.

The colored balls presented to the Time Slicer is their primary source of energy. The Slicers left the balls randomly in different dimensions so people could use them to travel. In the different dimensions, the more times the balls are used, more of them appear in the source dimension. The primary goal of the Time Slicer, as instructed by Death, is to encourage people to travel and learn from the different races in all dimensions.

## **Interaction**

Time Slicers only communicate with one another and their voice travels across multiple dimensions at the same time. From a casual observer, it sounds like a rush of high winds. This is because they can



only hear the sounds at extremely slow speed. If an observer recorded the sound and played it back at high speeds, they would understand more of the conversation (if they could listen to it in multiple dimensions at the same time).

The conversations between the Time Slicers usually involve information about different worlds and dimensions and trends that they see happening.

## **Combat**

Time Slicers are indestructible. In reality, they exist in multiple dimensions at the same time, even though their physical body lives in the Sai Dimension. No weapon or magic can harm them.

If they find a need to attack someone, a green liquid will ooze out of their legs and attach to the attackers. The green liquid covers their opponent's body and transports random parts to different dimensions and locations at the same time. Once the ooze attaches to their opponent, there is no way to get it off.



# Valanchor

Classification	Sentient Race
Elemental Type	Air
Habitat	Mountains and Dreamscape
Height	6'
Speed	Fast
Strength	Moderate
Intelligence	Moderate
Interaction	Mysterious and silent. Always watching and observing.
Special Characteristics	Traps dream energy into spheres to feed off them at a later date.

## Description

Like the Dream Catcher, the Valanchor feeds off the dreams of any sentient race. However, they never interfere with the dreams. They just watch.

As they are watching the dreams, they fly around with a sphere in their hand so they can collect any residual energy. When doing this, the

dreamer is quite aware of the presence of the Valanchor, but mostly, it doesn't seem to bother them. For many, they see the Valanchor in their dreams as angels or nurturing people.

As the dreamer wakes up and the dream state collapses, the Valanchor always thanks them and bids them farewell. If the dream was lucid, the Valanchor offers their name and asks if the dreamer could say that name before going to bed every night. If the dreamer agrees, that particular Valanchor will sense when the dream happens and immediately return.

After the Valanchor has left the dream world, they can return to the physical world. During their visit to the Dreamscape, in their high mountain caverns, their body is encased in a shimmering field of energy with their wings folded around them.

Back in the physical world, they love to talk about their latest dream adventures and soar high above the mountains. The energy ball that they bring back provides them and their family nourishment for many days. The older they are, the more energy they can store in these balls.

Valanchors prefer to visit content and happy dreams. The energy stored tastes like honey to them and seems to make them happy. There are, however, some Valanchor who go in the opposite direction. They prefer nightmares and dark dreams. Those who consume this type of energy soon become belligerent and angry. They know that the type of energy they consume alters their personality, but those who prefer the dark energy can't seem to stop.

## **Interaction**

In the Dreamscape, the Valanchor is a pleasant companion that loves to talk to the dreamers. They will say and do anything to appease the dreamers because they know that none of it is real. In addition, the more willing they are, the more likely the dreamer will call them back. A ready source of energy to feed their family is the primary goal of entering the dreams.

In the physical world, the Valanchor is very reluctant to talk with anyone who is not a Valanchor. They say nothing to anybody other than just watching them. They won't lift a finger to help anyone and never interfere in other's lives.

## **Combat**

While visiting the Dreamscape, the Valanchor cannot be physically hurt or captured. If anything disturbs their form, they are immediately returned to their physical presence.

When attacked, the primary weapon of the Valanchor is the mist that continuously surrounds their body. They can control it and send it out in all directions up to 30 feet and those surrounded by the mist will become sleepy and fall down dreaming. The effect becomes stronger the closer that the opponent is to the Valanchor. Once asleep, they Valanchor may kill the person using a sharp dagger they always carry with them or just leave.

# Appendix

# Elemental Symbols

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**Air Elemental** - Air Elementals are mainly composed of bits of dust or mists. They are known for being very indifferent to other races since they find them “fleeting”. They tend to live very long lives.



**Bone Elemental** - Bone elementals are considered some of the strongest elementals around. Naturally, most of them are composed of various bone material but they are able to change the densities of parts of their body at will.



**Dimension Elemental** - Dimension elementals exist across multiple dimensions at the same time and no one really understands how they think or act.



**Disease Elemental** - Disease elemental will take the host material (i.e. skin, rock, bone) and mutate it with their own DNA. It is unknown whether the elemental is sentient or not.



**Earth Elemental** - Earth elementals are mainly composed of dirt, small bits of rock, moss, and other small materials. Their body composition allows them to morph their body more easily into other shapes.



**Fire Elemental** - Being composed of fire, it's natural to think that they are rash. They are not. Fire elementals understand the fleeting nature of the world and tend to adjust to it more easily than other races.



**Lava Elemental** - These elementals tend to be very headstrong and violent. Able to shift parts of their bodies into forms of lava, they tend to use this to their advantage when dealing with people. A lot of times, it's their way or no way.



**Rock Elemental** - Being composed mainly of various ores and types of rocks, the Rock Elemental tends to be one of the physically stronger races. Most prefer to work with their hands but that doesn't mean that they are not intelligent.



**Sand Elemental** - Due to the nature of their world, Sand Elementals tend to be extremely reclusive. They prefer to stay with their own race. Composed mainly of sand, they blend in very well in the deserts and are almost impossible to detect.



**Skin Elemental** - Skin elementals are considered some of the weakest elementals around due to the fact that they don't have the ability to shift their forms. Most have to rely on various external weapons and their intelligence to survive



**Symbiote Elemental** - Symbiote elementals are semi-sentient. They tend to exist only if there is a host and will move between different hosts when one dies. Communication is usually handled telepathically.



**Water Elemental** - Being partly composed of water, these elementals are able to shift the density and transparency of their skin. This makes them extremely difficult to find in their natural environment.



**Web Elemental** - Like the Disease Elemental, it is unknown whether this race is sentient. They tend to be more insectoid and live in hive communities. They have a rough form of communication but not many can understand it.





**Wood Elemental** - One of the more common elementals, the Wood elemental is composed primarily of different forms of tree bark. They tend to be the ones that will interact most with the humans and are easily found in the forests.

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## *Felinicus*



Known as the "Hunter in the Dark" and a favorite among many of the rock elementals, this small and quick creature is extremely good at getting vermin and Unknor the Felin as pets to conversat they learn bro



## *Human Folklore*

"Them caves have eyes! I tells ya! Those things are watchin' you all!" the old man yelled at a group of young kids near the entrance of Bartlowe Hole. Many a caver have sworn that there was something in the cave that was watching them. Those who have investigated the "eyes" say that it's just some rock formations that look similar to cats. One caver claimed that he tried to carve out the "cat" from the rock, but could not. His tools weren't strong enough. When he went back, the formation was gone. This occurrence of the disappearing formation led to the legend that they

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