

Wraeththu Mythos

Wraeththu

from enchantment to fulfilment



Storm Constantine

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Storm Constantine
Gabriel Strange & Lydia Wood



Wraeththu from Enchantment to Fulfilment

By Storm Constantine, Gabriel Strange & Lydia Wood

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<http://www.wraeththu.wox.org>

STORM

Wraeththu Mythos

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Don't have access to the dice needed to play this game. Just flick through this page to find the dice you need in the top right of the right hand page



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PROLOGUE

GENESIS

In the beginning, there was darkness. The darkness of the womb and the darkness of creation. I think there is connection between the two: seeds sown in the night that blossom in the dawning of the light. I was brought forth from the gloom of creation almost sixteen years ago and tonight, I will once more be thrust back into the darkness, awaiting my rebirth.

I am naked and shivering, lying on a cold stone platform, somewhere deep beneath the city streets. Tight leather bands cross my chest, digging into my flesh, preventing me from rising or moving. Shadows press in against my skin, and the only sound I hear is the breathing of at least twenty others, all about to undergo the same transformation as myself. We have been locked together in a large room for three days; blind in the darkness, denied food or water. Now we are weak from hunger and dehydration. The only way we've known time has passed has been through the smallest fraction of light that's crossed the wall; sunlight that has somehow managed to find its way down below.

After three days of incarceration in a dank cell, the door burst open and they came in. Tall, beautiful, and terrifying, they called themselves the Uigenna. I had believed them to be the stuff of tabloid tales, stories told to frighten children into behaving, or characters taken from some book or movie. I was wrong, they were all-too-real, and I was to become one of them.

I was too weak to struggle as they dragged me down a hall into a large room filled with stone tables. I saw that other people, who must have been in the room with me, were already being laid out on the tables; leather bonds were strapped across their chests and legs, pinning them down. It was the first time I'd seen the others clearly,

"Are you ready to become one of us? Do you have burning passions that cannot be fulfilled and a desire to finally become whole?"



outside the darkness of our cell, but my mind didn't want to focus on anyone else's troubles but my own. I was pulled towards one of the tables by two Uigenna, where they laid me out and tied me down securely.

Other figures came into the room, moving about the bodies on the tables and doing something that I couldn't quite see - at least not until one of them came up to me. In his hand, he held a wicked-looking knife. I couldn't see his face, but when he suddenly slashed the blade across my wrist, it wasn't his face I was looking at. I yelled in shock at the sudden pain, but my tormentor was not finished. He did the same thing to himself, slicing open his wrist without making any sound of pain. As the blood flowed down his wrist, he reached down and pressed his open cut against mine, mingling his blood with mine. Then he moved on, leaving me there alone. A few moments later, they turned out the lights and left us in the dark. The wound on my arm started to itch, then it started to burn, spreading up my arm and through the rest of my body.

As I lie here on the cold stone, my mind wanders down the twisting corridors of memory, filling my head with a million thoughts and images dragged from the depths. The pain of my metamorphosis begins; fiery blades seem to carve away my flesh, and icy needles sliver their way through my insides. My psyche seizes upon the events that have brought me to this place, deep below the city.

"Become part of history and shape the future."



The day began like any other: the same routine playing itself out in the same pattern. I woke

up, got out of bed and hurried through my morning ritual of getting ready for school. Jumped into the shower, quickly cleaned myself, avoiding looking into the mirror for I knew and hated what would be staring back at me. I had not been an attractive child, and wasn't an attractive teenager either. My face had been attacked by acne for years now; my hair was stringy and unkempt; my body was flabby and fat. My mother said it was genetic, that I had glandular problems, but it was more psychological than anything else. When you hate yourself, it's easier to find comfort in food and the cycle becomes self-perpetuating - you make yourself even more unlovable. It even becomes something of a sick sort of twisted pride, a sign of how much you don't care about your body (even though you do).

After throwing on whatever clothes first came to hand, I grabbed up my backpack, stuffed my half-finished homework inside and ran to catch the bus. I hated going to school. Not because I hated learning. I was actually good at school - perhaps too good. Being fat, ugly and smart were three things almost guaranteed to ensure that you were amongst the least popular kids at school. This in turn meant you were ready prey for those higher up the social hierarchy than you. Needless to say, I was near the bottom of said hierarchy, quarry that even other prey could hunt without many feelings of remorse or pity.

For all prey, there is a certain safety in traveling in numbers - the protection of the herd. Of course, the slowest was often culled by the predators, while the others scurried for safety. He or she became a sacrifice to the rampant sadism of humanity. Unfortunately, over the last few months, my 'herd' had been culled. One by one, they had either transferred to different schools, moved on to other 'herds,' or had run away. Some kids had even killed themselves

"Zeus. Apollo. Artemis. Hecate, Aphrodite. The gods of humanity lived above, as we now do. We have inherited their power, their beauty and their strength. We must rule our Children, for they have proven that without their gods, they cannot be trusted."



in despair over everything that had happened over the last few years. The world was changing around us, quicker than anyone could account for. Despite what they say about the resilience of youth, children don't like change all that much. Too much change and we have little to ground ourselves. So, perhaps it was no wonder that children were either killing themselves or disappearing at an alarming rate. Adam, one of the latest to disappear from my herd, was the only one I had truly considered my friend. His disappearance struck me particularly hard.

Adam had disappeared about a month before, apparently running away without leaving even a note or message to say why he had gone. There had been only a token effort made by the police to track him down, but in the last few months the reports of runaways and missing persons had drastically increased. If they were not found within 72 hours, the police just gave up, almost as if they knew what had happened to them, yet were afraid of admitting the reality of it. The usual explanation in the police reports was that it was most likely that the individuals had run off to join one of the strange new gangs that had been cropping up in the seedier parts of the city. Perhaps it was no coincidence that these gangs had been increasing in number and strength over the same period of time as the disappearances of kids and teenagers had escalated. These gangs had been spreading rapidly, yet although they seemed to be forming in large numbers, no one seemed able to find out anything about them. They disappeared at the first hint of danger, apparently possessing some instinct that warned them of journalists or cops.

I hoped that Adam had found a place among one of those gangs, and that he was safe, although a part of me resented him for getting away and leaving me to deal with everything here on my own. More than anything, I wished he had taken me with him. I was too cowardly to try running away on my own and just as scared of the idea of committing suicide. As much as I may have hated myself and my life, I didn't want to die. So I remained where I was, living each day as I had the one before it. At home, I was safe and provided for. The only downside was the darkness, depressiveness and monotony of my life.

As usual, school seemed to last forever. I hurried from class to class, waiting until the last moment to dart through the throngs of students, to minimize the chance of running into any of my tormentors. Thankfully, that day, I managed to avoid any undue encounters and I thought I had made it safely through another week. I had grown to anticipate Fridays perhaps more than was normal for most kids, as it meant at least two days of relative safety and peace, where I could lock myself in my room and not see another living soul.

The bus let me off a few blocks away from my home, and I saw that my mother had yet to arrive. Typically, she picked me up after school as she passed by on her way home. She must have been running late at her office that day, but I dreaded she had been in a car accident, or some other calamity had struck. Usually, if she wasn't there, she sent one of the family's security guards. Like most other well-to-do families in the area, with all the disappearances and gang related incidents increasing, my family had taken to hiring security guards whenever we went out. Of course, the security guards didn't seem to like me any more than the kids at school did, and probably for the same reasons. All I know is that I was standing out there, alone on the street, without any cover to hide from what might come. A sudden fear overtook me, a premonition that I was too vulnerable at that moment, and that it was all too likely I would be viewed as easy prey by any passing threat.

"Governments concerned with their own vanity, rather than the affairs at the heart of their land, paved the way to their destruction at the hands of the Wraeththu."



I am dragged from the 'comfort' of my memories by an intense sensation that I cannot ignore. I think I'm screaming, although it's difficult to tell whether the heart-wrenching sound comes from my throat or from one of the others in the darkness around me. It feels as if I'm being burned alive, yet the next moment my insides are freezing cold.

Wave after wave. The process repeats itself, dragging me through one world of pain after another. Each time I'm sure I'll die from the pain alone, but always something within me resists the temptation to surrender

The cold stone beneath me digs into my back. Each small grain of dirt feels like a blade. The fine grains of sand and gravel abrade my flesh like nails, tearing it away to reveal the bone beneath. My jaw is clenched tightly, my eyes are squeezed shut: quiet explosions of color blossom before my mind's eye.

From those explosions, more memories emerge. To escape the pain, my mind retreats once more into events that happened only a few days ago...yet seem more than a lifetime away.



"Gods or demons? Saviours or tyrants? Are they what we are meant to become or are they something far more terrifying?"

Over time, through evolution, herd creatures develop a sort of sixth-sense about danger; an instinct that warns them of the approach of a predator. Whether it's catching a hint of musk on the air, hearing the rustle of the underbrush, or feeling an inexplicable urge to flee, this instinct has enabled herd animals to survive. Unfortunately, my own instincts and intuition were not quite as finely tuned as those possessed by other creatures. By the time I realized that I was vulnerable, standing alone in the open with no one else around, it was too late.

Just as the hairs on the back of my neck began to tingle, an explosion of sharp pain burst in the back of my skull. The shock of it nearly drove me to my knees. It sent my backpack skittering across the sidewalk and my glasses clattering to the road.



"Is it wrong to wish to become one of them? I yearn to have their beauty, their power... I yearn to know their secrets. I yearn to feel their touch..."

"Hey, Piggy, good to see ya," a sickeningly cheerful voice came from behind me. A voice I recognized all-too-well. If I was near the bottom of the social hierarchy in school, then the voice belonged to a guy who stood near the top: Jamie Brown. You know the type: captain of the varsity football team, face and body of a Hollywood actor, personality of a barracuda. I'm sure that every school around the world has one of those types. One of those people who have been given everything on a silver platter, yet who decide for some reason that those less fortunate needed to be reminded of it – constantly.

Jamie never went anywhere without his 'pack,' all predators like himself, although he was clearly their Alpha-male. And I had the misfortune of being the prey they had

cornered this day. There was no reason for them to be out where I lived, except for the corner store across the street from my bus stop where they were remarkably lax about carding people for cigarettes or alcohol. From the reek of beer and tobacco surrounding those guys, it wasn't too hard for me to figure out why they were around here. I just had the bad luck to be in the area at the wrong time.

Jamie and his pack were infamous amongst the herd students for the strange types of 'entertainment' they enjoyed. No one who'd been forced to entertain them ever said a word about it, but there was a strange sense about these victims, as if their spirits had been totally broken. I had always believed that my friend Rick had committed suicide because of something Jamie's pack had done to him, and that was probably the same reason Adam had run away as well.

"What a great way to finish our Friday, eh guys?" Jamie crowed to his friends as they crowded around me, jostling me from one body to the next until I was dizzy. The world around me was a blur of washed out colors, yet somehow Jamie's cruelly smiling face was crystal clear. "A case of beer, some cigarettes, and now we have a little Piggy for some entertainment. Who could ask for a better way to start the weekend?"

Before I knew what was happening, before I could say anything in protest, I was manhandled into the back of Jamie's car, pressed between two of his friends. They had decided to take me someplace more private for their 'entertainment.' The fear in my stomach churned acid that scalded its way up my throat, yet fear also kept my lips clamped shut. I was terrified of what would happen if I were sick. They were bigger, stronger, and meaner than I was. If I protested, or made any commotion, I would be beaten - and beaten bad. The further we got from my home, the sicker I felt. If there was any point in my life that I'd wished myself dead, this was the time.



Suddenly, I am awash with a coolness that spreads through every part of my body, soothing away the fire and ice, and the pain that has been my torment. Once more my wandering mind returns to my body. I gasp involuntarily at the unexpected release. Tears of relief fall down my face, even if this reprieve is only temporary.

Around me, some of the others are weeping too, while still more moan and scream in the throes of agony. My body feels different somehow, as if it's too tight and too small to contain the energy that's building up inside me again. A thin blade of light cuts across my face, burning my sore eyes. I can hear myself groaning in pain. As I close my eyes against the light, a strange, dispassionate voice speaks over the cries.

"Three have already died and it looks like two more won't make it through the night. I want the bodies removed and tossed into the pit; we can burn them before dawn."

I try to rise and open my eyes, to see who's talking and what he's talking about, but the straps hold me fiercely. I can feel the sweaty leather, slimy against my skin, yet although I'm still bound, the straps feel a bit looser than before. Odd, considering leather tends to shrink when it's soaked, becoming tighter - not looser. It almost makes me laugh: my mind attempting to rationalize the looseness of the leather straps instead of worrying about the talk of people dying and not making it through the night.

Then my body once more explodes with pain. The fires within me flare hungrily back to life, feasting upon my insides with fangs that dig deep enough to scorch my soul. It's as though someone or something is trying to disembowel me from the inside out.



I don't know how long I was in the car, or to where exactly we were driving. Jamie seemed to be taking a convoluted route through the city and Carmine has never been

"Evolution, genetic defect or constructed by mankind's folly, the Wraeththu have turned on humanity, aiding the disease and disaster that have already crippled our society."

"Humanity begat Hara, Preposterous! The evidence, show me the evidence."

"Each of us contains a seed of the god and the goddess. Are you brave enough to embrace them and become them?"

"They are wolves in sheep's clothing. They take our young and leave without a trace. They are Wraeththu."

the easiest of places to navigate. Within minutes, I was hopelessly lost and gave up trying to watch where we were going. I realized fairly quickly that trying to find my way back home would be hopeless. All I could hope for was that I would be able to get hold of my mother somehow, after the evening's 'entertainment' was completed, because I knew already that this was a one-way trip as far as Jamie was concerned.

Finally, Jamie pulled his car into a narrow side alley in what looked to be one of the more rundown areas of the city. After stopping the car, Jamie and his friends quickly got out, ushering me in front of them through a small door into a dark room. The metal door closed behind them with a resonant clang that sent shivers through my body.

I could hear the heavy breathing of other guys in the darkness of the room; I could almost smell their anticipation. Apparently though, only Jamie really knew what was going to happen, because one of his goons suddenly asked, "Are ya sure this is the right place?"

"Yes, now shut up," Jamie barked back as he pressed a large hand against my back, propelling me further into the gloom and down a hallway. The building stunk of old piss, of rotting meat, trash and other things that I didn't want to identify. The smell definitely did not ease the churning in my stomach. "Down the stairs, Piggy."

I felt like retching but my body had begun to descend into a state of shock.

I followed Jamie's directions, nervously climbing down the stairs. The other boys followed behind me, ensuring that I couldn't make a break for it.

The stairs emerged into a large basement, dimly lit except for small patches of sunlight streaming through grimy windows. Then, as soon as all of us had stepped into the room, a light array flickered on overhead, the bright fluorescent bulbs humming loudly. They revealed that we were not alone.

A tall figure stood illuminated in the harsh fluorescent radiance. Spiky hair dyed indigo, fashioned into a mohawk that spilled down his back, contrasted with the whiteness of his skin, as did the black fishnet shirt and black latex pants that seemed molded to an incredibly lithe body. His face was...the only word I could think to describe it was sculpted. His features were fine, narrow and angular, yet with a fullness of lips and a certain lushness about him that was reminiscent of marble sculptures from Ancient Greek or Roman Times. The fishnet shirt revealed that the figure was in fact a guy, yet the way he held his body and the way he moved seemed off somehow. There was something distinctly inhuman about him.

As the stranger saw us, he gave an odd, almost feral smile. He peered at me from eyes shadowed by his hair. "Good, you brought him," he said, in a soft, almost whispering voice.

"Yeah," Jamie replied smugly, "Just as ya asked - the Pig...er...the kid, Mikey. You got the money? Same deal as always?"

The stranger stepped forward, moving towards us with a sinuous grace that made me uncomfortable. Not that I wasn't already scared enough to piss myself, but I was so caught by the grip of terror, at that moment even a loosening of my bowels seemed impossible. When the stranger spoke next, it was in a sort of pleased hiss that reminded me uncannily of a cobra about to strike, "Excellent, Jamie...you will most assuredly receive what you deserve."

"Great guy, just what I wanted to hear," Jamie smirked and nodded his head, glancing smugly towards his friends as he said, "See, what'd I tell ya. These guys'll pay good money for these scumbags. Best part is, no one cares what happens to 'em, so it's easy money."

Just as the last word left Jamie's lips, the stranger snapped his fingers. At once, the room was again thrust into darkness. Movement erupted around me. Jamie and his pack were shouting and flailing about, and there were others moving in the murky shadows, moving with absolute silence except for the whispering slither of vinyl and leather. Bodies crashed into me as I tried to make a break for it, sending me spinning until I couldn't tell which way was out. I strained my eyes trying to pierce the gloom, but all I could 'see' was the afterimage of the fluorescent light burned against the backs of

my eyes. Finally, I thought I spotted a gleam of light, a possible way out, so I started running, pushing my way past whatever got in my way; then someone hit me from behind and sent me sprawling to the concrete floor. I tried to pick myself up, but a hard boot slammed against my head and sent me crashing into oblivion.

When I awoke, I found myself in a large room, without much light. I quickly realized I was naked, my skin crusted with sweat and filth. It didn't take me much longer to realize I was trapped with others, who were in a similar state to myself. At first, I tried talking to these anonymous figures, but the oppressiveness of the room and the starkness of our situation soon left each one of us alone with our own thoughts. Thoughts crowded into my head: I had been sold into slavery, or kidnapped by some strange cult, or even that I would be forced to take part in some sinister government experiment. In the end, when the Uigenna came to drag us away and strapped me down to the stone table, I had given up trying to figure out what had happened, but found in myself a strange determination to get out of it somehow, to get out and become something more than a statistic of another inexplicable disappearance.



I open my eyes and gaze up at the lights above me. My body feels strange, different somehow. Looking down at myself, I see the straps have gone. I'm lying on a cot instead of a cold stone table. I'm covered with a thin grey blanket, my body's shape visible beneath the fabric. At once, I sit upright, my head reeling. This can't be real. The rolls of fat have gone, as if they melted away in that terrible crucible of heat and pain. What's left behind is a body that's lithe and willowy. And I can see myself clearly, without the thick glasses I've needed all my life. Warily, I lift the corner of the blanket to see what lies beneath. Something has been done to me. Something beyond words. This body is not mine: it can't be. I'm not sure if it's even male any more.



I lie back in the silence, unable even to think. I lie still, very still. I stare at the cracked ceiling.

Then a shadow falls over me and a voice murmurs, "So, our sleeping beauty awakens."

It is the stranger from the basement: the tall, slender figure in ebony, ivory and indigo. He smiles and something within me stirs. There's something oddly familiar about him. And beyond this recognition is another feeling.

He approaches me slowly. "Good morning, Mikey. I'd ask if you slept well, but I remember how painful the change is."

I pull the sheet up to my neck, say nothing.

He smiles wistfully and shakes his head. "What? Don't recognize me? No, guess not... I was a bit different the last time you saw me. Well, guess that means we need to be reintroduced. Down here, they call me Athame, but the name my parents gave me was Adam."

I stare at him, and shake my head in denial of his words, yet as I look into his eyes, they are familiar to me, and part of me believes him.

"From the slums and backstreets of Carmine, the Wraeththu appeared and shook the foundations of a society already in turmoil. That society has fallen, giving way to a new era. Their era!"

"Have our gods abandoned us? Why are we plagued by these demons? Is there any salvation from the Wraeththu or are we doomed?"

"As man was beyond the ape, so Wraeththu is beyond man."

He kneels next to me, lifting a delicate yet powerful hand to cup my face. Alien thoughts spark inside me again. "I know you don't understand any of this. I know that this must come as a huge shock to you. It was a shock to me as well. But let me tell you, it is better this way. I couldn't save Ricky from killing himself, but I could save you."

"Wha...what about Jamie...and the others?" I swallow, trying to ease the scratchiness of my throat, a bit taken aback by how different my voice sounds now.

Adam - Athame - merely chuckles. "Oh, we had them undergo the change as well. Only Jamie survived." Athame laughs again, this time a sound of dark amusement, "He will find that he's not the top predator any more."

"Adam, what the hell is going on? How has this happened to me? How long have I been here? Have you starved me? But my eyes...?"

Athame puts a finger to his lips to silence me. "This is your beginning. All that you knew, that you were, you've left behind. All the old limitations of human form are meaningless now. You are Wraeththu. You are har."

They are just words. I stare at him, this creature of dream with Adam's eyes. "But how...?"

"We gave you our blood, our difference. This..." His hand sweeps across my body, and I swear I feel electric heat pouring from it. "This is our gift to you. Humanity's time is done. It is our time now. As Homo sapiens replaced Cro-Magnon, it is time for us to replace humanity. Nature has made us stronger and faster than man, as well as giving us other gifts - including the ability to make man into our own image."

"Then what am I?"

"As I said, you are har, no longer man, but one of us. Don't be afraid of the changes. From now on, Mikey is dead and gone. As of this morning, you shall be known as Boline, the light to my darkness and the darkness to my light."

He leans over me and exhales. The steam of his breath conjures pictures in my mind: new possibilities unfolding, of dark days filled with riots, rage and flames; of a glorious glowing city filled with others like ourselves; of a new world rising from the ashes unlike anything anyone could have ever imagined. Something within me blossoms in the darkness of my soul as those images fill my mind, a glowing bloom of light that fills me with a new sense of purpose, a new reason for being. I am no longer Mikey, the frightened and ugly kid from the suburbs of Carmine. I am Boline, the blade who will help usher in a new world.



"Beautiful, enigmatic and powerful. Ageless are the children of mankind's ignorance and intolerance. Wraeththu are here to stay!"





"Ponclast has spoken of alliance. Though I do not agree with his practices, his words about the Gelaming threat make sense to me. I fear our biggest enemy now is not the Varrs but our own tribe's undisciplined nature."

— Manticker, *Uigenna Archon*



INTRODUCTION

For some of you, role-playing will no doubt be second nature and for others it will be an entirely new concept. Either way, we recommend that you have a quick read through this introduction first, in order to familiarize yourself with what this book is all about. We recommend that potential 'Storytellers', (who will 'direct' the games) peruse it a few times before play. You will find explanations of the basic concepts of role-playing, from what it is, to how to do it, and then progress to more advanced role-playing ideas. We will also give brief notes about the race of Wraeththu (known as 'hara', as humans are known as men and women).

One of the things we should mention is the explicit nature of some aspects of the world of Wraeththu. The hara you will be playing have a very different physiology, sexuality, culture and social structure to that of humanity. Hara are both male and female in one body, however this should not be perceived as homosexuality. Sex, or 'aruna' as this activity is known to Wraeththu, is an important part of the harish social structure and lifestyle, in fact essential to their survival. As this aspect of life is rarely covered in games of this type, we feel it's important for potential players to be informed of it in advance. In playing the game, players can breeze over this subject, and simply treat it as an abstract function because, like the consumption of food, aruna is just a routine of harish life. Although in some instances the rough details may need to be covered (such as who, why, what for and where), a blow-by-blow account is not essential, unless the players are comfortable with describing sexual acts in a literary manner.

We plan to produce a number of supplemental books, some of which may be mentioned within this volume. These books will bring greater depth and enjoyment to the role-playing experience, and expand upon the Wraeththu Mythos. Some of these additional books will be individual tribe guides, covering the main Wraeththu groups in more detail and introducing additional tribes who live in other areas of the world. Further books will cover the rest of the world, cities and many other aspects of Wraeththu life and magic.

One final note to anyone wishing to be a Storyteller for this game: We recommend you read the books upon which it is based. Although not essential, doing so will give you a greater feel for the game and the world of Wraeththu itself. These books are the Wraeththu Chronicles: 'The Enchantments of Flesh and Spirit', 'The Bewitchments of Love and Hate' and 'The Fulfilments of Fate and Desire'. Also available now and in the

"The great Eagle of Kalamaph came to Earth on the Naqi wind, in it's talons it carried an ark. When the ark was placed on the highest mountain it split open to reveal the twin serpent, who then spoke six words. Those six words were the source of all creation."

- Gabriel Chamberg, Colurastes

near future are the Wraeththu Histories: 'The Wraiths of Will and Pleasure', 'The Shades of Time and Memory' and 'The Ghosts of Blood and Innocence'.

BASICS: WHAT IS ROLE-PLAYING?

Role-playing can be defined as: "Let's pretend, with rules, weapons and magic." When we were children, most of us probably played pretend games with others of our age group. These games are primitive versions of role-playing. You might have played at being a character like Superman, or King Arthur, or some other hero who was popular with you at the time.

However, when involved in a role-playing game like Wraeththu, you go into much more depth with your character, and work out a complex history for it, giving it family, friends, a personality, traits, skills, and also weaknesses and flaws.

Usually, a role-playing game requires about half a dozen players, although games can be played with less. One player acts in a similar manner to a director, and is referred to as the Storyteller, GM (Game Master) or DM (Dungeon Master). In this system we use the term Storyteller. Their job is to guide the other players through a plotline and to play the parts of the NPCs (non-player characters), who are the people and creatures the players might meet in the imaginary game world. The other players take the parts of the lead characters in the story. The Storyteller can be your best friend or your worst enemy, because they control the world of the game and the environment

your new character lives in. The Storyteller creates all the other characters and creatures you will meet on your adventures - the good guys, the bad guys and the double-crossing tricksters. The Storyteller might never play a character straight and to the point, so you might have to watch your back!

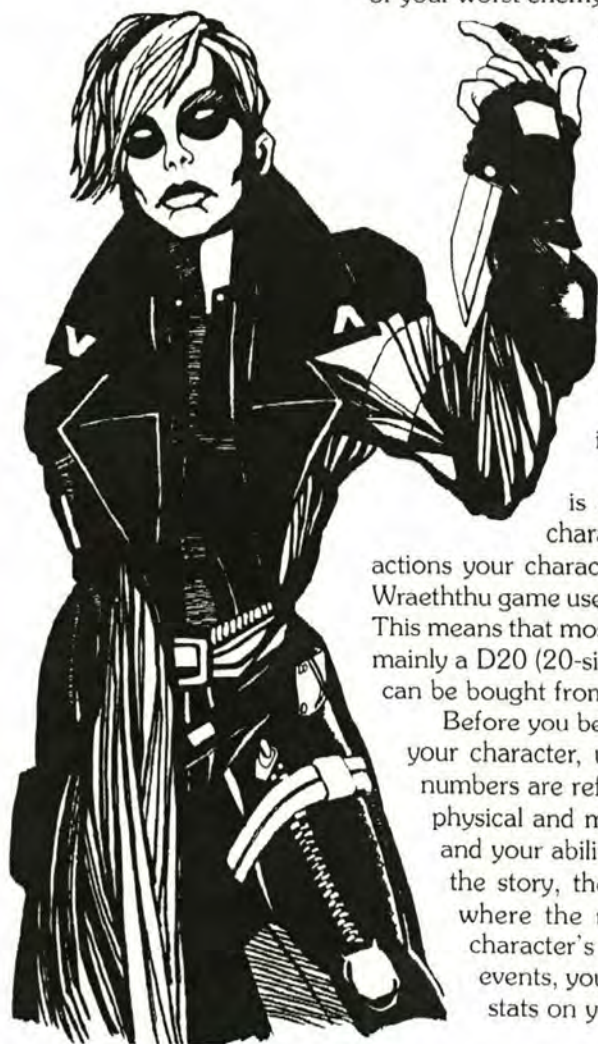
The game has a set of rules, which are used to tell the players when their characters are successful with any actions they take. Even though there is a certain amount of acting in a role-playing game, it is generally played while sitting around a table. You can describe your character's actions in third-person (i.e. 'he' or 'she' did this or that), but role-playing really comes into its own if you truly take on the part of your new character, and act 'in character'. Then you can have 'in game' conversations with the other players in your group, who are also acting in character.

The rules and your actions govern how successful your character is at whatever they do. 'Experience points', which advance your character's abilities, will be awarded for how well you role-play and the actions your character takes. There are many different systems of role-playing. The Wraeththu game uses the 'Storm' system, which is called a 'tabletop role-playing game'. This means that most of the actions and rules are based on the roll of a die. You will use mainly a D20 (20-sided die) and a D10 (10-sided die); these and other multi-sided dice can be bought from hobby and gaming shops, as well as from online stores.

Before you begin to play, you will need to roll the dice to define the statistics for your character, using certain rules and guidelines. During play, these predefined numbers are referred to as stats (or statistics), and they represent your character's physical and mental abilities. Other stats will represent your prowess in combat and your ability to perform certain tasks. Although these stats are secondary to the story, they are essential to the flow of the game, especially in situations where the results cannot be worked out through discussion alone. Your character's actions push the limitation of their skills, so during certain game events, you will need to roll a relevant die and check it against one of the skills stats on your character sheet. However, the Storyteller may wish to impose

*"Don't give me any of that
Psychic mumbo jumbo shit.
Just tell me what the hell
happened."*

- Besta Zamhalama, Varr



modifiers to these rolls in order to make the task easier or harder for your character. These matters are covered in detail later in this volume.

Taking part in your first RPG can be a daunting process, especially if you are playing with more experienced players, but don't be afraid to ask questions. As long as you have a good Storyteller, you will be fine. Most systems are really quite easy to learn, and after a few sessions you will pick up the essentials.

Even though certain rules have to be set down by the Storyteller to impose order on the game, role-playing is meant to be a fun and enjoyable experience. It is nothing more than pure escapism. For a few hours a week, you can role-play whatever type of character you choose, get the chance to forget about mundane life for a while, and have an adventure with friends in a world of wonder and mystery.

"What you have to realise, my friend, is that it's not I who's testing you but you who are testing yourself."

- Omar of the Dry Sea, Obliviate

How Do I Role-Play?

As mentioned earlier, role-playing is like a game of make-believe, but is constructed more like an organized debate or argument, where each player jumps in and says what their character is doing in the current scene. While it's important to make sure your character gets to act out all the actions you want them to, you should also respect the other players and try not to dominate the scene too much.

Due to the nature of role-playing, your character could be in a different imaginary location than the other players' characters. In this case, the Storyteller has to share their time with each separate group. This is similar to the way that a movie director might show two scenes in parallel to add more suspense to their film.

The main gist of role-playing is that you must describe your character's action in enough detail so that the Storyteller and the other players know what you are doing. However, avoid going into too much detail (i.e. the minutiae of how you're driving a car if you're simply going from point A to point B), as this would only bore the other players. Learn to give enough detail to keep your fellow players interested and to set the scene for what your character is about to do.

While role-playing, you can play a character that is radically different from you. That means making them act and react in a manner different to your own way of doing things.

The aim of this type of game is to play the role of a character in a world of billions and to interact with that world. It should not just be about gathering possessions or acquiring greater statistics for your character, which is called power gaming. This is when a player is interested only in getting the most and the best of everything, from the biggest guns to the fastest cars, and of course the highest stats, and it's a tactic that's usually frowned upon by other role-players.

To be a good role-player, you should learn how to manoeuvre your character through the trickiest situations and still come out on top. Sometimes, you will need to roll a die to determine the outcome of a situation or encounter in the game, but when you are really skilled, you should be able to describe your character's actions so well that you won't even need to roll a die. When you play a character over time, you will come to know their limits and of what they are capable. Then, you need only roll a die for events such as combat and plot-critical actions. A good role-player will sometimes drop their character into trouble and let them make mistakes, as this gives them more depth and makes them much more fun and interesting to play.

As mentioned earlier, the majority of role-playing is done around a table or sitting in a group, wherever you are comfortable. It's sometimes useful to play in an area where there is space to move around, in case any of the players wish to act out some scenes of the game. Some players like to jump into the thick of the action and actually enact in slow motion the moves their character makes. This can add more to the gaming experience, because it can give the other players a better insight into your character's actions. Also, after a couple of hours playing, it's sometimes a welcome break to get up and move around a bit.

"Caught in the throes of passion, you scream with ecstasy and believe the earth has moved. Our passions can move the earth, shaping it to our desires."

Flick Die: For players who don't have access to the dice needed to play this game. Just flick through this book while not looking at it, and stop at a random page. The numbers in the top right of the right hand page represent a random value for each type of die. From left to right, D4, D6, D8, D10, D12 and D20.

What Do I Need to Role-Play?

First, and most importantly, you need an active imagination, no matter how bizarre! You need some pens or pencils (more than one, as they always go missing), an eraser (or possibly two just in case the eraser thief is around) and a notebook or paper.

You will need a selection of dice, ranging from a D4 (4 sided die) to a D20 (20 sided die). These dice are similar to the six-sided dice used in common games, but in role-playing, you'll need to roll numbers higher than a six – the highest number on a common die. A gaming die, which has more sides than traditional die, was developed to avoid the problem of having to throw dice repeatedly or having to throw multiple dice. They enable you to roll a number quickly and easily, so the game is not held up too much while you roll. For example a d20 has twenty sides, numbered 1 – 20 (D4, D6, D8, D10, D12 and D20 are the most common die available). These dice add a varied outcome element to the game.

All of these items are easy to acquire. The dice can be purchased at all good role-playing stores. However, if you have trouble obtaining them, you can devise some other method of randomly picking numbers, such as using ordinary dice, coins, random number generators and numbers in a hat.

Also to play the game, you will need someone to take the part of a Storyteller, as well as 3 - 5 players, and somewhere to play which has good access to drinks and munchies. (Late night games usually lead to a sudden desire to eat and drink around 1 - 2 a.m.!)

You can add to the whole role-playing experience with devices such as mood lighting and music. The use of these will be explained in more detail later in this section.

THE CAST

As we have mentioned, role-playing shares a similarity with movies and movie-making, and this is that each has a cast of thousands, both major and minor characters. The players of a game are the 'main cast' and the non-player characters are the 'extras.'

Each character is unique and has something that makes them useful in the game. The main characters, who are controlled by the players, usually have a skill or ability that the other characters don't possess, therefore making them useful to the group. The non-player characters (NPC's) are all controlled by the Storyteller. There will probably be a handful of generated NPC's that are the characters' friends and foes. The remainder are usually invented spontaneously to serve a purpose.

Playing a Character

The art of role-playing revolves around taking the part of a character, an imaginary person who has both a history and moral code. This character is not just a bunch of numbers written on a piece of paper. Lots of things can help you build better characters and make them more rounded and real. One such tool is a character's background, which you can invent before you begin to play.

Background is essential in shaping how the character will react to certain stimuli. Not only does it shape the character, it gives you, the player, more of a chance to work out their strengths and weaknesses. Other details, such as merits and flaws, can individualise the character. Merits are the good points about a character: some may give bonuses, while others may help the character in tight situations. Flaws are negative points, which can be quite devastating during play. They may seem like traits you would never want your character to have, yet they are essential in making the character realistic. Everyone has flaws, because no one is perfect.

While playing, it can be useful to keep a diary of notes that relate to the character. Draw what the character would look like, to give other players a better impression of

*"Animus and anima
conjoined, made one in body
and soul. Now we're really
whole, and what do we do?
We kill each other like
humans used to do. No more
of this! Who'll come with me,
to establish a new
foundation for Wraeththu
evolution? Oh, yes, you,
Seel, of course."*

- Orien Farnell

them. You could also dress like the character during game play. All these things will help the character develop over the months and even years that you play.

Some events during the game might radically change the character's persona, so be prepared to make changes to the way you play. The more variety you put in, the better the experience for yourself and others playing with you. When it comes down to it, our personalities and identities are the sum of our life experiences.

A well-played character is willing to make sacrifices and take the rough with the smooth. The Storyteller may wish to throw you into a situation where you could lose everything, emerging from it only with the character alive. Don't be disheartened by such experiences, as you can still build the character back up; remember it's only a game.

The Storyteller

Them! The Others! That is the job of the Storyteller: the enemy and the ally, the one who has control over the world in which you play - the director, as it were.

If you have been appointed as the Storyteller for your group, and have never done it before, you will find at the end of this book several examples of scenarios and how to write them.

A skilled Storyteller will add lots of in-depth plot and ensure many possibilities for the characters to do well - or fail badly. As a Storyteller, you should be fair, and always make sure the characters come out on top; otherwise there would be no point in playing the game. Conversely, if you are too easy-going, the illusion of reality can shatter. When this occurs, the game can literally collapse around your ears, much to the dismay of the players. If you are too mean, it will also destroy the game. There is a fine balance between 'too easy' and 'too mean.' Just be careful and respond to the players' needs. It's most likely that the people for whom you run the game are friends, and we're sure you'd like to keep it that way! So, keep the game fun and enjoyable. If the players get too stuck, throw in an NPC or a hint that will help them get unstuck.

Another aspect to bear in mind is that only an incompetent Storyteller plans the plot 'to a tee' and then religiously sticks to it, without giving the players chance to explore other avenues. If you want your players to keep to the plot, then give them a good reason to and don't force them into it. If you insist, for example, that they go to location X, then location Y, without doing anything else, you will probably end up with rebellious players, whose characters just sit there doing nothing or perform anarchic or insane acts out of boredom.

It's a good idea to plan ahead, but not too far, to give flexibility for players. Make the plots intelligent and engaging. Include a good balance of action, as some players like a good shootout. Give them what they want, but remember that you can take it away should you so wish. You need to be tough, and have a wad of research material on hand, as a good group will challenge your ability to maintain the integrity of the plot. It's vital to be confident in what you are doing.

A good rule of thumb is to write down a plot synopsis similar to the way a movie treatment is done. This can consist of one to twenty pages, depending on how deep your plot is and how long you want the adventure to last. Don't give too much detail, but just an overview of the key areas and plot goals. You can back up some sections with research or devices you can use as props, such as letters from NPCs to characters and player hand-outs. There are a variety of things you can add to a plot to spice it up and make it fun to play.

Possibly the best research tool for storytellers is the Internet. If you have access to it, you can browse web sites for logos and graphics, or acquire in-depth research on a subject you plan to place in the story. There is a huge amount of material available that will enhance your game, so it is worth taking a look. If you cannot get access to the Web, you should acquire some research books on the relevant topics, which you should be able to find at your local library or bookstore.

"The trouble with Inception is that you never know what you'll get. Much of the time you end up with a blithering idiot that doesn't have two bits of brain to rub together. And those are the successes."

- Nath Ingoma, *Unneah*

"The only loyal ally is a dead one."

- Sorshon har Uigenna

"Did you just say Moose?"

- Cassiel Agrimony

SETTING & MAINTAINING GAME ATMOSPHERE

One of the most important components of a role-playing game is to create a good atmosphere, because this will help ensure everyone enjoys the role-playing experience. If there is no atmosphere, it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the players to get into the game.

There is no single key to creating a good atmosphere. It arises from a mixture of different elements, utilizing what you have around you, and adding to or altering it to suit the game you are playing. In a moment, for example, the director can create an atmosphere from sounds and images, and more subtle aspects such as inspiring emotions – i.e. love, fear, suspense – or simply by raising the heartbeat via some fast paced action.

Most of what is written here is aimed at the storyteller. However, players might find it useful to read through it at least once.

Mood

An important factor in creating realism in a role-playing game is the mood of your player group. You should aim to adjust carefully the mood of the room according to the type of game being played. For example, a Film Noir style game should have a few high contrast lights (but not too many or it will be too light). You could also reduce the temperature, so there is a slight chill in the room.

There are many different moods you can convey with very few props: a mixture of music, lights and temperature. With these factors under your control, you can create your mood of choice.

You can also enhance the mood of a game by stimulating the sense of smell, through using incense or oils to scent the room. There is a wide selection of incense available in most New Age stores or craft centres. Imagine the different moods conjured by Pine, Patchouli, Rose, Menthol or Aniseed. You can create scents to alter the mood for your game. We recommend you follow all instructions on any flammable materials in the correct manner as you will literally be dealing with fire. The use of incense and burning oils is your own choice, and at your own risk. Make sure you take the proper safety precautions.

Music is also another mood conjuror. Ambient noise tracks can provide good background music, especially if they are played so quietly they can only just be heard: The brain can register it even if the players cannot quite make it out. Playing recognizable tunes or loud songs is not recommended, as the players may spend more time listening to the music than playing. Good sources for mood music are the CDs and tapes designed for meditations, as the compositions are usually subtle and not overbearing. These can be picked up from the same kind of stores that sell incense and oils.

Live Action

Live action sequences can be fun. You can use them to aid imagination, and add even more realism to the game, especially during combat. If you can act out your moves, it will be easier for you to work out where each blow will land or to estimate how visible you are when supposedly hidden under cover.

You can plan other live action sequences as well. However, too many might interrupt the flow of the game. Players can dress 'in character', and meet up outside in a suitable location. This is good if the Storyteller needs to pass a message or convey some information to the characters. A small amount of live action can add greater depth and fun to the role-playing experience.

Other sequences can be acted out dependent on props and space. However a great deal of play will still rely on the imagination. Due to the nature of the Wraeththu Mythos, we do not suggest any players attempt to act out aspects of Inception or aruna. The

"I wiped the bitter taste of humanity from my lips like so much spittle."

"I will incept you, you bloody bigot, and turn you into the very thing you most hate"

- Unneah Warrior

Wraeththu are an inhuman race, and the players are human. These acts should be confined to the imagination.

It is important to remember while acting out any aspect of a game that *it is just a game* and not reality. Going too far can result in injury. Also, acting out your roles in public places can cause more problems. It's not unknown for people who witness role-playing in public and, unaware of what's really taking place, to get suspicious and call the authorities!

Props

Clothes and other adornments help to create a good atmosphere and convey the appropriate mood. There are many props you acquire at minimum cost, such as old books, clothes, walking sticks, glasses, etc. However weapons can be a little more difficult. Some weapons can be made out of carbon fibre rods covered in latex foam and a few other ingredients like plastic card and duct tape.

From modelling shops, you can acquire BB guns, but before playing with them, it's advisable to check out your local laws to see what is permissible for you to carry legally in a public place. If you do use this type of weapon, make sure at all times that it is not loaded with pellets. Although they are designed not to cause injury, being caught in the eye by a pellet could still harm your sight.

Just because your character would carry a weapon around with them, it doesn't mean you can. We advise that if you wish to transport such props you should do so in carryalls and bags. You should be aware that in many countries you can be arrested for carrying such toys on the street, so it's best to use them only indoors and around friends who know what you're doing.

If you should wish to play outdoors, you should contact the local authorities and inform them of what you plan to do, then follow their advice. Most will be understanding, as long as no one gets hurt and no laws are broken. It's best to let the police know your plans, as other people may call them if they see you running around wielding weapons!

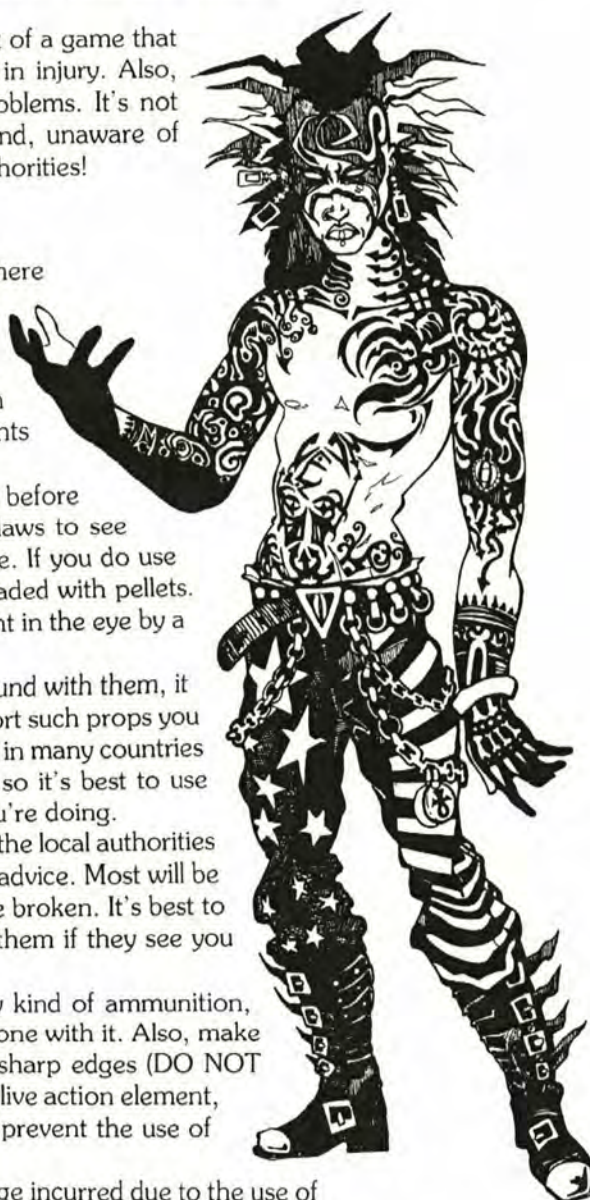
Make sure all prop weapons are not loaded with any kind of ammunition, even if it is a soft sponge dart, as you could still hurt someone with it. Also, make sure all model swords are well padded and there are no sharp edges (DO NOT USE METAL REPLICA SWORDS). We advise that for any live action element, someone should be in charge of inspecting all props and prevent the use of any that are potentially dangerous.

The authors are not responsible for any physical damage incurred due to the use of props, whether that use is correct or not, as these are only suggestions and not a necessity. We advise only the experienced player to use such props. However, they do so at their own risk.

Creating a Realistic World

As with films and novels, the one thing that helps makes them believable is a convincing setting, a world that the characters – and the viewer or reader – can explore. In a role playing game, the imagined world needs to have plenty of variety and detail, and many different locations for the characters to visit. In order to create an interesting game, the characters should have to make choices or face dilemmas as they progress, and these can arise from places and objects in the landscape.

Many things can make the world in which you play more real. For example, an abundance of NPCs (non-player characters) and creatures will help flesh out your scenarios, as they will provide plenty of opportunity for player interaction. In a movie, the cast of extras who might interact on a small scale with the major characters, or simply populate the background of a scene, make the world of the movie seem more



"Ah! Wank!"

- Skank Marchell, Ex Uigenna

"Whaddaya mean you can't swim? Who incepted this one? - Oh, hell, somehar pull him out of the pond!"

- Makopis har Froia

real. Imagine that, as part of a game, your characters have to visit a market. You cannot have a bustling market without stall-holders shouting out what wares they have to sell, to try and tempt your characters to buy. There will also have to be other customers, maybe beggars on street corners, and perhaps the odd thief slipping through the crowd looking for unprotected purses!

Setting

Setting a scene is very important in a role playing game. As the Storyteller, you need to describe your scene in enough detail so that the players know what is in the area and what scope there is for interaction. However, the line between imaginative and tedious detail is narrow. Describing at great length the intricate ironwork on a gate will only work if you happen to be playing with a bunch of ironwork enthusiasts! The best way to describe a scene is to give a brief overview, and perhaps have a list of a couple of comparable scenes in movies or even similar sites in your local area. Then, during play, you can add more detail to the scene, as it is requested or required. The longer the characters are in a scene, the more detail they will see. It is best to list the most important and obvious aspects of the scene first, and then, like a camera zooming in, list further details as the characters get closer or ask about them. It is a good idea to hide some plot details, so that the characters stay in the scene for longer. If you think the characters are missing some important plot point that you have not described, you can always prompt them by saying something like: 'Something catches your eye'.

Non-player characters are very important, but should be used with care. An NPC who takes too much control of a group can spoil the players' enthusiasm and enjoyment, while an NPC who is too weak will be nothing more than a pawn to the players. Developing a good background for NPCs can sometimes be worthwhile. However, this is again one of those fine lines, where you can waste hours creating an NPC only for the players to shoot it dead the first chance they get. So make a mental image of the NPC and a rough background, to which you can add detail if they survive the first five minutes.

Other things you should think about when creating a convincing setting in your imagined world are the people on the street, and public services (if any), such as the police and fire-fighters. Spend some time thinking about how the society works in this world. A dysfunctional society, which does not adhere to the laws of cause and effect, can destroy the illusion of reality.

Style

"If that bastard moans one more time about good discipline and hard food, slit the little fucker's throat as an example to the phyle."

- Watson, Varr Phylarch

As a Storyteller, you will develop your own style of running a game, where certain key aspects of yourself are included within the world. When you have played with the same group of players for a long time, they will eventually get to know your style. You then run the risk of things becoming predictable and a bit boring, so, after a while, try to vary your style. Take a different angle and style for a few games. This will have the effect of throwing the players off balance and make them work harder for their bread, as it were. If the players enjoy your personal style of running the game, then stick with it until you think they are getting bored again and need a change.

One thing that helps develop a sense of style is to create individually tailored sub-plots for the players. Each of these can include details you know the individual players like. This can be anything, from a love interest, rescuing a friend or relative, to a good old revenge story. You could also have a manipulative NPC (bad guy), who controls a character's destiny from afar, and who perhaps regularly crops up to cause them trouble. This 'Bad Guy' could have certain things in common with the Storyteller. This will make the hostile NPC seem familiar to the players, while also somewhat distant.

Pace

The mood of the game is really a culmination of all the things mentioned in this section, which will make the game realistic and enjoyable. Pace is just as important. It's pointless having a slow-paced car chase or a fast-paced, meticulous experiment. Make sure the mood and pace of the game match what the players are doing. Subtly change it to

reflect any action in the game. One of the best ways to explore how to do this is to watch movies and see how the directors handle the pace of different kinds of scenes, such as car chases or delicate situations. If you get into a movie and really enjoy it, then the director and his crew have managed to create a realistic world, through style, pace, mood, setting and the other elements we have discussed.

Planning

Forward planning is always useful. However, it can also be infuriating, as too much planning in the wrong areas can be a complete waste of time. As a Storyteller, you need to plan what you want the players to do in the next game. However, you also need to plan other plots around those events, just in case everything goes wrong. The players might well mess up your best plans on their way through the game. You might have created the perfect world, and then the players will promptly come along and destroy it. For example, you should never put a large glass dome over a city, as you can guarantee the inevitable will happen (your players will inevitably have something to do with the dome's destruction). When planning your games, keep in mind that the players will try to find holes in any plot you care to throw at them. They can be an unpredictable bunch and might well throw surprises at you. So be prepared to come up with solutions without forethought or planning.

If you want your players to stay in one area for a period of time, you must give them a reason to be there. A meeting or an interesting NPC will help. If the players really don't want to stay, and this affects your plans for the game, you can always give them a reason to return there soon.

Genre

The Wraeththu role-playing game is set in a rich and varied world, with conflict in many places and fragile peace in others. It is the end of the world as we know it. Much has changed in the past decade and continues to do so. The greater part of human society has disintegrated, and the up-and-coming Wraeththu have set up small feudal governments in the areas they control. Some Wraeththu have tried to develop different forms of government, taking ideas from the human administrations of past centuries and using them to suit their political aims. Many areas of the world have been touched by Wraeththu, to a greater or lesser extent. Whether this rapid spread is through their own initiative or via the helping hand of older and more powerful beings is not yet known. This game revolves around one 'chapter' early in their existence. Because the major communication systems have broken down, much of what Wraeththu hara know about each other is based on conjecture, rumour, lies and wishful thinking. But amazing truths are hidden among the fabrications.

The World

The world we know is a fairly stable place, where very little changes from year to year. Large trees can take hundreds of years to grow to maturity; the landscape itself, the mountains and valleys, can take thousands of years to transform, through the effects of weather and water flow.

Now imagine a world that has had enough of human depredation and, like any organism, desires only to rid itself of troublesome parasites. A few well-placed natural disasters have drastically changed the face of the planet. Weather systems have mutated and some major rivers now flow in new directions. In heavily polluted areas, some of which have been ravaged by biological weapons and imprudent technologies, crops have failed. Chaos was let loose upon humanity when no one was expecting it. While natural disasters caused havoc and millions of deaths,

*"Kalamaph the Lord Naqi,
who took flight to allow the
coming of Allavé, hear me
now as I call upon your
divine wisdom."*

- Oded Hasamas, Obliviata



humans never ceased to bicker among themselves, even more so as resources and inhabitable land became rarer in some areas. Biological and chemical warfare have taken their toll, causing widespread mental and physical disease. Against this background, Wraeththu begin to rise, to take the place of the species that abused their world and each other.

Human cities and roads have been decimated by earthquakes and warfare, but in some areas, as industry has ground to a halt, the problem of pollution has already begun to decline. Many of the great monuments of ancient civilizations have been destroyed or have fallen into ruin, but a few still stand, as testament to humanity's erstwhile greatness.

Over the last ten years, the human population has dropped by a staggering 50 percent, and is still dropping, with no hope of reverse.

Their time is running out. Even so, because they are a resilient species, groups of humans still strive to survive.

In their desperation, and with a growing awareness of how dire their situation really is, many have returned to a more harmonious existence with the earth. Unfortunately, this about-face has come far too late. Other humans, victims of despair, have given up hope for humanity, and simply roam the lands like lawless bandits.

In the wake of humanity's decline, the Wraeththu have risen, at first in secret, but now more overtly. Tall and ambiguous of gender, like the angels and demons of legend, these beings roam the earth, usually destroying what remains of human society and culture. They are hara, being both male and female in one body, and they spread through a process called Inception, whereby a transfusion of harish blood into a human mutates the inceptee's body into a Wraeththu form. At this time, the procedures of sexual reproduction are still virtually unknown, except among those hara who have concentrated more on self-evolution than hostility, gratification and lust for power.

In appearance, hara are androgynous, yet athletic. They are, paradoxically, deadly warriors, but also mystics and seers of great power. They arose from the ghettos of North Megalithica, incubating in the ruins of those shattered cities, long before humanity realized the threat they posed.

For some years, Wraeththu were regarded only as another youth cult of nihilistic anarchy, simply a further social ill to be swept aside or annihilated as circumstances dictated. This was mainly because they affected tribal codes and styles of dress that appeared similar to youth movements of earlier times. No one guessed the truth of what they were. Humanity was so caught up in its battle to survive that it overlooked the greatest danger of all to their continued existence. As for the hara themselves, even before they were incepted, most of them were already filled with bitterness and resentment. Most felt they had scores to settle with society, and used their newfound abilities to devastating effect against those they thought had wronged and abused them.

As time goes on, and the originally incepted hara have grown older and more tolerant, some of them are inclined to sympathize with humanity's predicament. However, the majority would still rather see humans become extinct, and regard them as useless



"It amazes me how we have already forgotten our past, when it is still so close. But so few of us realised the impact we were having on the world until it was too late."

- Cassiel Agrimony, Gelaming Scribe

consumers of resources who give nothing back to the world they took for granted for so long.

From the opposite perspective, given everything that has occurred, humanity has inevitably come to regard Wraeththu as a scapegoat, something to blame for all that has befallen them. Many believe that hara were created in a laboratory somewhere, perhaps as part of a military experiment that went out of control. These strange creatures seem to be immune to the diseases and insanity that plagues humankind. They are stronger, swifter and appear to have supernatural abilities. Few humans know the truth of their condition, because hara are always careful to remove their dead from any scene of conflict. As many humans fall back into the superstitions of an earlier time, they regard Wraeththu as supernatural and evil. Those of religious persuasion often believe that Wraeththu are angels of death, sent by a cruel adversary of their god to bring about Armageddon.

Through all this hardship, many human organizations, though fractured and scattered, still try to keep elements of their civilization functioning. In Megalithica, the great Western Continent, the old government, now controlled by the military, maintains some economic structure. Using what is left of the media, they still pump out propaganda to anyone who will listen.

Since their Inception in Megalithica, Wraeththu have spread across the globe like a virus, taking over towns and run-down areas of major cities. It is only a matter of time until all the great cities of the world fall into their hands.

Wraeththu spread east rapidly from Megalithica, across the great oceans. They began to incept humans on the island of Alba Sulh, moving further east to the continent, where they were able to settle themselves comfortably and continue their growth in the ravaged societies they found there. Much of the human social infrastructure has broken down in that area. What remains is now splintered, and very few services and utilities still function.

In both Megalithica and further afield, the remaining centres of human population are well protected by military forces. Some humans have fled the cities, and a few are now completely abandoned, as they have no resources or strategic value. Humans moved out to the countryside and open farm land, where they have reclaimed or built serviceable farms and communities. Some of these small communities are left relatively unchallenged by Wraeththu, but both major conflicts and small skirmishes between human settlements and the more savage of Wraeththu tribes are commonplace.

Other areas of the world are also affected, but mostly – so far – to a lesser extent. The great Eastern Continent, and islands in the southern hemisphere, have broken communications with other parts of the world and secured their borders. Now that Wraeththu has been identified as a real threat, many countries have isolated themselves in an attempt to preserve what is left of humanity in the wake of plagues and warfare. However, hara have infiltrated virtually every country, even if they have yet to establish big settlements. Instead, they have remained covert, taking small villages and neglected areas of cities, where they wait for the right time to strike. Remote areas in all parts of the world still maintain a human population, yet the lands outside their cities are slowly being taken over by Wraeththu.

Wraeththu believe that their time is coming. They do not know themselves how they originated, but are convinced they are the rightful inheritors of the planet. To augment their ranks, they prey upon youthful humans, who they subject to a process called Inception. This, through the transfusion of blood, makes a human mutate into a har. Because this process is relatively simple, Wraeththu have spread like a plague, raping cities and towns for resources and souls to join the cause. Now, in the dying days of humanity, Wraeththu is straining to find tribal identity, which has led to conflict between the different factions. Each tribe believes their way of living is the best, and some, following in the footsteps of their human predecessors, attempt to inflict their beliefs by force. Others, though perhaps more enlightened superficially, utilize politics and propaganda to further their cause. As time goes on, it becomes clear that the remaining human population is probably the least of Wraeththu's problems.

"Surviving is all we're doing. I thought it was about freedom? Then it was revenge? Now we don't care? So what, I'm hungry!"

- Yanosh Sale, Unneah Scavenger

"All the others know nothing; they hide from the reality of what they truly are and prevent themselves from becoming anything more. We alone know the truth and I'm quite happy to keep it that way for now."

- Zanak of the Kakkahaar, Diviner and Guardian of the Past

"I blink and another day goes by. I'm quiet because words died with my former life."

- Temple Doll Azure, Unneah

Alternate Worlds

There is plenty of opportunity to explore other worlds, as through their inhuman abilities Wraeththu are capable of travelling to other realms, beyond consensual reality. In a game, it could be possible for a group of Wraeththu to have accessed a new world, where they either live in harmony or cause havoc. When you start to bridge this gap, it opens up a whole new experience in the Wraeththu Saga.

These new worlds and realms could tie in with your favourite movie or book, or be set in a location freshly imagined. However you approach the subject, there are plenty of fun possibilities for adventuring around the myriad layers of reality.

The Past

Within the Wraeththu Mythos, you can construct a game set in the very early years, when tribes were first being formed and establishing a foothold. Even though Wraeththu have only been around a relatively short time, they have achieved a lot.

Alternatively, you could play a human who is struggling to prevent an onslaught of what they believe to be demons or aliens. There is plenty of scope within Wraeththu history to create inventive scenarios.

Should you wish to venture further you could, for example, set up a failed magical ritual that transports a group of hara back in time, at any point in human history. They might have to struggle to survive during human wars and political upheaval. Venture back even further and hara could roam a world where the heroes of popular legend still exist: Odysseus, King Arthur or Attila the Hun! The possibilities are endless.

The Future

This game is set around ten years before the events in the novel 'The Enchantments of Flesh and Spirit' take place. During play, you can advance time along a bit and meet many of the characters from the original Wraeththu Chronicles. You could even go forward further in time, and imagine a situation where, for example, an unknown force is eating away at the core of Wraeththu society. No empire lasts forever.

When heading for the future, there are plenty of possibilities to explore in the Wraeththu books themselves, and beyond that when almost all the humans have disappeared. Will Wraeththu struggle for survival with no known natural enemy? Will it come to a point where another race will appear to replace them? The choice is yours. The only limits on the game are the boundaries of your imagination.

THE WRAETHTHU

By this point, if you have not read the novels that inspired this game, you might be wondering exactly what a har is and who the Wraeththu are. The next few sections will explain about this race of non-humans. Wraeththu is the name of the species, and the term har refers to an individual Wraeththu, the plural is hara; as you would say 'human woman', so you would say 'Wraeththu har'.

An Overview

The origins of Wraeththu are unclear, in the same way that human evolution is unclear. Although they originally derived from humans, they are no longer human in the accepted sense, as their psychological and physical makeup is very different to that of humanity. Therefore, direct evolution must be ruled out, unless there was a sudden leap in the evolutionary ladder, which is not entirely unheard of. Wraeththu could also be the result of an experiment in the field of genetics. However, to date, no evidence has been found to support this idea. This leaves us with an enigma.

Hara are not human, but in many ways they look similar to human beings. If you can imagine a true androgyne – a creature comprised of both male and female elements – that is what a har looks like. If you gazed upon one, it might confuse your mind: one minute you might think you were looking at a very athletic Amazonian woman, the next at a graceful man, who though possessing a female ambience, is not exactly effeminate. Wraeththu are physically toned and of perfect proportions.

Wraeththu might behave very much like humans in certain situations, which could mislead an onlooker into thinking that they are human. However, despite appearances, they should be regarded as a completely different species, possibly even alien in origin.

The perception of Wraeththu as non-humans will make these next sections more understandable, if not more acceptable. Firstly there is only one gender among Wraeththukind. The concept of male and female as separate entities means nothing to the average har (even though some may cling to these ideals in relation to their past lives or current human friends, if they have any). However, for the purpose of clarity, we will refer to Wraeththu using masculine pronouns ("he" and "him"). This by no means makes them male; it simply makes reading and writing this information easier.

Wraeththu are creatures with both Ouana and Soume sexual organs, these being their equivalents to human male and female genitalia. This is not uncommon in nature; many creatures on earth are biologically similar, including certain varieties of snails and some species of fish. In some rare cases, mammals (including humans) can carry a few chromosomes of the opposite gender, which causes them to form reproductive organs or features of both genders. Other species, such as frogs, aren't strictly similar to hara, but they can change gender very quickly, should circumstances demand it. So, as you can see, dual gender is not unknown in nature. Wraeththu could well be seen as the pinnacle of evolution, in that as long as they have access to another har, they can always find a suitable mate, should hara find a way to reproduce.

Most creatures that use sexual reproduction to continue their species are unable to control impregnation naturally. Some believe that Wraeththu could be sterile, and therefore need no control. They maintain the species via the act of Inception, whereby Wraeththu blood is transfused into a human with a Naqi and the recipient undergoes vast physical, mental and spiritual changes. These changes are then sealed by aruna, the harish term for sexual intercourse.

The other major physical differences are the Wraeththu immune system, metabolism and ability to heal, all of which are far superior to those of humans. The harish immune system is capable of withstanding all known toxins and poisons that affect the human body detrimentally. It reduces the long-term effects of intoxicants and narcotics, as the body metabolizes and expels all unwanted substances quickly. A har can get drunk, but is unlikely to have a bad hangover the next morning.

Wraeththu are able to digest sustenance faster and much more efficiently than humans. Like a cheetah, their bodies regulate their food intake and keep them at peak physical condition. Although you might come across a starved har, due to circumstances and environment, you would never come across an obese one, or if you did, there would have to be a very unusual reason for it.

The mental faculties of hara are superior to those of humans. Wraeththu have far greater clarity of thought. Mentally, they are much more stable, at peace with their inner selves. There is no gender conflict or misunderstanding, or anxiety about attaining sexual partners. Some Wraeththu tend to adopt the roles of a more masculine or feminine disposition, but when this occurs, it is purely an echo of their former humanity, and something to be discouraged in Wraeththukind in general. Physically, hara do not need to segregate themselves into different gender groups, as essentially they are all the same.

The only apparent drawback of harish physiology is their physical and mental need for aruna. This activity appears to give them new vigour and vitality. Should they spend too many weeks without it, they will start to deteriorate both mentally and physically until they have aruna again. This condition can manifest as violent mood swings and a general air of disagreeability. At times a general appearance of fatigue can set in; this is

"It is well that I did not tell those humans the truth. For I am not a ghost but a thing of flesh and blood. Perhaps their blades could have killed me, but only I know this."

"Let's fuck the fucking fuckers."
- Yanosh Sale, Unneah Scavenger

"What we need now my friend... What we need now is a biscuit!"

- Cadakitha, Unneah

"From the few words of any known language you just said: I can gather there is a large human army heading for this tower, and they are shooting excrement?"

- Manticker, Uigenna Archon

believed to be because, during aruna, two hara will swap spiritual energy they refer to as 'essence'. This mutual exchange enhances the well-being and condition of the participants.

Wraeththu have heightened mental faculties such as telepathy, pyrokinesis and telekinesis. While a lot of hara take these things for granted and do little to understand their talents, or develop them, others have applied themselves to mastering them. Hara have achieved levels of manipulating matter of which humans, even the most learned and committed, could only dream. We could speculate that the harish state of androgyny has contributed greatly to their enhanced mental condition. However, further research into this area needs to be done before we can say for sure how they developed the ability to manipulate the universe on a level that humans can not.

The Language of Megalithica

Throughout history, language has changed to suit the needs of the society using it, such as the cultural differences between the old 'American English' and 'International English'. So the recent changes in the Megalithican tongue should come as no surprise. Most of them are now widely accepted amongst Wraeththukind, while others are still hotly debated amongst the higher echelons of the tribes. Much of the Megalithican language is similar to what went before, although many new words have been added to the common language to describe new acts and define many cultural aspects of the new race.

Some of the most contested changes in language will be covered in depth later; many of them apply to the nouns and pronouns that refer to Wraeththu - the core of any language. Because terminology that applied to humans is so ingrained, changes to it can make the language seem uncomfortable and clunky. But over time, as more hara use them, the new terms will filter through and slowly become accepted.

The Phenomena of Nouns and Pronouns

By Malakess har Sulh

Over the past few years, the terms 'har' and 'hara' have become widely accepted within the rank and phyle of Wraeththukind. These terms are used by all but a few fringe groups who wish to develop their own expressions. The terms originated in Megalithica, and have since spread throughout the tribes. They have even infiltrated Albish the native tongue of the Sulh.

The personal nouns 'har', 'hara', 'harish', 'harakind', 'anyhar', 'nohar', 'somehar' have comfortably replaced those of the old tongue, such as 'man/woman, men/women, human, humankind, anyone, no-one, someone, one, etc.' The term 'tiahaar' (plural: 'tiahaara'), is commonly used as a respectful form of address. Velisarius of the Kakkahaar coined the term 'harology', which is the study of Wraeththukind - a subject in which he is undeniably a pioneer.

The majority of new inceptees have found the adoption of all these terms fairly easy. However, a few still find it hard to get used to them, and continue to use those of the old language with which they are familiar.

I think it is clear that the new terms arose from our desire to separate ourselves from humanity, perhaps coupled with our intrinsic arrogance, our wish to appear superior to humankind. But regardless of why they appeared, these terms are certainly here to stay. They make sense. They are easy to use, and simply 'feel right'. Whether the same can be said for an androgynous pronoun set is another matter.

Gender neutral pronouns (GNPs), dual gender pronouns, or whatever you choose to call them, have caused far more controversy than the new nouns. Some Wraeththu adopted their use quite early on, much to the

confusion of others. Occasionally, this has led to misunderstandings between tribes.

Those who champion the use of a GNP set, claim that the gender specific pronouns of human terminology are insulting to our kind, because of our dual gender physiology. They have gone so far as to say that new inceptees should be discouraged from using the masculine pronoun from the moment they wake up after althaia. Other hara disagree, and view the whole idea as contrived and pointless. It seems obvious to me that most hara continue to refer to themselves and others as 'he', simply because it is part of their identity, part of who they are – or more accurately *were*. When they wake up from althaia, they are still essentially the same in their psyches: the same memories, the same preferences and so on. Perhaps if althaia changed or removed one's memories, it would be easier to think of oneself as a completely new creature, but that is not the case. Following Inception, a new har could hardly call themselves 'she', because that would be equally inaccurate.

I can't help feeling that once all humans have died out, 'he' will simply be androgynous, so why worry? However, I am perhaps alone in scholarly circles with that idea! Some hara feel the use of a masculine pronoun should be dispensed with at once, and a new term adopted instead. In my opinion, their views are entirely entrenched in old human notions concerning sexual orientation. If a har finds it difficult to understand and accept his new condition, which is beyond human interpretation of gender, then I hardly think a new word is going to help him significantly. Whichever way you look at it, the use of a gender neutral pronoun is one of the most difficult adaptations for many new inceptees to grasp. I think this is why the terms have not become common in the Megalithican tongue. Personally, I'm glad these abominations of language have never entered into Albish. To me, it is political oppression if I'm told how I should refer to myself.

For the record: from the wide selection of GNPs that have been sampled by Wraeththu, 'en' or 'em', 'ey', 'emself,' seem to be the most popular. These are used to replace the gender specific pronouns he, him, his, himself. Whether these new terms will become standard is something only time will tell.

Inception

Inception to Wraeththu can involve a lengthy and elaborate series of rituals and actions, during which a human is given a transfusion of Wraeththu blood, which initiates changes within their DNA and mutates them into hara.

The procedure, in essence, could be undertaken quickly without any spiritual aspect being involved, and in many cases, during the early years of Wraeththu history, this was often the case. But over time, as each tribe has developed their own spiritual ideas and systems, the procedure has evolved to include highly structured, mystical and magical aspects.

Inception is a rite of passage, and even though the physical mutation guarantees this will be a traumatic event, most tribes also incorporate other initiatory aspects of sacrifice, such as the shicawn (shee-corm), which is the ritual cutting of hair, and/or various pledges and vows. Almost every tribe requires the inceptee to state aloud that they come to the Inception of their own free will, although many hara have criticized this as hypocrisy, in view of the fact that no inceptee, once aware of what they are getting into, would be allowed to change their mind. Quite often, when an inceptee has resisted the process, Inception has taken place by force. Nowadays, with Wraeththu having less and less need to hide from humanity, this is rapidly becoming a non-issue, and some humans wishing to become har are starting to do so without being forced.

"So you're telling me you saw a horse... And it was flying? Please tell me who your dealer is. I want some of that shit you smoke."

- Dag Viking, Uigenna

"The thrill of the hunt, the heart pounding chase as the humans stumble and fall, this is truly the sport of Archons."

- Gamboll-gin, Uigenna

Forale (foh-rarl)

This is a three-day period of fasting prior to Inception and is a necessary medical requirement, as the body needs to be free of all toxins and waste to minimize the physical risk associated with the procedure. Most tribes have a specified Forale House, where potential inceptees are required to remain during this time. Forale can be shorter if an Inception needs to take place quickly. There are known cases of inceptees not taking forale at all. Although the absence of forale greatly reduces the time for actual Inception, the inceptee will take a day or so longer to change thereafter and is more likely to suffer severe pain.

"The word is 'Arse.' Only the lowest Ugenna would mistake it for a donkey."

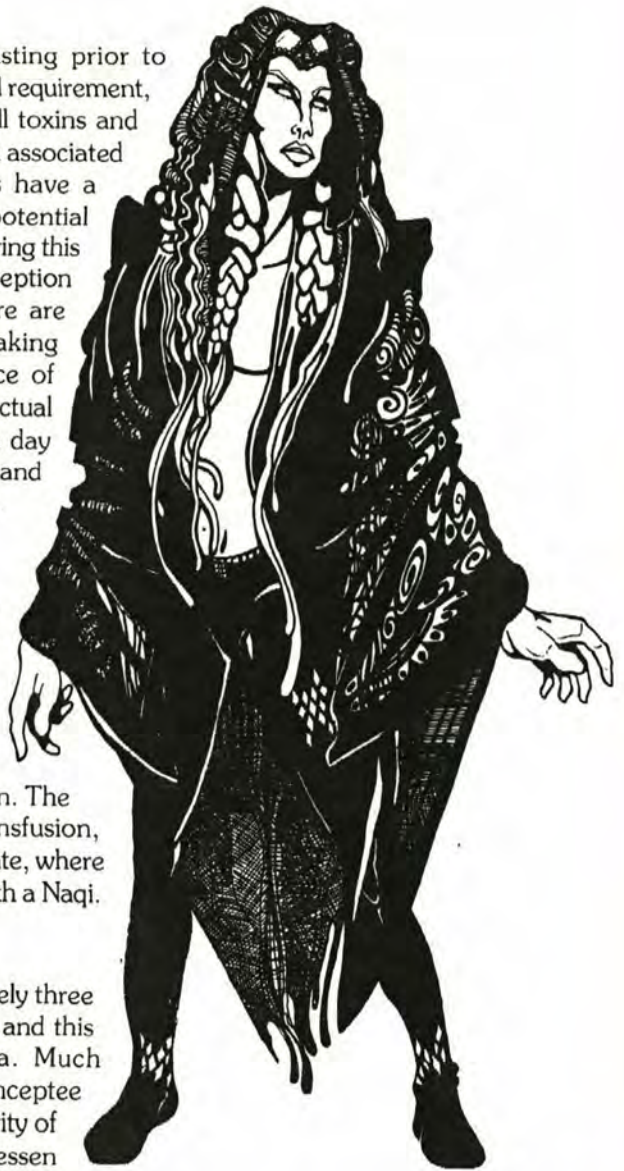
- Malakess har Sulh

Harhune (har-hoon)

This is the initiation/Inception procedure itself. Prior to the transfusion of blood, the inceptee is usually required to take part in a lengthy public ritual, during which the shicawn takes place, and any required vows or pledges are spoken. The ceremony concludes with the transfusion, which is generally conducted in private, where the inceptor and inceptee are cut with a Naqi.

Althaia (al-thay-uh)

The human body takes approximately three days to mutate into a harish form, and this process is referred to as althaia. Much discomfort is experienced by the inceptee during this time, although the majority of tribes utilize various medicines to lessen the effects, or at least keep the inceptee unconscious. Once the mutation is complete, the new har is required to take aruna (see below) with another har in order to 'fix' the changes within them. Nohar yet truly understands why this must take place or exactly how it works, although most agree that the exchange of essences that occurs during aruna must be the most important factor.



The Inception Rites of Wraeththu

From the Journals of Swithe Tresillian

The Inception rites of the Wraeththu tribes are varied and of differing complexity. Tribes who have adopted what they regard as a spiritual way of life tend to incorporate much more ceremony into the proceedings than those who regard Inception merely as a functional process to be completed with the minimum effort and fuss.

During my travels in Megalithica, I have observed firsthand many of the tribal practices concerning Inception. What follows are brief notes to give an overview of this fascinating procedure, and its many permutations among the tribes.

The Ugenna were, in my opinion, undoubtedly the first of the Wraeththu tribes. When they began to incept humans, the process was

"I just can't believe you incepted the Pope."

- Swooner har Sulh

subject to a great deal of trial and error, as different methods were attempted. I spoke to a Uigenna har in Duwamish who told me:

'We had no hienama. He got killed early on and we were separated from everyhar else. We had to augment our ranks to survive and incepted any human we could get our hands on, whatever their age or gender. Nearly every one of them died.'

This is hardly surprising, since the Uigenna Inception procedure of choice was simply to slash the arm of the inceptee with a blade (Naqi) or some other sharp implement, and for a har to do likewise. Then, the two wounds were held together for some minutes. Clearly, enough blood was transferred to affect the human form, but perhaps not enough to facilitate an Inception. Quite often, all that was achieved was a fatal poisoning, although those who survived this method were undoubtedly hara of high calibre.

The concept of hienamas, hara who were qualified to undertake Inceptions, was quite a late addition to the procedure. The first Wraeththu har, and the initial wave of inceptees for whom he was responsible, no doubt understood the process far better than those who either broke away or became separated from the primal group. Eventually, because the success rate was so poor, certain Uigenna took it upon themselves to acquire knowledge of Inception, to experiment in an organised fashion, and to note results. This led to a greater understanding of the procedure, and methods were devised to ensure a higher success rate.

The Uigenna never managed to develop a consistent method, and procedures did tend to vary from group to group, but on the whole they followed a certain pattern. The tribe learned that inceptees should fast for some days prior to the operation, which minimised rejection of the Wraeththu essence. They also realised that human females could not be incepted, at least not with the methods and knowledge at their disposal. Also, humans of the age group 14-21 were more likely to survive the process than those who were younger or older.

Generally, prior to Inception, a group of humans would be incarcerated in dismal conditions, in a state of fear and anxiety, unsure of their fate. Some even died of terror during this time, especially if they were already injured or sick. The Inceptions themselves would be conducted consecutively, with several hienamas or hara of fairly high rank who worked with the inceptors, donating their blood. The method used for transfusion still tended to involve the barbaric slashing of flesh while the inceptee was in a state of full consciousness. Again, many souls were lost at this point. It never seemed to occur to the Uigenna that making the process less frightening, brutal and painful would contribute to a higher success rate. But then again, it's likely the tribe prized individuals who could survive the worst experience, and believed those who couldn't to be weaklings, unworthy of becoming Uigenna. In the early days, the tribe had an abundance of humans to work with, so were undoubtedly rather cavalier in their attitude to fatalities.

Following transfusion, inceptees were left alone to undergo althaia, the changing from human to har. Again, fatalities were common, as not even basic care in hygiene was administered to these unfortunates. It seems almost a miracle that Wraeththu have ever managed to spread as successfully as they have.

It was not realised for some time that aruna after Inception helped 'set' the process, although those who emerged from althaia intact were habitually subjected to aruna by other members of the tribe, who either had an interest in a particular new har or who simply got there first. It is hardly surprising that the Uigenna were an aggressive and hostile tribe,

"Why, in all that Manticker has fought for, did you incept that 'Ugly Munter?'"

- Calambus Mint, Uigenna

"Our intelligence shows that the Varrs have secured a human military installation in the northern mountains. We need to get some spies up there and confirm their intent, as they could be planning a surprise attack."

- Zackary Raven Black, Gelaming Phylarch

"Where am I? How did I get here? Where the fuck are my gonads?"

— Unknown, *Unneah*

"I want the one responsible for teaching Zip how to incept humans, taken outside and shot, stabbed and burned."

— Wraxilan, *Uigenna Phylarch*

when most of them had undergone such traumatic Inceptions, which undoubtedly left terrible scars in both mind and body.

Since their tentative alliance with the Varrs, the Uigenna have been forced to modify their Inception procedures, at the very least to incorporate sterile conditions, the use of anaesthetic and regimented althaia care. Also, first aruna is now conducted with considerably more sensitivity than in the past. However, I can only speak of the higher echelons (if it can be termed as such!) of Uigenna society. There is little doubt that isolated groups still perform Inceptions of outrageous savagery.

Fortunately, the Uigenna are alone in their barbaric Inception methods. The Varrs are perhaps the acceptable face of Uigenna: hara from that tribe who have grown up and become civilised. The Varrish way of Inception is clinical, clean and structured. It also involves a small degree of ceremony, as this seems to help the newly incepted to accept their condition.

Prior to Inception, humans are kept in isolation to fast, in medical facilities. They are physically cleansed and examined for disease and injury. Tranquilising drugs are habitually administered, which ensures the inceptee is meek and malleable. Before the Inception itself takes place, a hienama will instruct the inceptee in a basic knowledge of Wraeththukind and what Inception will do to them. They are encouraged to believe they will emerge from the experience as superior beings, and that each one of them is important to the tribe as a whole.

The Inception takes place in the facility after an anaesthetic has been administered, and involves a clinical transfusion of blood from the hienama allotted to the inceptee. This hienama will also see the new har through althaia and is generally responsible for first aruna thereafter.

Although the Varrs do not greatly adhere to the caste system of magical training, they do provide a naming ceremony for each new har and a small rite of acceptance into the tribe.

There are occasions, of course, when a human will volunteer for Inception themselves. Such recruits usually derive from groups of human slaves. Varrish hara in control of these slaves generally notice and nurture humans who are suitable for Inception. These individuals inevitably go into the procedure with more knowledge than usual, and will have a harish mentor who will undertake the role of hienama for them.

While the way of the Varrs is functional and efficient, the methods of the more exotic tribes are certainly more intriguing. I was lucky enough to befriend a Colurastean on my travels, who was willing to give me some details of his tribe's Inception procedure.

The Colurastes favour incepting humans at a very young age, which at first, I must admit, I found to be a repellent idea, not least because of the arunic aspects of Inception. However, my source explained to me that incepted children were not subject to this aspect of the process. Inevitably, I was curious as to how Inception could then be successful. I learned that the Colurastes have developed a method whereby they activate the energy centres of the soume-lam, which in essence is the procedure which cements Inception, through the use of suppositories created from certain botanicals, the details of which my informant was obliged to keep secret from me. The young har is then allowed to live out his childhood, and undergoes a coming of age ceremony once he reaches sexual maturity. This is an astounding departure from normal practice and I was curious as to why the Colurastes favoured it. Apparently, when incepted during childhood, a har suffers far less from the mental afflictions that can plague the newly-har. He has grown up with his new form and accepts it completely, in many cases not even remembering being human.

Inception for the Colurastes is a lengthy ceremony, and every care is taken that the inceptee is calm and free from fear. Hara from the tribe adopt new inceptees, and care for them as if they were their own offspring. After Inception, the new har is given many gifts, cosseted and praised, and is in fact treated like a prince for several days after althaia.

The Colurastes are regarded as a strange and eccentric tribe, if not a little insane, but I believe their reputation is largely undeserved. In many ways, they are more advanced than the tribes who are more prominent upon the stage in Megalithica, but they keep their ways to themselves. Until a time comes when they feel comfortable allowing outsiders to witness their ceremonies and rites, they will remain shrouded in secrecy.

The majority of other tribes use an Inception method that remains fairly consistent. The inceptee undergoes the usual fast, commonly known as forale, and during this time might undergo certain purification ceremonies and instruction from a hienama. Most Inceptions take place in a Nayati, or temple, even if that is simply a location in the landscape that is made temporarily sacred by the officiating hienama(s). Prior to the transfusion process, the inceptee is generally required to take part in a public ritual, called a harhune, which serves as a 'statement of intent'. It is usually desirable for each inceptee to state that he is present of his own free will, although it has to be said that the prudent use of narcotics often stimulates the inceptee's enthusiasm for the event. Very few tribes allow an inceptee to undergo transfusion while conscious, simply because the procedure can be painful.

The new har will be cared for assiduously during althaia, when everything is done to ensure the process is as painless as possible, and distress is kept to a minimum. Again, most tribes advocate the use of tranquillising substances during this time.

First aruna is generally wrapped up in a great deal of ceremony and ritual, and much effort is made to ensure the procedure is as blissful as possible for the new har. He will generally choose a tribal name for himself during this time.

The subject of Inception is vast and fascinating, and the information given above merely scratches the surface of this vital aspect of haralogy. There is still much research and study to be done, as each tribe adds its own personal touches to the operation. Many groups are secretive about their methods, and suspicious of outsiders. I consider myself privileged to have gained the knowledge I already own, and hope only to extend it through time.

Perhaps, as humans become extinct and we learn about how to create pure-born hara, Inception will one day become a thing of the past. Everything possible should be done now to acquire information about Inception's many forms, before this intriguing and important information, this slice of history, is lost to Wraeththukind forever.

"The gods of humanity lived above them as we now do."

"All I saw was an opportunity to make money. Now there is no money. Luckily hara never require payment in cash, but trust me - you cannot afford to buy from the Kakkahaar."
- Finneaus har Unneah, Bard and Trader

Wraeththu Physiology

Biologically, harish and human functions appear similar to the untrained observer, but many basic human design faults or weaknesses are absent in the harish form. This is where the evolution argument breaks down, because such significant changes in an organism are very rare, though not impossible. It might be that evolution was initiated by some unknown outside force. It is also possible that hara were mutated by a disease or some earthly element that has come to light, since the tectonic activity and natural disasters that have been commonplace in recent years.

"One thing of note, no human female has been successfully incepted by a Wraeththu; no explanation has been given for this. Not even Thiede himself has an explanation."

— Malakess Har Sulh

"Exquisite torment in my clutches, till you surrender your soul to me. That I promise you."

— Woodbine har Colurastes

Appearance

Hara, on average, are fairly tall. The shortest har is generally about 5' 8." It has been noted that a har of 5' 3" who was incepted at the age of 17 years, grew 2" during althaia, and continued to grow after his transformation was complete. After six months, his height was measured at 5' 11." He would not have attained this height had he remained human, even given that his growth period, at 17, was not quite complete. The tallest hara are around 6' 7."

Hara generally do not have a great deal of body hair on the arms, legs and chest, which reflects their androgynous condition. However, the hair on the head grows vigorously, and humans who are in the early stages of pattern baldness when they were incepted, experience a regrowth of hair almost immediately.

Facially, hara retain characteristics of the ethnic group from which they were incepted. However, during althaia, it is as if they move towards a kind of perfect template for their type, which modifies their features to be more symmetrical, and regressive tendencies, such as malformed teeth and jaws, disappear.

There is sometimes some alteration to skin tone, which also appears uncannily to steer the new har to some kind of desired archetype. Those of dark skin pigments might become darker, the colour more intense, sometimes even acquiring subtle overtones of other shades, such as purple and gold. Some of these hara are unearthly in appearance and are greatly admired by others. Other hara might lose almost all skin pigment, but the incidence of true albinos is rare. Most of the palest hara tend to have very dark eyes.

Inception to certain tribes imparts other, stranger characteristics. The hair of the Colurastes is said to possess magical properties, and there have been reports of some isolated tribes producing hara whose skin tones have greenish or bluish hues.

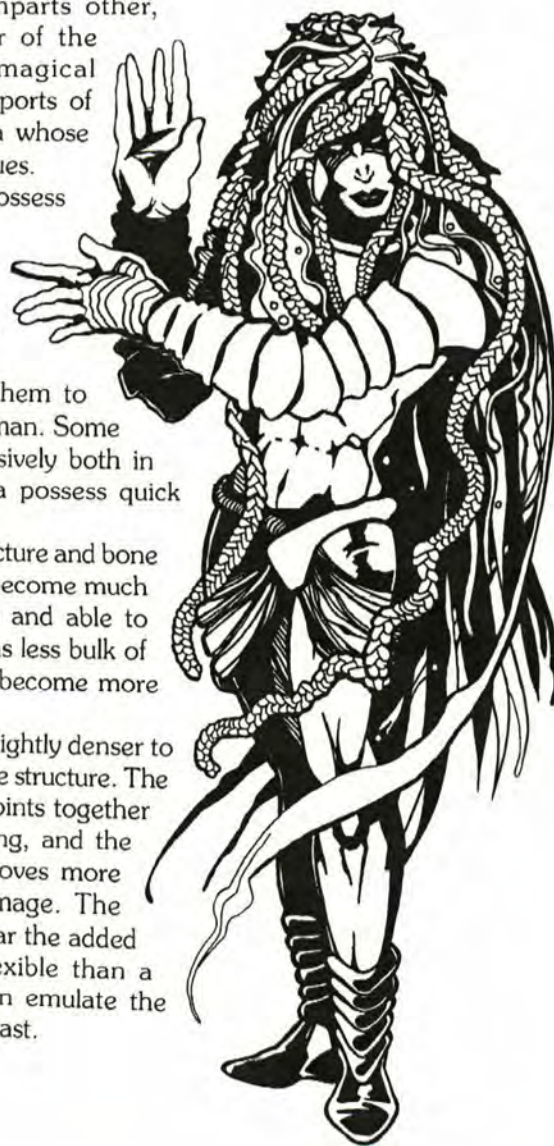
Rumours of a tribe whose hara possess tails have yet to be verified.

Agility

Hara are generally far more agile than humans, but this is mainly due to the fact that their physiology enables them to remain far fitter than the average human. Some can run extremely fast, leap impressively both in height and distance, and most hara possess quick reflexes.

Hara possess superior muscle structure and bone joints to humans. The muscles have become much denser, which makes them stronger and able to function more efficiently. As a har has less bulk of muscle tissue to move around, they become more agile.

Similarly, a har's bones are also slightly denser to accommodate the more efficient muscle structure. The cartilage that secures and holds the joints together is much more elastic and hardwearing, and the junction between two bones now moves more freely and is less susceptible to damage. The elasticity of the joints also gives the har the added advantage of being much more flexible than a human. With little training, hara can emulate the moves of a professional human gymnast.



Digestion

Wraeththu digestion is not too disparate from that of humankind, although it is unknown for hara to become overweight, whatever amount of food is ingested. Their metabolisms are flawlessly functional, so that excess nutrients are merely excreted as waste. Optimal bodyweight is never exceeded. This thorough system cleansing also extends to most intoxicants or stimulants. Narcotic effects can be experienced without lengthy side-effects. Because of this, few poisons are lethal to Wraeththu, although certain tribes of rather unsavoury reputation pride themselves on their ability to concoct poisons effective against their own kind.

Health and Self-Healing

The harish organism is adept at repairing itself, far more so than a human body. Agmara (or universal life energy) is often used by churgeons to augment the healing process, when healers focus the energy into a recipient's body through the hands or the breath. Wraeththu cannot regrow amputated limbs or organs that have undergone acute trauma, but minor trauma and injuries generally heal quickly. Serious injuries require the healing assistance of other hara. Wraeththu are much more resistant to disease than humans, as their immune systems are extremely efficient. This makes healing in the field safer and more efficient than it was for humans, and lessens the need for hospital facilities.

Among hara, mental illness, such as melancholia and depression, is not uncommon. For many, the mutation and its inherent ordeal have a long-term effect on the psyche. Some even descend into severe levels of psychosis, although even the most critical of these conditions can generally be treated with a course of Agmara healings by experienced, high caste churgeons. The most serious problems occur when this kind of treatment is not available to the affected har. In the majority of tribes, higher caste hara are vigilant concerning the mental condition of the newly incepted. Designated mentors keep a close eye on new hara for many months after Inception, to catch any symptoms of psychosis early on, before it gets out of hand. However, in the early days, this safeguard was not in place and quite a few hara descended into depression, which if left untreated can become increasingly difficult to treat.

The Senses

Wraeththu senses of touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste are rather more acute than those of humankind, but the sixth sense is even more developed. This may be due to the fact that Wraeththu are brought up with (or instructed in after Inception) the knowledge of how to make full use of their inner perception. This is a quality which has become dulled in the majority of humans. Some hara can even catch glimpses of future events or atmospheres; either by tranquil contemplation or in dreams. If a har receives no instruction in the use of his additional senses, he will not, like humans before him, be particularly adept at using them. However, even if not trained, he will still possess the ability to tune into this sense.

It is not unknown for some hara to have deficiencies in certain faculties, perhaps due to traumatic Inceptions. Therefore, you might occasionally come across a har who is short-sighted or hard of hearing. Other hara experience synaesthesia, when the senses become somewhat muddled. They might smell or hear colours, for example, or be able to 'see' sounds.

Life Span and Ageing

In comparison to humankind, Wraeththu appear ageless. Harish bodies are not subject to cellular deterioration in the same way as human bodies, but as yet nohar knows the full extent of a harish life-span. Sulh visionaries and mystics have suggested that, upon reaching the age of 150 years or thereabouts, a har will begin to 'fade', his vitality will diminish and the dignified end will be welcomed as the release for the soul and the gateway to the next incarnation.

A har's physical appearance will change little throughout his life. However, as he grows older, he will become more 'distinguished' in appearance. His eyes will appear

"You are full of reasonless pride, Varr, for you are nothing but a marred weapon. Now come close once more and learn how much deeper the finer blade cuts!"

- Dantallia, Gelaming duelling with a Varr

"Mug... Mug, mug, mug... Now I have your attention, can we please address the issue at hand?"

- Malakess har Sulh.

"The Varrs think they are Gods, the Uigenna think they are Demons, the Gelaming take this one step further; they 'know' they are Gods! Emm... don't tell them I said that?"

- Zillah Shemercy, Ex Varr General

"Many a star crossed lover has been separated from their partner in recent years, the men taken by the Wraeththu, and the women left for dead. On occasions women have been known to follow and help a cadre of Wraeththu."

"I think I will name your style of music 'Audio Terrorism.'"

- Aries Strala, Unneah

slightly deeper set, his cheek bones more defined, although his skin will still remain flexible and tight and show no visible signs of ageing. Weathering of the skin will add definition to the hara's physique. They will never appear old in the way that humans once did. Their experience and maturity will show more in their presence, bearing, charisma, and within their facial expressions.

DNA

Facilities are in short supply to perform accurate DNA analysis, but a few of the larger tribes have managed to get tissue samples analyzed. Many have proposed theories for what the results have revealed, some of which have tainted the data, but over some aspects the tribes are in common agreement.

The human genome has only four base pairs, [G A T C], whereas the harish gene has six base pairs [G A T C K L]. Nohar knows why this has occurred or what physical changes can be attributed to them. Not only have the base pairs increased, the amount of genetic information has been reduced. Many hara theorize that this is because there was a lot of redundant material in the human genome, which has somehow disappeared. It might also be that having six base pairs instead of four has made the information contained within them more dense and efficient.

The ribosome, the key to how the genome works, is also radically different to that of a human. This key decodes the DNA, and is used to instruct the cells of an organism to form into the right shape for organs and skin. The ribosome is a simple cell structure in humans, but in hara it has become much more complex.

Psychology

Wraeththu do not think exactly like humans, but as they evolved from human stock, hara still share many of their predecessors' traits. Older Wraeththu are slowly losing their more human aspects and we can imagine a time in the future when the old human ways of thinking have been completely wiped from the Wraeththu psyche.

Attitude to Humanity

The remnants of the human race are generally perceived as inferior, but not necessarily as a lesser life form of life that needs to be wiped out. The majority of hara regard humans in the same way a human might regard an animal as having equal rights to live upon this planet. Most humans respect animals, even though they don't possess the same intelligence and abilities as a human.

Some Wraeththu hunt humans for sport, while others try to preserve what is left of human culture and lifestyle. Whatever their viewpoint, every hara can see that humans suffer great inner conflict between their masculine and feminine aspects, which is hardly surprising, as outwardly they have to conform to their gender's accepted stereotypes. Hara frown upon this black and white perspective of the world. However, many humans have now begun to realize that life isn't quite as black and white as they used to think. These individuals are now beginning to attain an inner harmony similar to that achieved by Wraeththu.

Many hara pity humans as they struggle with their inner conflict of 'self'. Humans who appear to have an understanding of this conflict, and who are of suitable age, will be considered for Inception.

On the whole, Wraeththu don't hate humans, but regard the two species as essentially different and biologically incompatible. They believe that the human race is destined to extinction, and that part of this decline is due to humanity's inner conflict and their inability to understand themselves or to heal their psyches. Although certain hara have committed themselves to trying to train humans in this respect, very few can fully grasp the concept. Some hara are far from sympathetic about this inability to understand and tend to despise it, as they think the humans just aren't trying hard enough or don't want to understand anything that negates their own sense of superiority and self-importance.

Even though Wraeththu are physically and psychologically superior to humans, not all of them have the ability to comprehend their inner selves. It might be that certain hara still mistrust their inner voice, or else fear the truth of what they might discover within themselves. Through this failure to listen to their inner voices, hara can display the same prejudices against humans as humans tended to have against each other. This aspect of the harish cognitive mind seems to react in a similar manner to that of a human's, and the reaction can either be that of hostility and fear or else that of friendship and pity. Even though hara are not immune to dysfunctions of this type, their incidence is becoming less common as time goes on. Also, when this kind of imbalance occurs, it can be assuaged by the application of Agmara healing and careful tuition.

Relationships

Although some hara elect to have exclusive *emotional* relationships with one har only, which are known as chesna bonds, the idea of sexual fidelity – and indeed sexual jealousy – has been relegated to the past. Even two hara who are committed to a chesna bond would see nothing wrong in either of them taking aruna with hara outside that relationship. Wraeththu need aruna, and an exclusive physical relationship with only one partner, which inevitably would involve jealousy and mistrust, would ultimately be self-destructive. Tribes such as the Gelaming, Kakkahaar and the Unneah share the rather extreme view that hara cannot fall in love, at least not in human terms. Infatuation and 'crushes' are quite common, states which are referred to jokingly by the term 'kelos'.

Hara who are chesna might set up home together, travel together, and in most ways be inseparable, but they would still maintain an open view on taking other partners for aruna. A har would refer to his chesna partner as his 'chesnari'. Chesnari who have been together for some time develop a strong psychic bond and are able to communicate easily both emotions and thoughts. Interestingly, it appears that even hara who have ended a chesna bond can still share a psychic connection.

The Young

There is not yet any known or documented method for Wraeththu to reproduce, so the only idea we have of how a har will react to a child is to observe how they react to human children who are related to them, and also those who are not related.

Tribes such as the Colurastes prefer to incept the young rather than adult humans. Observation of their behaviour with their inceptees gives much insight into how hara will behave as parents, should reproduction ever become possible.

It is a very human trait to think of children as innocent creatures that can do no wrong. It appears that during the change from human to har, this emotional baggage is trimmed or removed completely. This does not mean hara dislike or despise the young. On the contrary, they respect children and what they will become. Hara believe that the way a child learns is through copying others, and the cooing and 'kiddy' speech of humans will not teach them anything other than that adults are at best stupid and should be ignored. Wraeththu believe that respect of elders is a desirable trait, and discipline should be applied when necessary, but on the whole, a har will encourage a child to think, to use its mind, to question the world around them.

The Colurastes believe that, when treated correctly, a child develops rational cognitive abilities and a greater sense of right and wrong at a much earlier age. Also, he will mature at a greater rate. This, however, does not stop him from having fun. It simply means the way he plays will be more directed towards the advancement of 'self', and a greater sense of how to act, react and deal with situations. Hara respect the fact that young children are open to learning and have yet to form a full set of rules about the world around them. Therefore, the influence of adults has great effect during this stage of development.

'Many rumours of human females being incepted have filtered through my ears. Not one of them has a grain of truth. Of course experimentation can be done to advance our knowledge in these areas and as I always say, "The females still have hope".'

– Velisarius Founder of the Kakkahaar.

"Evil? Wicked? What beautiful preconceptions. I may well be either, but at this moment I'm the only har who can aid you."

– Sovances, to a har in need

"Fuck... Fuck... Fuck, fuck and fuck... The monkey-banging crack whore... The beer has just run out."

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna

Belief

The 'unknown' has a strange power and works its magic on the minds of all living creatures. Humans fell deeply under its spell. Many human leaders developed complex systems of control devised around the concept of the unknown.

Deep down, humans need to rationalize everything that they perceive through their senses. They want explanations for the things their minds cannot understand, for in not knowing lies fear. Fear of the unknown causes great problems for the human mind. Even if many of the answers they seek lie before their eyes, humans seem not to see them, or are too lazy and cannot be bothered to comprehend them.

The need to believe in something that created or caused 'the unknown to happen' is deep rooted in the human psyche. Very few humans struggle to seek the truth, and even those who claim to have found it might only have discovered what they believed they would find, rather than what is really there. There is a fable of a human who was seeking the One Truth. While he was searching, Truth knocked on his door. The man said, 'Go away, I am searching for the Truth'.

Hara can see things differently, due to their ability to use and understand magic, and their integration with the metaphysical universe. They can see deeper into the connections between reality and the unknown. This ability enables them to unravel it and helps explain what cannot be explained simply through the senses alone. This does not mean there are no surprises left; it simply means that Wraeththu have a greater understanding of how the universe is made up and why things happen. They do not know everything, however. The universe is full of surprises, which can trip the unwary.

Unlike humans, hara do not need to believe in something to explain the unknown, which is why so many of them are opposed to organized religion. They have physical evidence of Agmara, because they can channel it through their own bodies, actually feel it. They are also aware that even with their superior physiology and extended abilities, they can perceive little more of the universe than humanity could. But what they cannot perceive or understand does not frighten them. They do not turn to gods to assuage a fear of the unknown or of what might lie beyond this life. Gods, for Wraeththu, perform a different function. Hara's ability to tune into the subtle energy of the ethers has shown them there is more to existence than physical life on the planet, and that the essence of a hara is eternal, part of the universal life force, which can only be changed in form, but never destroyed.

Existence

"People tend to get under your skin, even mine. You just have to learn to shed it when you outgrow it."

- Silk, - Colouraste Predator

Do we exist for a reason? Is there a meaning to life? If so, what is the great plan? These are questions that even hara cannot answer. Humans struggled to grasp the reason for their existence, which may have contributed to their downfall. Perhaps, if humankind had joined with Wraeththu, in accepting the force of nature, and had helped the earth rather than continued to abuse it, the rebellion of nature and the spread of horrific plagues might not have occurred. Humanity's self-importance and their misunderstanding of existence were partly responsible for their decline. This is illustrated through examples from their history, from the Crusades to the great world wars. Humans fell prey to their own failure to understand why they are alive.

This differs slightly with Wraeththu, who perhaps understand their place in the scheme of things more clearly. However, hara derive from humans and experience a constant struggle to overcome outmoded human conditioning and behaviours. Only high-ranking hara appreciate this conflict, and know that for Wraeththu to succeed where humanity failed, they must outgrow the desire for conquest and power. At this stage, the voices of moderation are relatively faint. While tribes like the Uigenna and the Varrs compete for dominance, hara will not fulfil their potential. Even the Gelaming, despite their lofty ideals, seem intent on vanquishing both the Varrs and the Uigenna. Hara such as the Kakkahaar, Velisarius, believe that Wraeththu must have its 'childhood', and that the apparently 'human' actions of hara should not be condemned. They believe that all hara will eventually mature from this stage of adolescence, when Wraeththu's true purpose will be revealed.

Therefore, to the progressive har, Wraeththu exist in order to better themselves and attain some kind of enlightenment. They believe this can be reached through the understanding of one's self and the inner peace it can bring. Through the power of Agmara, hara are given insight into the unknown. Most hara, even the most regressive, already know and understand these concepts, but many still fear the inner workings of the mind. This is undoubtedly a throwback to their previous human condition. Even though they have the chance to understand their own existence, certain hara still fear what they might find on the path to self knowledge, or think it requires too much effort. These individuals turn away from the path, to avoid confrontation with the dark they might find inside themselves.

Velisarius has said that it is as if the universe has thrown to Wraeththu unbelievable riches and gifts, but that hara have yet to understand what they have been given. To a har who does not understand the significance of precious metals, a golden ingot is simply a pretty toy to play with until it becomes boring and new toys are sought. The gold is put aside and forgotten, when it could have been used to buy every toy in the world. When questioned as to whether he understood the meaning of gold, Velisarius replied: 'The ingot lies before me in the sand. I have yet to work out how best to use it to acquire my toys, but I do understand it will one day accomplish this for me.'

"What's the difference between a Varr and a Gelaming? After three drinks, a Varr believes he's God. The Gelaming doesn't need alcohol."

-Kaziel Findac har Uigenna

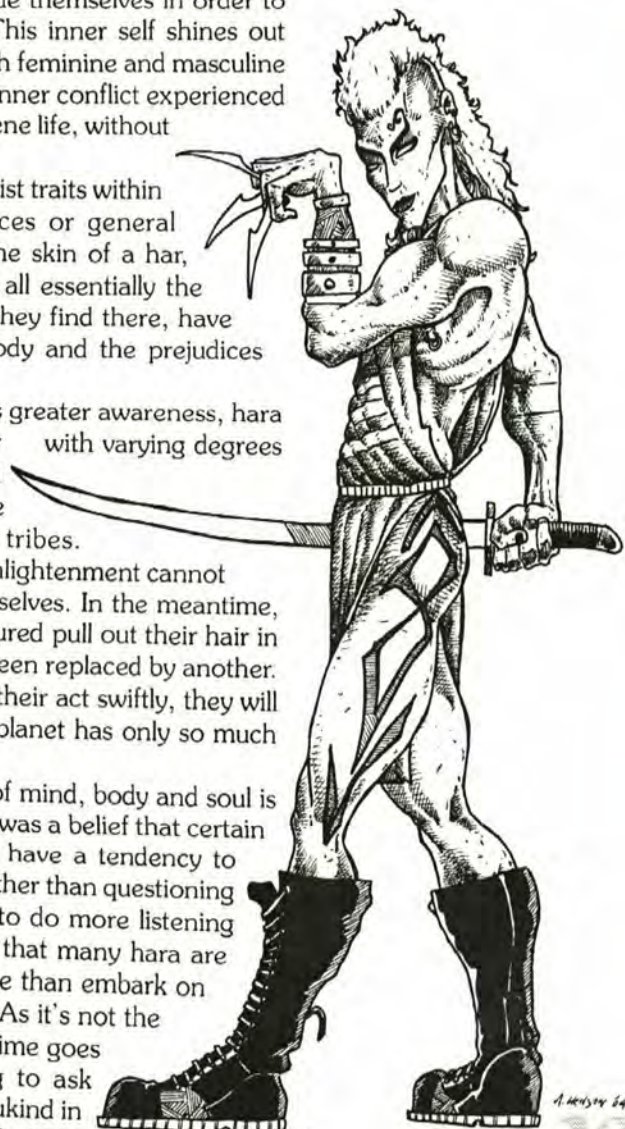
Self

As we have discussed, hara have a greater ability to see inside themselves in order to understand why they exist and of what they are capable. This inner self shines out beyond that of a human. Because of the amalgamation of both feminine and masculine aspects of their psyche, hara do not face the same degree of inner conflict experienced by humans. Hara can, if they so choose, live a much more serene life, without the taint of the human conflict of 'self'.

While there are undoubtedly (and inexcusably) still separatist traits within tribes, hara do not perceive ethnic origin, lifestyle choices or general appearance as divisive issues. They tend to look beneath the skin of a har, appreciating that despite any outward differences, they are all essentially the same. Only those who fear to look inside, or mistrust what they find there, have problems with the superficial differences of the physical body and the prejudices caused by a muddled mind.

Therefore, it seems confusing, if not sad, that despite this greater awareness, hara still group themselves into tribes, who all view one another with varying degrees of suspicion and distrust. While black-skinned and white-skinned Uigenna might live together in harmony, they will still be hostile to both black-skinned and white-skinned hara of other tribes. Enlightened hara wrestle with this dilemma: Awareness and enlightenment cannot be forced on others. Hara have to find these states for themselves. In the meantime, Wraeththu fight amongst themselves and hara who have matured pull out their hair in frustration. Many feel that one set of prejudices have merely been replaced by another. The most paranoid suspect that unless Wraeththu tighten up their act swiftly, they will be doomed to extinction as humanity was. They believe the planet has only so much patience, which could soon run out.

Some hara believe that the attempt to achieve harmony of mind, body and soul is their reason for existence and the way to enlightenment. This was a belief that certain humans also had. However, just as humans did, Wraeththu have a tendency to believe what more powerful and higher caste hara tell them, rather than questioning the motives of those hara. The most enlightened hara tend to do more listening than talking, but often this goes unnoticed. It has to be said that many hara are simply lazy; it is far easier to lap up somehar else's knowledge than embark on long, arduous inner journeys to discover answers for oneself. As it's not the destination that's important, it's the journey. Fortunately, as time goes on, and incepted hara mature, many more are beginning to ask themselves important questions about existence and Wraeththukind in general. Progression may be slow, but it is gradually occurring. Perhaps



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"Maybe we're little better than Varrs, but our parties are funnier."

- Malakess har Sulh

hara like Velisarius are right. Childhood is a necessary part of growing up. It cannot be forced or accelerated. Hara must learn, like children do, through experimentation, trial and error.

Aruna

Aruna is the Wraeththu term for sexual union. Among hara, it is indulged in either for pleasure, the intimate communication of minds and bodies that all hara need for spiritual contentment, or to achieve a specific result, as with Grissecon or ritual aruna.

The word 'aruna' came into being very early in Wraeththu history, and Velisarius of the Kakkahaar is believed to have coined the term. Initially, among the Uigenna, sex was – as often for humans – simply a means of physical gratification. It was only when more scholarly hara were incepted that the phenomenon was examined in depth.

Velisarius was incepted into the Uigenna, but despite the chaotic ways of his tribe, realised there was far more to sexual congress between hara than the need to scratch a physical itch. Initially, he did not think that hara could reproduce amongst themselves, which brought into question the whole need for sexual experience at all. Velisarius performed autopsies on hara killed in combat, and from his pioneering work much was learned about harish physiology. Through practicing ancient Tantric techniques (the art of sex magick), Velisarius saw that sex between hara was a dynamic spiritual force, and the energy created by it could be used and directed to affect reality, in a way far stronger than the most expert of human Tantric practitioners could have imagined. It was Velisarius who first saw the need to remove sexuality from the realm of gross physical needs and to elevate it to a spiritual status, which he termed aruna. Velisarius, and some like minded hara, were also instrumental in discovering that aruna is what 'fixes' Inception and also that it is a kind of sustenance for harakind in general.

Although aruna is generally regarded as a necessity for well-being, the amount of physical communion preferred varies from har to har. Some may seek out a companion only once a year, others may yearn for aruna several times a week. The female, or passive role, in aruna is known as soume (soo-mee); the active or masculine role as ouana (oo-ah-nah). It is not important whether a har enjoys most performing ouana or soume; again this varies among hara. Most swap and



"When the night is cold upon your skin, the air freezes you to the core of your being and the view before you a barren wasteland, then shall you understand who and what we are in truth."

- Tristan, on Wraeththu

change their roles according to mood or circumstance.

Sexual Organs

Every har possesses both masculine and feminine sexual organs, which are in many ways different to those of humanity, while also possessing certain similarities.

Ouana-Lim

When aroused, the masculine organ of the har resembles a petalled rod, sometimes of deep and varied colours. It possesses an inner tendril which only emerges when stimulated by the feminine organs of another har prior to the climax of any arunic activity. The secretions from the ouana-lim at this time possess healing and euphoric properties. There are seven energy centres found within the ouana-lim, which correspond to the seven main energy centres, or chakras, within the body's torso and head. Experienced hara can utilize these energy centres to intensify arunic energy during Grissecon, or else to heighten pleasure. As in human males, hara possess two testes, but these retract into the body cavity when a har takes a soume, or feminine, role in aruna. The ouana-lim too shrinks during these occasions, and then most resembles a dense, many-petalled flower on the surface of the body.

Soume-Lam

Behind the masculine organs lies the soume-lam, similar in some respects to a female generative organ, in that it is a self-lubricating passageway into the body. The interior of the soume-lam is pleated or furrowed, but also elastic, to accommodate the stiffened petals of an ouana-lim. Like the masculine organ, it possesses seven energy centres, although only five of them are accessible during normal aruna. High Codexia Malakess, the Sulh researcher, says that the remaining two must come into play during procreation. During normal aruna, the secretions from the stimulated soume-lam mingle with those of the ouana-lim to create an intoxicating substance that can sometimes be hallucinogenic. The culmination of aruna often provides an extremely visionary and spiritual experience for those involved.

"Wraeththu, our very name, is alluring. It sings of deep passion within the soul and embodies the power of the divine."

- Dantallia, another musing

Pelki

Most hara deny the existence of Pelki, although it undoubtedly does exist amongst brutalized tribes. It is the name for forced rape of either hara or humans. The latter is essentially murder, as humankind cannot tolerate the bodily secretions of Wraeththu, which act as a caustic poison; pelki to humans is always fatal. Because aruna is such a respected and important aspect of Wraeththu life, the concept of pelki is both abhorrent and horrifying to the average har. Unfortunately, certain dark powers can be accrued by indulging in these practices and this only serves as a dreadful temptation to hara of corrupt or morally decadent inclinations.

"Wraeththu are kings made from paupers. Gold and silver spun from nothing but hemp thread. How can you doubt our destiny to be anything but great?"

- Sovences, *Prophesising*

WRAETHTHU MAGICAL CASTE SYSTEM

Among Wraeththu, the caste system of magic refers to a level of training and learning rather than any social/cultural status. Some tribes' caste progression is not based on magical training, such as the Varrs', which is based on the arts of war. Hara progress through a three-tier caste system, with each tier consisting of three levels.

To pronounce these names, stress the syllables typed in bold.

KAIMANA (**Ky**-ee-mar-nah)

- Level 1: Ara - altar (**Ar**-ah)
 2: Neoma - new moon (Nee-**oh**-mah)
 3: Brynie - strong (**Bry**-nee)

ULANI (Oo-lar-nee)

- Level 1: Acantha - thorny (A-**canth**-uh)
 2: Pyralis - fire (py-**ral**-iss)
 3: Algoma - valley of flowers (al-**goh**-mah)

NAHIR NURI (Na-**heer** Noo-ree)

- Level 1: Efrata - distinguished (Eff-**rah**-tuh)
 2: Aislinn - vision (**Ayz**-linn)
 3: Cleatha - glory (Clee-**ah**-thuh)

"Everything changes; so it has been since the world began. Sometimes, these changes are good, sometimes not. But change does occur; and we are that change."

- Savieal Wayfarer, Colurastes

Hara of Kaimana and Ulani caste are always known by their level, i.e., somehar of Acantha level would be known as Acanthalid. Here is the full list of caste names:

Ara - Aralid	Acantha - Acanthalid
Neoma - Neomalid	Pyralis - Pyralisit
Brynie - Brynisit	Algoma - Algomalid

A har who was newly incepted would say about himself. "My caste is Kaimana and I'm an Aralid." A more advanced har could say, "My caste is Ulani and my level is Pyralis."

All newly incepted hara are Ara caste level: it means altar and signifies a time of preparation and learning.

The majority of hara do not progress further than level 1 or 2 Ulani, while many hara in underdeveloped tribes fail to ascend beyond Ara, level 1 Kaimana. The nine levels are crowned by a level beyond corporeal existence, equating with Aghama, or divinity.

Once Nahir Nuri has been achieved, however, the caste divisions (mostly incomprehensible to those of lower caste), are no longer used as a title of address. Hara of that caste are simply called Nahir Nuri.

Some tribes purposely keep some of their hara at a low caste level to use them as little more than slave labour. Alternatively, they might be kept at a low level simply until they have proven themselves thoroughly to the tribe as worthy of progression.

Certain tribes, such as the Obliviata, have no discernable caste system, but without a doubt still gain levels as they mature.

Different tribes overlay different or more precise meanings onto the caste system. For example, Pyralisits of the Kakkahaar tribe are highly prized as ritual fire dancers, and only hara of that level may partake in that aspect of rituals. The Varrs prize hara of Brynie and Acantha level, due to their strength and burgeoning powers.

It is unclear as to when the caste system developed, and who actually dreamed it into being. As all hara appear to be aware of their place in the system, it must have been created in the early days of Wraeththu. Even small and distant tribes, and those of other countries, practice the caste system of training, or something very similar. The only possible exception is the Obliviata, but it is presumed that they must have some other system of learning and training.

Caste Training

The time it takes to progress through the caste system varies from tribe to tribe and from har to har. The Unneah, Sulh, Colurastes and Gelaming like young hara to take

"Only two types of hara wander in darkness; those who are foolish and lost and those who have no need of light to see. I am of the latter kind. Which are you to be?"

- Sovences, of the Kakkahaar

their time to rise from Ara to Neoma and sometimes this process can take over two years.

During a young har's training from Ara to Neoma, they are taught about harish physiology and biology (as much as is currently known). They also learn about their new abilities and limitations. They will also be instructed in any spiritual doctrine the tribe follows, and will usually receive tuition in the basics of healing and magic. This will include learning how to use their telepathic abilities, and how to heal themselves or others. They might also be taught how to use some of their more unusual abilities, i.e. how to heat and cool objects.

It can take many years to progress from Neoma to Brynie, depending on the individual's abilities and also the traditions of the tribe to which he belongs. During this progression, a har's real skills and powers come to the surface. This is why many never get much beyond the first level of Ulani. Those who find their calling in life is satisfied by progression to Brynie might not need or desire higher levels. Some, however, take the paths that require greater magic or psychic abilities. They might simply enjoy study and reading. But the more scholarly hara generally progress to quite high levels.

To ascend to the Ulani tier requires as much work as reaching Brynie. Hara must face a series of tests and challenges that they need to pass in order to advance their caste to the next tier. The same applies to attaining Nahir Nuri. Few hara reach the third tier, due to the amount of time, effort and skill that it requires, as well as finding a suitable mentor or tutor to guide and train him.

The progression from Brynie to Acantha can be very traumatic for some hara, such as those of the Kakkahaar and Colurastes. Many of their rituals and practices are secret and it is forbidden for those of the lower caste levels to go beyond this point unless they are truly ready and have passed the tribes' many rigorous tests.

The higher you progress, the more complicated study becomes, but a har with a keen mind can progress fairly quickly. Often, this depends on how quickly the young har adapts to the changes in his body, and how fast he learns to use his abilities. Most hara find their powers eerily instinctive, while some might struggle to become familiar with them.

Some hara will quite obviously be of a high level, even when it has not been formalized by an official ceremony. This can occur when a har has been isolated, and has received no formal training, but has nevertheless developed as an individual. Sometimes, when such a har is found by a tribe, they can skip a level or levels, i.e. go straight from Neoma to Acantha. Many Nahir Nuri and committed hienamas (hi-en-ah-muhs), who are rather like priests, see it as a vocation to seek out these gifted hara and train them.

Caste Progression

An officiator known as a hienama (hy-en-ah-muh) conducts all caste ascensions, as well as Inceptions. Any har of Algoma level can train to become a hienama.

To ascend to a higher level in the system, hara must train in spiritual advancement. This involves working with Agmara energy (see below), acquiring levels of self-knowledge, and utilizing magical skills appropriate to their position within the system. After a period of training with a hienama, a har undergoes an initiation ritual, which is a formal recognition of their caste progression.

Caste ascensions and Inceptions take place in a temple (or sometimes a sacred site outdoors), known as a Nayati (ny-ah-tee). To make any chosen area a Nayati, a tribe must utilize the services of a hienama, who will perform a specific ritual, channelling Agmara energy into the environment in such a way to create sacred space, an area that naturally enhances magical or spiritual operations.

Agmara

As in many earlier, human mystical/esoteric systems, Wraeththu work with universal life force, which they refer to as Agmara (ag-mar-uh), or

*"Shallow fools wandering in
delusions of their own
devising. Truly it is the blind
leading the blind."*

Dantallia, speaking of a select few other
tribes

*"If you think we can crack
open that barrel with an axe,
and surf the wave, you're so
wasted."*

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna

less commonly, Agma (**ag-mar**). The name derives from Aghama, the founder of Wraeththu. The greater part of Aralid training involves teaching the individual to manipulate this force. It can be used for healing, affecting changes in reality, and facilitating telepathic abilities.

"Immanion? Yeah I've heard of it. All rubbish, propaganda and lies! Though if you find it, let me know?"

- Anonymous, Unthirst slave of the Varr tribe

For some tribes, caste progression, like Inception, involves little or no ceremony. Among the Varrs, for example, hara will go through a period of training followed by a formal announcement of their new level, much like graduating in school.

In the early days of Wraeththu, very few hara had time to learn about the caste system, and many were unaware of their own powers and true potential. While caste progression is faster and less complicated amongst the Uigenna in the northern cities, today a surprising number of Uigenna are Ulani. We presume they now apply more time and effort to caste progression, in order to ensure their survival and to have an advantage over their rivals.

Most hara do not get past mid-level Ulani, Pyralis, unless they have a desire to become a hienama, and then they must become Algoma to achieve their goal.

Very few Nahir Nuri exist, and it's unclear how many of these have reached the uppermost level. There is talk of a level beyond the Nahir Nuri tier, but what that might encompass, nohar knows.

MAGIC

Agmara

Agmara is the source of all magical energy to which Wraeththu have access. Agmara is Life Energy; it's part of everything. Through Agmara, all things in creation are interwoven and connected: both living beings and inanimate objects, such as rocks, water, air and the fire that burns.

Humans have known about life energy for thousands of years. It has given different names by different cultures: chi, mana, reiki, prana, barraka and spirit. Although it has many different names and uses, the energy remains the same. It's what makes the universe hold together and work. Without it, there would be no universe.

Agmara, as hara call life energy, has direct links to the development of Wraeththukind. Wraeththu differ from humans in that they possess the capabilities to use this energy for a multitude of tasks, from healing to destruction. They do this by being able to channel focused Agmara directly through their own bodies, most commonly through the hands, the feet, the breath and the eyes, and also of course during aruna. The possible uses are limited only by the knowledge and imagination of the practitioner.

Many objects can only hold an amount of Agmara roughly equal to their physical mass. However, certain substances can hold more; these include crystals and very ancient artefacts. It appears that the older an object is, and the more effort that has been put in to making it, the more Agmara it can hold. For example, a simple rock took little effort on the behalf of nature, but the formation of a crystal required a vast amount of time and natural energies to create. If you create a staff, wand or charm to hold Agmara, it can give you an additional store, from which you can draw at any time, **without** Probability or cause and effect looking in on the act.

"Yo! Dudes get your facts straight. We're Uigenna. We don't dig that rules shit."

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna

The Development of Magic

Magic is the understanding and manipulation of universal energy. Every object, whether it is living or inanimate, is made up of this energy.

Ancient peoples believed that the universe and everything in it was comprised of five basic elements: Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit (also sometimes known as Ethers or Forces). These were really metaphors or masks for forces they did not understand. People accepted the existence of energies that the limited human senses could not

perceive, and called them spirits, elementals and gods. What they could not comprehend, they put down to the action of 'gods'.

As humans developed, they became more obsessed with understanding everything. Belief in the unseen and strange forces was not enough. They wanted to shine a light into the darkest corners. They developed science. This in itself was first seen as a form of magic, by those who did not understand its principles and theories, although it eventually became widely accepted. However, even this new 'magic' could not explain everything in the universe. There have been many scientific theories about the mysteries of life, but when it comes down to it, what's a theory other than just clever guess work?

As time went on, and humans acquired more knowledge and awareness, science and magic began to converge. Humans accepted that processes and phenomena regarded as 'magical' might simply be aspects of the physical universe they had yet to understand. A new form of magical practice began to emerge from within science, which was more compatible with both perspectives. Uncannily, and unknown to its practitioners, it was actually a reversion to a very ancient view and understanding of the universe: knowledge that had been lost. This system was developed and applied in secret. Its practitioners began to explore it in every way they possibly could, although certain individuals jumped on the band wagon and claimed that they were more powerful than the gods. These claims, and the people who made them, discredited the system. Again, magic fell into ridicule. It could have saved the human race from their fate, but they just laughed it off as hokum.

The new concept of magic still acknowledged the five main elements and Forces of Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit with which practitioners worked in ancient times, but now also incorporated other Forces and Meta Realities such as Time, Chaos, Energy and Phase. These additions brought greater potential to magical practice. Unfortunately, humans, with all their prejudices, and blindness to what was really happening to the world, failed to grasp this potential, and ergo lost their only hope for survival.



Is Magic Difficult to Do?

The answer is yes and no, as anything becomes easy with practice. However, the amount of Agmara you will need for each task will vary. Drawing on and using Agmara takes its toll on the practitioner. Draw too much and overextend your abilities and you can cause yourself serious physical damage.

Usually, in magic there are two major forces at work: Creation and Destruction. Creation is always difficult, but destruction is only as difficult as you make it.

*"You have the smallest
ouana-lim I've ever seen. Are
you sure you're not a flat-
chested human female?"*

— Unknown, Uigenna

Destruction

If you wanted to destroy a table, there are many ways you could do it. You could burn it, or blow it up, or make something land on it with great force. These methods, however, all involve an element of creation, in that something has to be created in order for something to be destroyed.

Burning: This won't be too difficult as the table in question is made of wood. A flame or a spark can set it off. Only a small amount of fire is needed to initiate the process, as once the table is set alight it will burn away quite easily on its own. This requires minimal effort in the creation area.

Dropping an object onto it: You would either have to create an object to drop, or else move an existing object to a convenient location, from where you could drop it to maximum effect. If the area is enclosed, you would also need to accelerate the object. This operation requires more creative energy. However, you could employ cunning, and somehow cause someone to trip over and land on the table, thus utilising other forces that are not your own to do the destruction for you.

Now look at this from a magical perspective: The table contains a certain amount of magical energy, which can be used in the table's own destruction. This requires nothing more than a magical trigger, which does not have to be created. It could simply involve the redirection of focused Agmara, which already flows through your body. So, if its own magical energy is used to destroy the table, it will simply cease to exist. For a skilled practitioner of magic, this is very easy.

The destruction of any object is only as difficult as you make it. The easy way is simply to utilize an object's natural magical energy to destroy it in a cascade effect. This requires very little input. Any other method would require you either to create a force or an object to do the work for you.

It would seem that the easy option, the magical way, uses an insignificant amount of power to do the job. But casting the enchantment can be very hard on the har who manipulates the magical energy. If he's in a crisis situation, could he afford to expend so much energy, when he might also have to fight or flee? So, even the apparently easy way can be difficult. You have to weigh up what would be the easiest and most efficient method of destruction.

The fact is, it's pointless and a waste of energy to use magic, when you can simply pick up an axe and use it to hit the hypothetical table you want to destroy. In many situations, you don't need to use magic at all. The more cunning you employ, and the more thoroughly you think things through, the better and more powerful a magician you will become.

Creation

To create an object, you have to convert Agmara energy into physical matter. To the experienced practitioner, this is fairly simple and effortless, but it is very taxing indeed for the unskilled or inexperienced. Also, whatever your level of expertise, there is always the danger that the magical energy you channel into being can spiral out of control. This depends on the size of the object of the enchantment. Even if the actual physical effort of the caster is minimal, the amount of power can be, and usually is, very high.

Both destruction and creation have to comply with the laws of cause and effect, and from exploring this concept you'll see that creation is potentially far more hazardous than destruction.

Probability or Cause and Effect

In nature, the branches of trees move, animals hunt, and apples fall to the ground. All of these are effects. However, they don't just happen: Each requires a cause. A cause is that which results in the effect. The tree moves because the wind blows on it. The animal hunts because it's hungry. The apple falls to the ground because Isaac Newton

*"Your future..... is a twisted
mess of sorrow. But it's
nothing that cannot be
resolved.... for a price."*

*- Sovances of the Kakkahaar, scrying for a
human*



told us it is supposed to do that – well, not really! Newton defined the cause as ‘gravity’, which creates the effect.

For every affect you need a cause, and this fundamental concept applies to magic too. For example, under normal circumstances, a castle can’t just disappear in an instant. It just wouldn’t happen in the natural universe. However, it’s highly likely it would crumble to bits if an earthquake occurred directly beneath it. Magically, you could create an earthquake to achieve the effect you desire. But why bother with that? Why not just zap the castle with a blast of magical energy that makes it disappear? The reason for this is that if you simply create the effect without an obvious cause, you’re going against probability. After you’d cast your castle blasting enchantment, and made it disappear, you’d have bent the rules of cause and effect. The fabric of reality would snap back in to shape, with unpredictable results. This is called backlash. It’s rarely fatal, but it can be devastating, and in some cases the practitioner might lose their ability to manipulate magical energy. The Universe doesn’t like cheating. Even in magic, there has to be a probable cause and effect, otherwise you might achieve more than you bargained for.

In the past, many great magicians have used psychology and clever engineering of actions to achieve a desired result with a minimum of magical effort. As with the earlier example, if you want to destroy a table, you might as well use the axe. After all, you’re unlikely to fail in your attempt. It’s obvious this is the easiest way to do it, and the laws of probable cause would not be affected.

However, if you must use magic to destroy the table, you want to avoid unwanted questions, such as ‘Where the hell did that table go?’ For example, you could use your powers to make a drunk trip over and land on the table, thus breaking it, or manipulate that drunk into lighting a cigarette and then leaving it to burn on the table, which ultimately destroys it. These actions are very possible and likely, and therefore will not effect the force of probable cause. A skilled magician will find ways to trick the mind and get round the irritating force of probability. The best way to avoid risk is to use the axe when you can. Use magic only when you have no other option.

The same care should be applied to acts of magical creation. Imagine that you are very hungry. You could use Agmara to create a sumptuous feast that manifests before your eyes. Obviously, this is not very likely to happen naturally and its manifestation could cause a ‘wobble spot’ – an area where the fabric of reality breaks down or becomes warped. However, it wouldn’t be unlikely if someone came along, perhaps having changed their path along the way, who could give or sell you something to eat. If you need to use magic to create something, think of a way it could happen naturally.

We could go into all sorts of rarefied areas now and talk about how in magical reality time is non-linear, so the enchantment worked upon your supposed food bearer would have begun to take effect in real-time even before you cast it. But we won’t. The ideas of probability and cause and effect are quite mind-bending enough!

Magic is very powerful and can do many wondrous things. However, if you abuse it, it can involve dire consequences. The wisest magicians choose not to use it unless they absolutely have to. Even when they do, you’re not likely to know that they have, unless they have been forced into a situation where they have no other option.

There are many ways to disguise the blatant and vulgar use of magic, such as ritual acts like aruna and Grissecon. Through these processes, you can create ‘essential elixirs’, which can act as medicines, magical ‘batteries’ or condensations of power that can be directed by your will and intention.

When you use magic, you will be able to get away with most minor effects. It’s only when you start to tap into other beings’ or objects’ Agmara energy that probable cause will come into effect. The act of stealing Agmara from anything is enough to upset the Universe, but there are ways to produce Agmara without stealing, such as through Grissecon, or a ritual in which others take part.

“Varrs! Run!”

- Tristan, out of his depth

*“Fool to come here, now pay
the toll. I shall drink your
blood and rend your flesh. I
shall sunder your bones and
feast of your life! For I am
Uigenna, and you are both
my prey and plaything this
night.”*

- Loveless, to an intruder on his turf

Wraeththu Powers

Once a human has been incepted, their minds change as well as their bodies. Powers and abilities, that have been dormant for millennia in humans, come into their own and new powers develop. Soon after Inception, as part of their caste training, a new har learns how to flex the muscles of the mind and also how to channel Agmara energy. All Wraeththu, even those who choose to shun formal training, have natural psychic powers and healing abilities. Training in the psychic arts is given by the tribe's hienama, or other high ranking hara, but even tribes who tend not to concentrate on these abilities, such as the Varrs and the Obliviata, possess latent psychic talents.

Channelling Agmara

Magically, Wraeththu work with the universal life force. This is the same energy that many humans used in the past, for esoteric and healing work. Its less common name is Agma (ag-mar). The name derives from Aghama, the founder of Wraeththu. The greater part of Aralid training involves teaching the individual to manipulate this force. It can be used for healing, affecting changes in reality and other magical workings, and to help facilitate telepathic abilities. To use Agmara you first must be attuned to it. This usually takes place at Inception or soon after.

Using the Aethers (or Ethers)

Telepathy is a trait shared by all hara. At low levels of the caste system, most hara are aware of the emotions and surface thoughts of those around them. At the highest levels, hara can communicate across continents and even across the world.

The aethers refer to the realms beyond harish perception, but which might exist in the same time/space. They are the medium used for thought transference and visionary questing. In utilizing the aethers, a har wishing to communicate with another har across the world would visualize that, beyond this reality, distance has no meaning. By channelling Agmara and using it to transfer the thought, high caste hara can communicate telepathically with non-local receivers as if they were standing right next to them.

Healing

All hara have the ability to heal themselves and each other using Agmara energy. All forms of injuries can be treated from broken limbs to psychological problems. Simple illnesses such as sprained muscles and headaches can usually be treated and cured in one session. More complicated problems require healing sessions several times a day. In very severe cases, treatment will involve 24-hour attention from a team of skilled healers.

Grissecon

The energy raised during aruna can be used for magical purposes, especially when a great amount of focused Agmara is required. The ceremony for this is known as Grissecon, and can be a public or private rite.

Generally, hara of higher caste carry out this function. Different tribes perform Grissecon in various ways. In one method, during aruna, the participating hara focus any arunic energy into the secretions of their bodies. The resulting elixir can be used in many ways: for example, as a medium for healing, or as a ritual item for reality-altering tasks. Another method involves directing their combined arunic energy out of the body, in the same way that they might project Agmara towards a specific goal.

Other Talents

Wraeththu also have the skill to change temperatures, either in their own body or by channelling their own or environmental energy into another object. It is possible for a har to heat up a cup of coffee or melt ice on a window sill. Hara more skilled at these talents can adjust the temperature of a whole room, withstand blizzard conditions, or even walk through fire.

*"I want you and need you;
your touch, your breath. I
need it tonight. I need it now.
Damn you Sovences what
have you done to me? Damn
you and your whole nomad
tribe."*

- Dantallia, having just discovered chesna

*"Manticker the Seventy; what
a har. Pray you don't meet
him before your time."*

- Loveless, in another lucid moment



"Let it be noted, any Freyhellan seen on this fair land makes themselves a target. We will not tolerate their invasions any longer. I will send word to our northern outposts to take whatever measures are necessary to get our point across."

- Fragease, *Sulh Warmonger*



MEGALITHICA AND BEYOND

THE WORLD OF THE WRAETHTHU

In the vast country of Megalithica, and across the sea in Alba Sulh and Almagabra, Wraeththu society is forming and expanding at an incredible rate. Hara are already forming towns and cities of their own and taking over from where human society left off. Will Wraeththu make the same mistakes as humankind once did, or will they reach their true potential?

In this section, you will learn about Wraeththu society and the divisions that already exist within it. You'll hear rumours about the rest of the world and read tales about the various tribe leaders and other hara of legend. You'll gain deeper knowledge about Inception, and all the rites, rituals and beliefs of Wraeththu. You'll also discover the theories and stories behind the creation and diversity of Wraeththukind. You'll find out all you need to know about harish culture and society, the differences between the tribes and which areas of the world you should probably avoid and which you should make a point of visiting.

IS IT THEIR TIME NOW?

The First Signs

Thinking back, the signs were so obvious. We should have been more aware of the fate that awaited us, but we were preoccupied with other troubles. New diseases appeared out of nowhere to wipe out thousands, fertility levels dropped for no explicable reason and a new war started somewhere nearly every day. We never thought to look beyond what was happening on the news channels and out of our own windows. We were all so blind. Who could have thought that lurking beyond this devastation and destruction, a new race was waiting to be born, waiting to take over?

I was very young when it first started. The first thing I remember, when I began to realize just how wrong things were going with the world, was when a new virus appeared and started to infect the populations of several cities. Initially, it was almost undetectable, but it spread unbelievably quickly. Victims succumbed fast, and three quarters of those

How Humanity View Wraeththu

An Account by
Amelia Severance
Of the City of Sans Merci

"I am not incapable of compassion. But do not expect it of me, for I am a creature much more enamoured with gentle cruelty."

- Tristan, to a peer in the Irraka

infected died. No one ever figured out how it was spread. It caused widespread panic. Whole cities were put under quarantine - no one was allowed to visit or leave them! Public transportation ground to a halt and all flights were cancelled in an attempt to curb the spread of the disease. And yet, as quickly as the virus took hold, a few months later it had simply vanished.

Viruses of another kind were also plaguing the world. Computers would become infected almost daily with new worms and Trojans, even those locked away on secure networks. Nobody could trace where they were coming from, or even attempt to break the code in which they were programmed. The Internet as a whole slowly crumbled beneath the weight of malicious computer codes. Cities, indeed whole countries, would fall offline everyday. The anti-virus organizations and the policing networks could do nothing but sit back and watch.

It was announced that the fertility rate had dropped to an all-time low, which was blamed on nuclear fallout and a mysterious substance found in certain water supply systems. However, the countries concerned were too busy blaming each other to investigate what they had found.

Power stations were over-loaded one day, yet drained the next. When the water supplies got infected with some unknown chemicals, people started to hoard bottled water. Fights would break out in supermarkets over items like bread and toilet tissue. We were faced with the eerie sight of roads blocked with dead cars, once the pumps at the gas stations had run dry.

The governments were all too preoccupied with their ongoing wars to concentrate on what was happening at home. Conflicts against undefined enemies and international terrorism were started every month. Large groups of people would be found and destroyed, with little evidence to support their 'criminal' activities. Government funds were channelled into defence and the armed forces, taking precedence over solutions for the ever-growing power crisis and polluted waters that were killing the population at home. Old enemies built new weapons and used them with devastating consequences. Nuclear bombs were dropped with almost careless abandon. Whole countries were destroyed and deserts turned into huge, glass plains, due to the immense heat of the explosions.

Rise of the Wraeththu

It was at this point, in my opinion, that the planet started to fight back. A series of huge earthquakes devastated all but the strongest buildings in many areas, and tidal waves crashed against most of the coastal regions of the world. Simultaneously, long-dormant volcanoes erupted into the night's sky, destroying all in their wake.

Even these events did not stop the wars. The governments blamed each other for the natural disasters and panic broke out worldwide. We should have known by then that our days were numbered.

While all this was happening, we barely took notice of the small groups of young men, who had started to wander the streets in the slums of the northern cities late at night. Most of us, who were rich enough to afford the privilege, now lived in citadel communities, well protected from what went on beyond our high, impenetrable walls. The feral gangs spent their time fighting and drinking. They looted every building they could find a way into and killed those who dared to challenge them. The police would not go near certain areas of the cities, and left the kids, whose territories were clearly marked by gang logos, to run riot. If you did not live in a citadel, and a gang logo appeared in your neighbourhood, you knew it was time to pack up and move out - quickly!

The cities grew more and more violent. Some people moved away to the countryside or into the secure compounds that were set up for the less privileged, run by the police and local military. The gangs of what we perceived to be wild kids expanded at an alarming rate. People started to notice that young men and boys had begun to disappear from their homes. The word "Wraeththu" was first heard, and then it was whispered everywhere.

"Shadows in the heart and shadows in the mind - everyhar has them. Banish them from your thoughts, for they are just that: shadows. Divine will lives in everyhar. Shine with that light and the shadows will find no purchase."

- Dantallia, instructions on magic and purpose

Curfews were imposed, but few people dared to leave their homes after night fall in any case. As time went on, hardly any young men were left in the communities. It was as if they had somehow been spirited away. Some of us called for action, for more thorough investigation, but the government took little notice. They still had wars to plan and countries to invade. What damage could a bunch of kids really do?

I remember the day vividly when Carmine, the city of my birth, fell to Wraeththu. It all happened so quickly. We were used to power outages by then. At first, on that fateful day, the Internet went down. Later the electricity went off throughout the city. It never came back on again. That night, the barricades around the compounds began to fall. The Wraeththu gangs broke through and killed everyone they could catch, in a savage, brutal and bloody attack.

I was lucky. I left on the last bus to ever depart Carmine City. I remember the panic, the strange sounds in the air, the cries of beasts, the stink of smoke and blood, the darkness that covered the sky, shot with flame. Now I know that Wraeththu are much more than just street gangs, but then I still was too blind to see the truth. I went south: the same direction in which many other people were heading. I found sanctuary in Sans Merci.

Downfall of Humankind

After a triumphant and very bloody bombing campaign in some country I can't quite remember the name of, the government finally took notice of what was happening on its city streets. At first, they announced that Wraeththu street gangs were infected with some kind of disease and we were told a vaccine was being developed to combat it. As far as I am aware, that vaccine never appeared, although I did hear a rumour that it was tested on a large group of people and that nearly all of them died from its effects. We only got to hear things because the city officials still maintained tenuous contact with other communities through a radio link. We had TV stations, but they were all local.

A couple of years later, the battle for the city of Duwamish took place. The news came through that the human military forces had been defeated, with devastating casualties. The terrible truth about Wraeththu was finally revealed. They are no longer human. They cannot be. They can kill with their voices. They are impervious to pain. They are so swift and strong. Some say they are demons, or avenging angels, that have come to destroy humankind. They steal boys, do something to them to alter their being. But what exactly are they? Where did they come from? In truth, all we can be certain of is that they intend to take over this world and, whatever they were, they are not human as we are, and they aren't going to go away.

When Duwamish and the other great northern cities fell, most of us blamed the government – or what was left of it, wherever it hid, safe from the devastation. The country was falling apart and we had lost virtually all contact with the rest of the world, as other countries dealt with their own internal problems. The Far East had closed its borders years ago, to stop the spread of disease, and no one had heard from the Antipodean areas for a long time. In Megalithica, as Wraeththu renamed our country, the northern cities fell one by one to our inhuman adversaries, and they were heading south. The remnants of the military forces poured all that was left of their resources into stopping them. The government made grand announcements about our coming victory, but months went by, and the chaos in the north simply grew and grew.

The remaining human population fled further north and to the deep south, in an attempt to escape the Wraeththu scourge. At times, people even had to run from their friends and family, who had somehow been transformed into these ungodly creatures. Many human groups, who met on the road, dug in and formed small farms and encampments that could be easily defended. Some of these did indeed thrive, possibly because the Wraeththu gangs were concentrating on the suburbs and the centres of the once great cities.

People wanted to believe that they would be safe up in the hills or out in the deserts. Life continued at a slower pace, free from the grip of modern technology. In

"Have I got a deal for you?"

- Unknown, Unneah

"Uigenna I am. Fire, pure fire. My enemies from when I was human are nothing. Destroying them is only an automatic reflex. Burn and flay, let them just scream in helpless agony!"

- Unknown, Uigenna

most people's hearts lurked the hope that Wraeththu would not survive for long or spread much further.

Meanwhile, here in the south, many of the more inaccessible cities managed to keep going, even though they were isolated. Wraeththu only ventured this far south in raiding parties or to gain new recruits. Seeing what had happened to our northern counterparts, we began to make ready for the inevitable onslaught

Stories spread about strange mutations. Some people claimed that Wraeththu might even be aliens, while others were convinced that they were vampires or werewolves. All I knew was that they were evil, spawned from the worst of humankind, created by some unknown source to wipe humanity from the planet.

"I will take you and show you sensual passions beyond what your human mind can comprehend."

- Unknown, Gelaming

Is It Their Time Now?

The answer to this question has to be yes. All that is left of human society has scattered to the four winds. Some have fallen at the feet of these creatures and gone over to their side, and many others have died at their hands. Those who survive inhabit isolated, mountainous areas in the far north of the country and a few towns and cities off the beaten track in other areas. We live in the hope that our time will come again, or that human society still thrives in countries on the other side of the world.

Who could have thought that in a matter of a few decades the human race could almost be replaced by another species? We do not know where Wraeththu came from, or how they came to be, but they are fast and strong, and unbelievably vicious and cruel. But perhaps in their savagery lies their weakness. They are inexorable, but perhaps mindless. They have little organization. We must keep ourselves safe from their wicked ways, and wait for the day when we can build a force strong enough to take back our world from their hands. We have to believe it: Humanity will rule again.

WHAT HAPPENED TO ALL THE MEN?

An Account by
Calambus Mint
Of the Uigenna

How Wraeththu View Humanity, or Not?

The world was truly fucked, even before Wraeththu arose from the slums of Carmine City. Disease was rife throughout the cities. The water supplies had been poisoned by some bizarre enzyme that leaked up out of the earth, but it was discovered too late. Carmine was the birthplace of Wraeththu, but most of them deserted the place pretty quickly. Only once they'd found strength and numbers did they return.

It took many days travel for hara to arrive back in Carmine; it was still in a completely bad state, in fact far worse than it was when Wraeththu had left it. People were afraid to leave their homes. Industry was on the verge of collapse and many streets lay empty. You could almost hear the city screaming to have the life returned to it. The silence was like velvet; soft, dark and oh so alluring. Maybe it was the silence the humans feared, or was it something else? They never saw us coming. Just a bunch of kids; that's all they thought we were. Nothing but street gangs running wild. How very, very wrong they were!

I was wrong too, but I was only human then. All I saw was freedom, and a way to escape from my harsh life. I wanted to be Wraeththu so much! I hunted them out and found them; to me looking like a bunch of kids with dirty faces and wild eyes, so beautiful, so dangerous...

After Inception, I was in agony for a whole week. Fuck, it felt as if my insides were turning inside out. Little did I realise that they actually were! I was eventually woken by the smell and sound of rain on hot tarmac. I was lying in my own filth, high up on a roof top. A har with long, black hair and bright green eyes was laughing manically over my head. He smiled at me and told me he was going to make me whole. That night, he opened up a part of me I'd never had before and after that I was truly no longer human...

"Ah, smell that; it has a classic vintage."

- Calambus Mint, Uigenna

For the few days after Inception, it felt like I was one with Carmine. It could have been that my ears were more sensitive or some other after-effect of the process. For a short while, I was sure I could hear the voice. *Given enough time, I'll go back and investigate but, fuck that, I'm out to have some bloody good fun for now.*

At first, there were only twenty of us, but that quickly grew to fifty. Then half the gang split away from us. Our leader and some other har got in a fight over some humans. Don't really know what happened and I didn't really care. All I knew was that we were Uigenna now and the others were Unneah. Our leader told us we would show the world what it really meant to be Wraeththu. That night, I killed fourteen humans with my bare hands. I thought I would have hated the killing but I'd changed more than I first thought. As the body count rose, I felt more and more exhilarated, rather than feeling grief for those who died. I truly was a god!

It was then that our leader, Manticker, decided we should move on. He sounded like some kind of Evangelical preacher. Even back then his strength and power to control a mob like ours was unsurpassed.

Har-Lore: Wraeththu

Wraeththu were considered as nothing more than a street gang in the city of Neovik. Then that strange har Thiede started to try and organise the gang. He was into telling us who should be incepted and how we should behave around humans. Utter Bollocks. That's what Manticker called it. He said Thiede was just on some kind of power trip, telling us how we should run our lives! We had become Wraeththu to become free, not to be slaves to a har who thought he should be some kind of king. At this time, the human threat was immense. We had to cover our backs and make sure we left no trace of our presence. At one point, Thiede and Manticker were arguing. Punches and insults were flying everywhere, but then something strange happened. They just stopped what they were doing and stared out to sea, as though some beautiful shining har was sailing in from the ocean. It was then they just decided to go their separate ways.

Suddenly this weird great calm hit all Wraeththu at once. All our differences just seemed to pale into insignificance, compared to what we knew was coming. All the hara left that once great city on the same day, each taking those they had incepted with them. They headed out in an exodus to new territory. From the stories I heard, this journey was an unreal experience for many.

After seven days of hard travelling, the few Uigenna that Manticker had incepted realised what they were feeling, though they never actually saw what happened. They felt the earth tremble, as it let out a burst of rage that would make the humans look up to the heavens and pray to their false idols. Cities and huge swathes of land were decimated by the Tsunami that struck the eastern coast, with all the might that the earth could muster.

Due to tribal infighting, our tribe decided that it would be better to divide rather than fall. One group was to stay, adopt a new name and tribal ideals, while the rest of us gathered what we could for the journey. As we prepared to leave Carmine, a small group of five decided they would remain there to spy on those who had chosen a different path. We gathered what provisions we needed from the mall where we were staying, and headed out south. We cruised on our bikes, taking the fuel and supplies we needed whenever we got the opportunity. We followed the Old Straight Devil's Route south of Carmine, travelling through many places that I had only dreamed of visiting when I'd been human.

Being human had been such a drag. It had been bred into us to conform to some greater good, and to fear what would happen if we did not. Over the past three years,

"I really don't want to take aruna in these ruins. So what'll it be: your place or mine?"

- Uigenna, Warrior

"Dude, I'll give that a three for tonal balance and a two for smell."

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna



fear had grown every day in the residents of Carmine. Paranoia and dread had begun to take hold and many left the city to find a new home.

We spent the next year travelling along the Old Straight Devil's Route, stopping for a few weeks here and there. There were plenty of parties and lots of fighting. We left many of the smaller villages in smouldering ruins, before we rode to the next dot on the map. As we travelled, our group expanded with new members from every town we passed. We always left a few har shaped surprises in any towns that did survive our onslaught. Small groups of our tribe, we left behind as they had a plan to make these towns their own. Though our tribe grew extensively over the journey, we must also have left an equal number of hara behind in the towns and cities we visited so they could continue Manticker's work. Manticker: Now there's somehar not to cross. He's strong and fearless. Anyhar who gets in his way either ends up dead or at least severely mutilated...

We arrived at a dead-beat city that looked as if it had lost its power supply a few weeks before we arrived. Many of its citizens had been dumped in open graves on the outskirts; no time for funerals. They must have heard we were coming. The hastily erected road blocks hardly slowed us down. As we drove through the suburbs, we saw death and disease in every street. Is this what our once great government wants? Are they still fighting their pointless wars and blaming our actions on countries far from our borders? We pressed on. As we approached the borders of the inner sanctum of the city, we found a stronger barricade across the road.

Manticker pulled us to a stop, and organised small groups to find a way in and take out any humans they could find. It looked like this would be where we'd set up camp. A good place, considering the mall we'd just passed. Manticker spun his bike around and barked an order to a few members we had picked up in the last town. Fearing for their lives in Manticker's presence, they felt compelled to do what he said and went to find fuel for the vehicles. I would not say Manticker was an evil har, he just had a way of striking fear into the hearts of hara, and everything about him made you feel that he was far too strong for his own good. I think once you got used to his abrasive manner and earned his respect, he was not as harsh with you. Wraxilan told me not to worry about him, and that a lot of it was just show. As long as you treat him with honour and respect, he will show you the same courtesy.

Days passed, and a few of the scouting parties came back. The rest we never saw again. It's more than likely that they ran off, not understanding Manticker's way. Or they could have been killed, but I'm sure we would have heard if they had. Either way Manticker wanted revenge.

After many small skirmishes, we found the leader of this city. He and a few of his men tried to stand up to us. After a lot of showmanship and posturing, we met them in one of the parks. The battle was bloody, as ammunition for weapons was scarce. We all had to rely on things we could lay our hands on, from iron bars to meat cleavers and baseball bats. After shouting lots of insults and baiting, our Uigenna cadre was whipped into a frenzy. Manticker gave a deafening roar and we all charged at the waiting humans. Were they expecting us to back down? Unprepared, with few weapons and little or no morale, the humans were no match for us. We had wholesale slaughter on our hands. The ground ran red with the blood of the dead.

The smell of death was everywhere. I looked across the battlefield to see scared humans looking down from windows and from side streets. Did they really know what we were and what was coming? It was then I noticed Darrel – well Zip, as he is now known. He stood there, staring, not in disgust, but amazement at the Wraeththu and their power, his human mind barely able to comprehend what we were. His eyes were

a steely blue that seemed to penetrate my soul. Even in that hell of blood and death, his beauty shone like a beacon to me. I had to have him.

Then, my attention was jarred by another roar. Manticker had killed the leader of the human resistance. A ring of hara formed around our archon. He knelt over the body of the dying human leader. Blood poured from Manticker's head, not all of it his own. He held the hand of the human as the man took his last breath. He muttered a few last words that only Manticker could hear.

Then Manticker got to his feet. He gave a stirring speech, yet I could see something of what Wraxilan had told me. Something beneath the surface of that hard stare was weeping. A part of Manticker grieved for the death of this human leader. I wondered what the man's last words had been to invoke this response. Bowing his head, Manticker strode off the battle field, pushing hara out of his way. Something cut deep into his heart that day.

"Cool! Purple Carrots!"

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna

It was the hottest day of the year, and the beer was starting to go funny. We were going to have to stop at the next town and get supplies, and this would give me some quality time with Zip. We had been spending far too much time fighting humans and partying. I decided to invite him to a private party for just the two of us.

The day rolled on and the beer van gave its last breath of life. Many of the gang looked visibly distressed at this, even though the beer had turned sour in the heat. That van had been the centre of many joyous parties. It was like we had all lost a loyal dog or a family member. Disheartened, we moved on, leaving the hulk of the van on the road.

Many months passed. We ravaged every town that we came across and brought many more into our fold. Eventually, I managed to get my private party with Zip and we acquired another beer wagon, which was stocked by Dag, me and a few friends. While we were raiding the towns, and killing the last remaining humans, we met another har, a stranger to our tribe. After several hours of public torture, Manticker got him to speak. It seems that Ponclast and his Varrs (that would make a great name for a band) have been hot on our heels since we began heading west. Many of the towns we'd taken, in which we'd left phyles of the tribe as a garrison, have been taken off us by the Varrs. The remnants of the garrisons have been pushed back north. Hopefully, they'll have been incepting and taking new members as they went! I guess we will know, one day, if we ever meet them again.

Still, we moved on, our pace quickened now, with the constant threat of the Varr armies behind us. Manticker wanted to find a location which we could defend well, and we would not stop travelling now until we found it.

"I won't let this land fall into the chaos caused by weaker tribes. We must band together, in fierce perfection, or all shall perish."

- Unknown, Ulan Uigenna

After many months of hard travel, we approached the west coast, a small group split from us, to try to rally new members further south. Sadly, Zip was one of them. I guess we'd had our fun and now we were both heading towards more serious goals. If we're going to stand any chance against the Varrs in the future, we need numbers.

Manticker talked to us about a city he'd read about back when he'd been human. He claimed it lay north of our current camp. The next day we headed toward Duwamish. Manticker mentioned something about the huge tower he had seen on TV the last time there was a broadcast, which must have been some time ago. On our journey to Duwamish we have stopped only to collect supplies. War is brewing.

From the little amounts of news we've picked up off the humans, it appears that the government has finally taken note of what is happening in its own country. They've recalled their forces from overseas to fight battles at home. I heard many Wraeththu fell in these battles. Eventually the ground was won back and they claimed the cities and towns for their own. We were lucky that the armed forces had tried to reclaim the east side of Megalithica, which was far from us, but there was word on the street that the military was advancing toward our location. It was probably a good thing that we had increased our pace. The last thing we wanted was for the Varrs to catch up with us, as well as the human army.

"Purple? Carrots? What the fuck, did I eat that kegger last night?"

- Dag Viking, Uigenna

When we got to Duwamish, it appeared the people there had hardly heard of Wraeththu. They're mostly cut off from the rest of the country. When the power went out, it was as if they'd been forgotten. Manticker declared that we should try to keep this place intact, work from the inside out, and take their best for our army. During our travels, Manticker has learned from his past mistakes.

We found a place where we dug in and set up our army. This was the location Manticker had told us about - the tower. The needle seemed to shoot into the sky like a rocket. It's amazing it remained standing after the earthquake that had shaken the city a few weeks before. I can see why Manticker wanted this place. It was abandoned by humans, probably because the power had gone down in most of the city. It was a long climb on foot to reach the top, but that didn't bother us. We just knew it was a good place for us, in terms of defence. The last thing we wanted was for the human military and the Varrs to catch us in the open, with no defences. Plus, we reckoned the status of this building was another asset. The remaining locals wouldn't destroy it; they would want to take it back to show their superiority. Everyone agreed and Wraxilan called for a party in Manticker's honour as the founder of the new Uigenna home, yet for some reason Wraxilan did not attend it himself.

While the party was in its third day, Zip and Dag returned to us. They were upset about something, possibly because they missed the start of the party. Zip seemed to be avoiding me, passing the odd coy stare my way, as though he was embarrassed about having run away with Dag, who he'd claimed was not a patch on me before.

They looked like they had spent a few months surfing and later I found out they had, but that was before the earthquake. Well it was not so much an earthquake as a monumental natural disaster. They claimed they'd witnessed a large chunk of the west coast sinking into the sea. Though the story seemed unbelievable, it did tie in with the earthquake we'd felt. They even wanted me and a few others to go down and see, after the party was over. Maybe Zip was just using this as an excuse to get me back, or maybe he just trusted me more than the others. Either way when the beer runs dry, this party is over. I will then take a ride with them and see this place they have now nicknamed 'The Rift of the Damned.' Taking on the humans here seems like too much hard work to me; that is a battle for the others.

COUNTRIES OF THE KNOWN WORLD

Compared to humanity's heyday, the world is now sparsely inhabited. The main areas of habitation are in Megalithica and Almagabra. The remaining human population is in disarray and has been driven out of most of the previously densely populated cities. Wraeththu have managed to form functional settlements in a relatively brief time, and extend their presence in the world continually.

Megalithica

Capital City: Fulminir

Regions: Mainly unnamed, usually referred to by the name of the dominant local tribe.

Megalithica is a large western country and the original home of the Wraeththu. Its northern region used to be densely populated by humans, but a large part of it has been ravaged by earlier human conflict and, more recently, by conflict between humans and hara. Central Megalithica consists of varied terrain, including several large mountain ranges, wide open deserts, hot steaming swamps and also green, fertile areas. The southwest is mainly dry deserts and rocky plains, with large salt lakes and boggy marsh land. The main tribes have spread themselves successfully across most of the country, but the north is still the most densely populated, even if the environment is the least hospitable.

"Sure, he's my chesnari now. Hey roon-starved, c'mere!"

- Netspinner har Sulh



The ruling, and largest tribe of Megalithica is the Varrs. They control most of central Megalithica and have appropriated a great many old human settlements.

Uigenna are the second most powerful tribe, inhabiting semi-ruined cities in northern Megalithica. They continue to spread into new territory.

The Unneah also occupy territory in the northern cities, but are gradually moving south to start up new settlements.

A few Kakkahaar live in the southern deserts and plains of the country and are nomadic. Some groups have spread further afield.

The Colurastes inhabit the northeast of the country and are also nomadic, although they tend not to stray too far from their territory.

Major Native Tribes: Varr, Uigenna, Unneah, Colurastes and Kakkahaar

Other Tribes: Sulh, Smalt, Kheops, Greenling, Ferelith and Obliviata (all of which exist in small groups or travel the lands of Megalithica)

Population

It is difficult to devise accurate statistics on the population, as the gathering of information can be a dangerous occupation. The northern cities are probably home to several thousand Uigenna each, but due to constant fighting this number fluctuates wildly. The Varrs possibly number in the region of ten thousand, but they have been known to exaggerate their figures. The other tribes in Megalithica have fairly low numbers and most of the remaining human population has fled to the far north or south. Population estimates are that 40 percent of the human population is still alive and active in and around the area of Megalithica.

Money and Trade

No standard currency is used in Megalithica. Old human coins and notes are just about worthless, apart from with the Unneah and a few smaller tribes in south. The Varrs have started to mint their own coins, but they are still not widely available.

The most valuable trade items are forms of transport, ammunition and fuel. Horses are very expensive, but tribes such as the Kheops, in the lands above Megalithica, and the settlement of Greenling have started equine breeding programmes.

Food is also scarce and items such as fine wine, rich food and cigarettes command high prices. Other less savoury resources are also subject to trade. Among these are the poisons produced by the Uigenna and the Smalt, and the slave trade in both humans and hara, in which both the Colurastes and the Kakkahaar have been known to dabble.

Almagabra

Capital City: Immanion

Regions : Thaine, Florinada and Huldah

Almagabra is a warm, lush and beautiful country, far away from the Megalithican homelands of the Wraeththu. Immanion is the main city of Almagabra; it sits like a sparkling jewel on the magnificent coastline, looking out over an ever blue sea. The rest of Almagabra is sparsely populated. Some hara have ventured out from Immanion to start their new settlements, but due to disagreements with the ruling Gelaming, most of these have moved far away from the city.

The country itself has no real borders and almost melds with the area of Thaine to the north and Ferelithia to the west. It is probable that, in time, these areas will gain true independence as they gain more inhabitants.

Almagabra has a long rugged coastline and is part of a very ancient landscape. Humans had lived there for countless centuries, and even before the Gelaming took control of the place, the whole area was impregnated with powerful, magical and mystical energies. The country appears to be surprisingly free of human inhabitants, as if most sensed the coming of the Gelaming and decided to flee the area.

*"The first law of Churgery:
Thou shalt keep our nature
hidden."*

*"The stars are important to
us. It is from the stars that we
take direction, even in the
darkest night."*

- Omagh, har Hokule

The main tribe of Almagabra is the Gelaming. Although they are inherently autocratic, it is interesting that many other tribes also inhabit their territory, without too much problem. There is no doubt that many non-Gelaming hara are slowly being converted to the Gelaming lifestyle, but others still fight for their independence and individuality. Immanion itself is quite a cosmopolitan centre. Its visitors for trade and entertainment include representatives from Megalithican tribes who have established a presence in Almagabra, and also hara of the lesser known Freyhella and Olopade.

Native Tribes: Gelaming, Ferelith

Other Tribes: Unneah, Ugenna, Olopade and many others in small numbers. Most of them are travellers trying to establish new settlements closer to Immanion and its trade routes.

Population

The humans of Almagabra have not had such a hard time with Wraeththu as the Megalithican population. Humanity was ravaged by war, the breakdown of society and disease long before Wraeththu came to stake a claim in the country. Now, there are many functioning human colonies, although the majority of them suffer from the effects of infertility and disease. For humanity too, history seems to have regressed by around 300 years. Some human groups work and trade with Wraeththu, while others are hostile to the new race. In the early days, large human groups fled to the east of the continent in an attempt to escape Wraeththu conquest. Shortly after this exodus began, the east closed its borders and military patrols were put in place to prevent any non humans from entering the area.

From Gelaming research, it appears that approximately 30 percent of the human population remains. However, due to nature of the eastern terrain, with its many mountainous and cavernous regions, it is impossible to acquire accurate accounts of how many humans still live there.

The harish population of Immanion is growing fast, as new hara arrive from all over the world every day. The northern regions of Florinada and Thaine are much more sparsely inhabited and the southern region of Huldah is just about empty of a harish presence.

Currency and Trade

The most valuable commodity in Almagabra is undoubtedly the hara themselves. Any har who has something to offer the Gelaming, in terms of skills or knowledge is highly sought after. In Immanion, no hara go short of anything, but the same cannot be said for the rest of the country and reliable trade routes are only just being established. In some regions of Almagabra, hara use a currency that includes coins known as 'spinners' and the less valuable 'fillarets'. The exchange rate varies widely and it is always best to ask somehar you trust for advice before buying anything outside Immanion.

Alba Sulh

Capital City: Avalona (Cultural), Yorvik (Diplomatic)

Regions: The Islands of Alba and Keltoi

The country of Alba Sulh is seen as a magical place, where myth is made and legend begins. Hara who have travelled to this land have returned with clouded minds and vague stories



of what they saw and experienced. It is known that the fabric of reality in Alba Sulh is very flimsy and it borders upon a realm of pure magic. The friction caused by this juxtaposition distorts the perspective of any traveller who visits Alba Sulh. It is unknown whether this friction has the same effect on the Sulh, as none will divulge any of their secrets. Whether they use this magic as a form of defence or to cover up some sort of questionable activities, we can only conjecture.

There are several different stories concerning the founding of Avalona. One of these suggests that the city appeared complete overnight, in a marsh in the southern area of the country. We can see here a parallel with the myth of the founding of Immanion in Almagabra, and it's most likely the Sulh have simply appropriated this idea for themselves. Visitors to Avalona are not discouraged and there are plenty of hostelrys for the convenience of travellers.

Yorvik, the political capital, is visited by few uninvited outsiders. Emissaries from certain tribes have been allowed within, because the Sulh occasionally convene tribal meetings to discuss Wraeththu's future.

Although the Sulh are the main tribe of the islands, and comprise many different phyles that inhabit the length and breadth of the country, there are rumours of other indigenous tribes in the area. The Sulh are currently attempting to document a band of rogue groups, who inhabit the ruins of the former city of Lund, but their investigations are hampered the gangs' resistance to being studied. They seem on the whole to be feral and disorganized, and hide themselves in the warren of sewers and underground tunnels of the once great city.

The Freyhellans also attempted to start colonies on the north east coast, but met with opposition from the Sulh. These colonies are mostly now abandoned, although it's almost certain the Freyhellans use them occasionally when landing scouting parties on the island.

Native Tribes: Sulh

Other Tribes: Feral gangs in Lund, possible hidden Freyhellan settlements. Otherwise, information unknown.

Population

Data is not complete on Alba Sulh's exact population. Most of the previous human population died out quite some time ago, so very few suitable humans must have been left for Inception purposes. The Sulh estimate their population numbers at around 5,000, at least in the cities, but it's likely other hara inhabit the island beyond Sulh society.

Money and Trade

The Sulh trade in food produce, mainly fruit and grains. They have developed a form of currency, but tend to barter commodities rather than use money when dealing with other tribes overseas.

Olathe

Capital City: Je-Hal-Alamara

Regions: Alamara, Outlands

The country has two regions, with the greater part of it being known as the Outlands. Very few hara occupy this area as it provides little resources, following human warfare, pollution and natural disasters. There are many abandoned cities and villages, which are now crumbling to dust. The Outlands have suffered some of the worst climatic changes in the worlds: Temperatures have increased so dramatically that only a well-trained har can survive there for any length of time.

The Mountain of Alamara is the region to which the Obliviata tribe returns every four years for their tribal festival. It is their most sacred place. On the summit of the mountain,

*"Your breath is like drinking a
heady spirit. I'm already
drunk, intoxicated by your
bewitching soul. Let me refill
the cup."*

— Unknown, Kakkahaar

*"Better is any time or place
that hurts less than what you
currently have."*

— Bliss, words of wisdom

*"Whatever you do, don't
anger the cat. It's terrible, bad
luck."*

- Forsythe, Sulh

there is a temple to Allavé, beneath which is a warren of cold catacombs, used by the Obliviata during their rites. The entrance to the catacombs is cleverly concealed, and only the Obliviata themselves know of its whereabouts. They would rather die than reveal its location. The tribe believe that Alamara is the location where Allavé first appeared to hara, to preach his way of life. Until his death, he incepted new members to the tribe in the temple, at festival time.

Although there is no documented evidence of tribes other than Obliviata frequenting, or living in, the area, there are many caves in the mountains ranges, so it's not beyond the realms of possibility that secret tribes inhabit them.

Native Tribes: Obliviata

Other Tribes: Unknown

Population

Olathe has a very small, semi-permanent population. No human could survive in this land and even the hara who have visited have struggled with the punishing, local conditions. It's a wonder the Obliviata can survive the heat. Perhaps one of their tribal secrets is that their bodies have adapted to withstand extremes of temperature.

The southern area of the country is more temperate, but as yet whatever Wraeththu live there do so in secret.

Money and Trade

The Obliviata are keen to trade both goods and stories with all tribes. The most common trade items are simply food, herbs and water, as the Obliviata have no desire for trinkets. Though technically trade does not take place in Olathe itself, the Obliviata will barter goods within their own community when they meet at Alamara.

THE REST OF THE WORLD

Very few other areas of the world are known to be populated by hara, although this is probably more due to lack of communication impeding knowledge than anything else. Information that does filter through, via the nomadic tribes, indicates that new Wraeththu groups and tribes are sprouting up continually, although as the human population declines, this will no doubt taper off, due to a lack of potential inceptees.

The Unneah believe that certain hara have infiltrated remaining human communities and expand Wraeththu from within them, but there is no hard evidence of this.

Cordagne (West of Thaine)

Capital City: Massilia (Under Gelaming Control)

Native Tribes: Vocontii

Other Tribes: Gelaming and Sulh (both have permanent camps in this land)

*"It is said that once a har is
on the sands, he will
eventually meet god, or
perish."*

- Unknown, Obliviata

The native Vocontii tribe is fierce and relatively small in numbers compared to the Gelaming and Sulh in the country. The Sulh have a few small settlements in the north and the Gelaming own a large town called Massilia on the south coast. Cordagne still has a quite large human population in some remote locations. It is known that a sizable human population struggles to survive in the heart of the country. Due to the ferocity of the Vocontii, and their passion to repel strangers, few hara have entered the area. The Vocontii feel strongly that they want no outside influence on their tribal life, and they all speak the language that was once spoken by humans in the area. The Gelaming have tenuous diplomatic relations with the Vocontii, but it's unlikely they are particularly cordial.

Fereng (South of Cordagne)

Capital City: Ampurius (Under Gelaming Control)

Regions: Girona

Native Tribes: None

Other Tribes: Gelaming and Freyhella (in small coastal camps)

This area of the world is still sparsely populated and has no known local tribes, but a small Gelaming presence occupies the ancient town of Ampurius, just south of the Cordagne border. The Freyhellans use the north of this land as a base for fishing and strikes against the remaining human population. With the dwindling numbers of humans in the area, the majority of the inland settlements have collapsed and turned to dust. The Obliviata follow a travelling route that passes through Fereng on its way to the camps of the Freyhellans, where passage overseas can be secured.

"We don't take crap from no har."
-Belik, Varr

Erminia (South of Fereng)

Capital City: Gadir

Regions: Betis

Native Tribes: Guadal, Quiver

Other Tribes: Unneah

The Guadal and Quiver tribes, whose settlements are mainly coastal, are hardly more than a group of wreckers and looters. It is presumed that they derive from an offshoot of the Uigenna or the Unneah. They will lure passing ships onto the rocks in order to steal their cargo – and this often includes the crew, who will be sold on as slaves in Morass or Fallsend. The only tribe with which the Erminian Wraeththu have communication is the Unneah, in order to trade. Humans in the area have all been wiped out or were incepted many years ago. Strangely the Obliviata travel this land unmolested, which suggests that the Guadal and Quiver fear the Olathians in some way.

Nunavut (Far North of Megalithican Territory)

Capital City: Unknown

Regions: Tapiriit, Kanatami

Native Tribes: Inukshuk

Other Tribes: Freyhella

The native Inukshuk live in the far north of the continent in what most other hara would view as a harsh and desolate wasteland. The tribe has only just introduced themselves to the rest of the Wraeththu world, but still seems content to remain in their remote country. They travel the barren, snow-covered lands trading fish with the humans who still reside south of their borders. Also, they are known to trade with the Uigenna and Kheops to the south east.

The land, though beautiful and full of wildlife, is still a hard place in which to survive, but the Inukshuk are immensely fond of it and have no inclination to migrate. Some have said they simply appreciate the silent isolation, away from the often hectic and dangerous life to be found in Megalithica. The remains of the local human population live compatibly alongside the Inukshuk, in some cases even sharing settlements.

There are occasionally skirmishes between the Freyhellans and the Inukshuk, mainly over fishing rights rather than territory.

"Cast off your woes and worries. Shed them like the leaves of autumn trees."
- Bliss, to a wayward har

Freygard (North of Alba Sulh)

Capital City: Freygard

Regions: Unknown

Native Tribes: Freyhella
Other Tribes: Unknown

The Freyhella guard their homeland fiercely and very few hara had ever ventured that far north. The tribe seems to have quite successfully made their presence felt over a large area of the world, while still only having small numbers. Much of the northern area of this land is covered in ice and snow and is believed to be uninhabited, or at least very sparsely populated.

CITIES OF THE WORLD

Wraeththu have yet to establish a great many permanent settlements, but even so, the ones already set up are steeped in mystery, such as the elusive Immanion, in Almagabra. Some tribes inhabit old human towns, whereas others are more inclined to build new communities, shunning old human conurbations as 'tainted'.

Tribes such as the Kakkahaar and the Colurastes are nomadic, so as yet have no fixed home.

Popular myth suggests that many of the Wraeththu communities appeared to arrive almost fully built overnight. Stories of magic and otherworldly forces have spread fast. The majority of these tales have been spread by the Unneah, so are viewed with much distrust by most other tribes. It is unlikely that any town was really built in such an arcane fashion. The most obvious explanation is that groups of Wraeththu appropriated existing human settlements and then set about changing their appearance, so as to put their own mark upon the landscape.

Towns such as Galhea and Ahmouth in Megalithica, and Ferelithia in Almagabra, were almost certainly built upon existing human foundations, small villages that became the nucleus of thriving Wraeththu communities.

The following towns have already become well known, although many of the details about them are based only on rumour or dire warnings to avoid them.

"Evil? Wicked? What beautiful preconceptions. I may well be either, but at this moment I'm the only har who can aid you."

-Sovances, to a har in need

Immanion

It is difficult to speak objectively about this fabled city of the Gelaming. Many claim it is nothing but a fabrication, embellished upon by hara who seek to challenge the dominance of the Varrs. However, reports arise with increasing frequency from hara who claim to have visited the city or have spoken at length with individuals who live there. The Gelaming, naturally, speak with great warmth of their capital city. It is doubtful all their fond stories are based on fiction.

As for the facts, Immanion lies far from Megalithica, somewhere in the warm lush country of Almagabra, south of Thaine. While a rational mind finds it difficult to credit that the place was built entirely through supernatural means, it's likely the Gelaming utilized their magical skills and abilities in order to build quickly and efficiently. The tribe makes no secret of the fact that Immanion is not yet complete, a confession somewhat at odds with the wild stories from elsewhere that claim it appeared overnight, as if built by djinn. However, if even a fraction of the existing reports are correct, the city will eventually be a wonder of the Wraeththu world. It's known to be a coastal city, already possessing a military fleet.

Very few hara of tribes other than the Gelaming have visited Immanion, but any you meet who claim to have seen it will have their own theory as to exactly where it is and how it was built. It's most likely that those who insist it can't exist are hara from primitive tribes, who lack the vision possessed by the Gelaming.

Tribes such as the Obliviata and Unneah are possibly the only ones who know the truth about Immanion and the Gelaming, but only time will tell if any of the tantalizing rumours and stories are true.

Fulminir

The stone citadel city of Fulminir lies in the north of Megalithica and is the headquarters of Ponclast, the Archon of the Varrs, and other high ranking members of the Varr military machine. Very little of what goes on within Fulminir's walls is known to outsiders, even hara who are Varrs themselves. The citadel was once home to humans, but has been reinforced by the Varrs. No har who isn't Varrish has been known to leave Fulminir alive and none but the bravest, if not a known ally of the Varrs, would ever consider approaching the area, even for trade.

Even before the Varrs took control in the area, Fulminir could never be described as aesthetically pleasing, as it was originally a human military facility. The landscape around it is harsh and inhospitable, owing to the chemical and biological weapons experiments that took place there during human occupation. Consequently, it is still difficult to grow crops in the area, and most provisions are shipped in from Galhea, further to the south, along heavily protected trade routes.

Fulminir is an ideal location for the Varrish capital. Its construction ensures both privacy and security. It occupies a fairly modestly sized site upon the ground, although its many towers and multi-levelled fortifications allow for a large population. It is rumoured that there are many levels below ground also.

Galhea

Southeast of Fulminir, the other main Varrish settlement is Galhea, which was once a small human town. It is ruled by the Varrish Phylarch, Terzian. Galhea lies in a green and fertile landscape and trades with most tribes in Megalithica. Many hara of different tribes live and work in the surrounding farms, having been attracted there by the opportunity for employment and a fairly affluent life.

Galhea possesses a large military garrison and is headquarters to the Varrish armies of the southern territories. Terzian is second in command to Ponclast and often travels north to visit Fulminir, leaving his assistants and captains in charge of the town. Galhea was already fully developed when the Varrs appropriated it, after slaughtering or enslaving the indigenous human population.

Despite its inhabitants' brutal reputation, Galhea is probably one of the most peaceful and safe places to live in Megalithica, not least because of the militaristic rule of the Varrs.

Avalona

Avalona is generally regarded as the capital of the Sulh, on the island realm of Alba Sulh, seeing as it is the centre for trade and the most densely populated area. However, it's fairly certain that their political base is a hidden city far to the north, accessible only to the Sulh themselves. The tribe is reticent to discuss such matters with outsiders, as they uphold their reputation for secrecy diligently. Even though Sulh are said to speak only the truth, their homeland is one subject they successfully manage to reveal little about, even if directly asked.

Shrouded in myth and legend almost as much as the legendary Immanion, Avalona is said to have appeared overnight in the middle of a marsh, a spectral and strangely alien city. It's well known that the area was regarded as a spiritual centre by humanity for centuries before the Sulh came to occupy it.

Those who have visited Avalona say that the city is like a vision from a narcotic dream, with impossibly twisting spires and weirdly teetering buildings that look as if they could topple over at any moment. There are reports of flying creatures that transport goods and people around the city, and of a mysterious ruling class that has never been seen by anyone, not even the Sulh themselves. There is little doubt that intense magical activity around the area has done much to create 'leakage' from the ethers, which effectively warps the perceptions. Perhaps only the Sulh themselves are able to see the city as it really is.

"All this way and what do we find... Nothing!"
- Gamboll-gin, Uigenna

"This is ridiculous, how do the expect me to work with these new inceptees when most of them can barely string a sentence together."
- High Codexia Malakess, Sulh

Whatever Avalona's true origins, the truth about what is there may never be known as the stories that are being told around campfires seem like the dreams of an intoxicated artist

"Leaving? Ha! You'll be dead within a week. Wish the vultures well from me. Ha!"

-Tristan, to passing hara



Fallsend

Many hara will tell you that the less said about this unsavoury niche of Wraeththudom, the better. If you ever find yourself in this degenerate pocket of Thaine, you truly are unfortunate. The town is typically cold, bleak and wet, even in summer. Inhabitants of this small settlement are generally regarded as the dregs of Wraeththu society, hara that even the Ugenna would reject. There is not much more to the place than a dreary collection of huts and tents in a valley full of wet leaves and mud. The flotsam of Wraeththu society, misfits, psychotics and the victims of semi-successful Inceptions fetch up against its rotting river docks. Perhaps surprisingly, there have been reports recently that the inhabitants are attempting to form a kind of town council, and there has been talk of building plans for the area. It might be that some of the criminals who have skulked out of Megalithica to hide in the wilds of Thaine were once of fairly high rank, and have wits and initiative about them. If you have something to hide, or need somewhere to hide, or desire to buy dubious items with no questions asked, Fallsend is the town for you.

"Ride the crest of the wave, which is your fury. Let the hate and rage you feel for that lesser race lend its strength to your arms."

-Laice, Varr martial training

Carmine

A desolate semi-ruin in the north of Megalithica, Carmine City lies next to an immense lake, which is virtually an inland sea. Carmine was once a thriving human city with many inhabitants, but now has the reputation of being populated only by ghosts. This is not strictly true, because it certainly possesses a harish population as well, mainly phyles of Ugenna. Some believe that Thiede originated from this city. However, others have said that Thiede has denied this and has even gone so far as to say he wouldn't set foot in such a ghastly and degenerate place. Stories and rumours about Carmine City are rampant. There are tales of bodiless howls and screams that haunt the night, the tortured ghosts of long dead residents. Some say that even rats are loath to enter the city and that any hara not local to the area, who have gone there, went mad, or disappeared. From a distance, you can see the broken towers of human buildings, often shrouded in mists that drift in off the lake. There is a certain stark, brooding beauty to the place.

ANATOMY OF A CITY

The buildings and facilities to be found in a Wraeththu settlement depend on which tribe inhabits it and the number of hara present. Only towns taken over from humans, and which have not been too damaged, have a large proportion and variety of buildings, although not all of them will still be in use. Many will have been taken over and given new roles. Some of the more eccentric tribes like to make their homes in old churches and other unusual structures.

Houses and Homes

Like their human predecessors, most Wraeththu take great care of their homes. Those who have permanent dwellings tend either to live in old human houses or in self-made shacks or huts. In most of the larger Wraeththu settlements, such as Immanion and Galhea, high ranking hara live in large houses, with all other tribe members living in more modest accommodation. Tribes with organized military will have well equipped barracks for their soldiers.

Newer settlements tend to feature large huts or adapted tents, some of which can be of very intricate design. The more permanent buildings generally consist of several rooms and may even have a second floor. Hara of the Unneah are currently regarded as the best architects and town planners. They build very solid houses out of the most unusual materials.

Nomadic tribes, such as the Kakkahaar, live in large, ornate and sumptuous tents. The Colurastes prefer to seek shelter and make homes in natural caves. The Uigenna, and those hara who still live in the northern cities, have not yet started to build or develop their own buildings and hara in those areas all inhabit old human structures. Some phyles have chosen very unusual locations, such as art galleries or sports stadiums.

Schooling and Health

While most hara received some level of schooling when they were human, not even the youngest inceptees currently receive further formal education beyond caste progression. Currently, no harish towns have schools. The nearest you'll find to an education facility is among the Varrs, who have designated areas where military skills and tactics are taught. It is believed that the Gelaming plan to build colleges and universities in Immanion. If Wraeththu ever manages to settle as a species and manages to breed, a basic education system will probably be put in place to supplement the caste training.

Very few towns have proper hospital facilities. Generally, the only healers are hienamas, who have received no formal medical training, but who are skilled as channelling Agmara energy. As yet, we know little about our physiology, so few hara possess the skills to treat acute injuries. We are lucky that we rarely get sick. It would appear that we are immune to most human ailments.

Spirituality

Most settlements have temples or sacred spaces set aside for religious ceremonies, Inception and caste progression. A temple will usually contain some kind of cult statue, either representation of the Aghama or another deity specific to the tribe. Even the smaller phyles have shamans among their ranks, even if they lack an experienced hienama.

Towns that have existed for a while will mostly like have a Nayati as a temple, a structure which often doubles as a town hall or general meeting place. Some Nayatis are large and grand in design and can hold over a hundred hara. If a tribe possesses a Nayati, it's most likely they'll also have a hienama to preside over it.

*"I part the clouds of time and
behold the future."
- Mikara, Kakkaharr*

*"Seek for me among the soft
rouge petals of rose garden.
There we shall bloom
eternal in the full blossom of
our flower, if only for
tonight."
-Dantallia, courting*

"I hated that excrement. He mocked me, mocked me, treated me like I was nothing. Then I became Wraeththu. I literally fried that thing."

Kakkahaar phyles tend to have ritual sites that they use fairly regularly, and travel to them on festivals or special occasions such as caste progression ceremonies or Inceptions.

Recreation

Because the effects of alcohol are not so damaging to Wraeththukind, yet can still provide a pleasurable high, Wraeththu love drinking. It's rare you'll come across a settlement lacking an establishment where the locals can indulge in this pastime. A lot of tribes brew their own ales, ferment wine and distil various liqueurs. In Galhea, for example, you'll find Sheh, a beverage made from apples. The larger settlements usually have numerous inns and bars. In areas where food is plentiful, and the local hara have become well established, you'll find restaurants too. Even in areas with few facilities, hara are still naturally social creatures, so you'll generally find a party going on somewhere, providing food, strong liquor and music.

It would appear that the Ugenna's love of destruction stops when confronted with a decent source of entertainment or nightlife. Those brave enough to venture into the northern cities may be lucky enough to find fully working cinemas and nightclubs to sample. It must be said that Wraeththu have yet to start their own movie industry though, so any films on offer will be old and of questionable quality.

In the north, some hara have formed bands and tour the northern cities and beyond, very much in the same way as humans did.

As for sporting recreations, hara enjoy the kind of pastimes once popular with humans, such as swimming, surfing and horse riding. Some hara have become great horticulturalists and design gardens around spiritual ideals.

Hara who have maintained some of the less savoury aspects of human nature might visit the lamentable musendas, found in some debased settlements. These are the harish equivalent of whorehouses. As to why a har would want to frequent such a place when normal, healthy aruna is freely available elsewhere, we can only conjecture. One can only wonder what it is they get for their money. Hopefully, as Wraeththu progress, these establishments will close down due to a lack of custom.

Shopping

You won't find proper shops in many settlements. In Megalithica, only Galhea and Greenling could be said to have a bona fide shopping area, where merchants have permanent establishments. Most towns have market areas, where goods are bartered. The majority of hara don't have currency with which to trade, so the markets are generally held at regular intervals when the local inhabitants can bring items to swap for essential supplies and luxuries. Wraeththu markets in large settlements, such as Galhea, might offer goods from quite far afield, despite the limited trade routes.

The most available commodities are food, alcohol and tobacco. Weapons and horses are sometimes obtainable at very inflated prices, although if you have something valuable with which to barter, you can secure some very good deals.

Larger towns usually have a blacksmith, but if you are a stranger you will have a long wait to use such services.

In more peaceful and crime-free areas, many hara simply display the goods they have to trade in front of their homes.

Safety

Very few areas of the world can be considered safe, with gangs of Ugenna running rampant in the north of Megalithica and countless other small tribes and bands of humans causing chaos in other areas. Therefore, the issue of safety is paramount in most towns. While a lot can be said against the Varr regime, crime is extremely scarce. Hara or humans caught committing an offence are dealt with quickly and brutally.

"Do you not find me more beautiful than the stars? "

-Dantallia, teasing

Other settlements, even those of tribes with a less fierce reputation than the Varrs, still tend to hold a 'shoot first ask questions later' approach to unidentified hara or human that enter their territory without making the proper overtures to secure passage.

Outside Immanion, few communities have an organized police force, although most towns have some form of night watch and court system, no matter how primitive.

Suburbs and Farming Communities

On the outskirts of large settlements, rich or important hara have begun to build large houses with open views. Others have established farms to supply goods and employment to the locals.

Farms are always keen to take on extra hands to help with the work and will accept hara of any tribe without too many questions asked. Some will also employ human staff, but this is rare in Megalithica, where if you find a human working on harish land it's generally because they're a slave.

In Almagabra, suburban Immanion is expanding at a steady rate, as more hara from all over the world arrive to help in its construction. High-ranking members of the tribe all possess their own extensive dwellings, generally with full staff to care for them.

Manufacturing and Industry

The large factories and production lines of the human era are now a thing of the past. All produce is grown on local farms and other products are scavenged from human settlements or made locally in small shops. Hara skilled at carpentry or iron work are keenly sought after by the more industrious tribes. Most hara are learning how to produce what they need for themselves, and it will perhaps be a considerable time into the future when we discover what we are capable of.

All large scale industry is dead; nohar needs cars, trains or buses. Nohar watches television or goes on the Internet. The power stations burn no fuel and produce no electricity. All power is provided by small generators in the towns. Some hara claim to power their houses using magical energy. Hara still invent and build many new items, using new powers and unheard of technology. While some of the harish towns may not look that different from those in the past, the power and industry that drives them will be unlike anything seen before.

Underworld

Even in the well-patrolled streets of Immanion and Galhea, an underworld already exists. They are well hidden, but always there. Organized groups sell many a dodgy substance under cover of night: over-priced tobacco and lethal moonshine being some of the more legal. Weapons and toxins, smuggled by Uigenna and shipped in by the Smalt, are often available and if you can afford it, you can buy a har to use these items for you upon enemies.

In Thaine and in Uigenna territory such commerce is common-place and conducted in broad daylight, usually over a drink in the local bar.

Wraeththu – Human Bond

The only notable hara/human settlement is the town of Greenling in south Megalithica. At first, it was little more than a refugee camp, but is slowly growing into a thriving community. While the peace between the two species is at times uneasy, it never seems to spill over into open conflict.

The Olopade town of Samway also has a sizeable human population. While none of the humans complain, the precise motives of the Olopade for encouraging cohabitation are unclear.

Many areas of the world still have a human population. While some groups are openly hostile to hara, many have had to form trade agreements, simply to survive and others have taken employment in farming communities.

"Lords of the swamp! We rule here, for no others will come. We have nothing they want."

-Tristan, proclaiming the greatness of his tribe

"Music may soothe you and wine take your pain. Now come and share with me your troubles. Let me lighten your heart of its burden."

- Bliss, of the Fereolith

The Dead

As yet, no har has died by natural causes. Disease appears to be a thing of the past, but hara can still die from acts of violence and bio-engineered diseases, whether during tribal infighting or by being surprised by savage or well-armed humans.

In the early days, to prevent humans from discovering Wraeththu's secrets, the bodies of all hara slain in combat were either taken away from the stage of conflict, or else were burned *in situ*, in unceremonious heaps. Hara would ensure that even the bodies of their enemies of rival tribes were removed. Today, cremation is still common, though most tribes have solemn ceremonies, rituals and wakes to honour the dead. Some towns have graveyards with monuments, by which to remember their dead. Hara do not fear death, and while lost hara are mourned, death is never seen as a grim or frightening prospect. Instead, it is regarded as rebirth and the start of a new incarnation.

Emulating the Past

While the desire to build grand new cities and to renovate old human towns is apparent in many Wraeththu, some hara see such actions as a mistake and believe we should not try to emulate the past. These hara believe that by emulating humanity, Wraeththu will only meet the same fate and be destined to die out. Surely hara should be rebuilding the world in their own image?

This view, while unheard of in cities such as Immanion, is shared by a small number of hara and their tribes. Such hara think that all Wraeththu should live an unrestricted life, free of anything that connects them to their human past. Tribes such as the Colurastes, Kakkahaar and Obliviata seem to be living that dream to some extent.

Human Cities and Settlements

In the rough, wild north of Ugenna territory, there are several encampments of humans. They are fiercely protective of their territory and will kill any hara unlucky or unwary enough to stray into their territory on sight. The only hara with whom they share their land are the Kheops raiders, who are happy to plunder these towns, for new inceptees and goods. Due to Kheops' interference, it is unlikely that these communities will ever learn to trust Wraeththukind. They are doomed to live in isolation for a long time to come, and the only hope they have is that the raiders will eventually lose interest in their sport of human-baiting. Perhaps also, once Wraeththu civilization expands, these humans will choose to learn more about what hara are and to forge links of co-operation.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Outside the main Wraeththu cities and settlements of the world, you'll find other places of interest to visit. Many of them date back to human times and some of them have been recently built or discovered. The world has changed a lot over the past couple of decades, not only through harish intervention but also through natural disasters and other catastrophes.

Duwamish

This north-western city of Megalithica was the birthplace of a particular style of human music that became popular late in the 20th century, and indeed many of the young humans associated with the music scene eventually became har. The city's main feature is a gigantic tower, built by humans, but which still stands today, having withstood conflicts, storms and earthquakes. Manticker the Seventy and his immediate circle have appropriated this as their headquarters, and have kept it in a moderate state of repair.

"Keep away if you know
what's best!"

— Ferenzeh har Kakkahaar, advice to a
young Unneah coming for caste training.

Duwamish was abandoned by humans and today only relatively few Uigenna live there permanently. The majority of the tribe have left the area, seeking new territory and potential inceptees. The city, however, is still the spiritual home of the Uigenna. Many of them return there, either to meet with Manticker and his phyle, or simply to party with old friends in the rundown clubs and bars.

The Uigenna were drawn to the area, and once they had taken control of the city, they discovered an abundance of malls and warehouses to occupy, which were still in a good state of repair and offered plentiful resources. This was rich pickings in comparison with other towns and cities the tribe had poured through and plundered on its way west.

Settling in an abandoned restaurant in the tower, high above the city, Manticker and his tribe gained a perfect base of operations. Symbolically and culturally, the tower meant much to the human population, so Manticker assumed they would be reluctant to destroy or harm it. Initially, the remnants of the human policing forces attempted to rout the Uigenna from their monument, an operation that failed drastically and resulted in many human fatalities. This forced the humans to take extreme measures and call in the military. Their strategy might have been successful, had not Manticker's hara already incepted some human soldiers into their tribe, about which the human forces were ignorant. Suffice to say the resulting battle was fierce and bloody. It seemed that Uigenna crawled from every corner and gutter of the city. They forced back the advancing enemy, taking many of them as inceptees in the process. It was during this battle Manticker earned his eponymous epithet. As the humans launched a precision assault on the tower, Manticker lost his temper and single-handedly took down seventy armed men, before his enemies retreated in a shambles, and left the city to the Uigenna.

Now Duwamish is devoid of humans and only a few Uigenna phyles remain there. Despite this, it is still regarded as 'party central' for any visiting Uigenna. Every night, music and revellers spill out onto the streets. Any visitors are welcome to attend the many parties to be found in nearly every remaining building. However, it's not unusual for the convivial events to end up in fights and dangerous, potentially fatal competitions. Providing you have no fear, and are not averse to the possibility of trouble, a good time can be had in this cradle of Wraeththu civilization.

'I remember that bar crawl now. Was it really last month we started drinking on the outskirts of Carmine? Damn that bar crawl! Along the Old Straight Devil's Route, stopping at every bar, inn and liquor hole on the way, to prevent ourselves from getting too sober. I'm sure Zip mentioned something about surfing The Rift of the Damned. Well, I guess that's where he went. At the end of the road, I woke up in Duwamish.'

Who are you, anyway? What the hell are you doing in my sack?
- Calambus Mint, Uigenna

"Immanion? No such place!"
- Velaxis har Gelaming

"What do you call a Uigenna with a machinegun?"

"Happy!"

Soda Lake Cat Lair

Just north of Kakkahaar territory, in the gypsum flats, a large soda lake dominates the landscape. The surrounding area is mostly barren with few resources, although the surface of the lake swarms with wading birds. Despite its isolated and mean locale, the area obviously has some as yet unknown attraction. Visitors, mostly Kakkahaar, have reported that a large amount of feral cats live among the yuccas and agave plants around the lake, and also in the ruins of several huts that also stand there. We must presume the animals once belonged to the humans who built the huts, and have clearly bred in the wild since being abandoned. But they do not appear malnourished or in poor condition - quite the opposite. How they manage to survive so well in such hostile conditions is a mystery.

Nohar knows who built the clutter of abandoned dwellings around the lake. The Kakkahaar say that it is certainly a place of power, and that the cats are the *genii loci* of the site. Unneah, who pass through the area, claim always to leave offerings for the cats to ensure safe passage through the desert.

While there are no amenities or night-life and often only another sole pilgrim for company, this locale is well worth a visit, simply so you can soak up the otherworldly atmosphere, camp out beside the soda lake and absorb the stunning sunsets. It's a superb site where you can meditate and commune with the otherworld. Occasionally, if you time it right with the equinoxes and solstices, you might stumble across a party of other hara to make your visit all the more enjoyable. It's doubtful you'd run into hostile hara in this place. Remember to take gifts for the cats.

'It's improbable that they had built the place! I wonder why they choose this place to live. It's doubtful they drove the humans out.'

- Orien Farnell, Shaman, on the cats of the Soda Lake

Haunted Forests

"What do you call a Uigenna without a machinegun?"

"Unhappy!"

There are many areas of Megalithica where strange anomalies have been sighted and experienced. But in the deep forests of central Megalithica, the fabric of space and time itself appears to be unravelling. The Varrs have recently reported that entire groups of soldiers have gone missing for weeks, only to return to their barracks unable to give a coherent explanation as to where they'd been or why they'd been unable to complete their missions. Kakkahaar, who are currently working with the Varrs, say that the units claim they got lost and ended up walking in circles, even on routes that were travelled often. This area is now known as haunted.

The Irraka tell strange tales about invisible walls, miles long, that appear overnight and vanish just as quickly. As to who might be responsible for these strange phenomena, the Varrs blame the Gelaming, the Kakkahaar accuse passing Sulh, and the Unneah suspect the Kakkahaar.

Nohar seems able to give a precise location for the anomalies, other than they occur somewhere south of Fulminir and west of Galhea. However, if you have an adventurous spirit, and enjoy studying mysteries, this is the place to head. As one Kakkahaar has said, 'Throw away your compass and simply follow your nose. If your instincts tell you to turn one way, turn the other. Then you'll find yourself surrounded by sights so strange you'll think you're in a dream. Trees that are not trees. Spirits that walk by day. Not a place for the unwary or incautious, but we believe much can be learned there.'

"What do you call a Gelaming with a machinegun?"

"Confused!"

'Strange things are happening out in the wilderness. The Varrs blame the Gelaming, like they do for most things and it made me laugh when the Unneah accused us! Oh I wish I'd thought of it first. I can think of few things more satisfying than to watch lost Varr soldiers run around in circles for weeks on end!'

- Lianvis of the Kakkahaar

Samway

Situated in a remote area, subject to punishing winters, Samway is an old human town that is now home to the small mysterious tribe of Olopade. In human times, Samway was occupied by an order of monks and the ordinary villagers who farmed the land and helped make alcoholic beverages from secret recipes that were reputedly famous worldwide. An isolated tower, which was once part of the abbey, is now headquarters to the Olopardic Archon, Phade.

Humans still live in the town, but are regarded by the local hara almost as biological specimens. Reports from the Unneah suggest that Phade is a conservationist at heart, and does not believe that humans should be allowed to become extinct. The most sceptical hara claim that Phade merely uses the results of his human breeding programs as slaves. However, when you visit Samway, there is no indication of hostility, resentment, contempt or dislike between any of the residents, whether hara or human.

Samway lies in a deep valley amid wild mountains covered in pine forests. The town is picturesque, clinging to the sides of the valley precariously and spreading across its floor, where it is surrounded by ancient deciduous forests. There is a small lake in the centre of the valley, fed by several mountain streams, which in many locations spill over the rocks as impressive waterfalls. The winters in Samway are long and hard, and it has even been known to snow in early summer. However, the intense spring, the brief riotous summer and the glorious autumns are said to be something to behold. It is a beautiful, untouched and magical part of the world.

The Olopade are not very welcoming to strangers and are naturally secretive. This is strange, for they have no known reputation as an exceedingly magical tribe or of having anything in particular to hide. However, there has been the odd rumour that Phade is an agent of Thiede's and that the isolated location of his headquarters was chosen with deliberate care, perhaps for sinister reasons. Phade's Tower, situated a short distance from the town is a foreboding place that appears to be full of ghosts from both the past and the present.

However, because the Olopade get few visitors, Phade welcomes news from the outside world, and if you arrive with a host of good stories to tell, and respect the native hara's reticence, you might be able to charm your way into his company.

The only way to reach Samway is along the coast, through a dense forest of fir trees, passing over rickety, wooden bridges that no sane har or creature would dare to cross. The Olopade grudgingly appreciate curios and trinkets from other lands, so it would do no harm to stock your luggage with a few choice items for trade.

'Monks lived here once, but we chased them up into the mountains or incepted those young enough. Strange that humans would choose to live in such a remote place, but it's the isolation that makes it perfect for our needs.'

- Phade har Olopade

Phesbe

This small settlement is home to the Irraka, a small offshoot of the Uigenna. The Varrs view this town as a rebel base, but seem to be leaving the Irraka to their own devices for now, undoubtedly because they're engaged in more pressing business elsewhere.

The area could be seen as Unneah territory, but is too close to the Varr border to be any use to them. Other tribes regard the Irraka as either stupid or ignorant to have stayed there for so long.

Phesbe has no redeeming features, and any it might have once possessed were destroyed by the Uigenna a long time ago. Presumably, the hara who live there now were left behind or forgotten by the Uigenna, their numbers augmented by outcasts and misfits travelling south. The Irraka's headquarters is situated in what was once the Town Hall, a formerly elegant building that is now little more than a rotting ruin. Although the town boasted several well stocked stores when hara appropriated it from humans, these supplies ran out very quickly, and the Irraka are now forced to trade with any passing hara who feel inclined to sell their wares, or else attempt to raid the smaller Varr settlements to the north. The latter must surely be inadvisable, because the Varrs will retaliate with force.

Phesbe's main attraction to the traveller is its location, as it serves a useful stopping off point between the territory of the Kakkahaar and the Varrs. The Irraka are not particularly hostile, but neither are they welcoming. It is best to bring gifts if you wish to stay in their territory for more than a night.

'So the place is called Phesbe? I'm surprised it even still has a name. The Irraka are quite welcome to it. It wasn't even worth pausing in that dump in human times!'

- Aries Strala, Unneah

"What do you ca....."

- Talian har Uigenna, who was shot by a machinegun.

"With some hara, Inception is only a surface job."

-Creed Carenal har Uigenna

"Do they really think we can't see them?" —

- Momery har Varr, on spotting a group of drunken Uigenna hiding behind a cactus.

Imbrilim: Suspected Gelaming Encampment

Varr intelligence suggests that the Gelaming are building a staging post to the far south of Fulminir. Despite the slew of rumours and allegedly first-hand reports from hara who claim to have seen Gelaming in the area, the Varrs have yet to find any hard evidence.

The Unneah have said that the occupants of this camp are nothing more than a rough community of refugees from the north. The camp has been known by many names, most of which are undoubtedly fabrications. The most likely designation is Imbrilim, as this is the most consistently quoted. It's possible that the Gelaming established the place to offer aid to refugees, in the hope of winning these desperate souls to their cause.

Some hara who have set out deliberately to find Imbrilim have never returned home. This could be seen as evidence that Imbrilim is in fact all it is claimed to be, and therefore a better life might be found there, or at least a gateway to Immanion through ingratiating yourself with the Gelaming. However, the Varrs scoff at such suggestions, saying simply that the foolish hara who disappeared en route to Imbrilim were more likely to have been attacked and killed by rogue Uigenna or that they simply expired in the wilderness, before even catching sight of any Gelaming recruiting base.

If you should wish to make contact with the Gelaming in Megalithica, seeking out this encampment would be an obvious place to start. If you can find it.

'Preliminary incursions into Megalithica so far successful. Suitable place found for base. Must improve undercover reconnaissance. Too many mistakes made. Too much speculation directed our way.'

From a private memo to his chief of staff
- Ashmael Aldebaran, Gelaming

The Great Library of Kyme

Many years ago, all over the civilized world, humans in each country tended to store all their knowledge in one central library. These vast storehouses would also contain works from other countries too. Some of the manuscripts, documents and books were centuries old. Unfortunately, many of these invaluable establishments were wantonly destroyed, not just by belligerent hara when they over-ran the human cities, but also by humans themselves during their internal conflicts. It is fortunate indeed that a few of these irreplaceable halls of records still remain.

Both the Gelaming and the Varrs have staked claim to such stores, and keep them heavily guarded. But perhaps the greatest library of all, the most intact, is the one to be found on the island of Alba Sulh, in the town of Kyme.

Although the Sulh are selective about whom they let into their library, hara of the Gelaming, Kakkahaar and Obliviata have recorded visits there. Visitors can often remember the library vividly, although their recollections of how they got there are less clear. This is obviously because the Sulh obscured their minds in order to protect the library's whereabouts. Certain hara of the Kakkahaar have even gone so far as to say that the library does not exist, that the town of Kyme is no more than a muddy field and the library an illusion. When questioned about this claim, the Sulh replied that the Kakkahaar are merely envious of their library and covet the ancient books and grimoires on magical lore to be found within its walls. They say that anyhar is welcome to visit the library, if they approach its doors with a clear and honest heart, and fulfil certain criteria concerning their intentions.

It would seem, to an outsider, that the Sulh and the Kakkahaar, both being so passionate about studying ancient history and gathering arcane knowledge, would do well to combine their resources, but the idea of that is more of an illusion than anything the tricky Sulh could conjure up!

High Codexia Malakess, who is chief librarian at Kyme, is happy to give details about it to anyhar who asks him. He has spoken openly about the continued effort by the Sulh to maintain the library and add to it any information they can of the early

"I feel his coming like ice upon my spine. I want to turn and run. Yet I wish his presence for, after all, did I not summon him?"

- Dantallia, subject unknown

stages of Wraeththu development. He describes vault upon vault of priceless books and documents, some of them containing knowledge so rare and so potentially dangerous that they have to be guarded by magical wards.

Should you wish to visit the Library of Kyme, go first to Avalonia and arrange for a guide to take you there. Although the Sulh are honest hara, and rarely fleece strangers, it would be best to ask for references from any har who offers his services. You won't get in unless you fulfil the demanded criteria for entrance, and you won't find out what they are until you get there.

'If you're ever in the land of Alba Sulh be sure to visit Kyme. Though memories of the journey there may be dim and uncertain, you will certainly remember the wonders you find within its walls. "Tell me!" I hear you say. I wish I could describe to you the knowledge stored within its walls, but sadly you have to see it with your own eyes to believe.'

- High Codexia Malakess, Sulh Librarian

The Tribal Gangs of Lund

While on nearly every continent, Wraeththu have followed the original precedents set down by the First Incepted and have formed tribes, there are some hara, particularly in Alba Sulh, who have not followed this pattern. The Sulh have recorded as many details as they can of these young hara. They comprise individuals who have rebelled against those who incepted them. It is not a phenomenon peculiar only to Alba Sulh, but the Sulh are the only tribe yet to study it in detail.

The major centre for these gangs is the once great city of Lund, located in the south east of the island. Lund was devastated a decade ago and little remains there now but ruins, which are quickly being reclaimed by indigenous flora and fauna. The wild hara who live there mainly inhabit the warren of underground tunnels and sewers, many of which are hundreds of years old. Although little is known of the actual structure and traditions of these gangs, they resemble in many ways the early Ugenna. They do not refer to themselves as a tribe, and appear to shun the Wraeththu community in general. Occasionally, they have left their base and travelled the land in search of new recruits, presumably hara as disaffected as themselves. The gangs have also made lightning strike attacks on other Wraeththu communities in order to scavenge and steal resources and supplies. They are not overly aggressive towards other hara, and tend only to be dangerous when they have to defend themselves. Their style is to creep into a community, take what they want and creep out. The Sulh suppose the gangs' numbers are not great, but their feral nature in some ways outweighs this disadvantage. They are great survivalists, who make the most of limited resources. Cunning and creative to a har, they have fashioned imaginative traps and weapons, which are used to keep unwanted visitors out of their Lund lairs.

Eyewitness accounts describe the hara of these gangs as rough looking and dirty. The Sulh believe it's possible that the renegades might be working with, or even controlled by, a remaining cell of humans, or even some other greater unknown force. As the Sulh have no formal communication with the gangs, they cannot yet know for sure how these groups operate or were formed. The Sulh are powerful magicians, but they have not managed to penetrate the gangs or even investigate what lies beneath the city of Lund. If they had the assistance of a more military based tribe like the Varrs, this might be more of a possibility, but for now the gangs are destined to remain a mystery, until they either mature and become a tribe in their own right or die out.



The ruins of Lund themselves are a site worth visiting, and the curious har who wishes to know more about the many permutations of his kind could do worse than attempt to contact the mysterious subterranean gangs of the city. It is certain the Sulh would pay highly for any information you could give them.

'They seem to be fairly harmless. However the secrets they keep in the depths of Lund might not simply be the key to their own survival: It might unlock many of the great mysteries of Alba Sulh. Either way, we will eventually infiltrate these scum runners and uncover the truth.'

- Demetrius, Phylarch of the Sulh Warriors

Morass

"Morass, morass, my kingdom for more ass"

- Dag har Uigenna

How they got there nohar knows, but a small group of Uigenna have established themselves in the mountains of Thaine a short distance west of the town of Fallsend. The Unneah suggest that the hara in question managed to hitch a lift from Megalithica with the Freyhella.

Nohar other than a Uigenna could find Morass appealing, but if villainy and dissipation are your idea of fun, be sure to visit. Along with the nearby town of Fallsend, this area is famed for its musendas, cheap bars and the trading of illicit substances. Musendas are the harish equivalent of whorehouses. Why even the most degraded hara would need such a service is too vile to consider. Toxins and poison of all types can be bought, as well as the assassin to use them for you.

'The weather is crap, but this sure beats Megalithica. No Varrs, nohar bossing you around. Worth all the effort it took to get here. I always said I'd have myself a little place in the mountains.'

- Skank Marchell, Uigenna

Karibee Sea

This territory is firmly in the hands of a branch of the Smalt, the Picaroons, who tend to defend it aggressively and issue dire warnings to anyhar who enters their waters without just cause. Their hostility and suspicion is mainly the result of incursions by the Freyhella, who once sought to claim this fertile area for themselves. While the majority of Smalt phyles are sea-faring, the Picaroons have earned a reputation for themselves as antagonistic and dishonest, and are not averse to plundering the ships of other tribes that happen to drift across the Picaroons' path. They sail widely upon the oceans, and have been reported to land as far afield as northern Megalithica and Almagabra.

The most renowned of the Picaroons is Skipper Hansmet, who single-handedly planned and executed a naval manoeuvre to thwart the advances of the Freyhellans, who at the time were undoubtedly more organized and skilled. While the Freyhellans are renowned for working with sea and wind spirits to facilitate their voyages, Hansmet and his kind are more in tune with the mythical serpents of the deep, which they claim to be able to conjure up and control. One can only imagine what the confrontation at sea between the Picaroons and the Freyhellans must have been like.

Though Hansmet is the most feared of his phyle, he is also one of the most revered in the area: reputedly a har of honour who sticks to his word. However, despite Hansmet's allegedly more worthy qualities, the Picaroons are certainly the hara who can provide all manner of contraband and dangerous substances, if you are brave enough to barter with them. Their ships haunt the waters around their islands, with hara going ashore regularly to raid small coastal settlements.

The only settlement it is fairly safe to visit is Jaiker on the main island. Here, the intrepid traveller can sample first hand the delights of Smalt hospitality. Although the Picaroons are renowned as robbers, the only robbery you're likely to encounter in Jaiker is the daylight kind, as travellers are charged highly for all amenities and services. Some hara claim that the exotic nature of what is on offer is usually worth the price.

"Fight me. Prove yourself. Maybe then you live."

- Laice, in a duel

The Varrs claim that the Picaroons are administered by an Archon within the tribe, who could possibly be Skipper Hansmet. So far, the Picaroons have not revealed the truth.

'The sea is mine. I have no fear of him. If my ship were to break into a thousand pieces in a storm, the sea would carry me home. If you cut me, I bleed salt water. This is my home. It is mine. And I will take from it what I want, when I want, and never think of mercy.'

- Skipper Hansmet, *Picaroon phyle of the Smalt*

"Hold me, caress me. Give me all you have. You won't have need of it much longer anyway."

- Tristan

Neovik

Now little more than a derelict shell, this Megalithican city was once a thriving metropolis. The human population has long gone, and hardly any hara live within the ruins.

The city was destroyed around five years ago, by the shockwave of tsunamis that followed the eruption of a string of volcanoes across the eastern ocean. The immense tidal waves were completely unexpected and killed the majority of the human occupants as well as the hara who were just beginning to become established in the city.

The coastline in this area, once a sprawl of human conurbations, is now returning to nature. The once great city of Neovik is just a memory that haunts the toppled buildings and ruined roads that lie strewn in its place. Nature reclaims the land: Ivy and grasses grow from cracks in the ground, and through holes and crevices of buildings. Birds and animals have returned to make new homes.

This is a place of rich pickings for any ruincomber. A visit to the remains of Neovik is sure to provide you with a wide array of artefacts, resources and trinkets to barter.

'Once a metropolis of great wealth and power, Neovik, (so renamed by the Freyhella who landed there recently), was wiped out in an instant, when the ring of fire to the east erupted on one furious blast. The tidal wave that came from the fire rage wiped out all that lived. Many of the city's great structures toppled, all hope taken with them. Now we are left with the detritus and half-eaten husks of skyscrapers. All that lives within the empty shells are plants and creatures that have crept back from the wilderness. In Neovik, nature begins once more to claim what once belonged to her alone.'

- Gabriel Chamberg, *Colurastes*

The Rift of the Damned

'Well this is a bummer for all you hara who want to spend a nice hot summer in the sun surfing the seas of the west coast. The choice surfing spots are now sunk.'

- Dag, *Uigenna*

Four years ago, a group of Uigenna, were on a trip to catch a few waves down on the Megalithican west coast. One night, they were awoken in their hill top camp, by a loud rumbling and what they described as 'the sound of death itself'. Immediately, they left their camp to go and see what was going on, and were able to witness firsthand the last few hours of the earthquake that created The Rift of the Damned, so named by themselves, or rather their leader, a legendary Uigenna named Zip Hamstring.

A little upset that they missed the resulting tidal wave, the group returned to Duwamish to inform the rest of their phyle that the popular Devil's Cove surfing site was now a little inaccessible. Part of Megalithica had disappeared completely into the ocean, taking a lot of cities, and no doubt lives, with it. Zip Hamstring claims that he saw demons that night, striding over the land, stamping to break it apart, but who knows what he might have been smoking?

"Learn to embrace the power within you. Touch the centre of your soul and awaken the magic within. Ride the essence that is your spirit and awaken to a new dawn."

- Sovences

Demons or not, a huge coastal region on the west of Megalithica suffered a major tectonic shift and sank into the sea. Humans had been predicting this event for years beforehand but no doubt they hadn't really expected it to happen. Either way, the new topographical formation that came to replace Devil's Cove, and many other choice surfing spots, was soon made popular by the Uigenna, who came to check out Zip's story. They have also found the surfing to be far superior than it ever was, now that everything has settled.

'What was that? Have you dropped one, Dag...? Aw, shit! I don't think we'll be surfing Devil's Cove today.'

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna

Payuti

"You know, I don't think I have ever seen this river before?"

- Finneaus har Unneah, after a really good party.

In their fight against the Uigenna, the Varrs pursued various enemy phyles across the great desert areas of Megalithica. On their travels, they ventured into a locale known by local hara as Payuti, once the site of a great human city. Here, as they searched for their quarry that had gone underground, the Varrs stumbled across a vast hidden store of secret human technology. They found all manner of devices and information, which they could potentially use in their campaign to control Megalithica. Only two things stood in their way: the lack of a method to power these devices and the knowledge to use them. Through repeated attempts to understand what they had found were made, they only achieved the destruction of all but a few of these devices. Those that remain are kept in storage until the Varrs have the abilities and knowledge to use them.

Located in the great desert basin, west of Fulminir, Payuti was once home to many humans. Now all that remains is a few rogue groups who continue to try and prevent the Varrs from controlling the area. It is an area that has been associated with strange phenomena since ancient times, when it was said that whole native tribes disappeared for no reason. There is certainly an aura of power to the place, and for that reason alone it is worth visiting. As well as the ruins of the recent human city, there are some very ancient sites nearby that are soaked in weird energy.

Just outside the debris of the city itself are huge concrete strips and large underground caverns, made by the men who once worked there. The entire area now belongs to the Varrs. They have given no official report about this matter, but Gelaming and Uigenna spies have confirmed its existence and that the Varrs are using some top secret human project notes to help them create a new type of soldier through mutation. This only goes to show that the Varrs have not learned from the mistakes of our predecessors, and it will doubtless all end in tears.

"Wraeththu are timeless. Therefore you should learn to understand the perspective this allows us to have."

- Dantallia

'There was a place so revered by the humans that many tales were spread about the secrets that lay hidden there, the mysterious happenings that took place at night and by day. It was once a place where metal beasts rode the winds, like angels. It was a place where the magi of science strove to understand the workings of the universe and thereby become more powerful than any other living creature on the earth. All I can say is: They failed.'

- Zilla Shemercy, Ex-Varr General

Khemet

This is an ancient desert land to the west of Olathe, which has long been associated with magic and mystery, with potent gods and dark spirits. Like the Obliviata's homeland of Olathe, Khemet has been scorched irrevocably by the horrors of human warfare. The mighty river that once flowed through it has been reduced to a mean stream. Its sandy plateaus have become glass. Surviving humans have fled to the southern hills where they live in the cool caves near the river's source, waiting for the return of ancient gods. Even though so much has been lost, many of the ancient temples, as if in

defiance of those who sought to destroy them, still stand, long after their assailants have died. Great pyramids contemplate alone the vast reaches of the universe above them, and sand once more sighs back over the thresholds of the empty shrines.

Many hara believe, as humans did before them, that the answers to the secrets of life lie hidden beneath the sands of Khemet. Maybe it lies beneath the glass plateau of Roztau or deep within one of the haunted tombs. The surviving human population dares not leave the safety of its hilly settlements, and the Obliviata have more sense than to linger in such arid conditions, so Khemet dreams, and perhaps remembers, alone. One day, somehar will discover the secrets of this land. Maybe if Allavé chooses to return to this world, he will do so here, in the guise of a living god.

'Allavé tells us of a time when the gods walked amongst the men of Khemet. They built many great structures, over hundreds of years, and then as if by magic the gods disappeared leaving nothing but poverty. On my travels in this land, I have discovered the great pyramids, still standing, their stone casing crumbling under the immense heat. However, despite the heat, and like Allavé's temple, these structures contain chambers and caves which are strangely cold.'

- Omar of the Dry Sea, Obliviata

FAMOUS AND INFAMOUS WRAETHTHU

Wraeththu have only walked this earth for a short time, but already legends have been created, gods have been formed and stories have been woven around the lives of certain hara.

Thiede

Thiede is the mysterious and compelling archon of the Gelaming. He is said to be able to control great tides of etheric power and, by magic alone, build whole cities from dust. Not even the fierce Uigenna or the mystifying Kakkahaar would dare take on the Gelaming and their indomitable leader. Only the Varrs, with their skilled and disciplined fighting force, are left to stand against whatever plans Thiede has for Megalithica, and it might be that the Varrs' physical might will not be enough.

The most cynical hara claim that Thiede's true power derives from his ability to manipulate situations, his skill as an actor, and his shrewd assessment of other haras fears and desires.

Velisarius of the Kakkahaar once said, 'The red-head found a city with no humans in it. It had a good view of the sea. He said to his hara: "Tell everyhar you meet that I conjured this place into being." Off they went and repeated his words. That's true magic. I stand in awe.'

At Thiede's command, the Gelaming are recruiting hara from Megalithica, to join them in the forthcoming operation to free Megalithica from Varr control. In the desert areas, stories of powerful magics and strange occurrences abound. Thiede himself has been glimpsed in many areas of the country, apparently trying to influence the smaller tribes into supporting his cause. Often, it was only with hindsight, when others had questioned their encounter, that hara realised who it was they'd met.

Thiede likes to conceal his identity to a degree, but there are signs to look out for, should a mysterious and charismatic har try to persuade you to support the Gelaming. In his natural state, he is a tall, elegant and beautiful har with long blood red hair, but quite often he tends to mute his appearance with a magical glamour.



However, one thing he cannot, or chooses not to disguise is his aura of strength and majesty. He also appears ageless; the true essence of what it means to be Wraeththu.

Perhaps it is an exaggeration, but many say that everything Thiede touches becomes his. Hara do appear to fall readily beneath his spell. If confronted with him, you would be wise to remain wary, no matter what he promises.

Thiede has founded what appears to be a powerful nation across the sea, but did he really build the fabled city of Immanion through magic? Can he control time and space itself, as he likes to make hara think? We can be sure the Gelaming will soon be a greater presence in Megalithica. Perhaps then the answers to all the tantalizing questions will be revealed.

Ponclast

The Archon of the Varrs was incepted into the Uigenna, but quickly came into conflict with its leaders. Now, he lives behind the high dark walls of his northern citadel, Fulminir. From here, he formulates his grandiose plans for domination of Megalithica and beyond.

Very few hara outside Fulminir and Galhea have ever met Ponclast in person. This is mainly because he witnessed what happened to certain leaders of Uigenna phyles, who were careless about safety precautions, and takes great pains to ensure his own security. He allows only the highest ranking members of his staff near him, and even then he probably doesn't trust them entirely.

In appearance, Ponclast makes few concessions to the feminine side of his being. It is almost as if he resents this aspect of being Wraeththu, while he is clearly happy to embrace its other aspects, such as improved health, physiology and psychism. He is very contained in his manner, and rarely raises his voice. Not that he needs to: a glance from the Varr archon is generally enough to ensure his wishes are obeyed.

Ponclast was a respected military leader, even before he founded the Varrs, but clearly decided against trying to wrest power from his Uigenna overseers, instead opting to start a tribe from scratch. In this way, he was able to meld it more precisely to fit comfortably with his political and social beliefs.

Hara of tribes other than the Varrs, and who are not their allies, take great pleasure in spreading the most lurid and grotesque rumours about Ponclast. Around many a camp fire, you will hear gleeful tales of torture, blood sacrifices, bizarre and brutal sports, and even cannibalism. If Ponclast chooses to secrete himself inside Fulminir, its inevitable hara will conjecture about what he has to hide there.

Terzian

Terzian is a respected and powerful Varrish warrior, who has accrued much territory for his tribe, destroying many humans and hara in his wake. He is now the phylarch of the central Megalithican town of Galhea, which he recently appropriated from an extremely organized community of humans. A large proportion of the Varrish fighting force is now stationed in Galhea. Terzian rules over a wide area of territory and is Ponclast's second in command, perhaps the only har the archon truly trusts. In appearance, he is fair-haired and handsome, and always impeccably dressed, rarely seen out of uniform.

Galhea was hardly damaged during the takeover, and is now regarded as a place of peace and prosperity, in a time of great hardship. The town boasts markets with fresh produce and even schooling for newly incepted hara. It is surrounded by extensive farmland, which is tended by hara incepted from farming stock.

Terzian is far more open and approachable than Ponclast, and therefore tends to deal with the problems of other phylarchs, who might have difficulties securing an audience with the archon. Uncompromisingly loyal to his tribe, Terzian hates the Gelaming passionately, and is sure to be at the forefront of any forthcoming conflict between the tribes. He would certainly not lose his lands or his power without putting up a fight.

"Fire is nothing but the idea of heat granted freedom. To be Kakkahaar is to be the idea of Wraeththu granted freedom."

- Sovences extrapolating upon his tribe

"If they resist, kill them for their insolence. If they surrender, kill them for their weakness. Humanity is no longer of any worth. There is only Wraeththu."

- Laice, a Varr war chief

Manticker the Seventy

The Uigenna archon earned his title because he once killed a group of 70 armed humans in one fierce burst of rage. He has ruled now for over five years, which is quite impressive, as no other Uigenna archon has lasted that long. He is a great warrior, like some of the most famous Varrs, but in other ways is very different, perhaps more wholly 'har'. Unlike Ponclast, for example, Manticker does not aspire to be overly masculine, even though his body is heavily scarred and well muscled. In fact, he is surprisingly feminine in appearance for such a vicious har, having wild long hair and an affection for bizarre cosmetics and body adornment. Manticker would despise a har who was afraid of half their nature, so we can only conjecture what he must think about the Varrs, whatever tenuous alliance he has with them.

Before he acquired his new epithet, many hara called him The Amazon – at least behind his back. His short temper is famous and nohar would wish to bait him for any reason. When his fury is aroused, he will act unpredictably at best, and his strength is legendary, as well as his ability not to feel pain when angered.

Although he calls himself archon, and phyles immediately under his command do nothing to contest that, it's hard to fathom what control Manticker actually has over the Uigenna as a whole. His rule is absolute in his base city Duwamish, but beyond it other Uigenna have little more than a grudging respect for him. It will be interesting to see how much longer Manticker will stay in control, when other Uigenna are already eyeing up his territory with greedy relish. Perhaps they are waiting for him to make a deadly mistake.

"I am Thiede... No not him, I suffer from the ill fate of lack of imagination."

- Thiede Harasmaz, Uigenna

Wraxilan

Wraxilan, known as the Lion of Oomar, is a phylarch of the Uigenna. He is close to Manticker, even though he is a relatively recent inceptee to the tribe. Through strategic friendships among Manticker's inner cabal, Wraxilan has already amassed a large following within the tribe. He possesses great charisma, an engaging personality, sharp wit and arresting beauty. When these admirable traits are added to his fearlessness, swiftness and strength, we can appreciate his ability to attract other hara to his side. However, he is still Uigenna, so at times he is given to rashness and carelessness. Like Manticker, he is often quick to take offence and will lash out without thinking, occasionally with fatal results for the offenders. Surprisingly, his body carries few scars.

The Lion of Oomar has yellow-blond hair that is shorn at the sides of his head. However, the rest of it is so thick that he appears to have a great mane, like a lion, which is partly how he earned his title. Wraxilan is truly androgynous, with broad shoulders, slim hips, long, shapely legs and elegant facial features. He is also known for his wicked sense of humour and laughs nearly all the time, even while doing things that really aren't funny, such as maiming and killing. The majority of Uigenna think Wraxilan will one day challenge Manticker for rule of the tribe, supposing he doesn't get himself killed first.

Velisarius

The founder of the Kakkahaar was incepted into the Uigenna, but quickly became disaffected with their chaotic and thoughtless ways. He was a pioneer of early Wraeththu, in that he took time and effort to investigate their condition, both physically and mentally. Velisarius is credited with being the first har to perform an autopsy on a Wraeththu corpse in order to discover what changes really take place internally after Inception. This is hardly surprising, as he was studying medicine when the Uigenna abducted and incepted him. He was also one of the first hara to realize that Wraeththu needed to take stock of their condition and aim for self development.

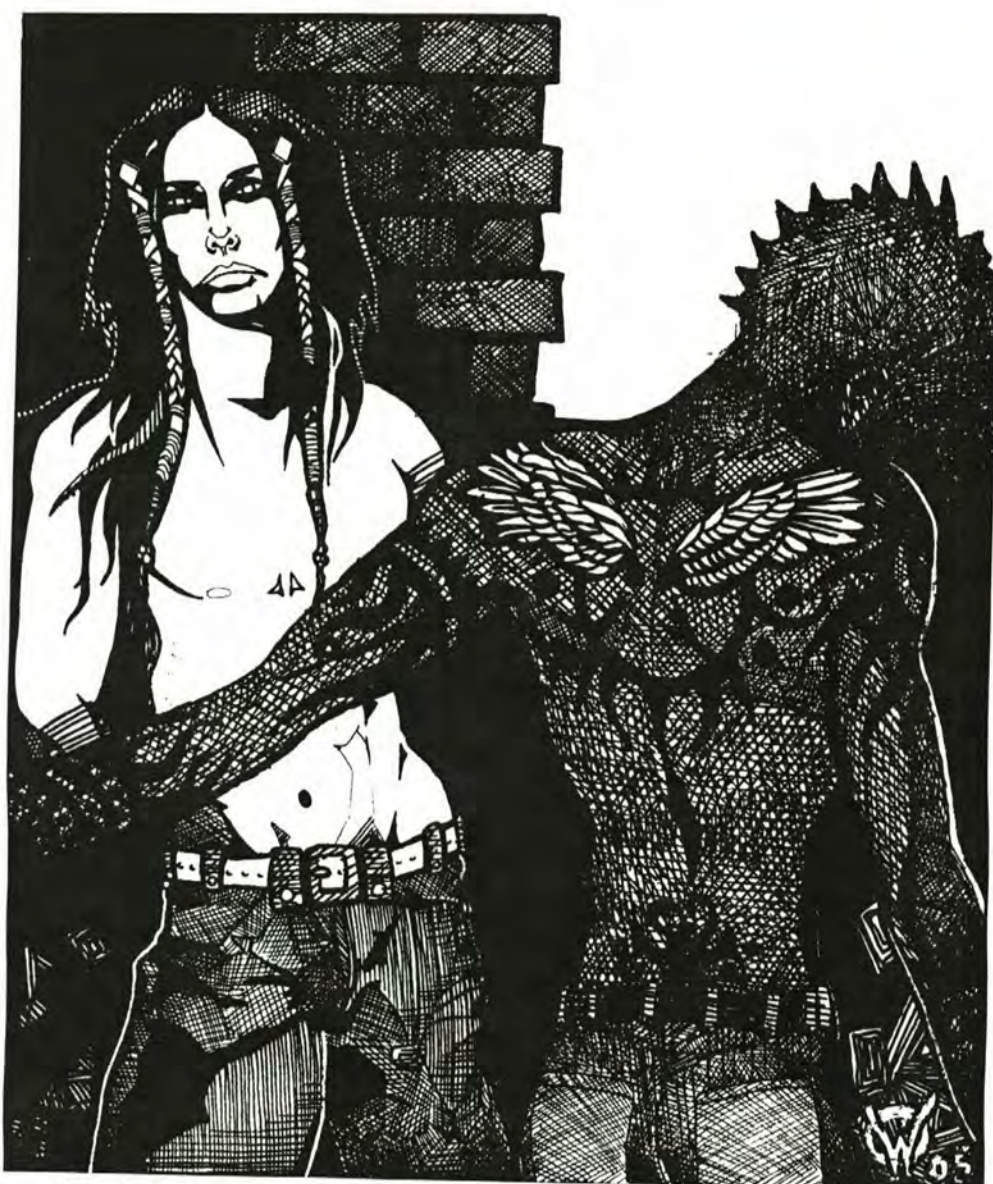
Although Velisarius attempted to coax high ranking Uigenna such as Manticker into sharing his passions, his words were ridiculed. Few hara had time for his philosophical and ethical arguments, preferring to live for the moment without thought for past or future. He was eventually driven from the northern cities in fear for his life.

"Lie with tigers; maybe you die. But if you survive, what a life you will have."

- Loveless, to a har who is rising in caste level

"Feel the glory and power of your body. Be unashamed of your love for it and for others. We are free and so we may be all we wish to be."

- Dantallia, speaking to younger hara



Once free of the Uigenna, Velisarius set about creating his own tribe, the Kakkahaar. He fled to the southern deserts, believing he could continue his studies there unmolested. He encouraged his hara to strive for self knowledge, to probe the secrets of their being and abandon petty human concerns and fears. He has a great love of study and knowledge, which he passed to his inceptees. Despite his interests, he is not ascetic, and also has a scathing view of what tribes such as the Sulh and the Gelaming consider to be morality. He has always maintained that hara can learn as much from the darkest corners of their souls as from the most enlightened. These beliefs are partly what make the Kakkahaar as feared as they are today.

However, it seems Velisarius eventually lost heart in some respects, for he is now a recluse, living in a secret retreat deep in the desert, attended only by a cabal of his most trusted hara. He has recently appointed a har named Lianvis as the new archon of the tribe.

In appearance, he is tall and lean, with tawny skin and thigh-length golden brown hair. His gaze is penetrating and his manner sometimes cryptic. The words of Velisarius are quoted throughout the Wraeththu world, whatever hara might think of his tribe and his beliefs.

"Say that again, but this time come closer!"

- Sangine har Colurastes, when asked if his hair can really strangle hara.

Lianvis

Lianvis, a protégé of Velisarius, is the current archon of the Kakkahaar. He is an intelligent and intimidating har whose leadership would never be questioned openly by any of the tribe. Lianvis seems to be far older than his apparent years and possesses wide knowledge in a great many subjects. In appearance, he is very similar to Velisarius, but that is a trait that most Kakkahaar seem to inherit following Inception.

Lianvis follows closely in Velisarius' footsteps and is determined to learn all he can about Wraeththu psychology. Very few of his hara are below Ulani in caste. Their archon encourages them to improve both their body and their mind.

Perhaps more than his predecessor, Lianvis is not squeamish about investigating the darker paths of the occult. He seems to care little that he has earned rather an unsavoury reputation, no doubt because he cannot see it affecting detrimentally his income or his position.

"Shhhh. Don't speak to me. Don't look at me! Just come here and touch me. Know me."

- Loveless, freaking out

Orien Farnell

Orien is a true legend of Wraeththu, a mysterious shaman, whose origins are unknown. In the early days, he spent a lot of time with the Uigenna, who tolerated him because of his usefulness. Humans incepted by Orien rarely died. Now, he travels Megalithica extensively, visiting many tribes. Hara believe he is searching for something or someone, but whatever it is, he seems willing to travel to the ends of the earth to find it.

After leaving the Uigenna, he sailed the rivers with the Unneah for some time, before spending several years with the Colurastes and the Kakkahaar, when he no doubt picked up a lot of their occult lore. While his exact caste level is unknown, most hara presume he must be Nahir Nuri, or third level Ulani at least. He seems old and wise, despite his youthful appearance, and affects humble threadbare clothes. His light brown hair is shoulder length, and his face open and handsome.

The Varrs suspect Orien of working for the Gelaming, but many hara see this aspersion merely as an attempt to discredit a formidable har, who has the ability to wield forces that the Varrs cannot comprehend. Like Velisarius, Orien's words are much quoted by other hara. This is probably because they hear quite a lot of them. His favourite way to spend an evening is to sit up all night talking around a camp fire, when liberal consumption of alcohol often tends to sway his speech into amazingly eloquent areas.

Allavé

Allavé is possibly one of the most mysterious and enigmatic of all legendary hara. Perceived almost as a god by the Obliviata, he made tremendous impact upon the world of Wraeththu in his relatively short life.

Allavé came to the hara of Olathe and was quickly accepted by them because of his immense power and charisma. The more sceptical say he was simply in the right place at the right time. Hara who fell beneath his spell were happy to emulate his ideals, and through this the Obliviata were created and the once chaotic Wraeththu groups of Olathe were united. Until his death, Allavé returned to Olathe once every four years or so years to incept new hara into his tribe and to oversee rituals of Grissecon. He was killed by a group of humans, and thereafter virtually deified by his tribe.

The Obliviata don't use magic themselves, but have faith that Allavé still works to protect and guide them from the etheric realms. They live by strict codes, laid down by their founder, and expect dire consequences should they deviate from them. Allavé taught that material possessions were lead weights upon the soul, and that the fewer ties a har has to earthly reality the better. A har unencumbered by possessions, and the cares they bring, is a free har.

Since his death, hara have reported many sightings of Allavé, who can apparently still manifest in this realm. He appears as a humble traveller, dressed in desert garb,

"Hahahahahahahahahahaha"
- Loveless, seeing his reflection distorted in a puddle

who is recognizable only by his piercing gaze, which hara say it is almost impossible to meet.

Tyr

Tyr is the fabled Archon of the Freyhella. Outside his own territory, he is known personally only to certain hara of the Sulh, the Unneah and Colurastes.

The Freyhella are a seafaring tribe, who live in a country north east of Megalithica. Tyr is named for an ancient god, and in founding his tribe, instilled a lot of very early human spiritual beliefs into his hara. As for his origins, he remains rather tight-lipped, but some Unneah say that he was once a Gelaming who fell out with Thiede, and therefore left Almagabra to start his own tribe. He is pale-haired and tanned, and while not overly tall, powerfully built like an athlete.

Stories about Tyr and his hara are common round many campfires and over many bars. Some of them are quite far-fetched and clearly owe more to the ancient mythology of which Tyr is fond than to fact. He is said to have conjured up and fought with a huge sea serpent somewhere off the coast of Alba Sulh, in order to gain magical knowledge. The truth might be somewhat more mundane, and involve only some kind of symbolic ritual. Still, when Unneah tell tales, they prefer them to be as tall as they can make them.

Thraice

A phylarch of the Sulh, Thraice has travelled widely and is regarded by many as both a diplomat and a seer. While most of his tribe make little effort to interact with others, Thraice has been quite a vocal representative of his hara. He was incepted in Alba Sulh, but after a few years, moved to Megalithica, where he rules over a nomadic phyle. Dark-haired and green-eyed, Thraice has an earnest countenance and little time for frivolity.

If any non-Sulh phylarch or archon convenes a meeting of tribes, for whatever reason, Thraice will be present. Some hara even lay a place for him at meeting tables in advance, acknowledging with some amusement his determination to take part in any kind of political gathering.

Thraice is renowned for his idealistic views, his fervour for the advancement of Wraeththu as a whole and his general altruism. In some areas, he is regarded as something of a freak. Like many before him, he despairs at the ways of hara like the Uigenna and the Varrs, and while he respects the Kakkahaars' knowledge, considers them to be decadent and dissolute. He campaigns relentlessly for hara to 'wake up' and abandon outmoded forms of thinking and behaviour. Recently, hara of his own phyle have been heard to complain that Thraice spends more time interfering in the business of other tribes than in devoting his energies to his own. However, nohar can dispute his honesty and passion, his concern for the world and the hara in it, and his fairness of mind. The Unneah have reported, somewhat facetiously, that Thraice once sought an audience with Thiede and urged him to befriend the Varrs and the Uigenna, stating that change could only be wrought slowly, from within. Thiede's response to this suggestion is not recorded.

"Hara look like wonderful flowers but their thorns are long, and some of them are even carnivorous plants!"

-Ebreean to his friend Miho.

"So eager you have come, so willing you are to pay a price. I wonder. Will you find what you seek and if you do, will you still want it?"

- Sovences, questioning another seeker after him

THE MAJOR TRIBES OF THE WRAETHTHU

The tribes of Wraeththu are many and varied and have spread with devastating swiftness around the world. Some have developed interesting specializations, and all have an idiosyncratic approach to magic, aruna and spirituality. Certain of the tribes have deviated so radically from humanity – in their appearance, beliefs, social structure and magical abilities – that it is sometimes difficult to believe they derive from the same source, or indeed that they are harish at all.

It is accepted by most hara that all Wraeththu derive from a common origin. The initial small groups later fragmented into the various tribes and sub-sects. However, due to the often strange mutations and diverse political and spiritual views, the only thing they truly share is their basic physiology.

From the major tribes detailed below, it is impossible to determine which is the superior. What one tribe might lack in physical power, they will make up for in political dexterity and vice versa. Others are more versed in magical skill and wield great influence over others through that.

The Gelaming are both skilled political manipulators and wielders of magical power, while the Varrs and the Uigenna find success mainly through brute force. However, superiority does not rest wholly upon temporal power, and it could be said that some of the tribes that might be perceived as weaker because they control less territory, are more highly developed and sophisticated than their larger contemporaries.

On the whole, the more spiritually advanced tribes seek seclusion and are uninterested in accruing territory. How they will be affected by the inevitable clash between the Gelaming and the Varr/Uigenna alliance is difficult to predict. Most hara believe that a big conflict looms, when it will be decided once and for all which tribe holds the greater power in both Megalithica and Almagabra.

Colurastes

The Colurastes are best known as the mysterious Serpent Hara. Exotic and secretive, very few hard facts have been documented about their activities and culture, but they are widely acclaimed for their intoxicating beauty. Colurastes tend to live in caves or rock dwellings, in small groups, and generally avoid contact with other tribes. Those who have met or traded with them often have strange stories to tell, of incredible enchantments and bizarre transformations.

The most recognizable aspect of the tribe is their unusual and magnificent hair. Most Colurastes grow it down to their thighs, or even longer. Although sometimes braided, especially when encountering strangers, the hair is generally worn loose in undulating tresses. It is said that the hair of a Colurastes has a life of its own and that it would bleed if it were cut. Legends abound of Colurastes hara actually strangling victims with their hair, but these might just be fabulous inventions. The stories have never been confirmed, and a popular myth is that those who are brave enough to investigate are never seen again.

Gelaming

The Gelaming inhabit the country of Almagabra, which is on the eastern continent, far from the Megalithican birthplace of Wraeththu. Their archon is a powerful har named Thiede, who is credited with building the city of Immanion, the first true Wraeththu city.

The Gelaming view themselves as superior to all other Wraeththu tribes, due to their knowledge of harish magic and abilities, which surpasses even that of the Kakkahaar. Thiede has also taken it upon himself to gather around him hara of high calibre who still possess, or are capable of learning, lost and vanishing human skills such as medicine,

"So cold, so fragile, and so very beautiful, almost like a frozen rose. I wonder. Do I keep you or do I break you?"

- Dantallia, being cruel

"The sands speak with an elemental power of both earth and air. If you have the ears for their voices you can learn to become something beyond yourself."

- Sovences, educating

"Varrs fight good, but don't know how to toy with their playthings."

- Loveless after a meeting with Laice

engineering and technology. Rumour suggests he has agents scouring every tribe for its best hara, who are then lured away to Almagabra to become part of the Gelaming administration.

All Gelaming are tall, elegant and beautiful, even by Wraeththu standards. They are cultured and stylish, and in some ways their courtly manners often echo an earlier time in human history. However, this urbane surface conceals their considerable fighting skills. No hara from another tribe would willingly take on a Gelaming in single combat.

In the name of freedom for all hara, the Gelaming plan to rid Megalithica of its Varr overseers and Ugenna brutality. How and when this matter will be approached is yet unknown and, in most hara's opinions, an attempt by brute force would cause more problems than it would solve.

Kakkahaar

The Kakkahaar occupy a wide area in the deserts of Megalithica. They are a nomadic tribe, of many phyles, living under canvas, who are respected and feared in equal measure by other tribes. Gifted in scrying and many other magical skills, the Kakkahaar make most of their income from practicing the art of divination, for both hara and humans. However, it must be said that the price they demand for their services might well be more than you can afford or are prepared to pay. Unlike the Gelaming, the Kakkahaar openly embrace the darker aspects of magick. Their leader Lianvis is famous for his association with dangerous magical practices, although some hara believe this is propaganda that Lianvis had disseminated himself to enhance his reputation.

Despite their deeply magical beliefs, the Kakkahaar are also fond of luxury, trinkets and self-adornment. Consequently, if you catch them in the right mood, they are relatively easy to bribe.

The Kakkahaar can only be found if they want you to find them and their ability to vanish into the environment is second to none. One of the most frightening and powerful tribes, the Kakkahaar should never be crossed. As many hara say, a fool who offends the desert hara has more than his life to lose.

Obliviata

The Obliviata derive from a large hot country known as Olathe, somewhere south of Almagabra. The tribe has travelled widely, small numbers of them even reaching Megalithica itself.

The Obliviata have a unique tribal structure and are deeply religious. They devote their time to following the word of their god, Allavé. Nomadic in nature, the Obliviata are skilled herbalists. They are fairly sociable and are happy to trade and share stories with hara they meet on their travels. Most of the Obliviata's true knowledge has been kept within the tribe and is only passed on to others of their kind. It is in their blood to travel, as the teachings of their deity tell them that only by having very few ties to the world will they be truly free. Possessions and permanent dwellings would weigh heavily on an Obliviata's soul.

"Wasteful... Purposeless... Beasts!"

- Dantallia, observing the Irraka

Sulh

The mysterious and highly magical Sulh originated on the island of Alba Sulh, west of Almagabra. All hara of the tribe possess extremely acute psychic powers, even those with no caste training. These skills appear to be an extension of standard Wraeththu powers.

The Sulh have developed a magical system around their gift, combining old world superstition and religion with newer beliefs. Hara of the Sulh are typically reserved, elegant and noble. While hospitable to strangers, they display none of the hedonistic excesses of certain other tribes. Very few of them have ventured from their home land, and those who have are always highly prized among other tribes.

Uigenna

The Uigenna of Northern Megalithica are probably the most feared of Wraeththu tribes, apart from the indomitable Varrs. Their savagery is famous and unequalled by any other tribe. When engaged in one of their berserker killing sprees, entire cities of humans and hara alike have been obliterated in their wake. The tribe archon is Manticker the Seventy, so named for once killing a group of 70 armed men in one huge burst of rage. All that prevents the tribe from further success is their lack of coordination and constant infighting. Due to their nature, they initially spread far very quickly and now, although stretched thinly, they have control of the underground elements of many cities across Northern Megalithica. Recently, a tenuous alliance with the Varrs has occurred. The Varrs appreciate the benefits of the Uigenna fighting force, and the higher echelons of the Uigenna are intelligent enough to realize that Varrish organization will benefit their own tribe.

Unneah

The Unneah are either an off-shoot of the Uigenna, or perhaps even their progenitors. What is certain is they have broken away from their previously-held reputation of being as vicious as the Uigenna. Although some phyles still hold territory within the cities, the majority of Unneah have branched out into the wilderness. Skilled traders by nature, some have settled into permanent communities, while others maintain a nomadic lifestyle, travelling the rivers of Megalithica or journeying from town to town overland to trade. They are flamboyant in appearance, hospitable to strangers because of their flair for commerce, and shamanic in their spiritual beliefs.

Varr

The Varrs are the largest and most domineering tribe in Megalithica. While they are not as uncompromisingly vicious as their Uigenna allies, they are nonetheless passionless and merciless killers, if they consider it expedient. Their archon is Ponclast, who occupies a citadel known as Fulminir in Northern Megalithica.

The Varrs control a large and well trained fighting force, which continues to accrue land for its archon wherever it can. Varr warriors pay no concessions to the feminine side of their nature, and it is fairly accurate to say that the tribe has almost reverted to two genders – culturally if not physically. The Varrs also follow many other traditions of their human predecessors, much to the disdain of the other tribes.

*I want to be your torment, enemy.
I want to be your pain.
I want to be your shriek of agony.
As your soul goes down the drain!*

*I want to be your ruin, enemy.
I want to be your rot.
I want to be your cry of agony.
As your soul is going to pot!*

*I want to be your hell, enemy.
I want to be your doom
I want to be your scream of agony.
As your damned soul goes foom!*

Uigenna War Chant

SUB-SECTS

Beyond the confines of the eight main tribes, many smaller groups have formed. Some are independent, while others are under the control of larger tribes. These sub-sects are mostly in the early stages of development and the majority have no organized leadership or name. Most can hardly be termed a tribe, or phyle, yet possess a certain permanency and a limited amount of structure. It might be that groups of this kind will eventually expand to become formidable tribes in their own right. Others will inevitably be absorbed into or destroyed by larger tribes.

Many of the sub-sect groups consist of Unthrist Wraeththu – that is, hara of no tribe or outcasts from a larger tribe. Whatever their origins, these small groups generally have no great impact upon Wraeththu society as a whole. Usually, a sub-sect will have no more than thirty members, all of which will be closely knit.

Some of the more notable and organized of these groups are listed below, with a few details about them.

Megalithica

Irraka

The Irraka (ee-RAH-kuh) is made up of a small group of outcasts and refugees who have escaped from the ravages of their Uigenna homelands of the north. They have no permanent home and, while not truly nomadic, find settling difficult as local hara tend to want them to move on. Also, Uigenna and Varrish military units will expel them from any area they control. The tribe has no caste training other than whatever the individual hara had when they joined the tribe. There is little hope for the Irraka in the future, unless they should acquire the assistance and support of one of the larger tribes, such as the Gelaming or Kakkahaar.

*"The desert is our home, but
so is the rest of this planet.
Many Wraeththu forget that,
I am sad for them."*

— Jankist har Oblivata

Zigane

The Zigane (Zig-ARN-ee) are a strange bunch of travelling hara and humans. Described by most as nothing more than a group of wandering gypsies, they are lead by a human woman known as the Pythoness. The origins of this group are unknown, and their goals are an even greater mystery.

Froia

The Froia (FROY-ah) live in a large marsh known as Astigi (ass-TEE-gee). One of more organized smaller groups, they are strongly magical, with a complex social structure. They can properly be called a tribe, even though their numbers are not great.

The territory of the Froia can be reached only by raft, and visitors must wait at the edge of the marsh for one of the tribe to come and give them permission to proceed. If this protocol is ignored, Froia dart snipers are likely to kill the visitors without hesitation. The Froia are growing increasingly wary of strangers, so if they suspect a visitor to be untrustworthy, they will not send a raft to meet them. The Froia leader is known as The Braga and all visiting hara are presented to him upon arrival.

The Froia have developed a complex religion and caste system, based on magic and aruna. They wear long concealing robes and will only reveal their body for the act of aruna. While the Froia inhabit part of what the Varrs consider to be Varrish territory, there is surprisingly little contact between the two tribes. As to how the Froia originated, common speculation is that they derived from the Colurastes or the Sulh.

Sarock

The Sarocks are a wandering group, who are said to be trying to find a permanent base, although many believe they already have one and that it is hidden by some form of magic. The hub of their activities appears to be in the Southern Megalithican desert.

Their leader is an attractive wild young har known as Seel Griselmig. He is believed to be of Unneah origin. It is known that the Sarocks are looking for (or have) a new settlement away from both the human population and other Wraeththu tribes. Even though they are small in number, and from an uncertain background, they are known to be very selective about who they allow into their group. The tribe seems to have quickly developed a highly complex caste system and already has access to a Nayati (temple) for Inceptions and other rites.

Greenling

The Greenling are not strictly a Wraeththu tribe, as the name applies both to a town and the hara who have settled there. Greenling is situated at the edge of the central Megalithican desert. It is a small town, whose population consists of outcast Wraeththu, and both harish and human refugees. The human inhabitants exist in surly, wary alliance with hara, although the two sides unite to protect themselves against threats from outside. The town of Greenling was established by hara who drifted down from the north to escape the horrors of the big cities. Some of these are hara who were denied entrance to the close-knit tribe of the Sarock.

*"Surrender. Your resistance
is futile and grows quickly
boring. Give yourself to my
arms and caress and I shall
be heavenly for you."*

— Dantallia, a dalliance

Amaha

The Amaha (AM-a-har) are a small tribe based in the town of Ahmouth, which is used as a staging post by the Varr army on its forays south. Most of the Amaha's trade and income is based upon commerce with the Varrish army. The tribe is under Varr control and any unique beliefs or abilities that the Amaha might possess are deeply hidden from the prying eyes of their overseers. Presumably the town once belonged to humans and was inhabited at some point by hara from the north.

Almagabra

Ferelith

The Ferelith (FER-eh-lith) inhabit the town of Ferelithia, which lies to the west of Almagabra and Immanion. The Ferelith are viewed by the Gelaming as somewhat frivolous and thus rather inconsequential. The typical Ferelithian is a sociable and contented creature. Presumably, the tribe was formed by those bored by, or isolated from, the Gelaming social structure and desired a more relaxing, if not exactly quieter, life. The town these hara are building is growing fast and is also believed to be home to several large groups of humans, who are both tolerated and included by their harish hosts.

"Magic? You come to me asking for magic? You had better hope and pray to whatever gods you still believe in that I decide not to show you true magic!"

- Lianvis har Kakkhaar.

Olopade

The Olopade (oll-OH-pard), allies of the Gelaming, are rumoured to inhabit an area at the northern edge of Thaine. Very little is known about how the Wraeththu populated this area of the world. Stories of strange phenomena in this region are common throughout Almagabra. Though certainly small in number, the Olopade are believed to be just as powerful as the Gelaming and are capable of using strong magic. They are extremely secretive and reclusive, although occasionally small parties of their hara will show up in other settlements to trade. They are also occasionally sighted in Immanion itself. Any hara who have taken it upon themselves to seek out the Olopade have never found them.

WRAETHTHU SOCIETY

Wraeththu society is broken up into various tribes. The tribe into which you were incepted, and/or the tribe of which you are currently a member, will affect your views on the world and the hara in it. Each tribe has differing views on spirituality, politics, ethics, and on how to have fun. Many have complex social structures and customs. Despite their differences, most hara can relate to one another at some level, due to their need for trade and social interaction.

Socialising

Hara's need for regular aruna means they are generally friendly and social creatures. Most Wraeththu settlements have inns or bars, and sometimes even restaurants and nightclubs. Hara enjoy good food and fine wine, when it is available. The majority of towns brew their own beer and ferment their own wine: Some of these brews are quite strong and can take visitors by surprise. Stronger drinks such as sheh and betica are also widely available, with varying degrees of refinement. Many liquors to be found are little more than moonshine. In the case of betica, even the "good stuff" is rather unpleasant. Fortunately, after half a glass or so, it tends to numb the mouth. Many Wraeththu still smoke tobacco, as it has little ill effect on harish bodies, but in most

areas it is rare and quite expensive. They will also indulge in natural stimulants and intoxicants local to their area.

If you are a friend of the Varrs, the best nights out in Megalithica are to be had in Galhea and Ahmouth. If you would prefer to avoid Varrish territory, you can head to the settlement of Greenling on the south coast. The Uigenna also know how to hold a good party, but not many hara would wish to attend such an event.

In Almagabra, Immanion has a few good restaurants and nightclubs, with many more in the process of construction. Ferelithia has excellent wine bars, serving interesting cocktails and unusual spirits.

Those seeking less reputable pastimes or company would be best off visiting the region of Thaine, but the less said about that the better.

"Sing your futile song."

-Tristan, mocking

Trade

Even amongst bitter rivals some trading goes on. While many hara live off items and produce stolen from old human towns, food and fuel are still in short supply. Only the Varrs, in Megalithica, and a few smaller tribes such as the Kheops and the Greenlings, have reclaimed farmland. Some of the nomadic tribes own cattle or goats for food and trade. Currency is in short supply and the old money the humans used is almost worthless. The Varrs have started to mint their own coins, and other tribes have been following suit. Most trade is still done by bartering, and some of the products and favours swapped are less than savoury. The Unneah have something of a reputation as the tribe to go to if you need something and are prepared to pay with good money. The Kakkahaar are also open to trade, if you can find them and are prepared to pay with more than just goods or money.

Travel

Since the downfall of humankind, nothing even approaching a public transport system exists anywhere. The nearest you will find to this is trading caravans who, for a price, will allow hara to travel with them to take advantage of the protection offered by a group. Most of the vehicles left in the cities were driven until they wore out or they were simply destroyed by the Uigenna. A few cars exist here and there, but fuel is rare and expensive. The same applies to small aircraft. The main mode of transport is the horse. Most settlements have livery stock available for sale, but you are advised to be careful when purchasing, especially if the owner seems rather too keen to sell.

Most travelling hara are either unthirst, of no tribe, or have left or been thrown out of their original phyle. It's important to be aware that the majority of them cannot be trusted. If you plan on travelling far, it is best to do so with a reputable trading caravan, or with one of the more trustworthy nomadic tribes, such as the Unneah, Obliviata or Sulh. Most phyles will not object to your presence, so long as you can pay them, and also respect their customs.

If you wish to travel overseas, say from Megalithica to Almagabra, you will need to travel by boat. Although large ships built by humans still exist, the fuel to power them is generally in short supply. There have been reports of immense liners that have been adapted to be powered by sail and oars, but on the whole most boats are generally now newly built by hara who derived from ship-building human stock or who have been trained in the craft.

Communication

Obviously the main communication systems used by humans, such as telephones and computer networks, have long disappeared. There are no national postal systems either. However, tribes such as the Varrs and the Gelaming, who require information to be disseminated efficiently, have developed local postal systems, similar to the old 'Pony Express'. If you wish to send a letter to somehar in a distant tribe, you can always pay a trader to deliver it for you, supposing they can be trusted.

"Speak all you wish and I shall listen. Everyhar holds to himself a unique wisdom. Share a little of yours and I shall also grant mine."

-Sovences, with another har

Although more advanced tribes are recreating such things as postal systems, Wraeththu also have another method at their disposal when they need to contact hara non-local to their area. The most gifted telepaths have formed a kind of etheric network, through which information can be relayed great distances. While only a few hara have the capability to contact others a long way away, most Pyralisits and Algomalids can transmit messages over several miles in earthly terms. A familiarity with the ethers is essential, along with skill at negotiating them. At present, these networks exist only within certain tribes, such as the Kakkahaar, Sulh and Gelaming. There is no formalized communication system nationwide, on any continent, but we can see the possibility for the future, when hara could 'surf' an internet that exists wholly in the etheric realms.

Industry

Most tribes are fairly self-sufficient concerning immediate survival needs, such as food, shelter and water. However, industries are being developed, which enable tribes to barter with one another for both essential and luxury goods.

Settled tribes who have permanent farmland trade their excess produce, while other industries such as cloth-making, cartwrighting, bakery, building, pottery and metalwork can be found among established tribes. On the coast, local hara build ships and boats, and repair existing craft left over from human occupation.

Much of harish industry reflects the way that humans developed nearly three hundred years before. Hara do not always have access to stable power sources, such as that provided by electricity and oil. Although large, organized settlements might have wind farms, generators powered by methane, and in some instances, natural gas, smaller and nomadic groups will have only fire at their disposal. Highly trained hara would have the ability to use their magical skills to augment mass manufacturing, but few hara would use magic in this way unless absolutely necessary. (See section on Magic and its use.)

Even though it appears that technology has regressed by 300 years, some groups of hara still repair and use artefacts and machines left behind by humanity. Slowly, as they mature, hara are rediscovering abandoned technologies and developing new ones, utilizing their unique abilities. However, all hara, whatever their political or spiritual viewpoint, feel strongly that the earth itself should be respected, and any technology used by Wraeththu should be compatible with the planet's well-being.

Work

Very few paid jobs are available to outsiders. The only tribes to offer wages are the Varrs and the Gelaming. The Varrs will offer outsiders work only on their farms or in their factories. Work is hard and the hours are long, but you are usually well fed and given somewhere to live.

If you can find them, the Gelaming offer better working conditions and a wide variety of jobs, but only the best at their trade or the very skilled ever get the opportunity to join them.

On a local scale, it may be possible to get a job in a bar or in some rich har's house, but this depends solely on which area of the world you are in.

Most tribes make it their job to look after their own hara, and will provide a home and work for its members. It all depends on which tribe you were incepted into, as to how you will be treated and what you will be provided with. Most hara are fairly generous with their provisions and will share it out.

Customs and Beliefs

Most harish customs are based around various religions both past and present. Even the tribes who are not overly spiritual tend to celebrate a festival at midwinter and sometimes at midsummer. These events can be spectacular parties or intricate ceremonies. Most involve vast consumption of intoxicants, a great deal of shared aruna

*"Come swim to the edge of
ecstasy, then surrender
whole to the love of oblivion.
Rise tomorrow and do it all
again."*

*- Loveless, in a lucid moment initiating a
new Uigenna*

*"Hope and joy: both are
foolish ideas that no longer
exist in this world, our world."*

- Tristan, speaking his heart

"Destiny, it has us all in its cold unyielding grip. Unyielding, unless, that is, we realise that grip is most often our own."

- Dantallia, an insight

"Aruna, it is tool, a blissful state and a key to our greatest magic. We would not be Wraeththu without it and cannot be Wraeththu without it."

- Sovences, on aruna

and sometimes even Grissecon. Some of the tribes have festivals throughout the year, such as the Sulh, who celebrate both the solstices, equinoxes and cross quarters.

Most Wraeththu rituals are based around Inception and caste progression. Hara are sometimes surprised at how much these rituals can vary, from the straight forward to the vastly intricate.

Many tribes do not welcome strangers unannounced, so it is always best to find out as much as you can about the areas you are passing through and those towns you intend to visit. Most tribes expect you to ask permission from the local phylarch on arrival, and some tribes, such as the Kakkahaar and Froia, expect you to wait on the edge of their territory to be greeted.

Another point often overlooked is the various tribes' views on the remaining human population. The Varrs generally kill those viewed as unworthy for Inception on sight, except for a few kept as slaves by some of the richer hara. The Uigenna also kill most humans, apart from those chosen for Inception. Surprisingly most other tribes are not openly hostile to humans. The majority view humans as rather a nuisance or simply ignore them, unless the humans choose to attack. Tribes such as the Greenling welcome humans in their town and the Zigane seem to view them as equal to themselves. Many smaller tribes trade with human settlements for goods and produce, and many an uneasy alliance has been formed between the two species.

Social Structure

The most powerful tribe in Megalithica is the Varrs. No overall government exists in the country and nothing even resembling a democracy is run. Areas of Megalithica are ruled by various high-ranking Varrish hara, who in turn answer to Ponclast. Diplomacy with other tribes is almost non-existent, and any treaties and alliances tend to break down very easily. Order and relative peace is kept in Varr-controlled areas by the army, and justice is served quickly and severely. It is always best to keep a low profile when travelling anywhere near Varr settlements.

In the Almagabran city of Immanion, Thiede is attempting to gain support for a Council of Tribes. So far he has had little luck in convincing the Megalithican tribes, as none of them trust him and are unsure of his true intent. Even hara who live closer to Almagabra have trouble with the idea of the Gelaming trying to tell them how to run their lives. In Immanion itself, the Gelaming are having better success in setting up a local council to run the new city. Many high ranking hara are involved in the project.

Apart from the ruling heads of the various tribes, the main leaders are known as phylarchs, who run different phyles (branches) of the tribes. Phylarchs are generally high-ranking Ulani, while some are believed to be Nahir Nuri. Not all tribes have phylarchs, as some are too small to have different phyles. Also certain tribes use different terminology for their tribal branches and leaders. After the phylarchs, the most respected member of any tribe is the hienama. He is usually the spiritual leader of the tribe and is responsible for incepting new hara. Larger tribes have many hienamas. The overall leader of a tribe, who is often its founder, is known as the Autarch. All phylarchs defer to him. But again, not all tribes possess an Autarch. Many of them were dispatched by enterprising phylarchs in the very early days.

Laws for the Lawless

There is very little that the major and minor Wraeththu tribes agree upon. Territory is fought over. Hara can be ostracized, persecuted or even killed for believing in the 'wrong' gods, wearing the 'wrong' clothes or for simply being born on the wrong side of the city walls.

The Wraeththu have no consensual laws, and few rules and codes are shared by all the various tribes. However, they are certain directives that should be followed to ensure our security and privacy.

The following information will be the first things your Inceptor teaches you. In order for us to maintain our secrecy from humans, we need to ensure our efforts are not in vain, so keep the following words in mind at all times.

After conflict, all hara must remove their dead from the arena, or destroy in entirety any bodies.

Humans must not be allowed to discover our true natures. Even if you risk your own life, you must take with you the bodies of your fallen comrades away from any scene of conflict, or else ensure the remains are utterly destroyed.

If you kill a har of a rival tribe, the same directive applies. We cannot afford to leave evidence behind. Humans are desperate to find a way to destroy us. They will do all that they can to secure a har, dead or alive, and we cannot allow this to happen.

We may be winning this war, but we still cannot afford to give the humans any advantage.

Never incept the very young

Although it is possible to incept human children, this practice is discouraged, as many of them can become loose cannons, more trouble than they are worth.

Also, abducting the very young incurs the added risk of human involvement, as they are extremely protective of their offspring. If children go missing, much effort is put into their retrieval and you could have a large scale human investigation on your hands. Should the child then be found after Inception, a medical examination would reveal the truth of Wraeththu nature.

The recommended minimum age for Inception is 16 years. After this age many human parents will simply presume their son has run away from home. However, no matter how much care is taken, there may come a time when the one you have incepted is discovered by a human and then reported to human authorities as being found. Should this occur, and the inceptee is on the verge of capture, perhaps because he is yet to finish althaia, you must kill him and destroy the body. There must be no opportunity for humans to conduct a medical examination of the remains.

Live by the rule of allure. Use your song of calling and your psychic power to draw suitable humans to you. It is better to have willing inceptees, who are not tied to their human family, than to drag someone struggling and screaming from their home, when opposition might be encountered. Break the bond with their human family and friends through the power of the mind. Make them come to you, rather than vice versa.

Humans and Aruna

The act of aruna and the fluids resulting from it are fatal to the human organism. Should you initiate this intimacy with a human, you must destroy the body thereafter. Any evidence remaining, no matter how small, will give humans an advantage over us.

"The moment is all you shall ever have"

- Loveless, speaking some Uigenna lore

"I shan't even pretend I care."

- Tristan, of the Irraka

Religions of the Wraeththu

Many tribes revere the Aghama, the first Wraeththu, almost as a god. They believe that this semi-mythical figure has left the earthly plain, but is still watching over and guiding the path of Wraeththu. Therefore, he is not strictly a deity, but rather a discarnate mentor. However, belief in the Aghama is not universal. While most tribes believe he exists, or existed, not all regard him as a benign ethereal being who still has an interest in Wraeththu's development.

"Come, dance with an angelic devil tonight?"

- Dantallia, teasing

It's important to understand that the majority of hara (there will always be exceptions) view gods not as beings higher and/or more powerful than themselves, but as unique expressions of universal life energy. Rather than saying that the gods created believers, they would say that gods are created by those who 'believe' in them. Humans invented thousands of gods, all of which provided an interface with the 'divine', the source of creation. Generally, human groups believed their own particular invention was the only 'true' god or gods, which inevitably gave rise to conflict throughout human history. To hara, gods are merely masks that conveniently allow them to interact with the Source. That said, once such an entity has been fed with the emotions, thoughts and intentions of many thousands of individuals, it can acquire a kind of vicarious independent existence. Hara respect and revere their gods, but do not abjectly worship them.

Some tribes have developed spiritual systems, or else have appropriated older indigenous beliefs, adapting them to their needs. Certain hara revere gods and goddesses modified from existing forms into an androgynous aspect. These gods might appear alongside the Aghama in their systems, or else the Aghama is acknowledged in different forms. Some believe that the Aghama has animal aspects, such as a lion or a horse, which reflects earlier totemic or anthropomorphic beliefs.

The Colurastes are said to have many gods, all of them a closely kept secret that only members of the tribe can ever hope to understand.

The Kakkahaar also recognize several gods. Their main deity is the pitiless Hubisag, who rules over death and dark magic.

Many tribes have a belief system that centres on angelic forms. As to how and why this system developed, which is fairly widespread, nohar knows. Ofaniel, Angel of the Moon, is often called upon to bless or curse many a har.

A few tribes have encouraged their hara to view their founder or current leader as a god: for example, the Obliviata. While this might seem odd or regressive, it must be said that if the Aghama can be regarded almost as a deity, then other prime movers in Wraeththu can equally claim that status.

Many hara are reluctant to acknowledge spirituality, as they blame many of humankind's faults and mistakes on religion. And yet we also find tribes whose hara embrace spirituality wholeheartedly, and who appear to be creating new gods every day.

Some hara view gods as unimportant and redundant, stating that Wraeththu have magic and power of their own to change their destiny. Despite this, many hara are spiritually inclined, and have combined their harishness and powers to create new, more androgynous belief systems.

Hopefully, Wraeththu are enlightened enough to recognize the validity of each other's gods and beliefs, even if they do not share them. Let us not make the same mistakes as humans where religion is concerned.

"Passion, if anything, can be said to be the driving force of our race. We are all, each of us, a slave to its subtle and powerful call."

- Laice, of the Varrs

The Language Barrier

Nearly all Wraeththu hara speak the native language of Megalithica and most, even in far off regions such as Almagabra, have learned enough to communicate easily.

The use of a universal language arose mainly because Wraeththu originated in one place. Usually, for ease of communication they choose inceptees because they can speak Megalithican well. As the race spread, the culture and languages diversified, but Megalithican has become a standard language and everyhar is at taught it at least at some basic level.

The Obliviata have their own native language but only speak it to each other. They also have their own written language. Many Obliviata speak a multitude of different tongues, because of their desire to travel and trade. They would be unable to function without this knowledge. As hara spread, and new, more distant tribes are discovered, the languages spoken will probably expand, with Megalithican remaining the most commonly known, due to Megalithica's large population and its status as the home of the Wraeththu.

Immanion is the main city to support a wide variety of hara of various tribes and backgrounds. A large proportion of the Gelaming came originally from distant lands and from previously unknown tribes. Many have their own languages, but a surprisingly large number can speak some Megalithican.

In Alba Sulh the residents all speak a derivative of Megalithican, though they prefer to call their tongue Albish. Even though the two languages are very similar, the Sulh are determined to keep the name of theirs different, as they consider their language to pre-date Megalithican.

In Almagabra, many of the human native languages have survived, both within the remaining human population and some of the smaller tribes. However, Megalithican is slowly creeping into standard use, as it makes survival and trading easier. A few small pockets of hara refuse to abandon their original language. However, many of them are overcome by the need for a good level of communication outside their own groups.

*"A gift to remember you by?
What makes you believe you
are worth remembering?"*

- Tristan, being himself

Sharing of Breath

The 'Sharing of Breath' is a Wraeththu kiss of mutual visualization. Like an ordinary kiss, it involves physical pleasure and fends off the need for aruna for a while. But it is also more than this. While sharing breath, two hara can communicate psychically and share visions and even dreams. This helps build up a strong psychic bond between hara, which is useful when they are later in different locations.

All hara remember fondly the first time they shared breath. While, for somehar determined to hold onto what is left of their humanity, aruna can often be a rather jarring experience, sharing breath is nearly always blissful. Hara usually share visions of swirling colours, images and lights that comprise the individual essence and power of each har involved. They can also choose to swap memories with their partner or simply day dream together. Many hara are more able to open up to another when sharing breath, and can communicate stories about their past, perhaps reliving and exorcising traumatic experiences.

Hara skilled at channelling Agmara sometimes share breath to heal another har. It can be used to heal internal injuries or psychological problems.

INCEPTION

Inception is the process through which a human becomes har. The Inception rites of the Wraeththu tribes are varied and of differing complexity. Tribes who have adopted what they regard as a spiritual way of life tend to incorporate much more ceremony into the proceedings than those who regard Inception merely as a functional process to be completed with the minimum effort and fuss.

The whole Inception process takes approximately seven days, sometimes longer. Nohar exactly understands why or how Inception works. Inevitably, as humans become extinct, Inception will one day become a thing of the past. Everything possible should be done now to acquire information about the process, before this intriguing and important information is lost to Wraeththukind for ever.

The subject of Inception is vast and fascinating, and the data given here merely scratches the surface of this vital aspect of harology. There is still much research and study to be done, as each tribe adds its own personal touches to the operation. Many groups are secretive about their methods and suspicious of outsiders asking questions, but hopefully we will learn more of their ways in the future.

Selection Process

The majority of humans are chosen for Inception for no other reason than that they are fairly presentable in a physical sense. However, some tribes also choose inceptees according to their previous occupation, and the knowledge and skills they will bring to

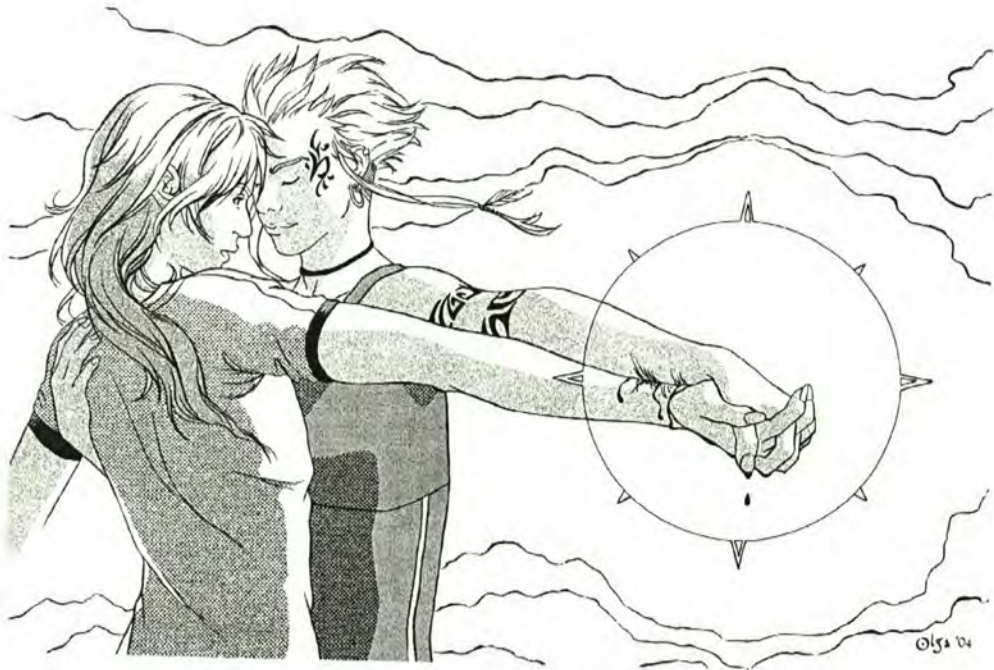
the tribe. In the early days, almost all available humans were incepted, with varying degree of success.

Most potential inceptees will be taken to the nearest settlement that has a hienama (priest), who will conduct the Inception. Very few low-ranking hara will attempt to conduct an Inception themselves, especially if they have grown attached to the human involved. They would prefer an experienced har to officiate, to minimize risk to the inceptee.

The only tribe that still performs large scale Inception ceremonies, (which were common in the past), are the Uigenna. This is a regular occurrence when they acquire new territory.

*"To find the truth of one's soul
you must embrace the
depths of isolation. Why else
would we wander these
lonely dunes?"*

*- Sovances, speaking of the Kakkahaar
lifestyle*



History of Inception

When Wraeththu first began to incept humans, the process was subject to a great deal of trial and error, and many different methods were attempted. There were no hienamas or high-ranking hara in charge of performing Inceptions, and no particular structure to the ceremony. Wraeththu were spread thinly in the cities, and many small groups were isolated, so could not discuss techniques or compare notes with more experienced hara. The lone hara tended to try and incept any human they came across, whether male or female, young or old. Nearly all these humans died. Death or botched Inceptions were very common.

The typical Inception procedure was for the arm of the inceptee to be slashed with some sharp implement, such as a broken bottle. A har of the tribe did likewise, and then the two wounds were held together for a while. Usually enough blood was transferred to have some effect on the inceptees' body, but not enough to produce an actual Inception. Quite often, all that was achieved was a fatal poisoning, although those who successfully survived this method were undoubtedly strong and healthy hara.

The concept of hienamas, hara who were qualified to undertake Inceptions, was quite a late addition to the procedure. The first Wraeththu har, and the initial wave of inceptees for whom he was responsible, no doubt understood the process far better than those who either broke away or became separated from early groups. Eventually, because the success rate was so poor, certain older hara took it upon themselves to acquire knowledge about Inception, to experiment in a more organised fashion, and to

*"Wilder! Faster! Most Vicious!
Better than anyhar else!"*

- Loveless, on himself and the Uigenna

note results. This led to a greater understanding of the procedure, and methods were devised to ensure a larger success rate.

The hienamas realised very quickly that human females could not be incepted, at least with the methods and knowledge at their disposal, and that younger humans seemed to accept the change easier. Those under the age of 21 occasioned the highest success rate.

The early hara took time to develop a consistent method for Inception, and procedures did tend to vary from group to group, but it was they who eventually worked out a consistent method, which closely resembles the rituals used today.

Many of the scars and minor defects of the human body tend to disappear during Inception. However, the Inception scar will remain as a permanent reminder of what they once were, to which they can never go back.

The Ritual

The Inception process from human into Wraeththu involves a fairly complicated series of rituals and actions, some of which have more psychological impact than physical. During the procedure a human is given a transfusion of Wraeththu blood, which initiates changes in the human body, which mutates them into a har over a period of about three days.

It is possible for Inception to take place without any actual ritual or spiritual aspect being involved, and in the early days of Wraeththu this was usually the case. Over time, each tribe developed their own beliefs and systems, most of them highly structured and involving magical aspects and complicated rituals.

The majority of tribes' Inception methods are very similar in design, with the exception of the Varrs, Colurastes and Obliviata.

Forale (foh-rarl)

Prior to Inception, inceptees first undergo a three-day period of fasting called the 'forale', which is a necessary medical requirement. The body needs to be free of all toxins and waste to minimize the physical risk associated with the procedure. Fasting also precipitates the process of mutation; otherwise it can take an extra few days for the inceptee to change.

Most tribes have a specified Forale House, where potential inceptees are required to remain during this time. They will often undergo a series of purification ceremonies. At the very least, they will take ritual baths several times a day. During this period, the inceptee is kept in isolation from the hara of the tribe. He will only have contact with his attendants, whose task is to bathe him, keep him hydrated through regular drinks of water and generally keep an eye on him. The inceptee will also meet with the hienama, and perhaps other high-ranking hara of the tribe, who will give him instruction and advice. During Forale, some tribes treat the inceptee with a degree of distaste and little or no compassion. This is done to break the will of particularly headstrong humans.

In the past, prior to Inception, a group of humans would be incarcerated in dismal conditions, in a state of fear and anxiety, unsure of what would be their fate. Some even died of terror during this time, especially if they were already injured or sick. Nowadays, before the Inception takes place, inceptees are given a wide selection of drugs, mainly to calm their nerves and ease the pain of the transfusion.

Harhune (har-hoon)

This is the start of the initiation/Inception procedure itself. The ritual takes place in a temple called Nayati, or a sacred space created temporarily by the hienama for the ritual. Prior to the transfusion of blood, the inceptee is usually required to take part in a lengthy public ritual, which is mainly done for show, during which the shicawn (sheecorm) takes place. This is the ritual cutting of hair, where the sides of the head are shaved, although the hair at the back and top are left long. It is also the time when any required vows or pledges are spoken.

'It is rare for a Human female to survive past the transfusion of blood and genetic matter. Most die within minutes of this happening. I have seen with my own eye some females last up to two days in to Althaia, as they have partly undergone transformation into Wraeththu, but in the end all have died.' -Velisarius founder of the Kakkahaar

"Mint, I'll let you have this crate of guns and ammo if you can successfully incept that woman out their."
- Wraxilan, Uigenna

"Strength is the ultimate decider in all matters. The Varrs are strong."

- Laice, speaking plainly

"Look at the sky. How peaceful infinity appears. It's all just a lie."

- Dantallia

The Harhune serves as a 'statement of intent'. It is usually desirable for each inceptee to state that he is present of his own free will, although the prudent use of narcotics often stimulates the inceptee's enthusiasm for the event. To enhance the atmosphere the crowd present usually chants, 'Harhune, Harhune, Harhune', building up in intensity until the transfusion takes place.

The ceremony concludes with the transfusion of harish blood into the human, which is generally conducted in private. Very few tribes allow an inceptee to undergo the transfusion while conscious, simply because the procedure can be very painful. Quite often, if an inceptee attempts to resist the process, Inception will take place by force.

Althaia (al-thay-uh)

Under normal conditions, the human body takes approximately three days to mutate into a harish form. At times, the process can take much longer. Althaias of up to two weeks have been recorded. This seems to depend on the condition of the human body prior to Inception. If the human is diseased, or particularly overweight, the change can take longer, due to the mutation process rectifying these problems. Also, strong willed humans have also been known to try and fight these changes and hold back althaia for many days, simply through strength of will, but they always succumb eventually.

Much discomfort is experienced by the inceptee during the changing, although the majority of tribes utilize various medicines to lessen the effects, or at least keep the inceptee unconscious. During althaia, everything is done to ensure the process is as painless as possible, and distress is kept to a minimum.

During the changes, the newly forming har will go into a deep trancelike state. During brief episodes of lighter sleep, he will often experience horrific nightmares. The body forms a kind of outer cocoon, consisting of solidified blood and waste ejected from the body. This serves to keep away infection from the mutating internal organs. Internally the Wraeththu DNA will latch on to that of the humans in a manner similar manner to that of a virus. Then, harish DNA gradually overwrites the human code. Also the DNA brings ribosomes with it, which help the mutation process to change the human tissue and organs.

The genetic mutation takes place over the first two days of althaia, with the organs changing at a slower rate. The process is similar to an embryo gestating in a womb, as the cells and organs of the human are literally reborn.

On the third day, the inceptee will be aware of a sharp pain in his stomach as the soume-lam is formed within. This is followed by the restructuring of the external reproductive organs in the ouana-lim. While these changes are taking place, the body will also be strengthening the rest of its functions. Muscles will at first retract, then re-grow in a stronger form. The bone structure will become denser, but at the same time more flexible. Brain chemistry will change, to allow the attunement of psychic powers. Other internal processes such as digestion will be improved and redefined.

Althaia is a long and painful process. The inceptee will be changed fundamentally, despite maintaining an outwardly human appearance. Once the transformation is complete, the cocoon of dry waste will fall away, leaving the skin smooth and the body supple. All that's required to complete the outward transformation is a bath.

Once the mutation has taken place, the new har is required to take aruna (a-roo-nah) with another har in order to 'fix' the changes within them. Nohar yet truly understands why this must be or exactly how it works, although most agree that the exchange of essences that occurs during aruna must be the most important factor. 'First Aruna' is generally wrapped up in a great deal of ceremony and ritual, and much effort is made to ensure the procedure is as blissful as possible for the new har. He will generally choose a tribal name for himself during this time.

In the early days, no har realised for some time that aruna after Inception helped 'set' the process, although those who emerged from althaia intact were habitually subjected to aruna by other members of the tribe, who either had an interest in a particular new har or who simply got there first.



If there is any physical factor that could hamper or delay the mutation, it is usually dispensed with after the first three days. Once all the essential changes have taken place, excess weight and disease is much more efficiently removed from the harsh biological system.

When Things Go Wrong

Even today, mistakes can be made during Inception. Previously unknown complaints or conditions within the inceptee can lead to problems, strange unexpected results and even death. While death from Inception is now very rare, due to the refinements of the procedure, it can still happen occasionally. This is generally due to hereditary genetic problems that are not fixable via althaia. Occasionally, recalcitrant inceptees have wished death on themselves, and have expired purely through intention – ironically, their partly enhanced psychic abilities being responsible.

Botched Inceptions were common in the early days. This was usually, but not always, the result of not fixing the Inception with aruna. While few of these hara survived, those who did either turned feral and escaped into the wilderness, were greatly deformed, or else became like mindless zombies, which attacked any living thing that approached them.

Other botched Inceptions were less apparent. A few hara retained some of their human flaws, such as bad eyesight. Others suffered hearing loss or had slightly deformed limbs. Many tribes viewed less than perfect Wraeththu as an anathema, and these hara were usually destroyed soon after althaia.

The First Days

The initial period after Inception involves a steep learning curve. Caste training does not begin straight away, but the newly incepted har's caste level will be Ara. Some instruction into Wraeththu powers will be given. Most of what a har learns and experiences during his first few days post-althaia depends on the tribe into which he is incepted. Many tribes treat the newly incepted har as a minor celebrity. He will receive gifts from well-wishers, and hara in the community might invite him round to their dwellings, when parties will be held. Such celebration is a fairly recent occurrence, since the numbers of newly incepted humans has dropped.

Also, this is traditionally the time when the new har's questions can be answered, concerning his new physical form. Some hara require a time of adjustment. Many newly incepted can be overly emotional and find themselves weeping for no particular reason. This is due to hormonal imbalances. Different tribes are varying sympathetic to these changes and to the new har's emotional needs. It can help if the har has a partner or somehar to look after them until they reach a state of inner balance.

During this time, and for some weeks after, the new har will be observed for any lasting effects of Inception. This task is generally undertaken by a mentor or the har who was responsible for the Inception. It is quite common for many hara to appear fine for several days, but then drop slowly into a deep depression. Worse, they might manifest distressing mental flaws or conditions. These can only be cured by high caste hara, trained as healers, who are able to use the universal life force Wraeththu call Agmara most strongly.

Tribal Methods of Inception

Uigenna

The Uigenna Inception method had its dark days, when humans were incepted in dark and dirty cellars, which were often infested with rats, and full of rubble and broken glass. Today, the ritual has more of a structure and the tribe has trained hienamas, who are skilled both at quick Inceptions and, when time allows, more elaborate and lengthy rituals. Despite their fierce reputation, the Uigenna have become skilled at caring for

"This one is botched... I keep telling it that they are a Wraeththu not a vampire but they won't have it, and they have gone all angsty now."

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna

"Come to me, ride with me, and learn the future."

- Laice, to a har he incepted

their inceptees during althaia. This is probably due to the high death rate in the past. While the Uigenna are still not the most attentive of hara, the humans they incept develop into strong and powerful Wraeththu. In the quieter and less war torn cities, new hara are given adequate training in the use of their innate powers. The more skilled are usually pushed up the caste system with relative speed.

Kakkahaar

Inception into the Kakkahaar tribe involves a complicated and highly elaborate ceremony. The ritual itself is steeped in occult mysticism. Only the highest-ranking Kakkahaar are trained to conduct Inceptions, and the procedure is still quite rare among them. After Inception, the new hara is required to study the history of Wraeththu, and of the Kakkahaar in particular, as well as learn about many early human religions and magical systems. Those who don't meet these requirements will never get past Ara. The Kakkahaar like to keep their secrets to themselves, and prefer their hara to be competent at both magic and combat.

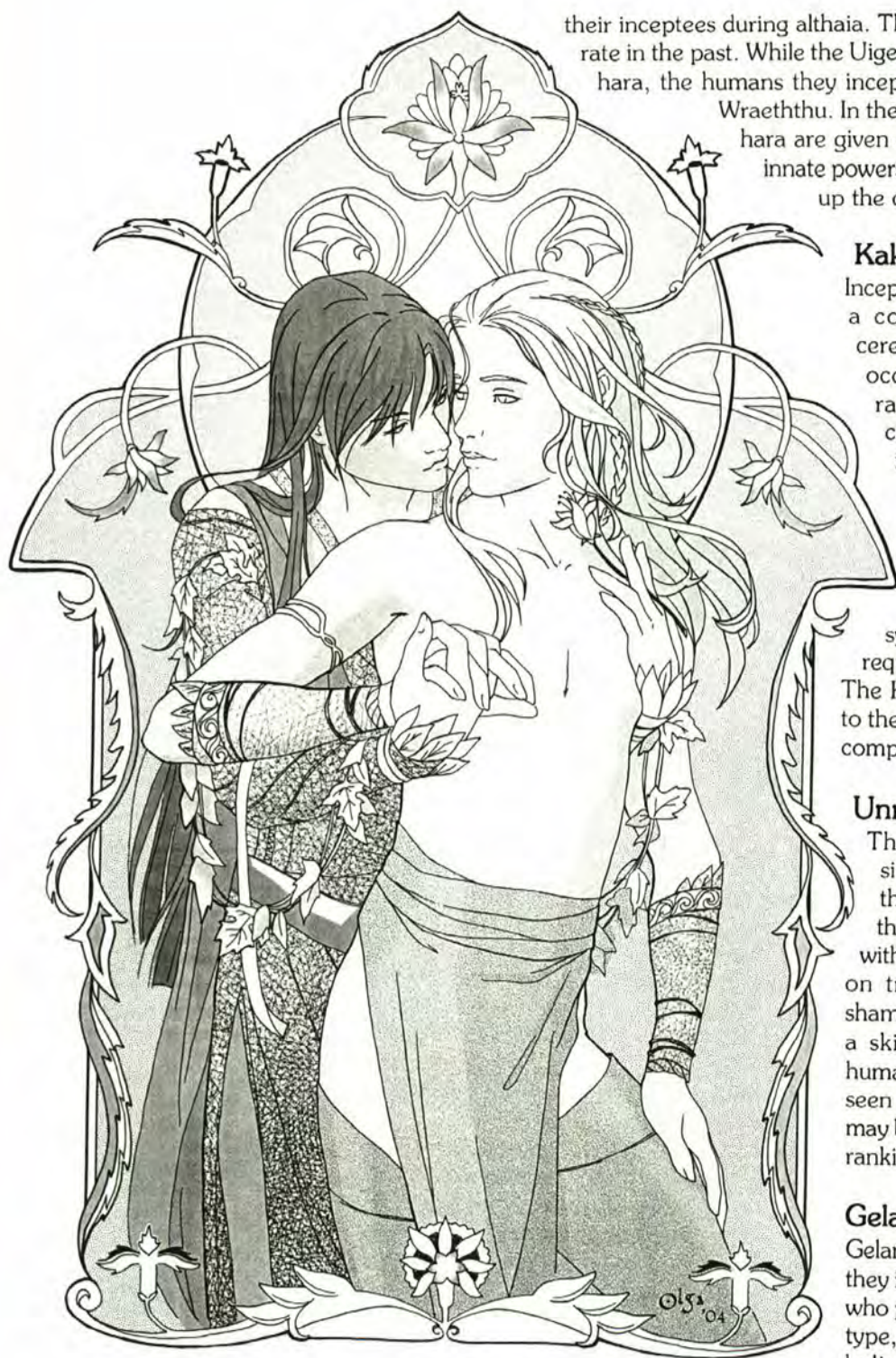
Unneah

The Unneah have a comparatively simple Inception ceremony. Only in their more permanent settlements do they tend to hold a full ritual, complete with eager crowd. The Unneah who live on trading boats will always have a shaman travelling with them. He will be a skilled teacher and will incept any humans brought to him. If the human is seen as important for some reason, he may be taken to a settlement for a higher-ranking hara to incept.

Gelaming

Gelaming are openly selective about who they incept, and tend to seek out humans who possess above-average skills of some type, or who are highly intelligent. It is believed that certain Gelaming are

employed solely to hunt down new inceptees for the tribe. The Inception ceremony is usually a grand event, with hara from the whole neighbourhood in attendance. The party will go late on into the night, for the crowd at least. The Inception itself will be rather quick and simple. The hienama simply asks for the blessing of the Aghama before the transfusion takes place. Most of the corresponding Harhune ritual is done for show.



Sulh

Inception into the Sulh tribe is more of a solemn process and is seen as a ritual of rebirth. No parties or celebration will take place until after the completion of althaia. It is a quiet and simple ceremony, but still a very mystical and moving rite. Any other hara in attendance will sit outside the temple and psychically lend their strength to the inceptee. Sometimes, bonfires are lit to ward away evil spirits. Inception will not take place if ill omens have been seen that day.

Obliviata

It is rare for the tribe to incept humans, but there was a time when that was not the case. The tribe grew rapidly in the early days, yet for no discernable reason they appeared to have stopped incepting people from their homeland. After that time only a few humans were incepted.

These days the process of selection is a lengthy one. Any human who wants to join the tribe, or is chosen by a travelling caravan, is treated to the hospitality of the camp. They will be given a meal and be told historical stories about the caravan. As part of the proceedings, the human will be given a drink, which they are told is a rare and/or unnamed wine. This drink will contain one drop of blood from each member of the caravan. At this point, the human will not be aware of what is happening, and will lapse into unconsciousness, as even this small amount of Wraeththu blood is toxic to a human frame. If, by morning, the human has survived, he will be welcomed to join the caravan, and travel with them, while being taught about Allavé. Then, when the Obliviata are compelled to return to their homeland for their festival, the wait is over for the new recruit who will be incepted with any other humans who have survived the journey to Olathe.

Inception rituals take place in the temple where Allavé is said to have resided during his time on earth. The process also involves a simple and solemn spiritual ceremony before the Harhune.

Varr

The Varrs have a very clinical view of Inception and include no rituals or religious aspects as part of the procedure. Humans are incepted in a hospital in sterile conditions. During althaia, the body is well cared for, and somehar is always in attendance to administer painkilling drugs. It is only after Inception that anything resembling a ceremony takes place. Usually a celebratory gathering is held, at which the new har takes a tribal name for himself. He will also be pronounced Ara by a high-ranking har of the tribe. Caste training usually starts within a few weeks, when the new hara are given basic combat training.

Colurastes

The Colurastes, like the Kakkahaar, have a highly developed Inception ritual: a lengthy procedure during which they try to keep the inceptee as calm and fearless as possible. Humans who are chosen for Inception are sometimes surprisingly young, but are allowed to stay as children until sexual maturity, when they will experience aruna for the first time. The Colurastes have found a way of fixing Inception without aruna, a secret which they guard fiercely. Hara of the Colurastes are a tightly-knit community and will immediately treat a new hara as one of their own. Presents will be given and the new har will be made to feel at home.

"Healing? Sorry har, wrong place and wrong time."

- Tristan, to an injured wayfarer

"A human city; what a charming playground for hara. Humans all dead, but we stay and play yet."

- Loveless, rambling

WHY ARE WE HERE?

By Cassiel Agrimony - Gelaming Scribe
Written upon reflection of the founding
of Immanion.

Wraeththu originated in the cities of northern Megalithica. Slowly, and often violently, the earliest hara took over other areas of the country and further a field. There are many theories of how and why we came into being, but no har, not even the high-ranking Gelaming scholars and the Hienamas agree on one theory. Maybe we are simply mutants, but were human scientists responsible for the mutation or is it a natural evolutionary step of evolution for life on earth? Some hara even believe we are the product of a divine act.

Many of the theories may seem extreme and unlikely, but until we know the truth, they all have to be considered as possibilities.

Theory One

The first Wraeththu is known as the Aghama and is revered as a god by many of the tribes. They are known as Aghamists. Other tribes, taking a less spiritual view, believe the Aghama was a real har of flesh and blood, but was not divine in origin.

Aghamists tell the tale of a mutant born to human parents, in the city that is now known as Carmine, in northern Megalithica. Whether this mutation was a freak occurrence, a genetic experiment, or something stranger still, is as yet unknown.

Some years ago, in the north, a child was born. A mutant. Its body was strangely malformed in some respects. As it grew, this child exhibited many unusual traits that foxed both its parents and the doctors they consulted in their concern. Their son conversed earnestly with people they could not see. Some of their neighbours' dogs feared him. Other children shrank from him in horror. His mother complained she simply did not like the child; he was unlovable, withdrawn. Even as a baby he had snarled at her, refusing the breast. Once, some years later, as she had prepared his dinner, all the saucepans had risen off the stove and flown at her. Turning round, a silent scream frozen on her face, she had seen him standing in the doorway, watching.

On reaching puberty, the boy disappeared from home, and despite massive police investigation, no clue to his fate was ever found - for some time.

Months later, officials were baffled by a bizarre murder case in Carmine City. A young man, apparently having been sexually assaulted, had been found dead in a disused building. But it was far from the simple case it appeared. Such killings are commonplace in the city. The young man's insides had been eroded away as if by a powerful and caustic substance. Post mortem investigation revealed the presence of an unknown material in the body tissues, something that kept on burning even as it dried on the dissecting table.

A mutant runaway had come alive in the city - alone, frightened and dangerous in his fear. He had learned just how different he was. His touch could mean death to those who offered him shelter, the sub-society of the city. He kept away from them, hiding in the terrible gaunt carcasses of forgotten tenements, on the run, shivering in the dark.

Freaks roamed the steaming tips, the rubble. One came across him as he slept; lifted aside the foul sacks that covered him, gazed at his translucent, glowing beauty. The veins on his neck showed blue through pearl, pumping with life. Some people are so far gone they would do anything to eat. One more day on the planet, one more day for the fleas, the rats, the sores.

Freak lips on a mutant throat, broken teeth to tear. The mutant opened his eyes, relaxed beneath the lapping suction. He did not want to die. He knew he could not die.

*"Freedom? What a truly
idealistic notion. But one that
deserves to be explored to
the very limits of its meaning."*

- Sovences, teaching a har of lower caste

For three days the freak writhed, gibbered and screamed on the soiled floor. Passively the mutant watched him, faint interest painted across his bland face. On the third day, the filth peeled away and the mutant was given an angel. An angel like himself, brimming with mysteries that alone he had had no inclination to explore.

The rest of it is now the legends of Wraeththu. Wraeththu: born in hate and bitterness, flexing their young, animal-strong muscles in the cities of the north. Always learning, always increasing their craft and cunning. Increasing. It was inevitable that eventually it touched somehar who had the curiosity, the intelligence to probe within the mystery. Wraeththu lost its ungoverned, adolescent wildness. It became an occult society, hungry for knowledge. But what they found within the Temple appalled them, its vastness scared them. Some broke away from the search for truth and fell back into the old ways of fighting and living for the day. Those who remained faced the unavoidable truth: Humanity was on the wane, Wraeththu waxed to replace it.

The first mutant faded into anonymity. No har was quite sure what had happened to him, but he had left strong leaders behind him. Now he had become a creature of legend, revered and feared as a god. Wraeththu did not believe he was dead, but that he'd elevated to a superior form of existence, monitoring or manipulating the development of his race.

Wraeththu grouped into tribes, each ascribing to varying beliefs, but all united in the Wraeththu spirit. They had the power to change the sons of men to be like themselves. As with the first, within three days of being infected with Wraeththu blood, the convert's body has completed the necessary changes. Many of them develop extra-sensory faculties. All are a supreme manifestation of the combined feminine and masculine spiritual constituents present in humanity. Humans have abused and abandoned their natural strengths: In Wraeththu it begins to bloom.

Wraeththu are also known as hara, as humans are called men and women. Hara are ageless. Their lifespan has not yet been assessed, but as far as can be discerned, their bodies are immune to cellular destruction through time. As they are physically perfect, so must they strive towards spiritual perfection. If power is riches, then the treasure-chests of Wraeththu are depthless. Purity of spirit is the key: Few ever attain it. But one day, when the ravages of humanity are just a memory, then the Few who have succeeded shall be the kings of the Earth.

The Story of First Wraeththu – Orien Farnell

This, or a similar story, was told to most hara, either before or after Inception. Some accepted this as truth, others as fantasy. Almost no hara seemed keen to question why this mutation happened. Or perhaps they did, but just didn't want to hear the answer?

Most Wraeththu seem happy to know nothing of their past and never seem to question why they are here and why they seemed destined to replace humankind as the dominant species on the planet.

If Wraeththu truly were spawned from one rogue mutant in northern Megalithica, surely we should be asking why such a thing has happened.

Option 1

The first Wraeththu was a complete freak of nature, and there was a flaw in the genetic code of the individual. The child should probably have died at a young age or suffered terrible diseases due to his mutation. This did not happen. Instead, another freak occurrence took place, when a human attacked the mutant and ingested some of his blood, which causes the mutation to be passed on. Perhaps this was destined to happen, as there was such a slim chance of it occurring.

"Drink deep the well of my soul and breath, and learn the sweetness of oblivion in my arms till morning light. Aruna can heal all hurts if you let it be so."

-Dantallia, speaking to an injured har for whom he has a great affection

"Thousands of little cuts."
-Sovences, topic unknown

The infection/mutation spread quickly throughout the underground gangs in the built up and desolate areas of Carmine City, thus seeding Wraeththu society.

Conclusion: These events were a freak accident and so is Wraeththu.

Option 2

The mutant was a product of genetic experimentation, or else the result of some kind of environmental contamination. The mutation could have been caused by radiation or poisoning in the food or water systems of the area, and was therefore an accident deriving from a contaminant leaking from an unknown source.

However, it is known that the government, and other secret agencies working in the cities, often tested new drugs and chemical weapons on individuals or even entire neighbourhoods. It might be that the child's parents, and even the child himself, was aware of, and consented to, this experimentation. The mutation could have been either an unexpected side effect or even the required effect.

If this was indeed the case, and whatever the reason behind the experiment, it quickly got out of hand, or was simply forgotten about amid the urban and global chaos of that time.

The child could have been created with a purpose in mind and maybe, in founding Wraeththu, he has actually achieved this goal. If this is the case, we will probably never know the reasons behind it.

It is also possible that whoever created Wraeththu knew exactly what they were doing and might have been trying for some time to create a new race to replace humanity. It is also probable that several prototypes were created, and the one who is now regarded as the first har might possibly be the latest, and most successful, of many.

Conclusion: Maverick or successful genetic experiment. Genetic accident.

Option 3

The entire story of the first Wraeththu and the mutation was fabricated by the early Wraeththu, and whoever or whatever created/introduced them to Megalithica. This was done to hide the truth and the identity of the source. If true, this story has worked as they planned to some extent, as very few Wraeththu appear to question their origins.

Conclusion: conspiracy theory par excellence.

N.B.:

Other possible causes of the mutation have also to be considered or found. One day we may know the truth behind our history. Wraeththu must not make the same mistakes as their human predecessors, by fearing their history. They should begin to study in depth the past of their own kind, without prejudice.

Theory Two

The more religious sectors of the human population tend to support the theory that the Wraeththu were sent from some higher source to wipe out humankind and punish them for their sins. Some believe the Wraeththu are avenging angels that were sent by their God to destroy the evils of the earth. Others believe them to be demons and that they were sent from hell to devour the souls of humankind. Those of earth-based religions, such as Pagans, believe that the Wraeththu were placed on earth as punishment for the way we have treated the planet, by polluting the land, sea and air.

Not many Wraeththu support these theories, even those who once adhered to a human religion. Humanity, in times of crisis, has often either turned to religion, or has blamed some higher power for their hardship. The decade before the rise of Wraeththu saw the

"Our origins are shrouded in mystery, much like those of the humans. Only a few hara know our origins and they are not telling."

- Malakess har Sulh, High Codexia

"Never believe you have anything that cannot be taken from you."

-Tristan, explaining the truth of things

slow downfall of the human race, through natural disaster, climate change, disease, social unrest, insanity and war. Some people directly affected by this chaos turned their backs on their old gods and others saw this turmoil as proof of the power of their god.

The beauty and savagery of the brutal warriors that suddenly appeared on the streets was seen as evidence that demons and angels had brought their war to the earth, and that the apocalypse had truly arrived. Humans, whether they believed in these stories or not, started to leave the cities *en masse*, which caused great panic and widespread confusion. In the more isolated and less densely populated areas, rumours of werewolves and other such fantasy creatures began to spread.

Eventually, the word 'Wraeththu' could be heard being whispered anywhere you went. People were scared and confused. All they saw was that people were vanishing, especially youthful males. Panic spread into all-out anarchy and fighting. Rumours spread of demon-Wraeththu that emerged from the sewers and cracks in the earth, destroying everything in their wake.

Stories of the end of the world are told in many human religions: the Apocalypse, Armageddon, Judgment Day is echoed throughout the world. A war between opposing forces of 'dark and light', i.e. God and the Devil, or some such other higher force, would be fought out on earth. The souls of humankind would be judged and those seen unfit to enter the afterlife would be destroyed or sent to Hell.

The people who viewed Wraeththu as angels, believed that they would first annihilate the 'sinners', and cleanse the earth of evil. This view was usually quickly destroyed when they came face to face with a Wraeththu. Those who lived to tell the tale would from then on speak of demons, devils and monsters without mercy, who were clearly committed to destroying all humanity.

Many became convinced that their god had deserted them and mass suicides were commonplace, are individuals clung to a hope that they could leave this nightmare world for whatever paradise their god had once offered them.

At the other end of the scale were humans who believed in an earth-based or more Pagan religion. Many of these people regarded the rise of Wraeththu and the destruction of the cities as humanity's punishment for polluting and raping the earth of her natural resources. They believed that Gaia, the spirit of the earth, was finally reclaiming what was hers, by creating a new race that would nourish and protect her, rather than seek new ways to cause her anguish.

Some Pagans saw the drop in the fertility rate in human females, new diseases and increasing psychological problems, as a result of human cruelty to the planet, and that these afflictions arose to give Wraeththu a firmer and easier base to build upon. Wraeththu would spill the blood of humanity to replenish the earth's natural resources.

Another theory based on this theme is that a divine being, or the Universe, itself simply decided to do away with humankind, because the unknown purpose for which humans had been created was no longer valid. Wraeththu were created for a similar unknown reason, as a superior species. Many believe that other species have ruled this planet long before humanity and that we have never truly understood what occurrence facilitated their downfalls in the past.

Conclusion: Divine retribution

Theory Three

Another idea to consider is that Wraeththu have always been here on earth. At first, this seems too far-fetched, but many human tribes and unknown species have been found in remote parts of the world throughout human history. Perhaps the early Wraeththu chose to hide themselves, until a time came and conditions were right for them to reveal themselves. It is possible that these have been secretly waiting for a suitable time to emerge and literally take over the world.

"Solace, home and destiny, it is to be found here for any har truly worthy of it. Here in Immanion."

- Dantallia, of his home

"More! Mine!"

- Loveless, words of wisdom

If this is indeed the case, perhaps one of these hara went to Carmine City, with the express intent of initiating the whole process by passing on the mutation through his blood. Conversely, it could have been an accident that another became infected by his blood.

If Wraeththu have existed at the same time as humanity for some time, it might explain the stories of immortals, angels and vampires that dominate the myths of the human world.

Some of these hara could have spread throughout the world to create some of the more isolated tribes, long before the Megalithic Wraeththu emerged.

Conclusion: Wraeththu have always walked amongst us.

"Death, it is said, comes to all things. To you perhaps sooner than you expected."

- Laice, to a prisoner of war

Theory Four

Another theory suggests that Wraeththu were simply the next evolutionary step of humanity, precipitated by environmental and social upheaval. The mutation could also be the result of a new disease that possesses a unique way of spreading. Many blood-based diseases have gripped humankind in the past.

It is undoubtedly true that Wraeththu are both mentally and physically superior to the species they are replacing. On a psychological level, hara have the potential to be more fulfilled as individuals, as long as they learn to accept both parts of their personality and sexuality and mould it into one being.

It is difficult for human scientists to accept that such a drastic evolutionary step could ever be natural, but many diseases have caused mutations in the past, and human technology, with all its advances, never did fully understand the workings of the human frame.

Evolution is a messy and misunderstood process. Even in the days before Wraeththu, some dual-gender offspring were born to humans, and on a cellular level, a high percentage of males possessed cells of the opposite sex. Maybe Wraeththu would have developed naturally over a longer period of time, but unforeseen conditions on the planet hastened their development.

Conclusion: Wraeththu are the next evolutionary step for humanity.

N.B.:

Most Wraeththu appear attached to the idea that some higher force created them, to refine the human form, and to create a perfect and peaceful society.

If peace and equality were the driving factors behind the creation of Wraeththu, then our creators have so far failed in their objectives. I wonder if our creator is disappointed with our development and if they still have changes they wish to make to our form or psyche. Perhaps, at some unknown point in the future, Wraeththu will be replaced with another species and the next stage of life will be born on this planet.

As a species, we should work towards eliminating our petty differences, and concentrate more upon reaching our full potential. Hara have already achieved the most wonderful heights of splendour and the most vicious acts of brutality – in much the same way as humans did. We can be the most noble and most bestial of creatures. We must learn to live in unity with ourselves and each other. If this can be achieved, I believe we are capable of anything.

"Weep away your world, pretty human, for it is yours no more. Weep it all away in that pretty red heart's spray."

- Loveless, with another victim

THE HUMAN THREAT

Human threat? you ask. Don't laugh! Even though we know that human decline and extinction is inevitable, they can still hurt us. What have they got to live for? Nothing. And because of this they are desperate and dangerous. Their attacks on hara, and the wanton destruction of our settlements, are becoming more frequent. Even though they should all be dead in ten years' time or so, their death throes are fierce. They know they are doomed and their intention is to take as many hara with them as they can.

From the hundreds of groups and organizations that tried to oppose us in the early years, only a handful survive. Hardened and battle-worn, these groups appear to have a plan. They disable key installations and attack our most vulnerable groups, such as land workers. While every har knows it is vital that our dead do not fall into human hands for study, it's possible they have already managed to secure a harish corpse for dissection. We sincerely hope this is not the case, as their ignorance of our condition is one of our advantages.

The majority of human groups are remnants of military and governmental forces, but we know that one of them has a religious foundation. These individuals are willing to die for their beliefs, and members of this fanatical group have on occasion breached our defences. With the passion of zealots they have taken their own lives to an explosive end, which resulted in the deaths of many important hara and the destruction of key buildings.

On the vast eastern continent, there is little Wraeththu activity beyond Almagabra and Thaine, since humans secured the boundaries around the territory they control in that area. Part of their defences include the construction of immense walls and barricades that spread for miles. It is ironic that only in their last days have the different factions of humanity finally overcome their differences and been able to work together to create a truly magnificent structure, a monument to their lost and wasted potential. No hara could pass beyond these walls, even in disguise, as every individual requesting entry into human territory is required to undergo a thorough medical examination.

Cunning and devious, the humans in the east still have many tricks up their sleeves. We know they still possess a few fearsome weapons of mass destruction, and although typical biological and chemical agents are unlikely to kill harish bodies, bombs and missiles are still a great threat to us and our communities. However, the fact that humans have not deployed such weapons suggests they lack all the components to use them.

That said, with regard to toxins, there is one substance that humans developed which is fatal to our kind. It was discovered during the development of DNA separation and profiling. A chemical was developed to separate the strands of DNA for use in profiling systems. You can appreciate the lethal application of this substance. The merest contact is enough to degrade a human frame at an astonishing rate. Unfortunately, a derivative of this chemical has the same effects on harish DNA, but at an even greater speed. On contact with the skin, the substance starts to dissolve and separate DNA. Within minutes, the victim is dead, as his nervous system breaks down, terminating all biological functions. For humans, there is no known antidote and it is virtually the same for us. The only possible chance for survival is if an infected individual



can quickly enter a state of stasis that will arrest the spread of the toxic agent throughout the body. Then, the application of Agmara healing might repair the damage, but recovery cannot be guaranteed.

Although we must be aware that explosives and chemicals could present a threat, it is unlikely you'll ever have to face them. The DNA toxin, in particular, was rare in the time of the humans, and even harder to find now. But it is important to bear in mind that such things do exist. If ever found, all effort must be made to ensure that they are controlled or destroyed.

OTHER THREATS

Nihilism

While many hara like to dismiss the human threat, or have already overcome it in their area, few Wraeththu seem to be aware of other problems that they may come to face in the future.

Surely a race that cannot breed is doomed to failure? And so far, there is no evidence that hara can reproduce amongst themselves. If humanity does become extinct, Wraeththu will lose its only known resource for expansion. You might hear stories that the Varrs, Gelaming and Sulh are able to produce 'harlings', but nohar has yet seen a Wraeththu child in the flesh. It's possible the reports are nothing more than deliberate propaganda spread to stop hara from asking too many awkward questions about the future, and to dispel the feelings of nihilism, which are growing among the ranks of the least well informed hara. We have yet to discover the extent of a harish lifespan, simply because not enough time has yet passed for us to observe the ageing process. However, we can see from the living evidence that the hara who claim to be the oldest amongst us do not appear significantly different in terms of body condition. This begs the question: Do we age at all? Nohar yet knows. Only time will tell. If we are immortal and infertile, then each har is precious, an irreplaceable resource.

The lack of a reliable and constant source of food is also a threat to many hara. Although more mature and organized phyles of certain tribes have begun to farm the land, there are still too many maverick groups, who exist like scavengers and are an impediment to those who are resourceful enough to be self-sufficient. Established, settled phyles now trade produce amongst themselves, but the trade routes could be compromised should a war commence between the Gelaming and the Varrs.

In some areas, such as the old human cities, drinking water is in short supply, even in locations where the original pumping stations still operate. While hara are more resistant to disease than humans were, and are capable of fighting all known infections, very few would willingly drink water polluted with their own effluent. Hara living near fresh water springs are very lucky indeed.

The Ancient Ones

Myths from human times concerning a race that preceded humanity still exist today. They are also known as the 'Old Ones' or the 'Elder Race'. The Gelaming are quick to refute claims that this race did, or does, exist, but other Wraeththu tribes are not so certain. Various Kakkahaar, Sulh and Obliviata have claimed to have physical proof that a race far older than humans once walked the earth, although the claimants are not very forthcoming about what this evidence comprises or where they found it. Perhaps the most paranoid of theories concerning these 'Ancient Ones' is that they are still around, observing the antics of both humans and hara with a calculating eye, waiting for the moment to reveal themselves and bring about some unknown, and probably unpleasant, event. Some hara believe this race actually created Wraeththu in order to replace humanity, which was an earlier, failed experiment. Throughout human history, despite the persistence of rumours about an elder race, no Ancient Ones ever revealed

*"Oh the pain, what will we do
when all the humans die?
We'll remember my young
har, the universe is a bitter
and twisted place, and it has
a wicked sense of humour.
So I have no doubt
something will come and try
to kill us."*

- Zackary Raven Black, Gelaming Phylarch

themselves and no trace of their supposedly vast civilization was ever found. All that existed was tantalizing conjecture. Nothing has changed.

'I have records dating back through human history. Again and again, from every part of the world, the same legend persists: an Elder Race once existed, but was decimated by natural disasters. Can we not say that this was also the fate of humanity? And can we then not say if it happened to them, it could have happened before? The Ancient Ones are known by many names: the Atlanteans, the Lemurians, the Grigori. There is no evidence to support their supposed existence, other than legends passed down through generations. Now hara pass those stories on. Do I believe them? I believe in very little, but rarely disbelieve anything either. I have seen no evidence, yet still the tantalizing possibility exists. I cannot bring myself to deny it. Nohar knows the secrets of the universe. Myths enrich our inner lives. I would like to believe the stories are true.'

- Grand Master Malakess, Sulh Librarian

Decadence

Could it be that we have no natural adversary? If so, then perhaps Wraeththu is doomed. We will stagnate and never advance beyond what we are now. Once the petty wars and battles over territory are resolved, what will there be to stop us, when humans and the basest aspects of our own nature are no longer a threat?

Wars, disease, and the problems engendered by imperfections in the human animal, actually encouraged humanity's scientific and spiritual development. They fought from darkness, through the feudal age, to construct their so-called modern civilization. Their only adversaries were their own kind, until Wraeththu came to oppose them. Now, as we take over, what does the future hold for us? With nothing to challenge us, will we sink into decadence and decline? What friction will be left to drive us forward, to make us strive for development? Only fate knows what the future holds for us. We can dream and theorize, but until it happens we will remain in ignorance. Our purpose, if it exists, has not yet been revealed.

Do we have a point? Why are you asking me? Make one up for yourself. Then live by it.

- Lianvis har Kakkahaar

"Idle? I know not its meaning."

- Loveless, a brief passing of words

MYTHOLOGY, LEGENDS AND CONSPIRACY

Shouldn't We Know Better By Now?

By Finneaus har Unneah

It may seem strange to some hara, but as enlightened as we like to think we are, numerous outlandish tales are still spun and many a myth created from fertile, harish imagination. Some of these legends date back to the time of humanity and even prehistory. The high and lofty Gelaming and the cold and vicious Varrs might laugh at some of the tales, but even if they aren't true, hara still love to hear a good story, right? What follows is a short account of a few of my favourite stories. Some of them could even turn out to be true.

Gelaming Madness

The most well known legend amongst hara has to be that of the first Wraeththu, the grand and mighty Aghama, who crawled out from the ruins of Carmine City and spawned our race of 'angels'. I accept there must have been a 'first', but why do half the hara in the world believe this har to be a god? Some hara believe he still watches over us and controls our destiny. Kind of gives you the creeps, doesn't it?

"Welcome to my broken palace. Enter the Kingdom of ruined dreams."

- Tristan, a common greeting

The Gelaming believe unquestionably in the Aghama, or maybe they just want to make other hara believe in him. Humanity once used religion as a tool of control, and we all know what the Gelaming want in life. The Gelaming themselves are the subject of a great many ludicrous stories. Have you heard the one about the giant flying horses? Or the magical city that just appeared one day out of the sky? While stories about Immanion and the Sedoo (those are the flying horses) are wide spread, no Gelaming hara will confirm or deny them. Why should they? If they're not true, they might as well be.

Many a lost and lonely har dreams of travelling to Immanion to start a new life, but nohar I've met ever seems able to pinpoint exactly where the city is. All anyhar can definitely say about Immanion is that it's big and vaguely in the east.

The best story I ever heard about Immanion was told to me by an unthrist har, who claimed to have knowledge that Immanion was actually the lost city of Atlantis, which had been waiting in a higher realm, until the downfall of humanity and the resurgence of earth's magical power, whereupon it decided to reappear. Wraeththu, apparently, were also a catalyst – the new Atlanteans! You almost want to believe it. While this story beggars belief, a surprising number of hara actually believe it.

There are countless other even more bizarre and unlikely stories about Immanion, but I won't insult your intelligence by repeating them here.

Werewolves of the Desert

Given what we know about universal energy, and how humans – and even hara – create masks for it in order to interact with it, I find it extraordinary that some hara still believe in the existence of actual vampires, werewolves and other mythical creatures. I remember a time before I was har when stories would come from the wilderness about werewolves roaming the Megalithic desert. In my opinion, the only real monsters are the bands of rogue Uigenna, who gleefully and savagely slaughter every living thing in their path. No doubt the legends sprang up following Uigenna attacks on small settlements, where the survivors had lost their minds. The remainder of the stories can probably be attributed to wandering hara who are the rather unpleasant results of botched Inceptions.

As to what truth might lie behind the tales of sea monsters off the coast of Alba Sulh and Freyhella, I can only conjecture. I imagine they are down to the illusion-casting skills of the more piratical tribes.

What I'd like to know is whether the flying horses allegedly owned by the Gelaming have wings.

Even More Than We First Thought?

Beyond the supernatural and mythical nonsense, the rumours being spread about the more unusual Wraeththu abilities are slowly being proved in reality. The truth is that we have yet to discover the limits of our new being. While I have heard of Grissecon, ritual aruna, I have never seen it with my own eyes. Even within my own tribe, stories abound of high-ranking hara performing this act to drive away Varr forces and cure strange almost supernatural diseases.

Perhaps the one thing that concerns all hara with sense is whether Wraeththu can reproduce amongst themselves. Are the stories of harish children based in reality or just the product of wishful thinking? Again, I have yet to see evidence with my own eyes, although the work of Velisarius har Kakkahaar suggests we certainly possess the right anatomy to accomplish reproduction. If this is the case, why aren't Wraeththu children common? Certain travellers maintain they have seen harlings, as Wraeththu young are dubbed, among the Sulh and the Kakkahaar, but I cannot help but think that these stories are spread by high level Nahir Nuri, to stem pessimistic speculation about what will happen to us once all suitable humans have been incepted.

The most unlikely myth of all is that of human females being successfully incepted. Nearly every har with a drop of blood in his veins must have tried that at some time, and I have never come across any success stories in reality.

"Ever feel like you have been dancing on a web made from glass and ice?"

- Dantallia, in a not so good moment

Conspiracy

On a darker and more mysterious note, I was once told an amazing story while travelling through Kakkahaar territory. I remember clearly that it was a cold and moonless night – the perfect time for dark tales. I was sitting at a campfire with a few weary companions, who I had met only the day before. They told me how they believed that Wraeththu had been created by a race of supreme angelic beings that exist outside of time. They went on to say that the Gelaming flying horses were in league with these other-worldly creatures, along with some secret society who once controlled the human governments. The Gelaming Archon, Thiede, knows all about it, apparently, and is somehow involved. Thiede believes the unseen forces created, and still controls, Wraeththukind. What their dark purpose might be, or what they hope to achieve or gain, is not part of the story, although one of my companions suggested that maybe hara, and the humans that came before us, are nothing more to these creatures than flies. Maybe we are toys to them or even food. Wine was flowing, and I don't remember much of what else was said that night, only that the atmosphere around our meagre fire was intense, and I often had the feeling I was being watched.

The following day, I woke alone. When I arrived at the next town, I discovered that my erstwhile companions had been surrounded by Gelaming forces in the centre of town and had been taken into custody. Perhaps I was lucky to be alive. I still don't know whether the stories I heard were complete fabrications, the product of paranoia and over-active imaginations, or somehow based in truth. All I know is that the hara who told them to me are no longer around. Perhaps they had committed some offence I didn't know about. Perhaps not. Draw your own conclusions.

Notes

While all these stories may be nothing more than the harish equivalent of fairy tales, or propaganda created by Nahir Nuri with their own agenda, it would appear that myths and legends are still very much a part of society and culture on earth. In that, we are little different from humans. We still don't know the truth about our origins, and maybe we never will, but whatever the outcome, I hope our desire to hear a good story, well told, will never die out.

"It's really very simple. You're dead."

- Laice, reciting last rites



LEXICON ONE

The Famous

AGHAMA	(ag-am-ah) - Title of the first Wraeththu, worshiped as a god by many hara.
ALLAVÉ	Founder of the Obliviata tribe; viewed as their god.
LIANVIS	Current Archon of the Kakkahar tribe; took over after Velisarius retired.
MANTICKER	Archon of the Uigenna tribe, known as Manticker the Seventy, after he killed seventy armed humans in one fierce bout of rage.
SCIAMANDER	Founder of the Colurastes.
THIEDE	(thee-dee) - Leader of the Gelaming.
TYR	Archon of the Freyhella.
VELISARIUS	Founder of the Kakkahaar tribe, now retired as Archon.
WRAXILAN	Also known as the Lion of Oomar, leader of a strong Uigenna phyle.

Places

AETHERS (or Ethers)	The realms beyond harish perception, used to transmit telepathic messages and for psychic questing.
AHEMET	The country to the north of Olathe, now almost uninhabitable due to nuclear fallout.
ALBA SULH	The home country of the Sulh tribe, believed to be somewhere between Megalithica and Almagabra.
ALMAGABRA	(Al-muh-gab-rah) - Home country of the Gelaming, believed to be located east of Megalithica.
AVALONA	A city in Alba Sulh, their spiritual capital.
CARMINE	A city in northern Megalithica; home of the first Wraeththu; legend has it that this city is haunted by the ghosts of the dead.
CORDAGNE	A country somewhere between Almagabra and Megalithica, believed to be near Alba Sulh.
DUWAMISH	Uigenna city in the far northwest of Megalithica.
ERMINIA	An unexplored country south of Fereng.
FALLSEND	A town in Thaine, home to some rather unpleasant elements of harish society.
FERELITH	A Wraeththu tribe of Almagabra.
FERENG	A country south of Cordagne.
FREYGARD	Home country of the Freyhella, to the north of Alba Sulh.
FROIA	A small marsh-dwelling tribe of central Megalithica.
FULMINIR	The capital city of Megalithica and citadel of the Varr Archon Ponclast.
GALHEA	(ga-lay-uh) - An important Varrish town in Central Megalithica governed by Terzian.
GIRDLE OF TIAMAT	The ocean between Megalithica and Almagabra.
GREENLING	A town on the edge of the southern Megalithican desert that is home to both hara and humans.
IMMANION	(im-man-eon) - Capital city of Almagabra.
JE-HAL-ALAMARA	Capital city and spiritual centre of the Obliviata.
KARIBEE SEA	The sea off the southern coast of Megalithica, ruled by the Smalt.
KYME	The great store of knowledge in Alba Sulh.

LUND	Large city in Alba Sulh, now derelict apart from a few gangs of young Wraeththu, who have chosen to live outside Sulh society.
MEGALITHICA	A Western continent dominated by the tribes of Uigenna and Varr, the birthplace of Wraeththu.
MORASS	Rather unpleasant town in Thaine.
NAYATI	A temple or sacred place.
NEOVIK	Large city on the west coast of Megalithica, heavily damaged in a tidal wave, now home to a few small groups of Freyhella and Uigenna.
NUNAVUT	A country to the far north of Megalithica, home of the Inukshuk tribe.
OLATHE	The home of the Obliviata, believed to be southeast of Almagabra.
OTHERLANES	Travel routes through the aethers, used by Sedim.
PAYUTI	A city to the west of Fulminir, now derelict.
PHESBE	Town in central Megalithica, home of the Irraka.
RIFT OF THE DAMNED	Formed off the west coast of Megalithica by a large earthquake, now a choice Uigenna and Hokule surfing spot.
SAMWAY	Home town of the Olopade, to the north of Thaine.

Common Form and Slang

AGMARA	Healing and spiritual energy channeled by hara, used during caste progression.
ALLUKA	A member of the Obliviata tribe, who has chosen to follow the path of magic.
ALTHAIA	The three-day period after Inception during which a human body mutates to become Wraeththu.
ARCHON	Overall leader of a tribe.
ARUNA	(A-roo-na) - Sexual communion between hara.
CHESNA	(chez-nah) - A close relationship between hara.
FORALE	(fuh-rah) - The period of fasting a human is required to undergo before Inception.
GRISSECON	(griss-uh-con) - Sexual communion between hara to raise power; sex magic.
HAR	Wraeththu individual (pl. hara)
HARHUNE	(har-hoon) - The ceremony of Inception, where a human becomes a har.
HIENAMA	(hy-en-ah-mah) - Wraeththu priest, magical teacher and inceptor.
INCEPTION	The procedure whereby a human mutates into a har.
KELOS	(kee-loss) - An emotional condition similar to infatuation, perceived to be a form of madness by some tribes.
OUANA	Masculine principle of hara.
OUANA-LIM	Masculine sexual organ of hara.
PELKI	Forbidden aruna that is the equivalent of human rape.
PHYLE	Branch of a tribe that has its own leader.
PHYLARCH	Leader of a phyle, who is in direct communication with the Archon.
SEDU	(sed-oo) - A mythical winged horse able to traverse the otherlanes, carrying harish passengers. (pl. sedim)
SHARING OF BREATH	A kiss of mutual visualization.
SHICAWM	The ritual shaving of the sides of the head during Inception.
SOUME	(soo-mee) - Feminine principle of hara.
SOUME-LAM	Feminine sexual organ of hara.
TIAHAAR	(tee-a-har) - Respectful form of address (pl. tiahaara).

UNHAR
WRAETHTHU

The state of a human before Inception.
(ray-thoo) - The race that replaced humanity as the predominant intelligent species on earth.

Tribes

AMAH
COLURASTES

Wraeththu tribe, from the town of Ahmouth in Megalithica.
(col-yur-ass-teez) - A highly mystical tribe from eastern Megalithica, called also the Serpent Hara.

FREYHELLA
GELAMING
HOKULE

A seafaring Wraeththu tribe from the country of Freygard.
(jel-a-ming) - Wraeththu tribe originating in Almagabra.
(ho-ku-lee) - A Wraeththu tribe that lives somewhere off the west coast of Megalithica.

INUKSHUK

(ee-nook-shuck) - A northern Wraeththu tribe, from the country of Nunavut.

IRRAKA
KAKKAHAAR

(ee-rah-kuh) - A minor tribe of Northern Megalithica
(kak-a-har) - Highly magical desert tribe of Southern Megalithica.

KHEOPS

(key-opp) - Small Wraeththu tribe of northern Megalithica, known as raiders.

OBLIVIATA
OLOPADE

(ob-li-vee-a-ta) - A Wraeththu tribe from the country of Olathe.
(oll-oh-pard) - A tribe loyal to the Gelaming, from the town of Samway to the north of Thaine.

SULH

(sull) - A Wraeththu tribe, different branches of which are found in both Alba Sulh and Megalithica.

SMALT
UIGENNA

A Wraeththu tribe from somewhere south of Megalithica.
(ew-ee-genn-ah) - Confrontational tribe of northern Megalithica, possibly the first Wraeththu tribe.

UNNEAH

(oo-nay-uh) - Tribe of Megalithica; controls most of the rivers and waterways; good traders.

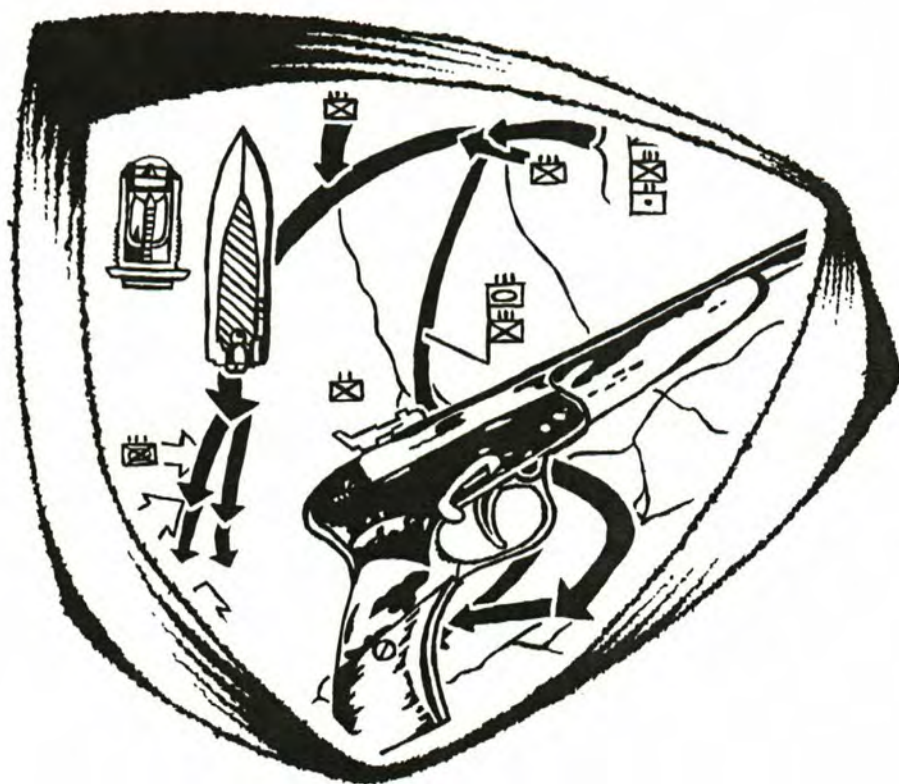
UNTHRIST
VARRS

Outcast, tribeless hara.
Most influential and widespread tribe of Megalithica, known for their warlike ways.

ZIGANE

(Zig-ARN-ee) - A travelling tribe of humans and hara.





"I have tried to make my peace with the Uigenna, though Manticker did not seem convinced at my proposal of the alliance. It may be that his tribe is in greater disarray than we first thought. Yet with the Gelaming forces gathering in the east, I cannot commit forces to take out the Uigenna even though they are ripe for the picking."

- Ponclast, *Archon of the Varrs*



TRIBES

There are eight major Wraeththu tribes and countless smaller tribes. Each tribe consists of groups of varying size, known as phyles. A large tribe might have dozens of phyles, whereas a smaller one might have only half a dozen. A Phyle is governed by a har with the title 'Phylarch'. The Phylarchs are answerable to an overall tribal leader, known most commonly as an 'archon'. However, some tribes have deviated from this common terminology, and have created their own forms of address for high-ranking hara.

While most of the tribes contain members from different human ethnic groups, many of them have adopted styles, customs and traditions from very early human civilisations. Wraeththu scholars have pondered this phenomenon, and several agree that it may have arisen because the planet itself retains certain memories or templates, like archetypes, which Wraeththu, being more attuned to the planet, absorb and manifest.

The largest tribes are the Varrs in Megalithica and the Gelaming in Almagabra. Close in terms of size are the Uigenna and the slightly smaller Unneah, who both mainly inhabit the northern cities of Megalithica and the surrounding areas. Other Megalithican tribes include the Colurastes in the northeast and the Kakkahaar in the southern deserts.

The country known as Olathe, south of Almagabra, is the homeland the Obliviata. Somewhere between the lands of Megalithica and Almagabra is the green island of Alba Sulh, which has become home to the Sulh.

Apart from the major tribes, smaller groups are currently in the process of forming a tribal identity, and some have already acquired a reputation, either good or bad, and have spawned some legendary figures. Other tribes of Megalithica are the Irraka, Amaha, Greenling, Kheops and Froia. In Almagabra, you will find the Fereolith and the Olopade.

Further a field is the country of Freygard, home of the Freyhella. The Smalt occupies an area south of Megalithica. The Hokule, a seafaring tribe, live on the islands to the east of Megalithica. Quite often, the smaller tribes tend to be reclusive, so information about them is scant or unreliable.

Rivalry amongst the Tribes

Despite their relatively small numbers and recent appearance in the world, Wraeththu have already developed hostilities and rivalries within their ranks. Small scale conflicts occur continually. The most frequent cause is disagreements over territory, as each

*"It's not the bright side.
Instead, it's more of a
slightly less dark side."*

- Uoria har Colurastes

*"One of the things that tends
to spark off bitter rivalry is
when a group incepts a
human that another tribe
has been stalking. A
Uigenna trick is to incept the
friends of the target and,
then re-introduce them later
to see what bonds are left."*

*"One day I will be a Hienama,
walk the streets of Immanion
and maybe even have a tribe
of my own!"*

*- Young Unneah, dreaming, as he picks
through the rubbish field on the outskirts of
Carmine.*

tribe fights to cling to the land they regard as their own. This hostility is most common in Megalithica, where the Varrs and the Ugenna seek to gain overall control.

Disparity of spiritual beliefs can also cause problems. Some tribes view the Aghama (the first Wraeththu) virtually as a god and ascribe to a spiritual system known as Aghamism. Others, while accepting that the Aghama does, or did once, exist, do not regard him in the same spiritual light. Yet more tribes refute entirely any concept of Aghamism and think it's all wishful thinking.

Tribal philosophy and ethics are also responsible for causing division. For example, the Kakkahaar think that the progression of Wraeththu society should, in essence, slow down, so that hara have time to come to terms with their new physiologies and abilities. Conversely, the Ugenna are uninterested in this view and consider that rapid expansion is a more desirable path.

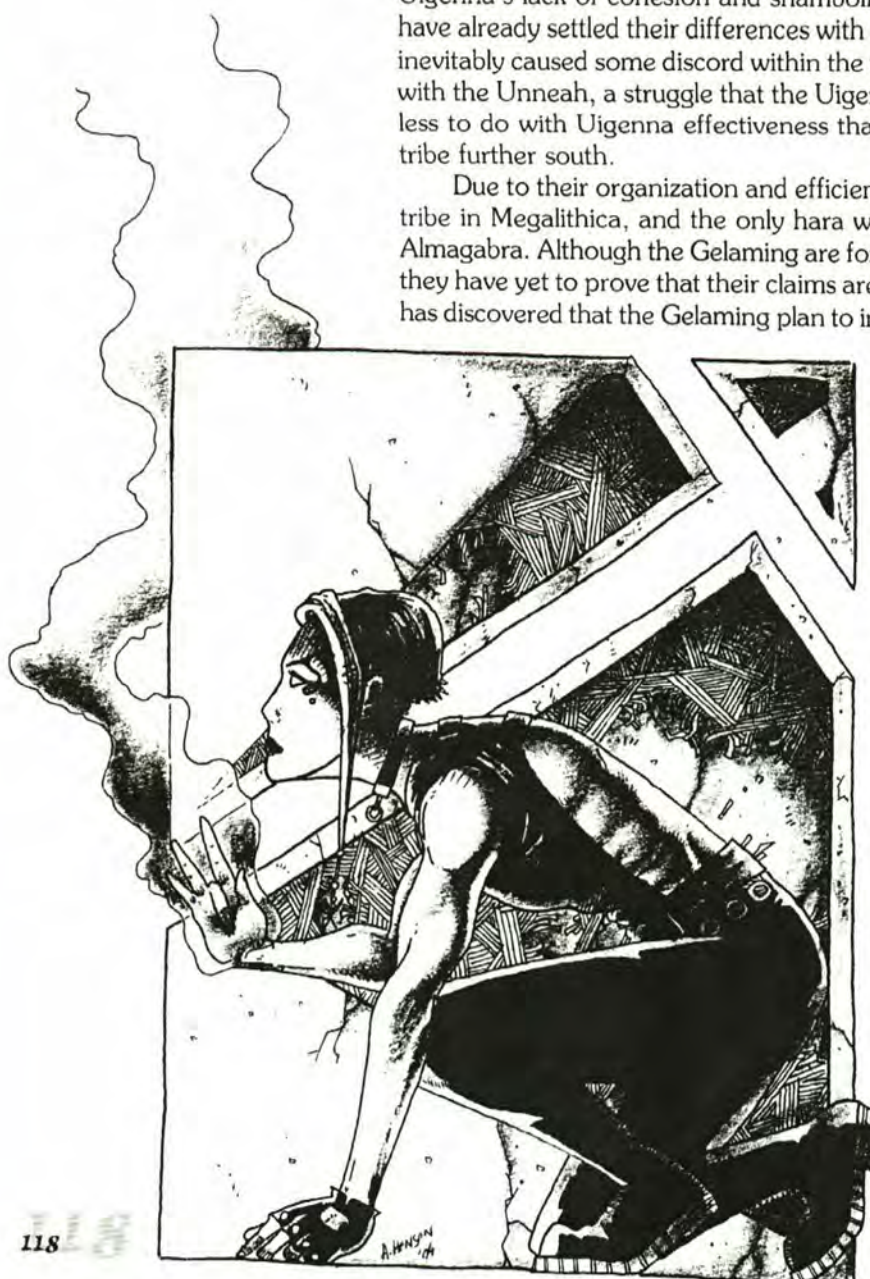
In the ongoing hostilities between the Varrs and the Ugenna, the Varr fighting force is highly trained and organized, while the Ugenna's ranks are always in disarray and they are often too busy squabbling amongst themselves. Over the past few years, the Ugenna have managed to stave off Varrish attacks on their territory, despite the Ugenna's lack of cohesion and shambolic method of fighting. Some Ugenna phyles have already settled their differences with the Varrs, in order to avoid defeat, which has inevitably caused some discord within the tribe. The Ugenna also compete for territory with the Unneah, a struggle that the Ugenna appear to be winning. However, this has less to do with Ugenna effectiveness than with the Unneah's decision to move their tribe further south.

Due to their organization and efficiency, the Varrs are certainly the most powerful tribe in Megalithica, and the only hara who make them nervous are the Gelaming in Almagabra. Although the Gelaming are fond of publicising their capabilities and powers, they have yet to prove that their claims are based on fact. However, Varrish intelligence has discovered that the Gelaming plan to install a heavy military presence in Megalithica,

which most Varrs believe points to invasion. Some hara, who regard the Gelaming as fair-minded peacekeepers, welcome this eventuality. The Varrs, inevitably, are not among them.

Petty rivalry sometimes occurs among the smaller and also mainly magical tribes of the Sulh, Colurastes and Kakkahaar, but rarely results in any form of open conflict, as the tribes inhabit different areas of the world. Differences arise mainly from opposing magical ethics, which on occasion might well culminate in magical skirmish.

The Obliviata have no rivals, although they are not always welcomed when they arrive unannounced on other tribes' territory. This is possibly because of their belief system, which some hara dislike, and their inherent tendency to be secretive. Hara of the Obliviata tribe have spurned almost all material requirements, other than what they need to survive. They simply travel, coming and going as they please, trading and using what they find as currency to buy supplies. For this reason they have no need for more land beyond their home country of Olathe. However, their simple and often ascetic lifestyles are often regarded scathingly as overly pious,



especially by hara with more hedonistic tendencies, which constitutes the majority of them.

On the western coast of Megalithica, the Hokule occasionally land their boats to trade with native hara. Like the Obliviata, the Hokule have no direct rivals, although the Varrs deeply distrust them - a feeling we can be sure is mutual. Even though the Varrs living in western Megalithica enjoy a small but serviceable trade agreement with the Hokule, the latter are regarded as somewhat frivolous and mistaken in their views. This is mainly because of the Hokule's extreme tolerance and acceptance of humans and their refusal to cast off human relatives. Strangely enough, the Hokule have formed quite a strong friendship with Uigenna inhabiting settlements on the west coast of Megalithica. This is no doubt because western Uigenna phyles are somewhat less belligerent than their northern city-dwelling counterparts. During any visit from the island dwellers, the Uigenna spend many nights holding parties for their visitors, trading information and generally having a good time. Both the Hokule and the Uigenna of this area share a love for the sea and the awesome power it has over the land and the beings that dwell there.

Why do tribes exist?

As they spread, Wraeththu quickly divided themselves into various groups, each with a distinct identity. This division took place very early on in their relatively short history, although as it was not documented in detail, it's unclear as to why it occurred. Given the level of human hostility Wraeththu faced, it would have made more sense to remain as one cohesive group.

Many early Wraeththu separated from their incepting hara, leaving their original tribe to explore new territory and find a place to call home. There were undoubtedly disputes over leadership and politics. It is also possible that some of today's tribes might have originated from specific human groups and the tribe leaders at the time only chose to incept those of a certain background or ethic origin. Some tribes, or phyles within tribes, took their names from the street gangs of which they were once members. Once one of them became har, they set about incepting the other members of their gang.

While many of the tribe founders, such as Velisarius of the Kakkahaar and Thiede of the Gelaming, are still alive, nohar has managed to secure a precise account of what really happened in the early days of Wraeththu. Orien Farnell, a respected hienama, has said that the Kakkahaar were formed after Velisarius was driven from the north by the Uigenna, who did not agree with his philosophy. The Gelaming were eventually formed by Thiede in his attempt to create a supposedly superior Wraeththu tribe. Other tribes such as the Sulh and Colurastes were no doubt formed to follow a desired spiritual and/or magical path. The Varrs were created by Ponclast, a disaffected Uigenna, who recognized the need for Wraeththu to have some kind of organization. Unfortunately for the majority of hara, Ponclast believes he is the only har fit to take control.

Today, the differences between the tribes derive from different factors, such as geography, politics, beliefs, magical powers and military skills. Interestingly, ethnic origin does not appear to be a contributing factor, as it once was for the humans. This is undoubtedly because hara do not suffer the same psychological problems over 'differences' that humans do.

Around the same time Velisarius and Ponclast left the Uigenna to form their own tribes, other hara left Megalithica and founded new tribes such as the Sulh and the Freyhella. It's clear they preferred to have an ocean between themselves and their belligerent former tribemates. Considering the continual infighting in Megalithica, the Freyhellan's and the Sulh's decision to live outside Megalithica seems a wise one.

Even though Wraeththu numbers are comparatively small compared to the old human population, the number of different tribes occupying Megalithica is already causing problems, something humans encountered far later in their development. Large and powerful tribes such as the Varrs and the Uigenna are steadily pushing smaller tribes such as the Kakkahaar, Kheops and the Irraka further into the southern deserts,

"When a close group of friends has been approached by multiple tribes; a lot of politics comes in to play, as each tribe is after key members of the group. The can lead to groups of friends being split up and brought into the Harish world with different and often opposing ideals."

"Twenty years ago, I could never have predicted what would happen to earth. All that concerned me was the television and getting to work on time. Now my biggest concern is to fight or join you."

-Muffy, Last Human in Fargo

"Smaller and more widespread tribes will group together to incept a cadre of friends. Each tribe in the alliance will pick members they deem the most worthy, and train them in the ideas of Wraeththudom together."

"The Kakkahaar wants to call on their ruthless gods, the Unneah just wish to run and the Uigenna... where are the Uigenna?"

- Solasus har Kakkahaar, during a botched attempt to start a coalition against the Varrs.

"I like what you have done with the place. It's kind of frumpy and stupid!"

- Aries Strala, Unneah

or up into the far northern mountains and wastelands. Other tribes, such as the Unneah and the Colurastes, have so far managed to hold on to their territories, but unless they receive the support of a more powerful tribe like the Gelaming, they might not be able to resist the Varrish advance for much longer.

A few small settlements have already been set up in the south by various hara; these serve as sanctuaries for refugees from the north of Megalithica, who no longer want to live in Varr or Uigennadominated lands. The populations of some of these towns may one day become tribes in their own right.

The Gelaming have their own country, which they call Almagabra, but seem determined to stake their claim on Megalithican soil, or at least that's what the Varrs would have you believe. Almagabra itself is not populated solely by Gelaming, as hara of other tribes have settled there, fleeing the chaos and uncertainty of Varr rule in Megalithica. The exact numbers and precise backgrounds of these travellers are not known. The Unneah, famed for gathering information, are the main source of news concerning new tribes in Almagabra.

In the dry hot country of Olathe, south of Almagabra, the Obliviata return home every four years or so, to pay homage to their founder and spiritual leader, who formulated their distinctive belief system. This tribe has already travelled far and wide. Many of its hara have visited the developing city of Immanion in Almagabra and some have even travelled as far as Megalithica itself.

There is no doubt that tribes are forming continually, all over the world, even if the breakdown of the old human communication systems means that information filters through slowly and is sometimes prone to exaggeration. Perhaps there is no area left where Wraeththu have not spread.

Tribal Seals

Five marked stones were given to each of the eight established tribes; these bore unique marks that were to become the symbols of their tribe, and could be used as seals against fraud. Nohar knows who created the symbols, only that the messenger who brought them to each tribe was of the Obliviata. To this day, the Obliviata maintain that they received the symbols from their god, and were told to take them to specific places, where they would be met by leading members of other tribes. Although many of the locations were far from populated areas, the respective tribe leaders reached them shortly after the Obliviata envoy.

The tribes began to use these seals to mark official letters and messages, setting them in rings and amulets. The Varrs and the Gelaming also use them on military orders. Nohar denies the usefulness of the stones, but everyhar wonders about their origins. Was it a gesture from the Obliviata to garner some acceptance for their kind? Or was it, as the Obliviata insist, the gift of some greater being that sent them down from the heavens?

Rings and amulets that bear a tribal seal possess strange properties. Not only do they leave physical impressions on sealing wax, but also magical or psychical imprints. These imprints are detectable by most hara, and those who have attempted to fake them have failed.

Could it be that these seals are a gift from the Aghama, or is their origin more prosaic? The most sceptical hara believe the Obliviata created the stones deliberately.

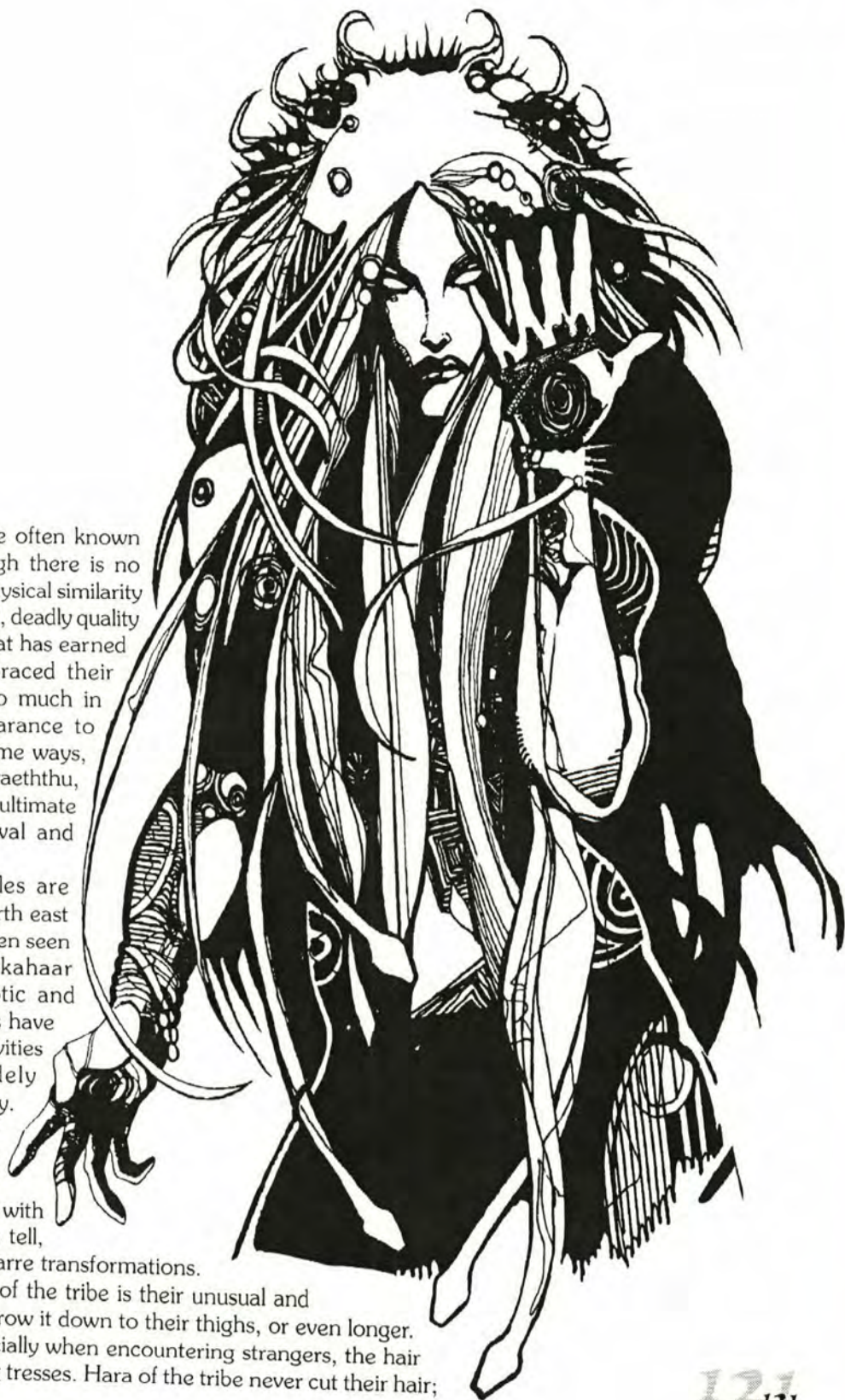
Most hara feel that given their own advancement and their progressive understanding of their innate powers, the seals may be obsolete in few years time. However, they serve a purpose for now.

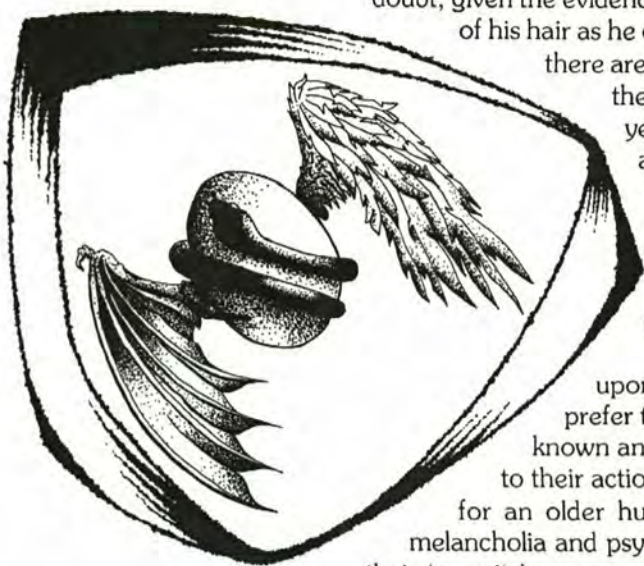
COLURASTES

The mysterious Colurastes are often known as the Serpent Hara. Although there is no evidence they have any great physical similarity to reptiles, there is a certain watchful, deadly quality to these hara, which is perhaps what has earned them the name. They have embraced their reputation wholeheartedly, and do much in their manner of dress and appearance to augment the serpent theme. In some ways, they embrace the very essence of Wraeththu, as the serpent has long been the ultimate symbol for androgyny, life renewal and magic.

Most of the Colurastes phyles are nomadic and while based in the north east of Megalithica, small bands have been seen in the southern deserts of Kakkahaar territory. They are typically exotic and extremely secretive. Few hard facts have been documented about their activities and culture, but they are widely acclaimed for their intoxicating beauty. They tend to live in caves or rock dwellings, in small groups, and generally avoid contact with other tribes. Hara who have met or traded with them often have strange stories to tell, of incredible enchantments and bizarre transformations.

The most recognizable aspect of the tribe is their unusual and magnificent hair. Most Colurastes grow it down to their thighs, or even longer. Although sometimes braided, especially when encountering strangers, the hair is generally worn loose in undulating tresses. Hara of the tribe never cut their hair;





it is said to possess a life of its own and would even bleed if it were cut. There is little doubt, given the evidence, that a Colurastean has as much control over the movement of his hair as he does over any other part of his body. He can use it to grip, and there are even stories of Colurastes hara actually strangling victims with their hair. As to how this mutation occurred, no information is yet available. All hara of the tribe are exceptionally beautiful, in a seductive and darkly sultry way, traits that they often use to devastating effect. Their gaze is as hypnotic as a serpent's. Some hara refer to them as 'lamiae'; the half human half snake creatures of ancient myth. They certainly often have snakes as pets, and work with them during their magical procedures.

For most tribes, the majority of Inceptions are performed upon humans in their teens or early twenties, but the Colurastes prefer to incept humans who are much younger. Therefore, they are known and feared by humans as child stealers. There is common sense to their actions, however, as Inception is far less traumatic for a child than for an older human. Consequently, Colurastes are rarely plagued by the melancholia and psychosis which often causes problems for other tribes. Because their 'recruits' are so young, Inception into the tribe is not consummated by aruna. What method they do use to 'cement' the mutation is not known outside of Colurastean circles, but it's commonly believed they must use some kind of meditational/healing procedure, perhaps augmented with certain herbs. For a Colurastean, aruna comes later, as part of a coming-of-age rite, when the inceptee is believed to be mature enough to appreciate the ceremony. Again, this must contribute greatly to the typical Colurastean's robust mental health and firm sense of identity. Although the tribe is known to incept any human children they come across on their travels, they have maintained relatively low numbers.

"If you apply this potion on the night of a full moon, you can almost reach it; any other time it just gives you a nasty rash."

- Uoria har, Colurastes

The tribe tends to seek out caves and rock dwellings as temporary homes, as they like dark places from where they can emerge at night. In appearance, they are either milky-white skinned or, if incepted from a dark-skinned race, a strange coffee colour that sometimes has a remarkable greenish tinge. It is not known if this is a product of Inception or a result of living in caves and being primarily nocturnal in nature. No cave dwelling, as far as is known, has ever become a permanent settlement. Colurastes will inhabit an area for some months, before leaving it to trade with other hara, or simply to move to a new area.

Trading with the Colurastes is a unique experience. They will always barter and haggle, in a strangely quiet manner, until they get what they desire or the hara they are trading with get bored and leave. No hara have ever got the best of a Colurastean. He is typically patient and persistent, utilizing his uncanny skills of persuasion. The tribe will trade almost anything, for any kind of currency. If you seek the most unusual and arcane items, the Colurastes are the hara to approach in order to acquire them. For a good price, they will actively seek out rare commodities for you.

"Inception? Yes I remember mine. Pain and bliss; waking up, unsure if I had really changed. Then the sun rose over the mountains and my rebirth was complete."

- Gabriel Chamberg, Colurastes

The Colurastes are extremely gifted psychically, in a manner similar to the Sulh, although their two cultures are entirely different. It's possible that the two tribes are related and sprang from the same source. Colurasteans are very sensitive and can feel others' emotions, even those of the dead. Some say that a Colurastean can sense events happening from miles away. It is certain that they possess enhanced senses, more so than an average har, especially those of hearing and smell. The Colurastes demand respect for their craft and, although they are skilled traders, almost never help hara of other tribes in other ways, unless they are paid extremely well for their services.

Every Colurastean you meet, who is disposed to talk to you, will tell of an untold destiny, which they must seek out. Once they have discovered what it is, they will do everything in their power to achieve it.

Caste progression is presumed to be based upon psychic abilities, but there is no concrete evidence for this, since the tribe is as secretive about this aspect of their tribe as they are about everything else.

Appearance

All Colurasteans have very long hair and skin of varying muted shades, whatever their original ethnic type. Their eyes are compelling, their gaze hypnotic. Their style of dress involves close-fitting garments, often of reptile skin. Unlike some other tribes, they do not favour tribal markings such as tattoos, piercing or ritual scarring. They do not use cosmetics or paint their faces to change their appearance, or style their hair. Their countenance is typically serene, if somewhat sly. Occasionally, some hara's fingers and toes are slightly webbed, which again has probably contributed to their reputation of being snakelike.

Perhaps because Inception is not 'fixed' by aruna, younger members of the tribe often lack the physical characteristics that typify an older Colurastes. These traits, such as the unusual hair, generally develop after the coming of age rite.

Background

The Colurastes were founded by a har named Sciamander, who was most likely of Sulh origin. He developed a great interest in serpents early on and considered them to possess magical powers. Perhaps the most extreme of his beliefs were at odds with his tribe leaders, for he certainly struck out on his own very soon after Inception, perhaps within less than two years. Sciamander took no hara with him, but set about creating his own tribe, as he had reached a high level in caste training quite quickly. For some years, the Colurastes lingered around the central northern cities of Megalithica, before moving east. Since then, they have created phyles in many areas of the country.

Organization

There is little current information about Sciamander, and it's presumed he is either dead or has concealed himself. It's possible that, if he still lives, he communicates with the phylarchs of the tribe by psychic means.

Like the Kakkahaar, Colurastes phyles meet several times a year for spiritual festivals to their deity, the half serpent/half har Ophidien, always in secluded locations. There is generally no communication between phyles, but at the appropriate times they all tend to gravitate to certain areas, which are not planned in advance, but sensed purely through psychic means.

Each phyle has a definite hierarchy, with a phylarch, and his immediate staff, as well as a group of shamans of varying status. The serpent handlers or anguinis (angween-eez) of the tribe are also held in high esteem.

Traits

All the Colurastes have strong psychic powers and an empathy with serpents. They are precise in their movements, well balanced, and possess an inordinate capability to climb slick surfaces.

As fighters they work better alone than in organized troops. The way of the Colurastes is that of the lone assassin. However, their strong ability to hypnotize with their gaze and their voice often renders conflict unnecessary when they find themselves in hostile situations. They can lull aggressors to sleep with their strange, sibilant songs and have even been known to plant suggestion in an enemy's mind so that he turns on his comrades instead.

Bonuses: Perception [PER] +2 and Willpower [WIL] +1

Crafts

While the Colurastes are certainly not builders, they are good at working with reptile leather, and Colurastean garments command a high price. They are also skilled at locating food and water, and unearthing unusual artefacts. Their ability to hypnotize is often used in healing situations, to alleviate pain and encourage the afflicted to heal

"While humankind should have learned a lot from watching the snakes, most ignored them. Wraeththu could learn a lot from us, but I think we await the same fate."

- Uoria, har Colurastes

"It is beneath us to think of humans as our ancestors. We never evolved from them. How could we? We just used their bodies until the serpent called and released us."

- Morfis har Colurastes

themselves. If you have need of a cunning diplomat, and can find a Colurastean willing to work for you, their powers of persuasion are second to none.

Bonuses: Occult + 1, Persuasion + 1 and Hypnotism + 1

"The Kakkahaar will easily buy those we reject and use them as slaves. They would be wise not to take caution to the wind, a serpent lies beneath the beautiful skin."

- Gabriel Chamberg, Colurastes

The Opposition

As the Colurastes are renowned for keeping to themselves, and do not seek to acquire permanent territory, they have few enemies other than humans, who regard them as among the most terrifying of hara. The Colurastes are more likely to be sought out by other tribes as potential agents and assassins. Most Wraeththu leaders would be pleased to have a Colurastean in their entourage, both for their useful skills and their exceptional appearance. In fact, the services of such a har are often regarded as a symbol of status, not least because few Colurasteans would willingly adhere to a tribe other than their own.

GELAMING

Much to the disgust of many hara, the Gelaming (JEL-a-ming) regard themselves as the cream of Wraeththu society, superior to all the other tribes. In many ways, this is undoubtedly true, because it seems virtually incontrovertible that their hara were initially poached from the most skilled and intelligent members of other tribes. Consequently, as with those tribes who originated in the great cities of Northern Megalithica, they are comprised of many different ethnic types.

The Gelaming are based in the country of Almagabra, which is a great distance away from the Wraeththu homelands of Megalithica, across the great ocean known as the Girdle of Tiamat. All Gelaming hara undergo intensive caste progression training and are well schooled in all of the Wraeththu abilities. Inceptions are conducted under strict guidelines, and reports from the Unneah suggest that these occasions involve a great deal of ritual and ceremony. Like the Varrs, the Gelaming have begun to spread propaganda about themselves. One of these stories claims they now know how to procreate,



rather than augment their ranks through Inception. However, they are humble enough to claim that only those of the highest caste are able to do so.

The archon of the Gelaming is a charismatic and mysterious har named Thiede, who has become something of a legend among Wraeththukind.

Physically, he is of spectacular appearance, with a striking mane of red-gold hair. Many hara consider him to be some kind of demon, while others perceive him in a more positive light and a force for good. Any hara who have met him speak of the sense of power he emanates. Stories of the Gelaming's and Thiede's strength and magic have spread far and wide throughout Megalithica, if not the entire Wraeththu world, but not all hara are inclined to believe them.

Immanion is the capital city of the Gelaming in Almagabra, and the headquarters of its military. A popular myth suggests Thiede built the city through magical means. He is credited with many astounding acts, but most sensible hara think he simply appropriated an existing human city and redeveloped it. As so few hara of other tribes have actually visited the place, no certain explanation can be given. It's common knowledge, whether based on true fact or not, that Thiede has great plans for the city. Some reports, again from rather unreliable sources, suggest that Immanion manifested itself complete in some magical fashion. There are stories of magnificent buildings, immense docks and wide streets. If these are true, then it is surely an old human city. It's very likely that Thiede has already set up some form of government in the city and he is certainly forming a fighting force.

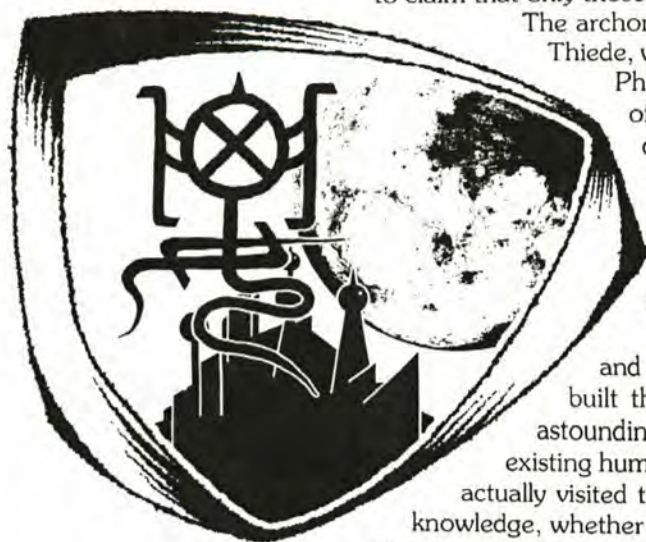
One rumour that persists, and seems very likely to be true, is that skilled hara of other tribes are still being recruited to help with the development of Immanion and other projects of the Gelaming. This information probably derives from hara who chose not to take up the offer.

The most important question concerning the Gelaming is whether they really are superior to hara of other tribes, or whether this is simply propaganda. Obviously, if they pay more attention to caste training and other aspects of education, they will have an advantage over less developed tribes, but whether they wield stronger abilities has yet to be proved.

Many strange occurrences are associated with the sighting of Gelaming in Megalithica. There are stories of immense white horses that appear from nowhere and vanish just as quickly. Hara have spoken of impenetrable force fields being found in the wilderness, through which nothing can pass, but which also disappear with no explanation. It's said that some tribe phyles have been spirited away by magical means, their camps and settlements left empty, but with food still warm on the tables. Any unexplained phenomenon is credited to be of Gelaming origin, whatever its form. It is very unlikely that the majority of these stories are true. In times of uncertainty such as these, individuals seek otherworldly explanations for their troubles. Empty camps are more likely to be the result of voracious recruitment campaigns on behalf of the Uigenna and the Varrs. These indigenous Megalithican tribes undoubtedly disseminate the information that their activities are the work of Gelaming, who so far have not made any statement one way or the other.

Reports suggest that the Gelaming are currently building, or intend to build, an encampment in central Megalithica. While no firm evidence has yet come to light, it seems likely the Gelaming would consider it desirable to have a presence on this continent. The Varrs and the Uigenna fear that this presages conflict over territory, while hara of lesser tribes, especially those most at risk from the Varrs and their allies, tend to regard a Gelaming presence as potentially protective.

The Gelaming's influence is obviously greatest in Almagabra, where other tribes have begun to settle and form their own communities. Territory north of Almagabra, known as Thaine, is something of a social wilderness. Groups of Uigenna have attempted to spread their tribe's influence overseas, and Thaine would certainly provide a certain amount of cover for them to further their activities. However, should they appear to be



"More Uigenna, a couple of Sulh and somehar who claims to be from Atlantis?"

- Vix har Gelaming, in a report on new arrivals to Immanion.

"Megalithica, land of our birth, home of the insane Uigenna, the vicious Kakkahaar and the secretive Colurastes. I can now see why we moved to Almagabra."

- Marius Frost, Gelaming Solider

too successful, the Gelaming will no doubt interfere and prevent further spread of Uigenna settlements.

The Gelaming have already made overtures of diplomacy to Megalithican tribes such as the Unneah and the Kakkahaar. These tribes of middling influence and size tend to be wary of such approaches, as they are suspicious of Thiede's true intentions, but they are also wise enough to know that only a fool would reject such advances.

Appearance

Gelaming hara are picked for their outstanding qualities. They share both a striking appearance and an aura of command and confidence, the former no doubt deriving partly from the latter. All Gelaming carry themselves with grace and elegance. Even though no Wraeththu could be described as ugly, the Gelaming truly seem to glow with splendour and power. While their clothes are often simple and practical, they are always stylish and flattering. Some higher ranking hara of the tribe have been seen in extravagant costumes, which were probably displayed to further their reputation and impress those who saw them. All Gelaming possess the ability to appear stunning, no matter what they wear.

Background

Very little is known about the history of the Gelaming. As such a large and powerful tribe could not simply appear from nowhere, it seems likely that Thiede nurtured it in secret for considerable time before making its presence known. Thiede has agents at work around the world, selecting hara for him, or suitable humans for Inception. As to where Thiede himself originated, nohar knows. Given his stature, it seems likely he was incepted to the Uigenna or the Varrs. It's well known that hara of high calibre compete for dominance among these tribes, so Thiede most likely broke away from his incepting tribe early on to initiate his own. What is most puzzling is why he chose to leave Megalithica to do this. Passage across the ocean is becoming increasingly problematical as the old human transport systems break down. If Thiede wishes to have real power in Megalithica, it would seem more feasible for him to have a headquarters on this continent too. Also, one would imagine that the logistics of transporting new hara to Almagabra would cause much inconvenience. Gelaming hara seem able to visit Megalithica regularly, yet there is no report of ships arriving from Almagabra. All of these facts lead back seductively to the idea that Thiede possesses methods of transport of an unusual, if not magical nature.

Organization

It is incontrovertible that Thiede is the dominating and driving force behind the Gelaming, but he must have a select group of hara around him to assist him with his plans. Common rumour suggests he has created an elite group to govern with him, who he incepted with his own blood. Tribes such as the Varrs believe that these individuals are the leaders of a potential invasion force.

As yet, Thiede appears to be stalling over when to show his hand. His power lies in rumour, fear and superstition: an accomplishment in itself. But more than one har has pondered whether his delay is because he is searching for something in Megalithica: a place of power, or an individual. While conflict between the various tribes grows stronger, we can only wait to discover Thiede's true plan.

Traits

Gelaming are intelligent and determined, and believe that they are the leading force amongst Wraeththu. This has imparted a rather arrogant air, which has resulted in them being disliked and resented by certain other tribes, even those the Gelaming might class as allies. If even half of the rumours about them are true, the Gelaming have managed to combine Wraeththu abilities with human technology to great effect.

"The City of Immanion still grows. Hara turn up every day, some from countries that I swear had been wiped out before the rise of Wraeththu. The city is supposed to be a secret or a myth to most hara, but at times I think that the Unneah must be selling maps or something!"

- Cassiel Agrimony, Gelaming Scribe

"I don't remember being human; it is probably for the best. I have seen life as a Varr and now life as a Gelaming; I doubt a human could have coped with either."

- Zillah Shemercy, Ex Varr General (Now Gelaming)

It is said that some of their achievements go far beyond what any other tribe has accomplished. The average Gelaming har might be an individual of great power or an extremely skilled performer. Until more is known about these mysterious hara, we can only conjecture.

Bonuses: Intelligence [INT] +2 and Stamina [STA] +1

Crafts

While most of this information has to be based upon assumption, it seems beyond doubt that the Gelaming possess a wide range of skills and crafts. After all, every Gelaming har was incepted or recruited because of their superior abilities. Therefore, they must be adept in leadership, communication, engineering and scientific arts. The Gelaming's control and knowledge of magic is rivalled only by the Kakkahaar. Those who view the Gelaming in a positive light state that the tribe's aim is to unite the different factions of Wraeththu, to move beyond humanity and avoid making the mistakes that humans made.

Bonuses: Leadership +1, Grace +1 and Wraeththu lore +1

"Thiede told me to watch out for the Kakkahaar. No details were given, but when I eventually met one I saw why he said that!"

- Cassiel Agrimony, Gelaming Scribe

The Opposition

There is no evidence to suggest that Gelaming view any other tribes as outright enemies. Perhaps it is simply that some tribes, such as the Varrs and the Uigenna, are in the Gelaming's way, impediments to their plans. Some hara believe that Thiede wishes to disempower the brutal tribes, so that more enlightened tribes are given the peace and space to grow. However, the majority of Megalithican hara are either unaware of these plans, or give them no credit, and view the Gelaming only as an unwelcome invasion force. In Almagabra, the Gelaming appear to live peacefully with their nearest neighbours and there is no instance of the superstitious fear that surrounds the tribe in Megalithica.

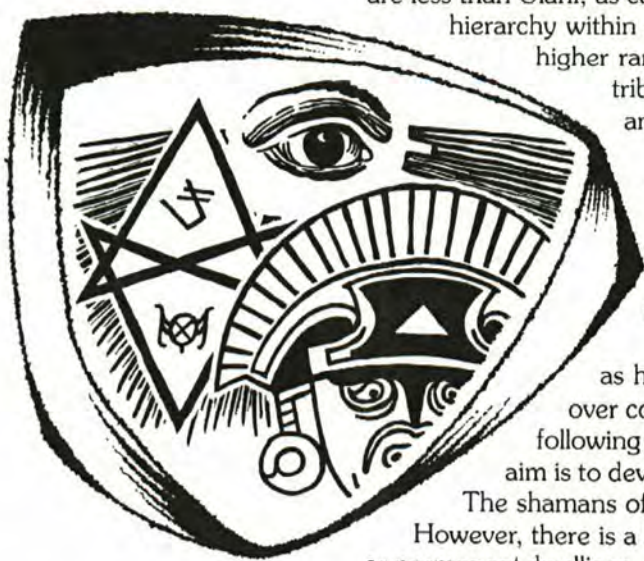
KAKKAHAAR

The Kakkahaar are a nomadic tribe, principally located in the southern deserts of Megalithica. They were founded by a har named Velisarius, who derived from Uigenna stock.

Kakkahaar move like phantoms through their chosen terrain, eradicating all traces of their presence behind them. You could search the desert for months and never find any sign of them; you will only find them if they want to be found. Kakkahaar possess a deft knack for sniffing out potential customers for business, but unless you have something useful to offer them, they won't make their presence known.

Hara of the tribe live in large ornate tents, the interiors of which are sumptuous and highly decorated. Most high-ranking Kakkahaar possess treasuries of trinkets and curios collected from all over Megalithica and beyond. Even though the Kakkahaar are great hoarders, they can still pack up and move their entire entourage in very little time. They have become adept at striking camp in record time.





The Kakkahaar are steeped in mysticism, and there are very few among them who are less than Ulani, as caste progression is very important to them. There is a definite hierarchy within each phyle and all hara of low caste act as staff to those of higher rank. You will often find Aralids from some of the more exotic tribes in a Kakkahaar phyle, who will never receive caste training and merely act as servants.

Nowadays, very few humans are incepted into the tribe, as the Kakkahaar are extremely selective about who joins them. Inception will only take place if they consider the human concerned can bring something useful to the tribe. They will accept individuals who have a propensity for magic, but in the early days Inception was more freely given.

Their founder, Velisarius, retired from his position as soon as his tribe had grown to a suitable size. At this time he handed over control to a hara named Lianvis, who is now archon. Spiritually, following Velisarius' original vision for the tribe, the Kakkahaars' main aim is to develop as hara, and teach all they can about what it is to be har.

The shamans of the tribe pay great attention to studying Wraeththu abilities. However, there is a less spiritual side to their nature. Even though they lack cities or permanent dwellings, they are probably one of the richest tribes in Megalithica. This is because they sell their services as magicians and seers for a high price, to both human and hara alike. The typical Kakkahaar is a shrewd business har.

Despite this, the practice of magic and spirituality is an important part of Kakkahaar culture. Many hara devote most of their time to studying different magical systems, and are learned in all aspects of its history. They are perhaps one of the few tribes to value human achievements, and many Kakkahaar can quote extensively from esoteric works written by humans in the past. They also study ancient human civilizations, believing that once humanity was greater than it is now, and that important lessons can be learned from the past, to prevent Wraeththu making the same mistakes, with the inevitable fall. They seek to gain insights into the meaning of existence.

However, while many hara of moderate tribes respect their knowledge, they also regard the Kakkahaar either as amoral or downright evil. This is because they are neither sentimental nor compassionate to outsiders, and have no concept in their belief system of karmic debt. They do not regard the expedient killing of hara or humans as wrong, and do not baulk from dark magical practices if they feel a situation merits it.

The tribe is naturally a hard and adaptable group, as life in the open desert is often harsh. The high temperatures of the day plummet to freezing nights and the landscape is often scoured by biting sand storms.

All other tribes have great respect for the Kakkahaar, even though many of them fear the desert dwellers. Kakkahaar fighting skills are renowned, as they are expert in many forms of martial arts. They have formed an uneasy alliance with the Varrs against the Gelaming, but most hara believe that the Kakkahaar will only ever be on their own side. The sole object to command their loyalty is their own development.

Due to their location, the Kakkahaar have to trade for the commodities and supplies they need to survive. They are sought after to scry into the future and also to perform magical workings for others to achieve a specific result. The Kakkahaar ask no questions about this. If you can pay them, or barter with them to mutual satisfaction, they will do as you ask, no matter how dark or suspect the request. However, some hara have said that the price the Kakkahaar demand for their services might sometimes be rather more than you're willing to pay – and this warning does not refer to money.

Higher ranking Kakkahaar are naturally hedonistic and decorate their tents with sumptuous furnishings: silk and satin cushions, luxurious drapes, and all manner of ornaments. Some even own large pieces of furniture, which is probably why they need such a large number of servants, seeing as these appointments have to be transported around the desert. The Kakkahaar enjoy fine wines, tobacco, and narcotics such as peyote and marijuana, and expect to consume rich and expensive foodstuffs. While the highest ranking hara affect a pose of being dilettantes and aesthetes, it would be a

"Listen... you can here the voices now! They are lost souls jealous of our warmth. Do not wander too far tonight."

- Kakkahaar Seer

"I will serve, so that I might learn. Hopefully one day I will prove my worth."

-Ara Kakkahaar Slave

mistake to take them for fools. Behind every languid gesture lies a sleeping monster it is best not to risk waking.

One of the most interesting aspects of the tribe is their relationship with the Varrs. Although little is known about how this alliance was forged, it is no secret that Kakkahaar have visited Galhea and other Varrish strongholds. Perhaps the Varrs have some sort of dependency upon the Kakkahaar, especially if they are taking advantage of the Kakkahaar's less savoury abilities. The Kakkahaar in turn, no doubt, are happy to milk the Varrs for all they can get. Whatever the minutiae of the arrangements, it's likely the Varrs need the Kakkahaar more than the Kakkahaar need them. This relationship could only be successful if the Kakkahaar desire it, although rumour suggests the relationship between the two tribes is often fraught with complications and mishaps.

Appearance

Like the Colurastes, the Kakkahaar wear their hair very long and sometimes it appears to cover their body like a shawl. Velisarius has left his imprint strongly on his hara, and all inceptees tend to mutate to a similar appearance. Generally, their skins are golden, their hair in shades of honey and tawny brown, and their eyes are often unnaturally dark. However, if the original inceptee was of particularly dark skin colouring, they transform into a quite stunning appearance: their skins are almost jet black, but shine with a strange golden sheen. Similarly, their hair is black, but threaded with gold. Such hara are highly prized among the Kakkahaar and often command positions of high rank, simply because of their exotic appearance.

As for clothing, the Kakkahaar dress in long sand-coloured robes of loose, flowing fabrics that drape their lean bodies perfectly. When travelling, they generally wear long hooded cloaks over their robes. They adopted this style of dress after interacting with the Obliviata, who affect (and make) similar attire. The Kakkahaar do not make their own clothes, so they still trade with the Obliviata to this day. Their garments enable them to keep cool in the searing desert heat, but also provide warmth in the dead cold of night. The Aralids who serve the higher ranks are expected to pay great attention to their appearance, and are generally chosen because of their beauty. They dress in diaphanous silks, or sometimes are adorned in nothing but their hair. Most Kakkahaar like to cover themselves in gold jewellery.

Background

The Kakkahaar originated, like most of the oldest tribes, in the northern cities of Megalithica. Their founder, Velisarius, was incepted very early in Wraeththu history, but had no desire to take part in the bloody wars against humankind. He regarded other tribes as uncultured and unaware of the true powers of Wraeththu, and sought to form a tribe comprised of Wraeththu's best elements. In this way, he was perhaps similar to Thiede, who formed the Gelaming, yet unlike Thiede he clearly had no desire to coerce other tribes to emulate his beliefs.

It is recorded that Velisarius thought that if Wraeththu were to reach their full potential, they should not strive to reach maturity as a race too quickly. Instead, they should learn from their mistakes, and study their own development, even if that meant investigating the darkest corners of their psyches, so that future generations would understand their beginnings. Velisarius considered education important, and thought that living from day to day like savages was pointless. However, his ideas came before their time, because the majority of northern hara had no empathy with them. His criticisms were regarded as arrogant and elitist, and led to his tribe being forced south. Once away from the brutality of the north, Velisarius set about creating the tribe that is now held in fear and awe by all other hara of Megalithica.

Organization

Velisarius now lives in a hidden retreat in the desert, attended only by a cabal of his most trusted hara. Lianvis, the appointed archon, is responsible for the day-to-day

"As the wind whistles through the desert at night, I can feel the change taking me over, a call of the wild, a call to become what we truly are; powerful, beautiful and wise."

-Young Kakkahaar on reaching Neoma

"We must never forget the past. While the humans never learned from their lessons, we were created so we could."

-Kakkahaar Hienama

*"Never trust those Obliviata.
They rarely speak and when
they do it's always in riddles."
- Iomar Grond har Kakkahaar*

administration of the tribe, which has numerous phyles. All Kakkahaar receive extensive magical training, as well tuition in several martial arts: two skills that they can use in deadly combination.

The Aralid servants of the Kakkahaar rarely progress through the magical caste system, but none of them appear to be resentful of this position, probably due to the strength of their overseers.

When traveling, a phyle moves in a close-knit group, never staying in one place for longer than necessary. In common with several other tribes, phyles meet at appointed sacred sites at certain times of year for social and religious activities. Their magical secrets are held so closely that should a har leave the tribe and divulge what he knows, he would be hunted down and killed, no matter how long it took to find him.

Traits

The Kakkahaar prize in equal measure the traits of self-awareness, business acumen and intelligence. The tribe's psychic power and defences are well developed, and magical skills generally begin to manifest very shortly after Inception. Their skill at scrying or divination is well-known and respected throughout the Wraeththu world. To this end, they use many different methods, most commonly the casting of bones and stones, card reading, and palmistry: they claim that no divinatory method is unknown to them. Spirituality has also played a big part in shaping the tribe, incorporating some exceedingly fierce deities of their own invention. While they are astute in business and commerce, they attempt to develop their magical abilities in order to further the secret knowledge of the tribe. The Kakkahaar also make excellent trackers and can be hired for this purpose.

Bonuses: Perception [PER] +1, Intelligence [INT] +1 and Willpower [WIL] +1

Crafts

Knowledge of occult lore, both past and present, is prevalent among the Kakkahaar. Most hara will happily spend endless hours poring over ancient books, as well as practicing their art. They have amassed extensive collections of books, rescued from human libraries or else stolen from individuals they have killed to acquire particularly rare volumes. The Kakkahaar are also skilled fighters, combining their mystical talents with fast and deadly physical accuracy. They are excellent survivalists, and can be hired as guides by groups wishing to make desert journeys.

Bonuses: Occult + 2 and Intuition + 1

*"If you can walk a mile in a
man's shoes, what is the
difference in walking a mile in
a har's shoes?"
- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar*

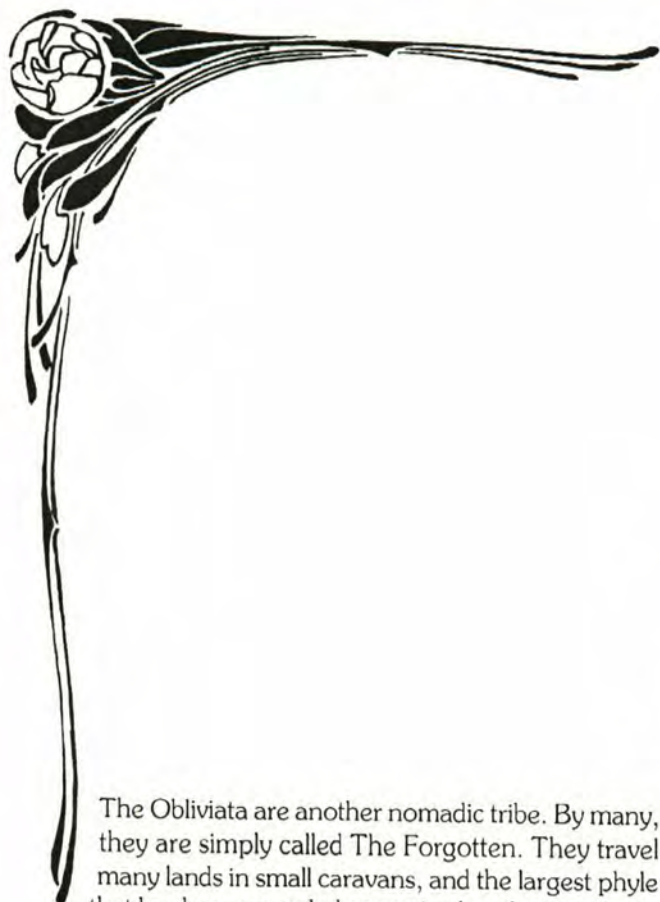
The Opposition

Even though it would appear that the larger tribes, such as the Varrs and the Uigenna, could easily crush the Kakkahaar, none of them have ever attempted to do so, perhaps accepting that it would be foolish even to try. The Kakkahaar can conjure up the most formidable magical entities and wouldn't think twice about doing so, whatever the consequences. Even the Gelaming have learned to respect the magical talents of the Kakkahaar.

The Obliviata, while maintaining a grudging trade arrangement with the tribe, have a fierce mistrust of the Kakkahaar, but would shrink from taking them on, in any form of contest. It is widely known throughout Megalithica that any har who dares to threaten a Kakkahaar always comes to a sticky end.

The Kakkahaar have no real enemies as such, but their relationships with other tribes are always shaky. Mistrust of the Kakkahaar runs deep and rightly so.

OBLIVIATA



The Obliviata are another nomadic tribe. By many, they are simply called The Forgotten. They travel many lands in small caravans, and the largest phyle that has been recorded comprised twelve members. They keep their numbers small, as this aids their ability to move quickly from place to place. Occasionally, two caravans will meet and exchange members to even out their numbers. Groups of Obliviata do not refer to themselves as phyles as they have no hierarchical structure and no overall leader. It is rare for any group to meet on the open road, unless it's when they travel back to their homeland, which they do every 52nd full moon. For many, the journey home can take months, but as they are expert travellers they will always arrive on time. During conclaves, they will relax, share tales, and trade amongst themselves. When caravans meet, they also regularly perform Grissecon; its purpose depending upon the needs of the tribe. Mostly it is a celebration of Allavé, the tribe's own interpretation of the Aghama.

Many of the tales told by the Obliviata appear to be unbelievable, but almost all of them contain coded yet solid information about areas the storyteller has travelled: towns to avoid, good hunting grounds and many places to find technology to trade. Many Obliviata fail to understand the importance of these coded tales and stories immediately after Inception. However, with time, they come to see they are more valuable than water or food, as the information seeded within them can mean the difference between life and death.

The Obliviata don't practice the magical arts like other hara. They feel no need to, as they believe that Allavé guides them and will give them whatever they need, as long as they stay true to his ideals. Legends exist of Obliviata who have denied Allavé, and who have subsequently struggled to survive, in many cases perishing in their camps. In other cases, they have



become so detached that they have ceased traveling altogether. They remain in one area, fearing to leave it, because Allavé's guidance is no longer with them. The Obliviata believe Allavé helps them to locate food and places to camp. Magic is his province alone, which is why the majority tend not to delve into the magical arts.



"If I were to tell you all of our secrets now, you would be overwhelmed by desire and pride, and these are not traits particular to the Obliviata."

- Omar of the Dry Sea, Obliviata

This said, some Obliviata have undertaken magical training, but under the guidance of Allavé, whom they believe has chosen them for the task. They claim that they now travel the world with his spirit as their companion. Such hara are known as Alluka. They bestow gifts to hara they meet, and consider it their life's purpose to help others. Many Obliviata do not follow a caste system, and those who do are rare and very secretive with their knowledge. Hara who have met Alluka might not always be aware they have done so, because of their enigmatic nature.

Although the Obliviata are commonly regarded as scavengers and outcasts, because of their way of life, their tribal sense of identity is, in fact, strong. They will always offer a helping hand to those who need it. They are strongly identified with the human Gypsies, who once travelled the lands of Almagabra, and this has given them a bad reputation. Even though they lack much in common with the old ways, having transcended beyond any ideals followed by their human predecessors, other tribes appear unable to forget the past and will not accept the Obliviata for the free hara they are, instead regarding them simply as thieves and vagabonds. This reputation is undeserved, as the Obliviata have a strong code of honour and would never steal from others, whether human or har. Perhaps the true explanation for their being ostracized is the fact that most hara cannot empathize with the often ascetic Obliviata way. They appear to shun or neglect some of their abilities, and for this they are viewed as mad or misguided.

Obliviata use the act of aruna differently to other tribes. It is performed as a friendly greeting between caravans meeting on the road, in recognition of the gift Allavé has given to them. They will also partake of this activity with any sociable hara they meet from other tribes. Strangely, members of a caravan rarely practice aruna between themselves, other than at tribe conclaves. This might be because they try to avoid the emotional ties of possessions and partnerships. Or possibly it's due to their unending dedication to, and respect of, Allavé. They believe that the blood he gave to his tribe was sealed with the act of aruna, and that this seal, like their word, is sacred and not to be used lightly. Either way you look at it, they have the highest respect for aruna, and the boundaries they have put upon it. This makes it a much more powerful and sacred act for them, than it is for most other tribes.

"Not all of us are made the same. Some of us do not come through the Inception process with everything as it should be. We do not judge these poor hara, we help them the best we can."

- Oded Hasarnas, Obliviata

In much the same manner as earlier human travellers, Obliviata leave marks in code wherever they go, so those who might visit a location later know what to expect there. They use this secret language to indicate to other tribe member's good places to stay, sites of interest in the area, and where goods and resources may be acquired. As they are a loosely knit tribe, it makes them happy to see a mark where others have wandered before them. To an Obliviata, it's like receiving a letter or postcard from an old friend or a long lost relative. Most hara will add to the marks they find, so that others who have passed can find out who has visited and what might have changed in the area. They have many ways to hide this information from outsiders: from the way a tree or plant has been pruned, to the layout of rocks and detritus. This keeps their findings secret from other hara, who might wish them harm. The Obliviata believe their hidden language was transferred to their minds by the blood of Allavé, and is passed on to those who drink from the blood that runs in their veins.

The tribe believes that as long as they keep their swords by their side, have food in their bellies and keep faith in Allavé, they need nothing more in life and will be safe from harm.

Appearance

The curved swords, which they wear at their sides, lend the Obliviata an imposing appearance. The scimitar serves many purposes, often as a weapon of defence when their caravans are attacked, but mostly as a tool for survival. The Obliviata's attire is suited to the nomadic lifestyle, comprised of many layers of light, free-flowing fabrics, which keep them warm when it's cold, but can easily be removed and stored in a small space. When traveling, they usually conceal themselves in hooded cloaks. Their clothes are also helpful in combat, as the baggy material can cause an opponent to misjudge their blows. All Obliviata wear head-dresses that consist of many winds of cloth: these can be used to conceal certain items, or even as ropes should the need arise. The head-dress is essential in their homelands, where the heat of the day can drive a har to insanity.

They are typically dark-skinned, of refined features, and carry themselves with noble grace. Quite often, they adopt tribal tattoos, which are rarely seen by outsiders.

Background

There is little doubt that the Obliviata originally derived from an off-shoot of a Near Eastern tribe. Allavé was a har of flesh and blood rather than an invented deity. In some ways, the culture of the Obliviata echoes that of earlier human occupants of the area. Perhaps, in the madness of the early days of Wraeththu, Allavé saw the value of retaining these early beliefs and began his own tribe accordingly. He was certainly a martyr for his cause, because he died only five years after inaugurating the Obliviata, while defending his caravan from a band of local humans, who were unaware that, had he lived, he would have been one of their champions in the world to come – a world where very few hara feel impelled to support them. Allavé's death only led to his hara vowing to maintain his ideals and he has, in death, been virtually deified.

Obliviata fight with the passion and strength of Allavé. They are typically honourable and respectful of others, although some of them have become mercenaries for bigger tribes, fighting humankind in the name of their founder. In Olathe, before the advent of Allavé, there was a host of small groups rather than established tribes, who all had very strong beliefs and an intolerance of others. Their aggression earned them many enemies, and not just in their homeland. However, this situation began to change once Allavé passed on his blood and the Obliviata began to spread, eventually absorbing many of the existing groups. In due course, the petty bickering and hostilities ceased and an air of acceptance settled over the tribe. They decided that they would follow in their founder's footsteps and declared that worldly possessions and permanent homes were unessential. All that was important was keeping to their ideals. As long as they had the tools they needed to survive, they eschewed anything else that would weigh them down while traveling – either spiritually or physically. Possessions, to an Obliviata, merely complicate life.

Many hara of the tribe scavenge and hunt for goods, which they trade for supplies and boons. They give much of what they find to any unfortunates found by the roadside. The ideal is to take only what is needed for survival or trade. Too many possessions will simply slow a caravan down and bind their souls.

Organization

The Obliviata have scattered far across many lands, and now even have a strong presence in Megalithica. There is little communication between caravans other than through the secret messages they leave. Occasionally, they meet other caravans on their travels and exchange goods and stories. The only time they congregate *en masse* is every 52nd full moon, when they return to their homelands and partake in Grissecon and the sharing of Allavé's Seal. During these gatherings, they exchange goods found during their travels and spend many nights telling lengthy stories about their victories and losses.

"Before our kind came into being, there was a great war in Olathe. The Megalithican government took it upon themselves to free our ancestors. Though this war took a heavy toll on our people, their negligence of their own allowed the Wraeththu to get a strong foothold in their lands. In a way they freed us by their own failure, and as I always say the universe works in mysterious ways."

- Omar of the Dry Sea, Obliviata

"Beware when travelling to strange lands, our ways and beliefs are not always welcome."

- Oded Hasamas, Obliviata

After twenty-eight days, when the moon is once again full, they return to their nomadic life.

Traits

The Obliviata are most proud of their ability to find goods and technology abandoned by humans. Many of these items were hidden by governments, in places where hara of other tribes fear to go. The Obliviata possess the ability to find many things that others cannot, or choose not, to see. They are also able to survive against all odds out in the wildernesses of different lands, being adaptable and resourceful. They find it easy to pick up new languages, and can generally converse with any hara they meet, wherever they are. Although they have encountered many obstacles, due to other hara's ignorance of their culture, they have thrived and expanded without resorting to conflict over territory. Because of their reputation, they sometimes find it difficult to engage in social activities with other hara in some areas, who treat them with suspicion, unaware what a joyful time may be had around an Obliviata fire. Despite this, except for hara of weak will, Obliviata never suffer from pangs of loneliness. Secure in the presence of their guardian spirit, Allavé, they never, in fact, feel alone.

Bonuses: Perception [PER] +2 and Willpower [WIL] +1

*"We are devoted to our god,
we understand the meaning.
We are not zealots or
fanatics who enforce our
word on others. Come to us
and ask; only then will we
tell."*

- Omar of the Dry Sea, Obliviata

Crafts

Obliviata caravans can travel great distances with ease, and it takes many talents to maintain life upon the road. One of their greatest abilities is that of breeding, training and working with animals. Horses, dogs and many other beasts trained by the Obliviata are highly regarded by other tribes, no matter what they might think of the hara who bred them. Each caravan possesses several riding animals and a handful of pack animals, which are used not only for transportation but also, in times of need, as a food source. Many hara have asked them why they continue to use animals for transport when they are in the few areas where other methods are still available. The Obliviata always reply that horses don't need repairs and what fuel they need can be collected or found on the road.

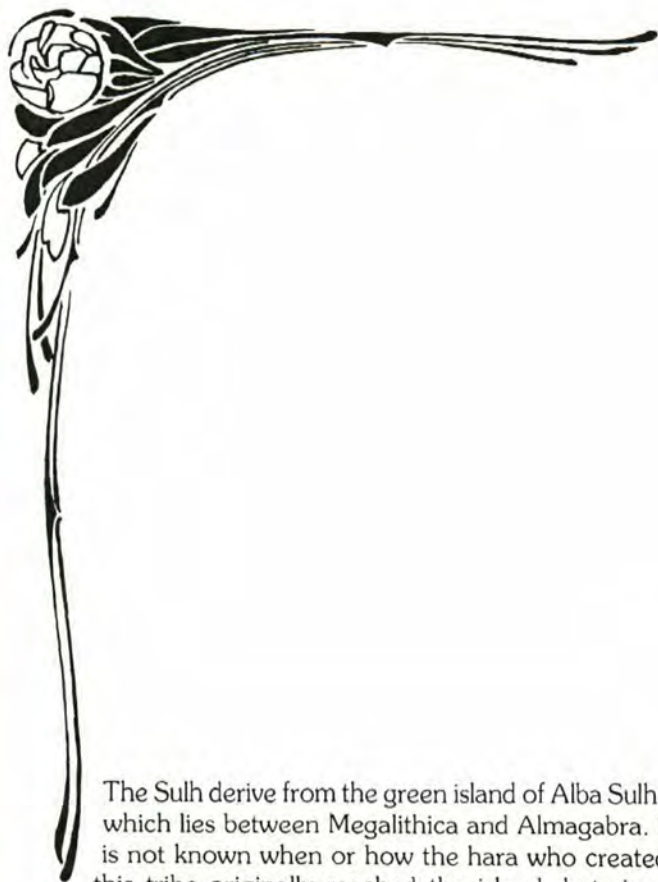
Bonuses: Animal Ken (General) + 3 and Linguistics (Obliviata) +10

The Opposition

There are many who shun and disapprove of the ways of the Obliviata. Even though they are a quiet tribe and keep to themselves, they still get moved on. The tribe who holds them in the most contempt is the Kakkahaar, which is surprising considering the trade alliance that exists between them. The hedonistic Kakkahaar despise the ascetic ways of the Obliviata. Other than when trading, the Obliviata try to avoid Kakkahaar settlements, as their caravans are small in comparison to Kakkahaar phyles, and they cannot defend themselves against Kakkahaar magic.

The Obliviata themselves regard no particular tribe as their enemy, although they will fight vigorously to defend themselves. They have no hierarchy or clan structure to speak of, yet they continue to thrive. It might be that other tribes fear this freedom and also the Obliviata's unshakeable faith in Allavé. Or maybe it is Allavé himself they fear.

SULH



The Sulh derive from the green island of Alba Sulh, which lies between Megalithica and Almagabra. It is not known when or how the hara who created this tribe originally reached the island, but since inauguration, certain Sulh hara clearly decided to trace their roots. There are now several nomadic Sulh colonies in Megalithica.

Shrouded in mystery, Alba Sulh is actually a group of islands. The largest is Alba and the second largest, which is less densely populated is Keltoi, which lies to the west of the main island, across a stretch of water known as the sea of the Monaig. There are many small communities in Alba Sulh, who generally maintain contact with one another only via the ethers, using telepathy. The entire region is coated in a layer of magical energy. Many claim to have seen strange and mythical creatures roaming the countryside there, and the Freyhella tell stories of sea monsters that prevent outsiders from getting too close to the shore.

The Sulh have strong magical powers and much of their caste system is based on the development of these talents. It seems that most inceptees are taught how to use their abilities very soon after Inception. Perhaps they need this early, intensive training, because it's said that the magical energy of Alba Sulh acts like a fog on reality, where the senses cannot be trusted.

Sulh prefer to incept humans who already possess certain psychic capabilities, or else individuals who share similar principles and beliefs to their own. To outsiders, the Sulh often appear overly superstitious and deliberately mysterious, but most of the tribe follow an ancient pagan religion, which they have combined with new harish principles to create their own system of beliefs. Hara of the Sulh tribe are very close to the land and in tune with the turning of





the seasons. They celebrate the solstices and the equinoxes, and understand the movement of the stars, moon and sun. Some Sulh are impressive prophets, which has given rise to the rumour that the Sulh already know the future of Wraeththu. They are also credited with being the only hara to know the truth about Wraeththu's creation and history. They have extensive knowledge of herbs and crystals, and use them effectively for healing and other magical operations. Given what is known of them, it's likely that the most adept of Sulh can see into other realms and even travel them to communicate with higher beings.

Hara of the Sulh are typically reserved and gracious in appearance, favouring earthy colours in their attire. They are a peaceful tribe and do not seek conflict with either humans or other tribes. On the whole, they are hospitable to strangers, but don't tend to share their magical secrets or information about the inner workings of their tribe with others. However, they are usually happy to discuss nearly any other subject. They display none of the hedonistic excesses of certain other tribes, but enjoy a good party none the less, especially around the time of the winter festival.

The few Sulh who call Megalithica their home are nomadic, fierce and strong, but don't have access to the same resources enjoyed by the relatively rich hara of their homeland. Most of the Megalithican Sulh live in the far north of the country, but hope to escape to the apparent peace of the south, away from the burnt out cities and Ugenna and Kheops raiders.

It is not known whether Megalithican Sulh are in regular contact with the tribes from Almagabra, but it is unlikely that they have avoided the attention of the Gelaming.

*"Sure, he's my chesnari now.
Hey roon-starved, c'mere!"*

- Netspinner har Sulh

Appearance

While some hara consider the Sulh too feminine, these traits are tempered by underlying toughness. Most wear their hair long and loose, and only tie it back when traveling or when there is physical work to do. The Sulh believe their hair to be a symbol of their power, and feel at their most effective, in a magical sense, when it is flowing free. Most Sulh wear exquisite clothes made from fine materials, in many shades of green, brown, dark orange, black and grey. However, some phyles' personal style embraces more vibrant colours, but this usually depends upon the season. Most Sulh clothing is surprisingly practical and highly adaptable, as Alba Sulh weather is clement at best. Those who have settled in Megalithica have adapted their clothes to cope with local conditions.

Though they are rarely seen, there is a warrior caste to all Sulh phyles. Those who have been glimpsed are said to have blue woad tattoos covering their bodies. It is believed the designs are magical in origin, but no study has yet been accomplished in this regard.

*"I hated that excrement. He
mocked me, mocked me,
treated me like I was nothing.
Then I became Wraeththu. I
literally fried that thing."*

Background

Because of their secrecy, little is also known about Sulh history. They already have some very colourful legends associated with them, which must surely be apocryphal in nature. The most famous of these stories concerns a young har with red hair who came to the islands and showed the people the way through the disasters and plagues that threatened to destroy them. Because of the successes they enjoyed through his teaching, the people overthrew their government and made the red-haired har their king. However, the conflict was not over. The har had a remaining sister, a woman not quite human of great power, who came to overthrow him and take the seat of power as hers. A battle broke out in the swamps where the city of Avalona now lies. It was a battle of magic, and it created rifts in the fabric of reality all over the land. These rifts changed things into other things. Many Sulh suffered from delusions, and found they

could no longer trust their own eyes. Danger lurked around every corner. At the end of the battle, the red-haired har and his sister called a truce and in doing so merged and became one. With their combined power, they taught the Sulh how to see through the effects of the magical distortions. Consequently, many of them were able to tap the magical power of the rifts, thus lessening their effects on the surrounding areas.

Though many locations in Alba Sulh still have the blur of magical taint clouding the vision of the untrained eye, the majority of the land is now safe to travel and only a few places have any major problems with the overspill of magical energy.

Organization

If you ask any Sulh questions about his homeland, he will tell you very little, while appearing to be open and accommodating. You can be sure that any information you receive from him will fit comfortably with whatever you believed beforehand. Sulh almost always tell the truth, even if you don't want to hear it, but only the truth they want you to hear. Naturally, this throws any information we have about them into doubt. However, travellers have reported their findings, and this is all we have to go on.

The Sulh occupy several large settlements in their homelands. Avalona is the cultural and magical capital. This city is steeped in myth and legend, and as for its origins even the Sulh are unsure of how, why and when it was built. There are even rumours that it simply appeared through the mist one autumn morning, fully built, as if it had fallen through from some other realm.

Their second city, called Yavik, is the political headquarters of the Sulh, and lies many miles to the north of Avalona. Yavik is well defended and any outsider who tries to enter it uninvited, or without making the proper overtures of introduction, will be killed on sight. Occasionally, the Sulh do host meetings of tribes to discuss Wraeththu affairs, but this is rare. No other hard facts are known about the Sulh's political and demographical power.

It is assumed they must have an archon, but if so, no information is known about him. Naturally, myths have arisen concerning who actually controls the tribe, but no har has actually met a Sulh leader. Perhaps, more accurately, even if they have, they don't remember the meeting or perceive it as an entirely different experience.

Traits

The Sulh can sense changes in the weather before they occur, and can also perceive the approach of strangers from afar, with astonishing detail. While not all Sulh possess high levels of telepathic ability, all of them are adept at reading hara, simply through a highly developed sense of awareness and observation. A Sulh will tell you that you can learn much from the way hara stand, speak, move or behave. Those who are very skilled psychics often have the gift of accurate prognostication, whether as feelings for some forthcoming event, prophetic dreams or full blown visions of the future.

All Sulh are well educated and enjoy learning new things. They work their way up the caste system easily, but never stretch themselves too far. It is best to be honest and straight when dealing with the Sulh, because they can see right into your heart. Their ability to pry into other hara's secrets, no matter how closely guarded they might be, makes them formidable opponents in the diplomatic stakes.

Bonuses: Perception [PER] +2 and Intelligence [INT] +1

Crafts

Sulh are skilled with plants and herbs and are much attuned to nature and its rhythms. They are peaceful hara, who avoid physical conflict unless absolutely necessary, but even so are surprisingly good fighters. Their serene natures and diplomatic way of looking at the world means they are not prone to losing control or being governed by emotions. They are reluctant to share or sell their talents and only tend to trade with those they deem worthy of their help.

"I won't abide a Sulh who sulks!"

- Unknown, Unneah

"Whatever you do, don't anger the cat. It's terrible, bad luck."

- Forsythe, Sulh

"Twenty years ago people complained they had things bad, what would they think now. No electricity, no mod con and most definitely no football."

- Gardensa har Sulh

Many goods and produce are grown in and traded from Alba Sulh, especially fruit, vegetables, mead and cider. The Sulh also do a good trade in clothes and fabrics. Their ability to always see the truth in any situation or conversation, and to penetrate fictions and magical barriers, makes their advisory services desirable to many tribe leaders.

Bonuses: Intuition + 2 and Theology +1

"It was on a priest's body I ate my daily sustenance. The trappings of the old religions cast out, people running and screaming, it could have been a scene from any old sci-fi book. These were the events of seven years ago. It's strange what memories an old building can hold."

-Maleferus har Sulh

The Opposition

The Sulh have no real enemies in their homeland, as they are fairly isolated. On Megalithican soil, they appear to have stable relationships with most of the tribes, even the Varrs. They have had the odd run in with the Uigenna and the Kheops in the north of the country, and the Kakkahaar and Colurastes view them with some mistrust, but also with curiosity, due to their shared magical nature.

A tribe that can possibly be perceived as a threat to the Sulh are the Freyhella, whose settlements lie in the lands north east of Alba Sulh. Conflict between the two tribes arose mainly because of the Freyhella's desire for resources and new lands, and the fact that the magical ambience of the islands is attractive to them; the Freyhella also being a highly mystical tribe. There are reports of small Freyhellan settlements on the north east coast of Alba, but even if this is the case, the Sulh have adequate protection in place to keep the Freyhella at bay.

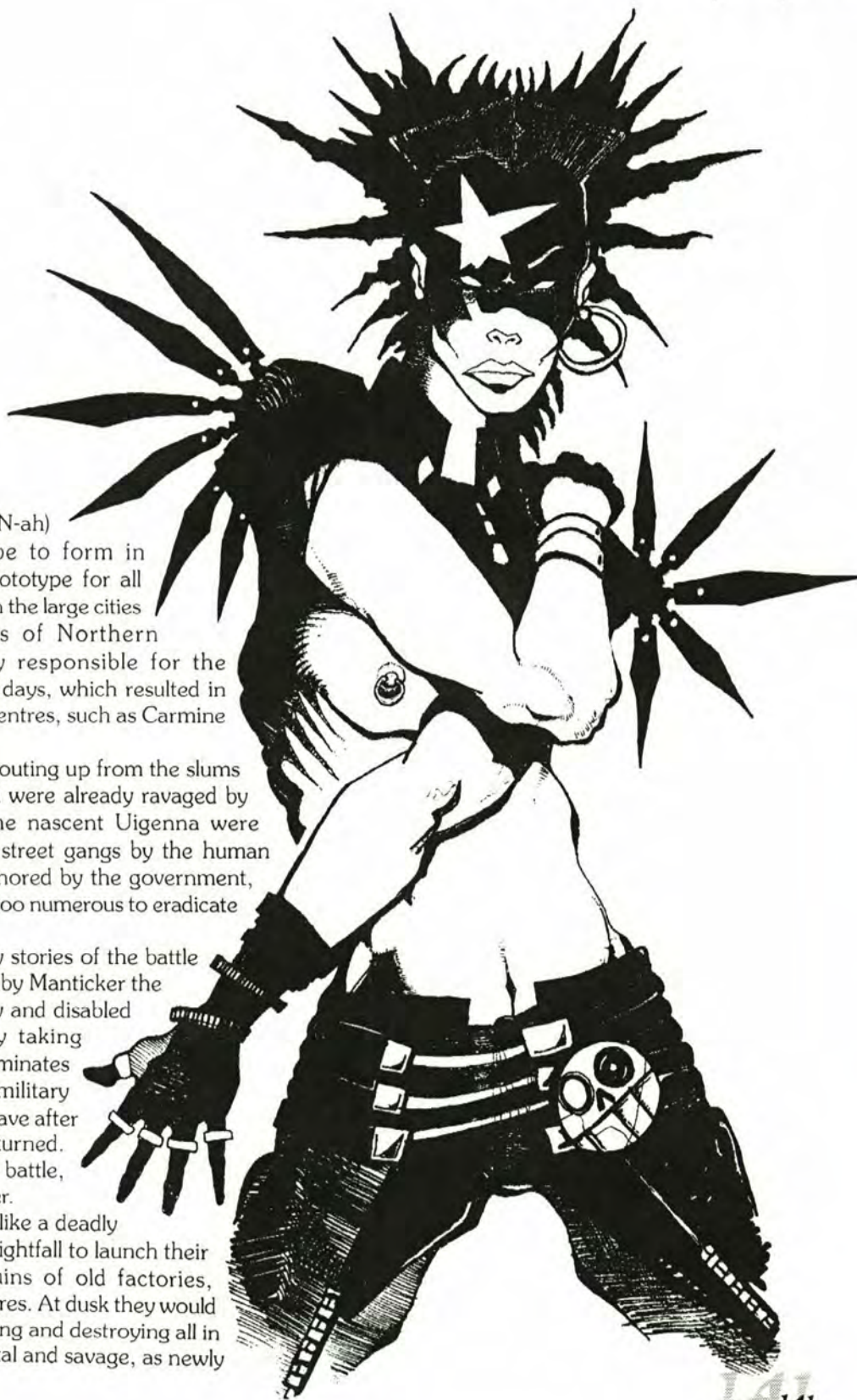
UIGENNA

The Uigenna (EW-ee-GENN-ah) were the first known tribe to form in Megalithica, and are the prototype for all other tribes. They originated in the large cities and densely populated areas of Northern Megalithica, and were mainly responsible for the devastation wrought in the early days, which resulted in the destruction of major human centres, such as Carmine City and Duwamish.

The tribe spread quickly, sprouting up from the slums and ghettos of the cities, which were already ravaged by poverty, crime and disease. The nascent Uigenna were regarded as nothing more than street gangs by the human population, and were virtually ignored by the government, until it was too late and they were too numerous to eradicate easily.

There are many bloodthirsty stories of the battle for Duwamish. The Uigenna, led by Manticker the Seventy, congregated on the city and disabled some local services, ultimately taking control of the great tower that dominates the city's skyline. The human military quarantined the city and sent in wave after wave of troops, none of which returned. Ultimately, the humans lost the battle, but that's another story altogether.

The early Wraeththu spread like a deadly plague. Uigenna would wait for nightfall to launch their attacks, taking cover in the ruins of old factories, abandoned homes and derelict stores. At dusk they would pour from their hiding places, killing and destroying all in their path. The slaughter was brutal and savage, as newly



incepted hara transformed into feral killing machines, with little thought for their own safety and no feeling whatsoever for the lives they destroyed.

In the cities that they began to populate, they would use their psychic abilities to lure human boys to them, offering promises of freedom, dark secrets and adventure. During the Uigenna's night-time raids, they would habitually collect up any young human males they came across for later Inception.

During the early days, the Inception ritual was bloody and vicious, and a high percentage of the inceptees died during the process. Many hara created during this time were incepted in filthy cellars, their arms cut with broken glass to accept a transfusion of Wraeththu blood. They would then be abandoned in a corner until the process of althaia, the changing was over, and they either survived it or perished. The new har's first aruna would be granted by whoever was interested or got there first. Today, although the ritual itself remains virtually unchanged, the operation is conducted with more care and the success rate has improved.

The concept of caste training was a later addition to Wraeththu culture, and the earliest hara were mostly ignorant of their condition, concentrating only upon the fact that their bodies were more efficient, as regards both healing and mobility. It was only once certain hara had been Wraeththu for some years, and had had time to observe and experience their differences from humanity, that somehar realized they should apply some effort to self-progression. These individuals then set themselves up as hienamas, and travelled from phyle to phyle to conduct Inceptions and initiate caste training. As to who worked out the tier system of caste levels, nohar knows for sure. Most hara believe it to be a teaching of the Aghama.

Despite the Uigenna's barbaric reputation, a high percentage among them progress to first and second level Ulani, while a few more reach much higher levels.

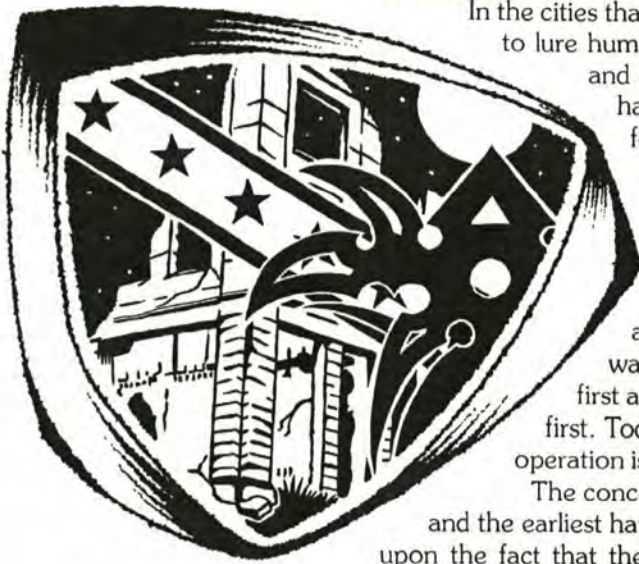
The current leader of the Uigenna is Manticker the Seventy, who acquired his name because he once killed seventy armed humans in one spectacular burst of rage. This is believed to have been what turned the tide of the Duwamish conflict. He is the essence of the hara of his tribe, scarred and toned by fighting, with a murderous look in his eye, shadowed only by his haunting femininity.

Since its creation, the Uigenna has split into many different phyles, each led by a warrior phylarch of repute. The largest of the phyles, known as Oomar, is led by a har named Wraxilan, the Lion of Oomar, who is an extremely popular figure in Uigenna lore. All hara regard him with respect, and he is commonly seen as the greatest threat to Manticker's authority. Wraxilan has an arresting appearance, with a wild, golden mane and a strong, shapely body.

The Uigenna are also famous for pioneering the development of substances that are toxic to the harish body, and these they use to devastating effect in inter-tribal conflict. Although nohar knows for certain how the Uigenna came upon this knowledge, it's widely believed it derived from experimentations with narcotic drugs in certain combinations. Hara of other tribes often makes use of the Uigenna toxicologists, who have developed a thriving business selling their poisonous wares. Uigenna poisoners are often also assassins, who will work for anyhar if the price is right.

Uigenna view humans with utmost contempt and believe they should be wiped from the face of the earth. While they are assiduous at weeding out hidden pockets of humanity, they now act with far more caution than in the past, when swathes of hara were annihilated by berserker type attacks on military installations. They regard the majority of other tribes as being of little consequence, unless strange hara stray into their territory uninvited. However, only a foolish har would ever approach a Uigenna stronghold without a good reason for being there. The Uigenna are renowned for being unpredictable, fickle and vicious; their only friends are the Varrs, and even that alliance has its shaky moments.

The Uigenna's headquarters of choice are abandoned human buildings, such as shopping malls, factories and warehouses. They would not feel at all comfortable out in



*"Hypermarket! Now I know
I'm in Heaven."*
- Unknown, Uigenna

*"I won't let this land fall into
the chaos caused by weaker
tribes. We must band
together, in fierce perfection,
or all shall perish."*
- Unknown, Ulani Uigenna

the wilderness, preferring the burned out remnants of human constructions. They regard industrial and commercial buildings as the best locations to set up a base, as they often still provide plenty of supplies (food, weapons and intoxicants) and a good defensible area. In these bases, their experimentation began with various household chemicals and drugs, fuelled by the desire for a better high.

Appearance

The Uigenna dress in whatever they can find and can be very creative about it. Most customize their clothes and adopt tribal marks, scarring and tattooing their skins with strange and beautiful patterns and body piercing. They often wear their hair in stylized Mohicans or wax their long hair into spikes. Others shave their skulls and tattoo them. All of these styles add to their ferocious appearance. Some Uigenna hara go so far as to file their teeth into points. All have sleek toned bodies from their nightly skirmishes, although some appear decidedly feminine, despite their warlike demeanour. Personal hygiene is not a great concern, as baths and fresh water are often a luxury in the slums and ghettos of the ruined cities. Despite this, many Uigenna are strikingly beautiful, in a bizarre fashion.

Background

The Uigenna are without doubt the oldest tribe, mainly because they were in the right place at the right time. The cities from which they derived were perfect breeding grounds for Wraeththu, where they could expand unseen for several years, hidden among the poverty-stricken inhabitants.

Many of the early groups of Uigenna consisted of incepted members of human street gangs, who already had close-knit communities. At first, hara tried to incept males and females alike, but soon realized that females were not susceptible to their Inception methods. It took them a while longer to realize that Inceptions should be 'fixed' by aruna, and many botched Inceptions resulted from this ignorance. The victims of these unsuccessful mutations now roam the cities, some having both physical deformities and mental problems, which has resulted in them being little more than mindless animals. Although these feral Uigenna pose no real threat to anyhar, they have a strong survival instinct and will defend themselves with force if they feel threatened.

As the tribe grew, it became more noticeable to the human population and confirmed humanity's worst ideas about Wraeththu. The Uigenna destroyed and ravaged everything in their way. Later, as they gained greater control of the inner cities, they began to acquire some degree of organization and structure, mainly to prevent themselves being wiped out by the remnants of the disillusioned and paranoid human military. As there are now very few humans left in the cities, the Uigenna have fallen to in-fighting between phyles and conflict with other tribes. It is sobering to consider that just about every tribe now existing derived from Uigenna stock, although it is easy to appreciate that not all hara incepted to this tribe would be attracted to its nihilistic and chaotic lifestyle. After Inception, and no doubt some traumatic experiences, many hara left the north to start their own tribes, seek out remaining human strongholds to conquer, or simply to escape from their insane commanders and start new lives elsewhere.

Today the tribe has spread over a large area of the world. Some phyles have even managed to get as far as Almagabra.

Organization

At first the Uigenna had little or no organization, and to this day it is still very limited. Manticker the Seventy claims leadership in the Uigenna stronghold of Duwamish, due to his reputation, but many of the other northern phyles plan openly to replace him. Manticker so far seems blind to the threat Wraxilan poses to his leadership, although his reasons for keeping the Lion of Oomar so close to him might be more complex than first appears. Not all Uigenna phyles in other cities regard Manticker as their archon, and are self-governing, sharing only the tribal name.

"Yo! Dudes get your facts straight. We're Uigenna. We don't dig that rules shit."

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna

"Beer, beer, we want more beer, we want more beer, we want more beer. Beer, beer..."

- Dag Viking, Uigenna

Although the Uigenna appear superficially to be anarchists, they do not have the organization to claim the title. Most of their attacks and conflicts are random, occurring only when they desire more territory or inceptees. Should they ever become fully organized they would be a formidable foe for any tribe, and would even worry the Varrs. Many have started 'fight clubs' in cities as a source of new recruits to the tribe. These dangerous yet exotic night clubs reveal signs of their nascent organization.

Traits

The Uigenna have no preference concerning who they choose to incept. If any choice is made at all, it is generally based upon appearance alone. All newly-incepted hara learn to fight quickly or they end up dead. Those of the tribe who are incepted from outside the highly populated areas are occasionally taken to other settlements for Inception and caste training. Uigenna who have broken away from the tribe usually have very strong survival instincts. The more intelligent members also tend to do well in life, and those who have received any level of caste progression or have strong occult powers are highly prized.

Bonuses: Stamina [STA] +1, Perception [PER] +1 and Dexterity [DEX] +1

"What! Zip, Dag and Mint are coming to Almagabra? Quick, close the bloody pub."

*- Skank Marchell, Ex Uigenna
(resides in Morass Thaine).*

Crafts

All Uigenna have good street sense and always possess expert knowledge about the territory they control. They are effective fighters, as they are fearless, but have little formal training. Once having established themselves in an area, they will quickly orientate themselves, finding all the major routes and short cuts, as well as places to hide and get supplies. Their main trade is dealing in unique poisons and toxins. Some of the more skilled poisoners are hired as assassins by other tribes.

Bonuses: Brawl +1, Streetwise +1 and Toxicology +1

The Opposition

Uigenna's main opposition and enemies are humankind. Unless suitable for Inception, any human unlucky enough to be found by the Uigenna will be killed outright. Even though Wraeththu have incredibly powerful abilities and skills compared to the dying human population, the remaining humans still have a strong sense of survival and will do all they can to preserve themselves.

Other tribes keep a distance from the Uigenna, due to their fierce nature. Even though the tribe is the cauldron of creation for Wraeththu, the Uigenna command neither respect nor liking. Most hara would like to see the tribe, and all it stands for, wiped out completely.

UNNEAH



The Unneah (oo-NAY-uh) exist in much the same territory as the Uigenna. At first glance, you cannot tell the two tribes apart, as both favour a wild and flamboyant appearance. However, Unneah living in settlements outside the cities have begun to tone down their appearance, presumably to differentiate themselves from the Uigenna, whose reputation is less than savoury.

Although the Unneah still have to fight hard to hold on to the areas they control in the cities, they do so with less wanton savagery than the Uigenna. Still, much can be compared between the two tribes and it is presumed that they branched from the same root in the early days of Wraeththu. The main difference is that the Unneah developed an aim to build a new society, rather than simply concentrate on destroying the old.

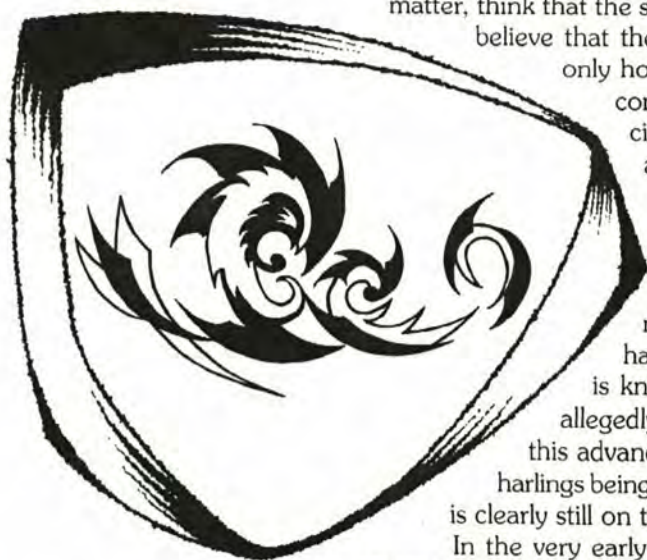
They are a comparatively small tribe in terms of numbers but have already managed to secure strong footholds in the larger cities. The tribe has pushed out into the suburbs of many cities, but their diaspora into the wildernesses of Megalithica has greatly accelerated their growth.

Unneah incept most of the suitable humans they come across and, as a rule, kill only those who seek to destroy them. While some phyles of the tribe have settled, a great many maintain a more nomadic lifestyle, traveling in fast mobile groups, which meet up occasionally to trade and keep in touch with any important news or events.

Currently, hienamas of the city phyles are encouraging their members to spread out further from the cities, start forming small colonies, learn to develop their psychic powers and discover as much as they can about Wraeththu physiology, psychology and history.

It is believed that the Unneah have secret hopes for the future, spurred on by the stories of Immanion, a Wraeththu city being built by the Gelaming, in a shrouded





location in Almagabra. Some Unneah hara, who have expressed an opinion on the matter, think that the stories of Immanion involve a lot of wishful thinking, but most believe that the Gelaming, and their leader Thiede, might be Wraeththu's only hope for a safe and prosperous future. Of the many tales that come out of Almagabra, the most persistent is that of the great city Thiede is building and the giant magical flying horses he is alleged to own there. Some hara of other tribes believe the Unneah have fabricated a lot of these tales themselves.

Among the Unneah, caste progression is sporadic. Those still fighting in the cities receive very little training, but those who have escaped into the landscape are learning new skills and abilities quickly, in order to survive. The tribe has conducted much experimentation with aruna and magic. It is known that Unneah hara conduct Grissecon at their festivals, allegedly having learned the procedure from the Gelaming. Despite this advancement in spiritual aruna, no news has been reported of any harlings being created, and this hope for the tribe's self-perpetuated existence is clearly still on the distant horizon.

In the very early days, trade and diplomacy between the Unneah and other tribes was very limited, perhaps because of the Unneah's tenuous connection to the Uigenna, which provoked suspicion. To this day, most of their knowledge and skills are kept from strangers, although they have now developed a strong sense of commerce. They barter goods between themselves and with other tribes, buying and selling artefacts and commodities, including livestock, as well as the more precious goods of fuel and mechanical equipment, left over from human occupation. Within tribal groups, labour is provided by members, and there is little interaction with other tribes apart from trade. Socially, the Unneah keep mostly to themselves. Through necessity, the rural members of the tribe have become skilled farmers and have used their combined knowledge to grow crops in the harshest of conditions.

Other phyles of the tribe have established themselves as river traders, and have founded settlements in the mountains around the Serpent River. Their boats are quite eccentric in appearance, more like baroque floating houses with turrets and pennants than typical vessels. The boats are decorated and equipped with scavenged human artefacts and utensils, often restructured in both a quaint and highly creative manner.

All Unneah, whatever their location, are adept at scavenging and can find items of use and interest with an almost supernatural accuracy. In fact, it's most likely they use visionary questing techniques to sniff out fertile scavenging sites.

Most phyles celebrate their major religious festival in private, retreating to forest and mountain locations. Often, two or more phyles will get together at these occasions, when Grissecon takes place to ensure good luck and safety for the coming winter. Their beliefs are predominantly shamanic in nature, as the majority of Unneah hara are close to the landscape in spirit. According to hara who have accidentally witnessed part of a festival, Unneah rituals involve much dancing and feasting. The shamans of the phyles are renowned for their efficacious curses and hexes, and hara of other tribes often buy their services at the fairs, for the hexes to be worked during the festival.

Though founded in the Midwest of Megalithica, the Unneah have begun to spread east, taking care to skirt the borders of Kakkahaar territory. It is likely they've made this move in order to get closer to Almagabra and forge greater links with the Gelaming. Some Unneah have approached the area around Carmine City, where great resources remain, but like all other tribes, they are extremely reluctant to enter the city. Carmine City is regarded by all Wraeththu as a dangerous and haunted place, filled with vengeful ghosts, who would drive any har foolish enough to invade their territory mad. While it must be appreciated that many hara are very superstitious, sometimes without legitimate grounds, there is certainly something about the place that feels harmful and unclean. The legends must be founded upon some basis of fact, but what that fact is has yet to be discovered. It is generally believed that the Unneah are aiming to try and breach the

"The tale I am about to tell you is truly unbelievable. Yes, I don't even believe it myself!"

- Finneaus har Unneah, Bard and Trader

"I have had quite a bit of success of late selling used microwave ovens to the Uigenna. I tend not to ask what they want them for."

- Yanosh Sale, Unneah Scavenger

borders of Carmine City, as well as take resources from many of the remaining human military bases in the east of Megalithica.

During their move east, the Unneah have come across other tribes, which are still fairly small or obscure, who have been able to give information about their interaction. These are tribes such as the Obliviata and the Freyhella, who travel many lands and great distances, and who have begun to explore Megalithica, from across the ocean in the Freyhella's case. It has been reported that the Unneah appear to feel more comfortable dealing with tribes of this type. Some Freyhellans have related that to them the Unneah were quite genial, even to the extent of sharing social occasions, when some intertribal aruna took place. Perhaps this is partly because the Freyhellans have no preconceptions about the Unneah and their connection with the Uigenna.

Stronger tribes such as the Varrs and Kakkahaar believe that the Unneah will eventually become too far stretched geographically, leading to inevitable fragmentation, when tribal identity is lost and new tribes spring up from the fragments or else become absorbed by larger tribes. This might be a hope rather than a prediction, because Varrish sources report that high ranking Varrs are beginning to be concerned about the Unneah's suspected desire to forge stronger relations with the Gelaming. It is no secret the Gelaming desire a foothold on Megalithican soil, and an alliance with the Unneah would be an effective means to do that. However, the Unneah themselves look upon these rumours with indifference. They are adept at paying lip service to stronger tribes around them, and merely describe themselves as traders, not politicians. If they want to ally with the Gelaming, it is undoubtedly because they see a good opportunity for business in the procedure.

"When the boat arrived at the harbour, it contained everything a Unneah could ever need... A way out of Carmine!"

- Yanosh Sale, Unneah Scavenger

Appearance

The urban Unneah are similar in appearance to the Uigenna, and upon first inspection there is no discernable way to tell the difference. In the early days, due to the constant conflict in the cities, neither tribe had much time to spend worrying about their appearance, and adopted a typical rebellious proto-Wraeththu style. Unneah still living in the cities often wear their hair in stiffened spikes, and their bodies bear tribal tattoos, scarification and piercings. Facial decoration often also includes painted black bands across the eyes and thick stripes over the cheeks. This is most likely a camouflage rather than a fashion statement. In the cities, it helps to appear like Uigenna and facilitates trading.

However, those in more peaceful locations have softened their appearance. In these places, the Unneah have developed their own style and have started to take pride in how they look. Most now wear their hair long and decorate it with multi-coloured braids and beads. Their clothing is often flamboyant, verging on theatrical. They are the gypsies and pirates of Wraeththukind, favouring sashes, colourful shirts, embroidery and ostentatious hats and scarves. Their jewellery also follows this pattern: hoop earrings, multiple necklaces of beads, brass bangles and anklets and flashy finger and toe rings. They are also scavengers and very creative with items they filch from old human settlements. Like their city tribemates, the nomadic, rural and riverine Unneah favour wearing black cosmetics around the eyes, though in a more subtle fashion.

"Cats, yes I deal in cats. Would you like them roasted or fried?"

- Aries Strala, Unneah

Background

The Unneah's early history is somewhat hazy, as no proper records were kept. We can presume that they were once part of the Uigenna, and there is even the possibility that the Uigenna derived from the Unneah. In the early days, the tribe had no other purpose but to fight to survive. As a relatively small tribe, they were adept at hiding themselves and quickly learned to use the rash and violent behaviour of their more proactive Uigenna neighbours as an effective shield. They would travel in small, close-knit gangs, incepting any humans they came across and only fighting if threatened.

As the tribe developed, its phylarchs started to make plans for the future. They had no desire to stay in the dying cities and, only a couple of years after forming, many

phyles moved out into the countryside, often taking a few outcast Uigenna with them. Although entirely nomadic to begin with, some groups began to settle, while others took to the water on the major rivers, thus forming the different phyles of the tribe.

Organization

It is true that the tribe has fragmented, even while the majority still refers to themselves as Unneah. Each phyle has its own leaders, who make all decisions without referring to other phylarchs. There is no overall Unneah archon, and there are no records of who their founder was.

Occasionally there will be a Council of Phylarchs when various leaders get together to address matters of mutual importance, but otherwise all phyles are self-regulating. This does not mean the Unneah are unorganized. Compared to the Uigenna, the Unneah seem positively structured. The individual phyles all seem to share common goals and views, and have a tangible tribal identity. They are against conflict and are keen to discover the limits of their harish abilities. They have a strong sense of culture and feel keenly that it should develop free of human restrictions, flaws and mistakes.

There is no doubt that the Unneah could go from strength to strength, if they allied with a stronger tribe, who could protect them from the drive for dominance of the Varrs and the Uigenna. The Unneah have learned to keep their heads down, and so far have not attracted great attention from the belligerent tribes of Megalithica. But there is no guarantee this state of affairs will continue. As the Uigenna and the Varrs become stronger, there will be less room for other tribes to expand in their own fashion, and disparate cultures may well be absorbed.

Traits

The Unneah value intelligence and inventiveness in their hara. Many are good land-readers, in that they utilize their psychic abilities to track down useful sites for scavenging, resources and conditions conducive to successful farming. Most of the older members of the tribe also have good fighting skills and are very strong-willed. Unneah have the desire to excel at anything they choose to tackle, with the ability to achieve the goals against all odds. The entire tribe seems to have a flamboyant nature and tend to strive for luxury and beauty even in the most desolate conditions.

Bonuses: Dexterity [DEX] +1, Willpower [WIL] +1 and Intelligence [INT] +1

Crafts

Members of the Unneah tribe have developed many different talents, from skills in fighting and scavenging, to those of town planning and engineering. For the tribe to develop all hara must learn a large range of skills to survive and improve their way of life: hunting, building and mechanical skills are of much importance, as are those of maintaining weapons in areas they seek to defend. Whatever they do, it is always done with an element of artistic flare. Much of their work is sought after by many tribes, both for artistic values and practical uses.

Bonuses: Mechanical Repair +1, Survival +1 and Art Expression +1

The Opposition

The Unneah have no natural enemies, and will kill only predatory or hostile humans. They are not hostile to humans themselves, but simply view them as an occasional inconvenience that needs to be dealt with in whatever manner works at the time. Occasionally, they will engage in small skirmishes over territory with the Uigenna, but as the tribe as a whole has no real desire to stay in the cities these conflicts now occur with less regularity. If the Unneah do form an alliance of any kind with the Gelaming, this will undoubtedly gain them many enemies, especially among the Varrs. Some of the more remote Unneah settlements overlap with the territory of the Kakkahaar, but so far there are no reports of any conflict between the two tribes.

"I remember the days of bad B-Movies. Now I sell what I find to the Uigenna. They seem to like these things, when they can get a generator up and running."

- Aries Straia, Unneah

"I am not here to argue who is right or wrong. I am here to slap some sense into you both for being too like each other."

- Yull Manarr, Unneah

VARR

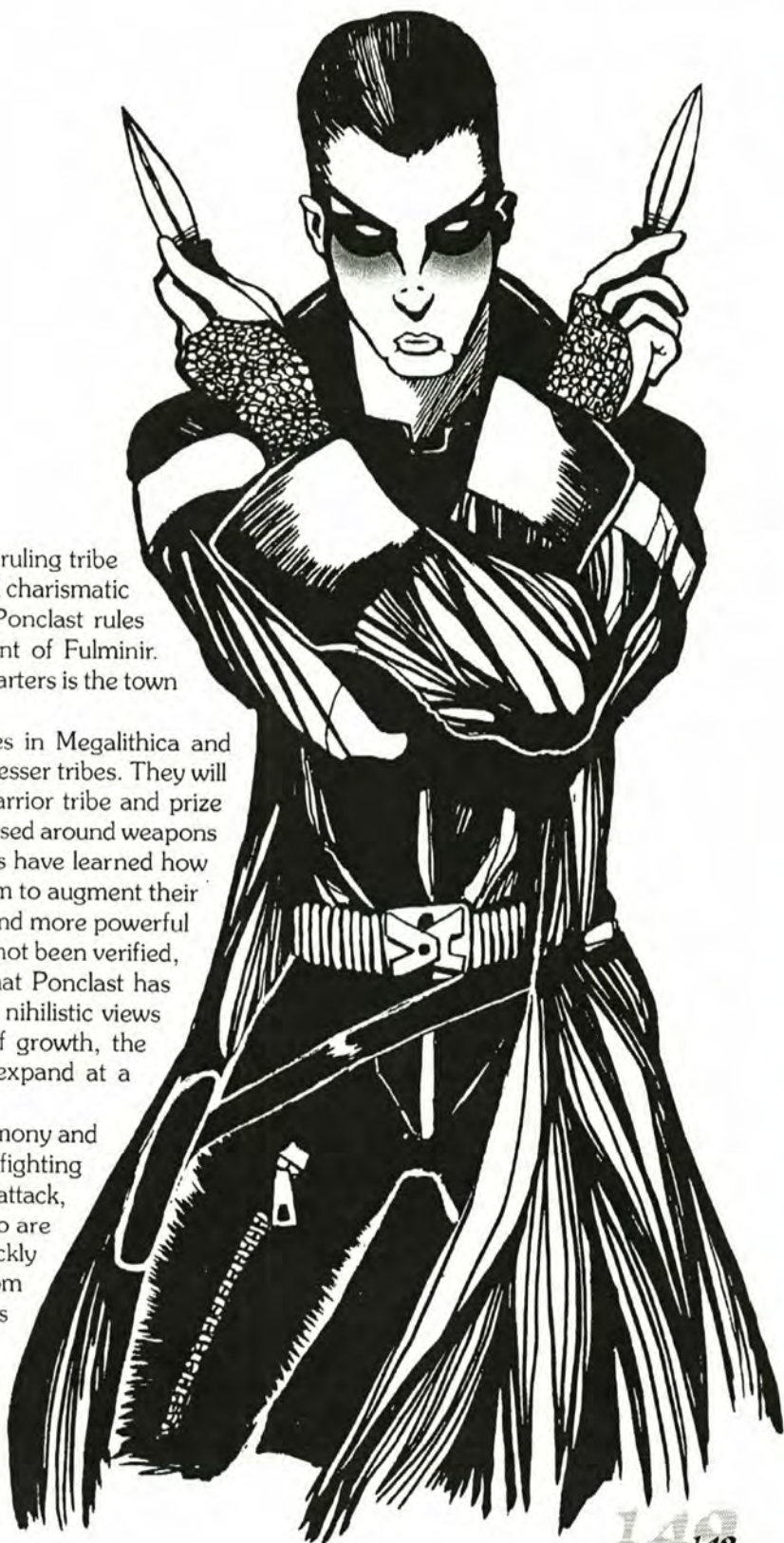


It is no secret that the Varrs aspire to be the ruling tribe of Megalithica. Their leader, Ponclast, is a tall charismatic har, with short black hair and steely eyes. Ponclast rules inflexibly from the northern citadel settlement of Fulminir. His second in command is Terzian, whose headquarters is the town of Galhea further south.

The Varrs possess one of the largest armies in Megalithica and focus their attention on subduing and controlling lesser tribes. They will defend their territory fiercely. The Varrs are a warrior tribe and prize fighting skills above all else. Their caste system is based around weapons training and fighting. It is rumoured that the Varrs have learned how to procreate and have initiated a breeding program to augment their ranks. Pure born harlings are said to be stronger and more powerful than incepted humans. So far, these reports have not been verified, and no 'harlings' have been seen. It might be that Ponclast has disseminated this rumour himself to stave off the nihilistic views of some of his ranks. Whatever their manner of growth, the Varrish population and its military continue to expand at a steady rate.

Inceptions are conducted with very little ceremony and potential hara are chosen for their strength and fighting skills. If a human defends himself well against a Varr attack, he is less likely to be killed by them than those who are defenceless. Capture and Inception occur so quickly and efficiently that most humans are still reeling from the first attack when they wake up after althaia as hara.

The Varr military machine is very similar in structure to those of the past human society. Regiments are garrisoned over all conquered territories of Megalithica. To retain control of the



hara and humans who occupy the land, all Varrish towns possess barracks, even in the more secure and undisputed areas of their homeland.

Southern Megalithica is within the reach of many Varrish garrisons, who have formed alliances with certain other tribes, such as the Kakkahaar, the Unneah, and to some degree the Uigenna. These alliances are fragile and often break down, leading to conflict. Even though they control a relatively small area of southern Megalithica, the name of the Varrs is widely feared in that area.

One of the most notable differences between the Varrs and other Wraeththu tribes is their segregation of hara into two classes, which virtually equates to the definition of previous human genders. The warriors appear almost completely male, with short unadorned hair, tough practical clothing and a lack of any other adornment. Sexually, they are predominantly ouana.

Conversely, those hara who have been chosen to be consorts of the higher-ranking Varrs, and potential progenitors of their sons, are very feminine in appearance. They wear their hair long, adopt a more decorative mode of attire, and are predominantly soume. These roles are hardly ever reversed.

Aruna is regarded as an important part of a Varr's life. They understand the harish body's need for it. Even though the higher ranking Varrs will pair off with a consort, it is still seen as normal for a Varr to have many different partners, even amongst the military ranks.

Human society is one of the main templates for Varr culture. They have taken over many existing human towns, rather than starting their communities from scratch. Some Varr families live in very old houses, once the homes of rich and aristocratic humans. They adapt the towns that they appropriate to their needs. Within these towns large barracks are built to house the local militia. Higher ranking hara reside in private houses, decorated with trophies and regalia as a mark of their rank and status.

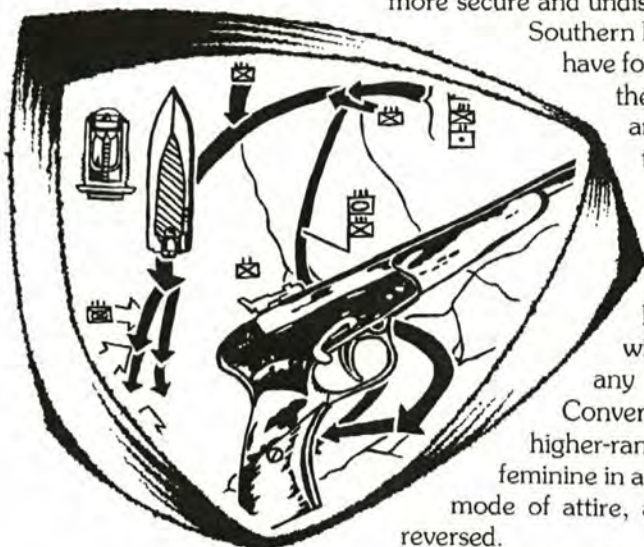
Slavery of humans is common among the Varrs. Human females and those seen unfit for Inception are sometimes sold into slavery, if they are not killed. Many Varrs regard the possession of human slaves as a status symbol.

Varrs have all but abandoned any mystical training and some never develop fully any of Wraeththu's unique powers. Strangely, they do tend to value those of other tribes who possess magical skills, such as the Kakkahaar and the Sulh. Recently, it is believed that Ponclast has developed an interest in magic, and is attempting to progress in caste training to strengthen his tribe, but this report has not been confirmed. It's most likely that the Varrs use magic unconsciously while fighting, in a manner similar to the way that the Obliviata use magic and the power of their god while traveling. However, you'd be hard pressed to find a Varr who would agree with this idea.

The Gelaming are opposed to the Varrish way of life, and see the tribe as a threat to Wraeththukind that must be eradicated. Reports suggest that the Gelaming have plans to invade Megalithica and take it by force. The Varrs are prepared to do all in their power to prevent this from happening. Varrs view the Gelaming as interfering do-gooders, who should keep their noses out of other hara's business.

Spirituality and gods have no place in Varrish society. They believe that Wraeththu arose naturally on earth to destroy a weaker species that was damaging the planet. They plan to continue that aim.

The Varrs trade widely and have a thriving trading relationship with many other tribes and small groups throughout Megalithica. Most Varrish towns have large market areas, where nearly anything can be brought and sold. Although their main ethic is that of conquest, many of their incepted hara derived from human farming stock, so they possess a high percentage of land workers also. The tribe controls huge swathes of farm land, where many different kinds of crops are grown. They also have large dairy herds of cattle, as well as sheep and goats. Varrish horses are among the best to be found in Megalithica. The tribe travelled far to secure breeding stock from human



"The Gelaming have no right to come here and tell us how to live. They think the world is theirs to play with; we shall prove them wrong."

-Captain Garner har Varr

"We are at peace here in Galhea, while the rest of Megalithica is at war. Soon, the war will be over and all Wraeththu shall know peace. This is what the Varrs offer."

-Sambriel, Soume Varr



equestrian centres and have bred their own strain of battle horse, which possesses a combination of speed and strength.

Appearance

In the upper and military echelons, the Varrs comprise two distinct groups: those who are predominantly ouana, the male aspect, and those who are soume, the female aspect. Each group is encouraged to develop only one side of their being, which in turn affects their physical constitution. Varrs believe that this segregation will facilitate the eventual ability to breed, although their view is shared by no other tribe.

Fighters are strong and well built compared to other tribe members. They wear their hair cut short at the sides of their head, if not entirely. Their tough hard wearing clothes and boots are fashioned mainly from leather. Their clothes are always highly practical, possessing the capacity to hold and conceal weaponry.

Those of the tribe who are consorts to the warriors appear almost entirely like human females. They wear their hair long and dress in flowing robes and skirts, usually pale in colour. They are typically beautiful, as the warrior class desires good stock. The more masculine aspected hara take great care of their consorts and adorn them in clothes of very high standard, made of the finest fabrics.

Other hara of the tribe, who work the land and populate the towns are less obviously divided in their aspects, although there is still a prevailing trend to lean more to one aspect than the other. Their appearance varies, but generally they adopt practical clothing and do not affect tribal marks, such as tribes like the Uigenna use.

Background

The Varrs either branched early on from the Uigenna or else started separately at the same time. It is certain they have existed since the early days of Wraeththu. There's no reason to dispute Ponclast's assertion that he was among the first wave of Wraeththu inceptees, and if he didn't found the Varrs as he claims, he took over their leadership very early on.

Spreading quickly through Megalithica, claiming territory as they went, their only opposition at that time (apart from humans) was the Uigenna. The initial conflict between the two tribes has now mutated into a tenuous alliance, as the Uigenna appreciate the benefits of Varrish organization, while the Varrs want to make use of the Uigenna fighting force and knowledge of poisons. As the Uigenna flounder, due to their constant in-fighting and inability to co-exist with other tribes, the Varrs are steadily acquiring dominance. They worked their way through human settlements, incepting or killing anyone they found. They regarded themselves, and still do, as a liberating force for Wraeththu. Unlike the Uigenna, they are unlikely to attack other hara outright, but are more likely to use persuasion and veiled threats to coerce smaller groups to ally with them. However, any resistance to their aims is met harshly.

The prime directive of the Varrs is to spread their control and destroy any enemies. They mistrust all other tribes, even those with whom they have alliances. Consequently, the Varrish administration employs a vast spy network. Even though they have wiped out many of the human settlements, a few humans still provide pockets of resistance against them, using whatever military technology they can find that still functions.

Organization

The Varrs are controlled by Ponclast from the citadel settlement of Fulminir, a large fortress in a mountainous area, which was once a human military installation. Fulminir has been refortified by the Varrs and is base to some of the highest-ranking members of the Varrish armies.

Each town in Varrish control is governed by a har of Ponclast's choosing. Galhea, the southern Varr settlement, is the second largest stronghold, governed by Terzian. He is Ponclast's second in command and general of the Varrish army, who will lead the

"In the desert something grows. I fear it in my heart and soul. Hara have vanished, good soldiers too. I fear we are near the end."

- An uneasy Varr soldier

"While we maintain an uneasy arrangement with the Uigenna, they still cannot be trusted; not while Manticker is in control."

-Captain Garner har Varr

tribe against the planned war with the Gelaming. Terzian is regarded as a hero by the Varrs. He is seen as both a shrewd diplomat and a skilled warrior.

The Varrs possess an efficient communications network in the form of Runners, who are equipped with the fastest of horses, bred especially for the purpose. Runner stations exist throughout Megalithica, and are well defended.

Traits

The Varrs pride strength, will power and self-discipline. Their skills with weaponry and in the tactics of combat outrank most other tribes. Their strength lies not only in a well-conditioned body but also in an ordered mind. They can travel over long distances with very little sleep or creature comforts. During times of conflict, when they are far from home, aruna is their only luxury. The Varrs also value agility and cunning in their hara and encourage them to become all round fighters, to use all the skills at their disposal.

Another Varrish trait is their ability to impose order over chaos. Once they have appropriated a new town, it is soon organized into a functioning base.

Bonuses: Strength [STR] +2 and Willpower [WIL] +1 (For Soldiers) other hara such as hostlings get no bonuses.

"A bloody war is coming. I can feel it in my bones. The Gelaming keep meddling in our affairs, and Ponclast seems to have something on his mind."

- Besta Zamhalama, Varr

Crafts

All Varr warriors are skilled fighters. They know how to use, maintain and repair many different weapons, of both Varrish construction and those they have appropriated from humans. They are also excellent horsemen. Varrs are taught to use many different fighting styles during their caste progression. Many spend their spare time training at the local barracks, where they can practice alongside others in their military unit.

Bonuses: All Combat skills are considered to be one level higher than they are, and the relevant bonuses for that higher level are also applicable.

The Opposition

The Gelaming are undoubtedly a major thorn in the side of the Varrs. It is believed that the Gelaming are planning an invasion of Megalithica, in order to wrest control from the Varrs, liberate oppressed tribes and discourage the notion of imbalanced sexual aspects. Consequently, the Varrs are rallying their allies to combat this invasion. The Gelaming's aim is to free the common Varrs from their oppressive leadership and bring them in line with the Gelaming way of thinking. The Gelaming regard their tribe as superior to all others and have disseminated propaganda widely to promote this reputation: a reputation that the Varrs hope to disprove and destroy.

SMALLER AND DISTANT TRIBES

A Few of the More Distinctive

Many tribes are forming all over the world, but very few have actually formed alliances with major tribes such as the Varrs or the Gelaming. Most of the smaller and more distant groups that live beyond Megalithican and Almagabran territory keep to themselves, apart from essential trade. In many cases, there is no record of how hara spread to these often isolated locations, but rumours of countless other tribes are slowly spreading across the Wraeththu world.

Freyhella

The Freyhella hail from the distant, mysterious and cold land of Freygard. The little we know of this tribe is from what the Unneah have learned about them. The only other tribes in touch with the Freyhella are the equally mysterious Colurastes and the Sulh, who have had to fend off Freyhellan incursions into their territory.

Even though the Freyhella appear to have travelled far, they have apparently avoided confrontation with the 'mighty' Gelaming so far. This might be due to the independent nature of the Freyhella, or else the Gelaming simply sees them as too small and unimportant to bother with.

The origins of the Freyhella are as yet unknown. It is presumed that they are possible early offshoots of the Uigenna, or Sulh, and some stories even mention a connection with the mysterious Olopade. They have embraced the ancient mythology of their cold, northern homelands and, like their very early human counterparts; they are great seafarers.

Hara of the Freyhella are as beautiful as they are strong. They have tough, sea-tanned skin and long, pale hair, which most wear braided. As for their apparel, the majority favour highly practical leather and fur clothes, which are suitable for sea travel in rough conditions. Their major settlement of Freygard is a strange and magical place, full of haunting lakes and craggy hills. The summers are warm, but the winters are harsh and bitter.

Freyhella are highly magical and have learned many of their skills through studying the ancient religions and native humans of their homelands. The tribe has a large fleet of warships, as well as trade vessels that travel far and wide both in their local area and to Megalithica, Alba Sulh and beyond. The Freyhellans have no real enemies, as they have only minimal contact with other tribes, apart from skirmishes some years ago with the Sulh. But any hara who venture into Freyhellan territory without an invitation or good excuse will not get a warm reception. If you are perceived as friendly, the Freyhellans are welcoming. Although their hospitality can sometimes be somewhat boisterous, a party in Freygard is always a memorable night.

The tribe's leader is a har named Tyr, and many tales are told about his wondrous deeds. These stories seem to be as far-fetched as those about the Gelaming. Tyr is very tall, fierce in battle, courageous and brave. Yet he is also something of a mystic. He is reputed to have vanquished a sea monster single-handedly, somewhere off the coast of Alba Sulh.

Smalt

The Smalt are a far-spread tribe. The only other tribes known to be in regular contact with them are the Kakkahaar, a few small but dangerous offshoots of the Uigenna and, surprisingly, the small settlement of Greenling.

Hara of the Smalt are skilled in hunting, sailing, and the use of drugs and toxins. Only hara of less reputable tribes have ever heard of them, and even then the Smalt are only ever discussed in certain small settlements in southern Megalithica. The Varrs appear to be ignoring the Smalt's existence.

"I have heard talk that some hara in the early days managed to get on flights to other parts of the world. There has been little to come from the territories east and south of Almagabra, maybe they are building their numbers as well."

- Gamboll-gin, Uigenna

"I knew it was not easy for you. Had I known what it was really like, I would have tried to be less of a pain in the ass. At least I would have tried harder."

- Zackary Raven Black, Gelaming Phylarch

"Wait a minute. I think there is a joke in there... Nah, got nothing"

- Dag Viking, Uigenna

The Smalt live both on the islands just off the southern coast of eastern Megalithica and also in the dark, damp forests in the northern areas of a large continent to the south.

Those who live on the islands are friendly and laid back in nature. Many hara have taken over the old human settlements there, and also much of the former commerce in sugar, tobacco and fruit. The main centre is the town of Jaiker on the main island, where they are many interesting sites and experiences to be had for the most intrepid travellers. However, one island phyle, known as the Picaroons, are not as accommodating as their fellows. They are regarded as rogues and ne'er-do-wells by others, and have adopted a piratical lifestyle, which makes traveling to Smalt territory something of a hazard.

Smaltish hara who live on the mainland are more secretive and highly suspicious of strangers. They tend to be territorial, and only very brave or foolish hara would dare to enter the Smalt rain forest without a guide. Many medicines, toxins and other mysterious substances are harvested in the forests. Even in human times, dangerous and deadly animals and plants lurked in the dark swamps beneath the tribe's treetop homes. The Smalt are even more resistant to poisons than the average har, and are very sensitive psychically. Many Smaltish hara have the faculty of synaesthesia, when they are able to 'smell' colours or 'see' sounds.

The Smalt derive from a surprisingly wide range of cultural backgrounds, and their skin colour varies from pale to deepest black. How such a wide variety of Wraeththu happened to come to live in such an unusual part of the world is unknown. Neither is it known why the Smalt seemed to have spread themselves over two completely different terrains, while still retaining a cohesive tribal identity.

Those hara who live on the islands have started to form trading routes with southern Megalithica and much of their produce has already appeared in Varrish trading markets, via Kakkahaar and Unneah sources. The only settlement that the Smalt deal with directly is the town of Greenling.

Although different rumours have spread about the tribe, the name of the Smalt is not known to many. Some hara regard them as harmless traders, but others see them as dangerous and view them with much suspicion. While the Smalt trade mainly in the merchandise mentioned above, they are also known to trade with the Kakkahaar for less savoury products. Some believe the most deadly of the Uigenna toxins derive from the distant rain forests.

Hokule

The Hokule occupy territory on islands off the west coast of Megalithica, and their traders occasionally turn up at small coastal settlements of the Varrs, Uigenna and occasionally Kheops.

Hara of the Hokule are very friendly and fun loving. Whenever they come ashore to trade, they will always host a party in honour of whoever they are staying with. Varrs in the western area of Megalithica view the Hokule with suspicion, but as the Hokule could never be classified as a threat, are happy to trade with them for food and goods. West coast Uigenna get on exceptionally well with the Hokule, as they share a flamboyant nature and a love of celebration. These Uigenna look forward to the visits of their seafaring friends, and often hold huge beach parties, with barbeques, loud music and even windsurfing competitions.

The tribe's archon is a tall gregarious har named Alalahe (al-ah-la-hay). While he has never visited Megalithica himself, his hara love to tell stories about him. They say he lives at the top of a volcano and became Wraeththu one day after he went swimming in the sea. The volcano had erupted, and when he left the water he had become har. Alalahe then decided to climb the volcano, where he collapsed unconscious. In a dream he was told how to incept other humans, and subsequently incepted his two sons Po and Ao, who in turn incepted others from their village. Many people from the surrounding islands also came to visit and they were incepted too. This race was one of the few human groups to embrace the harish form and was willing to accept the change.

"For the thirteenth time, I don't know what a starter motor is, let alone where to get one. Buy yourself a horse!"

- Blackrose, Sulh

Hokule are a peaceful tribe, family is very important to them and even after Inception they still live and work with humans. They will only incept those males who ask to be incepted and would never force anything on anyone.

Hokule travel the ocean in large double hulled canoes, also called hokule, and they navigate by a star of the same name. This is undoubtedly why they chose the name. They spend a great deal of time building and designing kites, surfboards and canoes. Some of the larger kites are used as sails for their canoes and surfboards. The Hokule also enjoy windsurfing and swimming; all hara of the tribe are extremely strong swimmers.

The tribe's religious beliefs are based upon the world they see around them and the sea inevitably plays a large part. Hokule also respect and pay homage to their ancestors, even those of their human past. They see Wraeththu as simply the next evolutionary step and continue to hold human life in great esteem. The tribe is still relatively small in numbers, but because its hara are spread over great distances and travel far, many new phyles are being set up all the time.

Most Hokule are very spiritual, while still open and friendly. They are able to sense other hara's intentions and know when not to trust them. While some might find it surprising that they have a firm alliance with the less than reputable Uigenna, perhaps it is because the Hokule can see, and bring out, the best in everyhar they meet.

"Enlightenment for some can be found at the bottom of a beer bottle."

- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar

Kheops

The Kheops tribe consists of several clans of raiders. Some live in the mountain ranges far above the northern cities of the Uigenna, while others inhabit the flat desolate northern plain. It is presumed the tribe was formed by young hara who did not wish to remain under the rule of the Varrs and the Uigenna, and sought to enjoy a freer lifestyle.

Over the years, the Kheops have settled down a little and have formed several small towns, with farm land and herds of cattle and sheep. They are skilled weavers and developed a strong form of magic, which they combine with their practical work. Most Kheops have become very powerful telepaths, which makes their raids on human and harish settlements precise manoeuvres that are very hard to prevent.

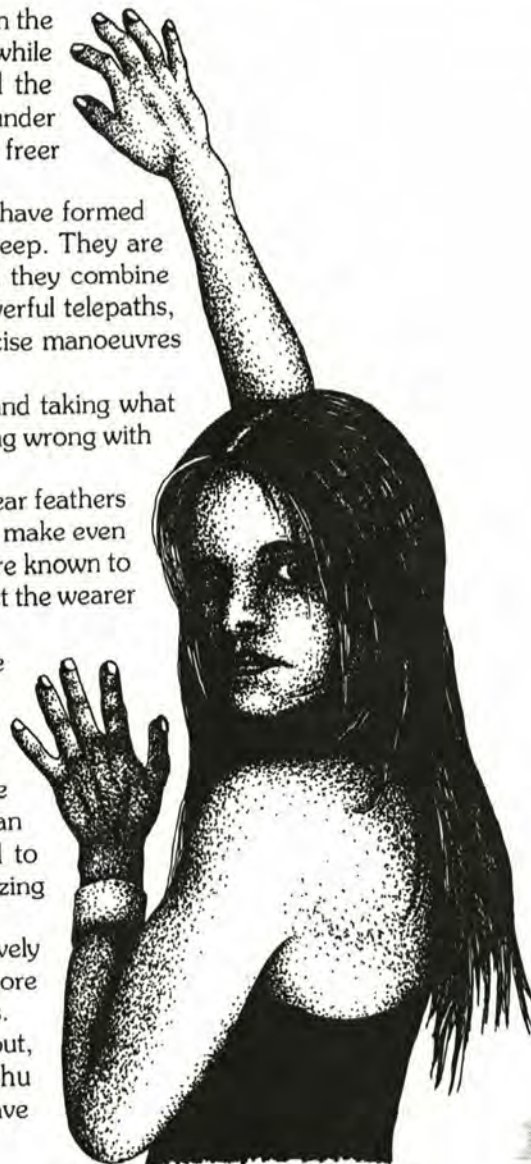
Most of their income derives from raiding human towns and taking what they need. They have no respect for humankind, and see nothing wrong with destroying and looting their settlements.

Kheops paint their faces in wild designs and colours and wear feathers in their hair; some of their outlandish and bizarre clothing would make even an Unneah envious. The Kheops weave their own fabrics and are known to be able to work magical power into the material, either to protect the wearer against evil intent, or even to create illusions.

The tribe has separated into clans, the largest being the Darkriver Clan, from the northeast. Darkrivers can be recognized by the starburst design they wear on their clothes. They are rumoured to be one of the most unfriendly clans, and have such a strong hatred of the Gelaming that it rivals that of the Varrs. The Darkrivers live in small tents or huts, which they can take up easily, when they get in too much trouble and need to move on quickly, or simply when their cattle require new grazing ground.

Another of the clans is the Bloodclouds, who are comparatively more peaceful. While still raiders by nature, Bloodclouds are more tied to the land and have formed more permanent settlements.

In areas where the human population has nearly died out, some Kheops clans have started raiding small Wraeththu settlements. As you can imagine, most of the other tribes have not taken too kindly to this new development.



Inukshuk

The Inukshuk live very far north of Megalithica. The only way the rest of the Megalithican tribes came to know of their existence was when a small phyle of Inukshuk, called the Masak, travelled down into Uigenna territory to find out why no airplanes could be seen flying overhead any more.

Inukshuk are unclear as to how they became Wraeththu, but don't appear to be that bothered by the change. Since making contact with the Megalithican tribes, they have opened up limited trade routes with the Kheops and the Uigenna. Due to the cold weather and constant snowdrifts, most of their traveling is done by dog sleds and very ancient looking trucks, powered by an unknown source.

Apart from the Masak, three other phyles have been recorded: the Apijaq, the Pukak, and the Ivuniit. All three are based in small coastal towns, with smaller encampments set up along trade routes. When asked why they don't move to a warmer climate, they simply answer that they would miss the snow.

While small in numbers, it is known that they make fierce warriors. Owing to the cold climate of their homelands, they can fight effectively in almost any weather conditions. It is known that the Inukshuk have had the odd skirmish with the Freyhellans over territory and fishing rights. While the Inukshuk are a peace-loving tribe, they do not take kindly to being threatened.

All Inukshuk wear thick fur coats at all times. They also tend to have tribal tattoos, the symbols of which are sacred to their particular phyle.

Those few hara who have met the Inukshuk tribe have mixed opinions about them. The Uigenna appreciate the Inukshuk sense of humour – which is allegedly the only thing that stopped them killing the Inukshuk on sight. The Kheops seem happy to trade with them for meat, in return for other foods.

*"Have a little heart, lung,
kidneys – hey, go nuts!"*

- Tosta Riko, Uigenna





"If Greenling was not such a useful place to spread counter intelligence they would have been removed a long time ago. Yet the most immediate threat to our secrecy is Seel and the infernal settlement of Salt Rock, if only our scouts would return with its location."

- Velisarius, Archon of the Kakkahaar



CHARACTER GENERATION

Even experienced players should read through this first part of character generation at least once, to get a feel for the way the Storm System works.

If you have already read the previous sections, you should by now have a good idea of which tribe you would like to play, and from which area of the world your character derives.

From here on in, you will make a number of die rolls and a series of decisions, which will build more definition into your character. From Traits to Magic, you will be guided through each section until you have generated your first Wraeththu character.

The first time you make a character, the process might seem slow and fiddly, but once you are used to it, you'll be able to progress more rapidly, using the quick character generation notes at the end of this section. **See page 26.**

You'll generate a character and a background for him, so that your actions in the game have some reference to reality. Just as the real world is based upon rules and levels, a character is established in the same way. For example, if you start the game with a human character, there will be limits built into his skills, because in the world of the game, humans don't have the same abilities and resources to advance that Wraeththu have. There is a scale between 1 and 20 for almost all Stats and Skills; 20 being the peak of human ability. There is no upper limit for harish ability, as the Wraeththu world is comparatively new, and hara do not yet know themselves the limits of their capabilities.

Background

Your character's history, as well as his plans for the future, are very important to the game. What your character did three years ago while on holiday could have far reaching implications for future events. The more you know, or rather invent, about your character's background and what has influenced his life in the past, the more he will become a strong and complex character.

How deep you go while developing background is up to you. You can write anything, from a few short notes to a whole short story. The more Character experiences you write about will, in turn, influence the actions and reactions of your character in play. **See page 161.**

"So I'm a Uigenna? What's a Uigenna?"

- A new inceptee, with a lot to learn.

A good way to develop your character's personality is to start the game as a human and work through until you get incepted. This can add a lot more depth to the character, as well as offering a different playing experience.

*"Wraeththu? No I can't be one of them. They have six arms and laser beams for eyes."
- The young Uigenna who has even more to learn.*

Traits

Your Traits are very important, as they include establishing your character's appearance and basic information; they are the visible and public features, the first thing that others learn about you. The Traits are what your character would use to describe themselves.

Traits are a list of descriptions with some basic physical characteristics, which will enable you, as a player, to relate the details of your character more efficiently. All of these decisions will be partly influenced by the background you have written for the character. **See page 161.**

Decide upon your character's Traits based upon his background. The Traits are Name, Tribe, Caste/Level (in most cases will start at Kaimana/Ara), Place of Birth, Age, Town, Country, and Physical Attributes.

For characters starting out as humans, the Traits are Name, Place of Birth, Age, Town, Country, and Physical Attributes.

Statistics

Your character's physical abilities are defined by their Stats (Strength [STR], Dexterity [DEX], Stamina [STA], Perception [PER], Willpower [WIL] and Intelligence [INT]); these are a numeric representation of raw ability, and can directly affect your capabilities to perform various tasks. Unlike Skills, Stats affect the physical form of your character. For Example your Strength [STR] is a measure of how well your bones and muscles perform. The other Stats also determine the cellular and physical limitations of your character's body.

The Stats are universal to all creatures of the physical plane, and every human, animal and har has them. **See page 172.**

Secondary Statistics

These are the Stats that make hara different from humans and animals. They are a collection of unique abilities, such as psychic and magical powers. These Stats give further dimensions to your character; some of them are used as representations of the various energies to which the Wraeththu have access. These energies will slowly decrease over time, and will need to be replenished by the character during play. **See page 187, 257, 258 and 263.**

These characteristics can degrade; as the character ages, or if they use less of one Stat than another. The changes might be slow and minor, but they can still happen. The degradation of Statistics is in the hands of the storyteller, as it is rare this would happen, yet in some cases lack of activity or age could catch up with the character. Also damage to the body can affect the Stats. **See page 291.**

Skills

Skills are the sum of your character's experience. As your character progresses through life, he will pick up new Skills, such as cooking, archery, or riding horses.

Unlike the Stats, Skills won't degrade as much, unless the character has psychological problems or undergoes some kind of mental trauma that has resulted in neurological damage. **See page 178 and 200.**

Magic

Humans do not have access to the magical abilities of the harish form. These powers are exclusive to Wraeththu, who don't view them as special or amazing. As every har has the capability to use magic, it is simply seen as any other practical ability, such as riding a horse.

Many tribes excel at the use of magic, while some deny their ability to influence the forces of Agmara. Even those who study and perform magic extensively will not use it in everyday actions. A har might have the ability to move mountains and create cities, but will still only use magic as a last resort. This is due to the possibility of immense backlash if they make a mistake or draw power from the wrong location.

Even though hara can command the waves, it takes many years of study and practice to hone such powers, so many hara of the same tribe will work together in rituals, through the act of Grissecon. These rituals enable the characters to work together, boosting their abilities and giving them greater success in the use of magic. Working together can also have the advantage of creating much more complex magical effects. See page 189 and 357.

Merits and Flaws

Although physical flaws are rare in hara, the trauma of Inception can leave a har with mental problems. These problems, if left unchecked, can lead to serious debilitating Flaws. Hara who have undergone thorough training and guidance after Inception are less likely to suffer in that way. While long-standing problems can be healed over time, through the use of Agmara energy, the more serious cases will require the services of a high caste har.

Humans can have a wide range of Merits and Flaws, which will add challenge to playing your character beyond the use of his background. If you are playing a human who battles against Wraeththu, or eventually becomes har, these Flaws can add greater depth to the experience and can even give your character a driving force to become Wraeththu. The Merits are a reflection of those things for which your character has a talent. See page 176 and 228.

"Can I change my name to Merlin?"

- A young Sulh, who asked a few too many questions.

Rounding off

As a finishing touch you may want to tweak your character, by moving a few points around with the Storyteller's consent. You should fine tune your character's equipment, friends and other details that add that spark of realism.

If you initially generate your character's background carefully, you won't need to do much further tweaking, as you will have developed it with specific ideas in mind. By the time you have worked your way through each section, you will have a fully functional character, which is ready to play. See page 192.

BACKGROUND

People say we are the sum of our experiences: if that is the case, knowledge of our past is the most vital information resource a sentient species can have. One event or decision can change the entire course of a person's life, which could make an impact on the world in some way. If the person had chosen or acted differently, the world might be a very different place. Someone's background and history affects who they become and what path their life takes.

Wraeththu too are the sum of their experiences. There are many ways you can play your character in the game, starting as a human, or as a newly incepted har, or even a well-travelled Wraeththu. A lot of things in the character's life will have had different influences upon their personality; their parents, friends, lovers, or their enemies. The possibilities for the development of your character's personality are endless. It would be unfeasible to work out his life in minute detail, from moment to moment, but you can build a list of key events that you think shaped him. This will help you later, if you're faced with situations where he has a difficult decision to make or a problem to overcome.

We have compiled a list of basic questions that will help you begin developing a fairly well formed character background. These questions are not set in stone; they can be changed to suit your character's history and experience. If you feel the need to add more questions to enable you to cover important areas of your character's past, then you should do so. Each member of your player group should do this.

"The Sulh know the future. I recommend you don't ask about yours."

- Malakess, losing patience with a new inceptee.

A fun way to develop your character background, especially if your player group comprises close friends, is to get another player to ask you the questions in an interview format. This will give you a greater feel and insight into what makes your character unique, as well as providing the other players with insight, so that they can relate their characters to yours. Also, if appropriate, it will help the group to integrate all (or some) of their characters' histories.

Human

It's a good idea if all players answer these questions. Every character will have begun life as a human, which will have had an affect on their personality. After Inception, they might still possess some of their former human idiosyncrasies. Some will alter your character's personality in a good and harmonious way; others may be in direct conflict with the thoughts and beliefs of his new form and tribe. Certain conflicts can manifest themselves as negative personality traits, or psychological problems.

This game can be enjoyed just as much if you play a group of humans battling against the Wraeththu. Although such characters are essentially doomed either to die or one day be incepted, you can at least explore the world as a character perceived as the enemy.

What did your character do at school, college?

Events and circumstances at school and college shape your life; from the people you meet to the subjects you study. Did your character pass any subject during education or did he drop out? Who were your character's best friends and how did meeting them change his life? The subjects he studied might end up being Skills if he thought they were important enough to continue using.

Did your character have a part-time job, or were they in full-time work?

What your character did to earn money while in education and afterwards might simply have been a mundane job that had little impact on his life. Alternatively, he might have picked up important skills and a trade. He could have met new people who influenced his life, or caused problems for him. Was he an important public figure? Did he love or loathe his work?

Was your character a member of any subcultures?

The friends your character made might have had a big impact on his history and personality. Was he a goth, punk, geek, jock or any other minority group, who was stereotyped because of the way he dressed or acted? Did he keep his friends though thick and thin, and when he became a har did he still remain friends with them? More importantly, was he still interested in them?

Did your character take a specific educational path?

Beyond school and college did your character continue studying to become a professional or an expert in their field? Was his education important enough to him, for him to continue studying even in the light of what was happening to the world? Are your character's skills important to the current human condition?

What was your character's family life like?

If your character lived with his family, how did they treat him? What influence did they have on his personality? Was this family your character's real family or was he adopted? Perhaps he was brought up 'on the street' by a gang? Did your character have brothers or sisters who are still alive, or who could have been incepted before him? Would they be shocked to find out he has become a creature that is perceived to be destroying humankind or would they still show love to him?

"They say that if no one stops them, the Uigenna will dominate everything, so I'm just gonna keep moving, because there is no way I'm getting between those twisted bastards and what they want."

- Seraph, Kakkahar Nomad

Did your character travel much or stay at home?

Was your character outgoing and adventurous? Did he go out to find new places and experience new cultures and people? On the other hand, your character could have been introverted to some degree. He could have been a geeky kid who stayed at home, read books and watched TV (while TV stations were still operational). What hobbies did he have, and what did he do in his spare time?

How did your character hear about the Wraeththu?

Urban legends are rife, especially stories of the Wraeththu. How did your character first find out about them? Was it through first-hand experience, urban legends or stories told by friends? Did the way he found out about them affect his views? Were those views positive or negative? How does the character feel about Wraeththu now because of these views?

"Can you all please just put down your weapons so we can talk about this? Oh, I'm sorry; I didn't mean to phrase that as a question."

- Essence, Gelaming Priest

Inception

This is the most traumatic experience in any Wraeththu's life: the physical and mental changes put a great strain on the mind. Minor defects in a character's personality could be accentuated and become a problem. Inception can also have the opposite affect and remove bad habits or annoying personality traits for which he was once ridiculed. Try to think what it would be like to wake up one morning and be a different gender, or even a completely different species. Rebirth, and the revelation of a mind free of gender and race conflict, could (and most probably would) have the most dramatic affect on your character's outlook on the world. One of the major aspects of this physical and psychological change is the dreams your character will have during the change. Many inceptees are unconscious, or drugged so they do not feel the pain of Inception. During this time, they can have vivid and disturbing dreams that will affect how they behave during the first days of being har.

If you start playing your character as a human, the following questions won't be relevant, but they will be useful if your character is an incepted har. They will help shape the role-playing experience and develop a stronger feel and more depth to your game.

Why did your character become har?

Many hara of the Uigenna did not have a choice about Inception. They were simply at the wrong place at the wrong time. Some humans, however, did have a choice and went to the Wraeththu of their own free will to be incepted. What reasons, if any, did your character have to want to undergo the change? Were they medical, cultural, peer pressure or one of a multitude of other reasons? Did your character seek out the Wraeththu on purpose?

Were any of your character's friends and relatives incepted?

Those who are close to your character might have had the biggest influence on his life. Were any of them incepted or at least approached by Wraeththu? Was it these relatives who turned your character or persuaded him to become har? Was it because they were turned that your character fought Inception, or did they keep their Inception hidden from him? How did the friends who were incepted change with regards to the character, and how did the character deal with this?

Into which tribe was your character incepted?

This is vitally important, as it will give you insight into how your character was incepted and the stresses he might have undergone. Every tribe has different Inception rites and practices, and the way your character was treated afterwards will have the greatest effect on him.

Starting play as an incepted character, your first few weeks of orientation, or lack of, will have already taken place. This means your character can plunge directly into the thick of the action. Your first few months of being har can make an exciting preliminary adventure.

"People tend to get under your skin, even mine. You just have to learn to shed it when you outgrow it."

- Silk, Colouraste Predator

Did your character know what to expect or was it all new to him?

Some tribes would explain the process of Inception to your character, and tell him what he would be likely to feel, and how the process is conducted. Other tribes would just grab him off the street, throw him into an abandoned basement and use bits of broken glass as the tools of transfusion. Did your character have any feelings about what happened prior to his Inception, or does it all feel like that was in another life?

Did your character have any strange experiences during the Inception?

At any point, did the character feel as though part of the Inception rite was not right? Did he feel as though what he'd started was wrong and that he didn't want to go through with it? Was the Inception better than he thought it would be? Did he have vivid dreams that he thought were real? Did anything go wrong that the other hara were worried about or seemed to panic over?

Did your character dream and if so how did these dreams affect them?

During the change, which can take anything from a day to a month, an inceptee is kept unconscious, so as to lessen the trauma and pain. Did your character have any dreams or nightmares that still disturb him now? Where did he go in these dreams and who or what did he meet in them?

When your character's body had fully changed and he awoke, what did he feel?

Was the experience like being reborn, or did your character feel self-loathing at what he had become? Was it like a new world, where your character could see more with his new eyes than he could before? What did your character feel about his new body and the imbalance of gender removed from his inner conflicts? Emotionally, how did this affect your character; was it a feeling of ecstasy or a feeling of fear?

"If you don't move that thing out of my face, I'm going to rip yours off and wear it as a helmet!"

- Abrasa Rye, Kakkahaar.

With whom did your character have his first aruna, and was the experience positive or negative?

Many tribes will conduct aruna as part of the Inception rite. If the Inception of your character is not fixed with aruna, the change might continue in a slower form that slowly cripples the body and twists the mind. Minor deformities will disappear shortly after aruna. If your character does not take aruna, he runs the risk of becoming a freak and an outcast, slowly degenerating, until he becomes little more than an instinct driven animal. Was your character's aruna left too long and has he suffered a deformity that is still with him, or did he take aruna in time? Was the experience intimate or distant, as if your character was still in a dreamlike state? Did your character enjoy the act of aruna or did he hate it?

Now that the character is no longer human, does he feel bound by humanity's laws?

Wraeththu are obviously different from humans and many believe themselves to be superior, morally as well as physically. Flushed with a new sense of power, many new Wraeththu can develop a god complex (and some never grow out of it). So how much of a connection to humans and humanity has your character retained? Do you still see your family

and friends in the same way, or are they now nothing more than animals to you?

First Days

Like Inception, the first day of being a har are significant to the development of your character's personality. Who did he meet, what did they say to him, and how was he treated? This will challenge your character's ideas about Wraeththudom, and it might give him a new direction in life. If he was mistreated, he might develop a loathing for those around him. His tribe might have cared for him quite well, which might result in a more developed sense of self. It will be these first days and your character's reaction to them, in relation to his history, that will produce personality changes and possibly psychological defects.

He might end up reliving past events in his dreams, or as flashbacks, as they rise to the forefront of his mind. Unresolved conflicts and issues, from the human life he left behind, might surface and demand a resolution. These might change the way he reacts to situations, either for the next few days or even the rest of his harish life. Your character might be confronted by things against which he had a prejudice in his human life. He might feel deeply uneasy about his new body. These and many more things could conflict with the old human aspect of the character's background.

"I have to pick out ones which go: de dum, de dum, de dum, de dum, de dum."

- High Codexia Malakess, Sulh

After Inception, did your character receive tuition or was he just left to roam the lands?

After your character's Inception rite was completed was he left to roam the lands as an Unthrist? Did he become one of the tribe members straight away, and trained in the ways of the tribe? The training your character received: was it useful or did he find it hard to cope with? Was his mentor brutal and harsh, or friendly and helpful?

How did your character find out about his psychic abilities and magic?

Many tribes teach new inceptees how to use their basic psychic abilities and start training them in the art of magic. Some tribes will not give this training, in which case the abilities can become suppressed, latent or forgotten. How did your character find out about his abilities in magic and psychic powers? Was it through tuition or by accident?

How did your character feel about his new body and change in consciousness?

Many things have changed for your character. Have any of these changes caused conflict with the beliefs he previously had? Have new conflicts arisen?

With whom did your character make friends and why?

Now your character is har, he will meet other hara and make new friends, that will influence his harish life. Did he keep the friends he had before or has he abandoned them in favour of new ones? Are the new friends helpful or do they lead him astray? Do they have similar opinions and beliefs to him, or are they vastly different?

"Peanuts! Don't mention peanuts near me. When you live with Chinchillas, peanuts become the bane of your life."

- Calambus Mint, Uigenna

How does your character feel about humans now?

Many tribes tend to indoctrinate their members against the remains of the human race, but some maintain that humans, though inferior, are still to be respected as sentient life. How does your character now feel about humanity? Does he want to kill humans on sight, study them, or help

them? It could be that he has renounced his harish nature and has rejoined the humans, even though he knows he will have to turn back to the harish fold one day.

The Future

Your character's goals can also shape the way he acts and the decisions he makes. Now your character has a new body and powers to explore, his goals in life might have changed. Your character's aspirations for the future could affect his actions and his interactions with others.

A character with no plans for the future would be very dull; he will have no drive to achieve greater things. This might be one of the problems from which your character suffers. If not, try to think of what *you* would do and where would *you* go with harish psychic and magical powers.

The following questions will determine goals and future plans; they can be used to develop the personality of an older, more experienced har.

"I have always found that sticking my fingers in my ears and humming really loudly solves a whole slew of problems."

- High Codexia Malakess, Sulh

What are your character's plans now he has become a har?

With your character's new abilities, is there anything he wants to do that he couldn't do before? As a human, did he have a driving goal or ambition beyond his reach?

Is there any person your character desires to meet, or place he'd like to go?

With his new tribe, is there anywhere your character can go, which he was unable to reach as a human? Is there a person or har he would like to meet, a long lost relative, a surviving celebrity or, a har of note?

Is your character going to fight for his tribe or will he be a loner?

Now that your character has discovered so many new things, will he work with his tribe or join one another of the phyles to be different? He could be working for another tribe as a spy or informant, or he might have an inclination to do that in the future.

"I spent my whole life sticking it to The Man, now I'm going to be The Man."

- Watson, Varr, during his promotion to Phylarch.

What reaction would your character have if he should meet an erstwhile close friend or family member?

Your character might have moved away from home, but there's still a chance he might run into someone or somehar he knows. How would your character act if he met a family member or friend he'd had when he'd been human? Would he want to incept them or have them incepted?

How does your character feel about the future, knowing that hara have not yet found a way to reproduce?

Nihilism is a big problem, as no tribe has found a way to breed. There's a genuine worry the race might die out in a few hundred years. Some even think that looking after humans as cattle is the only way to keep the race thriving. What are your character's thoughts about the future; will he help humans or endeavour to find a way to breed?

Once you have worked out your characters background you will need to specify their caste goals to advance to Neoma, or in some rare cases Brynie. For information on reaching the next caste level the **Caste Progression** section on **page 329-350**. Once you have decided upon these get the Storytellers approval.

WOMEN AND INCEPTION

In the world of the Wraeththu, women seem to get rather a raw deal. It appears they are unable to become Hara, and the Hara claim the best and brightest men to become like them. Women who wish to play characters in the world of Wraeththu may feel this is rather off-putting. After all, a Wraeththu character is neither male nor female (and yet in some ways both). Almost all Wraeththu have begun their lives as men and see the world initially from a male perspective. A Wraeththu is essentially a male character coming to terms with their new female nature, so women may find it unfair they cannot play a female character coming to terms with their male aspect.

If the Storyteller allows, it is not beyond the scope of the game to allow women to become Hara of the fabled Kamagrians. However there are a great many things that need to be considered and the effect on the game world as a whole can be quite important. A lot of the attitudes and fears about the Wraeththu depend on who can and who cannot become like them. The Wraeththu themselves also form attitudes dependant on who among the humans are useful to them. So while the Storyteller is free to allow women to be incepted, such a thing should not be included without any thought for the consequences.

From the books we know two very definite facts about Inception. Firstly that it works best on the young, and secondly that men take to it better than women. Why, we are not sure. Men and women certainly have a different biology, but we are both human, which is still the basis for the Wraeththu. So it is not beyond possibility for Inception to work for a woman. We know that plenty of Hara have tried to incept women, so it is not unthinkable that for a few exceptional individuals it may have actually worked. However, if the Storyteller allows such a character, it should be a rarity, although how much of a rarity is up to the Storyteller. Even so, such an Inception should only be performed by a powerful and experienced Hienama of the Kamagrian tribe. It would also be considered a rarity and in some circles the Kamagrian inceptee would be seen as a freak, and cast out. As this sort of Inception is unknown of the resulting character will become a curiosity and possibly a pawn to elder Wraeththu. The last thing any new character needs is to get the attention of somehar like Thiede!

Once Hara, an initially female character is no different from any other Wraeththu, except in her background experiences. The physical changes may seem more apparent on a woman, as Wraeththu are externally more like men. However, the alien nature of the Wraeththu on the inside and the outside makes the change no easier to cope with for a man or a woman. Playing such a character has interesting and different role playing potential, but is statistically no different to anyhar else. The one flaw a female Hara would suffer is the inability to incept other humans.

Staying Human

Another option for a woman who is uncomfortable playing a Hara is to play a female human character, much like Kate in the books. Female humans have far more potential as player characters than their male counterparts. A woman's reaction to the Wraeththu is often dependant on the Wraeththu she has met before, as it is for anyone. Some Wraeththu see any humans as beasts to be slaughtered, be they men, women or children. One character option could be a woman who has lost her family to the Wraeththu, and is learning to accept that some may not be the demons she believes them to be. Another woman might be studying the Wraeththu, and is able to get closer to them than her male assistants as she is not perceived as a threat. However, some Hara are able to live in relative harmony with humans. Places such as Greenling are rare, but not unknown. As the men of the world gradually dwindle, lost to war and Inception, women may find themselves in exclusively female societies, which some might even see as a blessing. The women in these communities might travel with Wraeththu to try and create trade links and promises of peace.

The Kamagrians are the representation of the female aspect of Wraeththu. Little is known about them and they are only rumoured to exist. Their home land is believed to be far away to the east.

From here they base searches looking for the rare cases where a female has been incepted. Many believe that Kamagrian is another name for the Zigane.

It is unknown whether Kamagrians are unable to incept other humans, because of the extremely rare nature of female Inception; it is even unlikely you will see hundreds of Kamagrians around. If you do then this probably means war.

Almost all Kamagrians are adopted by the Zigane tribe, and taken to their homeland.

There they will be taught in the ways of the Zigane, and if they are unlucky they may meet Opelexian the leader of this tribe.

If women are able to be incepted, then the human sexes will have the same attitude. Like men, any woman is either an enemy or a potential convert. As such, women (like men) will either embrace the potential future or try and fight it. For all their beauty, the Wraeththu are truly terrifying. People the character once knew who have been converted might tell how great it is to be Hara, but of course they would, their minds have been twisted. Plenty of people would rather die than live as a twisted and brainwashed version of themselves, so it would not be unusual for humans to fight the Wraeththu menace with everything they have. Women tend to be less physical in their attempts to fight the future. However, the books have shown quite clearly that women are happy to pick up guns and destroy Wraeththu where they find them. Like any other character in a role playing game, just choosing the sex of the character does not define them. Their background and life experiences will be the main architects of their attitudes.

"Many a har has said love is an outmoded concept. If this is the case why does my heart race when I'm near you?"

- Vix har Gelaming

If women cannot be incepted then they are more likely to fit in with a group of Hara than a male character will. Human males are usually the ones trying to fight the Wraeththu, but women seem to be ignored by them. When the world starts to fall apart, might becomes the only justice. With women being physically unable to dominate men, they fall prey to man's desperation. They are often kept hidden away for safety and sometimes used as little more than breeding stock to replace those that the Wraeththu have taken. Taking this to an extreme, 'rape gangs' may stalk the cities trying to ensure every woman is pregnant in a desperate and horrifying attempt to repopulate the human race. As the physically weaker members of society, many women are forced back into the kitchen to do as they are told. With this climate, it is small wonder that many turn to Wraeththu society, running for the ironic safe haven of a Wraeththu city, happy to be rid of men. The Hara are happy to leave them alone, as women are of no interest to them as either mates or slaves. They also know women want nothing from them, they neither beg to be incepted or resort to violence as easily as men. So the Wraeththu are happy to treat them as individuals and trade and work with them as required. In fact, with Wraeththu being originally male, many may turn to women to help them deal with their newly awoken feminine side. Who else in the world is there to council the Hara about the new aspects of themselves? Such peaceful communities may not be very common, certainly until most of humanity is gone.

"Oh My God! Ha! Your god cannot save you now."

- Gabriel Chamberg, Colurastes

The potential is already there; in today's society many women find close friendships with gay men, so why not with the Wraeththu? To a woman, Wraeththu may well seem to be perfect men. They are strong and powerful, as well as deeply attractive, with all that power tempered by a sensitive feminine aspect. It would not be surprising for many women to fall in love with a Hara, even when she knows that love can never be returned. However, in its place can often form a bond of love dependant not on sex or lust. Aruna for a Wraeththu is not only something reserved for those they love. So it follows that Aruna need not be an essential ingredient for any loving relationship as well. In such a way, a Wraeththu could easily come to a non-sexual but still loving relationship with a woman. Such a relationship would make them perfect adventuring companions.

While most women feel it is rather unfair that they cannot be part of the new future, some (like Kate) find a more philosophical approach. Everyone is alive and must make of the world what they can. Even if their very race faces extinction, it is still up to the individual as to how they live their life. Kate reasons that the soul is immortal, and Wraeththu magic bears this out somewhat. So any women will one day be reborn as Wraeththu, as will the entire race. It seems that for most women in the world, this, and the life she makes for herself, will have to serve as her only consolation.

TRAITS

Of all the elements that mesh together to create a character, the traits are the most important; they describe the physical front your character shows to the world. Enough basic information is contained in them to give other players sufficient ideas about your character's image.

Also there's other basic information that's useful as quick reference. It's important to have this section of your Character Sheet completed, as you might be asked questions at any time about your character. It will save trawling through your character's background, for minor details.

If you have read and answered some of the background questions, you will have a good idea of what to enter in this section. Players who have written a complete history will have no trouble with this.

In the individual sections of character generation, we had added Additional Rules that your Storyteller or group might like to use, this should be decided before creation begins. One such addition is the option to use a fixed point system for character generation. This will make all characters equal in power. The choices you make during the initial stages of character generation, not die rolls, will determine that your character is different from another player's. The fixed point system has been added as an additional rule, because it will give all players an equal footing at the start of the game.

Names

All characters have a human name, which like your own name will be fairly ordinary. These names are not really relevant during play, as your character would usually abandon their human name after Inception. However, even though it might not be that important, the Storyteller could perhaps use it in some way to introduce new plot elements. Enter your character's human name in the **Background Notes** section of the Character Sheet.

Once incepted, your character would normally choose a new name (although a few choose to keep their human name.) This takes place in the latter part of the Inception rites, and symbolises the rebirth of the body and soul. Many Wraeththu choose an unusual name, something with an elegant ring to it. This name might be taken from an ancient text or civilization. Many hara don't adopt surnames. In this case, they take on the name of their tribe, such as 'Maljayha har Uigenna.' If you are playing a character who begins the game as a human, you don't need to choose your harish name at this time.

In the **Name** section of your Character Sheet enter your character's name; their human name should be noted in the **Background Notes** section.

Example Names are: Maljayha, Calambus, Crimson, Lynx, Aries, Zillah, Winter, Arrik, Kia, Tiamat, Thoth, Blackfern, Zap, Nubia, Shiva, Needle, Antarax, Tarn, Melchior, Silver, Foxhawk, Kynvarch, Marabron, Laziliez, Gorlagon, Belshazar, Jinn.

Current Tribe

You have a choice from one of the major tribes: **Colurastes**, **Gelaming**, **Kakkahaar**, **Obliviata**, **Sulh**, **Uigenna**, **Unneah** and **Varr**. Your character's tribe is important; it will denote his Phylarch and Archon, and the basic philosophy he'll be obliged to adopt. Much of his initial training will be with this tribe; it is central to the progression of your character.

Starting play as a human, your character won't belong to a tribe. If he already knows about the Wraeththu, he might have an idea as to which tribe attracts him, but sometimes it can be more fun to let the story unfold and see where it takes him.

It's best if the majority of your player group is of a similar tribe (or at least a tribe amenable with your character's), as hostilities can break out over internal group politics.

Once you have chosen your character's **Current Tribe**, fill in the relevant space on the Character Sheet.

"Every Rule has its exceptions."

- Skank Marchell, Ex Uigenna, now lives in Morass, Thaine.

Some elements of character generation may require the use of a calculator. These calculations are worked out in advance, as part of this section, so that when you're playing the game there is little or no calculation work to be done.

"Fuck em and their Law!"

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna

During play, your character can switch tribes, for political or other reasons. When your character changes tribe, note the change in the **Background Notes** section.

Caste

All newly incepted hara start at the lowest caste tier: *Kaimana* at *Ara* level. We recommend you begin play as a har of little experience. You could try and persuade your Storyteller to let your character start at the second level of *Kaimana*, *Neoma*, but you might have to present a strong case to her/him! If you should want to start the game at a slightly higher caste, write your character's background so that it's feasible they would progress quickly.

Once you have settled upon your **Caste** and **Level**, locate the relevant space on your Character Sheet and fill in the details. See **page 329** for more details on the caste system.

Place of Birth

Although this information is not vital, it helps in role-playing your character, and can be a guide to his actions towards others. It might also help decide his tribe. Record your character's place of birth as a human, then note it in the **Background Notes**. You might never use this information, but sometimes the storyteller can develop plot around your character's birth town, which influences his actions in the game.

Town and Country

All the major Wraeththu settlements are described in this book; your character might live in any of them, dependent upon his tribe. Some hara choose to wander Megalithica, trying to scratch a living with odd jobs for Wraeththu and humans alike. Your character could be part of an army or a dedicated group within a tribe. Also the country where he's based might have an effect on his physical appearance. Once you have decided upon a location for him, note this on the Character Sheet.

Age

Wraeththu have not been around for that long. Because of this, and the general age of inceptees, your character's age will necessarily be within a limited range. Some characters might break the mould by a few years, but only if their tribe sees them as useful assets. Your character will be between the ages of 16 and 30. Choose an age, and then record it in the relevant section.

"Come on, you have seen me naked, the least you can do is cook me dinner."

- Aries Strals, Unneah

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

These are the basics of your character's appearance. You might have already decided upon some aspect when you created his background. Once you've chosen these traits, fill in the relevant sections of the Character Sheet.

First, it's useful to know your character's height; it might be relevant in a situation where, for example, he needs to squeeze into a small space, or his height is important in some other way. Most hara are a few centimetres taller than the average human; this depends on the age at which they were incepted. The character's height will be between 170cm and 200cm, with occasional variants, owing to his age and his physical stature when he was human. To convert height into inches divide the height in cm by 2.54 (there are 12 inches to the foot). For a height conversion table see next page.

Your character's weight is also significant, as it will affect his ability to store Agmara energy. This is explained on **page 191**. Most hara are slender, and compared to a human of similar size and build, they weigh less. The weight of your character will be between 77kg and 104 kg. It's rare a character will go beyond these limits.



To calculate your character's weight in pounds, multiply their weight in kilograms by 2.2. For a weight conversion table see below.

A calculation to work out weight in relation to height for a hara: from a base value of 170cm, minus the character's height, and then add the base value of 77kg. ((Height - 170cm) + 77kg.)

So a character who is 185cm (73in / 6'1") tall would be around 92Kg (200lbs / 14s 4lbs)

Additional physical attributes help other players visualise your character's appearance. The hair and eye colour is generally the same as any human's, although it's possible that your character could develop a subtle tint toward an unnatural colour.

The Character Sheet's **Distinguishing Features** section is for any other features that stand out on your character, such as a scar that won't heal, or pigmentation of the skin.

Name	<u>Rosko</u>	Player	<u>Gabriel Strange</u>
Current Tribe	<u>Uigenna</u>	Caste	<u>Kaimana</u> Level <u>Arch</u>
Age	<u>19</u>	Height	<u>187</u> Weight <u>90</u> Hair Colour <u>Blue</u> Eye Colour <u>Green</u>
Place of Birth	<u>Carmine</u>	Current Town	<u>Carmine</u> Current Country <u>Megalithia</u>
Distinguishing Features			

Weight Conversion			Height Conversion		
Kg	lbs	Stone lbs	cm	in	feet' in"
50	110	7s 12lbs	150	59	4'11"
55	121	8s 9 lbs	155	61	5'1"
60	132	9s 6lbs	160	63	5'3"
65	143	10s 3lbs	165	65	5'5"
70	154	11s 0lbs	170	67	5'7"
75	165	11s 11lbs	175	68	5'8"
80	176	12s 8lbs	180	71	5'11"
85	187	13s 5lbs	185	73	6'1"
90	198	14s 2lbs	190	75	6'3"
95	209	14s 13lbs	195	77	6'5"
100	220	15s 10lbs	200	79	6'7"
105	231	16s 7lbs	205	81	6'9"
110	242	17s 4lbs	210	83	7'1"
115	253	18s 1lbs	215	85	7'3"
120	264	18s 12lbs	220	87	7'5"

N.B. these are just rough guide for quick conversion. To work out this exactly use the calculations detailed above.

You can use a descriptive term, such as tall, for your character's height, rather than a numerical value, such as 6ft 3 ins. But, Weight should always be represented by a numeral. This is because your character's weight is an important factor during Agmara usage, and therefore requires a numerical value.

Rolls and Rounding up!

Many times during Character Generation (unless you are using the fixed point system) and possibly during play, occasions will arise when you need to divide one number by another. Sometimes when dividing these numbers you'll be left with a fraction (a number which is not whole). The best option is to round them off to the nearest whole number, so a 4.70 would become 5 and a 3.30 a 3. Some confusion can arise when the fraction is say 7.50 because the number is in the middle. Which way should it go? The answer is simple: all fractions of .10, .20, .30 and .40 must be rounded down, and the rest rounded up. If any indecision arises, the Storyteller has final say.

"When I arrived they were all dead, come and look..."

- Besta Zamhalama, Varr

Statistics [Stat8]

"Do all of your recipes revolve around beer?"

- Yanosh Sale, Unneah Scavenger

These are a numeric representation of the basic abilities of living organisms. They give you the capacity to judge your character's capabilities. Stats also enable your character to interact with his environment realistically. Without this information, you don't know whether your character is able to act as he desires. For example, you would be stumped when comparing your character's cognitive ability with that of another.

Statistics (Stats), though a little cumbersome for the newcomer to role-playing, are the quickest and easiest method for your character to challenge others in the game world, and for him to interact with the environment.

In the Wraeththu world, Stats are divided into two sections; primary and secondary. The primaries are common to all living creatures; the secondary Stats apply only to the harish form.

If you wish to play a human character, you don't need work out the secondary Stats before play. Also, your primaries will be slightly lower than those of a harish character. (These differences will be explained later in this section.)

Later in character generation, you'll be able to transfer points from area to another. In this way, if you think one area is a little low for your character, you can boost his Stats with extra points. Some elements of his background should have already determined which Stats are likely to predominate; this will make point transfer decisions easier.

Primary Stats

The following six Stats are the basic building blocks of a character and you need to work them out before developing the rest. Later, the Stats will reflect the character's skills and other areas of his life, such as physical abilities.

Stat Modifiers (Stat Mod.) are the way the Stats affect the rest of your character. These numbers might seem low, but they can help boost skills to the next level, because of a character's natural abilities. Stat Modifications will be discussed later in this section.

Primary statistics range from 1 to 20. All new characters will have Stats between 5 and 15. A stat of higher than 15 is extremely rare in human society, and is the reserve of famous artists and athletes. A new character shouldn't break the 15 point barrier without good reason, unless the character's background reflects his renown with that ability. All Stats above this level need advance approval from the Storyteller. During play, your character will develop his abilities over time.

Strength [STR]

Your character's muscles and physical structure are represented by the Strength Stat. These measurements, though crude, offer an insight into his capabilities. A physically weak character may have a Strength rating of 5 or 6; this will inhibit him in many ways. A character with a high Strength would be much more capable of inflicting significant damage during combat, and would make him a formidable opponent. As it's not just a representation of muscle power, strength can reflect his ability to heal and take damage. Any character whose background suggests an adept combatant or other physical ability should have a high Strength rating.

"Thanks, Dag, now we're the ones who have to change the tyre on the beer truck. Do you realise your little stunt back there landed us in this fucking nightmare...? Dag, there's no way you can lift that truck on your own. Come off it, you might look the part, but you're not that strong... Well, bugger me sideways with the rotting leg of a human, you can lift it! Hold on, I'll get the spare..."

- Calambus Mint, Uigenna

"The Uigenna and the Unneah all look the same to me; the main problem is you sometimes never find out which is which, until it's too late."

- Ystrik har Sulh, on his first visit to Megalithica

Dexterity [DEX]

Dexterity is a representation of your character's physical speed and flexibility. Strength alone won't make him proficient in combat, because a faster, more agile character will run rings around him. Dexterity is important in many other ways, because agile characters will have a greater ability to manipulate their bodies. Climbing, acrobatics, tumbling and falling are a few instances where Dexterity is valuable. A high Dexterity is useful if your character wishes to avoid combat, as it will provide raw speed with which he can avoid blows from an adversary.

"I may have had a few to drink, souls, but I can still shoot a beer off Zip's head... Now which one is it...? Hold still Zip, I'll go for the 'you' in the middle first, it won't hurt a bit... Hey! You moved! That's just not fair, Zip. You know I could have done it, but you moved... Oh I did hit it. Ah well I told you, I'm bloody good..."

- Dag Viking, Uigenna

"First it was the Uigenna that were coming to kill us, and then the Varrs and now everyone says the Gelaming are coming to take over. I wish I was a Kakkahaar, no har messes with them!"

- Depressed Unneah

Stamina [STA]

This is a key element, enabling your character to work for extended periods of time. His Stamina represents his endurance and ability to work under physically and mentally demanding conditions. For example, a character with high Stamina and Strength is able to carry large weights around for extended periods. If he just had high Strength, he might only be able to work intensively for short periods. Stamina is the key to a well-rounded character; it will allow extended physical activities and enable him to endure mental stress. Be sure your character's Stamina reflects that of which he is capable. Poorly judged Stamina leaves him with problems, which can lead to disgruntled players.

"How many miles is it now, Dag? Last night I told you that rolling the last barrel of beer down that bank would only get you into trouble, even though it was my idea... A few more hours and we should have these barrels back. You just keep a hold of your two and I'll tend for mine... Nearly there, I can see the camp now and the muscles in my legs feel like they're on fire. How about you Dag...? Dag...? DAG!"

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna

Perception [PER]

Perception covers the ability to quickly perceive small details in the environment, spot anomalies and find hidden clues, along with other similar attributes. It's your character's mental ability to see beyond the normal and mundane, and find the patterns hidden beneath. A character with high perception is useful as a researcher or hunter; anything where the ability to find subtle clues is essential. Perception pertains to more than simply sight; it includes all the senses, even the sixth sense, the mind's ability to read between the lines.

"Ahhhh! I can see it... It's there. You just have to know where to look... I'll give you 10 more minutes and if you haven't found it, I'll have to show you... 5... 4... 3... 2... 1... Time's up, Mint. I told you I'd have to point it out to you. Look, it's there, that's the place, just between those two ridges, ha! What, what do you mean, it's the other direction between the lake and the river? I can read maps you know! Oh, I guess you are right, it was blatantly obvious. Lucky I was just testing ya!"

- Dag Viking, Uigenna

"This will be the last time I see you. I don't care what your excuse is!"

- Franziz har Varr

Willpower [WIL]

Willpower works hand in hand with Stamina, but on a much deeper level. Your character's Willpower is used in many ways; in magic and for any action where your character attempts to force someone into doing something that they would not normally

do. It's a measure of his ability to endure the problems life throws at him. Those with high Willpower will be able to fight the big fight without worry. A character with low Willpower will probably need a helping hand to keep to the path he has chosen.

"I know, Mint - she meant a lot to you, and I know how you feel. She meant a lot to the whole tribe... All these many miles, hundreds of parties, and she was at every one of them... Mint, at some point you have to let go of the past. Her passing was a big loss for us all. I'm sure we'll get over this together. We just need to push ourselves to reach the next city... Come on, Mint, she will be sadly missed, I'm sure we can get another 'beer truck' in the next city. Come on; let's push on, so we can reach that goal."

- Zip Hamstring, *Uigenna*

"I can reach out with my mind and listen to the universe talking. That is enough magic for me."

- Shill, *Gelarning sorcery student*

Intelligence [INT]

This is not a measure of your character's knowledge, but rather his ability to work out problems and solve puzzles. Coupled with a high Perception and Stamina, Intelligence makes your character a formidable adept in the mental arts. An intelligent character thinks quickly; he can find solutions on the spot. Most of the time, he can think his way out of situations without resorting to combat, or other physical means. Many great leaders have a high intelligence; their ability to think on their feet, and get people out of tight situations, is their key to success. (To work out your Character's IQ, multiply his Intelligence by 11.4)

"Come on, Mint - just hit him. He won't feel it and we can at least get to the beer... That talking shit doesn't work with these primitive humans... Mint, just hit him, I'm getting desperate. I need my beer. Hit him... Oh! How the hell did you manage that? He just walked off and you didn't even lay a finger on him... That was quick thinking telling him you would let your animals loose on him if he didn't leave... Animals...? What animals? We don't have any..."

- Dag Viking, *Uigenna*

"This island suffered cruelly due to fates unknown. Humanity had fallen in this land and we Sulh have a lot of work ahead of us."

- Poltenemy har Sulh

Determining Stats

As mentioned before, statistics are measured in numeric values between 1 and 20. A new character's basic Stats should be between 5 and 15. This narrow band of values gives your character a fighting chance, without him being overly powerful or world-renowned for his abilities.

System: By now, you'll know whether you'll start the game with a human or harish character. Both races generate their Stats in a similar manner. If there are differences in certain areas, they are explained where appropriate.

All new characters start with a base value of 4 in each Stat (3 if starting out as human).

Roll one six-sided die six times, recording each value on some note paper.

Once you have these numbers, assign one to each stat, (strength, dexterity, stamina, perception, willpower and intelligence), adding them to the base values. Use your character's background to guide you in their distribution. When you have assigned these six numbers, you already have an idea of how your character's physical abilities will pan out.

Now, add the finishing touches, by distributing 10 additional points across all six Stats as you see fit (no Stat can go above fifteen unless the Storyteller agrees). This enables you to bring the character in line with his background. (4 [3 for human] + 1D6 per stat + 10 Bonus points)

If you don't spend all 10 points, they can be saved. Add them to the development pool for later use. Once points are sacrificed to this pool, they are spent at the value stated later in character generation.

Once you've determined your character's basic Stats, and all the points have been distributed, record these values in the relevant **Stats** column on the Character Sheet.

Additional Rule: You can re-roll one die from the six, when determining the values for Stats.

If you prefer the fixed point based system, rather than rolling dice, you have 44 points to spend on your Stats. Starting with the base of 4 (base of 3 if starting as human). However, you still need to keep within the parameters specified earlier. (4 [3 for human])

Tribal Bonuses

Tribal Bonuses are irrelevant to characters starting as human. Human characters need only fill in the **Total** column. During development of your character's background, you might have chosen the tribe into which he was incepted. Now add the bonuses described in the **Tribes** section. Each one has 3 points allocated to a stat. Record these bonuses in the **Bonus** column of the Character Sheet, and then calculate the **Total** column, adding all bonuses. See **Page 117-156** for bonus relevant to your characters tribe.

Stat Modifications

As mentioned earlier, your character's Stats have what's called Stat Modifiers. These affect their Skills and other abilities. Most characters will gain a +1, and some may gain +2 to various Skills. The Stat Modifiers represent the actions of your character's natural physical and mental abilities, upon skills and other abilities. For example if your character is physically fit, then he'll naturally be better at athletics than a character with low physical Stats. You can work out these Stat Modifiers using the table below. Look at each Stat **Total** on your Character Sheet, and record the Stat Modifier in the **Mod** column.

Stats		Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.	Mod.
Strength	[STR]	[12]	[]	[12]	[12]	[+1]
Dexterity	[DEX]	[15]	[+1]	[16]	[16]	[+2]
Stamina	[STA]	[10]	[+1]	[11]	[11]	[+1]
Perception	[PER]	[9]	[+1]	[10]	[10]	[+1]
Willpower	[WIL]	[9]	[]	[9]	[9]	[-]
Intelligence	[INT]	[7]	[]	[7]	[7]	[-]
Secondary Stats						
Energy	[EN]	[32]	[]	[32]	[32]	[]
Psyche	[PSY]	[2]	[]	[2]	[2]	[]
Composure	[CMP]	[7]	[]	[7]	[7]	[]

Stat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Stat Modifier	-2	-2	-1	-1	0	0	0	0	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+2	+2	+2	+3	+3	+4	+5

DEVELOPMENT POINTS

The Development point will enable you to add finishing touches and give the character a more realistic edge. You'll spend your character's Development Points for those extra few things that define him as a quasi-real entity. You can buy Resources, which will determine to some degree what equipment and lifestyle your character has. Other aspects, such as Associates, are determined between the player and the Storyteller, based upon the details of the character's background.

Your character's Development points are worked out now so if you wish to spend them on your character's Stats. Then you should do so now, as many aspects of character generation are worked out from your Stat Modifiers, and finalising your stats now will make life easier later.

In the next sections you might spend every last Development Point given to you. Spare points from Stats, Skills, Merits and Flaws, or lack thereof, can be spent to boost

areas of your character which are deficient, or you think aren't quite up to the standard of his background. Once you've finished, you'll have few or no development points left. If you have some you cannot spend, you can always dump multiples of 5 in your Fate Pool. You can also use development points on Merits if you wish. Any other spare points that cannot be spent must be discarded. You cannot use them again.

The Fate pool can be seen as: 'the luck of the Irish', 'against all odds' and 'uncanny success'. It can be used during play to change the result of a die roll. See the 'What Fate has in Store for You?' section on page 252.

System: To work out how many additional development points your character gains, add the total roll of two six-sided dice to 20 base points. Once you have worked out your additional points, add the total to the points you have remaining from the early stages of character generation. As you progress through character generation you might overspend on Merits, so you will need to subtract some of these points. $(2D6 + 20)$

Additional Rule: For the fixed point character generation system, you have 28 development points; no die rolls are required.

"This is the time of myth and legend, our actions now might shape the stories and tales of the future."

- Skank Marchell, Ex Uigenna, now lives in Morass, Thaine.

You can use development points to buy levels of **Resources**. Bear in mind your character's background. Use the table on page 178 to discover what each point of Resources can offer. Resources are rated from 1 to 5; 1 being the lowest base level. If you don't spend any points on Resources, it will make your character the 'lowest of the low' and possibly even an 'owned' har. The costs of Resources are 5 development points for 1 point of resources. Once you have decided upon his level of Resources, enter that data on to your Character Sheet. This will also help determine to what equipment your character will have access. For more information on **Resources** see page 374.

You can also spend development points on Stats, Skills, Magical Abilities and Fate. The rate at which you can spend these points is detailed in the table below. For example, Stat points would cost 5 development points to gain one additional point to the base value of the Stat. Once you have spent up, discard any remaining points. For a quick run down see the table below.

Group	Development Cost
Statistics	5
Skills	3
Magic (Manipulation & Resistance)	5
Magic (Matter and Energy)	10
Magic (Changing States)	20
Fate	5
Resources	5

MERITS AND FLAWS

No one is perfect. Many of us have flaws we don't talk about, or obvious ones that everyone can see. But some people also have enhanced abilities above the average. Merits and Flaws enable you to craft a truly unique character that's complex and may have many layers to their personality. Sometimes, it's good fun to play out your character's flaws, but as with all character attributes, pick flaws that fit with his background. Some combinations of Merits and Flaws won't fit well with this. You can always consult the Storyteller in such situations.

Later in the character generation section on **page 228**, there's a list of common Merits and Flaws. Many of these are just ideas; you can adapt and invent your own as you see fit. Remember, the use of Merits and Flaws is optional; you do not have to use them. Their advantage is that they can add a wide range of possibilities to the role-playing experience, and how you play your character.

At any point, the Storyteller can veto or nullify the effects of Merits or Flaws, so it's always best to get final approval for them from your Storyteller. You can also ask around your group as to what they think of some of your ideas; you don't want to be in conflict with the other players.

We recommend that the Storyteller limits the amount of Merits and Flaws you can have, as characters with too many flaws will become unplayable. As a guide, 10 points of flaws is enough; beyond that is bordering on ludicrous. When choosing your character's Merits and Flaws, always keep in mind what you want his weaknesses and advantages to be.

System: To buy Merits and Flaws, you spend or gain development pool points. For every Merit or Flaw you buy, there'll be a number listed with it. That number should be subtracted from your development pool for Merits, and added for Flaws. For example, if a character had a Development pool of 20 points and took a 2 point Merit they would have 18 points remaining. If they took a 3 point Flaw, they would have 23 points to spend.

Once you have decided what Merits and Flaws you want to take, you need to work out whether you have gained or lost any Development Pool points and alter your current total accordingly. Later you will have some free points, so don't worry if you run out. You can buy that essential Merit later.

"All the plagues and the madness that came before have only left us and the animals behind. We must respect the land or it may deal us the same fate as humanity."
- Sulh Hienama

Merits & Flaws	Pts.	M / F
_____	[]	O O
_____	[]	O O
_____	[]	O O
_____	[]	O O
_____	[]	O O
_____	[]	O O
_____	[]	O O

RESOURCES

Since the collapse of human society, there is little material wealth to be owned and currency that still exists is just about worthless. Yet some things will still have value within your character's tribe. These might give you an element of power or status. Resources are rated between 1 and 5. There is also a 0 rating for players who do not want to spend development points on Resources. You should discuss with the Storyteller what you have of value and where it's located. Not all Resources are small items, so you could have anything from a house to a small island off the coast of Megalithica.

Use the following table to work out an adequate level of Resources, referring always to your character's background. If you have a Resource score of 5 then your background needs to reflect your wealthy upbringing. A low level Resource score might need explaining, unless your character has broken all ties with their past. This table represents the resources your character starts the game with; however based on their actions you might lose some if not all of your character's resources. It is worth noting down what exactly what items of importance your character owns, i.e. a working

generator, farmable land, etc.. This is more useful during actual play than simply just having a notation of 'Resources: 3'. Any assets your character takes needs to be approved by the Storyteller.

Level	Example	Availability Rank
0	Your character has few or no funds. More than likely he is an owned har or a street kid. He is homeless and penniless. He has to fight to survive for scraps from others around him.	Nothing
1	Your character manages to sell his skills and abilities to other hara; this brings in enough food and items of value with which to bargain. He's not living in the gutter, but he doesn't live in his own home either. He probably drifts or lives in tribe-supplied accommodation.	Common
2	Your character probably has a steady position working within the tribe; maybe he's part of the tribe's military or spy network. He probably has a small dwelling in the tribal homelands. Many would say at this level your character is stuck in a rut, but more than likely he is comfortable.	Un-Common
3	At this level your character is probably in business for himself, with a few employees. He would own a sizeable house and hold a small amount of influence over the local hara.	Exclusive
4	Your character is well off. Although he might not have much land, he could own two or three houses and run a business, which has ample employees. There is little he cannot afford; he suffers more from the fact that the really expensive things in life aren't his.	Rare
5	Your character is in control of a large area of land, maybe he is a Phylarch, or similar in rank. He could be the head of a sizeable business. He has enough money to survive and can afford most things he desires.	Ultra Rare

N.B. As resources fluctuate throughout game play it's useful to keep a check on your character's current Resources level.

SKILLS

Stats determine your character's physical characteristics that are in measurable in the physical body. Skills are different. They are not so much to do with intelligence or your character's ability to solve problems, but more to do with his knowledge; the data he's collected and assimilated during his life.

Some Skills are irrelevant in the world of Wraeththu. With the downfall of civilization and the failing power grids, expertise in many fields has become redundant. You'll find a few of these somewhat outdated talents in the Skill lists, simply because you might choose to start a game in an era where they are still of use. Plus, you never know what the future might hold. Some of the Skills your character had previously thought useless could be adapted to different areas. The Skill lists can be located on **page 200**.

"Wow, an entire crate of peach brandy!"

- A Uigenna scavenging party strike it rich

Like Stats, the Skill level is dependent on knowledge and experience. The more proficient your character is in a particular field, the higher his Skill. With a Skill level of 1, your character has little or no knowledge in an area. The average level of Skill is 8. Anything above this level denotes a Skill he would use in a work situation or as a dedicated hobby. Above 15 is extremely rare. If your character has a Skill level this high, they'll be a minimum of twenty-eight years old and be working in a profession where it's very important. High Skill needs to be reflected within the background, subject to the approval of the Storyteller. Aim to average your character's Skills between 6 and 12. This will reflect the Skill of a sixteen to twenty-five year old. See **page 242**, for more information on how Skills work within the game.

See the table below for a rough guide to Skill levels and real world examples of experience.

Level	Qualification	Experience	Quick Description
20	Twenty-five years constant study in one particular field, not many characters reach this level of expertise.	Your character is in the top 1% in the world. They are known by everyone. Their name is mentioned by many and their face is instantly recognizable.	Godlike
15-19	Multiple degrees in a collective field, equivalent to fifteen years study and research.	Your character is in the top 10% in the world. They are known by many for their work.	Sage
13-14	PhD, or research degree, this is post degree education; which has an additional two to three years research.	Used as a main profession, used every day and constantly in their life. Your character may have some minor celebrity status in this field.	Accomplished
10-12	BA (Hons) or degree equivalent, or up to three years university study	Used a few times a week, used in a work environment, also practiced and studied a lot.	Adept
7-9	A level, or college/further education qualification, equivalent to two years post high school study	Used a few times a month, regular practice and regular use.	Competent
5-6	High/Secondary school qualification, such as SAT's or GCSE's or equivalent to three to four years of school study.	Used a few times a year, practiced on an occasional basis.	Novice
1-4	Small training course which lasts for a few weeks.	Little or no practical experience, used few times in a life time	Beginner

Stats have an effect upon the Skills your character uses. Strength, Dexterity and Stamina will have a big effect upon physical Skills. Each Skill has a devoted category based upon a Stat, i.e. Social Skill is governed by Willpower and Technical Skills are governed by Intelligence.

Each individual Skill has a Stat that directly affects it; some of these might be the same as the relevant category. Some Skills use Stats from two areas, because they require a combined amount of physical and mental input.

When you are selecting your character's Skills, you need to note down the relevant Stats, (the Stat for the group, and the stat for each individual skill), then you can work out the bonuses your character gains (work out the bonuses when you have finished spending development points). Take the two relevant Stat Modifiers add them together and divide by two, and note these in the column next to the Skill. Also if you are starting the game after your character is incepted, you will need to add their Tribe's Skill Bonuses as well, which are found in the Tribes Section. Combat skills don't get any of these bonuses, because of the way the combat system works. Each area of combat gets bonuses based on different Stats to create the base Combat Action Modifiers. This is explained in the following section.

For example Agroth has Strength 14, and Dexterity 12, so his Climbing Skill would get an additional bonus to its final score. So if he spends 10 points on the climbing skill, his final score would be 11, the 10 points with the bonus of +1 to the Climbing skill from the physical stats.

We have replicated the Stat Modifiers table here, and later in this section, for easy reference.

To work out the bonus to each Skill from the characters Stats, take the two relevant Stat Modifiers for each Skill, add them together and divide by two, then note the result in the column next to the Skill.

Stat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Stat Modifier	-2	-2	-1	-1	0	0	0	0	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+2	+2	+2	+3	+3	+4	+5

N.B.: The Tribal Skill Bonuses represent your character's initial weeks of training after Inception. If your character starts as human, he doesn't gain these bonuses. Your

It might seem as though these points favour the more intelligent character, but the more physical characters will be able to rely on Stats for physical actions and skills. Only a few physical skills actually require expert training to attempt.

storyteller should note this lack in experience and enable your character to advance in the initial months after Inception. If the Skill bonuses are in areas that are specific to a tribe, such as the Obliviata's proficiency with languages, your character will develop this Skill before any others. For more information on this subject see **Rites of Inception** page 253.

If you have developed a background for your character, the choice of Skills and Skill areas should be straightforward. You will already have an idea what he did at school and/or for a living. If you find that you have bought the Skills he needs, and you still have spare points to spend, it might be worth developing a few hobbies for him. If you cannot spend all the Skill points, you can add them to your character's development pool for later use. If you find you cannot buy enough Skills to match your character's background, you can use development points at the end of character generation.

Once you have decided upon your character's Skills, you should get the Storyteller's

approval for them, as some Skills might not be available or might not yet exist. It's always best to make sure your background covers the areas in which your character wants to develop Skills, as the Storyteller will be more inclined to accept some Skills over others.

The Skills are listed in a later section this can be found on page 200.

System: The amount of points a character has to spend on Skills is worked out by adding the following Stat Modifiers together: Intelligence multiplied by 2, plus Perception and the roll of two six-sided dice. Then add 45 bonus points ((INT Mod. x 2) + PER Mod. + 2 D6 + 45).

Note the total on a piece of paper, then you can buy what Skills you need. You can buy them at 1 point per skill level. Once you have worked out what Skills you want, add the Tribal Bonuses (if you are playing a har).

Additional Rule: If you have opted for the fixed point character generation system, use the following: add the Stat Modifiers for Intelligence, multiplied by two, plus Perception to 53 bonus points ((INT Mod. x 2) + PER Mod. + 53). Again add your Tribal Bonuses to the relevant Skills.

N.B.: These skill points are also used to buy Combat Skills. However, combat skills get no direct bonuses from Stat Modifiers.

skills	Stats.	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.
Climbing	[STR/DEX]	[6]	[+2]	[8]
Stealth	[DEX/PER]	[8]	[+2]	[10]
Butchery	[WIL/INT]	[8]	[—]	[8]
Survival	[PER/INT]	[4]	[—]	[4]
Streetwise	[INT/PER]	[3]	[+1]	[4]
Toxicology	[INT/PER]	[3]	[+1]	[4]
	[/]	[]	[]	[]
	[/]	[]	[]	[]
	[/]	[]	[]	[]
	[/]	[]	[]	[]
	[/]	[]	[]	[]
	[/]	[]	[]	[]
	[/]	[]	[]	[]
	[/]	[]	[]	[]
Combat Styles				
Two Weapon		[8]	[]	[8]
1H Fighting		[5]	[]	[5]
		[]	[]	[]
		[]	[]	[]
Combat Skills				
Brawl/Unarmed		[4]	[+1]	[5]
Dagger (Basic)		[8]	[]	[8]
		[]	[]	[]
		[]	[]	[]
		[]	[]	[]

COMBAT SKILLS

There are many different ways to resolve conflict, but occasionally combat cannot be avoided. In this section, you'll learn how to calculate your character's Base Combat Action Modifiers, and the bonuses gained from any combat.

The Base Combat Action Modifiers reflect your character's physical makeup and its effects in combat. An agile fighter is faster with a melee weapon, but a stronger

fighter is able to inflict a greater amount of damage. The same goes for ranged weapons: Perception and Intelligence play a greater part with these more technical weapons. For example, if your character knows which parts of the body to hit in order to take down a foe quickly, with a clear line of sight, he's going to fare better in combat than if he didn't have this knowledge.

The multiple Combat Action Modifiers represent different disciplines within combat. Each use different physical and mental abilities. These are required for more realistic combat, and add to the strategy used in such melees.

The Base Combat Action Modifiers will give your character additional bonuses based upon their Stats. Coupled with good training, this will make him a formidable combatant. Certain weapons will gain additional modifiers for your character's final bonus. These will be explained later in the **Art of War** section, on page 266.

Unlike normal Skills, Combat Skills don't directly take bonuses from Stats, only the general areas of ranged and close combat skills. So the Pistol Skill will not gain a bonus to its level from Stats, but instead at the base modifier, where many elements of ranged and close combat are similar. This base Combat Action Modifier is similar to the Stat Modifier used on Skills, in so much as this is your character's raw natural ability with weapons. It is split into two areas - Ranged and Close Combat - and the Combat Action Modifiers apply to any weapons in which your character is skilled.

Combat Skills are broken up into two distinct areas. The two main areas are Style and the Weapons Skill with its specialisation. The first area, Style does not teach your character how to use a specific weapon. Instead it teaches how to work with an offensive and defensive strategy in close combat. Also it helps with basic weapon handling, so your character doesn't accidentally cut off his own limbs.

Weapon Styles are split into basic areas, which are *1H Fighting Style*, *2H Fighting Style*, *2 Weapon Fighting Style*, *Pole Arm Fighting Style* and *Fencing*. However Style is not used in ranged combat, only in close combat.

Your character only needs to take each Combat Style once, and this must be equal to or higher than any Weapon Skill they wish to use. If not Style is taken they will not be able to take the Close combat Skill above 6. For example, a character who has the *Sword Skill* at 12 must have at least *1H Fighting Style* (or other Skill which will enable him to use that sword) at 12 or greater. The odd ones out are *Fencing* and *Brawl/Unarmed* which can be taken as Lone Skills, with no specialisation or Style elements. If the character takes one of the two Lone Skills they only gain the Base & General Combat Action Modifiers.

This may seem a little harsh for players who want characters to use close combat. However, it is more realistic, as anyone can pick up a gun and pull a trigger, with a modicum of success. Using a sword in combat is much more difficult; attempting to defend and attack without damaging yourself could end in disaster. This is most prevalent when fighting against trained foes. Anyone who is trained in close combat will easily take down an untrained combatant. However, during ranged combat, the untrained person can still get a few shots in the right direction, which might make their foe think twice about sticking their neck out. It's worth bearing this in mind; any character can use a weapon without having any training. However they'll get no bonuses to their rolls in combat, compared to someone who is trained.

Fencing is quite common and is taught in many places around the world, though it involves only the basics of combat. Therefore, you only get your basic Close Combat and General Combat Action Modifiers. However the styles come into their own, if your character has been trained by a School of Arms. In which case, he could have been taught to defend and attack in a set way or using certain moves.

Many styles mentioned in this book are very basic. More complex styles can be developed, which give bonuses to certain areas of combat. The basic Style allows you to access weapon specific bonuses. The more complex Styles reflect the deeper training and strategies taught by schools, but not specific martial styles.

"Nice house, you've got here... If we plant the explosive charge just there, we can topple the whole block!"

- Jozt har Uigenna

"We were happy until you came. But you don't really give a shit about that, do you?"

- Sarah, human fighter, to a Varr soldier.

"The time has come for enlightenment, whether you like it or not."
 - Shard, Uligena leader to captive inceptees

The second area of Combat Skills concerns when your character specialises with a weapon; for example, a specific type of Sword (Katana) or Axe (Great Axe). In each weapon category, there are some suggestions for specialisations. The specialisations within the weapon groups reflect your character's training with a specific sub-category of weapon. For example, in the case of blades, using a katana in combat is different to using a broad sword. So your character needs to specialise in the relevant category. He can train in a Weapon Skill multiple times to become adept with different types of weapons within each Skill. However should your character take the Sword (Katana) Skill and then grab a broad sword for a fight, he will only be able to use his Base Close Combat Action Modifiers.

For ranged combat, you don't need the style element, you just need to select a weapon Skill such as Pistols and specialise with a type of pistol. As in close combat, your character needs to take a Skill and specialise. He will lose the specialisation bonuses if he uses a different type of pistol to the one with which he trained, but will gain his Base Ranged Combat Action Modifiers. More information on combat is given in the **Art of War** section on page 266.

It's advisable to think about what weapons your character would have access to. Just owning a replica sword and swinging it around a garden is not training. Training teaches you much more, such as confidence in combat when dealing with equal or superior foes. This is not something you can learn at home.

System: once you have decided what weapons your character will wield, plan out whether you need to take a Style or multiple Styles. It is best to purchase your Styles first, (i.e. before Weapon Skills), up to a level where you feel they will be effective. Once you have purchased your Styles, select the weapon skills you want and spend points on them. The Style that relates to your chosen Weapon Skills should be equal or higher than the skill.

E.G. If a character has Sword (Katana) at 10 then 1H Fighting Style should be greater than or equal to 10, and all relevant bonuses will apply. For all swords where the character has no specialisation the character only uses the Base Close and General Combat Action Modifiers. For any weapons that are not swords, and no skills or specialisations are relevant, the character gets Base Combat Action Modifiers and a -5 to all actions on combat rolls.

If Pistol (Desert Eagle) is 10, the character will gain all relevant combat bonuses, for all pistols which the character is not specialised in, then the character will only use the Base Ranged Combat Action Modifiers in combat. If the character uses a Machine Gun (AK-47) and has no relevant training or specialisation, they will gain Base Combat Action Modifiers and a -5 to all actions on combat rolls Base Combat Action Modifiers and a -5 to all actions on combat rolls.

Weapons	Damage	AP	Attacks (S/3RB/A)	RT	Weight	Size	Ammo	Range (S/M/L)
Dagger(Basic)	[104+2]	[4]	[8 / /]	[-]	[0.6]	[0.3]	[-]	[- / - / -]
Brawl/Unarmed	[104+3]	[-]	[8 / /]	[-]	[-]	[-]	[-]	[- / - / -]
	[]	[]	[/ /]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[/ /]
	[]	[]	[/ /]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[/ /]
	[]	[]	[/ /]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[/ /]
	[]	[]	[/ /]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[/ /]

For Example: Agroth wishes to use a Katana and takes it at level 10; a Katana being primarily a one handed weapon. He needs to take 1H Fighting Style at least at level 10. In combat, Agroth will use the bonuses from the Close Combat and Base General Combat Action Modifiers and the Skill specialisation. However Agroth drops the Katana and it slips away under a table, so he grabs a broad sword off the table instead. With this broad sword, he only uses his Base Close Combat and General Action Modifiers, and not his specialisations. However disaster strikes again; the broad sword breaks, and Agroth is left with only a kitchen knife. As he has no specialisation in any knife

skill, he gets Base Combat Action Modifiers and a -5 to all actions in combat and has to work with base rolls.

Later on, Agroth is caught in a gun fight. He uses the pistol he has been trained with and specialised in, so can incorporate both the specialisation bonuses and the Ranged Combat and General Combat Action Modifiers. He runs out of ammo and has to use a pistol with which he's not familiar. This leaves him with only the Base Ranged and General Combat Action Modifiers for this weapon. Again disaster strikes for unlucky Agroth. The new pistol jams and needs repairing. Without thought he picks up an AK-47 machine gun and now has no bonuses or Combat Action Modifiers with this weapon and is left with Base Combat Action Modifiers and a -5 to all actions on combat rolls

"It's over. Deal with it"
- Restin, Varr soldier, to a defeated human woman.

Base Combat Action Modifiers

In this section, you'll learn how to calculate your character's Base Combat Action Modifiers, which were mentioned in the previous section. These are split in to the three main groups: Close Combat Action Modifiers, which directly effect melee, Unarmed Combat Skills, and Ranged Combat Action Modifiers, which are used for any weapon thrown or fired at range. The final group is General Combat Action Modifiers which are used in close and ranged combat.

Close Combat

Combat Skill Bonuses	Lvl.	Aim	Dodge	Damage	Speed	Block	Roll	Leap	Repair
Base Close Combat Modifiers		+3	+2	+1	+1	+1	+2	+1	+1
Base Ranged Combat Modifiers			0	0	+2	N/A			0
Dagger (Basic)	8	+5	+4	+1	+1	+1	+5	+1	+2
Brawl/Unarmed	5	+4	+3	+3	+1	+1	+3	+1	-

The Close Combat Action Modifiers are broken down into seven distinct areas, which you use and combine to aid your character's effectiveness in combat. These Combat Action Modifiers are the basis of all Hand-to-Hand (H-to-H) Combat, Melee Combat, and any other form of intimate combat. From table legs to a Kukri, these Combat Action Modifiers, coupled with the bonuses from weapon Skills, will enable your character to use all of their combat potential. How combat works will be explained fully in the rules section, where there will be examples of how all these bonuses come in to play.

Once you have calculated out your character's Close Combat Action Modifiers, enter them in the relevant section of the Character Sheet.

Dodge

In combat, the ability to dodge a blow is essential. A successful Dodge will get your character out of the way as a blow passes by. However, there is one drawback with dodging; it doesn't ready your character to make his next attack/action. Dodging is a desperate attempt to avoid powerful blows. You might end up in a position where he has to re-evaluate the combat situation. This delays his next blow slightly and could leave him open to a second attack/action that he needs to dodge.

System: Your character's base close combat Dodge bonus is the final total of their Dexterity Stat Modifier (DEX Mod.)

Damage

Usually the main aim of close combat is to do massive damage to an opponent quickly, to render a foe incapacitated or dead. A strong character, who has trained with a weapon, can use his Strength to best effect during combat. Putting his Strength to good use will do additional damage to a foe and hopefully take them out faster, possibly

These bonuses are given instead of the normal Skill bonus, so a skill bought at 17 will remain at 17, and get no Combat Action Modifier to this value from Stats. Also the Skills training, and in some cases Styles, can affect the basic combat actions.

with only one blow. This close combat Damage bonus is added to the total damage rolled during any given combat phase.

System: Your character's base close combat **Damage** bonus is the final total of their Strength Stat Modifier (STR Mod.) after Development points have been spent.

Speed

Another factor in helping resolve combat quickly and efficiently is your character's speed and efficiency with a weapon. A Dextrous character can wield a weapon faster, and bring it to readiness more efficiently, so that it's ready for the next blow. Close Combat speed also has factors that are dependent upon your character's Perception, as bringing a weapon to readiness in the right place to parry their foe is essential. Your character's Perception enables him to pinpoint a foe within the environment, and know what stance and position to take for his next action. Each weapon has its speed factor; smaller weapons are faster, because they are lighter and less bulky; larger weapons are of course slower. A large weapon that does the most damage is not always the best option. Faster weapons might do the same damage over the same time frame, but from two blows.

System: Your character's Base Close Combat **Speed** bonus is the final total of their Dexterity plus Perception Stat Modifier, divided by 2 ((DEX Mod. + PER Mod.) ÷ 2)

"We are trying to build a new world here. Things are going to get broken."

- Vordak, Unneah War Leader

Block

Like dodging, blocking or parrying a blow is another way to avoid damage in combat. Blocking, however, has more advantages. Because it is part of fluid combat actions, your character can ready their weapon faster to either Block again or to hit an opponent. A successful Block can lead to a battle of strengths, where each character is slowly trying to push their opponent's weapon away from themselves. A Block might seem more useful than a dodge, but has its drawbacks, as you are still in close combat range. Characters with a faster weapon stand a chance of gaining extra blows in between an opponent's Blocks and parries.

System: Your character's Base Close Combat **Block** bonus is the final total of their Dexterity plus Perception Stat Modifier, divided by two ((DEX Mod. + PER Mod.) ÷ 2)

Repair

One advantage of specialising in a specific type of weapon is that your character knows how it was made; this enables him to perform repairs. If there are sufficient tools available, he can effectively fix a broken or buckled blade. However, because your character's Skill is dedicated to one type of weapon, he might have difficulty in repairing other types. Each category of sword is made in a different way and from different materials to others. Though effective, the ability to repair weapons is a greatly specialised skill.

System: Your character's Base Close Combat Weapon **Repair** bonus is the final total of their Dexterity, plus Intelligence Stat Modifier, divided by 2 ((DEX Mod. + INT Mod.) ÷ 2)

"Inception can be a tricky process. I don't think it liked you."

- Jozt har Uigenna

Ranged Combat

In Ranged Combat, the bonuses work in a similar manner to H-to-H Combat, although some of the values are different, and certain actions you can perform work differently. These bonuses also cover common areas of Ranged combat. Rather than being specific, each one provides a wide range of activities that your character can do, from evading gun fire, to repairing and maintaining weapons. However because Ranged Combat works slightly differently than H-to-H Combat, and requires different disciplines, many of these bonuses are calculated in a manner to suit each discipline. Once you have worked out your character's Close Combat Action Modifiers, you need to enter them into the relevant section of the Character Sheet.

Dodge

The ability to dodge ranged attacks does not mean your character can literally avoid bullets. It enables him to examine the field of combat so he has an idea of where his enemies are. He will also know where the best cover is. It might seem like he can dodge bullets, but all he's doing is using his knowledge of combat tactics to predict where his opponents are going to fire next. However, like Close Combat Dodge, it's a last resort manoeuvre, as it'll take him a short while to get his bearings and be ready to continue fighting.

System: Your character's Base Ranged Combat **Dodge** bonus is the final total of his Intelligence, plus Perception Stat Modifier, divided by 2 ((INT Mod. + PER Mod.) ÷ 2)

Damage

Hitting an opponent at range is fairly easy, but inflicting the most effective wounds requires skill; the Damage Combat Action Modifier represents your character's ability to do this. You should hit an opponent in a vital area, which means they won't be able to fight back. That could be a shot to the heart or a shot to cripple a limb. A sniper should not have to take two shots at an enemy. He should get the required result in one shot, otherwise his life might be short.

System: Your character's Base Ranged Combat **Damage** bonus is the final total of their Intelligence, plus Perception Stat Modifier, divided by 2 ((INT Mod. + PER Mod.) ÷ 2)

Speed

This comes into play mainly during the use of single shot weapons, but it can be used for quick draw manoeuvres, or reloading. Though Speed makes little difference to ranged weapons, the slightest increase might be enough for your character to squeeze off his shot first. In ranged combat, the small difference given by Speed, used in conjunction with other combat manoeuvres, can make your character a formidable combatant.

System: Your character's Base Ranged Combat **Speed** bonus is the final total of their Dexterity Stat Modifier (DEX Mod.) after Development points have been spent.

Repair

Ranged weapons are far more delicate than their close combat counterparts, so special care and attention is needed to keep them in good working order. From regular cleaning and testing, to restringing a bow or un-jamming a gun, the Repair Skill gives you a raw base Action Modifier for all repair die rolls. These Action Modifiers are dependant upon the weapon skills and specialisations your character has taken. Modern weapons have many more problems than ancient weapons, such as jammed ammunition, misaligned sights, broken parts and warped barrels. The ability to field-repair modern weapons has saved the life of many combatants, when their weapons have caused problems.

System: Your character's Base Ranged Combat **Repair** bonus is the final total of his Intelligence, plus Perception modifier, divided by 3 ((INT Mod. + PER Mod.) ÷ 3)

General Combat Modifiers

These modifiers are used for both Ranged and Close combat as they use similar disciplines and techniques to achieve the same goal. These moves in combat provide varied ranges of actions that your character can perform, many of which can be used in conjunction with the scenery and other characters around them.

Aim

Good combat training will teach your character when and where to strike, as a flurry of blows is not always the best option. Sometimes, decisive attacks and strategy will win in the end, as your character's opponent might start to feel the effects of fatigue faster than he does. A good blow that lands in a join between armour plates is worth more

"Magic may be the way of the Gelaming, but I prefer the way of six in the clip and one in the chamber."

- Moon, Varr Warrior

Repairing a weapon using your combat skill specific to that weapon will offer only a basic repair, such as un-jamming the weapon and generally keeping it in working order. In close combat it's used for keeping the weapon sharp and smoothing any notches from the edge. Anything more advanced than basic field repairs is beyond this ability, and requires a specialised skill.

"You are so beautiful; I just want to kiss your breath away."

- Kahin, Uigenna Magician

"I get to name all types of stuff. You should see the Grateful Dead Burial Ground."

- Gamboll-gin, Uigenna

than several blows to the armour itself, which will take most of the impact. So your character's Base Aim Close Combat Action Modifier is very important for landing a good sturdy blow.

With ranged Combat it's rare that you find a 'natural' with ranged weapons, although these Combat Action Modifiers imply something of that ability. Almost all ranged weapons are affected by wind and other environmental circumstances. Covered or moving targets can also pose challenges. The Ranged Combat Action Modifier for Aim represents some rudimentary knowledge of targeting ranged weapons; this is to be added to all relevant combat.

System: Your character's Base Combat **Aim** bonus is the final total of his Dexterity plus Perception Stat Modifier (DEX Mod. + PER Mod.)

Roll

The Combat Roll is similar in nature to a Dodge, but gives your character the advantages of getting out of close quarters, and having his weapon ready faster. Also, the Roll can be used to enter combat, to evade the foe's initial blows. However Rolling in combat is not always a bed of roses. Sometimes the arena will not have enough space to make a Roll manoeuvre. Other environmental measures may cause problems, such as broken glass and detritus on the floor. Combat Rolls have both advantages and disadvantages, but when coupled with other elements of combat can make your character a competent combatant.

During Ranged Combat, the ability to roll to avoid being shot, and come out the other side unscathed and ready, is extremely useful. Unlike Dodging, a Roll is more precise and the aim is to come out of the Roll shooting, or ready to shoot, an opponent. Also a Roll can be useful if your character wishes to dive behind cover, as it offers him more adaptability than just Dodging.

System: Your character's Base Combat **Roll** bonus is the final total of his Dexterity Stat Modifier (DEX Mod.) after Development points have been spent.

Leap

Other Combat manoeuvres are available to your character, one of which is the ability to Leap out of combat, or jump with a weapon to gain the advantage. In the manner of a great swashbuckler, he can Leap onto objects to avoid blows, or Leap from an object to land a blow on his foe. The Leap manoeuvre is similar to the Roll, in that it allows your character to dodge blows and ready their weapon faster than the standard Dodge. It also allows him to enter combat with an advantage. This Combat Action Modifier can be used as an aid to jumping and leaping while firing, because it allows your character to avoid being shot.

System: Your character's Base Combat **Leap** bonus is the final total of their Dexterity plus Strength Stat Modifier, divided by 2 ((DEX Mod. + STR Mod.) ÷ 2)

Finishing off Weapon Skills

Now you have your base bonuses, you need to work out your 'weapon specific bonuses' for each weapon skill you've selected. Look up the Weapon Skill on **page 222** and check the level at which you have the Skill, against the list of bonuses for that Skill.

All the bonuses are accumulative, so start by adding the lowest level first, then work your way up, until you have reached the limit of your Skill level. Once you have worked these out, you need to add your character's Base Combat Action Modifiers to them. Then enter the totals in the relevant section on your Character Sheet, with the specialisation taken.

For Example: Agroth's Base Close Combat Action Modifiers, of Dodge +2, Damage +3, Speed +1 Block +1, Roll +2, Leap +2, Aim +1 and Repair +1; also Agroth selects the Sword Skill at 17 with the specialisation Katana. His Combat Action Modifiers for this specialisation are as follows Dodge +3, Damage +5, Speed +1, Block +2, Roll +2, Leap +1, Aim +6 and Repair +4. Giving Agroth the final totals of Dodge +5, Damage +8, Speed +2, Block +3, Roll +4, Leap +3, Aim +7 and Repair +5.

SECONDARY STATS

There are many physical differences between hara and humanity; some are reflected in the Primary Stats by additional points. Other things are role-played, such as disease or illness, and don't need numeric representation. However, a few things that are wholly different to humans are represented by the Secondary Stats of Psyche and Composure.

These two Stats are only available to characters who have been incepted. If you're playing a human character, ignore them, and later refer to the **Rites of Inception** on page 253.

Energy is the only secondary Stat that humans have. It determines the body's ability to perform extended actions. Many actions, such as combat, drain temporary energy reserves.

Energy [EN]

A body can perform actions until it's exhausted, after which it needs to rest or at least slow down to recover. The Energy Stat represents your character's body's ability to perform strenuous actions and denotes at which point physical exhaustion will set in. Humans and hara alike have a limit to what they can do, although a har has the ability to push his body further before he falters and needs to rest.

Once a body's energy has reached a low level, it must rest and recuperate. If absolutely necessary, it can be pushed further until physical exhaustion sets in. The effects of Physical Exhaustion are explained in the rules section, along with examples of how energy is used during activities.

Energy is the body's natural reserves. There is a finite amount available to a character but it will recharge given the right conditions and enough time. It differs from Stamina, as Stamina does not deplete and you can still pull off a Stamina roll even if your character is exhausted. However, your character's Stamina can increase the potential Energy available to him.

It's difficult to determine what gives a being higher energy levels, as everyone is different, but your character's Stats are there to help in this regard. If you wish to use the fixed point character generation system, there is an additional rule concerning energy. For further information on the use of this stat within the game, see page 257.

'Dazrail, you're built like an ox, but you're exhausted already, and we've only walked a few miles in these hills... What would the Megalithicans think of you, seeing a Sulh of your size panting on this rock? This is the third time you've rested today and we've only walked 60 miles. Do you want the Freyhellans to think us Sulh are weak? If you continue like this, I'll have to recommend you spend a few months stacking and cataloguing books in Kyme; it did me the world of good.'

- Grand Master Malakess, *Sulh Librarian*

System: Energy is worked out as follows. Start with 20 points (base points), then add the roll of a six sided die, plus the character's Stamina Stat Modifier, multiplied by 2 ((20 + 1D6 + STA Mod.) x2.) Once you've worked this out, write the figure in the relevant section of your Character Sheet, in the lvl. column.

Humans have significantly lower energy levels at their disposal, and only get a base of 10 points ((10 + 1D6 + STA Mod.) x2.)

Additional Rule: If you use the fixed point character generation system, then use 24 points (base points), plus your character's Stamina Modification multiplied by 2 (24 + (STA Mod. x2))

For human characters, the base point's value is 14 instead of 24 ((14 + STA Mod.) x2.)

"So far, we have not found a human disease that can affect our kind. Maybe one day a new strain of virus or bacteria will affect us. Let's hope that day is a very long way off."

- Velisarius founder of the Kakkahaar.

"This is not about you. This is about the greater good of all Wraeththu."

- Zillah Shemercy, *Ex Varr General*

"In theory, if our Psychic abilities keep growing at this rate, I would expect in less than fifty years we could establish a Psychic network around the world. This would be similar to the wretched thing the humans called the Internet, but ours will be useful."

- Malakess har Sulh

Psyche [PSY]

Wraeththu have innate Psychic powers. They're used to create minor effects in reality, and for communication. The majority of Varrs use only the communication abilities, as their Psychic power is limited. The level of the Psyche stat represents the strength of the abilities, plus the distance over which they will work. A high level does not represent a multitude of different powers, but rather the effectiveness of selective powers. It represents your character's skill with his enhanced abilities.

Telepathic communication can be likened to a basic telephone system. Once your character is familiar with a har, he can contact them telepathically, as and when he needs to. Although it's not a constant network of communication, the ability is always available, unless some other force blocks the use of telepathy. Even with this ability, hara still prefer face to face communication; they can learn a lot more from eye contact and body language than from psychic messages. As a har's abilities grow, he's able to send images, feelings and emotions, along with his communications. At high levels, a har can experience exactly what a sender is seeing, feeling and doing.

Many hara also use an ability similar to pyrokinesis. They can heat objects in close proximity to themselves. This also works the other way, as the capacity to cool things down. These temperature altering abilities are useful in harsh environments. Although the changes are only small, they can be useful in daily life, from warming a cup of cold coffee, to keeping a har alive in freezing conditions. Anyhar who pushes his abilities to new heights can eventually create enhanced effects, such as lighting small fires and making ice for drinks. For further information on the use of the Psyche stat within the game, see **page 258**.

'Now my young Azsan, do you remember about the many gifts Allavé will grant you once you have taken the rite of passage? As we enter Khemet, Allavé gives us protection from the immense heat of this land, as you are protected, Azsan. You will be sheltered whilst in our presence... The ability to withstand the elements is just one of the gifts Allavé bestows upon his followers, as well as the secret language granted by his divinity.'

- Oded Hasamas, Obliviata

System: Humans cannot access this power until they're incepted. To calculate the Psyche Stat, add the roll of a six sided die to the character's Willpower Stat Modifier (1D6+ WIL mod.). Once you have worked this out, enter the result into the **Psyche** section on your Character Sheet. Although these values might seem low, you will be able to increase them over time, through game play and experience. This secondary Stat cannot go above 20, even through experience or caste development.

Additional Rule: If you wish to use the fixed point character generation system, then add 4 (base points) plus your character Willpower Modification (4 + WIL Mod.) and enter the result on your Character Sheet.

It might seem as if humans could use the Composure Secondary Stat like a Wraeththu would. However, a human character could lose their Composure during play, and, the effects of low Composure to a human are only minor in comparison to how it would affect a Har.

Composure [CMP]

One of the more noticeable things about hara is their ability to remain composed during situations that humans cannot handle. Should their Composure drop to low, they'll begin to fall prey to uncontrollable rages and bouts of manic depression. During game play, this will have the effect of making situations much more difficult, should the character fail a Composure roll.

Many young hara do not have much experience of their new abilities or their subconscious minds still cling onto ideals from the past: such things are indicated by a low Composure Stat. As newly incepted Wraeththu progress through their caste training, they begin to develop a balanced and focused mind. A har will temporarily lose Composure points if he does not meditate or follow the goals of his caste training.

There are ways to regain Composure. Many of these are actions revolve around basic Wraeththu practices, such as aruna and the sharing of breath. A character's Composure can also be boosted when he achieves an important goal or the next level of his caste training.

A character low on Composure will appear run down and be ill-tempered. It might have taken him a few months to reach this state, or a couple of years. It depends on how much the har embraces Wraeththudom. Many newly incepted hara suffer mental flashbacks to their human existence, which can make it hard for them to embrace their new nature.

Hara need to *feed* off one another's energy to maintain a form of equilibrium. They distribute this energy by taking aruna or sharing breath. In ideal situations, Wraeththu are open about aruna and have no lingering taboos from their human psyche. Aruna is seen as a normal and everyday activity. As pregnancy and disease are not issues connected with it, aruna can take place with no burden of doubt or anxiety. A har starved of this interaction will become listless, sullen and irritable, and in extreme or prolonged cases become openly violent.

Composure is also a measure of how attractive one har is to another, like a form of inner light that shines through the character's personality. A well composed Har will seem to glow and appear to be more physically attractive than a Har with a low composure level. A character with a lower composure level shows the effects of stress and tiredness, in both physical and psychic levels, therefore making them seem unattractive.

"I know about this Malakess; he tends to stick his nose where it is not wanted."

- Fragease, Sulh Warmonger

For further information on the use of the Composure stat within the game see **page 263**.

'By the four winds, you look absolutely fucked, my friend. If you continue the way you're going, you'll be eating carrion with the vultures over there... Stop complaining that no har likes you, you're not an arsehole. You're a har who has not embraced what he is. Sticking to human ideas from the past will get you nowhere in this life, you idiot... Weren't you told when you were incepted what hara need to do to survive..? Ah, your Inceptor was a Uigenna! Well, now that answers some fucking questions! Come with me. I'll make sure you get a damn good rooning.'

- Yanosh Sale, Unneah Scavenger

System: This secondary stat is irrelevant to characters starting out as human. See the **Rites of Inception** Section on **page 253**.

If your character is har, work out his Composure as follows: add 3 (base points), then add your Willpower Stat Modifier to the roll of a six sided die ($3 + 1D6 + WIL$ mod.) Once you have worked this out enter the result in the relevant area on the Character Sheet.

Additional Rule: If you wish to use the fixed point character generation system, then use the following values: 4 (base points), plus your character Willpower Modification ($7 + WIL$ Mod.)

MAGIC

As this area will be covered in depth later, there is very little description in this section. If you want to find out more about how magic works, see **page 305**.

There are threemain groups in magic: Matter Elements, Energy Forces, Changing States/ Meta Realities. There are also other areas: Chaos and Order, Agmara, Probability and Resistance.

The third and final group comprises a collection of changing states and Meta Realities: Temporal, Phase, Destruction and Conversion. These can be manipulated to produce phenomenal effects and change the state of the universe.

Magic	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.
Manipulation	[6]	[]	[6]	[6]
Resistance	[0]	[]	[0]	[0]

Probability

Matter	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.
Air [INT]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Earth [STR]	[2]	[]	[2]	[2]
Fire [DEX]	[1]	[]	[1]	[1]
Water [WIL]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Energy

Spirit [INT]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Kinetic [STR]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Attraction [DEX]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Plasmatic [WIL]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Changing States

Temporal	[]	[]	[]	[]
Phase	[]	[]	[]	[]
Destruction	[]	[]	[]	[]
Conversion	[]	[]	[]	[]

Chaos & Order

Chaos
 OOOOOO
 OO●●● | ●OOOOO
 OOOOOO
 Order

Manipulation, Probability and Agmara all go hand in hand. You use Manipulation in conjunction with the three main groups of magic, and Agmara to imbue the magical action with energy and a spark of life. Agmara, the latent energy of the universe, measures your manipulated effects and the use of itself against what *could have* really happened. Like ripples in a pond, your Manipulation of the universe can spread and have far reaching consequences. Agmara judges what you have done, and if the ripples are too big or far reaching, your character's Probability rating will slowly increase. This is where your character uses magic to go against the grain of what would have really happened if magic had not been used. This is like a bad smell; it will fade over time, but you're tagged for a period, and the more your character's Probability grows, the more the universe will put obstacles in his way for him to stumble over.

During the first few months of being Wraeththu, your character will have experienced many new things, yet they might still be unsure of where they want to go from here. Unless they are part of a tribe that uses magic heavily, many hara will slowly develop their magical abilities, rather than spending time and effort training at every chance

they get. So, choose your starting elements well to make maximum effect of the powers your character has. See **page 348** for more information about how magic works and the best way to manipulate effects.

'So they have sent you to me... Only been incepted a few weeks now and think your abilities to manipulate the universe are top notch, eh? You might have read hundreds of books on magic when you were human, but they were written by humans, and what do they know? I know, I have thousands of books on human magic in the library's archives and about one percent of those writers actually knew what really makes the universe tick. So, you can create a slight breeze, in order to move the dust into a nice neat pile... You will have learned something when you can get the mop and bucket to do the whole cleaning job for you...'

- Malakess-har-Sulh, *High Codexia of the Library of Kyme*

System: **Agmara** is the base construct of all magic. Whenever your character tries to perform a magical effect, he needs to channel this energy. It is in everything and part of every living and non-living organism. To work out your character's base level of Agmara, you need to calculate the character's weight in kilograms. Then take this value and divide by 2. This will give you the base Agmara. To work out your character's maximum capacity for Agmara, multiply the base Agmara value by 10. Your character's current level of Agmara is the same as his base value. Once the game has begun your character can gain more up to his maximum. (For the Base Agmara, divide the characters weight in kg by 2, for the Max, multiply the Base by 10)

"We're two cultures divided by a common language."

- High Codexia Malakess, Sulh

Your character's ability to manipulate the elements is worked out by adding the Stat Modifiers from Intelligence and Willpower, plus the roll of a six-sided die. This is your character's starting **Manipulation**, which can be upgraded later through caste training and experience. (To work out Manipulation, INT Mod. + WIL Mod. + 1D6)

Additional Rule: If you have opted for the fixed point character generation system, you should use the following to work out manipulation. Add the Stat Modifiers from Intelligence and Willpower to 4 base points. (INT Mod. + WIL Mod. + 4)

Your character's **Resistance** to magic used against them is very important and is hard to increase. Even human starting characters will have a base value (natural resistance), because they are intelligent creatures and have the power to resist, if only at a subconscious level. To work out a character's base Resistance, add the Stat Modifiers for Stamina and Willpower and divide by 2 (Resistance is worked out using, STA Mod. + WIL Mod. ÷ 2).

"I hate the graveyard shift, nothing exciting ever happens."

- Marius Frost, *Gelaming Solider*

During the initial weeks following Inception, your character will become versatile with at least two elements from the first two groups (Matter and Energy); these can be any two of those eight elements or Forces. You need to pick a primary and secondary element or Force for your character. The value for the **Primary** is the relevant starting Stat Modifier, and the value of the **Secondary** is its relevant starting Stat Modifier divided by 2 (Primary = Stat Mod. Secondary = Stat Mod. ÷ 2). It's best to select two elements in which your character gains a Stat bonus, though in some cases you might start with no points in an element. This will be because the Stats that represent any natural ability in manipulating the elements are not high enough to give your character a base score. It means that your character will take things slowly in the initial stages of learning magic. Once he's fully introduced to it, and comfortable with its use, he can develop at the normal rate.

Chaos and Order: these are fundamental to all magical effects. To work out your character's starting level, you need to distribute 3 points as you see fit between both

paths. These points can be spent wherever you want. Think about what effects your character will want to create and put the highest amount in that half.

ROUNDING OFF

During the rounding-off stages of character generation, you might want to go back and tweak your character's background a little to make it more appropriate now that's evolved a little. As with many other aspects of character generation, make sure you have the approval of the Storyteller before proceeding.

At this stage, it's time to consider the direction in which your character is heading. You'll need to start thinking about caste development. Almost all characters start at Kaimana-Ara caste level, but many characters will have aspirations to progress further. Work out what your character's goals will be at the start the game, and modify the goals during play, depending on his experiences and challenges. The character might want to head in a direction you never thought of. For ideas of what your character's goals should be in order to reach the next caste level, see the **Caste Progression** section on page 329.

EQUIPMENT

You can work out what weapons or equipment your character uses. This is also affected by Resources. Once you have set your level, you might want to work out to what your character has access to. This will need to be cleared by the Storyteller, so you should pick these personal items within reasonable limits. Unless you have written such items into your background, it's very hard to get hold of good melee weapons, and most ranged weapons will need to be kept stocked with ammunition and serviced. Characters with resources 0 to 2 will not have any weapons of note, other than perhaps a dagger.

The Availability rank is used to determine what kind of Resources your character has access to or can get hold of. This, and the kinds of equipment available, are explained in **Appendix 1**.

"You hit me! I don't suppose we could just have aruna instead."

- Marius Frost, *Gelaming Solider*

Resources ○○○○○○

Armour

AV

BP

Hitpoints

Clothes

[1] [-] [-]

[] [] []

[] [] []

[] [] []

[] [] []

Equipment

Leather Jacket

Canvas Tent

Blanket

Boots (Ankle)

Trousers

Underwear

Hitpoints

Although this is rather a crude method of working out physical damage, it is the best one for speed during play. Your Hitpoints are broken into two groups: Minor Wounds and Major Wounds. Minor Wounds don't need expert medical attention, and can be healed over time with a basic **First Aid** skill, (unless you're a har who can heal with Agmara energy). Major Wounds are damage to your vital organs and chief working parts. These will require professional medical attention and will impede the performance of a har who receives them. A har will still take any penalties a human does, but they are slightly more resilient and have a 5 point buffer zone where Major Wound Damage won't affect their performance. However a har can usually heal himself with Agmara, given enough time and help. Should a har's Major Wounds reach 15 (10 if your character is a human), he will be incapacitated. He will probably lapse into unconsciousness or coma, and die shortly afterwards. Once your character has taken any Major Wounds, he will need expert healing attention. Even a har needs help at this stage.

For more information on healing and the effects of damage see page 291.

Minor Wounds

These can be classified as cuts and bruises, the damage taken by small weapons. Minor Wounds can be tended to in a short period of time, usually in the field, if you have a medical kit or some amount of minor **First Aid** knowledge. Though irritating, they are not debilitating, and will not affect the performance of your character. Minor Wounds constitute damage to the skin and the top layers of tissue that protect the vital parts of the body; the muscles, bones and organs. On the whole, weapons are designed to inflict major wound damage, although a few exist intended only to inflict minor harm. While not life threatening, they will cause a great deal of pain and discomfort. If a weapon does more than 10 points of Minor Wound damage, it also penetrates the skin to cause 1 point of Major Wound damage. The weapon's impact

Dragunov Sniper (SVD)



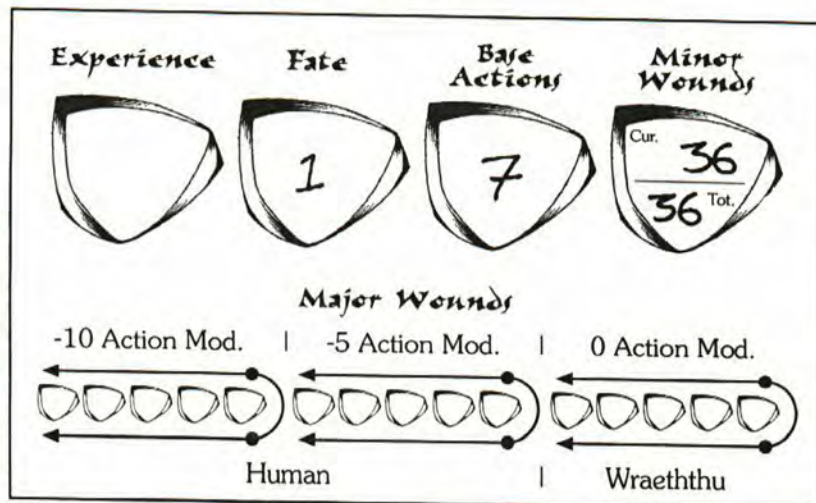
is so great it has torn through the skin and has reached the muscles or

organs beneath it.

System: As each character is different externally, you need to work out your character's capacity to withstand Minor Wounds based on a few Stat Modifiers. To do this, add the base points of 30, plus the Stat Modifier for Strength and Stamina, to the roll of a six-sided die. (30 + STR Mod. + STA Mod. + 1D6)

If you're starting the game as a human character, add 20, and the Stat Modifiers of Strength and Stamina, to the roll of a six-sided die. (20 + STR Mod. + STA Mod. + 1D6)

Once you have worked out all your character's Minor Wounds totals, enter them in the space provided on the Character Sheet.



Additional Rule: If you are using the fixed point character generation system you need to use the following to work out your character's Minor Wounds total. Add 34 (24 for human characters) to the Stat Modifier for Strength and Stamina (34 [24 for humans] + STR Mod. + STA Mod.)

Major Wounds

Wraeththu bodies are far more capable of healing themselves than human bodies are. However, as in a human, their bones, organs and muscles are vital to existence, and severe trauma cannot just be shrugged off. The body can survive for a while with some parts missing or damaged, but unless repairs are made quickly the body will shut down and begin to die. A Major Wound represents damage to those vital organs. Should your character take his maximum damage or over in a Major Wound, he will begin to die. Your character has limited time. He must wait for healing or magical attention to help him at least recover some Major Wound points, or he'll expire.

*"You don't use magic, you just ask it to work with you."
- Mask, Sulh Magician*

If your character's body takes Major Wound damage, he will be impaired during physical or mental action. So, it is important for your character to seek medical attention as soon as he can. For more information on the effects of Major Wound damage and recovering from the trauma of this damage, see page 291.

System: All characters have a fixed level of Major Wound points. The only difference is for humans, whose organs, bones, and muscle tissue are not as resilient as those of Wraeththu. All hara have 15 Major Wound points and humans have 10 Major Wound points. Beyond Inception, there is no way to increase this level.

If you're playing a human, ignore the last 5 Major Wound points on the Wound Bar. Start from the right hand side of the bar and work your way left as you take this type of damage. See **Appendix 2** for more details on how this section of the character sheet works.

COMBAT ELEMENTS

By this point in character generation, there should be only a few gaps left on your Character Sheet, in the combat and weapons section. In this final section, you will work out your character's Base Actions and fill in the final details of any weapons you have chosen during the **Resources** stage.

Base Actions

Your Base Actions are used when making decisive manoeuvres during combat or other situations where time is of the essence. These are the number of physical manoeuvres your character can perform per 5 second phase. During normal game play, you will have little use for Base Actions. For more information on how actions see page 271.

System: Your character's Base Actions are worked out by adding 5 points to your character's Dexterity Stat Modifier, then enter the total value in to the space provided on your Character Sheet (5 + DEX Mod.)

FINAL TOUCHES

During the Resources stage of character generation, you should have decided if your character has some form of Melee or Ranged weapons. If this is the case, you might have already entered the basic weapon data into the relevant sections of the Character Sheet from **Appendix 5**. You will only need to work out the number of attacks/actions

your character can make per phase for that specific weapon, otherwise fill in as much information as you can, such as ammunition, weight, etc. You record this information so that you don't have to keep referring to the core rules, every time you need it.

System: To work out your character's number of attacks/actions per Combat Phase for each melee weapon, add the Weapons Skills Speed Combat Action Modifier to your character's Base Actions and divide it by that weapon's Speed ((Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier + Base Actions) ÷ Weapon Speed)

For ranged weapons, things are done slightly differently, as there are a number of modes for each weapon. Fully Automatic (A) uses the character Base Actions, this number and (A) should be marked in the speed section of the weapon. All weapons marked as (S) Single Shot or Three Round Burst (3RB) use the same speed calculation as close combat to work out your character's base attacks/actions per Combat Phase with that weapon. ((Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier + Base Actions) ÷ Weapon Speed). Some weapons may have a number of fire modes so will require all modes to be worked out. For more information on weapons and their firing rates see the **Appendix 2**, for more information on Combat Phases and actions see page 271.

Some weapons have a special classification, and will be marked with an (S*). See the weapons description for details of this classification. Some flintlock weapons or muskets require complex loading and it can take up to thirty seconds to re-load.



FN P90

YOU'RE DONE

Now you're done. You should have a complete character, with background and a set of Stats and Skills, which gives you a representation in numbers, so that your character can interact with the world of the game. If this is your first time playing, don't expect everything to be perfect. Also, you might start playing the game and be unhappy with the way your character has developed. So these last parts of this section will give you notes and ideas of how to generate characters for specific tribes. It also provides a quick way to generate your character, so you don't have to read through this whole section again unless you really need to. More advanced players or groups might want to use the Quick Character Generation straight off. However, it is recommended you read the whole section just to get a feel and idea for how things work in the Storm system.

QUICK CHARACTER GENERATION

This part of character generation is split into two parts. First, there's further information about tailoring a character to a specific tribe. The second part covers character generation in a brief format, so you can pick out quickly what you need and get your character developed without having to read through the previous sections again. (Reading through the previous sections at least once is advisable even for experienced role-players, as some parts of the 'Storm' game system are different to other games.)

Building a Better Wraeththu

Each tribe has a differing opinion on what makes a good inceptee. Certain tribes prize certain skills and talents in the humans they chose to incept. Those hara who are not up to scratch will either be trained after Inception or, depending on the tribe, simply left behind or destroyed.

The Skills and Magical Elements/Forces listed under each tribe are only suggestions and are there to give you a better idea about the individual motives of each tribe. We have provided the bonuses each tribe offers, so you don't need to look back to previous sections. For more information on tribes see **pages 117**.

Colurastes

"The Colurastes are a very insular tribe; they don't often deal with outsiders. One thing that has slipped out is their extremely strict almost religious guidelines for living. Many Colurastes who abuse power or misuse magic are severely dealt with and some are even sent from the tribe never to return"

— Malakess har Suil.

Hara of the Colurastes tend to incept most of the humans they come across, but are especially drawn to those who are lost and alone, or who have been cast out of their homes. Their knowledge of the occult is extensive, but they treat that knowledge with great respect and do not abuse their powers.

Skill Bonuses:	Occult + 1, Persuasion + 1 and Hypnotism + 1
Stat Bonuses:	Perception [PER] +2 and Willpower [WIL] +1
Other useful Skills:	Grace, Disguise, Intuition, Art (Expression), Slight of Hand, Tracking, Theology and Ride (Horse).
Magical Elements:	Earth, Spirit and Kinetic.

Gelaming

The Gelaming are notoriously picky about who they choose to incept. Only the most beautiful and talented are picked to become one of them. Many different skills are prized among the tribe and only those who are the very best at what they want are incepted.

Skill Bonuses:	Leadership +1, Grace +1 and Wraeththu lore +1
Stat Bonuses:	Intelligence [INT] +2 and Stamina [STA] +1
Other useful skills:	1H Fighting Style, Sword (Any), Archery (Crossbow), Rifle (Any), Art (Any), Athletics, Area Knowledge (Immanion), Occult, Politics and History.
Magical Elements:	Air, Attraction and Plasmatic.

Kakkahaar

The Kakkahaar choose to incept humans who are cunning and intelligent; those with knowledge of the darker side of the occult are especially sought after. Those who are from rich families or secret societies are also welcome. The Kakkahaar fighting skills are based around trickery and stealth, and all their weapons will be tipped in poison.

Skill Bonuses:	Occult + 2 and Intuition + 1
Stat Bonuses:	Perception [PER] +1, Intelligence [INT] +1 and Willpower [WIL] +1
Other useful Skills:	1H Fighting Style, Sword (Kukri), Sword (Katana), Rifles (Any), Intimidation, Art (Any), Stealth, Slight of Hand, Tracking, Linguistics (Ancient), Wraeththu Lore, Theology, Divination and Ride (Horse).
Magical Elements:	Fire, Earth and Spirit.

Obliviata

Hara of the Obliviata tend only to incept humans from their homelands or those who prove themselves loyal to their god. All are skilled at travelling long distances and finding things that aren't obvious to others. Trading is the Obliviata's way of surviving. They trade to obtain food and the essential supplies they need.

Skill Bonuses:	Animal Ken (General) + 3 and Linguistics(Obliviata) +1
Stat Bonuses:	Perception [PER] +2 and Willpower [WIL] +1

"The desert doesn't forgive, and neither do I."

— Kass'lik, Kakkahaar Warrior

- Other useful Skills:** 1H Fighting Style, Sword (Scimitar), Dagger (Any), Survival, Hunting, Tracking, Intuition, Area Knowledge (Olathe), Theology, Ride (Any) Animal, Fast Talk and Trading Lore.
- Magical Elements:** None (On rare occasion Some Obliviata have taken it upon themselves to dedicate their lives to Allavé. The Alluka develop their magical abilities. Because there are so few known Alluka they are the preserve of NPC's)

Sulh

The Sulh incept those who are skilled psychics and proficient with magic, or have great knowledge of things such as herbs and crystals. They are fierce and strong, but never usually fight without good reason and are skilled diplomats when they need to be. Very few Sulh are incepted beyond the borders of Alba Sulh.

- Skill Bonuses:** Intuition + 2 and Grace +1
- Stat Bonuses:** Perception [PER] +2 and Intelligence [INT] +1
- Other useful Skills:** Archery (Short Bow/Long Bow), Diplomacy, Mediation, Stealth, Hunting, Occult, Hypnotism, Theology, Divination and Folk Medicine.
- Magical Elements:** Air, Spirit and Attraction.

Uigenna

All Uigenna are skilled at fighting and quickly learn the skills needed in urban warfare. They always have extensive knowledge of the area in which they live, both above and below the streets. Hara of the Uigenna are also skilled in the art of making poisons and other lethal substances, such as various chemical weapons and bombs.

- Skill Bonuses:** Brawl +1, Streetwise +1 and Toxicology +1.
- Stat Bonuses:** Stamina [STA] +1, Perception [PER] +1 and Dexterity [DEX] +1
- Other useful Skills:** Thrown (Dagger/Dart/Grenade), Demolitions, Intimidation, Chemistry, Survival, Drive Urban Vehicle (Car) and Drive Urban Vehicle (Bike).
- Magical Elements:** Fire, Kinetic and Plasmatic.

Unneah

The Unneah who still live in the cities are skilled warriors, but temper their fury with stealth and poise in battle. They are skilled mechanics and engineers and can build nearly anything from next to nothing. Hara of the Unneah are skilled traders and travel far up and down the rivers of Megalithica. They also love gossip and are keen to hear new stories and pass them on.

- Skill Bonuses:** Mechanical Repair + 1, Survival + 1 and Art Expression +1
- Stat Bonuses:** Dexterity [DEX] +1, Willpower [WIL] +1 and Intelligence [INT] +1
- Other useful Skills:** 1H Fighting Style, Sword (Sabre), Brawl, Stealth, Persuasion, Electronics, Engineering (Mechanical), Architect, Fishing, Swimming, Occult and Pilot Water based (Barge or Small Sail Ship).
- Magical Elements:** Water, Earth and Spirit.

"Many think the Uigenna are insane or out of control. Some have even said our kind has serious mental flaws. Fuck me sideways and send me to Fulminir, if that's the truth. However from the inside I would argue that it's not the case, but rather that we're fucking free spirited and willing to do or try anything once, just because we enjoy a thrill and want to live life to the fullest. This does not make us fucking mad!"

- Yanosh Sale har Uigenna.

"...and now for my next trick"

- Mask, Sulh Magician

Varr

The Varrs prize skills in combat above all other abilities. If you wish to gain rank quickly in the Varr military, knowledge of combat tactics, and the ability to survive and thrive in harsh conditions will help.

"I miss Immanion already..."
 - Nadius Har Gelaming's first day in the
 desert of Megalithica.

- Skill Bonuses:** All Combat skills are considered to be one level higher than they are, and the relevant bonuses for that higher level are also applicable.
- Stat Bonuses:** Strength [STR] +2 and Willpower [WIL] +1 (For Soldiers), Stamina [STA] +1, Perception [PER] +1 and Dexterity [DEX] +1 (Others)
- Other useful Skills:** 1H Fighting Style, 2H Fighting Style, Sword (Any), Pistols (Any), Rifles (Any), Intimidation, Persuasion, Survival, Weapon Smith, Hunting, Tracking, Trapping, Climbing, Interrogation, Leadership and Military Tactics.
- Magical Elements:** None preferred. (They refuse to believe they can use magic so they cannot take any elements beyond base points.)

Characters in Minutes

Not quite, 'Instant Character, Just add Water.' But it's close. These are all the important rules taken from the previous sections. It's always best to write down your character's background, even if you are using the Quick Character Generation.

Traits

Decide upon your characters Traits based upon your character's background. The Traits are *Name, Tribe, Caste/level* (always starts at Kaimana/Ara), *Place of Birth, Age, Town and Country and Physical Attributes*. For characters starting out as humans, *Name, Place of Birth, Age, Town and Country and Physical Attributes*.

Primary Stats

Your character's primary Stats are worked out as follows: 4 (3 points for human characters) + 1D6 for each stat, and then you have 10 points to distribute as you see fit.

The fixed point system uses 4 (3 points for human characters) for each stat plus 34 points to distribute as you see fit.

No stat can be below 4 or above 15. Don't forget to add you tribal bonuses where applicable. Any points you can spare can be placed in the development pool. Then work out your character's Stat Modifications using the following table.

Stat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Stat Modifier	-2	-2	-1	-1	0	0	0	0	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+2	+2	+2	+3	+3	+4	+5

Development Points

Your base Development points are as follows: 2D6 + 20

Using the fixed point system, you get 28 points to spend. They can be spent as follows;

Group	Development Cost
Statistics	5
Skills	3
Magic (Manipulation & Resistance)	5
Magic (Matter and Energy)	10
Magic (Changing States)	20
Fate	5
Resources	5



Fulminir, if that's the truth. However from the inside I would argue that it's not the case, but rather that we're fucking free spirited and willing to do or try anything once, just because we enjoy a thrill and want to live life to the fullest. This does not make us fucking mad!

- Yanosh Sale har Uigenna.

Merits and Flaws

You can pick any number of Merits, but a maximum of 10 Flaws. Merits take points from your development pool and Flaws give you points.

"Sorry, is the knife at your throat disturbing?"

- Silis, Rogue Obliviata Assassin

Skills

To work out your character's available skill points: $((INT \text{ Mod.} \times 2) + PER \text{ Mod.} + 2D6 + 45)$

Use these to buy your character's Skills and Combat Skills.

For the fixed point system: $((INT \text{ Mod.} \times 2) + PER \text{ Mod.} + 53)$.

Then add your Character's Tribal Bonuses if you're playing a har. Remember the highest recommended skill level for a starting character is 15. Any remaining skill points can be moved to the development pool.

Combat skills

The following are the calculations for your base combat skills.

Close Combat

Dodge = DEX Mod.

Damage = STR Mod.

Speed = $(DEX \text{ Mod.} + PER \text{ Mod.}) \div 2$

Block = $(DEX \text{ Mod.} + PER \text{ Mod.}) \div 2$

Repair = $(DEX \text{ Mod.} + INT \text{ Mod.}) \div 2$

Ranged Combat

Dodge = $(INT \text{ Mod.} + PER \text{ Mod.}) \div 2$

Damage = $(INT \text{ Mod.} + PER \text{ Mod.}) \div 2$

Speed = DEX Mod.

Repair = $(PER \text{ Mod.} + INT \text{ Mod.}) \div 3$

"I hope my Dad never finds out about this."

- A new inceptee, with a lot to think about.

General Combat

Aim = DEX Mod. + PER Mod.

Roll = DEX Mod.

Leap = $(DEX \text{ Mod.} + STR \text{ Mod.}) \div 2$

Your Style needs to be higher than the relevant Skill and you need to specialise. You can then fill-in your character's Skill bonuses, adding the Base Combat Action Modifiers

Secondary Stats

Humans can only take the Energy Secondary Stat

Secondary Stats are calculated as follows:

Energy = $(20 [10 \text{ for humans}] + 1D6 + STA \text{ Mod.}) \times 2$. Fixed Point System uses $(24[14 \text{ for humans}] + STA \text{ Mod.}) \times 2$.

Psyche = $1D6 + WIL \text{ Mod.}$ Fixed point system uses $4 + WIL \text{ Mod.}$

Composure = $3 + 1D6 + WIL \text{ Mod.}$ The Fixed point system uses $7 + WIL \text{ Mod.}$

*"YAWA EKAT BABEK DNA
AZZIP"*

- High Codexia Malakess, Sulh

Magic

Next is the basic calculations for working out what magical abilities your character starts with. Humans need not apply.

Base Agmara = $Characters \text{ Weight} \div 2$. *Max* = *Base Agmara* $\times 10$. *Current* = *Base Agmara*.

Manipulation = INT Mod. + WIL Mod. + 1D6. Fixed point system uses INT Mod. + WIL Mod. + 4

Resistance = STA Mod. + WIL Mod. ÷ 2

Base Elements = Pick two from the Matter & Energy groups of elements a primary and a secondary element and use the relevant Stat Modifier (Primary = Stat Mod, Secondary = Stat Mod. ÷ 2)

Chaos & Order = 3 points to spend as you see fit.

Hitpoints

The two sections of Hitpoints are worked out as follows.

Minor wounds = 30 (20 for human characters) + STR Mod. + STA Mod. + 1D6.

For the Fixed point system: 34 (24 for human characters) + STR Mod. + STA Mod.

Major Wounds = 15 points, 10 points for humans.

"Do you think we could
reopen the chocolate
factory?"

- A low ranking Varr soldier.

Base Actions

Your character's Base Actions are 5 + DEX Mod.

Final Touches

For Melee weapons you need to work out the amount of times your character can attack or act per Combat Phase: ((Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier + Base Actions) ÷ Weapon Speed.) For ranged weapons, things are done slightly differently, as there are a number of modes for each weapon. Fully Automatic (A) uses the character Base Actions, this number and (A) and the characters base actions should be marked in the speed section of the weapon. All weapons marked as (S) Single Shot or Three Round Burst (3RB) use the same speed calculation as close combat to work out your character's base attacks/actions per Combat Phase with that weapon. ((Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier + Base Actions) ÷ Weapon Speed)

Skills List

This section contains the details for Skills that your character can have. This is not a definitive list. If you find there's a Skill your character would have and it's not listed, create a new Skill. All Skills should be approved by the Storyteller. On **page 178**, it explains how to calculate how many points you have to spend on Skills, and also some of the basics of buying them.

Skills are split up into six main sections. Each section relates to a Primary Stat. These Skill sections have a group of Skills within them that relate to that Stat. Also, each individual Skill has a Stat associated with it. Most Skill functions are self evident. Any that need any further explanation will have rules with them. The specialisations provided are examples. If there are other specialisations that your character would have, justify them to the storyteller and you can have them.

A specialisation can be anything to which the skill directly relates. For example, for *Linguistics* you need to specify a language, such as French, German, Arabic, etc. Other skills that have specialisations, such as *Area Knowledge* would be specific to a town or city. A character who has specialised in a similar area of expertise, such as possessing *Area Knowledge* of a similar town, would receive a -6 to the skill. This rule applies to all other skills that have specialisations. If the specialisation is very different to the action you want to attempt then, then treat it as being untrained.

Skills are not meant to be a replacement for role-playing actions out. They are designed to be an aid to how well your character can perform those actions. Some Skills cannot be performed for obvious reasons. For example, it is unlikely any playing group will have the time and resources for you to sit and weave fabric. The rest you should attempt to act out, or explain what you're trying to do. Some Storytellers might

be inclined to give you a temporary bonus to your skill for the related rolls if you give a good description or put on a good show. The best way to describe your actions is to think of it as a small story, which you're telling the rest of the group. For example, rather than saying that you're just picking the lock, you could describe it like this:

'Inserting the picks into the mechanism, and preparing the barrel. I'm going to start on the locking pins, lifting each one with care and precision, until the last one has clicked into place. However, I have never picked this make of lock before, so it might take me a few minutes to get to grips with how they slide in to place.'

Another thing to consider when using Skills is whether the action can be performed using the associated Stat alone, which would amount to using it untrained. Some Skills marked with a 'U' can be used as untrained skills, by using the associated Stat. However these will only work in a basic capacity. For example *Climbing* which covers where and how to climb safely, would help the character if they have to climb anything, from a tree to a mountain. However, if they do not possess the *Climbing* Skill, they could use an associated Stat, such as Strength or Dexterity, to attempt a degree of success in the climb. If a Skill is used as untrained in a basic action, the player gets a negative Action Modifier to the Stat. In these cases, the negative Action Modifier will be -6, or higher for a more complex action.

For skills not marked with a 'U', the Action Modifiers increases to -15. This is to reflect the training needed to perform this skill.

Tools are another important factor to consider when buying your Skills, as some skills need tools to be performed. All skills that require tools will be marked with a 'T', which means that without these tools the skill cannot be used. A second level of tools is required for some skills; these will be marked with an 'S'. These specialised tools can only be used with the specified Skill, and are useless for other actions. Any Skill marked with an 'S' can be performed with normal tools but at a reduced efficiency.

When a player wishes to use a Skill that requires specialised tools, they roll as normal if they have the tools. The same goes for any skill that requires normal tools. If the character does not have access to tools they cannot use the Skill. However if the Skill needs specialist tools and they have access to normal tools, they will receive a -6 to the skill for these actions.

Tools come in a wide range, and each Skill will have requirements, from a set of screwdrivers to a selection of delicate and precise tools and electronic equipment. Some of these items are listed in **Appendix 1**. If the tools your character requires are not listed, ask the Storyteller if your character can get hold of them. It would be impossible to list every conceivable tool in this book, so the Appendix only lists a few common tools.

All Weapons Skills require a weapon, so the character can obviously use them effectively; the only exclusion is Brawl/Unarmed, which only requires a good pair of fists and feet.

"In the stories whispered around campuses, on city corners, they were werewolves. I wish the stories had been true; for in reality, they were far more dangerous than any werewolf"

- Rammiel, Human



Master Skills List

Strength

Blacksmithery [DEX] - T
Climbing [DEX] - U
Mechanical Repair [STR] - T
Weapon Smith [INT] - T

Dexterity

Armour Smith [INT] - T
Carpentry [INT] - T
Drive All Terrain Vehicle (Specify) [PER]
Drive Urban Vehicle (Specify) [PER]
Forgery [PER] - S
Grace [PER] - U
Locksmithing [PER] - S
Performance [INT] - U
Pilot Air Based (Specify) [INT]
Pilot Water Based (Specify) [INT]
Slight of hand [PER] - U
Ride Animal [STR] - U
Stealth [PER] - U
Trapping [PER] - S

Willpower

Animal Ken (Specify) [INT]
Butchery [INT] - U
Diplomacy [INT] - U

Divination [PER] - T
Fast Talk [PER] - U
Fishing [DEX] - S
Hunting [INT]
Hypnotism [INT]
Interrogation [INT] - U
Intimidation [PER] - U
Leadership [INT] - U
Meditation [INT]
Occult [INT]
Persuasion [PER] - U

Intelligence

Architect [PER]
Area Knowledge (Specify) [PER]
Biology [INT]
Bureaucracy [WIL]
Cartographer [PER] - S
Chemistry [INT]
Computer Engineer [PER] - S
Computer Operations [PER]
Computer Programmer [WIL]
Cooking [DEX] - TU
Cryptography [PER] - S
Demolitions [PER] - S
Doctor [DEX]

Electrician [PER] - T
Electronics Engineer [DEX] - S
Etiquette (Specify Tribe) [PER]
First Aid [DEX] - S
Folk Medicine [PER]
History (Specify) [PER]
Investigation [PER] - U
Linguistics (Specify) [INT]
Military Tactics [PER]
Politics [PER]
Pharmacology [PER] - S
Physics [INT]
Psychology [WIL]
Streetwise [PER] - U
Panache [PER] - U
Theology [INT] - U
Toxicology [PER] - S
Trading Lore [WIL] - U
Wraeththu Lore [PER]

Perception

Art (Music/Dance/Expression) [DEX] - U
Disguise [PER] - S
Intuition [INT] - U
Lip Reading [INT]
Mimicry [DEX] - U
Security Systems [INT] - S
Survival [INT]
Tracking [INT]
Craft (Specify) [DEX] - S

Stamina

Athletics [DEX] - U
Farmer [INT] - S
Mason [DEX] - T
Swimming [DEX] - U

Combat Styles

Fencing
1H (One Hand) Fighting Style
2H (Two-Handed) Fighting Style
Two Weapon Fighting Style
Pole Arm Fighting Style

Weapon Skills

Archery (Specify)
Auto Arms (Specify)
Axe (Specify)
Blunt Weapon (Specify)
Brawl/Unarmed
Dagger/Knife (Specify)
Machine Guns (Specify)
Pistol/Single Shot (Specify)
Pole Arms (Specify)
Pyrotechnics/Mines (Specify)
Rifle (Specify)
Support Weapons/Launchers (Specify)
Sword (Specify)
Thrown (Specify)
Whip, Chain and Rope (Specify)

Strength

Blacksmithery [DEX] - T

It was rare to find a traditional blacksmith in late human society. As horses were no longer a common form of transport, blacksmiths were specialists. But in the world of Wraeththu, things are different. Horses might be the best form of transport your character can get. So, from shoeing horses to making gates, if your character can work with iron, and has the correct tools, his services will be in high demand to the right hara.

Blacksmithery is now an extremely useful skill. As fuel and vehicles are almost impossible to find and maintain, many tribes have taken to using horses again, because you don't need processed fuel or particularly specialist tools to keep them running. A har with this Skill is prized by all tribes, as they can be useful not only within the tribe itself, but through hiring out their Skills can to others, in exchange for goods or valuables.

Climbing [DEX] - U

Climbing cliffs and mountains is not the only use for this Skill; you can use it to scale most surfaces, such as walls. Combined with survival and other outdoors Skills, you can become an impressive mountaineer. This Skill can also be useful for trackers.

Since the downfall of humankind, much of the apparatus for scaling such heights has fallen into disrepair, such as pitons and ropes. Possessing the climbing Skill removes some of the limits concerning travel. Why go round the mountain when you can climb over it?

Mechanical Repair [STR] - T

Although at this stage of their development, Wraeththu have yet to start manufacturing new machines, this Skill is still very useful. You can use it service and repair any remaining vehicles, engines, machines, farming equipment and so on. A har with this Skill finds it comes as second nature; he has a gift for mechanical tinkering. From re-building an engine, to jerry rigging a device to keep it working an extra few hours, you have the abilities to keep things running.

Although many of the mechanical devices that humankind made are beyond repair, those that are still usable will need servicing to keep them in working order. A har with this Skill is highly prized by tribes, such as the Varrs, who still use vehicles and manmade machines.

Weapon Smith [INT] - T

The art of weapon-smithery has had to be remembered from an earlier time in history. While some human communities still possess the resources to make sophisticated weapons, most hara have resorted to blades and bows. The Varrs are able to maintain human weaponry, if not recreate it. With this Skill, you have the ability to pick the right materials, and employ them in the lengthy process of folding and manipulating the metals to produce a durable and sharp weapon.

A few inceptees already possess this Skill when they're incepted, which is regarded as fortunate by their new tribe. (In fact, individuals with valuable Skills are sought out by tribes for Inception.) Weapon-smiths are able to continue their art, making armaments for the tribe. Many of their weapons would be used as currency, sold to hara of status and power, or those who can offer enough to trade to buy weapons.

System: Weapons Smith is related to Blacksmithing, (although a more refined Skill), but it's also an *expansion* of that skill. If Blacksmithing is at an equal or higher level than Weapon Smith, then you will gain a +3 to this skill when rolling on it.

Blacksmithery [DEX]
Climbing [DEX]
Mechanical Repair [STR]
Weapon Smith [INT]

Dexterity

Armour Smith [INT] -T

You are able to forge and construct some of the finest armour, from archaic breast plates to quite modern Kevlar (bullet proof) vests; essentially, the principles are the same, it's just that the materials have evolved. As materials advance, you can revise and update your techniques to take advantage of the new textiles or composite materials.

This Skill is still very useful in the world of Wraeththu. Although many of the new, sophisticated materials are scarce, you can still get your hands on the good, old, trustworthy ones, like woven cloth, steel and leather.

System: Armour Smith is related to Blacksmithing, (although a more refined Skill), but it's also an *expansion* of that skill. If Blacksmithing is at an equal or higher level than Armour Smith, then you will gain a +3 to this skill when rolling on it.

Carpentry [INT] -T

Natural carpenters would say that wood speaks to you; as you handle it, it tells you its life, and what it would like to become. From making simple furniture to crafting fine filigree work and sculpture, your abilities to manipulate wood, and its grain, flow from within. In the old world, these Skills lay in the hands of true craftsman, yet many hara possess a strong, though basic, ability.

This is an extremely valued Skill. If you possess it, tribes will seek you out, in order to take advantage of it. It will come in useful for joinery in building dwellings, or creating practical items, such as bowls, horse-drawn vehicles and furniture. You can trade your Skill and use it to make a living. As the Wraeththu world expands, your Skills are valuable for establishing new towns and settlements.

Drive All Terrain Vehicle (Specify) [PER]

This Skill involves rather more than simply driving the vehicle. Anyone who can drive can do that. The naturally skilled ATV driver judges the terrain, and plans his move. It's like a game of chess; driver versus terrain. A har with this Skill will also take into consideration how the vehicle will perform under different environmental and climatic conditions.

Since the downfall of humanity, this is a fairly out-dated Skill. Any ATVs still around need fuel, and the processing of fuel is now almost non existent. Such vehicles have often just been left to rot by the roadside or in yards. Yet some tribes, such as the Varrs, maintain small caches of vehicles. They ration fuel, and only use it when the need arises. However, in time, the fuel reserves will run dry and all petrol-powered vehicles will be obsolete.

Specialisations: Tank, Quad Bike, Hover Craft, Truck, Ranged Vehicle (Land Rover), Dirt Bike, Mountain Bike.

System: If a character has Drive Urban Vehicle, with any specialisation, at an equal or higher level, than this Skill they will gain a +3 to this Skill when rolling on it.

Drive Urban Vehicle (Specify) [PER]

At the peak of human civilisation, vehicles were essential for daily life, and nearly everyone could drive. Quite a lot of inceptees possess this Skill, even if they can't often use it. A few tribe phyles have come across vast caches of fuel, hidden away by humans and then abandoned, as Wraeththu drove them from their enclaves. So, the ability to drive vehicles can sometimes come in handy.

The ability to drive was considered a vital skill in human society, but that society has mostly disappeared and many of the resources needed to support human vehicles have vanished. A few vehicles do still exist, but Wraeththu tend to use them only in emergencies.

Specialisations: Car, Motorcycle Truck, Bus, HGV, Sports Vehicle.

Forgery [PER] - S

The art in your Skill is for it not to be noticed. Everything you create is a bluff; it's not the real thing, and there is little opportunity for artistic flair. From documents to money, what you create can be vital to somehar. It can save lives, hide identities, or fund wars. Somehar is always after a little bit of your work.

Although standardised money is no longer in circulation, there are still plenty of opportunities for your character to use his art. With the advent of magic, he can add other dimensions to his work. From Varr military documents, to Gelaming artefacts, there are many new things for him to forge.

Grace [PER] - U

Your grace and elegance precedes you. With this Skill, you don't necessarily have to look the part or even act the part. No matter what you do, there is always an air of elegance to it. Maybe you are a dancer or some other kind of performer.

Hara may comment upon and compliment your character on his natural grace. It's natural and comes from within. He might have possessed it when he was human, or it could be a trait that developed after Inception. It has sometimes been known to let him down; even though such occasions are rare, they can and will happen.

Locksmithing [PER] - S

Renowned for being a thief's Skill, it is also part of the locksmith's expertise. From tumblers to mortis locks; you can get through most locked doors. In theory, most locks are based on similar systems, and it's just a case of applying different tools, and tried methods, until eventually the mechanism succumbs to your touch.

A very useful ability for the unscrupulous har, it's popular among some of the smaller tribes, and there will always be locks. Even though technology is disappearing, or at least changing, there is still a use for some of the simple and older mechanical devices. Locks are among some of the simplest around, yet the most secure and robust.

Performance [INT] - U

The art of acting, whether in a theatrical role or even, at times, to facilitate deception, has become a part of your character's life. He can use his Skill to bluff or manipulate, to disguise the side of him that other people see. When he's mastered it, how will onlookers know who is the real him? His main arena is most likely on the stage. After a time, his Skill can become legendary and hara will follow him around to see him perform.

Wraeththu who are good at acting can find a job almost anywhere, whether that's at a high class theatre in Immanion, or just as somehar hired to be a distraction in the Galhean underworld. Formal training is required to take this Skill at a high level, but many hara still have good performance Skills that come naturally to them.

Pilot Air Based (Specify) [INT]

Traversing the skies, with the freedom of the bird, the pilot combines a multitude of disciplines, from navigation, to the actual flying of the plane. A pilot has to operate on all these levels at once. Not a Skill for everyone; some need to fly for their occupation, others do it for pleasure.

A virtually redundant Skill since the demise of humanity, though some gliders and small one man craft are still use. The greatest difficulty is finding the fuel for them. Your character might be lucky enough to own a microlight and scavenge enough fuel for those essential trips.

Specialisations: Jumbo Jet, Personal Jet, Fighter Jet, Large Prop, Personal Prop, Glider, Hang Glider, Microlight, Helicopter, Historic Prop.

Forgery [PER]
Grace [PER]
Locksmithing [PER]
Performance [INT]
Pilot Air Based [INT]

Pilot Water Based (Specify) [INT]

Your character might have lived a life on the ocean waves, or even on the ripples of a lake or a river. From navigation to water safety, he has tried his hand at many aspects of water travel. Boats are now powered mainly through sail, and occasionally steam. Engine-powered vessels are rare. Water travel is now the only way to move between different continents.

As almost all the planes are downed, your character's Skills are highly prized. Whether travelling from Alba Sulh to Megalithica, or from Almagabra to other regions, ships are just about the only conveyance for the common har.

Specialisations: Barge, Power Boat, Steam Ship, Tanker, Luxury Yacht, Sail Yacht, Large Sail Ship, Small Sail Ship, Cruse Liner, Row Boat, Large Row Boat, Hovercraft, Submarine Small, Submarine Large.

Sleight of Hand [PER] - U

Card tricks aren't your character's only game. He can pick pockets, and perform what looks like magic to make things vanish from sight. From entertainers to common thieves, this ability is used world-wide; it brings happiness to hundreds and misery to thousands.

Some things never change. What was once the art of thieves became the art of entertainers, and now lands squarely back in the fingers of the under-handed. It's a valuable Skill to fall back on if you're in a tight situation and need to get out of it quickly. Don't use it around the Sulh or the Kakkahaar; you have been warned!

Ride Animal [STR] - U

Considered a sport and a hobby, the riding animal had just about disappeared as a mode of transport in human society. There were very few people in the old world who would ride a horse to get to town. At one time, of course, just about everyone knew how to ride a horse, but those days are gone.

Since the fall of human civilisation and its machines of transportation, humans and hara alike are discovering that the horse and pack animal are the best modes of transport. Unfortunately, many newly incepted hara don't have this essential Skill, so need to learn it quite fast in order to get around quickly.

Stealth [PER] - U

The art of being stealthy is the ability not only to blend in, but not to be seen at all. It's not just a case of wearing black and keeping to the shadows. Your character knows how best to navigate his environment, taking advantage of all available cover and of moving silently. Planning his next move is vital in order to remain undetected.

Hara will never know your character is there, and he will always leave without a trace. While this Skill comes naturally to some, hara previously trained in the secret services or armed forces are often proficient at Stealth.

Trapping [PER] - S

Out in the wilderness, or in the jungle, survival can be difficult. Trapping is a vital Skill in that kind of environment. As a Trapper, your character can capture animals for food, and can also adapt to trap predators or enemies. As in earlier times of human history, animal skins can be used for trade.

Hara have had to become resourceful concerning food, as the stockpiles of humanity's processed tinned food won't last for ever. Tribes that haven't settled in one place, or don't have the infrastructure to support farming, rely on capturing animals for food. Even though some hara can coax animals to them with their psychic abilities, trapping is still the most reliable method.

Pilot Water Based [INT]
Slight of hand [PER]
Ride Animal [STR]
Stealth [PER]
Trapping [PER]

Willpower

Animal Ken (Specify) [INT]

Your character knows how the minds of animals work, and has an innate feel for their instincts and drives. He trains them when they are young, using great empathy, so that they become his friends and colleagues. The animal at his side will go beyond the call of duty to protect him, even to the point of doing things that their instincts tell them that they shouldn't. He doesn't just train animals, he conditions them.

Although the average har has the ability to affect how creatures perceive and react to him, few can communicate their wishes and needs to an animal. With the Skill of Animal Ken, your character goes beyond merely being able to communicate with creatures. They do not fear him. He can train any animal to go beyond its instincts.

System: All harish characters will have a +3 to any rolls using Animal Ken.

Butchery [INT] - U

Knowing the correct way to slaughter animals, then prepare the best cuts of meat is a useful Skill. A knowledge of butchery, with its awareness of the workings of living bodies, can also be translated into a more sinister ability, such as that of the torturer, when combined with Biology and Interrogation.

Butchers are useful to communities, and any har with the Butchery Skill can make a good living. He can also make a quick and efficient killer in combat, knowing which areas of the body to attack, in order to cause a quick or a slow and painful death. Although rather an unsavoury specialisation in this talent, tribes such as the Varrs and Uigenna would find it extremely desirable.

System: At skill level 5 gain +1 to all combat damage; at level 10 gain an additional +2 to combat damage; level 15 gain an additional +3; level 20 gain +4 additional combat damage. (This is a very messy and hands-on method of killing, and not to everyone's tastes, so the Storyteller should limit the use of this skill against sentient creatures.)

If combining these Skills to be a torturer, then the character uses the lowest score from Butchery, Biology, and Interrogation, whenever a Torture roll is needed.

Diplomacy [INT] - U

Diplomacy is the subtle art of negotiation between leaders, countries and governments. It can be a tricky business at the best of times. If your character is a skilled diplomat, his talent will be in high demand. He has the ability to avert war, and manipulate relations, whether for himself or for a paying client.

Diplomacy in the world of Wraeththu is as complicated as it gets; tribe rivalry and infighting is common all over Megalithica, and even those who were skilled diplomats in human times will be hard pushed to understand this complex new world. Surprisingly, the Sulh have already made themselves known as accomplished diplomats. Nohar can quite figure out how this came about.

System: On a successful roll, a character will gain insight into the action and political motives of an opponent, based on the evidence at hand.

Divination [PER] - T

Can the turning of a card or the fall of a few stones really reveal the future? Your character has learned to tap into the tides of time to predict the future and explore the secrets of the past, using some kind of divination tool as a medium, such as scrying sticks, cards, bones or stones.

Despite the psychic abilities that all hara have, some are more gifted than others in the art of divination. Many hara are curious about the future, or want insight into the present or the past. The Sulh, the Kakkahaar and the Colurastes all are skilled at the divining arts, but only the Kakkahaar choose to use them for accruing income. Believe me, you cannot afford the price!

Animal Ken (Specify) [INT]
Butchery [INT]
Diplomacy [INT]
Divination [PER]

System: The future is not set. Any correct prediction will be subject to the laws of Chaos, and the further in the future the prediction is, the more likely it will be incorrect, owing to changes of circumstance. For each day beyond the present day, (the day the divination takes place), the player gains a -1 to their skill. The past has already happened, so accuracy will not decrease when looking into it. The present can be affected by other powerful minds clouding the issue, so if there are opposing forces working against your character's efforts, they might gain information that is incorrect, or only perceive flashes of what might be, rather than a complete explanation. Knowledgeable characters can evade the art of Divination by using various techniques to cloak their actions.

Fast Talk [PER] - U

Your character has always been able to talk himself out of tight situations. He could be described, in clichéd terms, as being able to talk the hind legs off a donkey. This Skill has many uses, from trying to get away with some criminal activity, to getting the best price for an item from traders. Your character talks quickly and precisely, altering the direction and gist of the conversation before his target realises what has happened.

This Skill is worth its weight in gold. Amongst the trading communities, the ability to bluff and steer the conversation your way is essential to securing the right price. Also, when your character is in trouble, he can always use his Skill to talk his way out of it!

System: if a character is successful at using this Skill, they will be able to steer the conversation in the direction they desire, by not giving the other person chance to think between the questions and comments posed.

Fishing [DEX] - S

Your character knows the best places to fish, and how to prepare his catch. In order to survive and feed himself, he has become adept in this Skill. It's an essential complement to the Survival Skill, if he has to spend lengthy periods away from inhabited areas.

Your character most likely learned to fish while human. While proper fishing tackle is rare, he is able to make rough lines out of available materials, or use nets to catch fish. With experience, his ability to make the tools of the trade and catch fish improves.

Hunting [INT]

This Skill does not apply to animals alone, but to any living creature. Your character could hunt a criminal or a bear. One of the Survival Skills, this talent helps him think like his prey, so that he's able to anticipate their actions, and where they would hide. He notices the clues they leave behind them.

A vital Skill for survival, in terms of acquiring meat, when combined with the Trapping and Tracking Skills, this makes your character an extremely accomplished hunter. Hara would hire him for more than his ability to hunt animals.

System: If your character has the Tracking Skill at equal or higher level than this Skill, they will gain a +3, to this Skill for any rolls relating purely to hunting.

Hypnotism [INT]

A more direct method of swaying another's will than the subtle art of psychic persuasion, hypnotism is tricky to accomplish without arousing suspicion. Your character can use his voice and gaze to embed commands and ideas in the subconscious minds of his victims.

Though the harish mind is far more resilient than a human's to this method of persuasion, it can still be tricked with the right methods. But like humans, hara cannot be persuaded to go against their instincts with hypnotism.

System: As this is a battle of wills, your character must win in a Willpower die roll contest. For every minute your character spends doing this, his opponent's willpower is effectively reduced by 1. So after 5 minutes, the opponent gets a -5 to their willpower on the next roll. However, for every minute, the opponent gets a Perception roll against

your character's Skill. If he has a skill of 10, you need to roll above 10 for the opponent to realise what he's trying to do to them. If they roll below 10, you can continue.

If the Hypnotism is successful, one command can be implanted into the mind of the victim. It is up to the victim how they interpret this command. This means that if the Hypnotiser specifies the command wrongly, they can end up with disastrous results.

Interrogation [INT] - U

By any means necessary, your character will do what it takes to get information that he or his employer needs. He might use violence or mental cunning, but is always willing to take that extra step to find out what others refuse to tell him.

The Gelaming interrogate people with magic and psychology; the Varrs with torture; and for some reason hara seem compelled to tell the truth to the Sulh without them doing anything at all.

System: All Sulh characters gain a +5 to this Skill when dealing with characters of a lower caste than themselves. If their victim is equal or higher in caste to them, then the victim gets a + 1. This Skill does not work well on members of their own tribe, so a Minus -5 to the skill for working on your own tribe.

If combining these skills to be a torturer, the character uses the lowest score from Butchery, Biology, and Interrogation, whenever a Torture roll is needed.

Intimidation [PER] - U

Your character emanates a great sense of power and presence, which enables him to get what he wants. Dressing the part and physical stance also play an important part in the Intimidation Skill. This does not involve persuading others with threats or subtle psychology, so much as appearing as if he'll do something nasty to them if they don't comply with his wishes. He never displays weakness.

Most of the Varr and the Gelaming are masters at Intimidation, whether by brute force or just looking the part. Those skilled at acting can often fake this very well. Having a reputation will also help if your character is renowned as a tough contender.

Leadership [INT] - U

Your character is a born leader. Those he commands look up to him and respect his decisions. He might have been brought up to lead, or it might be a talent that comes naturally to him. Some hara could resent his powerful aura of control, while others will seek him out, wanting him on their side.

Some hara were born to lead. Perhaps, in the early days, your character formed his own Phyle or even a Tribe. The Varrs and the Gelaming both seek to rule all of Wraeththudom; maybe he's the har to stand against them.

Meditation [INT]

People meditate regularly to help calm their mind and avoid stress. For some, meditation can even take the place of sleep. It can be seen as a religious ritual, to go beyond the mundane world and become one with the universe.

The Sulh use meditation for psychic questing, in order to secure information otherwise unavailable to them, while the Obliviata use it to gain control of their base urges. Many other tribes also encourage hara to meditate regularly.

System: Some hara choose meditation over sleep, as it is a far more efficient method of resting; every hour of meditation is equivalent to two hours of sleep. For every hour, you must make a successful Meditation die roll, or you snap out of your trance, and cannot regain the state for another two hours. Also, for every eight hours' constant Meditation, hara regain 1 point of Composure up to their maximum.

Another benefit of Meditation is that a Harish character can use it to accelerate the body functions for healing and regenerations. While the character is meditating, all Minor Wounds and Agmara regained will be quadruple all natural values. However the Meditation needs to be performed for at least 2 hours before healing or regeneration starts.

Interrogation [INT]
Intimidation [PER]
Leadership [INT]
Meditation [INT]

Degradation of Major Wounds can be stopped with Meditation. I.e. damage to a major organ wouldn't get any worse. However, when used in this way, you should subtract 5 when rolling. , If the roll is successful, the Major Wound won't get any worse, and the character will be in a form of biological stasis, where nothing else can regenerate.

If the Meditation cycle is broken or disturbed, then it needs to be restarted from scratch. So, if your character needs to meditate for 2 hours, and they are disturbed after the first hour, they need to start from hour one again.

Occult [INT]

Your character understands the deeper and darker working of the mind and the world around him. Knowledge of the Occult is always kept to a select few. He might be a Magician, or belong to a cult or secret society. But are the secrets he penetrates worth the price he might have to pay for them?

In the world of the Wraeththu it would be easy to dismiss knowledge of the occult as being left behind in the human past. Hara now all believe in magic and the mystery of the unknown is slowly being revealed to them? Or is it? Wraeththu still don't know how they came to be. Why do the Kakkahaar keep their rituals so secret? What are the Sulh really storing in their immense library? Greater mysteries have yet to be unfolded.

N.B.: Occult will offer no bonuses to Wraeththu magic, as all the occult knowledge gained in the past is related to the work of humanity. Now, with the advent of Wraeththu Magic, the old knowledge is rarely useful, as hara prefer to develop their magical skills in a different direction.

Persuasion [PER] - U

While similar to Intimidation, Persuasion is the art of talking an intended victim into doing what you want them to do, rather than achieving this result through body language or brute force. A persuaded person would not even know your character has changed their mind in order for them to agree with him. However, unlike Intimidation, the har your character tries to persuade needs to know what he's talking about.

Most high caste hara have a talent for talking almost any har into doing what they want them to do. The Gelaming are a prime example of this gift at work; they can usually persuade anyhar to do their bidding.

Intelligence

Architect [PER]

Your character has always been skilled at design, but has found his niche as an Architect. He might design buildings or even have overseen the planning of a whole city. He knows how to build strong and stable buildings that can survive most environmental conditions.

If Wraeththu are to survive and flourish, they need to start building. The earth has absorbed a great deal of what humanity had built upon it. Wraeththu architecture must be more in tune with the environment. Some hara have chosen to occupy and rebuild old human settlements, while other tribes have decided to build new towns. Competent, artistic and sensitive architects are in high demand, especially among the Gelaming.

Area Knowledge (Specify) [PER]

Your character knows a certain area like the back of his hand, whether it's a city, a town, or even a mountain range or desert. He knows all the best places to hide and where to find what he needs. He is familiar with the area's history and politics, and might have studied for many years to acquire this knowledge.

The street gangs of the Ugenna and Unneah know their territory, both above and below ground, like no other. But outside their area of expertise, they are the same as

any other har. Your character might know your home town better than any har. Perhaps, in his human youth, he spent a long time exploring every area and hiding place.

Specialisation: Select an area, town or city to be the special object of your character's Skill. For each additional area, you need to take this Skill again with a different specialisation.

Biology [INT]

Your character understands living organisms and how they work, whether human or animal. Unlike butchery, this Skill applies specifically to human biology, so he can use it in combat to injure or wound his opponent much more efficiently.

Harish biology is different to that of humans, so while human biology now has limited usefulness, skilled biologists are needed to discover more about Wraeththu physiology, as more mysteries come to light. Your character will have had to learn this skill while still human. Although some of the basics can still be learned from books, no definitive works have yet been written on harish biology.

System: This bonus only applies to humans. At skill level 5, gain an additional +1 damage in all combat. Level 10 gain +2; Level 15 gain +3; level 20 gain +4.

You can start developing harish biology once you have reached skill level 15. It has to be taken as a separate skill, and is subject to the Storyteller's approval, but without the specialisation your character cannot gain the combat bonuses against harish characters. Also, Biology is useful for creating toxins, as well as other medical applications.

On a successful die roll, with a -5 Action Modifier to your skill, you have the ability to decide what type of wound you want to inflict on hara and humans alike. You can choose between Major Wound damage or Minor Wounds, giving you the ability to shoot a weapon and cause a flesh wound rather than penetrate the skin and cause damage which could kill or maim an opponent.

If combining these skills to be a torturer, then the character uses the lowest score from Butchery, Biology, and Interrogation, whenever a Torture roll is needed.

Bureaucracy [WIL]

The inner workings of Governments, Councils, or even Royalty, are no mystery to your character. He knows how to get what he wants from the higher ranks, and has penetrated many secrets that others seek to discover. He can use his Skill to manipulate the political endeavours of governments and companies, losing things in endless reams of paperwork.

Bureaucracy is still a problem in the Wraeththu world; too many secrets are hidden away from the prying eyes of hara. Who can say what is truly happening in Immanion or Fulminir? The web of paperwork and lies woven by the officials are enough to make anyhar's head spin.

Cartographer [PER] - S

People always need maps, as the world changes constantly; new cities appear, and natural disasters can change the appearance and topography of an area. Your character's specialised Skill is respected and prized, from making accurate street maps to mapping the coast of a country.

Now, more than ever, this Skill is needed by others. There are few accurate maps of harish settlements, and most tribes have yet to chart the changing face of the landscape. Since the fall of humanity, natural disasters have changed the course of rivers and the shape of the environment. If the Varrs and the Gelaming do go to war, this Skill will be in high demand by both sides.

Chemistry [INT]

Through chemistry, your character can understand the building blocks of creation. He knows how and why toxins affect organisms, and why certain substances react with others. He can create explosives and other useful chemical compounds.

Biology [INT]
Bureaucracy [WIL]
Cartographer [PER]
Chemistry [INT]

Chemistry is still a valid Skill. The elemental structure of the planet is slowly changing and hara skilled in this area have many new things to discover. To take this Skill at a high level, your character will have to have learned it while still human. As with Biology, some of the basics can still be learned from books, but a more practical background is required to progress with this Skill.

Computer Engineer [PER] - S

Whether as a hobby or a job, the ability to build and maintain computing devices was very useful in the world of humanity. Your character's skills were invaluable, as many of the corporations that survived through computers had little knowledge themselves of how to run them.

Computers are completely redundant, so if your character possesses this Skill, it's virtually useless. The infrastructure of the computer age has collapsed; there is little or no electric power, and what supply still exists would not be wasted on computers. However, it is rumoured that the Varrs control a computing facility once owned by the humans, where they have managed to re-establish a power supply, which presumably will run until their fuel stocks are exhausted.

Computer Operations [PER]

In the old world, the maintenance and running of computers was no mystery to your character, from day to day operations, to keeping the data safe and secure. He could make things work, despite the inherent problems with incompatibilities and bugs; he could even improve the performance of machines.

Like all the computer skills, your character's abilities are more or less redundant, as only a few areas maintain small power sources, which will eventually expire. He is led by the rumours that some tribes still maintain small areas of technology for information purposes.

Computer Programmer [WIL]

Corporations and industrial giants thirsted for your character's abilities; he made the programs which were the foundations of business and the core of the human world. People like him made the Internet and the applications that governed everyone's day to day lives.

There is no longer any need for your character's Skill - or is there? If the rumours are true, he might be able to penetrate the inner cabals of the Varrs, and offer his Skill to those in the know about any facilities they maintain.

Cooking [DEX] - TU

Your character can conjure up exciting and interesting meals. Others comment on his culinary expertise and every dinner party he holds is always a huge success. Once he's acquired enough experience, he might decide to set up his own restaurant.

This was probably a talent that your character had back in human times, but many hara develop good cooking skills to order to survive. At low levels, he'll be able to make a good meal, while at high levels he'll be capable of preparing an entire banquet.

Cryptography [PER] - S

This is the art of disguising information, hiding messages from prying eyes, and those who would seek use it against you. Cryptography took many forms in the human world, especially after the advent of the Internet and electronic data transmissions.

Still useful in the Wraeththu world, Cryptography can be used to hide messages within messages. The possibilities for its use are wide and varied, and it can be applied to many forms of communication. Used mainly in encoding records and sending private letters or information.

Computer Engineer [PER]
Computer Operations [PER]
Computer Programmer [WIL]
Cooking [DEX]
Cryptography [PER]

Demolitions [PER] - S

The art of Demolitions has been around since humans developed things that go 'boom'! This Skill enables your character to know where to place the least amount of explosives for maximum impact. Also, it enables him to find weak spots in buildings, and plan how and where they will fall. However, possessing this Skill does not mean he knows where to buy or how to make explosives; it simply enables him to use them correctly.

Many tribes still make basic explosives; the more complex substances, like TNT and C4, are more difficult to produce and need far more equipment, of which very little remains. It is believed the Varrs still have stores of old explosives, many of which are believed to be too volatile to use.

System: If your character has the Architect Skill, at an equal or higher level than Demolitions, they will gain a +3 to the Skill for all rolls.

Doctor [DEX]

Your character knows all about common diseases and how to treat Major Wounds; he might have trained for many years to acquire the ability to diagnose conditions and illnesses quickly. He might have chosen to study a particular disease and became a specialist in that field. If your character specialises in this Skill, he will have far more expertise than an ordinary MD.

In the Wraeththu world, the knowledge your character acquired during medical training is of limited practical use, beyond the treatment of wounds, as Wraeththu are less susceptible to disease than humans. However, doctors are still considered valuable inceptees, as their knowledge can be applied to investigating harish physiology. If this Skill is coupled with Biology, your character could be a pioneer in this field.

System: A Biology skill is needed of equal or higher value to Doctor to be able to use it. If your character has Diplomacy at an equal or higher level they can gain an additional +3 to this skill for all its rolls.

Electrician [PER] - T

The ability to repair electrical equipment was an essential in the human world, from rewiring a house to repairing the wiring of an engine. When large scale equipment is involved, your character knows what to do and how to do it, even if he needs assistance to finish the job. However, on a smaller scale involving chips and resistors, you're flummoxed.

The more established Wraeththu communities generally have some form of generator, which has to be maintained. Many of them are rather old, and/or have had to be converted to methane gas, which harish settlements can produce (if they have the knowledge). So this Skill is invaluable to tribes who use such generators.

Electronics Engineer [DEX] - S

This skill applies to smaller scale electrical devices, such as VCR's, computers, toasters and vacuum cleaners. Domestic appliances in the old human world generally had some form of electrical components. Your character felt at home with small pieces of silicon and bits of circuit board. He could build devices to accomplish specific tasks, and then fix them if necessary.

Like all Skills where electricity and therefore fuel are needed, this skill has fallen into redundancy. However, if your character comes across working technology, he can apply his trade, at a price.

Etiquette (Specify Tribe) [PER]

Your character possesses the social and cultural graces that tend to impress others, even if occasionally it can incur other's scorn. Knowledge of how to behave at important social events is second nature to him. He might hate to see others doing things wrong, but etiquette prevents him from partaking in ridicule.

Etiquette in the company of other tribes is a Skill your character will have gained after Inception. Coupled with any niceties of social behaviour he learned while human,

Demolitions [PER]
Doctor [DEX]
Electrician [PER]
Electronics Engineer [DEX]
Etiquette [PER]

he'll rarely make a faux pas in harish society. But the cultural differences between tribes can often make learning their social rules very tricky indeed.

First Aid [DEX] - S

You character has knowledge of medicine, and how to deal with problems actively in the field, such as stabilising another person who has suffered Major Wounds. They are also trained to deal with Minor Wounds and have the skill to deal with these, when the need arises.

Though it may seem an out of date concept, first aid is still useful to hara. Even though all hara have enhanced healing over that of humans, and the ability to heal with Agmara energy, there are occasions when this is not possible and First Aid is still needed.

N.B.: First Aid, can only be used to heal Minor Wounds, and stop the degradation of Major Wounds, Doctor is needed for the healing of Major Wounds through Skills. See **page 291** for more information about healing using First Aid.

Folk Medicine [PER]

You character has knowledge of natural medicine, and of the plants and herbs of the wilderness. He was probably never formally trained in this Skill, unless he was a member of a human community who were into such things, and was taught by a Shaman or a Witch.

Hara learned the basics of Folk Medicine through trial and error or a need to survive. The Sulh, Colurastes and, to some degree, the Kakkahaar offer more advance training. During the past ten years, new species of herbs and other remedies have been discovered, which have some effect upon the harish form.

N.B.: Folk Medicine, can only be used to heal Minor Wounds, and stop the degradation of Major Wounds, Doctor is needed for the healing of Major Wounds through Skills. See **page 292** for more information about healing using Folk Medicine.

History (Specify) [PER]

Knowledge of the past is more useful than it might appear; knowing what has happened before can help your character plan for the future and hopefully not make the same mistakes that others did in the past.

Many hara choose to forget that they were once human, but the human past is not that far behind them. Many believe that the planet chose to destroy humanity and created a replacement sentient species in Wraeththu. Hopefully, hara can undo the mistakes of the past and learn to understand how and why they came about.

Investigation [PER] - U

A born sleuth, your character has an uncanny ability to uncover information and has a network of contacts to help him in his investigations. Whether he works for a government or himself, his Skill is always valued by others who need it.

Investigation is a very useful Skill in the world of the Wraeththu, as many secrets lie hidden in towns all over Megalithica and Almagabra. Coupled with his psychic abilities, a har with this Skill can be an extremely effective investigator.

Linguistics (Specify) [INT]

Your character can speak, and also possibly read and write, in a language that is not his native tongue. From local sayings, to the regional dialect, he knows the ins and outs of these languages. Individuals more advanced in Linguistics can offer their services as translators.

Many hara have learned another language through necessity, in trade and travel, while others might have had schooling as a human. Almost all hara speak Megalithican, as well as the native language of their human home land.

Specialisations: You can take this Skill in Megalithican (a derivative of English), Albish (also a derivative of English), plus other human languages. The Obliviata have

their own language, as described in the Tribes section; this is a complex patois, and exclusive to their tribe, which few other hara can understand.

Military Tactics [PER]

An understanding of the subtle and deadly dance of the battlefield has always been a prized skill. While it is the troops who actually fight, there always needs to be a good commander giving orders, to help prevent unnecessary loss of life and secure ultimate victory.

Prized among the Varrs and the Gelaming, this Skill can make your character a good commander and, with a little more training in other associated areas, he could soon be controlling his own troops. With the escalating hostility between the Gelaming and the Varrs, he might feel that war will soon be coming to his shores.

System: If a group of characters plan their combat actions and manoeuvres before a fight, and a successful roll on Military Tactics is made by one character, then all characters in that group gain a +3 to all combat actions during the Melee.

Politics [PER]

In any country, politicians are often among the most hated individuals; even if you're not a politician yourself, it's important to have a grasp about the politics of the land in which you live, or which you travel through. It can mean the difference between survival and death. Politics is a very difficult game: often subjective, often apparently insane. A good politician is a clever manipulator who can stay one step ahead in the game.

Wherever your character is in the world, the government once in power has certainly fallen into ruin, if it still exists at all. Anarchy now rules in most cities of Megalithica, under the influence of the Ugenna, and also the Varrs, who seek to control the world beyond their borders. The Gelaming might have voted themselves in as the rulers of all Wraeththu, but elections and the politics of the past are a long way from being reformed.

Pharmacology [PER] - S

Maybe your character is, or was, in the medical profession. He knows how to treat many different diseases and what the pills and potions are most effective; he might even be familiar with how to make them.

While human medicine may be of little use to Wraeththu, knowledge of chemistry, biology and how to develop new medicines more suitable for harish needs, is a valuable Skill. It is possible that your character studied medicine or pharmacology as a human.

System: You need both the Biology and Chemistry Skill at equal or higher levels to this skill to use it.

Physics [INT]

Physics is the study of the structure of matter, space and time; it has many different branches, from Cosmology to Quantum psychics. There might seem to be a lot of theories and little fact, but the application of scientific theory can be useful, even beyond the realms of physics.

While science as it was amongst humans no longer exists, knowledge of physics is still a useful Skill. Physics will help a har understand the basics of cause and effects in magical practices and its disciplines can still be applied to aspects of Wraeththu life. In order to take this Skill at a high level, your character will have to have learned it while human, although the basics can still be learned from books.

Psychology [WIL]

Your character will be fascinated by the intricacies of the mind, from how people think to the way they behave. He can explore the darker side of the mind, find things hidden deep within the subconscious and understand why people behave the way they do.

Military Tactics [PER]
Politics [PER]
Pharmacology [PER]
Physics [INT]
Psychology [WIL]

Though harish Psychology is different to that of a human's, the same principles are at work. As all hara are incepted from humans, fragments of the fragile human mind remain, and can sometimes cause problems and incompatibilities.

Streetwise [PER] - U

Your character knows how to survive in an urban environment, and is aware of all the best places to scavenge, and find food and clean water. The rules of the street are second nature to him, as he knows who is in charge of whom and where the tribal boundaries are, as well as the ways to cross them.

Many Wraeththu are virtually born on the streets. The tribal politics and brutal life of the inner city holds no fear to hara with this Skill. It is possessed especially by the Uigenna and Unneah. Many other hara come from this background, but most choose to deny it. Your character always knows where to get essential items, and the right hara to speak to, if he wants to get a job done.

Panache [PER] - U

Your character has a knack for knowing what is, or will be, fashionable, chic and trendy. In any crowd, he'll stand out as a well-dressed individual. He can fit it at any high-class business lunch or elegant party. Panache goes beyond mere surface dressing, of course. Everything your character does invites admiration from others: the ultimate cool.

The Gelaming are masters of panache, but that does not mean it is restricted only to the hara of Immanion. Wraeththu of many tribes are naturally stylish, but fashion is a fickle thing, even among hara. Many use this Skill to impress others, especially those of smaller tribes. An Unthrist har who wants to impress a passing group of Gelaming will often have to make sure he looks the part before he approaches them.

Theology [INT] - U

Belief is very powerful; some live by it, while others die for it. The religions of the world are varied, many are misunderstood, and new ones are created constantly. Your character could have been a priest of an organised religion or simply a scholar who was interested in learning about the belief systems of the world.

While the religions of the past have no place in this new world, many lost and Unthrist hara try to cling on to their past beliefs. New religions, or spiritual systems, are being created to allow for the changes that have taken place. The Aghama is one of the new gods for many hara. But do Wraeththu really need a religion, considering the trouble they caused in the human past?

Toxicology [PER]

With this Skill, your character knows how the naturally resilient harish body responds to certain toxins. He could kill a har, or simply render them unconscious. From natural poisons to those manufactured for mass destruction, he has explored, to some degree, how each one can cripple or inflict pain on his foes. Some poisons are subtle and some, shall we say, are not...

As if the Uigenna weren't bad enough, one of them seems to have had the brains to create poisons deadly enough to affect hara. Wraeththu had believed they were safe from such substances, but apparently not. The knowledge of how to create and administer poisons is spreading fast, and other tribes are having to learn such skills in order to fight back.

System: You need both the Biology and Chemistry Skill at equal or higher levels to Toxicology to use it. This skill directly relates to creating toxins which are harmful to the Wraeththu. For creating human toxins, you need the Pharmacology skill.

Trading Lore [WIL] - U

Getting a good deal is always difficult, but your character knows the best places to buy and sell. He understands the not so subtle art of haggling, and nearly always come out

on top. He is knowledgeable about the major trade routes of the world; he might even know how to get contraband goods.

While currency is scarce, trading is as important as it ever was. Complex bartering systems have arisen throughout Megalithica and it is best not to buy anything without local advice from someone you can trust. The Unneah are masters at the art, and the Kakkahaar always make sure their end of the bargain is best. The Obliviata have formed their own systems of trade and are always reliable to deal with, despite their strange beliefs. If your character is lucky, he might know one or two of the Obliviata's trade routes. These are valuable if he has goods he wants to shift quickly, or supplies he needs to off load.

System: If your character has Streetwise at an equal or higher level than this skill, they will gain a +3 to this skill when rolling on it.

Wraeththu Lore [PER]

Your character knows more than most hara about the history and origins of Wraeththu. He understands some aspects of harish physiology and psychology of which the majority appear ignorant. He might have made a concerted effort to learn more about Wraeththu after Inception, or perhaps learned this knowledge from another source, such as his tribe's Archon, Phylarch or Hienama, who decided to share some of their secrets.

The Gelaming claim to know everything about Wraeththu history, including the truth about who the Aghama really was. But the Kakkahaar also appear to have plenty of knowledge about the past. Perhaps hara will never know the truth behind their creation. It would take a very privileged and gifted har to uncover it.

N.B.: As the Wraeththu are a fairly new race of creatures, almost all of them know nothing about themselves or their feudal society. With the development of this skill your character starts to gather knowledge about the Wraeththu origins and how the society functions as a whole.

Perception

Art (Music/Dance/Expression) [DEX] - U

Art covers many things such as painting, singing and dancing. You have to specify which particular Skill you wish your character to have. Some might wish to specialise in one instrument, or one specific area of art; others might wish to be more general in their approach and cover a range of styles and methods.

Art is valued in Wraeththu society. The grand houses of Immanion will pay good money for a fine piece of art, and most artisans can find work all over Megalithica and Almagabra. In some of the larger cities, your character could even initiate new art movements.

System: If your character has Performance at an equal or higher level than this Skill they will gain a +3 whenever a roll is needed for your character's Art Skills.

Disguise [PER] - S

With this Skill, your character can hide in plain sight, so that he's unrecognisable to those who might wish him harm, or would at least like to unmask him. He can blend in and vanish, in almost any environment, simply through the clever use of a little makeup and suitable clothes. He can also disguise his actions and movements, so that he looks like another person.

The art of Disguise is desirable in a lot of harish communities. Many tribes like to have spies, and the payment for this service is generally lucrative. The ability to hide yourself is useful in troubled times. Hara skilled at Disguise know how not to draw attention to themselves. To some degree, Disguise is also useful to infiltrate human settlements and gather information, or seek out new inceptees.

System: If your character has Mimicry at an equal or higher level to this Skill you will gain a +3 to for all rolls involving Disguise.

Wraeththu Lore [PER]
Art [DEX]
Disguise [PER]

Intuition [INT] - U

Your character has a natural talent for knowing what's really going on behind the scenes, or perhaps has an uncanny knack of knowing what's going to happen next. He can second guess many hara, reading their movements and actions.

Some hara have a heightened inner sense, more so than the average Wraeththu. They often foresee events before they occur, and know how to read ominous signs. For some hara, it's a trait they developed as part of their caste training; for others, it will have been with them since birth.

System: On a successful roll a character gains insight concerning the current situation. It's up to the Storyteller to decide what the intuitive feeling is, and it may not always be useful.

Lip Reading [INT]

Lip-reading is like another language. Your character can develop this Skill for every language on the planet. Lip-reading has many uses; your character could study a conversation from afar, or talk to others while loud music or loud noises prevent normal hearing.

Only hara who learned to lip read when human tend to possess this Skill. The usefulness of lip-reading is limited to younger, lower caste hara, as older hara prefer the abilities to read minds and communicate over long distances to acquire necessary information.

Mimicry [DEX] - U

Your character can mimic the mannerisms and actions of most hara he meets. The more he develops this Skill, the quicker and easier it is for him to imitate others, including their mannerisms and the way they speak and act. It requires acute observation of others, an ability to pick up what might otherwise seem unimportant details.

As your character progresses through this Skill he'll become more proficient at mimicking the voices and subtle mannerisms of others. It might be fairly easy to imitate some har's voice or to copy their actions, but to master both at once can take a long time and a lot of practice. For example, it's difficult to fool a har who has known the one you're mimicking for many years. It's easy to mimic individuals who are not well known to those you have to interact with.

Security Systems [INT] - S

From simple alarms, to manufacturing complex systems to capture intruders, this Skill is used to protect a building or valuable items. Your character can design devices and prepare areas for maximum security, which can not only alert him to an intruder's presence, but can also stop and capture them.

With the use of magic, your character can now take security to new levels, setting up systems that cannot be breached. He can use such methods as impregnating an area with an aura of fear, so that others are reluctant to pass through them, or use his magic to hide an area, so nohar detects its presence.

System: When setting up a system, take the Success Level, and subtract that from your Skill number, to work out the Action Modifier penalty that others will suffer when trying to break your security. Your character needs Electronics Engineer at an equal or higher level to Security Systems to enable them to use this skill.

Survival [INT]

If your character has this skill, his body and senses are honed for survival in almost any environment; punishing desert terrains and perilous mountains hold no fear for him. He could have learned this Skill, simply because his circumstances left him with no choice, or he could have been trained in it.

Anyhar incepted into the Uigenna during the early days of Wraeththu is a true survivor. While Wraeththu bodies are stronger than humans', many broke down under

the mental strain of the new world. Each tribe has a particular method of survival, and a set of skills to cope with the changes that have taken place over the past decade.

System: For each one of these Skills (Tracking, Hunting, Trapping, Fishing, Folk Medicine and Stealth) your character has above 5 points they will gain a +1 bonus to this skill, when making any Survival rolls.

Tracking [INT]

As a skilled hunter, your character understands the way his prey thinks. Tracking is the art of looking at the trail prey leaves; the subtle clues they leave on the ground. Your character can use this Skill both out in the wilds and in the city. Obviously, the clues he looks for in each environment are slightly different.

Coupled with other survival skills, Tracking makes your character a formidable har. He can track in the traditional manner, but now has other tools at his disposal, such as the use of magic. He can hire himself out to many tribes; the Varrs are very interested in good trackers, as are the Gelaming.

System: If your character has the Hunting Skill at equal or higher level than Tracking they will gain a +3, to this skill for any rolls relating purely to tracking.

Craft (Specify) [DEX] - S

Your character's hands are his tools. He makes many things, from fine cloths and clothes, to pots, as well as smaller items, which might be practical or simply aesthetically pleasing. He can ply a great trade in such items, selling them to those who need household goods, or who just want something to adorn their homes.

Now that mass manufacturing has vanished, your character is in his element; his Skill is in high demand. He gets traders knocking on his door asking for his wares, so he is more than capable of having quite an affluent life.

Specialisations: Potter, Weaver, Wood Carver, Jeweller, Tailor, Metal Worker, Tanner.

System: If a character has this Skill in a field that relates to any of the Smithery skills, they will be able to create many fanciful designs, which will bring a higher value to items they make. Also, at the Storyteller's discretion, your character may be able to add some special function to weapons and armour to make the more efficient in combat. But this would require a roll for both Skills if your character creates any Weapon or Armour.

Stamina

Athletics [DEX] - U

Athletics involves fitness. It covers the basics of Skills such as jumping and climbing, and affects how supple your character is. Athletics applies to a multitude of disciplines, which could either be part of his work or simply a way to keep his body in shape.

Hara are naturally more athletic than humans, although a bit of practice and training never hurt anyhar. Generally, being more flexible and athletic helps in most tricky situations. Also, it comes in useful for such activities as climbing ropes and the leaps and rolls of combat.

System: Some aspects of this Skill can aid Combat Skills. For both Roll and Leap, you gain the following bonuses to all combat Skills. For Athletic skill level of 5 and above +1; for 10 and above gain an additional +2; 15 and above and additional +3; +4 for skill level of 20.

Farmer [INT] - S

While being a farmer might be seen as a humble way to live, it's an essential Skill to any successful community. Your character has knowledge of the land, how to get the best from it in terms of crops, and how to breed and look after livestock. Even in the human world, farming was essential to provide food stuffs for the city dwellers.

Tracking [INT]
Craft (Specify) [DEX]
Athletics [DEX]
Farmer [INT]

As industry and large scale farming is dead, a steady source of food is always hard to find. Farms have been set up around the Varrish town of Galhea, but that is one of the few places where the community is settled enough to start growing crops. Other small tribes are starting to turn towards agriculture, so the Farming Skill is much needed all over Megalithica and beyond.

Mason [DEX] - T

Your character can perceive life in stone. To him, it's not cold and dead, but speaks volumes. He can build dwellings with it, and fashion it into decorations for buildings. Combined with Art skills, he can produce wonderful sculptures.

In Immanion, your character can always find work as a stonemason. Even the Varrs need hara with this Skill. Human cities that have been taken over by hara need to be rebuilt, while other tribes want to build their own new towns. Your character's work is becoming more in demand as Wraeththu spread.

System: If your character has the Architect Skill at an equal or higher level than Mason, they will gain a +3 to this skill when making any rolls. Also, combined with a related Art Skill, the character can create magnificent sculptures, which can be very valuable in the growing Harish towns. However many creations would require successful skill rolls, on all related skills, as and when needed.

Swimming [DEX] - U

If your character possesses this Skill at a basic level, he has the ability to swim in calm or still water. Those who are practiced can swim in strong currents and other turbulent conditions. A useful skill, in the human world it was more of a hobby and a sport than an essential skill for survival.

With his new harish strength and stamina your character has become a strong swimmer. The majority of hara will have learned this skill as a human, so only a few will have developed it after Inception. As a har, he can swim further and faster than ever before and can hold his breath under water for a longer period of time.

Combat Skills and Styles List

There are many elements to the art of Combat; these are explained in Character Generation on **page 180**. Here we cover the styles and skills essential characters who wish to partake in any form of combat.

The majority of Combat-related Skills do not gain any Stat Modifiers, as these are worked out in your character's Base Combat Action Modifiers. The first section of Skills covers the Close Combat Styles, which are essential to a character who wishes to be a contender in a close combat melee. His Styles need to be a higher skill level than his actual Close Combat Skills, otherwise he won't gain any bonuses from the Combat Skill.

For example, if you want your character to be an expert with the Kris Dagger, you would take 1H (one hand) Fighting Style at 15, and Dagger (Kris Dagger) at no higher than 15.

Without a Fighting Style your character won't know how to fight properly. The only other option is Fencing, which is a general Sword skill, and this offers little benefit in Combat. For all Close Combat, you need at least two Skills to accomplish any kind of effective manoeuvre or complex attack/action.

For more information on Combat see **The Art of War** section on **page 266**.

N.B. A shield can be used as a defensive weapon with most one handed weapons, however to use the shield offensively you need *Two Weapon Fighting Style* at 1.

Styles

The Styles listed here are a basic guide. If you choose to give your character an exotic martial arts Style, you should consult your Storyteller before developing it. What follows are only guidelines as to what can be taken.

If you wish to develop a specific style of combat, which lends itself to key areas, you need to pick a basic Style that is the closest match to what you want to develop. You need to work with the Storyteller and decide what bonuses you will receive in combat. However for every Positive point you gain, you need to lose a point in another area. The maximum number of positive points to all areas is limited to 7, and 5 on any one action. Special abilities or moves may be granted if the Storyteller sees fit. Once you have tweaked your Style, you need to name it and it should be represented by first listing the name you choose and the Style from which it's derived. The Style bonuses will only be used once the Style is at least 5 points. However, a gradual scale can be developed, beyond the 5th point. It is up to the player and Storyteller to work out how the Style is developed and the Storyteller must approve all adjustments. See page 267.

E.G. Hou-Shein (1H Fighting Style), at lvl5 +2 to aim, -1 to Block and -1 to Dodge, at lvl10 +2 to aim, -1 to Block and -1 to Dodge, at lvl15 +1 to aim and -1 to Dodge.

Fencing

This is the Base Combat Skill for swords; it simply means your character can use a sword without hurting himself and looking an idiot. It offers no special bonuses; he just has a basic ability with a cutting or thrusting weapon. Pole arms are not included in this Skill, although daggers and axes are.

Other Skills will give your character bonuses to manoeuvres; this Skill only gives the base Bonuses from Stats and no extras.

This skill is useful for characters who do not wish to delve too far into combat, but want a basic ability to defend themselves. Many hara will take this Skill, because they do not see the need for close combat; they prefer to use magic or other methods to take down a foe.

System: No Combat Skills or specialisations are necessary for you to take this Style, and you cannot use it as a Style with Combat Skills. You still need to take other Styles if you wish to develop those Skills and perfect the art of using a weapon other than basic manoeuvres. However this offers a cheap alternative for players not wanting to be a combat specialist but would like some basic training. Just use your Base Close Combat Action Modifiers.

1H (One Hand) Fighting Style

This skill defines your character's fighting Style with all one-handed weapons, such as daggers and swords. It is not a weapon Skill, and cannot be used on its own. It needs to be used in conjunction with a weapons Skill. This Style offers no more than the ability for your character to use a weapon properly without injuring himself. There is more to Combat than simply hitting an opponent. Your character must anticipate where his foe will strike next, and what moves could follow the last. It also includes a level of awareness that aids him during combat.

This is good sturdy style that enables hara to train in the use of all one-handed weapons. The armies of the Gelaming and the Varrs are most likely to train in this style, as are the Obliviata. Many other hara will develop this style to a competent level, so that they can defend themselves and those in their settlements.

System: Your character must have a one-handed weapon specialisation to use this Style. As he progresses, he can take multiple weapons Skills and specialisations in one-handed fighting. From daggers to axes, this gives him a level of competence and awareness in combat, allows him to plan strategically his next move, and gives him insight into what his foe will do next.

2H (Two-Handed) Fighting Style

Similar to One-Handed Fighting Style, this enables your character to use any weapons where he needs both hands, such as long swords and large axes. It gives him the ability to swing and parry in a smooth flow, so his attacks will come faster, and he can use the momentum of the weapon to his advantage.

Fencing
1H (One Hand) Fighting Style
2H (Two-Handed) Fighting Style

This isn't as common as One-Handed Fighting Style, because of the bulk and weight of two-handed weapons, which many hara choose not to carry. Though making them formidable in combat, the use of two-handed weapons may leave hara at a disadvantage against smaller faster weapons.

System: You need to have a Two-Handed Weapon Skill in order to use this Style. As with one-handed weapons, you can later develop multiple two-handed weapons Skills under this one Style. At basic level, this style simply offers grounding in the flow of combat.

Two Weapon Fighting Style

This style offers similar advantages to the previous two styles. However, it does have one disadvantage: your character is trained to use two weapons simultaneously, so when using only one weapon he's at a loss, because the moves and parries based on two weapons will be incomplete.

An extremely specialised style, which is hardly used among hara of Megalithica, though there are a few weapon masters who are trained in it. Because of the expense of finding two weapons that compliment each other, this skill will not be widely used.

System: You will need to develop the Two Weapons Skill to work with this Style, unless you use two weapons that are the same. However, most two handed combatants tend to use a parrying dagger and a larger long sword for striking blows.

N.B.: A character must take 1H fighting style at a minimum level of 6.

Pole Arm Fighting Style

There are many advantages to this fighting Style, but it also has some disadvantages. One of the main advantages is range; most pole arms have a greater reach than other weapons. The main disadvantage is encountered should a foe get too close, because then the effectiveness of the weapon and Style suffers greatly.

This Style of fighting is taken more as a personal preference, as few armies or structured combat units will use it. However, in the right hands, the use of a staff or long axe can be quite formidable. Hara of smaller tribes will specialise in this Style.

System: The majority of pole arms have a long range, which means that should you be confronted by a character with a close range weapon, your only choice is to keep your distance. If your opponent gets in too close, you will need to pick up a different weapon or just get the hell out of there!

Weapon Skills

These are the basic Skills. If you wish to develop them and specialise, make sure your Storyteller agrees your character has access to the equipment and a teacher. The Weapons Skills you take for Close Combat will dictate the Styles your character needs to take. These are listed with each Skill. In the case of multiple Styles you can take all of them, or just one. The Combat Action Modifiers for each Skill are listed, for each level that they apply.

Archery (Specify)

This Skill is used with all Bows and Crossbows. It is the archaic equivalent of a gun, and almost all men in England in the Middle-Ages were taught how to use a bow. With this skill, you need to specialise in a specific type of weapon. Once you have chosen your character's specialisation, he will receive no bonuses from any other Archery weapon, because each type is radically different to all others, from the distance its missiles fly, to the weight and fight path of each missile.

Archery is popular amongst the less well-off hara, as part of this skill means you can also make your own ammunition. So, unlike other ranged weapons, you don't need to hunt for rare ammunition. Archery, although archaic, is almost silent and certainly deadly, which is why many assassins choose to use it, tipping their arrows with Ugenna toxins.

Specialisations: Short Bow, Long Bow, Cross Bow, Arbalest, Repeating Crossbow, Goat's Foot Cross Bow, Windlass Crossbow and Mounted Bow.

System: If you take this Ranged Skill, the repair bonuses and training will enable your character to make the ammunition for your weapon.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+2 Repair
Level 5	+2 Aim
Level 10	+1 Speed, + 2 Damage
Level 15	+2 Repair, +2 Aim
Level 20	+1 Repair, +2 Speed, +3 Aim, +2 Damage

Auto Arms (Specify)

Automatic arms cause maximum damage and swiftly incapacitate an opponent; also, they take down a number of targets quickly. Sometimes called Sub-Machine Guns, these weapons use similar ammunition to that of most common pistols, which makes them cheap and versatile weapons. The main disadvantage with Sub-Machine Guns is that they require two hands to fire properly; otherwise their accuracy is greatly reduced. This Skill can also be used with Automatic Rifles. However, to be a true sniper, it is better to learn the Rifle skill, as the accuracy of this weapon is greater.

Not many hara have experience of this type of weapon, and they have limited usefulness owing to their need for constant maintenance and the vast amounts of ammunition they consume. The tools used to make this ammunition are extremely rare, because of the demise of manufacturing.

Specialisations: FN P90, Uzi 9mm, MP5K 9mm, Ingram Model 10 and Sten Mk III. H&K P90, Calico M-950. An alternative that your Storyteller may wish to consider is selecting specialisation by Calibre of fire arms.

System: This is a Ranged Skill, which cover many areas. However, it does not cover the making of ammunition. If you fire any weapon on fully automatic with one hand, you will face a -5 Combat Action Modifier to Aim.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+1 Repair
Level 5	+2 Aim
Level 10	+1 Dodge, +2 Damage
Level 15	+1 Roll, +2 Leap
Level 20	+2 Repair, +2 Aim, +2 Damage

Axe (Specify)

Axes are used mainly as cleaving weapons. Due to their weight and balance, they are generally used to make a quick kill, against an unsuspecting or unskilled opponent. Axes come in many different formats, from large to small. Throwing axes are included in the Thrown Skill. Although the axe is largely a clumsy weapon, and somewhat hampers the agility required for quick attacks, it is designed to do massive amounts of damage with few blows.

Because of the inelegance of the Axe, many hara choose not to use this type of weapon. Also, the larger Axes are bulky and difficult to carry around. Unless your character has somehow acquired a good quality Axe, or was trained in it for some reason, it's unlikely that he'd study this Skill.

Specialisations: Hand Axe, Elephant Axe, Bearded War Axe, Silepe, Tomahawk, Tschenkan and Venmuroo.

Styles: 1H Fighting Style, 2H Fighting Style and 2 Weapon Fighting Style

System: A throwing Axe is used under the Thrown Skill, and not the Axe.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+1 Repair, +1 Aim

Auto Arms
Axe

Level 5	+1 Roll, +1 Dodge
Level 10	+2 Damage, +1 Leap, +1 Block, +2 Aim
Level 15	+2 Repair, +1 Dodge, +2 Damage
Level 20	+2 Repair, +1 Speed, +5 Damage, +2 Block, +2 Aim

Blunt Weapon (Specify)

The ability to use blunt weapons comes into its own when you need to knock someone out, or do damage to a character without killing them. The main type of weapons used with this Skill are non-edged, or weapons that mainly inflict only Minor Wounds. Like axes, they are quite clumsy weapons, with no elegance involved in their use. They are designed to crush and bruise, but rarely to kill quickly.

The resilience of most hara's bodies has made many of the small blunt weapons redundant. Some are still useful, such as the Black Jack, which is designed to render a foe unconscious. Blunt trauma to the head will still cause a Wraeththu to lapse into unconsciousness.

Specialisations: Club, Mace, Nunchaku, Spiked Mace, Sceptre, Black Jack, War Hammer, Truncheon.

Styles: 1H Fighting Style, 2H Fighting style, 2 Weapon Fighting Style.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+3 Repair, +1 Aim
Level 5	+2 Roll, +1 Dodge
Level 10	+3 Damage, +1 Leap, +2 Block, +2 Aim
Level 15	+2 Repair, +2 Dodge, +2 Damage
Level 20	+1 Repair, +2 Speed, +6 Damage, +3 Aim

Brawl/Unarmed

This hand-to-hand Combat Skill is for those who cannot, or choose not to use weapons. You can take this Skill at low-level to give your character basic brawling skills. Experienced street fighters or boxers would have this Skill at higher levels, as they are trained to use their bodies as weapons, to damage, stun or disable an opponent. Unlike martial arts, there are no set rules, structures or moves involved in this Skill. It is all down to the player's imagination and cunning to use Brawl in combat.

The Ugenna are masters of Brawling, which is an unpredictable and yet creative form of combat. Many Ugenna are lethal, simply with their fists and feet. A lot of hara choose to learn a few basic Brawl moves, just in case they get cornered and need to show some force to escape.

Styles: None required. A player may wish to develop a fighting style for use with this Skill; such styles could be derivatives of Modern Martial Arts.

System: If you wish to develop a Martial Combat Skill, it is best to work with the Storyteller in its development.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+2 Damage, +1 Aim
Level 5	+1 Roll, +1 Dodge
Level 10	+2 Damage, +2 Leap, +2 Block, +2 Aim
Level 15	+1 Speed, +1 Dodge, +1 Damage, +2 Aim
Level 20	+3 Roll, +1 Speed, +5 Damage, +1 Block, +3 Aim

Dagger/Knife (Specify)

Small knives, and other such implements, (which are very common), can be used with lethal speed and accuracy. Easily concealed, they are the weapon of choice by many characters. A lot of people own knives, even if few of them know how to use them correctly as a weapon. They have been used for millennia as ritual weapons, as well as a culinary tool, and are very versatile, having many applications beyond conflict and self defence.

Many hara carry knives and daggers; if not for combat, then for ritual and utilitarian purposes. Nearly every har carries a knife of some kind, because he can use it for so many things, from incepting a human to gutting a fish.

Styles: 1H Fighting Style, 2 Weapon Fighting Style.

System: A thrown dagger comes under the Thrown Skill, and not the Dagger Skill.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+1 Repair, +1 Aim
Level 5	+3 Roll, +2 Dodge, +1 Aim
Level 10	+1 Damage, +2 Leap, +2 Aim
Level 15	+2 Repair, +2 Dodge, + 1 Damage, +2 Aim
Level 20	+2 Repair, +3 Speed + 3 Damage, + 1 Block, +3 Aim

Machine Guns (Specify)

Machine Guns are far more powerful than Automatic Arms, mainly because of the difference in Ammunition. The Machine Gun uses specialised ammo, which can be harder to obtain than normal ammunition. Also, another drawback is that these weapons are almost impossible to wield without the use of a bi-pod, which is the two-legged structure they stand upon. Only Machine Guns weighing less than 10 kg can realistically be used by hand; all others need their bi-pod. However, should your character have a Strength rating in excess of 17, he can use weapons of up to 20kg without support.

The Varrs are the only tribe that has access to many of the older weapons; among them is a large selection of Machine Guns. Yet because of their high rate of fire, ammunition has to be strictly rationed and use only in extreme combat situations.

Specialisations: 7.62mm FN MAG, 5.56mm Steyer, 7.62mm M60, .50 Browning Heavy Machine Gun, .50 Saco Defence and GECAL 50 six Barrel Machine Gun (or the smaller Mini-Gun). Due to the many different makes and firing systems that machine guns use, it is rare this Skill is transferable. However, the combat rules do allow for similar types of weapons, which only get certain bonuses.

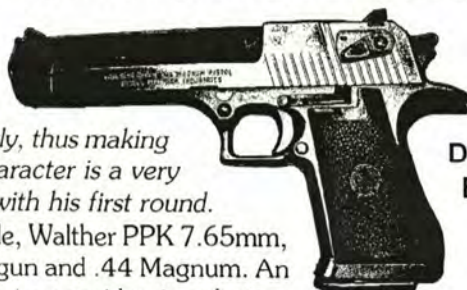
Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+1 Repair
Level 5	+1 Aim
Level 10	+1 Repair, +2 Damage
Level 15	+1 Aim +2 Repair
Level 20	+2 Damage +2 Aim

Pistol/Single Shot (Specify)

Pistols are quite common in many countries of the modern world; in several countries citizens can own them for home defence. Along with Shotguns, Pistols are quite easy to maintain, and most of them use common forms of Ammunition.

Please remember: when shooting a har with such a weapon, you're only likely to annoy him, rather than damage him greatly, thus making your situation worse. Only useful if your character is a very good shot, or happens to hit a vital organ with his first round.

Specialisations: Glock 17, Desert Eagle, Walther PPK 7.65mm, Parabellum Mauser, Derringer, 12bore Shotgun and .44 Magnum. An alternative that your Storyteller may wish to consider is selecting specialisation by Calibre of fire arms.



Desert Eagle

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+2 Repair
Level 5	+1 Aim

Machine Guns
Pistol/Single Shot

Level 10	+1 Speed +1 Roll +2 Damage
Level 15	+2 Repair +1 Aim
Level 20	+2 Repair +2 Aim +1 Roll +1 Dodge, +2 Damage

Pole Arms (Specify)

This enables you to use all Pole Arms such as Spears, Halberds or other such long arms. Used widely in medieval wars, and on occasions when thousands of men met on a field to solve a dispute over land. Pole Arms are very heavy, and in confined places, or very close combat, become virtually useless.

Because of the bulk of Pole Arms, they are not commonly used by hara, Staffs and duel-purpose weapons are more common, although most hara prefer to use a dagger in close combat, because of the speed of the weapon.

Specialisations: Spear, Halberd, Parangs, Pike, Trident, Berdiche Brandestoc, Glaive, Pole Axe, Scythe, Voulge and Quarterstaff/Staff.

Style: 2H Fighting style.

System: This type of weapon cannot be used properly as a one handed weapon.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+2 Repair, +1 Aim
Level 5	+1 Roll, +1 Dodge
Level 10	+2 Damage +2 Leap +2 Block, + 1 Aim
Level 15	+1 Repair, +1 Dodge, + 1 Damage
Level 20	+3 Repair, +1 Speed, + 5 Damage, +1 Block, + 2 Aim

Pyrotechnics/Mines (Specify)

This Skill covers a wide base, from land mines, through nitro-glycerine baed explosives, to custom-built explosives. The majority of weapons of this kind usually come in sealed packets of single units, which can be placed and then detonated by various types of trigger. A har with this Skill will have knowledge of many of the common types of trigger and explosives. They might have enough knowledge to make explosives and triggers.

Due to the complex chemical nature of most modern explosives, many hara have to rely on the rapidly diminishing supplies once owned by humans. The Varrs are believed to have a large store, but much of it is useless because of its age.

System: This Skill uses similar bonuses to Ranged Combat, although the Aim Bonuses are used in positioning the explosives for maximum effect. With this Skill, you know how explosives are made, but will still have difficulty in finding caches of the appropriate components. This requires the Chemistry Skill. If using this in conjunction with Demolitions, you can consider this skill 3 levels higher, or gain a +3 to any action with the Demolitions Skill.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+2 Speed
Level 5	+1 Repair
Level 10	+1 Aim, + 10 Damage
Level 15	+2 Repair +1 Aim
Level 20	+2 Repair +2 Aim, +20 Damage

Rifle (Specify)

High-powered Rifles can be deployed in many situations. In the old human world, they were used mainly for assassinations, or covert operations. Some Rifles are powerful enough to do serious damage or even remove a victim's head. However, such a feat isn't easy and requires great skill.

This Skill has to be combined with Auto Weapons, if your Rifle of choice has single shot and auto capability. However the Accuracy of such weapons is greatly reduced. They are best used just with the Auto Weapons Skill, as this will enable you to use the full range of the weapon's abilities, rather than just the single shot mode.

Still quite popular amongst some of the small tribes, because they don't need to use much ammunition; a large store of ammo will last along time. Low use of ammunition, coupled with the high power of many rifles, means they are suitable to kill hara at range quickly.

Specialisations: WA2000 Walther Sniping Rifle, Shotguns, 7.62mm Dragunov Sniper (SVD), AK-47 Assault Rifle and 5.56mm XL 70 E3 Enfield (SA80A).

System: This Ranged Skill can only be used in single shot Mode.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+3 Repair
Level 5	+3 Aim
Level 10	+1 Speed, +2 Damage
Level 15	+2 Repair +5 Aim
Level 20	+3 Repair +10 Aim, +5 Damage

Support Weapons/Launchers (Specify)

These weapons come in all shapes and sizes, including grenades and rocket launchers. They are fairly simple to use; more so than you would expect. However, most require very high maintenance; the ones that don't are usually disposable.

With the downfall of human industry, many of these weapons have fallen into disrepair. The disposable ones are still available, but the reusable ones just don't cut it any more. Once the availability of these weapons dries up, this Skill will be redundant.

Specialisations: Flamethrowers, Grenade Launchers, Automatic Shotguns, Anti-tank Weapons, Rocket Launchers, Mortars and Ground Based Missile Launchers.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+1 Repair
Level 5	+2 Aim
Level 10	+1 Dodge, +1 Aim
Level 15	+1 Aim +2 Repair
Level 20	+10 Damage +2 Aim

Sword (Specify)

Swordplay involves taking down a foe in the fastest possible way, while at the same time using the weapon to block and parry attacks. A good sword is expertly crafted. To a master of the art, it stands between them and death, so a sword master always looks after his weapons carefully.

Many hara have adopted the sword as the weapon of choice, because it needs no ammunition, and it is fairly easy to carry around. Their maintenance is quite simple, and need no rare, specialised materials to keep them sharp.

Specialisations: Bastard Sword, Katana, Falchion, Claymore, Broadsword, Flamberge, Foil, Sabre, No-Dachi, Rapier, Small Sword and Zweihander.

Style: 1H Fighting Style, 2H Fighting Style, 2 Weapon Fighting Style.

Skill level	Bonus
Level 3	+2 Repair + 1 Block +1 Aim
Level 5	+2 Roll, +1 Dodge + 1 Speed + 1 Aim
Level 10	+2 Damage +1 Leap + 1 Block +2 Aim
Level 15	+2 Repair, +2 Dodge, + 3 Damage +2 Aim
Level 20	+2 Repair, +2 Speed + 5 Damage +2 Block +3 Aim

Thrown (Specify)

This Skill covers all kinds of thrown weapon. In some cases, a weapon is designed only to be thrown, while some are designed to be used in hand-to-hand combat as well. Should your character specialise in a weapon that can be thrown, he should also train in this Skill. Other weapons classified in this Skill include the Rope and chain-based weapons over 2 meters in length.

Support Weapons/Launchers
Sword
Thrown

A very useful skill to develop in the Wraeththu world, as Daggers and similar smaller weapons are preferred over bulky and heavy weapons. Also, Throwing can be handy for improvised weapons.

Specialisations: Axe, Dagger, Sling, Dart, Spear, Shuriken, Kawanaga, Boomerang, Grenade, Rante.

System: This can be combined with other Skills that involve throwing, such as Axes or Daggers.

<i>Skill level</i>	<i>Bonus</i>
Level 3	+2 Repair, +1 Aim
Level 5	+2 Roll, +1 Dodge
Level 10	+2 Damage, +1 Leap, +1 Aim
Level 15	+2 Repair, +2 Dodge, +1 Aim
Level 20	+1 Repair, +2 Speed, + 5 Damage , +3 Aim

Whip, Chain and Rope (Specify)

Many weapons fit into this group, but all of them have one thing in common; they can be wildly unpredictable in their attack. With training, your character would be able to make good use of such weapons. These weapons are usually a rope, chain or strip of leather, with some blade or spike on the end to cause physical damage.

A very useful skill to develop, as many of these types of weapons can be jury-rigged together, and easily dismantled or hidden in plain view. As the origins of many of these weapons were similar, most components needed to make them can be found on a farm or around a rural town.

Specialisations: Bull Whip, Lasso, Kusari, Kusarigama, Kyogetsu-Shoge, Oh-gama

<i>Skill level</i>	<i>Bonus</i>
Level 3	+1 Repair, +1 Aim
Level 5	+2 Roll, +1 Damage
Level 10	+2 Damage, +1 Leap, +1 Aim
Level 15	+2 Dodge, +1 Aim, +1 Speed
Level 20	+1 Repair, +2 Speed, +3 Aim

MERITS AND FLAWS LISTS

During play, you cannot take Merits and Flaws; they can only be given to your character by the Storyteller, in response to your character's actions. So make sure you chose the ones you want during Character Generation. To keep your character balanced, you can only take 10 points of Flaws. Beyond this limit, your character will start to become unplayable, or else they'll end up as severe misfits who can't fit in with any character group. There is no limit to the points you can spend on Merits, other than the amount of development points you want to spend. However, the Storyteller can impose a limit on the amount of merits you can take, if they wish.

Merits and Flaws are broken into three sections. The first is for characters who start play as Humans. Many of these Merits and Flaws will be removed during the Inception process, unless you or the Storyteller decides they should remain.

The Second Section gives the Merits and Flaws that can survive Inception, should things go wrong. Both Human and Wraeththu characters can pick from this section.

Finally the third section is for Wraeththu characters only; these are taken by characters starting the game as Wraeththu.

Next you'll find some examples of Merits and Flaws. Feel free to make up any new ones you think reflect your character, but remember the Storyteller has to approve newly developed Merits and Flaws. Some Merits and Flaws have variable levels, denoted

by 1-4pt flaw or relevant numbers. This means you can alter the severity of this Merit or Flaw, to suit your role-playing needs.

For example, a character with 1 point of assets might have friends in a local gang who can help him and offer equipment he needs. A character with Assets of 5 might have the favour of an Archon or Phylarch, who can offer them better equipment and favours.

A note to the Storyteller: *if a player does not play out their character's Merits or Flaws, you should warn them and give them some advice on how to do this. If they persist in ignoring the choices they made during the character generation phase, you should penalise the character.*

Human

Many Merits and Flaws only apply if you wish to start the game as a human, and get incepted during play. Once your human character is incepted, Human Flaws, (particularly physical defects), will generally be removed. The Storyteller should not allow a player to take the following Merits and Flaws if they plan for their human character to be incepted during the first few sessions of play.

By referring to physical conditions, such as blindness, as Flaws, this in no way implies that the writers regard a blind person as flawed in the accepted sense of the word. In anything other than a society possessing 'mod cons' and sophisticated medical technology, certain disabilities would put individuals at a terrifying and sometimes life-threatening disadvantage. Flaws refer, in human characters, mainly to physical disadvantages.

Impaired Vision – 1-3pt Flaw

Your character has lost partial or all of their sight, either by accident, illness or from birth. If they have been blind for a while, they might have become accustomed to it. If it's a recent debility, he might still be coming to terms with this traumatic turn in their life.

Most likely, your character has accepted his condition and copes as well he can in the broken down human society. Little does he know there is a chance for him to see clearly again, but that it might mean he'll have to change his entire being.

System: All Skills and tasks involving the sense of sight get an automatic negative Action Modifier to the Skill, and any related die roll. Normally, this would be greater, but compensation is given for enhanced sensitivity in other senses, such as hearing and smell. A 1 point flaw would give -5 unless glasses or other vision correcting devices were used. At 2 points, the character would have a -10 to all visual based skills, glasses or lenses can reduce this to a -5. At 3 points the character would be at -15, glasses or other such items cannot reduce this.

Brittle Bones - 4pt Flaw

Life is often painful, and your character might well have resented other kids who could run around and play. He couldn't rough-house like they did, because he'd probably be in hospital by the end of the day. His bones are like glass; even falling out of bed can break them.

Your character might have heard from a friend on the Internet, before it went down, that someone had discovered something that could help him; a therapy, he thinks they said. But he ignored that bit: the name was important. It was 'Wraeththu'; he's sure of that, and heard it could help him, make his bones stronger.

System: Minor Wounds Stat is halved, and any Minor Wound damage above 3 points will break bones and do 1 point of Major Wound damage.

Deaf - 2pt Flaw

Your character lives in a world of silence. He might have lost his hearing recently, perhaps having been near to an explosion, or was born with the condition.

Impaired Vision [Flaw]
Brittle Bones [Flaw]
Deaf [Flaw]

If your character recently lost his hearing, there might be some aspects of life that cause him difficulties, but he's learning to overcome them. He hopes that one day medicine, or these strange Wraeththu he keeps reading about, will be able to do something to help.

System: The character gains a -15 to any rolls involving sound, but can still sense some low frequency vibrations. As with blindness, the penalty would normally be -20, but compensation is given for enhanced sensitivity in other senses, such as sight and smell.

Lame - 1pt Flaw

Your character has had a damaged leg all his life or has suffered the condition recently from an illness or accident. Perhaps he has been hoping for years that medicine will come up with something to help. It's not too much of a problem most of the time, only when he tries to do something too physical. However, on some days, it can cause a lot of physical pain.

Your character might have heard about something that could help, something called hara. But what is that? Is it a new medicine or treatment, or something completely revolutionary? He's living in hope that 'hara' will one day become something to which he can get access.

System: Your character has a -10 to all die rolls influencing physical actions that involve the legs, such as running or jumping.

Oracle - 1pt Merit

Your character has foresight; he can see what might come to pass. The further he looks into the future, the more unpredictable the Merit becomes. Every prediction he makes has a possibility of failure, but he gets far more 'hits' than 'misses' with his predictions, compared to others around him.

Some distant future events cannot be avoided; it's just a matter of time before they catch up with you. Your character can use this Merit to tell fortunes, which can bring in some extra cash, in these hard times. But one day he knows he will become a Wraeththu har and this scares him. Beyond that, he cannot see his own future.

System: The character gets feelings about his future. If he decides to delve further it is up to the Storyteller how much information is given to the player. This Merit involves picking up details of brief fragments of information, and having the ability to interpret them, helped by knowledge of current events. This ability will be lost after Inception. However if you want his kind of ability, which can be transferred through Inception, then Psychic is a better option, though more expensive.

Overweight - 3pt Flaw

Your character hears it on the news and sees it on the streets; everyone is supposed to be thin and beautiful. It's not as if he wants to be over weight; he has no choice. Perhaps he's stuck in the Catch 22 situation of depression and binge eating, or perhaps his condition has medical factors attached to it.

All through his life to date, others have teased your character about his weight. He might have tried everything to change it, from diets to hypnotism, but nothing works. Someone has mentioned something about a miracle cure. Was it a cruel joke? They called it 'hara', and from what they said, it only takes three days work! But no matter how hard your character looks, no one seems to know where to buy it. He lives in hope that one day hara can help him.

Crossover

These Merits and Flaws are retained following a human character's Inception. They can also be taken if you're starting play as har. Many of these are psychological in nature. They can gradually be removed from your character throughout prolonged play. However, this can take an extremely long time.

An Eye for the Target- 4pt Merit

Your character is a natural in combat. He never loses sight of his target, and takes to weapons like a duck to water. Even with an unfamiliar weapon, it's as though he has been training in its use for months.

Valued by the Varrs, your character's natural abilities mean he will progress quickly through the ranks. Also, in a world where weapons and ammunition are scarce, it's useful to his tribe that he can use just about anything he lays his hands on as a weapon.

System: For any weapons in which you do not have a Skill, gain +3 to Aim. For any weapons in which you are Skilled, gain +5 to Aim.

Ambidextrous - 4pt Merit

The majority of people are either left or right handed, but your character can use both hands equally efficiently. This is useful if he ever damages a hand. Also, he can use both hands independently, which perhaps he might have found useful at school, if he ever had to write out lines!

There are many applications for this useful Merit, but in particular your character excels at crafts and jobs requiring manual dexterity. Also, when training with two weapons, wielded simultaneously, this Merit gives great advantage to anyone who is skilled.

System: For all Craft Skills which involve intricate work with the hands, gain +5 to all die rolls. For 2 Weapon Fighting Style, gain the advantage of +2 to all combat moves.

Assets - 1-5pt Merit

Even though your character hasn't got many resources of his own, he has access to other hara's assets. He is well connected with high-ranking hara, who favour him for some reason. He can get just about anything he wants, but it can take time and he might have to ask nicely!

Your character has a good relationship with a high-ranking har (perhaps his Inceptor) and can acquire what he wants and needs from this har. He can tap into his benefactor's resources. Most of the time, the benefactor will agree to your character's requests, but sometimes it might require rather more persuasion. Others might tease and mock your character for this Merit, but he doesn't care; he's happy. When he needs something, he doesn't have to worry about how he'll get it.

System: The assets don't actually belong to your character, and an event during play could wipe them out unexpectedly, so be careful. Every point of Assets relates to a point of Resources for your benefactor.

Blind Fighting - 25pt Merit

During combat, your character, though blind, relies on his other four senses and his instincts. It's an extremely rare ability. Only a select few have honed their fighting instincts that they can fight without the sense of sight. Your character could have lost his eyes following Inception, which means they would not regenerate, or perhaps his Inception was not entirely successful and he carried blindness through althaia with him to being har.

A har with this Merit would be much prized by any Wraeththu tribe. Coupled with his harish senses, his ability to fight would be extraordinary. He might fight like a demon possessed, greatly unnerving his opponents.

System: This Merit applies only to Close Combat situations, as the noise of guns, and distance from an opponent would negate all benefits. For humans, all Combat penalties for being blind or fighting in the dark or poor light are halved. A character with the **Impaired Vision** or **No Eyes** Flaw, but who possesses this Merit, is useful in combat, as other combatants will be at a greater disadvantage than them.

Wraeththu Blind Fighters get no penalties if they have No Eyes or are fighting in the dark. Due to their enhanced senses and instincts, they can fight as though they had full sight. However every other aspect of their lives still involves penalties.

An Eye for the Target [Merit]
Ambidextrous [Merit]
Assets [Merit]
Blind Fighting [Merit]

N.B.: This 25 point Merit is above the 10 point limit of what your character can take during character generation. As this is a very potent Merit, it is advised you get permission from the Storyteller before you take it. This merit can also be taken by sighted characters who wish to be combat effective in dark or low light situations.

Photographic Memory - 5pt Merit

Your character has never had a problem remembering things, even though his schooling might not have gone as well as it could have done – perhaps because he dwelled a little too much on small details. He only needs to see something once to remember everything about it. He can read entire books by reviewing them in his mind. He only needs to see the pages once, so that, at a later date, he bring them to the forefront of his mind and read them.

Your character's ability ensures he's much sought after, even though the typical harish memory is better than humans'. The Gelaming might want him as a spy, while other tribes, such as the Sulh and the Kakkahaar, could have more devious plans in mind for him.

System: As he remembers everything he sees or reads, your character's mind can get a little cluttered. It might take him a while to sort through all the data and recall specific information. But he will never forget anything; it's just a case of finding it. There is no bonus to Skills, as he still needs the practical training to develop the instinct that comes with a Skill. But details, facts, information in a book or document, will remain archived in the character's memory.

Psychic - 4pt Merit

Your character has an uncanny ability to perceive things which 'aren't there', and possesses a kind of 6th sense. Occasionally, he hears voices telling him about things that are happening elsewhere or about future events.

As a human, your character's powers are limited to prediction and a heightened sense of things around him. As har, he can sense whenever magic is used around him. This sense can manifest as a pain, a twitch, or even a feeling of static; the signal could be anything. When your character becomes Har, this ability boosts his Psychic powers.

System: As a human character this Merit is simply a storytelling tool for play, but once your character is har, gain +3 to Psyche Secondary Stat.

Addiction - 2pt Flaw

Drugs have always been crutches in human society; the most common being Alcohol, Caffeine and Tobacco. They were widely available, so people easily became addicted to them. Whether their addiction was physical or psychological, their addiction affected their lives.

As a har, your character's physical need for human drugs is removed, but the psychological need can remain. Fortunately, his improved physiology means his craving cannot detrimentally affect his physical form. Tobacco and coffee are now being grown again by hara in the relevant crop areas, and every tribe brews its own alcoholic beverages. Hara can also become addicted to certain forms of the toxins manufactured by the Uigenna. Consumption of any of these substances only counts as a flaw if your character's need for them causes problems, such as when they're unavailable or too expensive.

System: For a human character, addiction requires good role-playing, to act out the addiction. As a har, addiction can still cause your character problems; it can affect his Composure. Although meditation helps, he might still be consumed by the need for his addictive substance of choice. If he cannot satisfy his cravings, after three days he'll begin losing 1 point of Composure every day, until his needs are met.

Dreadful Aim - 4pt Flaw

Combat has never been your character's thing. He's never felt comfortable with a weapon in his hands. He might have tried to learn at shooting ranges and gun clubs, but to no avail. His aim has always been off and he just can't shoot straight.

This is not real problem for hara; Skills in other areas can be put to good use. However, due to the fact that Wraeththu society is almost feudal, it's important for a har to be able to defend himself. Even though Inception removed many other minor problems, it never improved your character's aim. He still cannot hit a barn door at ten paces.

System: All Combat Skills are subject to your character's dreadful aim, and suffer a -5 penalty.

Missing Limb - 4pt Flaw

Due to an accident or disease your character lost a limb while human. It might not have caused him any great problems in the human world, due to the availability of therapy and prosthetic limbs. He can function as well as he did in the past, with only a few things beyond his capabilities.

Perhaps your character hoped that his limb would just 'grow back' after Inception, but this was not the case. Your character still has a missing limb, and prosthetic limbs have all been lost or destroyed. Other hara might try not to treat him differently but as physical abnormalities are rare amongst Wraeththu, a missing limb attracts attention.

System: Over the years, your character has learned to live without the limb; it causes no real problem. The majority of difficulties are social and need to be role-played out.

No Eyes - 5pt Flaw

This is similar to the Blind Flaw, but is carried through Inception, due to the complete lack of eyes. Your character might have lost his eyes to accident or disease while human, and as with missing limbs, Inception cannot regenerate missing physical components.

Your character could have been incepted as an experiment, or there was something about him that hara wanted. It could be that he had specialised knowledge or information.

System: As with the Blind Flaw, all Skills and tasks involving the use of sight receive -15 penalty to all die rolls. This would normally be -20, but compensation is given for heightened sensitivity in other senses, such as hearing and smell.

Sexual Perversion - 3pt Flaw

As a human, your character might have been shunned and, in some cases, despised by others. He had strange and quite possibly illegal sexual tastes. He always pushed the limits and experimented with acts that were seen as wrong by his community.

Now your character is har, his desires have changed. The act of aruna is more potent than standard human sexual relations. But perhaps a lingering desire to attempt the taboo and bizarre still grips him. His perversions could have become more intense, to the point where, should they ever come to light, he'd be socially disgraced.

Shyness - 4pt Flaw

Your character tries to avoid social situations. He does not feel comfortable being around other hara. Even if they approach him, he finds it difficult to hold a conversation. A voice inside him tells him he'll only make a fool of himself.

Perhaps your character is unsure how or why he became har. The experience might well have been traumatic; the unavoidable intimacy could have scared the life out of him. Crippling shyness has been the bane of his life and Inception hasn't made it go away. It makes him feel like an outcast.

Speech Impediment - 2pt Flaw

Your character will have had this Flaw all his life, and for some reason Inception didn't remove it. Although it can be inconvenient and embarrassing, it's only ever dangerous when he's in a situation where he needs to talk fast. Depending on his outlook, the occasional jokes and impatience from others will have a greater or lesser effect on his life.

Missing Limb [Flaw]
No Eyes [Flaw]
Sexual Perversion [Flaw]
Shyness [Flaw]
Speech Impediment [Flaw]

Becoming har has not helped with this problem. Your character would not feel at home in a tibe who paid great attention to social graces. In other tribes, a speech impediment would be irrelevant.

Wraeththu

The Wraeththu Merits and Flaws are exclusive to characters starting the game as hara. Human characters cannot use them. If players starting as humans wish to take them, they can do so, but they'll only come into play once their character has been incepted. This can give the character an added boost later in the game, when they become har.

Absolute Composure - 4pt Merit

Your character is calm and composed. Nothing spooks him. All of life's traumas appear to flow over him, like they're not his problems. Nothing really gets him down or stresses him out.

Your character is completely laid back, and never panics, even in the worst situation. While other hara might get in a flap, and act out of character, he keeps his cool. He accepted the transition from human to Wraeththu objectively, simply intrigued by his new form. While others might have been frightened or disgusted, needing a lot of support, your character simply carried on living, without fuss. He probably helped his hienama with the hysterical ones.

System: Your character gains a bonus to their Composure secondary Stat. Taking everything in his stride, he gains +3 to this Stat.

Magical Adept - 5pt Merit

The nature of the universe and the energies than flow through it make sense to your character. He has a gut feeling about how everything works, despite what science might have dictated. He has an understanding of what connects living thing together, and how each connection relates to the other.

As a har, your character excels in magic. Other hara are amazed at how fast he picked up the ability to manipulate magical energies. He has a greater empathy than most for how the universe ticks.

System: Any die roll relating to the use of Magic gains +3.

Magic Sense - 2pt Merit

As a human, your character would have kept getting strange feelings, sometimes even cramps or bad static charges from objects. He might have tried everything to stop this, but even his doctor was stumped. Your character knew there was something different about him, but could never put a finger on exactly what it was.

Your character found Inception extremely interesting. It was as if he was plugged into the universal power grid. He began to realise that what he thought was a problem was actually simply another sense, beyond the limited human five senses. He can feel when magic is being performed close by, even if he can't always discern all the details of the operation.

System: Your character can detect the use of magic within 500 metres of themselves. This requires no die roll, but can in some case cause discomfort. It can also be used to detect enchanted items. However, due to the nature of this sense, they can suffer discomfort whenever using their own magic.

Past Memories - 5pt Merit

Your character experiences extremely strong déjà vu. He feels he's done things before, and recognises places he's never visited, to the extent, for example, that he'll know all the details about a town's layout. He has feelings about hara and environments, which he knows do not stem from himself. Like a sixth sense, he simply gets feelings about something and has no idea where they come from.

Absolute Composure [Merit]
Magical Adept [Merit]
Magic Sense [Merit]
Past Memories [Merit]

Wraeththu believe your character taps into genetic memories, now that he has greater control of his mind. His déjà vu is so strong, he can receive visions of the lives of his ancestors. He can see things through their eyes and feel the things they felt. If he concentrates hard, he can gain great information about a forthcoming task or conflict.

System: Your character must concentrate hard, spend 10 points of Agmara, and make a successful Willpower die roll at a -10 difficulty. If successful, he can make use of an ancestor's Skill, as if it was his own. This action takes approximately 5 minutes to perform, as the character needs to go into trance, but the effects will only last while the action is being carried out. The level of the Skill you gain is determined by the roll of one D20. The score is the level of expertise your character has, the nature of the Skill is chosen by the player.

Destiny - 1-5pt Merit or Flaw

Since your character was a child, he had a feeling that he was important in some way. He might have felt that one day his true colours would emerge and his fate would be complete. He might not know what that fate will be, but he senses it will be big and important. He also knows he's not going to miss it, because his Destiny awaits him, no matter what his path is.

Inception did not ease the feeling of destiny in your character. His purpose in life has not been fulfilled. He knows that one day he will make an important difference, but doesn't know when or what it will be. It could be good, or it could be bad; the facts are beyond his reach. His worst fear could be that his Destiny ends in death, but perhaps that's just his mind playing tricks

System: Your character has a Destiny. Due to his actions, something momentous will happen. It could be the initiation of a war, or the saving of single, significant life. He's not sure. Take this as a Merit if the Destiny is in some way good, or beneficial to your character, and as a Flaw if it's detrimental. It is then up to the Storyteller to decide your character's fate.

Synaesthesia - 3pt Merit or Flaw

Sometimes, your character experiences moments where all the information filtered by his senses gets confused and mingled. He sees sounds, smell colours, and tastes what he sees. It might cause him euphoria or terror. The episodes are only brief, but leave him feeling disorientated, as though the world is more real and brighter than before.

After Inception, some hara develop this strange muddling of senses. For some, it can be an advantage, while for others, it can be limiting, such as when it manifests as an overdeveloped sense of taste, hearing or smell. It can be useful as it provides more information about a situation. i.e. the ability to smell the words coming from a har's lips will tell rather more than just the words themselves and accompanying body language. A har with Synaesthesia can hone this condition to his advantage, or simply become befuddled by it.

System: This can be taken as a Merit or a Flaw. The changes in your character's senses can be of use or a nuisance, but they are always active. As a role-playing tool, it can offer a variety of benefits or obstacles for characters. Pick two or more senses that have been muddled, and decide if this is for the better or worse of your character. Throughout the game, the Storyteller can decide if you gain a Action Modifier to actions due to this condition. The Action Modifier is +/-3 to the current action, depending on if you have taken Synaesthesia as a Merit or a Flaw.

Beacon to the Other Realms - 4pt Flaw

Things just don't go right in your character's life. He puts an object down in front of him, turns around, and then when he turns back the object has vanished. On top of that, his equipment and tools are always breaking and going wrong. He might blame it all on fairies or gremlins, but he cannot find any explanation for his bad luck.

Since his Inception, this Flaw might have become clearer, and considerably worse. For some reason, if magic is being performed nearby, your character should expect the

Destiny [Merit or Flaw]
Synaesthesia [Merit or Flaw]
Beacon to the Other Realms [Flaw]

unexpected. Sometimes, he sees peculiar creatures appear, which then disappear. It seems he attracts interest from the beings of other Realms.

System: Your character has a large visible presence in the other realms, and the beings that inhabit them view it with great interest. Some might even consider his presence to be a sacred object. Your character is unaware of the reality of the situation, and sees only the end result; otherworldly beings can be pulled through into his reality whenever powerful magic is used around or by him. These creatures are not necessarily aggressive, but can be annoying. When the entities manifest in this reality, they usually take on a form which its inhabitants can accept, such as some form of wild animal. But there will always something odd about them. Perhaps an otherwise ordinary looking animal might have two heads or twelve eyes. It is up to the Storyteller when this Flaw is brought in to play. As a role-playing tool, it can lead to all sorts of adventures or scenarios for the players.

It's like a bad smell: if someone is trying to locate you with magic or the **Magic Sense** merit, they will easily find you, and gain a +5 Skill or Stat when finding you with magic.

Impaired Immunity - 4pt Flaw

As a human, your character was always ill; if a bug went round, he was sure to catch it. As a child, he was always off school. As he grew older, others might have thought him rather a hypochondriac, but he knew this wasn't true, because his illnesses were real.

Inception at least saved your character from the diseases and conditions that could have killed him. But for some reason, he still gets sick, which is very rare among hara. Human diseases and infections might no longer be fatal to him, but he can still suffer from them for a few days before his body manages to throw them off.

System: On occasions that your character is ill, apply -5 to all actions. Bouts of illness usually last 2 days, and occur at least once a month. The symptoms can vary, but are never fatal.

Magically Inept - 3pt Flaw

At school, your character most likely excelled in science, and would have scoffed at anything he considered to be 'mumbo jumbo'. Magic and folklore, to him, were for fools and fantasists. He aimed to be a hot shot in the scientific community, with a no-nonsense, straight-laced approach to life. He had a scientific explanation for every phenomenon, even if it was faced with something inexplicable. Needless to say, he does not believe in magic.

Now your character is har, he's had to readjust his world view somewhat. All his ideals about a mechanical universe and science have been shattered. He has been shown incontrovertibly that mean is real and that it works. This goes very much against every fibre of his being. He constantly tries to rationalise with scientific thought what he sees and experiences. This can sometimes irritate his companions if they're in a situation when the use of magic is essential.

System: Any die roll relating to the use of magic will gain an automatic -3.

Memory Fragments - 2pt Flaw

Your character was never very good at time-keeping. He was always late for appointments, if indeed he even remembered them. It seemed that time was his enemy, and it was a constant battle to keep up with current events. Now he's har, he remembers bits of his childhood, and his teenage years, but can't put them in order them to make any sense or a coherent history. He sometimes wishes he could index his memories and date-stamp them to solve his problem.

After Inception, something drastic happened. Your character's memories of human life shattered, and only unconnected fragments remain, and most of these are in the wrong chronological order. For example, he might remember how he used to get up in the morning and be taken to nursery, but that he had to shave before he left the house.

He recalls being at high school, where he'd scream out loud because he'd lost a toy or his nappy needed changing.

System: This is nothing more than a tool for role-playing. Your character cannot remember his past clearly and what he does remember is muddled up and in the wrong order and place.

Psychically Challenged - 3pt Flaw

Your character never had a sixth sense or the slightest sensitivity in that direction. When others had feelings that something bad was going to happen, he felt nothing at all, which might sometimes have got him into trouble.

After Inception, your character experienced an overriding sense of numbness, as if one of his senses had been cut off, but he couldn't discern what it was. Once he began to find out what other hara were capable of psychically, he quickly realised that his Psychic abilities were atrophied or totally absent.

System: Your character has an effective -5 to their Psyche Secondary stat on all actions using it. Even though he can progress, and eventually develop psychic abilities, he'll always be one step behind his peers, and will never achieve quite as much as other hara. This might cause problems for him, if he's incepted into a magically adept tribe. He might even be cast out from them.

Size Reversal - 2pt flaw

Your character wasn't tall when he was human, and was perhaps the butt of a few jokes about his height. But he wasn't abnormally short.

When your character was incepted, other inceptees around him all appeared to grow a few inches. However, for some reason, your character shrank. He became a foot shorter than before, which makes him the odd one out in any group of hara. There will be occasions, of course, when his small size is of use to him, or to companions.

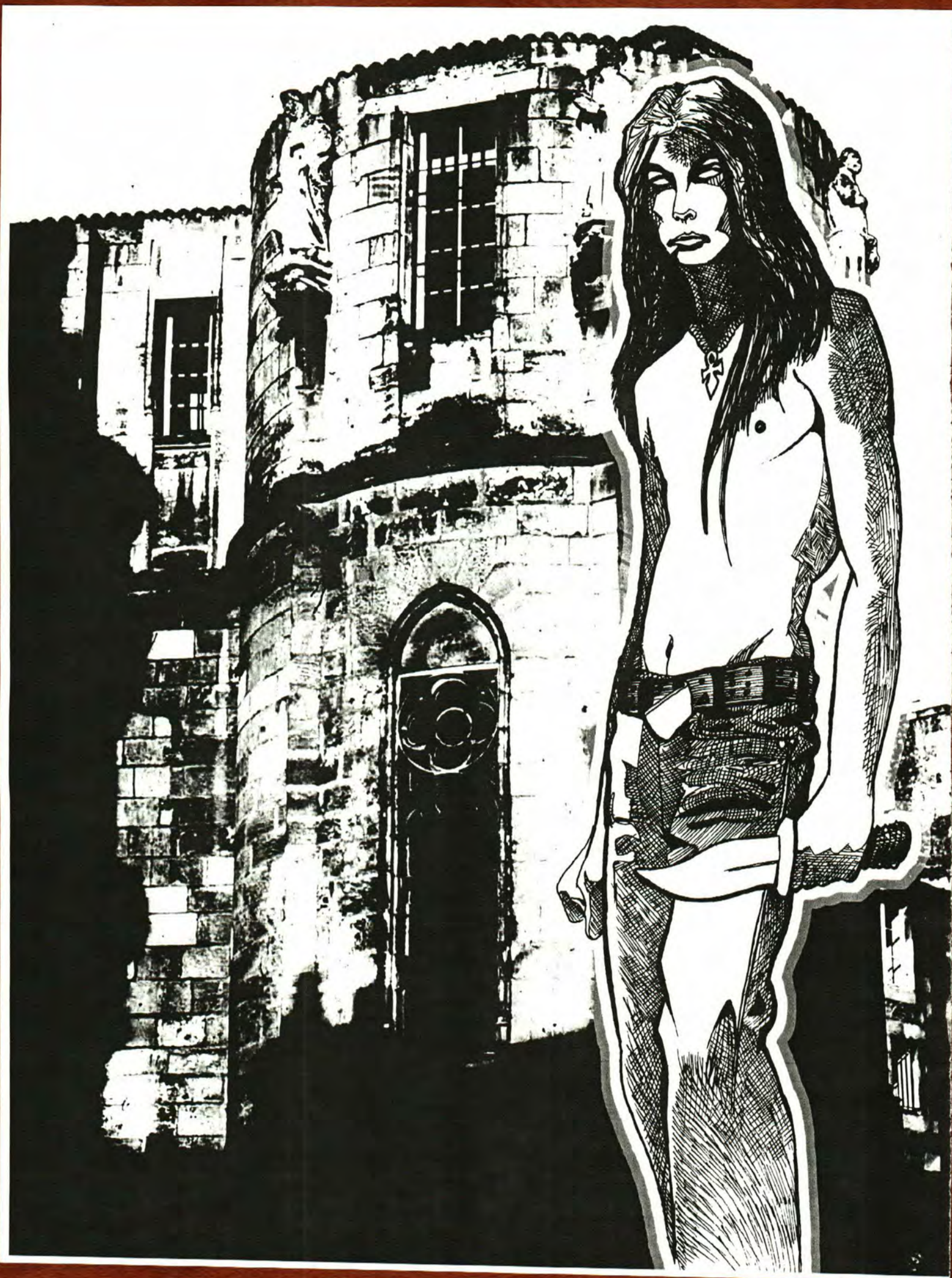
System: Rather than adding a few inches after Inception, your character loses up to a foot in height.

Slightly Botched Inception - 1-3 pt Flaw

One of the things that got your character down when he was young was what people referred to as 'growing pains'. For some reason he just seemed to ache: not all the time, but every now and again his leg or arm would give him pain. Other parts of his body hurt occasionally too. He accepted these little pains as part of his life.

Your character's Inception went wrong; not drastically wrong, but certainly not all right, and he was left with legacies from it. He heard the whispers of 'botched Inception', and quickly realised he was not the same as most other hara.

System: A slight mental or physical flaw developed during Inception, or was not rectified during it. This could encompass slight defects such as bad eye sight, or being slightly hard of hearing, or a deformed limb, or a minor physiological problem (Lame, Deaf, Blind). Your character can take any one of the Human flaws, or invent a Flaw compatible with the amount of points you want to spend. The effects of this Flaw are varied, so it is best to discuss it with the Storyteller, to see what they think Botched Inception will do to your character.



RULES

In a game of this scope and complexity, there have to be rules to govern some actions during play. This section provides a quick and accurate method of determining the results of actions. Not all of these rules will be used for every action in the game. In most cases a rule is needed to plan critical situations or when a character's life is on the line. However it's advantageous to read through this section at least once so you have a lay of the land, as it were. Some of these rules are not 100% realistic; for example, we cannot accurately assess the damage taken to a character by a particular weapon. This is where the Storyteller steps in and makes changes to the rules, depending on the situation. There will no doubt be occasions during play when a scenario arises for which rules have not been written. In such cases, the Storyteller should devise a new rule to cover the situation. The enjoyment and entertainment of the players is paramount at all times.

1) The Rule of 'What If' and 'But'!

Players: What the Storyteller says is final. No arguing and no fighting, just because some players might interpret the rules differently! The Storyteller is running the game. You are still allowed to point out rulings you think are unfair, but remember the Storyteller has the final word.

Storytellers: This does not mean you should rule with an iron hand; you cannot run a game without players. Make sure the game flows, and the players are happy. If you're not sure on a rule, or don't like it, change it to suit the situation. The rules in this book are not set in stone. The story needs to determine the results of actions. The rules alone cannot decide what is most interesting for the players.

2) The Rule of Common Sense

For every action there is a reaction. If you throw a ball in the air, it will come down (unless you're in space). Therefore, your knowledge of the world around you, and how it works, is the base set of rules for running this game. Other rules are there to aid you and create some set standards and guidelines to work from. As a general rule, use common sense and

"Uigenna? Sure, I've heard of them. Barbarians, uncivilized. Be glad you were incepted among the Gelaming."

- Verbanis, to his Chesnari, Wraith, Gelaming

your knowledge to fill in niggling gaps and other things that might have been overlooked.

This system is based on a few die rolls and relies on the Storyteller to have some insight and 'common sense' about the world. As a Storyteller, just stop and think for a second if you're unsure of an action's result. Your aim is to make the game as realistic as possible, as well as fun.

"I heard the Kakkahaar eat humans."

- Dustspinner, Gelaming

3) The Rule of Rules

For many inexperienced role-players, the sight of all these rules may seem very ominous. Don't worry: you don't have to use all of the rules all of the time, the Storyteller should only use rules when a plot critical situation occurs, such as a life or death situation for a character. Once you're used to the rules, you can start to bring them into other situations to add a bit more spice to them. Whenever a character needs to use a skill, you can get the player to roll the die. Even on non-plot critical situations, use of the rules can expand the story of a character, especially if they fail a die roll.

Skills and combat are the main actions where rolls are important. Rolls should be made as and when they are required. All other rules and rolls are secondary to what the Story and Storyteller wants.

"Maybe the world decided it needed something new?"

- Elli, Gelaming

4) Always Make Sure Your Players Love Their Characters

While you shouldn't grant too many powerful advantages to the characters, allow the players a little flexibility if they want something extra to make the character they want. Don't grant them extra points just because they want to be the best or the toughest in the group. If someone wants a certain skill to reflect the character's background or personality, and they have no points left, it is fine to hand out a couple of extras. However, first work with the player to see if the points can be gained by reducing something else first. In short, spend some time creating and discussing characters with the players, so they get to play a character that inspires them. This should mean they will want to play your game again, even if when you first become a Storyteller your initial campaigns are fairly basic. The players will simply want to enter the world of Wraeththu to play the characters they have created.

Optional Rules

Rules can be added to bring more depth to the game or to do things in a slightly different way. It is essential that players be alerted to any changes or additions to the rules before the game starts, as they might be displeased if the rules are changed halfway through.

ACTIONS/PHASES

In order to facilitate play, 'game' time is broken down into small sections, in which actions can be measured against each other. These sections are called Phases. Each Phase lasts five seconds in the game world, regardless of how long it takes to role-play the moves/action in real time. Their use is only important in aspects of role-playing where timing is critical. One of these aspects is combat.

Phases are themselves split up into Slices that last for 1 second called Action Slices. Phases allow each character a fair chance to take part in play. The players describe their characters' action, and the Storyteller describes the results. All the described

actions – of every character – occur during the same five second phase. This means that even if something untoward should happen, all characters get an equal chance to act.

Each character has a Base Actions rating. This is affected by the character's raw speed, which represents how many actions a character can make in a single five second Phase. Though the Base Actions are rarely used during general role play, some characters (because of Stats) will react and move more swiftly than others, in which case the Base Actions can help determine the results of the group's actions within the game.

The following table gives some examples of common actions and how many Phases they take. This is for characters acting out actions at normal speed. The time it takes to perform some actions, due to circumstances and environment, might be beyond a character's control, and are therefore not wholly reliant on their Base Actions. In some areas of the game, there are recommended amounts of Phases and Slices for particular actions.

Action	Slices/Phases
Bending down to pick an item off the floor	2/0
Opening a door stepping through and closing it behind you	5/0
De-holstering a weapon	1/0
De-holstering a weapon and gathering composure to aim properly	3/0
Proper removal of full plate armour	0/180
Boiling an egg to perfection (well 3 minutes)	0/36

"The world was dying.
Humanity was dying. But
their will to survive is great. It
is so great, in fact, some
humans changed into us.
Evolution in action. Like
many newer species, they
did not get along with their
predecessors, the pure
humans. There was war."
- Binding-rocks, Tribeless

During combat, Phases play a vital role in giving each character a chance to react to the situation. The Base Actions are used for characters who might be present in a combat environment but are not actually involved in the combat. Those partaking in the combat will have an attack/action rating on their character sheets, next to the weapon they are currently using. A well-trained combatant will be able to perform actions smoothly and quickly.

The attack/action rating for each weapon gives the characters an advantage of speed against an untrained foe. Some weapons, because of their size and weight, will reduce the number of attacks/actions a character can make per Phase. This reduction is not necessarily disadvantageous, since large and bulky weapons tend to do considerably more damage. The faster weapon will do less damage per blow, but have the advantage of striking more blows within a Phase, thus bringing an element of strategy into combat. For more information on the pace and flow of combat, see [page 271](#).

CURRENT OR TEMPORARY VALUES

During play, Stats and Skills might suffer long-term negative effects or be reduced by certain events, although these effects need not necessarily be permanent. Current values, sometimes referred to as temporary values, should be recorded next to anything they have modified. Space has been provided on the character sheet for players to record these current values. The normal value of the Stat, Skill or Secondary Stat is called the Maximum value, and this can only change through permanent upgrades or downgrades.

Usually, changes to a character are considered temporary. However, some sections of the rules change the Maximum values, such as experience upgrades, and Inception upgrades. Should the story require it, the Storyteller can make any changes permanent. If the change to any aspect of the character is permanent, it will affect both maximum and current value.

The current value of any Skill or Stat cannot be higher than the maximum value, unless the character has some magical or special equipment to do this.

Fate and Experience have no maximum or current value; the character can accrue and use these points with no limits.

In the case of Stats, if the temporary value is considerably lower, the character's Skills will be affected via the Stat Modifiers. Bear this in mind when rolling for the Skills. There is no need to record such changes in Stat Modifiers, as the current values will eventually return to normal.

STATS AND SKILLS

This section describes the use of Skills and Stats and the relevant die rolls within the game system. There are four main aspects to these rolls, Normal Rolls, Contested Rolls, **Success Level** and Action Modifiers.

Normal Rolls are used when a character uses a Skill or Stat to perform an action where no other character opposes it. Action Modifiers, based on the Universal Modifier Table (UMT), should be used to adjust the Skill or Stat, and not be used to adjust the die roll. For example, an everyday action in which a character is practiced will add a sizeable bonus to their Skill or Stat. If the character performs an action in which they have little experience, they will gain a penalty. Action Modifiers vary between -10 to +10. Use the UMT for examples and to give you an idea of what the modifier should be for various tasks.

Contested Rolls don't always require Action Modifiers. However, the Storyteller is encouraged to use them. With a Contested Roll, a character will be working directly against another character's Skill or Stat. For example, arm wrestling between two characters is a direct action, while if two characters, such as a locksmith and a thief work against each other, say to create a lock and then to break it respectively, this would be an indirect action. When two characters roll against each other for Skills which are indirect actions, for example Lock Smiting, the **Success Level** will become the negative Action Modifier for the character who wishes to open the lock without a key.

The **Success Level** is the difference between the roll of the dice and the character's Skill or Stat level (with Action or Combat Action Modifiers applied). This number is only calculated should you have a successful roll. If the roll fails, the **Success Level** is 0. If it's an indirect action, the **Success Level** should be recorded for items that have been created, such as a lock, so that they can be used as Action Modifiers later in the game. The same applies to Skills that can be contested at a later date. The **Success Level** also comes into play with magical effects and combat.

"It was a pleasure knowing you."

- Cest Nara, Uigenna

The Success Level is a widely used concept in the Storm system, so should be noted and remembered, for combat and magic.

For example, Agroth has to create a lock and has a Locksmith Skill of 15. However, the tools he is using are a bit old and worn, so he has a -2 Action Modifier, making the total 13. He then rolls a 5 on a D20. Agroth's **Success Level** is 8, which is his total Skill, minus the Action Modifier, minus the die roll. This means anyone trying to pick the lock he makes will have a -8 Action Modifier to their Skill, unless they have a good set of tools or favourable conditions, which can affect the outcome.

Action Modifiers are taken from the UMT on **page 246**. These are applied to the Stat or Skill the character is using, and they do not affect the roll.

Normal Rolls

During normal actions, the Skill or Stat is used for one Phase, which is up to 5 seconds. Some Skill or Stat actions, such as driving, will extend beyond the first Phase. It is up to the Storyteller to decide how often an additional Skill roll is needed. A good base to work from is every 12 Phases, or one minute in game time per roll. The Storyteller

could decide to make the player roll if the situation they are in changes, or the Action Modifiers change. For example, when driving a vehicle, a roll will only be needed when the character performs difficult manoeuvres. Some Skills might require constant attention and several rapid-fire rolls to determine the outcome.

Usually, an Extremely Extended Action (EEA) that takes many days will only require one roll per day until it is completed. Should the character fail the roll, it will take an extra day to complete the task. If they fumble the EEA, (see later) they will experience a major setback, and could lose many days' worth of work. The amount of days involved is at the Storyteller's discretion.

System: For Normal Rolls, take the total value of the relevant Skill or Stat and apply the Action Modifiers, then roll one D20. If you roll less than or equal to a total modified Skill or Stat value, your character succeeded at their task. If the roll is higher than the Modified skill or stat, then that action is considered a failure.

Use Action Modifiers only when needed. If they are over-used, it will complicate matters and slow down the game. For example, a character is trying to repair a car in the confines of a garage. There are no Action Modifiers, since the required tools would be at hand. However, were he to attempt a repair on the same car in the Arctic, with biting winds and numb fingers, it would be considerably more difficult to accomplish. Because there are many wide and varied conditions in which Skills and Stats can be used, it is almost impossible to give every variation and to work out every Action Modifier. Use them as and when needed, or during critical situations.

Example: Agroth wants to pick a lock, of a type he has only seen a few times before. The Storyteller gives him a -4 to his Skill. His modified skill is 11. Luckily, Agroth has a high Skill level of 15 and has worked with a wide variety of locks before. He rolls his D20 and scores 9. He has rolled under his modified Skill (11), so is successful and picks the lock. If he had failed, the Storyteller might have allowed him another attempt. However, repeated tries would only be allowed if the character desperately needed to get through a particular door. Most of the time, the character would realistically give up after about the third attempt.

One of the keys to deciding if a roll is needed is the stress level involved in particular tasks. For example, fixing a car in a garage is quite straight forward to an experienced mechanic. However, if the mechanic has a gun held to his head and is told the job must be done immediately or he'll be shot, a roll would be appropriate. If the mechanic was in the Arctic, but had adequate food and shelter, a roll might not be needed. The repair would take time, but the character doesn't have to rush. Making a player roll dice can add to tension and excitement in the game. Just don't make dice rolls the focus of the game by asking for them for every unimportant task.

Contested Rolls

A Contested Roll is when a character or NPC is working in direct opposition to another. Both characters might be using different Skills. Action Modifiers might apply to contested Skills, but this is less likely than when making Normal Rolls. (For combat rolls, refer to the **Art of War** section on page 266.

System: When a character works against another, the rules are slightly different, as what counts most is the **Success Level**. Should any party fail their Skill roll, this is considered a standard failure and gives the opponent the edge – unless they also fail. All Fumbles and Criticals, described later in this section, are subject to the same ruling, as are the Action Modifiers for each character involved in the Contested Roll. Each character should do what they can to ensure that conditions and environment work in their favour, to give them an advantage (i.e. going to a particular place or using a particular tool). Once both parties have rolled their dice, the character with the highest **Success Level** wins. Should there be a draw, both parties will have to roll again, until a conclusion is reached.

"There are states of enlightenment reached through many means, such as drugs and alcohol. You may witness things you never thought possible. You may do things you won't remember in the morning."

- Myth, Uigenna

"Boo! Now if I wanted to kill you, I could have, you would never have seen me coming – I am so good, trust me, tell your friends."

- Jakana, Varr

EEA (Extremely Extended Action) does not apply during a directly contested action. If an EEA is performed for an indirect action, the **Success Level** is taken from the final die roll, which will become the Action Modifier for the opposing roll. Therefore, if a character's **Success Level** is 5 points, any player who tries to work against that object or situation will gain a -5 Action Modifier. When they roll, this is applied to their Skill or Stat.

Example: Agroth is attempting to make a trap to stop a foe from following him. He rolls against his relevant Skill and Scores 3. He had to roll beneath a target of 13, so this is a **Success Level** of 10. Now the trap is set and the opponent will gain a -10 Action Modifier to his Skill when it comes to his roll. Parmuti comes along and spots the trap. He tries to disarm it. Parmuti's relevant Skill is 16. With the Action Modifier set by Agroth's roll, Parmuti is working with a modified Skill of 6, so must roll under this number. He succeeds in disarming the trap and moves on.

"A U bend is like life. There are ups and downs and in the middle – let us not talk about in the middle, just yet."

– Zachar Griss, Obliviata

Specialisations

When a player wishes their character to use a Skill that requires a specialisation, such as **Area Knowledge**, the character would have to have knowledge of the precise area in which they were located, in order for the specialisation to be of full use. Should the terrain be similar enough to the field of expertise, they would receive a -6 Action Modifier to their Skill.

If the character attempts an action where the specialisation they have is radically different to the circumstances and/or environment they're in, their Skill should be treated as untrained. For example, a character with **Area Knowledge** of Galhea would not be able to use that skill to negotiate terrain in the farming villages of Almagabra. The Storyteller should decide upon the similarities and differences. They might also adjust the character's Action Modifier, depending on how close or how far from the character's field of expertise the desired action is.

Untrained Skills

When a character is attempting an action, the player should consider whether it can be performed using the associated Stat alone, which would amount to using it untrained. The Skills that are marked with a 'U' in the **Character Generation** section, **Page 200**, can be used as untrained skills. However, these will only work in a basic capacity. For example, the **Climbing** Skill encompasses where and how to climb safely. It would be of use to the character whenever they have to climb anything, from a tree to a mountain. However, if they do not possess the **Climbing** Skill, they could use an associated Stat, such as Strength or Dexterity, to attempt a degree of success in the climb. If a Skill is used as untrained in a basic action, the character gets a negative Action Modifier to the Stat. In these cases, the negative Action Modifier will be -6, or higher for a more complex action.

For skills not marked with a 'U', the Action Modifier increases to -15. This is to reflect the training needed to perform this skill.

Working as a Group

There are times when a character will need to work as part of a group in order to perform or speed up the actions of a Skill.

When working as a group all the characters need to have the relevant Skill or skills that the rest of the group will be using, or the benefit of group actions will not be applicable. Every character in the group that has the relevant Skills needs to make a roll on that Skill. Out of the entire group only one character needs to make a successful roll. For EEAs, every character who is in the group when a roll is required should make a roll to see if they succeed; again only one successful roll is needed. Where the **Success Level** of the skill is important, the highest Success Level is the one that is applicable to the actions.

Another benefit of working as a group is the time taken to perform EEAs is significantly reduced. For each additional har or human in the working group the time taken to complete the EEA is reduced by half.

"Life, death and the eternal drama are all nothing compared to the taste of a warm cream pie."

– Myth, Uigenna

If one of the characters in the group has the Leadership Skill they can make a roll on this Skill and include unskilled members in the group. On a successful Leadership roll, a number of characters equal to the **Success Level** can be included in the working group. They will be unable to make the Skill roll with the group leader, but their actions will count on EEAs and help reduce the time spent working on the action.

Tools

Many Skills require tools, and some require specialised tools that can be only used with that Skill. Any character wishing to use a Skill requiring tools, and has the tools at hand, may use the Skill with no negative Action Modifier. However, if they have no tools at hand, they will not be able to perform the Skill.

In the case of specialised tools, a character may have some other tools associated with a different Skill which nevertheless may be used. If the character has access to non-specialised tools, and wants to use them for the specialised tool Skill, they may do so, but will receive a -6 Action Modifier.

A character might also be able to use objects around them to emulate the tools required, which is usually called jury-rigging. If the Storyteller has informed the players of certain items in the area, the players can devise a convincing way to use them. The character will use the relevant Skill with a -6 Action Modifier. For Skills that require specialised tools they will receive a -10 Action Modifier. It is up to the Storyteller to consent to tools being jury-rigged. If the player gives a good description of their character's actions, the Storyteller can also adjust the Action Modifiers to the character's Skills.

Critical Success

A Critical Success occurs when a player rolls 1 on a D20 for any non-combat die roll. This is usually used for Skills and Stats rolls, and represents the small chance that things will go well for the character.

It is rare for a character to achieve a Critical Success, but if they do, it will negate any negative Action Modifiers and cause the action to be an automatic success. On extended rolls and EEAs, the task in hand has a boost of luck, which reduces the amount of successful rolls required by 2, instead of the usual 1. On a critical roll, where a **Success Level** is required, the **Success Level** is doubled.

For more information on Critical Successes in combat see the **Art of War** Section on page 283.

Optional rule: You can change it so that a critical roll is not an automatic success, but instead adds 5 to the **Success Level**. This makes the margin of success higher, but adds a different element to the game and the outcome of critical rolls is less certain.

Fumble / Critical Failure

A Critical Failure has the opposite effect of a Critical Success. Any Skill or Stat roll of 20 made on a D20 is an automatic failure, regardless of the situation and any conditions which may be assisting the character. Every action has a possibility of utter failure, and this rule represents that chance.

Regardless of Action Modifiers, the character has failed, and dependant on what task was involved, this might cause unexpected problems. It could even lead to the death or at least the injury of another character. On extended rolls and EEAs, the action is an abject failure and needs to be scrapped and started all over again.

For more information on Critical Failures in combat, see the **Art of War** Section on page 283.

Optional Rule: As with the Critical Success roll optional rule, a Fumble does not have to be an automatic failure. The character's **Success Level** is considered to be -5 instead of the normal 0 for a failure. This gives any opponents a positive Action Modifier.

"What manner of creature mates like a human? There is no love, no passion and no soul – I would rather be celibate than bear the touch of those vile creatures."

- Raul Dona, Colurastes

"I have some sense of justice, but the universe must have been laughing when you were spat out."

- Myth, Uigenna

Universal Modifiers Table [UMT]

At some point in the game a character will encounter abnormal situations. This table will aid you in determining the Action Modifier for a character's Skills or Stat rolls, dependent on the situation. There are only a few listed here, but feel free to use any in the range -10 to +10. Most Action Modifiers are a combination of one, two or three ratings from the columns below.

Action Modifier	Standard Actions	Situational Familiarity	Environmental Conditions	Duress & Distraction
+10	Practiced	An everyday task with which a character is very familiar.	-	-
+8	Experienced	A task the character would do at least once a week.	-	-
+6	Able	A common action performed at least once a month.	-	There are zero distractions, or the character is psyched up and has entered a trance, which blocks out all external distractions. They have been planning and thinking about this for at least a week.
+4	Familiar	An action with which the character has a bit of experience; something they might do once or twice a year.	The environmental conditions and location prove useful in completing the task. Not only is the temperature just right, but there are objects around the character can use for leverage or storage. Everything is going right.	Possibly one of their good friends is there to help, working as a second pair of eyes, or handing tools when needed.
+2	Competent	An action or task the character has performed only a few times in their life.	The temperature or weather is beneficial to the task, or the area helps the character to perform it.	The character is comfortable; there is little or no noise or distraction. One of their favourite songs could be playing.
0	Ambivalent	A fairly new experience or action a character has never performed, but is similar to other things they have done.	Normal Conditions, No environmental issues. <i>Normal Lighting Conditions.</i>	No distraction; the environment is fairly normal for this kind of work.
-2	Unfamiliar	A situation or action with which the character is unfamiliar, but for which they can draw upon similar experiences.	The character is slightly uncomfortable, from being slightly too warm/cold or in humid conditions. They might be slightly cramped in an awkward position.	In the background, there might be an annoying noise or a bad smell. It could even be the sounds of people around them that distracts the concentration of the character.
-4	Tricky	Something a character has seen performed before but they're not sure of the intricate details.	The temperature is a little too hot/cold or the weather is not helpful to the work being carried out. The character might be cramped in a small space or is working in such a position they are distracted or in pain. <i>Low Lighting Conditions.</i>	Something is definitely getting on the nerves of the character; maybe a friend is shouting or getting in the way a lot. Or possibly there is a lot of noise from machinery. Maybe someone is constantly mocking them or nagging.
-6	Inept	A skill or action the character has only read about. Using specialised skill in a different specialised area.	Heat is causing the character to sweat, or cold is bringing on a bout of the shakes. The weather is bordering on extreme, or the character is in a very confined space with little room to manoeuvre, or is in terrible pain because of the position they are in.	A high-pitched squeal or siren, blinding light or inconstant light. Some noise in the background, maybe from battle, a friend or even just general town chatter that's loud enough to break the concentration of the character.
-8	Incompetent	The character can only rely on second hand information. They were probably told about this from a friend, and the details are not 100% accurate.	Extreme heat or cold, or the weather is completely unbearable, or the character is in a space or position that causes them pain or gives them enough movement only to manipulate small tools.	There is noise everywhere. People are nagging, and constantly bothering the character. Possibly the character's life depends on the task being done.
-10	Clueless	Something the character has never seen before, never heard of or even been told about.	The temperature is so extreme the character is in pain or in danger. Local objects could be flying around in the wind. The space and position in which the character is working might cause physical damage from an extremely limited movement range.	The character's life is on the line. They have a limited time to finish the task. Deafening noise or blinding light, even very low light, are causing the character to lose their concentration every few seconds.
Special	+/- Success Level		-15 for No light or blind.	

Combat Stance Aim Modifier (Ranged)	Combat Stance Aim Modifier (Close)	Combat Cover Aim Modifier (Ranged Only)	Distance Aim Modifiers(Ranged)	Moving Target Aim Modifier
-	-	-	-	-
Ambushing the defender.	Ambushing the defender.	-	-	-
Delayed attack, character is aiming (takes 1 Combat Phase. Character cannot take any other combat actions)	Delayed attack, character is aiming (takes 1 Combat Phase. Character cannot take any other combat actions or distractions)	-	-	-
Shooting from a prone stance.	Hitting a target defender who is in a prone position.	Stands out from the background	Point blank	-
Shooting from a kneeling stance	Hitting a target when the defender is in the kneeling position. Or defending from an elevated position	Illuminated, otherwise obvious.	-	-
Standing	Standing	Open, or with no visual cover.	Short range	Standing still
Hitting a target who is standing side on.	Hitting a target who is standing side on.	Partial cover, only 80% of the target is visible	-	Walking, travelling up to 5 km/h
Hitting a kneeling target	Hitting a target when the attacker is in the kneeling position.	Good cover, 60% of the target is visible	Medium range	Jogging, travelling 6-10 km/h
Hitting a prone target or a 'called shot' upon a small area of the target.	Hitting a target when the attacker is in the prone position.	Ample cover, 40% of the target is visible	-	Running, travelling at 11-20 km/h
'Snap shot', to gain initiative and take a spare attack/action before any other character.	'Snap attack', take a spare attack/action before any other character.	Excellent cover: 20% of the Target is visible	-	Sprinting, travelling at 21-35 km/h
Unexpected attack.	Unexpected attack.	Less than 20% of the target is visible.	Long range	Travelling above 35 km/h

EXPERIENCE

"You see those colours, well, do you do you? Those are the colours of the mystical magical fairy grotto. No I'm just kidding you. That would be the effect of the drugs we slipped into your drink."

- Myth, Uigenna

Experience points are rewards to the players for good role-playing and ideas. The better the player is at acting out and describing the actions of their character, the greater the reward should be. Players may also receive such rewards for cunning plans and other ideas that help and aid their companion players.

The experience a character gains can only be used for that character. If the character should die, and the player has to restart with a new one, the Storyteller may offer the player some extra Development Points for their new character, since an experienced character brought into a fairly long-standing game might cause difficulties for the other players' characters. The amount of Development Points awarded is at the Storyteller's discretion. They should ensure that the new character is not quite as powerful as the rest of the group, but not so inept as to compromise play.

During play, characters will encounter many new situations, objects and environments, and learn new Skills. For this, you will use the experience system, which enables a character to develop and advance, and rise above those around them.

There are many ways of gaining Experience Points, but in this game they are awarded when the character is played as the Storyteller feels it should be, and successfully furthers the quest. Should the group complete a major plot point, their characters will each gain a substantial amount of Experience Points. The Storyteller should decide how to distribute them. The best method is to distribute an average of 25 experience points to each player per gaming session. This means the characters won't develop at an unrealistically quick pace. This rule is not set in stone; it is simply a guideline to judge the characters' development in relation to the amount of time spent playing.

When the Storyteller distributes Experience Points, they should assess each character's achievements individually, and award points of different amounts dependant on the character's success, rather than distribute the same amount of points across the whole group. This encourages all players to perform at their best. Rather than 'hitching a ride' on the back of more proactive players, every member of the group will have to take part in the action and use their expertise to advance their character. This helps persuade every player to take a role in the game and not just spectate.

The Storyteller should use their discretion and creativity when distributing Virgin Experience Points. This can be used to mould the style and mood of the game.

Optional Rule: Some Storytellers might prefer to use a group experience system, where the experience is shared out between all the characters. However, this can cause arguments, as some players might not take much part in the game, yet still receive Experience Points, even when their fellow players have done all the work.

Virgin Experience

During play, a character will experience many new things and perform actions they have never done before. The Storyteller may award double Experience Points for these events. This also encourages the players to keep a log of their character's activities, and push the characters to new places and levels.

If a character should help another character in the game, or assist a vital NPC in distress, and they have done such things before, they may gain 5 Experience. But if it's the first time they have performed this act, they would gain 10 Experience Points. However, during play, and to gain the higher Virgin Experience Points, some players might try to insist that their character has performed an action in a completely different way to how they've done it before. In such situations, the Storyteller must decide if the events are different enough. Is an act of rescue always the same act, regardless of the prevailing circumstances? The Storyteller may draw the line by deciding that a character hanging off a building or a cliff is in a different predicament to one stuck in a burning building. But if they are trapped in a burning building their quandary can be seen as similar to being trapped in a lift.

Spot Awards

Experience Points can be awarded on the spot, which can be anything from solving a piece of the plot to saving the life of a character. Usually, they are major turning points in the plot, which can change a character's life and destiny. Spot Awards could even be the completion of a certain quest or duty. Again, it should be decided by the Storyteller to whom and when Spot Award Experience Points are given. Special Events can occur as frequently or infrequently as the Storyteller decides, but it's advisable to award substantial bonuses for them. The recommended amount of Experience Points for Special Events is between 50 and 200 points, dependant on the event in question. These points should be given as special awards and in addition to the basic Experience Points for general role-playing.

The table below can be used for reference, and gives examples of how to distribute Experience Points for Special Events.

Experience Award	Event or Action
200	For completing a Caste goal or completing the entire scenario on which they're working, the kind of quest where all your current adversaries have been destroyed or dealt with, and the characters can have a break for a while.
150	This is given for defeating a group of key NPCs by any means, or maybe the characters have completed a sub-quest or other such plot point.
100	Usually given for defeating a group NPCs, or overcoming a difficult plot point which the Storyteller decides is beyond normal parameters.
50	This is when a character or group has discovered something extremely valuable to the plot. Maybe at this point it will unravel another section of the scenario or change its direction significantly.
25	Usually awarded for a major feat which helps the entire plot or helps save the party, such as saving an important NPC or character, or discovering a piece of information vital to the plot.
10	For characters who perform well and work hard to try and solve the plot, manage to save another character or help an NPC achieve its goal. Also awarded to players who go out of their way in real life to enhance the gaming experience, such as dressing up, providing pizza, keeping records, doing a website etc.
5	Can be awarded to a player who stays in character and acts realistically in all gaming circumstances. This is bonus awarded per gaming session. Also awarded if a player does something to enhance the group's chances of survival or aids them in the quest.
1	Awarded to a character who finds out a piece of evidence that may lead to the completion of a quest or goal

These values are just guidelines for the Storyteller to use when distributing Experience Points. It is best to award them at the conclusion of each game session. They can be 'spent' straight away, or used at a later date, should the player need to save up for a high level Skill.

In some situations, the Storyteller may give Spot Awards, but they should consist only of a few Experience Points, perhaps no more than 10. Spot Awards should be given when a player delivers an extremely vivid description of their character's actions, or perhaps makes the rest of the group laugh. Spot Awards can encourage the players to excel and generate better role-playing. They are the Storyteller's tool, to promote good and consistent role-playing.

Upgrading and Buying Skills, Stats and Others

At some point during play, the players will want to upgrade the Skills and Stats of their character. Use the table in the next page to calculate the cost of the upgrade. Look up the current level of the Skill or Stat to be upgraded. The number to the right is the amount of Experience Points that need to be spent to achieve the next level of Skill or Stat. These values are relevant to Stats, Skills and **Manipulation** (See Magic Arts). Secondary Stats cannot be increased with the use of Experience Points; they can only be indirectly improved through the relevant Stat Modifiers from the main six Stats, or via Caste upgrades. For Magical Arts, see later in this section.

"If that's the way you want it, I can easily make you dance the hokey-kokey in nothing but a toga, while you think you're dreaming about aruna."

- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar

"We settle this in blood, yours and not mine. Mine shall not be spilt today, for you are truly unworthy."

- Deacon, Colurastes

Players should inform the Storyteller what Skills and Stats they intend to upgrade next, as this will help the Storyteller gear some aspects of the plot towards advancement.

Skill/Stat	Points	Skill/Stat	Points	Skill/Stat	Points	Skill/Stat	Points
New Skill	50	4	60	9	200	14	500
0	50	5	100	10	250	15	600
1	20	6	120	11	300	16	700
2	30	7	150	12	350	18	800
3	40	8	175	13	400	18	900
						19	1000

Example: The player wants to upgrade the *Cooking* Skill for their character Agroth, from his current rating of 10 to the next level (11). He will need to amass 250 Experience Points. Once Agroth has gained enough Experience Points the player should inform the Storyteller that they wish to upgrade the Skill. Once approved, the player can increase the level on their character sheet relating to that Skill. The Experience Points are deducted from the total available to that character.

Storytellers should only allow Skills and Stats to be upgraded by one point on each occasion; advancing through multiple points would require the character to undertake extensive practice and training. Unless the character has taken time out from the main quest to train intensively, or the player specifies that the character is reading up on or practicing a Skill, then only 1 point can be upgraded per gaming session. In general, each player should inform the Storyteller what they want to spend their experience points on when they come to spend them. Then the Storyteller can tell them if they are able to add those points at that time, depending what is going on in the game. This also means the Storyteller keeps aware of what the players are spending their experience points on and the direction they want their character to take. Once the player has spent their Experience Points, they should check to see if their new Stat levels have affected the character's Stat Modifiers for Skills, Secondary Stats, etc.

Any changes to the character through the expenditure of Experience are considered permanent.

"You and I, ones like them.
We are all tools of the
Aghama. You can either be a
scalpel, or a mallet. Now,
which shall it be?"

- Phelt, Gelaming

Training

All Experience Point expenditure detailed in the previous section is based upon the assumption that a character has access to someone of equal or higher skill to train them, or they have some form of training manual or instructions. If a character is trying to advance a Skill without some form of instruction, it will be more difficult for them to learn. They will have to rely on trial and error, more than anything else.

Any Skill marked with 'U' on the Skills list, **see page 200**, it does not require any form of instruction for the character to advance in them, so all Experience Points used for upgrading these Skills are distributed as normal. All other Skills require some form of instruction, from someone who has the same Skill as a character, but at a higher level. Again, this requires no die roll or extra time while playing to perform, as it is presumed that the character will study and train whenever they get the chance. For all Experience Point expenditure on Skills that require training, where instruction is available, the experience cost is as listed in the previous table. If the character tries to attain a new Skill level without proper instruction, all experience costs will be doubled. This only applies to skills without a 'U' on the list. In all cases, the Storyteller has the last say on the necessity of training when a character comes to learn or improve a skill.

Skills which require training to use also require a trainer or some form of instruction. If this is unavailable then the expenditure of experience is doubled for that skill.

Weapons Skills and Combat Styles also require training to upgrade, and suffer the same penalties if no trainer is available. However, if the character is developing their own Combat Style, they can upgrade that Style as normal with no penalties.

To make things a little easier, most training is done in the character's 'down time', when they have a few hours spare to read books or practice. Should a character reach a new town or outpost, you can role-play them finding a trainer and arranging some training sessions. This can be helpful in building a list of trainers in certain locations for future reference, so a character will know where to get the best training, and can also share that knowledge with others.

New Skills

To learn a new Skill, a character must have 50 Experience Points to spend during their initial training, and have a teacher with the relevant Skill at level 5 or higher. This applies to all Skills, even Skills that can be used untrained, as the character needs some basic initial instruction to point them in the right direction. Instruction can come in the form of a book, a mentor or a training facility. If the character does not have such resources, they can learn on their own, but the initial cost is 250 experience rather than 50.

To learn a new Skill, it would take a character about a week of on-off training in game time. This time spent training will not affect the character during normal play, and they can take part in the story as usual. Accelerated training can cut down the length of time required to train at a new level, but only by a few days. However, in this case, a character would have to take time out to study, which means it would affect their ability to take part in the story. It would perhaps be done if it were essential to the group that one of the party received training needed desperately to complete a quest. Accelerated training is performed only if the Storyteller agrees that the required time and a trainer are available. It's dependent on the story and situation the characters are in.

Once the character has finished their training, they must spend another 50 Experience Points to fix that Skill, like graduating in it. The character then gains the relevant new Skill at level 1. Even if the character has received no specialised instruction and has effectively trained themselves, the same 50 points still apply.

New Specialisations

Buying another Specialisation for a Normal Skill or Combat Skill is cost effective, as a character has already learned the basics and doesn't need to learn them again. The second specialization starts at half a character's highest Specialisation for that Skill. However, to gain the new Specialisation fully, the player must spend the Experience Points for the next level of the new Specialisation.

Example: Agroth wants to gain a second Specialisation in the Sword Skill with a different type of sword. He already has Sword (Katana) at 15, but wants to learn to use Sword (Broadsword). Because he already has one specialisation at 15 in Sword, he needs to spend 150 Experience Points to gain Sword (Broadsword) at level 7. If no instruction is available, the Experience expenditure is doubled. Once the training has been performed and the Experience Points have been spent, the player should make a note of the new Specialisation on their character sheet, and also calculate any additional bonuses from various Stat Modifiers.

Changing Stat Modifiers

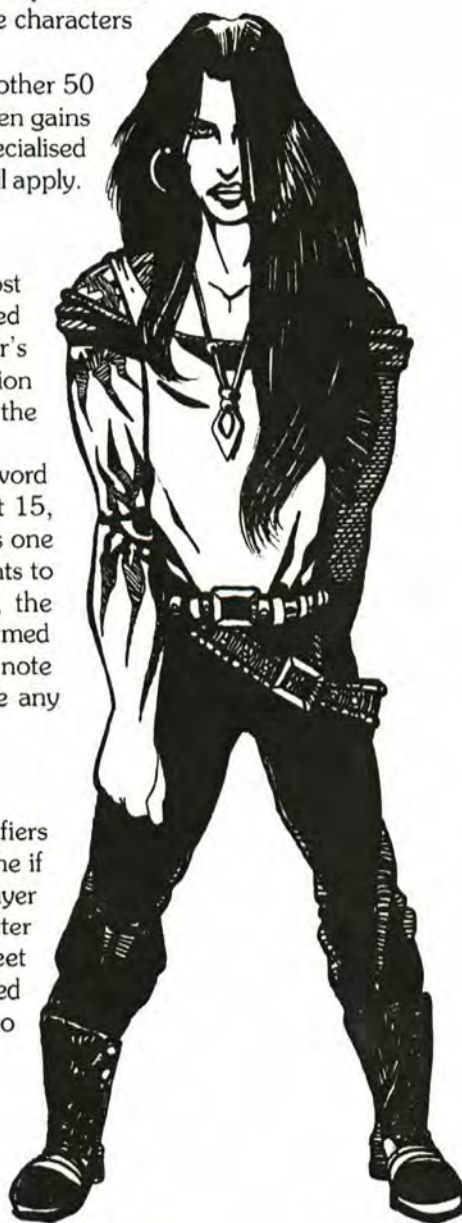
If one of the characters has upgraded a Stat, one of their Stat Modifiers might have changed. If this is the case, the player should also determine if any Skills or Combat Action Modifiers have changed. If so, the player should delete the old value and enter the new value on the character sheet. After character generation, the only sections of the character sheet which are affected by changes to Stats are the Stat Modifiers, Skills based on Stats, Energy and Combat Action Modifiers. It is best to flick to **Quick Character Generation** on **page 195** to work these out.

Upgrading Magic

Any harsh character using magic who wishes to upgrade it will use different levels of experience expenditure values than those used for Skills and Stats. Magic is harder to learn because there are no books or standard methods, but requires no trainer beyond the initial induction of each element and force. It has its own experience expenditure table, on the next page. The Changing

"Who's this? Another poor sap who did the bleeding for you? Well, I have had enough. It's your turn to do some bleeding."

- Skipper Hansmet, Smalt, Phylarch of Picaroon Phyle.



"Forget the cavalry; someone needs to call the cleaning service."

- Watson, Varr Phylarch

States and Meta Realities set of magical abilities costs significantly more than Matter and Energy. If a character wants to learn a new Element or Force he should seek the advice of a Hienama, before he can gain his first point in a new Element or Force. Because the barriers in magic are philosophical, rather than based around knowledge, advance beyond the first point requires only personal study and meditation.

The limits of magical power are dependant upon the character's Caste level. As a character reaches higher goals and hones his Wraeththu abilities, he becomes capable of achieving greater magical effects. The Caste and level on the right hand column of the table is the minimum level a character should reach to attain the values on the left. Items and Action Modifiers can take these values higher. Manipulation is upgraded as a normal Skill. (See the previous section for details of upgrading Skills.) Magical Resistance can only be upgraded by advancing Caste levels.

While at first glance, the points cost might seem very high, a generous Storyteller would allow the characters to advance fairly quickly, perhaps by 1 point in a Magical ability in every campaign. It would also depend on which tribe a character belongs to, and if he needs training. Most characters in the world of the Wraeththu can take 30-40 years to reach the higher levels of Ulani.

Resistance cannot be increased with experience; this will increase as the character progresses through the caste levels.

Magic Ability	Energy, Matter, Chaos and Order	Changing States / Meta Realities	Caste and Level Needed
0	25	75	Kaimana / Ara
1	50	150	Kaimana / Ara
2	75	225	Kaimana / Ara
3	125	375	Kaimana / Neoma
4	175	525	Kaimana / Brynie
5	250	750	Ulani / Acantha
6	375	1125	Ulani / Pyralis
7	525	1575	Ulani / Algoma
8	675	2025	Nahir Nuri / Efrata
9	825	2475	Nahir Nuri / Aislinn
10	-	-	Nahir Nuri / Cleatha

WHAT DOES FATE HAVE IN STORE FOR YOU?

Fate is a fickle beast. With one hand it gives, and with the other it takes. Many hara believe that fate controls their destiny, while others are sure they are in control of their own future. How do they really know what trick Fate is playing? It might be that we think we are in control, because that's what Fate wants us to believe. The answers are beyond the reach of mortals, and perhaps safely on a high shelf where the Wraeththu cannot touch it.

How does Fate work in this game, if destiny is already decided? How do you know that in spending a Fate point, you're not playing in to the hands of Fate itself? No one really knows, not even the Storyteller, as most stories are organic in nature. The final result may never been known, or could change over the course of a game.

Spending Fate

If a player fluffs a roll and fails at a task, they can spend a Fate Point to alter this action for the better. Although this does not guarantee success, it does give the character that one extra chance. Directly after a failed roll, the player should declare they are spending a Fate point, which then changes the result of the roll to a favourable one. Fate can even be used to twist the hand of another. A player can use a Fate Point after the Storyteller or another player has rolled for a character or an NPC to stop someone who is working against them.

System: Once the Fate point has been declared and marked off the character sheet, the player rolls one 10 sided die (1D10). The player can add or subtract their score from their original D20 roll. This can either positively affect the actions of the character spending the Fate point, or negatively affect those who oppose them. Multiple Fate points can be spent should the player choose to do so, but it's not advisable to expend all Fate Points too quickly, as you'll never know when you'll need them. Fate Points can be used after any roll of a D20; this includes Magic and Combat, but not Combat Damage. (1 Fate Point allows a player to adjust one of their character's failed rolls or a roll directly against them by the total of 1D10. Multiple points can be added or subtracted from a D20 roll.)

Gaining Fate

To gain more Fate Points, the player spends Experience Points. They should declare this intention at the same time as they upgrade their character's Skills. 1 Fate Point costs 25 Experience Points. There is no limit to how many Fate Points a character can have; it is controlled only by the amount of Experience Points a character has to spend. (25 Experience Points per Fate Point. This transaction should be made while buying up Skills and spending other Experience Points.)

Should a character run out of Fate Points during play, but have spare Experience Points, they can spend them on Raw Fate. Raw Fate costs 100 Experience Points per point. Raw Fate is only used when the character's Fate pool has run dry, and they have enough Experience Points to spare. It's not advisable to do this too frequently, as it will use up all the Experience Points and a character will be unable to develop to their true potential. Raw Fate is for dire emergencies, when a character's life hangs in the balance, or the destiny of the world is dependent upon the roll of a die. (100 Experience Points per Raw Fate point. This transaction can be made at any time during play.)

"I can't believe it's gone. My tail; it's gone!"

- A confused new inceptee

THE RITES OF INCEPTION

Perhaps the most life-defining experience in the life of a Wraeththu har is Inception. This is the moment when they are introduced to a new world, granted new abilities, faculties and feelings. Inception is never an easy experience. Every har remembers the pain and turmoil of it; a milestone in his life. Some might have their personalities radically changed by it, while others might be mentally scarred from the experience. Yet more might find they have become cured from a previous defect or dysfunction. To each har, Inception is different and each will see it and remember it in a different way.

A common phenomenon amongst the older inceptees, who underwent the process in the very earliest days of Wraeththu, is a condition that has been termed 'Inception Backlash.' This is a mental state where the human side of the har fights for survival and rebels against the transformation. Old mental scars can be brought to the surface, as well as unresolved inner conflicts. During Inception, any part of the har's human life, which might have been blocked out, could come back to haunt him. Damaged relationships or problems that he might have tried to ignore will reappear and demand to be dealt with. For many months after Inception, such backlash can leave a newly incepted har in a state of emotional and psychological turbulence. Some hara are affected for many years to come. This is one of the main reasons that older humans are not chosen for Inception, unless they possess rare skills or the mental capabilities to cope with backlash. Younger humans tend to carry less 'baggage' of negative experiences.

It is up to the Storyteller and the players to decide if a game should include the role-playing of flashback experiences. Players who opt for their characters to take on such mental scarring should be awarded extra Experience Points, dependent on what they take on and how well they role-play their character dealing with old memories and problems.

"It's not too difficult: all living things have the same basic needs and where there are needs there's trade to be had."

- Muffy har Unneah



Players whose characters begin play as human will have to decide how they want his Inception to turn out. The tougher and harder the players make it for themselves, the more Experience Points should be awarded to their character. The time period for how long a player's character should remain human before becoming har is not specified in these rules, since the Storyteller should decide how the story will flow and when the characters are ready to undergo the transformation.

The process of Inception is described in detail on **page 95**. Even though some Inceptions do not 'take' properly and end up as 'botched', and some humans even die during the process, the Storyteller should guard against players having to make rolls that might potentially kill their character in an instant. As with Inception Backlash, if a player chooses to make their character's life more difficult and then role-plays their problems, they should be awarded more Experience Points.

In the early stages of Wraeththu history, no har has been able to inception a human female successfully. Many hara have tried, and to date every attempt has ended in failure and death for inceptee after a few days. Rumours abound concerning a more feminine-ascpected strain of Wraeththu that might once have been human females, but this Inception process has never been witnessed and the inceptors never encountered. Some hara believe the Zigane tribe know more about these rumours than others.

After Inception, there are many opportunities for players to gain Experience. The **Introduction** gives details of how Wraeththu are different to humans; this can offer ideas and inspiration for role-playing. Any player who uses this section to create inspired changes in a character, and then role-plays them well, should be awarded extra Experience Points. From physiological to psychological transformations, the passage of Inception offers many chances for creative role-playing. During the first months after Inception, when a character is thrown into his new life, with new friends and new values, he might have troubles and problems adapting.

If a player chooses to play a human female character, they can become affiliated to certain Wraeththu tribes. Some tribes are friendlier to human females than others. The Gelaming, for example, welcome women within their cities and towns, believing them to be as much victims of

man's depredation as the planet itself. Tribes who would be most likely to have female associates are the Uigenna, Gelaming, Unneah, and the Sulh. Those least likely to fraternise with human women are the Varrs, Kakkahaar and the Obliviata. Colurastes are fairly neutral about the matter.

As the future is not set, no har knows if a way will be found to incept human females, but many hope it will be found. Another option for a human female character is to go on a quest to track down the fabled Zigane.

Any benefits to the character's Stats, Secondary Stats, etc. from Inception are permanent changes.

Benefits

There are many benefits to being incepted, such as an enhanced immune system, which gives far greater protection against disease, and the ability to avoid many of the mental problems that have hit humanity hard. The radical change in the body's structure and internal workings can produce physical and obvious effects, such as weight loss in those who were overweight, as well as a growth spurt in those who lacked stature. It is as if the harish genes try to pull the body into a form that can cope with the other changes such as magical abilities and the enhanced metabolism.

No real studies have yet been made to explore the precise effects of Inception. However, through trial and error, certain facts have been determined. Many believe that as well as physical and mental changes, there is also a significant spiritual change, so that hara can use magic effectively and cooperate with the natural flow of the universe.

The changes that a har experiences during the Rite of Inception are as follows.

Traits

After Inception, add the **Current Tribe** to the relevant section of the character sheet. This is the tribe to which the character has just been incepted. The character's Caste will be Kaimana, and his level will be Ara, as all newly incepted hara begin at this level, though some may ascend quickly to Neoma. A character that, as a human, was of shorter than the average height may grow rapidly during Inception. Some humans increase in height by up to ten centimetres. Humans who are taller than average don't grow beyond this.

During Inception, the body of a character who is either underweight or overweight will adjust to the average weight for an average har. This aspect can add additional days to althaia, the period of change. Greatly overweight characters can spend up to two weeks to transform, as his body sheds the extra pounds. For the height and weight limits of the Wraeththu, see **Page 170** in **Character Generation**.

Caste Goals

During the first few days after Inception, hara begin to think about their future. Therefore, while making the changes to the character, the players should decide upon a set of goals their characters need to achieve to ascend to the second level of Kaimana. These will be explained and detailed in the **Caste Progression** section on **page 329**. Once the player has decided what their goals are, they should note them down in the notes section on their character sheet. All Caste Goals are dependent upon the tribe which incepted the character, and the current story situation.

Stats

The physical makeup of the body is transformed after Althaia. This awards each character 1 additional point to every Stat, as well as the bonuses specific to their tribe. The additional point should be recorded by adding 1 point to the level each Stat on the character sheet. The Tribal Bonuses can be found in the **Tribes** section, and also in **Character Generation**, starting on **page 195**. The Tribal Bonuses should be entered into the Bonus Column of the Stats section of the character sheet; they will of course

The Storyteller should consider giving the characters a few days downtime to get over the Rite of Inception, therefore all the bonuses from Inception will have peaked, and be ready to use.

"Let's use real weapons now and fight like true hara. Take you knife and show me it's for more than just gutting fish."

- Zillah Shemercy, Ex Varr General

"You may have a larger weapon than me. However, a Zweihander is not much use to you as all you can do is swing it left and right."

- Besta Zamhalama, Varr

affect the final total of the Stat. The Tribal Bonuses manifest gradually over the first few weeks of initial training, while the body undergoes final small adjustments. During the first few weeks after Inception the harish body is still settling and changing to its final form. Although this is slower than the initial change, the training the character is put through will imprint better during this time.

Once all the new totals have been calculated, check to see if the character Stat Modifiers have changed. If they have, apply these changes to any Skill that uses the changed Stats.

Secondary Stats

Players should add an additional 20 points to their **Energy** Stat, and then check to see if their Stamina Stat Modifier has changed; this can add a valuable few points. See **page 187** to review the calculations for the Energy Secondary Stat. For **Psyche** and **Composure**, refer to the relevant section of **Character Generation**, and calculate these values according to the rules there. See **page 188-189**.

Skills

In the first few weeks after Inception, a character's new abilities will start to manifest, amongst which will be an aptitude for various Skills. These Skills gain Tribal Bonuses and should be recorded in the bonus column for any relevant Skills. These Skill bonuses manifest over the first few weeks, like the Stat Bonuses. If a character does not have these Skills, you can make a note of the bonuses for later use. These bonuses represent initial training becoming instinctive, as the genetic changes settle in the character's body. Tribal Bonuses are in the **Tribes** section and also in **Character Generation** starting on **page 195**.

Magic

All characters, regardless of which Tribe they belong to, will gain basic magical abilities. The rules for calculating basic magical abilities are found in **Character Generation** starting on **page 189**. Dependant upon the tribe that incepted the character, he might not be able to develop his magical abilities beyond the base values. Some tribes have more of a propensity for magic use than others. The character's Resistance should be calculated using the relevant Stat Modifiers, detailed in **Character Generation**.

Final Touches

"When I became har, I lost my love. Since then I have found new way to love."

- Uorla har Colurastes

When the character is fully har, he will be able to use the full range of the Major Wounds section of the character sheet. He will have 15 Major Wound points, instead of 10 and also an extra 10 permanent Minor Wounds points. The character's body will become slightly more resilient to damage.

Any Merits and Flaws, which specifically relate to Humans, will be removed from the character sheet. No points will be deducted or awarded for this action; these aspects are simply changed by the Inception process. On the **Background Notes** section, enter the name of a character's Inceptor (hienama), as this information may become relevant later in the game or be of use to the Storyteller. Beyond this point, a character will no longer age in the same way a human does. He will not display the normal signs of physical wear and tear. He will become more distinguished in appearance as he matures, and will hold himself with a greater air of experience.

Early Days

In the early days of being har, a character will become more familiar with his abilities. He will make new friends and possibly new enemies. This is a turbulent time in any inceptee's life. The genetic changes, which were fixed by first aruna, have begun to settle and will finally be set a few weeks after Inception. The first few weeks are valuable to get the character into the mindset of the tribe.

Some players might choose to begin the game with a character who has already undergone Inception about three months previously. He will already have spent some

time in initial training and have mostly got over the more traumatic aspects of transformation. He will be slightly less powerful than a character who starts as human, because the latter will have gained some experience through role-playing

Starting as a human might make a character more powerful in the long run, but he will have to endure the pain and trials engendered by Inception. It also allows a player to get to know their character as a human first, before he becomes one of the more alien Wraeththu.

ENERGY (OPTIONAL RULE)

This Secondary Stat is used mainly in combat and other actions where the character has to exert themselves. It simulates the realities of fighting and aggressive activities and how they drain the energy of the body. Energy is also depleted by acts such as running, lifting, jumping, or any other feat that requires physical exertion. The Storyteller should determine which actions deplete Energy and how much Energy it requires to accomplish them. For example, it could take 1 Energy point for each psychically strenuous action. Guard against over-using this Stat, or players might find it debilitates their characters too much.

The Energy Secondary Stat has little or no bearing on when a character needs to sleep, as it covers fatigue over short periods. Tiredness and the need for sleep are subject to the Storyteller's decision over what the character requires. As this Stat can sometimes be complicated to use, it is not obligatory for it to be included in the game; that is at the Storyteller's discretion. However, Energy should still be calculated during character generation, as other aspects of the game will rely on this Stat.

"The Varrs wanted us to find you before the Gelaming did."

- Solasus har Kakkahaar

Recovering Energy

Energy can be regained in several ways, from the projection of psychic powers to the use of drugs, but the usual method is simply to take some rest. If a character's Energy level is less than 3, it can be bumped back up to 3 within one minute by resting. However, doing this too often can lead to extreme exhaustion, which is explained below.

For realism, a character should rest and recuperate their base 3 points 10 times, before they have trouble regaining their lost Energy. After the 10th time, it should take 1 minute to regain 1 point up to the base 3. After the 11th time, on each occasion a character uses those base 3 points again, it should take 1 additional minute to regain 1 point. The 12th time, it will take 3 minutes, and so on.

Example: Agroth has a current Energy level 3 and has rested 10 times in a row, not allowing himself to recover beyond the base 3 points; it took 1 minute for each point. Now, he is feeling the effects of exhaustion and it takes him 1 minute to gain back 1 point of Energy. He continues to push his body further, but after the 15th instance of recuperation it takes him 5 minutes to gain 1 point back. At this point, he gives up and collapses into sleep, as he can see it's not worth continuing.

Should you wish a character to rest for longer periods, or use other methods of regaining Energy, use the table right.

You cannot take your character's Energy levels above the maximum shown on the character sheet. Should a player push their

Activity	Points gained back
Resting normally (only after you have gained back you initial 3 points)	1 point for each 5 minutes rested. This needs to be good comfortable undisturbed rest.
Sleeping	Sleeping for up to 8 hours will gain all lost points back; anything less is worked out at 5 points an hour.
Meditation	This will regain 10 points an hour.
Energy drinks	This will regain 2 points and can only be used twice a day; otherwise the benefits are lost.
Drugs	Drugs vary between 5 and 20, dependent on the drug; however, they can become highly addictive.
Unconscious (not through free will)	3 points an hour.
Normal recovery while not resting.	1 point every 15 minutes

character to 0 Energy, then the character will black out and fall unconscious until revived, or until enough time has passed for them to recover (3 hours.)

This following list gives a quick rundown of how the base 3 Energy points work. Base 3 and below really affects the character.

"Look, you're twice the size of me, but I'm still going to stand up to you, so that makes me crazy, or really, really dangerous. Would you like to guess which?"

- Fragease, Sulh Warmonger

- When a character reaches 1 Energy, they can continue to undertake minimal actions but their base 3 will take 5 minutes to regenerate. Alternatively, they can stop and rest properly, which will regenerate the lost Energy in 1 minute.
- Once the character has been regenerated 10 times in a row, without continued rest of greater than 10 minutes, or 50 minutes' minimal actions, they become physically exhausted.
- On the 11th recuperation, it will take 1 minute per point of complete rest for the first 3 point to regenerate, or 5 minutes per point if engaged in minimal actions.
- From the 12th regeneration onwards, add 1 minute to the rest time per point, e.g. the 15th time will take 5 minutes per point of complete rest, and the 20th will take 10 minutes.
- If a character continues to do minimal actions, all recovery times are multiplied by 5. By the 15th time, it will take the character 25 minutes to recuperate, and if they reach the 20th time, it will take 50 minutes per point.
- Theoretically, a character can just continue with insufficient quick rests and push themselves beyond the limits. However, eventually such a tactic becomes unworkable, because they will have to rest for such lengthy periods to regain small amounts of Energy. It is more efficient to allow a character to take a normal rest period when you get the chance.

Energy and Tiredness

In real life, you can stay awake even if your energy levels are low. It is possible to watch TV for 18 hours and still feel sleepy, or work for 18 hours even when you're tired. Humans get tired naturally, and when they do, they have to sleep. Within the game, Energy is different, and can be regained through simply resting from physical exertion, even while still awake. Should your character's Energy reach 0, they will black out. As this trait depletes the character, the player should role-play their loss of energy. The lower the trait is, the less enthusiastic they will be to do anything that will deplete it further.

PSYCHE

A harish character's Psyche abilities are split into three parts: Telepathy, Thermokinesis and Healing. These can be put into the same category as Magic, although every har has access to these base abilities, regardless of what magical Skills he possesses. Whether a character, or his Tribe, uses Psyche abilities or not, he will still have access to them in moments of crisis, if he needs them. This applies even to hara of tribes who shun magic.

The Obliviata will not admit they have the ability to draw on any kind of power themselves, as they believe manifestations of Psyche is their god working for them. In reality, the Obliviata use these abilities subconsciously. The disadvantage is that they cannot use them consciously, unless they pay some kind of homage to their deity to unlock their subconscious blocks. Critical rolls and Fumbles are ignored for any Psyche rolls that are required.

Psyche abilities other than Healing do not require any specialist knowledge to create an effect, unlike Magic, for which the character needs a certain level of knowledge and expertise in order to create a desired effect. For more details see the following sections.

As the character progresses through their caste level, these abilities will increase.

Telepathy

The ability to communicate over great distances, simply through the power of the mind, is something certain humans claimed to have been able to do throughout history. Through some strange quirk of fate, or through constructed evolution, the Wraeththu have perfected their Telepathy above and beyond that of human capabilities.

Because Wraeththu Telepathy works differently to that of any humans who possess the ability, it is extremely difficult for a har to communicate this way with humans. In close proximity to a human, hara can transmit thoughts and emotions to a human mind, but can only receive vague impressions in return.

System: The main factor in the Psyche score is distance, i.e. how far a har is from the individual with whom he wishes to communicate. Other factors are not so important, and are decided by the random roll of a die. These factors include how familiar the har is with the object of his communication and sometimes local conditions. Below is a table which gives Action Modifiers to the Psyche Stat based on some of these factors. As they are just examples, the Storyteller can adapt and add to these Action Modifiers, for the needs of their game. Multiple Action Modifiers can apply to any situation.

Situation	Action Modifier
Telepathy with another character that is unfamiliar.	-3
Communicating with a character familiar to the player's character.	0
Communicating with a character the player's character is friends with.	+3
Telepathy with another character that the character is close to, such as a long term travelling companion or chesnari.	+5
Trying to reach a character that is unconscious or otherwise mentally distracted, e.g. in Grissecon, or some other form of intense ritual.	-5
Contacting a character whose Composure is 4 or less	-5
Magical block, created by character or naturally occurring. Once a block is erected, the success level of the magical manipulation roll is the modifying factor. For natural blocks these can be determined by the Storyteller or the roll of 1D6. (Unless otherwise known)	- Success Level
If one of the characters is in another realm, and his location is known.	-3
If one of the characters is in another realm and his location is unknown.	-5
If the character receiving is Human	-5
If a hara is trying to read a human	-15

Obliviata characters cannot consciously use Psyche powers, as their beliefs require them to make some kind of homage to their god to unlock these powers for a specific task.

"Why will nobody listen to me when I say run?"
- Lucentio, Gelaming Solider, in charge of Sedu training.

"Guns require bullets; bullets require significant resources to make. Now if I were you, I would take your firearms, sell them and invest in a nice sharp sword."
- Amin Adeshi, Obliviata

The table on the next page lists over what distance characters can use Psyche, dependent on their Psyche level and with Action Modifiers applied. The distance over which they're communicating does not affect the Action Modifier. However, the Action Modifier for familiarity with another character can increase or decrease the distance over which a character can communicate.

*"Draw in the breath of life
and feel the universe fill your
lungs, let out the breath and
give back to the world the gift
you were given."*

- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar

Modified Psyche	Communication Level	Distance
1		Up to 5km away.
2		6-15 km away
3	Can send thoughts, emotions, ideas and impressions.	16-50 km away
4		51-100 km away
5	Can send Linguistic Communication	101 - 1000 km away
Each point above 5		+2000 km further can be reached. (This also costs 1 additional point of Agmara for each 2000 km extra.)
15	Images, and feelings as they happen, potentially a har can transmit everything they are currently seeing and feeling through all their senses. Even past memories can be sent.	At this level, a character can reach others who are travelling thorough or are visiting other realms. (500 Agmara needs to be spent to break through to other realms. This can be done as a group activity and the use of Agmara can be shared. However, each member of the group needs to be able to have a modified Psyche of 15 or above.)
20	Multiple targets can conference, like they would in a meeting; anything can be sent or received.	

Once the Action Modifiers have been calculated and applied, and if the distance is within range (see the previous tables), the player should roll beneath their modified Psyche Stat on 1 D20. If the player rolls successfully, their character can communicate for up to 12 phases (one minute), after which another roll is required. For each minute, or part of a minute, that a character maintains the communication, it costs 1 point of Agmara energy. If the roll fails, then communication is lost, but the Agmara energy is still spent. Criticals and Fumbles do not apply.

Players might find it useful to keep a record of characters with whom their character is familiar, and what bonuses he gains during telepathy with them.

*"You hear about free love
and freedom of speech, that's
my kind of world right
there...sign me up!"*

- Myth, Uigenna

Thermokinesis

This Stat enables Wraeththu to survive in places and under conditions that humans could not tolerate. By adjusting their body temperature, or the temperature of an object in their environment, they can exist fairly comfortably in situations where most humans would suffer.

Thermokinesis enables a har to heat or cool objects at a specific rate; no hara have managed to break the boundaries of that rate. There is a theory that Agmara flow can only travel at a set speed. However, at the time the game is set, experimentation is ongoing to test the limits of Pysche abilities.

In the early stages of development, most hara are unable to affect temperatures a great deal, although it can often be by enough of a degree to make a difference to their situation. As a har progresses through the Caste levels, his Thermokinesis will improve, until he has the ability to start fires or freeze liquids. A few hara of high Caste levels have theorised that at the higher levels of Nahir Nuri, a har could melt rock and almost instantly freeze objects to Absolute Zero (0 Kelvin).

System: The rate at which any object's or creature's temperature changes is 1 litre per 5 second Phase, or 1 kilogram in weight per Phase. Characters may slow this rate down, through their will, although they cannot increase it. Temperature limits can be calculated with the table opposite.

The range of this ability is about 10 centimetres. Physical contact with objects that reach a very high temperature will burn the character using the ability.

The only tribe that cannot access this ability consciously are the Obliviata, although they use it instinctively as and when needed, such as when encountering harsh environmental conditions, when their bodies adjust naturally. They believe that as long as they remain loyal to their god, they will always survive, no matter what circumstances arise.

Thermokinesis takes 1 Agmara point for each Phase it remains activated, and for each kilogram to be affected. To heat an object of 3kg for 1 Phase, a player would need to spend 3 Agmara. Once an object's temperature has been changed, it will return to a natural level at a normal rate.

Psyche Level	Temp. (Centigrade)	Notes
1	+/- 1-10	
3	+/- 11-25	
5	+/- 26-60 Water from a boiled kettle	Any negative Action Modifiers from environmental conditions are reduced by 2 points, but cannot go below 0.
7	+/- 61-80	
10	+/- 81-120	
Each point above 10	+/-10 additional	When the character is working under conditions of extreme temperatures, he can ignore any Action Modifiers pertaining to temperature.

All hara have a slightly higher tolerance to heat and cold than humans. The Obliviata use this ability naturally to survive in harsh climates. They do not need to roll a die as this ability is instinctive and automatic, providing they stay true to their god.

To activate this ability, a player should make a basic die roll, since Action Modifiers do not affect Thermokinesis. The score from 1D20 must be less than the Psyche Stat. Thermokinesis costs 1 point of Agmara energy for each litre or kilogram to be affected, multiplied by the number of Phases for which the ability is activated. If a character attempts to effect a temperature change on any living creature or object which can resist, and that wishes to resist, a Contested Roll is needed. In this case, the character's Psyche is compared against the opposition's Magical Resistance. If one side fails, then the other automatically succeeds. If both succeed, use the standard rules for Contested Rolls. (Roll under the Psyche Stat on 1D20 [Obliviata don't need to roll]. It costs 1 Agmara for every Kg or litre affected. Multiply this by the amount of phases activated.)

Agmara Healing

This ability enables hara to heal themselves and others around them. By channelling the energy of Agmara, a har can heal Minor Wounds. However, if a har should have to treat serious physical damage, he will need to possess a degree of medical knowledge. Harish doctors are known as Churgeons. For more information, see the section on page 320.

Every tribe has access to this ability. Varrish Churgeons use Agmara healing, in conjunction with more conventional medical practices once used by humans. The Obliviata believe they use this ability through their deity, although the strictures of their beliefs mean they can only heal others rather than themselves. Obliviata characters have to make Skill rolls and possess a practical medical knowledge of how to heal wounds.

Although Agmara healing is effective whatever the circumstances, if a character possesses some kind of medical knowledge he will be a much more efficient healer. **Doctor** or veterinary Skills are useful, since they give a har knowledge of the composition of the body. Hara can heal most human medical conditions, should they have the desire to do so. The only exclusions to this rule are genetic defects or mental instability.

"To forgive is divine, to hate is the biggest rush since snorting a whole two lines of premium grade drugs."

- Tosta Riko, Uigenna

Over time, hara suffering from mental illness can be healed with progressive treatments, which could take many months. There are no rules concerning the length of time for therapy, because should a character require this kind of healing, it should be a key goal or a plot point.

For more information on the healing of hara and humans alike see page 291.

Among the Obliviata, seriously injured hara are laid in a ritual space, with holy symbols drawn around them, for the purpose of healing. The ritual will involve between four to eight members from a caravan. They will utter chants to Allavé and lay hands on the afflicted har, while a Churgeon cleans the wounds.

Minor Wounds

Because Minor Wounds are mainly superficial, they will generally heal naturally over time. In utilising Agmara energy, a har simply accelerates and works with the body's natural healing ability. When wounds are fairly serious, more knowledge is needed about the potential damage to the body and any after-effects. (The required specialist knowledge is described later.)

System: When characters heal themselves, they don't need to make a roll of any kind. They need only to spend the correct amount of Agmara points to heal Minor Wounds. When trying to heal another *willing* character, no roll is needed, but should a character not want to receive healing, a character may still proceed with the healing, with a successful Psyche vs. Magical Resistance check.

The cost to heal 1 Minor Wound is 10 Agmara, regardless of the situation. It takes 1 minute to heal 1 Minor Wound. For example, to heal 12 Minor Wounds it will take 12 minutes to channel enough energy. When channelling the Agmara to heal, a character must concentrate in order to use the energy most efficiently. Major distractions that require the character to move around or shift position will disrupt the process and will nullify the last minutes' healing. The process must then be restarted, and all previously expended Agmara energy will be lost.

A character cannot heal Wounds beyond his maximum ability to do so, which is determined during Character Generation.

Major Wounds

Unlike Minor Wounds, Major Wounds cannot be healed by the body naturally and need specialised medical assistance. Also, Major Wounds can cause death. They cannot be healed by the use of Agmara alone, and require the healer to have specialist knowledge.

The more severe the Major Wounds, the more skill is required to heal the character.

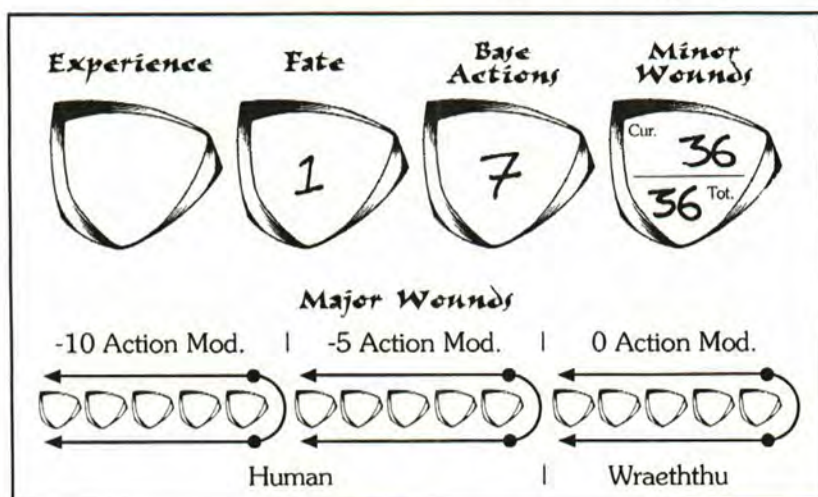
System: The 5 points of Major Wounds on the right hand side of the Wound Bar (used only by harish characters) can be healed with Agmara energy and the use of *First Aid* or *Folk Medicine*. As with Minor Wounds, a Resistance roll is required if the 'patient' resists treatment.

To heal 1 Major Wound from the right side, it costs 50 Agmara and a successful **Psyche** roll with no Action Modifiers. Also, the healer needs to have *First Aid* or *Folk Medicine* at 5 or higher. Should the roll fail, the Agmara spent is lost.

It takes 10 minutes to heal 1 Major Wound. Any distractions will disrupt the flow of Agmara; the wound won't be healed and the energy will

be lost. A roll is needed for every point that needs to be regained. A character can only be healed in this way for the 5 Major Wounds on the right side of the Wound Bar

The 10 Major Wound points on the left hand side of the Wound Bar require a higher level of Skill to be healed. A **Doctor** Skill of 5 or higher is required, as well as a successful **Psyche** roll (no Action Modifiers). Even when channelling Agmara energy, a character should possess a thorough knowledge of the physical body, as mistakes in this type of healing can be fatal.



A cost of 100 Agmara and a successful roll on the Psyche Stat will heal 1 point from this section of the Wound Bar. If the roll fails, the Agmara is lost and the wound is not healed. It takes 1 hour without distractions to heal one wound from this section of the Wound Bar. If the Churgeon is distracted, it is classified as a failure; the operation will take 1 hour longer, and the Agmara energy is lost.

Stabilisation of Major Wounds

If a character is in a critical condition, another har can stabilise them and stop any further deterioration, which would worsen the Major Wounds. The wounded har can be placed into a form of stasis, in which they are unable to respond to stimuli. Any har can channel Agmara to put a wounded character into this state, which is obviously useful for keeping a wounded har alive until a specialist healer can be found. No har can put himself into a suspended state, simply because it is maintained by the frequent application of Agmara energy.

System: To stabilise a character, a har channels 10 points of Agmara for 1 minute in every 10. Like all other healing, this channelling requires that there are no distractions, otherwise the stasis will be broken and the character's condition will begin to deteriorate. However, an application can be administered before the 10 minutes has expired, just in case of failure. This initiates another 10 minutes' time frame.

A state of stasis can be maintained for as long as it's required, but it does need to be supported by the application of Agmara energy. Stasis can also be maintained during the healing process itself, providing another har is present to apply the Agmara energy required.

Once 1 Major Wound has been healed, the character will no longer deteriorate, and the stabilisation be discontinued. For more information on deterioration, see the *Healing and Health* section on page 291.

Group Healing

Healing is more effective when practised by a group of hara, since they can then pool their abilities. Each character in the group should possess the necessary Skill levels in *Doctor*, *Folk Medicine* or *First Aid*.

As with other forms of group magic, only one character in the group needs to make a successful roll against their **Psyche** Stat. Even should the others fail, the procedure will continue as normal. Should they all fail, it is taken that the current application is a failure and the group needs to restart the process. The same goes for distractions. As long as one character is successful in his roll, which means he is not distracted, the group may continue the healing. Agmara expenditure is shared amongst the group. Each member can donate as much Agmara energy as he wishes. Group healing does not necessarily speed up the process; it simply gives more of a chance of success.

System: The system for group healing works in the same way as normal healing, except that only one member needs to make a successful roll. The cost of Agmara is split between members. If Major Wounds, Minor Wounds and Stabilisation are required, These can be performed simultaneously.

Many tribes will have a group of hara who have been trained specifically to be Churgeons, or another type of ritual healer. A human who has trained in medicine would be a desirable candidate for Inception. They will subsequently train in Churgery.

"It's a nice night to be beaten senseless, isn't it?"
- Cest Nara, Uigenna

COMPOSURE

Harish Composure is similar to that of a human. Composure includes how a har carries himself, how physically attractive he is, and his ability to remain calm and competent in moments of crisis. Harish Composure can also affect the physical body. In some cases, low Composure can even be detrimental to the health of the character. If a character follows the path of his tribe or at least adheres to the ways of Wraeththu, he will remain composed. Should the har start to defy his nature, he will begin to lose Composure. Physically, he might begin to assume a coarsened appearance, losing the grace and beauty of his harish form.

A character with high Composure will emanate a glow and have a certain charisma, which will enhance his looks and make him more attractive to others.

"The earth, the sky and the stones are all speaking to us. Some of us have been granted the wisdom to listen; some of us have been cursed with the inability to shut up."

- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar

If a har's Composure reaches a very low level, he will become less physically attractive, and the inner glow that makes hara so awe-inspiring will slowly slip away. Other hara may start to shun a character with low Composure, while some might take pity on him and help him back onto the right path.

Essentially, Wraeththu need to embrace their nature and break the ties to being human. As the characters progress through their Caste levels, they will slowly strip away the bonds to their previous form and gain more Composure. This makes it less likely they will fall back to the ways of humanity.

The Effects of Composure

The Composure Secondary Stat is a guideline to how a character should be played in high pressure situations. In extreme cases, Composure can affect die rolls and the character's abilities to interact socially. If a character's Composure is 5 or higher, he will incur no penalty. However, he will feel more and more edgy the closer he gets to 5. The maximum the Composure Stat can reach through character development is 20. However, the character's temporary Composure can fluctuate between 0 and his current maximum.

If a character's Composure falls below 5, he will start to deteriorate. His hair might appear lustreless and straggly, his skin pallid and sickly, his eyes dull. Eventually the character will look as if he has been living rough on the streets. The character's personality will also take some battering from low Composure levels. He might lose his temper and snap at other characters more often.

Some hara have extreme views of those who have low Composure, regarding them as misfits to be ignored. This can mean the afflicted har becomes a social outcast, in some cases driven from the community. A character with low Composure can recover from this condition under his own steam, but the situation is improved drastically if he has another sympathetic har to help him.

System: When a character's Composure is 4 or below, his abilities to perform certain tasks will be reduced. Social Skills, and others that are used when interacting with other characters, will begin to receive a negative Action Modifier. At extremely low levels, all the character's Skills will be affected, as he will find it harder to concentrate. The social and general Action Modifiers are not accumulative and only one need be applied to each roll. Dependent on the Skill or action, the player or Storyteller should decide whether the action is social or not. See the table below, for the Action Modifiers received from low Composure.

Composure	Social Action Modifier	General Action Modifier
4	-1	0
3	-2	0
2	-4	-1
1	-6	-2
0	-12	-4

Losing Composure

There is no hard and fast rule about when and how a character loses Composure; it is more of a plot device for use by the Storyteller. The basics of what Composure does are explained in this section to give the Storyteller insight into how and why a character might lose it. In some cases, a loss of Composure can be a penalty for bad role-playing and not staying in character. It could also occur when a character takes a risk and directly goes against his nature.

Should a character act against his Tribe's ethics or the way of Wraeththu, he will lose at least 1 point of temporary Composure. If the character's actions are spontaneous or accidental, he should lose at least 1 point of temporary Composure. However, in some situations, when the character has had time to think and reasons his action is the only way to proceed for the good of his Tribe and race, he would not lose Composure.

For example, a har of the Varr tribe could act in a way contrary to the way he has been taught. If the Varr changes from a Masculine to Feminine role (or vice versa) without an extremely good reason, he would be going against the Tribe's basic ethics. The action would be considered an insult to the Varr Tribe. The character would then lose 1 point of temporary Composure, if not more, dependent on the events surrounding such action.

However, the Varr might undergo this change because it would be for the greater good of the Tribe. As long as he has thought his actions through, even accepting that he may well become an outcast, he will not lose any Composure. In such cases, he has rationalised the situation, and is not defying tribal ethics so much as trying to protect them.

The loss of Composure is based around the moral structure of a character, and if the Storyteller thinks a player is not playing their character right, then penalties should occur. Players should not role-play their way through their characters' difficult and amoral decisions, should such circumstances arise.

"What separates you from death is the fact that your head remains attached to your shoulders, for now."

- Jambalis, Obliviata

System: If a character acts against the ethics of his current Tribe and the nature of Wraeththu (such as falling in love with a human), he will lose 1 or more temporary Composure points. If the action is taken and the character has rationalised that it is for the good of his tribe and Wraeththudom, then he will not lose any Composure. The Storyteller should decide when to implement Composure penalties.

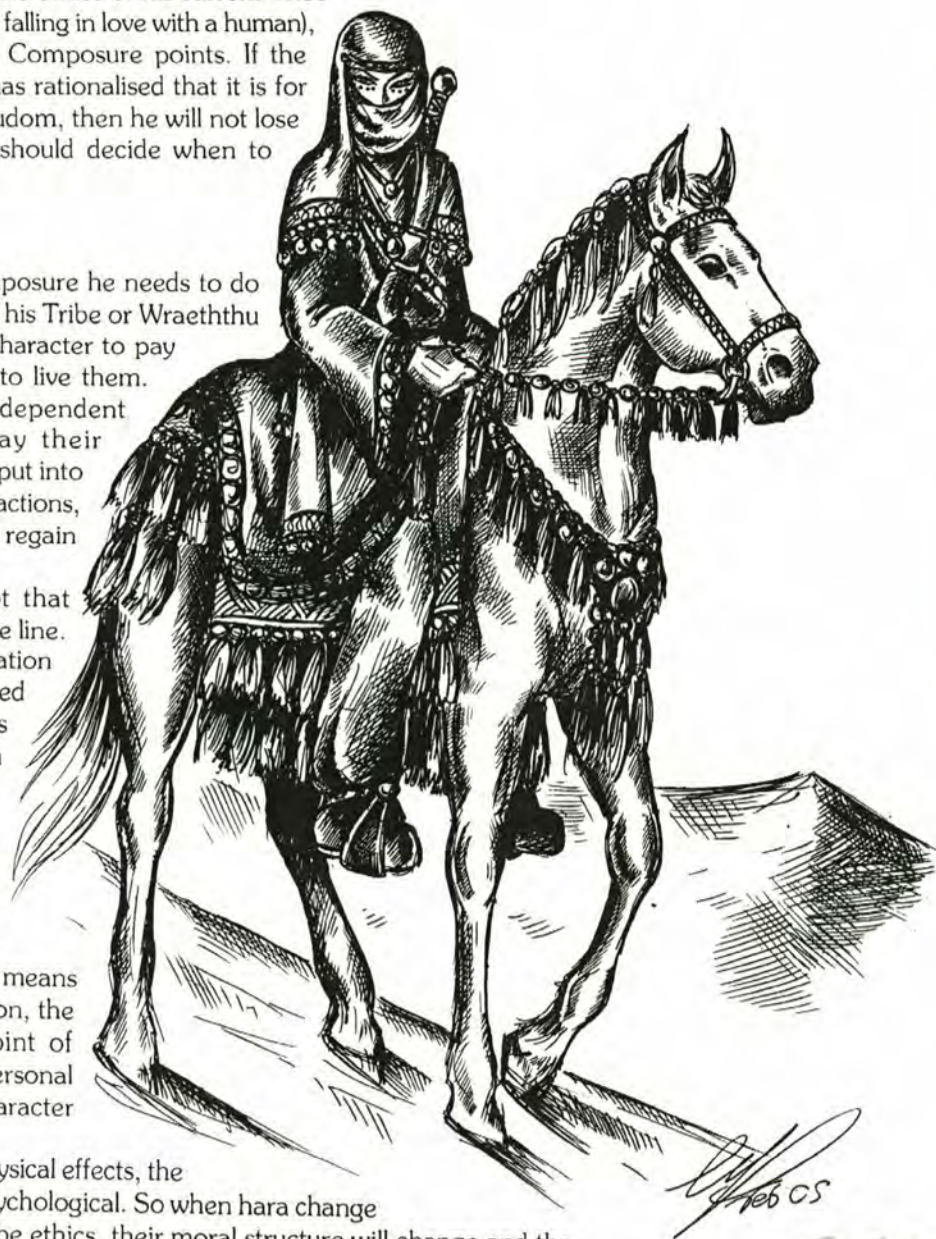
Gaining Composure

For a character to regain lost Composure he needs to do something to promote the ethics of his Tribe or Wraeththu as a whole. It's not enough for a character to pay lip service to tribal ethics; he has to live them. Again, regaining Composure is dependent upon how the players role-play their characters. The more thought they put into the pros and cons of the character's actions, the more likely the character will regain temporary Composure.

Regaining Composure is not that easy. It's not just a case of toeing the line. It should involve some kind of situation where the character's hand is forced and the decision to stick to the line is hard. The character will then automatically regain at least 1 point of temporary Composure.

For example, a Varr is forced into a situation where he has to consider switching from a masculine to feminine aspect. He decides to toe the line and not switch, even if it means great personal risk. In such a situation, the character would regain 1 lost point of Composure. If there is little or no personal risk involved in his decision, the character will not regain any lost points.

Although Composure shows physical effects, the act of losing or gaining it is purely psychological. So when hara change tribes and ascribe to a new set of tribe ethics, their moral structure will change and the reason why characters gain and lose composure changes. Changing tribes is a good



chance for the players to do some good role-playing, as the acceptance of new ethics can take anything from a few weeks to a few months. Hara will suffer conflicts of interest or internal issues they will have to deal with.

System: If a character sticks to the ethics of his Current Tribe and Wraeththudom, against all odds and facing great risks, he will regain at least 1 point of temporary Composure. If there is little or no risk involved then the character will not regain any lost points. The Storyteller should decide when to implement the regaining of composure.

Increasing Composure

A character cannot increase their maximum Composure through role-playing alone. There are only two ways the maximum can be increased. One is by advancement through the Caste levels, **see page 329**. The other is through undertaking a quest given to him by, for example, the Archon of a Tribe. If the quest is completed, and was role-played well, the Storyteller can decide that a character becomes slightly more enlightened. He can then be awarded 1 point of permanent Composure.

System: A character's maximum Composure cannot drop, but his temporary Composure can fluctuate. When a character's maximum Composure increases, his temporary Composure will also return to maximum.

THE ART OF WAR

In the world of the Wraeththu, there are times when a character will have no option but to fight, even if for most of the time it's best to avoid risk of injury or permanent damage. The weapons Wraeththu use must be tough and durable; therefore, it's little use for them to raid abandoned humans' houses to steal the ornamental weapons often found decorating the walls. Such ornaments will be useful for no more than one serious melee, as the blades will become dull, bend or break. Wraeththu do not plough into combat unless there is no other option, because they know that while their form has been enhanced, it can still be damaged, and medical attention is no longer as easy to acquire as it was. Some of the warlike tribes, like the Varrs and the Uigenna, will not go headlong into combat; they will at least take a few moments to assess the situation. Uigenna have lost too many of their ranks by foolishly rushing in, so nowadays they will at least assess their opponents and call for back up if they need it.

Because combat can be fatal, for hara or humans, any characters entering it with the idea they're going to hit everyone until they drop will probably be the first to fall. As in all combat, the first successful strike is always the most important. A good solid blow can render an opponent's arm useless or cause them to double up in pain. A character should strive to make sure that they get the first strike. Rash rushes into combat can result in the necessity to create a new character by the end of the game session. A good combatant assesses the field of play, observes what kind of weapon their opponent carries, and from that judges the best course of action, which could be ensuring a prior advantage or even making the decision to run away.

A word of warning: combat can be fatal. If a character has a tendency to run into any combat situation unprepared and without caution, they can and probably will die. This game is not based on 'Hollywood' rules; it's based on how weapons damage bodies in the real world. If you were faced with a trained swordsman in real life, you would probably have little or no hope of coming out alive, unless you were similarly trained. Training is vital in combat, as is a good grasp of strategy and knowledge of defence.

There might appear to be a vast amount of information to take into account when characters are in combat. It is best to look at it this way: the players should concentrate on their own actions and work with the rest of the group. The Storyteller is the one

"It is not the length of a human's staff that matters; it is the fact that he needs both hands to hold it without making a fool of himself."

- Cest Nara, Uigenna

trying to make sure everyone takes their turn, and that all NPC's have a chance to act, and that each action is judged fairly. Once the action has been described, it is up to the player to choose a Combat Action that closely matches what they have described. Some action may take more than one attack/action to perform, and may use multiple Combat slices. A roll needs to be made for each Combat Action used.

Combat usually starts when a Character or NPC makes an offensive action; this may just be the drawing of a sword and sizing up of an opponent. However, if only one character is aware of the ensuing combat, then the melee will start with their first offensive action. If both are aware, it can start shortly before each character launches into an attack. This is usually one or two Combat Phases before the action starts.

Combat can end at any time; it is up to the Storyteller to decide if all the foes have been vanquished adequately; if they have given up and run away, or if they have all been killed. Combat may also stop if any of the characters choose to withdraw or make some indication they do not want to continue the fight. They would have to convince the other combatants to stop. If this is not done carefully, it could well be a fatal act for that character.

Also there might be times in combat when all the characters reach a stalemate situation. They could be hidden or taking a few minutes behind cover. During this time, it is best to drop out of using Actions and Phases until the combat restarts.

"If humans were meant to use the energy of Agmara, then they would not perish so easily, when I apply a little pressure."

- Solasus har Kakkhaar

Combat Styles

The Styles listed here are basic ones, which offer the characters no bonuses other than the ability to use their chosen weapon properly. The Storyteller may choose to allow players to develop a Combat Style of their own choosing for their characters.

Styles developed by players cannot manifest overnight. It takes time to perfect a good Style that produces profound changes in a character's combat abilities. It is best to develop a progressive Style, which will offer bonuses over a long period. This emulates a character's experience in developing their own Style. First, you should note down the basic Style idea, in order for the Storyteller to approve it or otherwise. You can 'buy' the style, at the Storyteller's discretion, either during Character Generation or during play. Buying self-developed Styles is similar to buying a normal Skill, but a character will not be penalised for not using a trainer. If a character is actively researching and developing a Style, the Storyteller should award bonus Experience Points for their endeavours. This bonus can then be spent on the Style itself or related Skills. Once the player has developed the Combat Style, they can devise some background material and description for it, perhaps even a full history within the world of the game. If the player does this well, the Storyteller may award the Style some Combat Moves or abilities, such as a move designed to disarm an opponent.

System: Developing a Style is relatively easy, but the development of its description and history requires more time and thought. The following basic rules will help a player begin developing a Style. The rest of the bonuses and Combat Moves should be determined during the game, and the ability to role-play the development of the Style. Only the Combat Action Modifiers can accrue the bonuses; the abilities of Aim, Dodge, Damage, Roll, Leap, Speed, Repair and Block. Combat Moves and features can be added at the Storyteller's discretion.

- O All points must balance. For every positive point taken in one of the Combat Actions, you need to take a negative point in another. For example, if a player chooses to take +3 points in Aim, they should subtract another 3 points in other Combat Action Modifiers. This could be -1 on Dodge, -2 on Block, or any other combination.



- A character can have no more than 7 positive points.
- A character can have no more than 5 positive points on one Combat Action.
- No Style will grant any bonus until the character has reached the 5th level in it.
- All Style bonuses should be progressive and balanced over the development, with boosts at rank 5, 10, 15 and 20.
- If the Storyteller says 'NO' this is the final word.
- When developing a new Style, the character must always start from scratch and cannot start at a higher level, as with other specialisations.

"Hey, are you using that?
Because if you're not, you
really should share!"

- Myth, Uigenna

For example, the *Hou-Shein (1H Fighting Style)* detailed below is just a basic example of how to construct a fighting Style. It shows the progression of development, as well as the balancing of bonuses over that progression. It also provides an example of a Combat Move, which has been developed with the Style. Although the Combat Move might not seem to cause a great deal of damage, 1 additional point of Major Wound damage in combat can be fatal to an opponent. If used properly, it can be fatal to *all* opponents.

Hou-Shein (1H Fighting Style)

Developed in recent years by the esteemed Trainer How-Sung Ping, this Combat Style was developed so a combatant has the advantage of making a solid first strike against their opponent. Concentrating primarily on Speed and precision striking, this Style has caused many opponents to fall quickly in the field of combat. How-Sung spent many years of his youth developing the art of precise and fast striking. Now he has passed away, and his protégé teaches this Style to any who are willing to accept the stern mental discipline of the How-Sung School.

Lvl Bonuses

5	+1 to aim, +1 Speed, -1 to Block and -1 to Dodge
10	+1 to aim, +1 Speed, -1 to Block and -1 to Dodge
15	+1 to aim and -1 to Dodge.
20	+1 to aim, +1 Speed and -2 to Block

Special: Any attack from the rear will do an additional point of Major Wound damage.

"Our species is destined for
greatness. We shall succeed
where humanity has faltered,
rising to glorious new
heights!"

- Snowbane, Varr

Combining Combat Actions to Make Combat Moves

One advantage of developing your own combat style is the ability to specify Combat Moves. They are a combination of actions that end in a specific result. Many hand to hand martial styles use a combination of Combat Actions to perform Combat Moves. With a style that concentrates on speed this can be a deadly combination.

As a Combat Move has a flow to its actions, the player need only roll for the last combat action in the move. For example, in a counter attack, the flow of the action would be to **Dodge** the incoming blow, and in the same movement follow through with an attack. In this situation, the player would only roll with the character's Aim Action Modifier.

Any number of combinations can be used for various actions, such as **Leap** and **Aim**, for a flying/jump kick, or **Dodge** and **Aim**, for a low sweeping kick. The combinations are only limited by your imagination and the number of Spare attacks/actions to be used in one Combat Slice. Some Combat Moves can span over multiple Combat Slices; the character using the move needs to be fast enough to act in each consecutive Combat Slice, and have any required Spare attacks/actions. All Combat Moves that you create with a Style should be approved by the Storyteller.

You might want to develop a Combat Move along with your Combat Style; this would gain its own Combat Action Modifier, and can be improved along with the

Combat style. This bonus is in addition to the Combat Action Moodier for the last Combat Action. The Combat Move gains a +1 at level 1, 5, 10, 15 and 20. These can be changed, or have the points from the development of the Combat Style used on them.

When creating Combat Moves, any negative aspects of Combat Actions can be taken into account, once the move has been completed. The example below gives an indication of what a Combat Move can be like.

Combat Move: Counter Attack

The character uses a combination of *Dodge* and *Aim*; this can be deadly in close combat. First, the character dodges the incoming action, and in the same movement swings with his weapon to strike the foe. The Combat Move takes the modifier form of the character Aim Combat Action Modifier, as this is the last Combat Action in the move. Once the Combat Action has been completed, whether successful or not, the character can only perform a defensive action, in the attack/action following the move. This Combat Move requires two attack/actions in the same Combat Slice.

- Only defensive actions can be performed for the attack/action directly after a Counter Attack.
- The Counter Attack requires the character to have 1 Spare attack/action to use in order to perform the Combat Move.
- The Aim Combat Action Modifier is used as the modifier for the Counter Attack.
- If the Counter Attack is a failure, the character will be struck by the foe's blow.

"You have seen nothing until
you have watched a
thousand white horses race
across the sky while your
fellow hara chant in the
background."

- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar

Using Combat Styles

A character should have a Combat Style that enables them to take advantage of all the bonuses from Combat Skills. Without the Style element of Close Combat, the character will only make basic die rolls with the Base Close Combat Modifiers and will not get an advantage from Skill Bonuses, and they will not be able to take that Close Combat Skill above 6. If the character only takes one of the basic Combat Styles, this will enable them to tap into their full potential, when they use the Style in conjunction with a relevant Combat Skill. The level of Style should be equal to or greater than the Combat Skills with which it is used. If the character takes no Skill or Style they will only gain the Base Combat action Modifiers and a -5 Action Modifier on all combat actions.

See the table below to cross-reference what Skills and Styles a character has and what bonuses they can access. The Style represents a character's training in combat, from which they learned how to attack, parry and perform other combat actions. It does not cover the use of a specific weapon. What it does cover is everything from how to use the weapon's weight, to a character's advantage, to keeping up momentum and taking the correct stance to get maximum swing, while leaving as little of the character exposed as possible. Coupled with the Skill and experience of a specific type of weapon, a character will be able to tap into their full potential as a combatant.

N.B.: Specialised Weapon is a Weapon in which a character has a Skill and specialisation. Similar weapon is a Weapon a character has a Skill in but not a specialisation. Non Skilled Weapon is a weapon in which they don't have any relevant Skills. The Correct Style is any one of the Combat Styles listed with the Weapon Skill.

Details	Bonuses Applicable		
	Base	Style	Skill
Specialised Weapon & Correct Style	Yes	Yes	Yes
Similar Weapon & Correct Style	Yes	Yes	No
Non Skilled Weapon & Fencing or Brawl/Unarmed	Yes	Yes	Brawl / Unarmed Only
Non Skilled Weapon & Incorrect or no Style	Yes. -5 Action Modifier	No	No
Close Combat Skill & No Relevant Weapons Style	Yes	No	Up to level 6

"Evolution is just another name for mass genocide, if you ask me. What happened to the Dinosaurs should happen to men."

- Blackrose, Sulth

There are a few exceptions to these rules.

Fencing is a Style which requires no Skill for a character to use it. It offers Combat Actions at a reduced rate. However, a customised Fencing Style can be created to emphasise certain areas of combat. With the basic Style, the only bonuses the character will receive are the Base Combat Action Modifiers.

N.B. The Fencing Style in this book represents the bare minimum of armed combat Styles and Skills. Many schools will teach a more customised Fencing Style. A world class fencer or trainer will adapt the basics and produce a stronger and altogether better Combat Style.

Brawl/Unarmed is the only Close Combat Skill which requires no Style. However, Close Combat Martial Styles can be developed in conjunction with Brawl/Unarmed. If a character has the Brawl/Unarmed Skill, they will be able to access the bonuses from the Close Combat Action Modifiers and the Skill itself. These modifiers will apply regardless of whether a Style is involved or not. If a Martial Style is developed in tandem with the Skill, the Style's bonuses will also apply. Because the character will fight with hands, feet, shoulders, head and so on, they won't suffer penalties for not having a Style.

Combat Skills

Unlike Styles, Combat Skills represent the individual weapon disciplines within each Combat Style. Each type of weapon has specialisations. Different kinds of sword or axe will have different points of balance and different weight distribution. This is why a character will be at a disadvantage if they have to use a weapon different to the one in which they specialised. With continual use, however, the character will eventually become familiar with the weight and feel of the new weapon. Even if the weapon is of a similar style to their usual one, its balance point and weight will differ enough to cause the character to feel uncomfortable using it, which will negate any Modifiers they receive from the weapon.

Because Close Combat Skills are so intrinsically linked to the Combat Styles, a Combat Skill should be taken at a lower or equal level than the associated Style. Should the Skill rise to a higher level because of the development of a new Style, the Skill can only be used at this level in association with that particular Style. For example, Agroth has the Sword Skill (Broadsword) at 12. He also has 1H Fighting Style at 15 and 2H Fighting Style at 10. If he's using the weapon one-handedly, the Skill will be at 12. If he's using it two-handedly, the Skill will be at 10.

Generally speaking, Ranged Combat Skills do not require the use of Styles. However, in some cases, Ranged Combat Styles can be developed. For Ranged weapons, do not take a Style, since the weapon Skill is enough to gain all bonuses at its current level.

A character with no Skill will only gain the use of Base Ranged Combat Modifiers. They will also gain a -5 Action Modifier to all combat actions.

Combat is divided this way because the training required to become competent in the use of close combat weapons takes far more time and is more complex than that for ranged weapons. This is why the Close Combat Skills are separated into Styles, which gives competency in strategies. A well-trained character can predict the flow of combat, and might be able to Parry and Dodge. The Skill covers the use of the weapon in combat and the character's ability to manoeuvre quickly and efficiently with their chosen weapon. A character who knows their weapon's balance points can use the momentum of the weapon and their own body to the best advantage in conflict situations.

A time might arise in play when a character loses their favourite weapon and cannot immediately acquire a new one that is the same. In this case, they can start to use a similar weapon and eventually develop a new specialisation for it. See **page 249**, about developing a new specialisation.

"You catch on fucking fast; you're going to do fine at this adventure shit."

- Yanosh Sale, Unneah Scavenger

Combat Phases & Initiative

This section is quite complex, so certain information will be repeated to facilitate understanding.

Combat usually stretches over multiple Combat Phases. Combat Phases consist of 5 Action Slices. Each Slice is 1 second of time within the game world. These assist accurate and realistic combat. As explained on **page 271**, Phases can be used at any point when timing is critical. A lot can happen in a Combat Phase, so it's more than likely that they will take a little while to play, due to the required die rolls and calculations.

Usually, at the start of a Combat Phase each combatant will roll a single D20 for Initiative. Each combatant should make a note of this score, as it dictates the sequence of events and which combatant goes first. Within each Combat Phase, all the characters' actions are regarded as simultaneous, as they plunge into a fight. But in order to role-play the combat, they will each take turns for their moves, and some moves will counter others. A character with high Initiative will react faster than one with low Initiative. There are other factors that affect the speed of the combatants, such as local conditions, which are too numerous to list here and are the responsibility of the Storyteller. These conditions may give one of the combatants a boost of speed, so they will land their blows slightly before their opponent does.

Each Weapon will have a set number of attack/actions per Combat Phase. Combat is based on one action/attack per Action Slice. Some characters might have more than 5 attack/actions per Phase, because some weapons are faster to use than others (see table below). If so, any attack/actions above 5 are considered Spare. Combatants may save Spare attack/actions until the next Combat Phase, when they will gain a +3 to their Initiative roll for each Spare attack/action they have saved. This is useful if a character wants to spend a few seconds summing up their opponent and staying just out of their range. In the first Combat Phase of any fight, no character can use Spare attacks/actions for their Initiative; this is always a raw D20 roll. However, they may use the entire Phase not to fight, but simply to assess their opponent. They may then save the Spare attacks/actions for the next Initiative roll.

If the character has less than 5 attacks/actions per Combat Phase, the player should refer to the table below. They will not be able to act in an Action Slice unless there is an 'X' marked in the box for that Action Slice. Initiative only applies to Action Slices where the character can act.

As each Combat Phase is split into 1 second intervals, which are called Action Slices, a character in combat can perform a number of combat attack/action per Action Slice. The number of actions characters can make is determined by the number of attacks/actions for the specific weapons they are using. Because every weapons different as some are heavier than others, each will have an effect on how many attacks/actions a character can perform in one Combat Phase.

If the weapon a character is using has less than 5 attacks/actions the player should refer to the table right to determine in which Action Slices the character can act. In the first column, look up the number of attacks/actions the character has with their chosen weapon. The columns to the right each represent 1 Action Slice. If the column is marked with a 'O', then no action is performed. If it is marked with an 'X', the character can act. If a combatant cannot perform an action, or the box is marked with an 'O', the Action Slice will pass to the next combatant. This table allows for an even distribution of action within each Combat Phase, and ensures that combat is unbiased towards any single combatant.

If a character has more than 5 attacks/actions per Combat Phase, they can choose to perform a second attack/action directly after they have performed the first. They can do this once for every attack/action they have over 5. These are known as Spare

"A true artist of the soul can paint pictures with just a few thoughts; you have a long way to go before you can even draw a stick figure."

- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar

attacks / actions	Action Slices				
	1	2	3	4	5
0	O	O	O	O	O
1	O	O	X	O	O
2	O	X	O	X	O
3	X	O	X	O	X
4	X	X	O	X	X
5	X	X	X	X	X
5+	See Below				

attacks/actions. These extra attacks do not have to be used as additional attacks or actions. If the player so chooses, they can be saved to grant the character a bonus to Initiative for the next Combat Phase.

Additional attack/actions should be performed directly after the initial attack/action in an Action Slice, before any other combatants take their turns.

The use of Spare attack/actions in an Action Slice should be judged carefully. Any attack/action can be used as a defensive move, at the same time as attacking. However, if a character has already used all their attacks/actions, they cannot defend against any further attacks in that Action Slice.

"This won't hurt me at all."

- Cest Nara, Uigenna

System: Roll 1D20 plus any bonuses from spare attacks/actions (+3 per saved attack/action) and special abilities. There is no bonus on the first Combat Phase of any fight. The highest score rolled will resolve their combat attacks/actions for the first Action Slice of the Combat Phase. Then the next character takes their turn, and so on, until each combatant has resolved their attacks/actions for the Action Slice. Then the second Action Slice begins, and is played in the same order. Once the fifth Action Slice has been resolved, a new Combat Phase will start and each combatant rolls for Initiative again. If a character's attacks/actions are less than 5, they will be unable to act in the Action Slice, regardless of Initiative.

If the character has less than 5 attacks/actions per Combat Phase, the player should refer to the table on previous page and act in every Action Slice with an 'X' in it. If the character has more than 5 attacks/actions per Combat Phase, they can use these additional attacks/actions to perform an additional manoeuvre directly after they have finished one. Or they can save the Spare attacks/actions to use as an Initiative bonus in a subsequent Phase. If a character is unable to perform an attack/action (the table is marked with an 'O'), the Action Slice passes to the next combatant.

A defensive action can be taken out of turn if the character is being attacked, but only if the character has an unused or Spare attack/action in that Action Slice. If the character takes such an action out of turn, they will lose an attack/action for the Action Slice. When it comes to taking an attack/action later in that Action Slice, they might not be able to act. If they have already acted and have no Spare attacks/actions, they will leave themselves vulnerable.

"Personally, I am just planning on world domination, but Kansas will do for starters."

- Varr officer, when asked what he plans to do tomorrow.

Close Combat

This is a breakdown of all the individual elements of close combat that can be performed in one Action Slice or across multiple Action Slices. As there are many elements to combat, this section will concentrate solely on close combat and all the main actions a character can perform. Ranged combat will be covered in the following section.

Each one of the following Combat Actions takes 1 attack/action to perform. The Weapon Speed and Combat Style can drastically affect the amount of attacks/actions per Combat Phase. The Combat Actions cover the general areas of combat and allow a great deal of flexibility in their use. Some players like to give detailed descriptions of their character's actions, and this can affect which rolls are needed. Each weapon has a list of bonuses that reflect the training with that weapon and no other.

The bonuses listed with these on the character sheet will be the character's Close Combat Action Modifiers when using that weapon. Each weapon and set of modifiers will be different, as each weapon offers differing advantages.

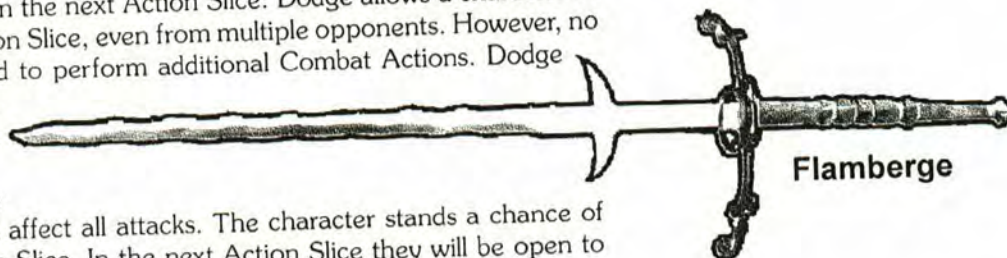
Dodge

This action allows a character to Dodge a foe's blow, but after the Dodge has been performed the character must spend 1 attack/action recovering and getting ready for the next move. In this recovery attack/action, the character cannot perform any offensive moves, and can only act defensively. If the character has Spare attacks/actions in that Combat Phase, they can use one of these attack/actions for recovery. This will enable

them to attack or take an action in the next Action Slice. Dodge allows a character to avoid all blows in the current Action Slice, even from multiple opponents. However, no Spare attack/actions can be used to perform additional Combat Actions. Dodge can also be used as a method to escape combat if followed with a defensive Roll Action.

If the Dodge is successful, the **Success Level** of the die roll will affect all attacks. The character stands a chance of avoiding all blows for one Action Slice. In the next Action Slice they will be open to attack again.

- Only defensive actions can be performed for the attack/action directly after a Dodge.
- Characters with greater than 5 attacks/actions can use one Spare attack/action to enable them to attack in the next Action Slice.
- The character can Dodge multiple blows for the current Action Slice in which it is used, if the **Success Level** of the roll is good enough
- No offensive attacks/actions can be performed in the same Action Slice as Dodge, even if the character has Spare attacks/actions.
- Many Combat Styles beyond the basic ones (represented in this book) will teach a Dodge + Counter Attack move. This is developed through training. More information can be found on **page 268**.



Flamberge

Damage

Damage is not an attack/action as such, but a Combat Action Modifier to the amount of damage a character inflicts per attack. Any close combat blow successfully landing on an opponent will automatically receive this bonus to the damage roll. Stronger characters will excel at giving out greater amounts of damage and finishing a foe off quickly. Weaker characters will have to rely on another element of combat to survive. The type of damage done is dependant on the weapon; a blade stands a chance of doing Major Wound Damage.

- Damage is a bonus to all damage rolls in close combat.

Speed

Speed is used indirectly in combat. It affects no rolls directly. However, depending on what weapon a character uses, it will give a statistical advantage when they have to use the weapon quickly. Any character who is quick and light on their feet will gain additional attacks/actions in combat if their speed rating is good enough. The calculation to use this Combat Action Modifier with the weapon is as follows: **Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier + Base Actions ÷ Weapon Speed**. This calculates the attacks/actions a character has per Combat Phase with that weapon.

- $\text{Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier} + \text{Base Actions} \div \text{Weapon Speed} = \text{attacks/actions for that weapon per Combat Phase}$.

Block

In close combat, Block is a very powerful move which breaks the opponent's flow of combat by stopping their weapon dead. The Block action is useful for a faster combatant to get the advantage and use a Spare attack/action to land an extra blow. Block can only be used on one opponent per Action Slice, so doesn't provide the same advantages as Dodge.

A successful Block attack/action can lead to a situation where a character has a chance to hold off the opponent's weapon for a short while. This occurs when the attacker chooses not to withdraw their attack nor to perform another action. It results in a battle of strengths in the next Action Slice, and will require both combatants to

"If you think that dancing naked around a few old stones is enough to give you true enlightenment, all it will give you is a cold backside."

- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar

"That's a lovely scent you have, yeah, kind of half way between sewer and privy!"

- Myth, Uigenna

perform a contested Strength roll. The successful character is allowed to decide if the hold is broken. If not, it will carry over to the next Action Slice, when both characters roll contested Strength again; Spare attacks/actions cannot be used here.

When a character does decide to break the hold, treat the end result as though a normal Block had been performed, i.e. no offensive actions can be made. If a combatant wins the contested Strength rolls 5 times, they can force their opponent out of the hold and into a situation where the victor may perform an offensive action as the next attack/action, while the loser can only perform a defensive action.

- Block will stop a combatant's attacks instantly.
- A successful Block can lead to a hold action, if the attacker chooses not to perform another action.
- If a Block goes to a hold situation, whoever wins on a contested Strength roll in the next Action Slice gets to decide whether to break the hold or continue.
- After 5 successful contested Strength rolls, the victor can force the opponent into a position where they can only perform defensively; the winner will only be able to perform an offensive attack as the next attack/action.
- No other attacks/actions can be performed in the same Action Slice as the Block, even if the character has Spare attacks/actions.

Repair

With all close combat weapons, it's very important to keep them in serviceable order. Even though a sword has no moving parts, the blade needs to be kept sharp and free of corrosion. During combat, a close combat weapon will acquire notches, or might become dull due to over-use. As part of the character's training, they are taught how to keep their weapon in good working order and how to replace any parts that wear out.

This applies to just a basic level of Repair. Should a weapon be broken or seriously bent or damaged, the character will need to use the Weapon Smith Skill or find someone else to do it.

- Repair requires a Standard Skill roll based on the Skill level, plus the Repair Combat Action Modifiers from the Skill.
- More difficult operations, such as removing deep notches or straightening a blade, may incur an Action Modifier.

Aim

The most important aspect of close combat is for a character to be able to manipulate their weapon efficiently, aiming it carefully to make their next blow, rather than simply making careless, repetitive hits. Good combat has flow and elegance. The combatant uses the weight and swing of a weapon to maximum advantage. The Aim Close Combat Action Modifier can be used to land a blow in the right place on an opponent, or it can be used to make a swing that will parry an opponent's blow. Although hitting an opponent is obviously desirable, it is not the only aspect of combat. A well-balanced set of Combat Actions is more useful than concentration on the Aim ability alone.

If the character makes a successful attack and hits the opponent they will do the damage stated by their weapon and Combat Action Modifiers, taking armour into consideration. A successful parry will deflect the opponent's blow and a character will take no damage.

Other things that Aim can be used for in close combat are physical attacks made with fists, feet, other body parts and defensive weapons such as shields. Any physical attacks made by the character will use the **Brawl/Unarmed** Skill, but the character will still need **Two Weapon Fighting Style**, since they are using their fist (for example) on the one side, and a weapon on the other. If the character does not have **Brawl/Unarmed**, they will be unable to use physical attacks to any effect.

"I can imagine that in a fantasy life you may be the ruler of the world, warrior of the eighth circle and supreme wizard of Aeron Rock...here...you're just a man."

- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar



- Adds to the character's ability to strike an opponent and parry their blows.
- Fists, feet, other physical attacks and defensive weapons, such as shields, are performed in the same way as Two Weapon attacks, and should incorporate *Brawl/Unarmed*.

Roll

With adequate training, a character will come out of a combat Roll ready to make their next move. Without training, they might end up impaled on their own weapon or vulnerable to the next attack. There are two main Combat Skill actions for this ability: offensive Rolls and defensive Rolls. Both work on the same principle and use the same die rolls. With offensive Rolls, a character actually makes a Roll into combat, which takes an attack/action. However, the next attack/action can only be an offensive one. With the defensive Roll, the character tries to avoid combat. In this case, the character's next attack/action can only be defensive, such as a parry or block.

- Offensive Rolls can only be followed by offensive attacks/actions.
- Defensive Rolls can only be followed by defensive attacks/actions.

"At least there is one advantage to the collapse of civilisation. No more junk mail and spam."

- Zackary Raven Black, Gelaming Phylarch

Leap

In close combat, a character might have to Leap over an object or jump to or from an object. The Leap Combat Action enables a character to be able to perform a Leap, from swinging on ropes to gain an advantage of height in combat, to putting their body weight behind a blow. The Combat Leap is very versatile and, used with other actions, can make a character a very potent combatant.

If a character decides to use Leap to add more weight to a blow, the player must state their intention when declaring the character's Leap attack/action. After this declaration, the character can only make an offensive attack/action. However, they will gain a bonus to damage inflicted.

- A combat Leap can be used to gain an advantage in combat, and get behind or over cover.
- When used to put weight behind a blow, only an offensive attack/action can follow it.
- If the die roll and offensive attack/action is successful, the character will gain a temporary +5 to damage for that attack/action,

"In case I don't make it through the night, thanks for the adventure."

- Marius Frost, Gelaming Solider

Two Weapon Fighting

Duel weapon fighting is a precise art. Any character trained to use two weapons properly will be at a disadvantage if left only with one weapon, which is why all Two Weapon training requires the character to have 1H Fighting Style at a minimum level of 6. The main weapon is usually the larger of the two, and is used as an offensive weapon. The 'off hand' weapon, being half the size of the first, is the defensive weapon. This gives the wielder the advantage of being able to defend and attack at the same time. The character must have a Two Weapon Fighting Style and have Skills in both weapons they use.

A shield used defensively, does not require Two Weapon Fighting. However, to use it as an off hand offensive weapon requires not only physical prowess but a good knowledge of combat tactics using two weapons. So to use a shield offensively, your character will need Two Weapon Fighting.

When an off hand weapon is used that is capable of offensive actions, then both weapons will have the same attacks/actions as if they are Main Weapons. Effectively, the character can act twice with one attack/action rather than once. However, the character must have the appropriate Weapons Skill in both weapons. Without specialisation, the character will be at a disadvantage. For Two Weapon Fighting, the character will roll a die as normal in their Action Slice for the main weapon, but will

"I'm a Churgeon, he's my bartender; we don't have secrets."

- Gamboli-gin, *Ulgenna*

"You are playing with fire, and not only will you be burned, you will also set fire to others who are with you."

- Abon Rhul, *Kakkahaar*

then roll again and declare their attack/action is for their off hand weapon – if they choose to use it. If they attack with both weapons, they will be left vulnerable in terms of defence.

Roll, Leap and Dodge are taken from the Combat Action Modifiers of the Main Weapon not the off hand weapon. All other Combat Action Modifiers for the Weapon Skill apply to the off hand attacks/actions.

When a defensive weapon is used in the off hand, the character can only perform defensive actions, such as Blocks and Parries. Again, these are treated like normal attacks/actions. Shields are treated like Complimentary Weapons. A Complimentary Weapon is one that has no offensive capabilities, can be only used to Block and Parry blows and will always use the Combat Action Modifiers of the main Weapon Skill and Style, unless that Style forbids a second weapon.

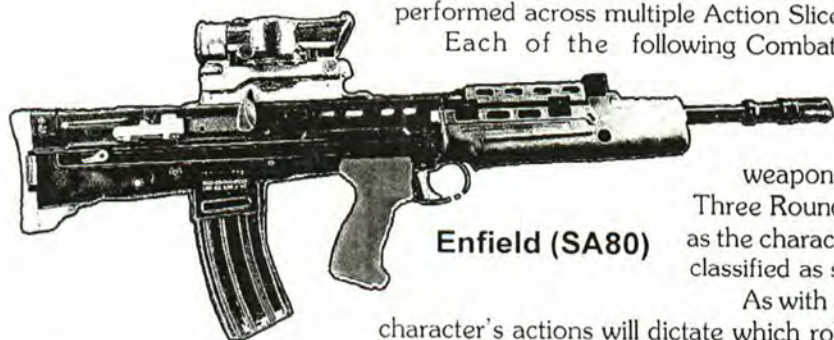
Complimentary Weapons are those that don't have a specialised Skill: these include Shields, Cloaks and other objects. These weapons will use all the Combat Action Modifiers from the Main Weapon Skill.

N.B.: A character must take 1H Fighting Style at a minimum level of 6 in order to be able to take or use this Fighting Style.

- ☐ The main weapon is treated as normal and all the die rolls for that weapon are made as normal.
- ☐ A character must have the Two Weapon Fighting Style, the necessary Weapons Skills and specialisations (for the full range of Combat Action Modifiers) to be able to fight with two weapons.
- ☐ The off hand attack/action is rolled and worked out directly after the main weapons attack/action has been completed, should the player wish to use the off hand weapon.
- ☐ The off hand weapon requires its own Skills, but gets the same number of attacks per Combat Phase as the main weapon and can be used simultaneously.
- ☐ If the off hand weapon has offensive capabilities then its Combat Action Modifiers are used, except for Roll, Leap and Dodge, which are taken from Main Weapon Skill.
- ☐ If the off hand weapon is only capable of defensive actions, then all the Combat Action Modifiers are taken from the main weapon's Skill. This includes shields and other items which require no specialised Skill.

Ranged Combat

Ranged combat doesn't require the use of Combat Styles, although a character may develop one if they so choose. The Ranged combat system works in a similar manner to close combat; it involves a set of actions that can be combined to perform various moves. Each Combat Action takes one attack/action to perform; some can be performed across multiple Action Slices.



Enfield (SA80)

Each of the following Combat Actions takes one attack/action to perform, so if a character's current weapon is a fully automatic gun, it will only allow for 5 attacks/actions per Combat Phase. Single shot weapons may have a reload time and Automatic and Three Round Burst (3RB) weapons can be pumped as fast as the character can use them. Archaic ranged weapons are classified as single shot.

As with all methods of combat, a good description of a character's actions will dictate which rolls are needed to perform them. The bonuses listed with the Combat Skills on the character sheet indicate a character's Ranged Combat Action Modifiers when using a particular weapon. Each weapon and set of modifiers will be different, as each weapon offers differing advantages.

Dodge

Though dodging missiles is very difficult, this Combat Action covers more than just noticing the projectiles and avoiding them. It covers a subconscious ability to assess the field of combat, thus allowing the character to have some intuition concerning the current flow of combat. This instinct enables the character subconsciously to get a feeling of where each combatant is on the field and where their weapons are pointing. Coupled with an awareness of the rhythm of firing, this gives the character some ability to move out of the firing line before the missiles leave the weapon.

If a character elects to Dodge for an attack/action, they can perform no other action until the next Action Slice. If in the next attack/action if they choose to perform an offensive Combat Action, they may not use their Aim Combat Action Modifier. If a character has greater than 5 attacks/actions per Combat Phase, they may elect to use one of the Spare attack/actions to counteract the negative effects of the Dodge move. However, this will use up that action. If the Dodge is successful, the roll will reflect on all attacks against the character for that Action Slice, so they stand a chance of avoiding all attacks during that Phase.

A character cannot physically dodge a bullet once it has been fired, unless he is a harish character who can control time. However, as described above, with this Style the character is not dodging the bullet, but making sure they are not in any possible path of the projectile.

- O After a Dodge, if an offensive attack is performed, the character cannot use the Aim Combat Action Modifier for that attack. Defensive actions are unaffected.
- O Characters with greater than 5 attack/actions can use one Spare attack/action to counteract the negative effects of the Dodge.
- O If the character's die rolls are good enough, they can Dodge multiple blows for the entire Action Slice to which the rolls pertain.
- O No other attacks/actions can be performed in the same Action Slice as the Dodge, even if the character has Spare attacks/actions.

Damage

Damage is not a Combat Action, but a Combat Action Modifier that refers to the amount of damage a character inflicts per attack. Any Ranged combat attack the character successfully makes on their opponents will automatically receive this bonus to the damage roll. Some characters will excel at inflicting greater amounts of damage and finishing a foe off quickly. Other characters will have to rely on other elements of combat to survive. The type of damage the Combat Action Modifier inflicts is dependent on the weapon and the **Success Level** of the roll.

- O Damage is a Combat Action Modifier to all damage rolls in Ranged combat.

Speed

Speed affects no rolls directly, but depending on the weapon in use it can give the character a statistical advantage. Any character who is quick will gain additional actions in combat if their speed rating is good for a specific weapon type.

For Ranged weapons, the rules are slightly different, as there are a number of modes for each weapon. If a weapon is Fully Automatic, marked with (A) in the relevant speed section, their attack/actions will be equal to the Base Actions of the character for the Combat Phase. If the character's Base Actions are above 5, the remainder will become Spare attacks/actions. When a character uses weapons marked as (S) Single Shot or Three Round Burst (3RB), the player should use the same speed calculation as for close combat to determine the character's base attacks/actions per Combat Phase. (Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier + Base Actions ÷ Weapon Speed)

Ranged weapons with multiple fire modes might have different amounts of attack/actions, dependant on the mode in question.

"Did the same person who taught you to ride a horse teach you the manners of a pig as well?"
- Cest Nara, Uigenna

"I don't think yarble is a word; an expression of confusion, pain perhaps, but what do I know...I am so toasted most of the time, anything can become a word."
- Myth, Uigenna

"The big bad world out there is full of people who'll rip you off, rip you apart and dance a little gig while doing so. Hey, thankfully I am not one of those people. Got a light?"

- Myth, Uigenna

- Use the following calculation for Single Shot (S) and Three Round Burst (3RB) weapons Speed Combat Action Modifier: **Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier + Base Actions + Weapon Speed = Actions** for that weapon.
- Fully Automatic (A) weapons use the character's Base Actions and should be noted as (A) [Base Actions] in the Speed section on the character sheet.

Repair

Field repairs on ranged weapons are essential to the survival of the combatant, from stringing a bow to un-jamming a gun. Most ballistic weapons need regular cleaning and maintenance to ensure they fire correctly and to reduce the risk of jamming. Weapons such as bows and throwing knives also need regular care and attention to keep their aim true. The Repair action is worked out on a normal Skill die roll with the Ranged Combat Action Modifier added to the Skill as an Action Modifier. Some Repair actions may require more work or be harder to perform; this is decided at the Storyteller's discretion.

- Repair requires a Standard Skill roll based on the Skill level, plus the Combat Action Modifiers from the Skill.
- More difficult operations, such as stripping a weapon, may incur an Action Modifier.

Aim

In Ranged combat, Aim is the most important ability; otherwise a character might not be able to make effective hits. Aiming a Ranged weapon is not just a case of lining up with the target. There are other considerations, such as wind and gravity, which can affect the trajectory of a missile. Some weapons, even those that have been mass manufactured, have idiosyncrasies that may throw a round off target over a long distance. Recoil can also have a major effect on ranged weapons; this applies only to guns, rather than bows or thrown weapons. Training can help a character overcome Recoil, but as each model of weapon has differing amounts of recoil, a character will need to specialise.

If the character makes a successful attack and hits the opponent, they will inflict the damage pertinent to that weapon. The player should add the Weapons and Damage Combat Action Modifier, taking any armour into consideration.

- Adds to the character's ability to hit an opponent.

Roll

In Ranged combat, the Roll can be very useful, since it reduces a character's profile. This means they provide a smaller target, while moving simultaneously. As with the Dodge Style, a character cannot physically dodge missiles but they can use their combat knowledge to assess the field of combat. They can Roll away from the combat and behind cover, and Roll into combat while keeping a low profile. Offensive and Defensive Rolls both work on the same principle and use the same die. In an Offensive Roll, the character Rolls into combat, which takes 1 attack/action. However, the next attack/action can only be an offensive one. With the defensive Roll, the character attempts to avoid combat, in which case their attack/action can only be defensive, such as Dodge or Leap.

- Offensive Rolls can only be followed by Offensive attacks/actions.
- Defensive Rolls can only be followed by Defensive attacks/actions.

"Before you ask yourself who I am, ask yourself – who you are?"

- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar

Leap

As with Leap in other forms of combat, this Style can be used very effectively during Ranged combat, such as gaining an advantage in position on the field. The Combat Leap is very versatile, and when used with other Combat Actions can make a character a very potent combatant.

A character having a Spare attack/action can fire a ranged weapon while Leaping. The player should declare this intention at the beginning of that character's Action Slice. No penalties are incurred for this action other than the standard movement Combat Action Modifiers.

- A combat Leap can be used to gain a good advantage in combat.
- A Spare attack/action can be used to fire while Leaping.
- No penalties are given for a character firing while Leaping, other than the standard movement Action Modifiers.

Duel Weapon Fighting

Some weapons require the use of both hands, in order for the character to take aim effectively or be able to steady a heavy or two-handed Ranged weapon, such as a longbow, crossbow or a two-handed gun. Most other Ranged weapons can be used in a duel capacity. The Storyteller should make any decisions over whether a weapon fits this category or not.

Any characters using Duel Weapons must have Skills in both of them, and specialisations are preferable to prevent any disadvantage. If the character uses two of the same type of weapon, the relevant Skill will apply to both of them. The off hand Weapon Skill will use the Aim and Damage from the main Weapon. All other Combat Action Modifiers are taken from the off-hand Weapon.

Many small weapons, such as pistols and throwing knives, can be used as duel weapons. However there is a drawback to consider. Any ranged weapon requires the character to line up with the target, and they will be at a distinct disadvantage with their off hand weapon. A character firing at multiple targets will be at a greater disadvantage, as they will only be able to target accurately on one opponent.

When a character fires at a single combatant, they are only able to use half of their Aim and Damage Combat Action Modifier for their off hand weapon. When firing at two combatants, the off hand weapon will gain no Aim or Damage Combat Action Modifier, and the main weapon will only gain half of that weapon's Aim Combat Action Modifier. If the character is not specialised in any of the weapons, they will incur -5 Action Modifier to all Combat Actions. If they are unskilled, they will incur -10 Action Modifier.

Additional Rule: Many of the larger pistols require two hands to shoot. So any weapon which has an Armour Penetration (AP) value above 5 will gain the character -1 to Aim for every point above that value. This only applies when using two pistols and in most cases while using a pistol as a single weapon the character will use both hands to stabilize.

- A character must be Skilled in both weapons to get the best bonuses.
- When firing both weapons at the same target, the character gains full Combat Action Modifiers for the main weapon, but only half the Aim and Damage Combat Action Modifiers for the off hand weapon.
- When attempting to fire at two opponents, the character gains no Combat Action Modifiers for the off hand weapon and only half the Aim Combat Action Modifier for the main weapon.
- A skilled combatant incurs -5 Action Modifier to all Combat Actions. If unskilled, they will incur -10 Action Modifier.

"Keeping secrets in a room full of telepaths is not a good idea."

- Cassiel, Agrimony's notes, after a failed meeting with the Sulh.

"I said the situation was contained, not resolved, and if you keep going on at me it will never be resolved."

- Skipper Hansmet, Smalt, Phylarch of Picaroon Phyle.

COMBAT MECHANICS

This section deals with how the die rolls work and how other elements of combat can affect a character.

Rolls

As when determining the results of normal Skills, the die rolls of combat are made on a 20 sided die (D20), but the mechanics of combat are slightly different and often require the character to contest another's roll. A D20 is rolled to calculate the **Success Level** of the Skill, plus the relevant Combat Action Modifiers for the attack/action.

System: All combat attack/action rolls are made on a D20 to calculate the **Success Level**. Add Combat Action Modifiers and any additional Action Modifiers. This also applies when rolls are required for NPCs. The Storyteller should make all rolls for NPCs.

Normal attacks/actions

These are attacks/actions performed on the field of combat, and aren't part of the conflict. For example, should a character jump to obtain a better vantage point behind an unsuspecting enemy, the opponent is not actively in melee with the character. Any attack/action where the opponent is not actively working against the player is considered a *Normal Roll*.

System: All normal rolls are done in the same manner as Skill rolls. The character's Skill is modified by their Combat Action Modifiers and situational Action Modifiers. If the roll is less than the skill, plus all relevant modifiers, then it is considered a success. The Storyteller should make sure Actions Modifiers are used in these situations, as they are vital to the strategy of combat.

(Combat Action Modifiers + Action Modifiers + Skill level. If the player rolls under that on a D20 then their action is successful.)

Contested attacks/actions

Contested rolls in a combat situation work similarly to Skill rolls, with the character's **Success Level** being of prime importance. In all melee situations, where the opponent tries actively to work against a character, the player needs to compete against the **Success Level** of the opposition. For example, if a character attacks an opponent and the opponent tries to parry the blow with a sword or other implement, both players must roll a die and compare their **Success Levels**.

System: It does not matter which character's attack/action is resolved first; the result is dependent upon who gets the highest **Success level**. Both players should roll a D20 with a score beneath their Skill level, with relevant Combat Action Modifiers and situational Action Modifiers applied. In Ranged combat situations, Action Modifiers such as the position, visibility and stance of both characters is important. Once both players have calculated the results of their rolls and **Success Level**, they should declare them. Whoever gets the higher number is the victor in that part of the melee. If the scores of both combatants are equal, the defending character will always have the advantage and be the one who comes out on top.

If a player rolls for an Offensive action, and the **Success Level** is at least 5 points higher than the defender, and the weapon has a sharp edge, or is a ranged weapon which can penetrate the skin, the weapon will inflict Major Wound Damage. If it is less than 5 points higher, or is a blunt weapon such as a club or Ball Mace, it will only do Minor Wound Damage. For more information on Success levels see **page 243**.

(Combat Action Modifiers + Action Modifiers + Skill level. If the player rolls under that on a D20, the difference between the roll and the Modified Skill is the **Success Level**. The character with the highest **Success Level** is the victor. Sharp and

*"Inception? What's it like?,
Well, to tell you the truth
there's a lot of pain, and the
ritual sacrifice is really a
downer...but hey...don't run!
I'm just kidding!"*

- Myth, Uligena

penetrating weapons inflict Major Wound damage, if the offensive attack's **Success Level** is 5 points or more over the defensive **Success Level**.)

Combat Moves, Called Shots and Actions

Occasionally during play, a player might find that none of the Combat Actions quite fit the action they want their character to make. In this case, make a raw roll with no Combat Action Modifiers, and only use situational Action Modifiers. Any moves players might devise that aren't covered by the main groups of actions can be learned as a special move and formed into a new Combat Style. Within the limits of the Combat Style, and depending on what the Storyteller will allow, you can apply Combat Action Modifiers to Combat Moves, which will increase as the Style develops.

Should a player give an extremely good description of the attack/action, the Storyteller can award the character a bonus to their **Success Level**. This bonus can be from +2 to +8; the better the description, the higher the bonus. These bonuses only apply to players and not NPCs. All bonuses should be given sparingly.

A Called Shot comes into play when a character aims for a specific area of their opponent's body, whether in Close Combat or Ranged Combat. A Called Shot gives the character a fixed Action Modifier of -6 to any Combat Actions where the Aim Combat Action Modifier is used to target a location. (Called Shot gives -6 Action Modifier to the character's Aim Combat Action Modifier).

A note for those of you who like a more free form combat: the descriptions for the Combat Actions are only provided as guidelines. They can be altered to make combat more like a Hong Kong action movie!

Free Movement

Some combat actions do not require the use of an attack/action and these are referred to as Free Movement. They include simple actions, such as walking around the field to re-position during an attack. Free Movements can be performed simultaneously with any other action. A Free Movement is an action that is not specifically a reaction to another combat action, or cannot be classified as a combat move itself. It does not require any concentration on behalf of the character, or interfere with their combat actions. This includes ducking under an obstacle, or changing combat stance. Walking or moving any large distance takes up one attack/action, if the distance is greater than 1 metre. A character can walk up to 1 meter per Action Slice as Free Movement. The distance they can run is calculated on **page 297**, and should be noted on the character sheet.

Reload, Draw, Snap Shot and Change Weapon

The reload time of single shot weapons is accounted for in weapon speed, so this rule does not apply to them. A trained character can reload a weapon with a new clip or magazine in 2 attacks/actions. If the character is fast enough, it may be done in one Action Slice. Some modern arms come with clips or special tools for quick reloads, which makes things a lot faster in the field of combat. Other weapons will take longer to reload, in which case they will have a Reload Time [RT] listed beside them, as well as a note of how many attacks/actions are required to fully reload.

To draw a holstered and properly slung weapon takes 1 attack/action. If the weapon is not stored or slung properly, it can take longer. The Storyteller should decide upon these timings, as some characters may store their weapons in a backpack.

To change a weapon in combat is just as quick as drawing one, since usually the character will simply drop the old weapon on the floor and draw the new one. However, should the character wish to put the weapon away and ready the next one, it takes 2 attacks/actions to reholster and 1 attack/action to draw the new weapon (supposing it is in a holster and is slung properly).

"Picking a lock is like, well, picking a lock. What? I was never one for meaningful metaphors, just pick the damn lock!"
- Blackrose, Sulh

"The argument is one sided; I am right and you are wrong. You will always be wrong, for you lack the experience to know I am correct."
- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar

(2 attacks/actions to change a clip or reload most multi-shot weapons, 1 attack/action to draw a weapon, and 2 to store the weapon again.)

Should a character wish to take their Combat Action before everyone else in the current Combat Phase, they can use what is called a Snap Shot. The Snap Shot can only be performed at the start of a Combat Phase. If two characters choose to do this, both need to roll for Initiative as normal, to see who acts first. This enables them to move up one attack/action to the first Action Slice of combat, even if they would not normally be able to act in that Slice. Also, a Snap Shot overrides the Initiative of other characters and allows the character making the shot to act first. To perform such an action, the character should take a -8 Action Modifier to the Aim Combat Action Modifier they are using, and relinquish their next attack/action. Spare attacks/actions can be used if the character has them. (-8 Action Modifier, to the character Aim Combat Action Modifier and use up one attack/action, to act first in any Combat Phase.)

"If I were you...I would apologise. They're looking in this direction and they don't look overly pleased to hear what you just said."

- Yull Manarr, Uneeah

Multiple Opponents

In both Ranged and Close Combat, a character can attempt to engage two or more opponents at the same time. The calculations for this are no different to any other attack. However, if a character runs out of attacks/actions in that Action Slice, they will not be able to act or defend unless they have performed an action which protects them for the whole Action Slice, such as a Dodge. Therefore, making attack after attack is not always the best option. Evolve strategies and think about a character's future moves, rather than just the next one.

Auto Weapons and Recoil

All Automatic Weapons will be marked with an (A), in the attack/action column, meaning they can be used in Fully Automatic mode. Some may have multiple settings, such as 3 Round Burst or Single Shot, but their use is calculated as in normal attacks. Only those weapons marked with an (A) and used in Full Auto mode can be used effectively while strafing.

System: When firing a Ranged weapon in Fully Automatic mode, the player may wish to strafe the attack across multiple Action Slices. In doing so, a character will not be able to use Spare attacks/actions, unless they are purely defensive and don't require the use of the firing hands. This is because the damage inflicted by Full Auto weapons has been calculated per 1 second (1 Action Slice) burst. If the character's Base Actions are above 5, the remainder will become Spare attacks/actions. A Fully Automatic weapon can only fire once per Action Slice and 5 times per Combat Phase. This does not mean they fire 5 rounds, because damage is calculated with the maximum number of rounds that weapon can fire in 1 second. The weapon cannot fire faster than its mechanism allows.

"Killing you would be a pain that I could live with, now and forever...and...forever!"

- Cest Nara, Uigenna

When firing across multiple Action Slices, the character will keep the same **Success Level** they scored with the initial attack. However, a negative Combat Action Modifier will apply to the score for each additional Phase the weapon is fired. If the Auto weapon is used in one hand, the character will incur -5 Combat Action Modifier to their Skill for each additional Action Slice. This makes it progressively more difficult to hit multiple opponents. If the character uses both hands, therefore counteracting any attack/action with their off hand, they will be able to maintain the strafe longer, as they will incur only a -2 Combat Action Modifier per additional Action Slice.

Automatic weapons run out of ammunition very quickly, so they are not always the best option, even if they seem the most powerful. Also, should the character stop firing, the strafe action is broken and the player needs to roll for another attack, and the Combat Action Modifiers for a strafing start over again. (If used 1 handed, -5 Combat Action Modifier per Action Slice beyond the first. If used 2 handed, -2 Combat Action Modifier per Action Slice beyond the first. If the volley of rounds ceases, the player must re-roll the attack and start over.)



Criticals and Fumbles

Criticals and Fumbles represent those occasions when things go extraordinarily well or unbelievably badly. They mean automatic success or failure in whatever attack/action a character is undertaking.

System: Should a player roll a D20, and score 1 (called a Natural 1), this is a critical success. The attack/action will be an astounding success, and cannot be stopped, unless the opponent also rolls a Natural, in which case the conflict has to be resolved through **Success Levels**. Any character scoring a Natural 1 during an attack will inflict 2x as much damage for that attack. This brings in the element of a lucky blow. (Rolling a Natural 1 will result in automatic success and 2x damage)

Should the roll be a Natural 20, the character has Fumbled. This not only means it is an automatic failure, but the character may have dropped their weapon in Close Combat or their Ranged weapon will have jammed or broken. The actual events surrounding a Fumble should be determined by the Storyteller, but it is best to use the basic guidelines of a dropped or jammed weapon. (Rolling a Natural 20 will result in automatic failure and may leave the character open to attack.)

"Of course, I can sell you some firearms, but as you know the price is high and you will have to pay up front."

- Blackrose, Sulh

Energy Use in Combat (Optional Rule)

During combat, characters will eventually succumb to fatigue. However, because this can sometimes slow down the dynamic of combat, it is acceptable to ignore this rule if you so wish, although it would remove a vital strategic element from combat.

System: As long as the character's temporary Energy level is higher than 5, they will fight in combat as normal. They might start to get tired as their levels get close to 5, but they can still push themselves to make the necessary moves.

Once the character's Energy level drops to 5 or less, they will not be able to fight at full efficiency. All Combat Action Modifiers will be at -7 until the character can regain the lost Energy. This can help with the strategy of combat, where some characters with boundless Energy can hold out with defensive actions until the other combatants are fatigued and cannot fight properly, then move in for the kill.

For every Combat Phase in which a character uses more than half of their attacks/actions in Close Combat, they will lose 2 points of Energy. This should be removed from their current level of Energy at the end of each Combat Phase. All other rules for Energy use apply as normal. See **page 257** for more info. If a character uses all of their attacks/actions, they lose 4 points of Energy. (If Energy drops to 5 or less, all combat actions are at -7. A character loses 2 points of Energy for every Combat Phase in which they have used more than half of their attacks/actions. They lose 4 points of Energy when all attacks/actions have been used.)

In Ranged combat, the character only loses Energy if they expend all of their attacks/actions during one Combat Phase. However, they will use considerably less than in Close Combat. They lose 2 points from their current Energy level for every Combat Phase they expend all of their available attacks/actions. (In Ranged combat the character only loses 2 points of Energy for every Combat Phase during which they expend all of their attacks/actions)

"Let this fire bear witness to this ceremony. May its flames keep warm the souls of those who came before us."

- Oded Hasamas, Obliviata

Armour

Armour shields its wearer from stray blows and affords protection in battle. In the world of Wraeththu, any serviceable armour is extremely valuable.

Good armour provides a high resistance to physical attacks, and is comfortable to wear in terms of its weight and the bulk of its component materials. Heavy bulky armour makes it more difficult for a character to move with agility, and if it's too restrictive, it becomes virtually useless, since the character would move too slowly to

"It wasn't so much stolen as borrowed indefinitely, but hey for a price I can help you track down who did it. It'll cost more if you want it back."

- Blackrose, Sulih

"I saw the desert eat an entire Varr scouting party once. That is a trick I must learn myself."

- An Impressed Unneah

avoid repeated attacks. It can be useful for a character to wear different layers of light armour to provide more protection.

Armour Penetration [AP] & Armour Value [AV]

The most important aspect of armour is that it should protect the wearer. Some forms of armour are designed simply to block attacks, but do not really allow the wearer the chance to attack. Others are light and flexible. Manoeuvrability is dependent on which materials are used to make the armour. Advanced, light materials once developed by humans are expensive and scarce, but they do offer a high level of protection and flexibility. Primitive materials, such as leather and metal, offer adequate protection and are more easily available, but are usually less flexible and lightweight.

Some forms of armour are able to deflect all low velocity assaults, and the most advanced can deflect just about any type of attack. Each weapon has an Armour Penetration [AP] value, which dictates what level of armour a blow can penetrate. Also, each set of armour has an Armour Value [AV], which is what the weapon's AP needs to beat in order to penetrate the armour. Shock Damage is when a weapon hits the armour but does not penetrate it. The resulting blow will send a shock wave through the character, inflicting Minor Wound damage.

System: If the weapon's AP is lower than the armour's AV, the weapon will bounce off or be deflected. However, the blow might have enough kinetic impact to cause Shock Damage, which inflicts Minor Wounds.

- If the AP is less than or equal to the AV, but more than half of the AV, the character will take half the damage total in Minor Wounds, and the Armour will take the same amount of damage.
- If the Shock Damage inflicts more than 10 points of Minor Wounds, it will cause 1 Major Wound, and an additional 1 for every multiple of 10.
- If the AP is less than half of the AV, no weapon will penetrate the armour and it will take no damage.
- If the AP is higher than the AV, the weapon will do full damage to the character and to the armour.

Each kind of Armour has a Bulk Penalty [BP] value, which indicates the negative Action and Combat Modifier the armour gives to the character's actions. The BP on most armour is usually worth the trade off. However, when layering armour, the Bulk Penalty may start to get out of hand, since it's accumulative. If a character should wear too many layers, they will reach a point when they are ineffective in combat. However, in certain situations, heavy armour layering can afford greater and necessary protection.

Once the damage is calculated for the first layer, any damage that penetrates through the AV to the second or later layers, even Shock Damage, is not reduced. However, the AP is modified and is reduced by the AV of the previous layers. For example, if the first layer has an AV of 3, and the weapon has an AP of 6, the AP that affects the next layer is only 3. Once this is calculated, the damage that passes through can be calculated for the next layer as normal. Effectively, multiple layers of the right kinds of armour will be more effective than just a single layer. (Bulk Penalty is accumulative. Damage and AP pass through to the second and later layers; however they are reduced by the first layer.)

Armour Damage

Armour will not last forever; repeated blows from weapons will eventually degrade it to a point where it offers no protection. This damage can be repaired if a character has the Skills or knows someone who is an Armourer. However, because of the scarcity of advanced armour manufactured by humans, once it has degraded too far it is usually abandoned.

System: As described in the previous section, weapons can damage armour, which is subtracted from the total hit points for the armour. Once the armour has lost half of its hitpoints, the AV is reduced by half. When the hit points reach 0, the armour is too damaged to offer any protection and becomes redundant. (At 50% of the armour's hit points, the AV is reduced by half. At 0 hit points the armour is useless and offers no protection.)

Bulk Penalty [BP]

Armour restricts movement. The heaviest kind offers the highest protection, but the least manoeuvrability. Light armour might be unrestrictive, but offers less protection.

System: Armour's BP is a negative Action or Combat Action Modifier applied to all physical actions, even individual Combat Actions. This value will not degrade with the armour.

Damage

Every character will incur some kind of physical damage at some stage in a game. In these rules, we don't seek to emulate reality without exception, but have attempted to create a realistic and workable system. In some cases, the Storyteller might want to describe exactly how the damage inflicted affects the character, such as what it's like to have a broken arm or punctured lungs.

Different Types of Wounds

Physical damage to a living body is recorded as Major Wounds and Minor Wounds. Damage to all other objects within the game is simply referred to as damage. For information on healing and the effects of massive trauma, see the section on *Healing and Health* on page 291.

Minor Wounds

Minor Wounds are non-critical superficial injuries. If a character's Minor Wounds descends to 0, they will become unconscious, until they are healed or heal naturally, but they will not die. Any weapon or object that does damage to a body, but has no sharp edges to break the skin, will always do Minor Wound Damage, unless the description of the item says otherwise. If a body takes too much blunt trauma damage in one impact, the force of the impact will cause a small amount of Major Wound damage.

System: Should the Minor Wound damage total from a single blow be greater than 10, 1 point of Major Wound damage should be taken. This applies to every multiple of 10 points of Minor Wound damage.

Minor wounds are not as debilitating as Major Wounds, so the character will mainly suffer bearable pain from Minor Wounds. Should the character's Minor Wounds reach 0, they will lose consciousness, and will not come round until they have healed at least



"As the poison flows in my veins, it gives me the power to change the future. The price I pay will change my future forever."

- Solasus har Kakkahaar, considering the cost of his actions

1 point of their Minor Wounds. This point can be gained from the body's own natural ability to heal, from drugs or from other medical attention. (If a character's Minor Wounds reaches 0, they will lose consciousness. For every multiple of 10 Minor Wounds, the character will take 1 point of Major Wound Damage)

Major Wounds

Major Wounds are serious damage to the body's internal workings, and include such injuries as broken bones and damaged organs. The exact nature of the damage and which organs are affected depends on the location of the attack. Unless healed, Major Wound damage will eventually get worse and cause further damage to the body. The Storyteller should decide on the ultimate effects of Major Wounds in a character, to keep with the flow of the story. The rules are guidelines for the descriptions of the Storyteller.

Hara are more resilient than humans, so they can take more Major Wound damage. This is represented as 5 additional points of Major Wound damage for harish characters.

System: All weapons that have sharp edges, or ranged weapons that can puncture the skin, have the capability to inflict Major Wound damage. If the attacking character's **Success Level** for the offensive Combat Action is at least 5 points higher than the opponent's Defensive **Success Level**, the weapon will cause Major Wound damage. If not, it will only inflict Minor Wound damage.

The Major Wounds section of the character sheet is split into three groups of 5 Jewels. When a character takes Major Wound damage, the player fills in the Jewels from right to left, one Jewel for each point of Major Wound Damage taken.

- The group on the far right is exclusive to harish characters; if any of these Jewels are filled in the character will not suffer any debilitating effects, because hara have 5 extra points of Major Wounds.
- The middle group of Jewels is for the use of players with human characters. Once one of these jewels is shaded in, the character will take a -5 Action Modifier to all Skills and actions to reflect the effects that trauma has on the body.
- The group of Jewels on the left are the last group to be shaded in by the player. This represents severe trauma. Any character having one of these Jewels filled in will take a -10 Action Modifier to all Skills and actions.

"Harbingers of doom, all of them. Untrustworthy and certainly not the kind of people I would want to associate with, ever."

- Blackrose, Sulh

Should a character end up with all the jewels filled in, they will die if they do not receive immediate medical attention. It might be possible to revive that character shortly after death. The effects of revival, and the loss of Major Wound points, will be explained in the **Healing and Heath** section. (The right group of 5 jewels are exclusive to hara; the middle group cause -5 Action Modifier to all actions, and the left group cause -10 Action Modifier. Should a character lose all of their Major Wound points, they die)

Optional Rule: The Storyteller may add more realism to combat and Major Wounds. If so, this optional rule can be included in the game. A character should roll against their Stamina for every action they make. The Stamina roll is subject to the Action Modifiers for Major Wounds. If the roll fails, the character will collapse and become unconscious, while their condition slowly deteriorates.

Cranial Trauma and Called Shots

If a character aims at a specific location on their opponent's body, it is a Called Shot. Any character trying to perform this action will receive a -6 Combat Action Modifier to their attack. If the character manages to hit the desired area, any damage caused will afflict that part of the body. This can be important should the opponent suffer Major Wound damage. If an opponent is struck on the head or neck, it's more likely that they'll lose consciousness.

System: Damage to the head and neck are potentially much more severe and instantly life-threatening than that taken in other areas. Should a character sustains more than 5 points of damage, taking into account their Stamina Stat Modifier of Minor Wound damage, they will fall unconscious. The period during which they remain unconscious is determined by 1 D20 +5 minutes, minus their Stamina Stat Modifier.

Some weapons or objects are designed to knock a character unconscious, while only causing minimal damage. These weapons are listed with Knockout Blow [KB] in their damage section. If a character takes damage to the head from such a weapon, they will fall unconscious regardless of the amount of damage taken. This is treated as though the character has been knocked out by a normal weapon (Should a character take more than 5 + STA Mod in damage to the head or neck, they will fall unconscious for (1D20 +5) – STA Mod. in minutes. Any weapon marked with [KB] in their damage section will render the character unconscious regardless of damage done).

Distributing Damage (Optional)

Other than when characters make Called Shots, the Storyteller might need to know which part of a character's body has been hit. To determine this, they should roll 1 D100 and refer to the following table. The distribution of damage is an optional rule, which the Storyteller might not wish to use all the time. It is a guideline provided simply for reference. The Storyteller can adjust it as they see fit.

"When life gets me down I just turn to the comforting arms of my fellow hara, who are always good for a few handouts."
- Myth, Uigenna

Location	Front / Back Quadrants		L/R Side Quadrants	
	Percentage	Roll	Percentage	Roll
Head	5%	1 to 5	9%	1 to 9
Neck	3%	6 to 8	6%	10 to 15
Right Upper Arm	8%	9 to 16	10%	16 to 25
Left Upper Arm	8%	17 to 24		
Chest	12%	25 to 36	18%	26 to 43
Right Lower Arm and Hand	7%	37 to 43	10%	44 to 53
Left Lower Arm and Hand	7%	44 to 50		
Abdomen	10%	51 to 60	15%	54 to 68
Right Upper Leg and Knee	11%	61 to 71	17%	69 to 85
Left Upper Leg and Knee	11%	72 to 82		
Right Leg and Foot	9%	83 to 91	15%	86 to 100
Left Leg and Foot	9%	92 to 100		

COMBAT FLOW

It is important to keep the flow and pace of combat consistent. If they wish to, Storytellers and players may devise alternative ways to run combat to what is suggested here. However, it's important to remember that the world of Wraeththu can be a harsh, unpredictable and dangerous place, so combat within it should be equally potentially lethal. Forethought is essential, since planning moves and actions is vital for success. Rather than charging into combat like an enraged bull, characters should perhaps slink in carefully like a cat.

This section provides the Storyteller with a quick reference list, regarding the flow of combat and the order in which things should be done. Initially, players might find that role-playing combat takes a lot of time, but with practice and familiarity the rules will become second nature, and conflicts will be resolved quickly.

The 9 stages of combat are detailed below. **Stages 2-8** should be repeated for each character in each Action Slice, until the end of the Combat Phase, and then for every Combat Phase, until the conflict is resolved.

It's recommend that the Storyteller read through the combat rules a few times, until they have a good feel for them. This helps make the flow of combat faster. Also, players should read up on what their characters are capable of within each Combat Action.

Combat will end once all foes are vanquished, or stalemate is reached. In many cases, characters will not fight to the death. Some will bow out of combat when they are too injured, or others will not be able to continue due to their wounds or unconsciousness.

1. Roll Initiative

Whenever combat starts, all characters should roll for Initiative. (If it is a new conflict, characters will be awarded only minimal bonuses and cannot use any Spare attacks/actions to receive an Initiative bonus.)

Roll 1D20. Add to the score any bonuses from Saved attacks/actions, if applicable (+3 per saved attack/action), or special abilities. Those who roll the highest score will take their turn first. Then, the next highest scorer will take their turn, until all those involved have acted. These Initiative values are retained until the end of the Combat Phase. Once everyone has made Initiative rolls and noted them, proceed to **Stage 2**.

The character with the highest Initiative score now proceeds through **Stages 2-8**. When they have finished, the character with the next highest Initiative score can act. Once everyone has taken their turn, the next Action Slice commences, and each player proceeds again through **Stages 2-8**. This process is repeated until the end of the Combat Phase.

2. Determining Order of Play

Each Combat Phase is broken into 5 Action Slices, each of which takes 1 second in the game world. Once all characters in the conflict have taken their turns (the Storyteller controls all NPCs), the next Action Slice begins. When all 5 Action Slices are completed, a new Combat Phase starts from **Stage 1**.

Use the attack/action table to work out in which Action Slice a character can use their weapon of choice ('X' means the character can act in that Action Slice). If a character has more than 5 attacks/actions, the rest are considered Spare attacks/actions, which can be used at any time in the current Combat Phase, or saved to gain an initiative bonus for the next Combat Phase.

Spare attack/actions can be used at any time for defensive actions.

Once it is noted who can act first, and they are able to act in the current Action Slice, proceed to **Stage 3**. If they cannot act, the Action Slice passes to the next highest Initiative scorer who's able to act, and they will go to **Stage 3**.

attacks / actions	Action Slices				
	1	2	3	4	5
0	O	O	O	O	O
1	O	O	X	O	O
2	O	X	O	X	O
3	X	O	X	O	X
4	X	X	O	X	X
5	X	X	X	X	X
5+	See Below				

"Quiet...do you hear that, it's the drum-beat sound of the moment before I kick your ass!"

- Cest Nara, Uigenna

"Every time I've thought things can't get any worse, I find the universe is full of surprises."

- High Codexia Malakess, Sulh

3. Declare attacks/actions

The player declares what attack/action they are taking in the current Action Slice. Once intention has been declared, any characters with an attack/action or Spare attack/action in this Action Slice may defend or oppose the intended action. If this is the case, they can calculate the opposing action at the same time, and skip **Stages 2-8** when it comes to their initiative.

The player should add some description to their character's action, which helps the Storyteller and the other players to visualise what the character is doing. If the player describes events extraordinarily well, the Storyteller may award the character a bonus to their **Success Level**. This may be from +2 to +8. These bonuses are only applied to players and cannot be used for NPCs; all bonuses should be given sparingly.

If any character wants to use a Spare attack/action to attack or defend, it should be declared now.

The player should choose which Combat action their character will perform, as this dictates any applicable Combat Action Modifiers. Proceed to **Stage 4**.

(Some actions may negate the need for **Stages 5-7** to be calculated, such as Free Moves and other non-offensive or defensive actions. If this is the case, proceed to **Stage 8**.)

4. Storyteller's Description

The Storyteller may describe the scene as they see fit. Also, they may describe any opposition, environmental conditions, or things that might give Combat Action Modifiers to the character's actions. If any characters are taking action and need to roll dice, proceed to **Stage 5**.

If no rolls are required, proceed to **Stage 8**.

5. Combatant and Foe Make Attack/Action Rolls

Once all the Combat Action Modifiers and actions have been described, the players and Storyteller (if NPCs are involved) should make their rolls on a D20, and apply the Combat Action Modifiers and other Action Modifiers. This will determine whose action succeeds based on the **Success Level**. Two opposing characters should make their rolls at the same time.

Once players are totally familiar with the process of calculating and role-playing combat, they can speed up the process by combining this **Stage 5** with **Stage 3**, i.e. declare their intentions, apply any Combat Action Modifiers, then proceed directly to rolling dice. The Storyteller takes into consideration the Action Modifiers and describes the remainder of any successful attacks/actions.

Action Modifiers can be found on the UMT (Universal Modifiers Table) on **page 246**, which gives examples of different Action Modifiers. Players can devise details for any that are not listed.

Once the rolls have been made and the Success Levels calculated, proceed to **Stage 6**.

6. Resolution of Rolls

Once the characters (and if applicable the opposition) have made their rolls, and everything has been accounted for, the scores are compared and a victor is declared. If the action is a success, the player or Storyteller may add a little more description to it, so the other players know what the resolution of that action is.

*"It's the right thing to do.
WHY? Because it is."
- Gamboli-gin, Uigenna*

*"See that sky, the waste of
the world caught in the
clouds – they did that, not
us...they're the cancer and I
say we purge and burn it all."
- Blackrose, Sulh*

The character with the highest **Success Level**, taking into account Combat Action Modifiers and Action Modifiers, or who rolls under their Skill level, is successful. They should proceed to **Stage 7** for offensive actions, and **Stage 8** for other actions or failed actions.

Criticals and Fumbles need to be taken into account at this stage.

7. Damage Reconciliation

If the attack/action that succeeded was not offensive, go to **Stage 8**. The victorious character should roll for damage for the weapon they used. The die to be used should be recorded on the character sheet or referenced from **Appendix 5**. The totals from Damage dice for that weapon should be added to any Damage Combat Action Modifier the character has, or any bonus from the weapon itself. If the roll was a critical success, total damage is doubled.

Once total damage for the attack has been calculated, the Storyteller, and/or the player whose character was the loser, should apply the damage to any armour they are wearing to determine what damage penetrated it. If the character is not wearing any armour, all damage is taken as Wounds.

If the attacker's offensive **Success Level** is 5 points or more higher than the defensive character's **Success Level**, any sharp weapons or weapons that penetrate the skin (e.g. bullets or arrows) will do Major Wound Damage. Also, for every multiple of 10 points of Minor Wound damage the victim takes 1 point of Major Wound damage.

As actions in a given Action Slice are simultaneous, a character who is killed or crippled from a blow will still get to attempt their action, before any Action Modifiers or death is accounted for. So, if both opponents are on the attack, they both should resolve their attack rolls and damage.

Once damage has been calculated and noted on the character sheets, go to **Stage 8**.

8. Storyteller's Description

The Storyteller might want to add some extra description to the actions before the Action Slice passes to the character with the next highest Initiative. If the character has declared a Spare attack/action for attack, go back to **Stage 4** and resolve it. Now go to **Stage 9**.

9. Repeat

Once the Action Slice **Stages 2-8** have been completed for one character, and their opponent if applicable, return to **Stage 2**, for the character with the next highest Initiative.

When the fifth Action Slice is completed, and the actions of the character with the lowest Initiative have been resolved, any Spare attacks/actions not used by any character give a bonus of +3 to the players' next Initiative roll.

Once the Combat Phase is completed, return to **Stage 1** and begin the next round of combat. Repeat this process until the conflict ends. Also, if players are accounting for the depletion of Energy in combat, they should note down for each character who has acted how much Energy they have used.

Full Auto strafes from ranged weapons can be carried over to the next Combat Phase but Initiative still needs to be rolled. Return to **Stage 1**. Repeat Combat Phases until the conflict is resolved.

"What do you mean, you don't understand the Sulh?"

- Abon Rhul, Kakkahaar

"Open your mind, your pockets and please donate to the church of 'Robbing you blind'."

- Blackrose, Sulh

HEALING AND HEALTH

It is essential for good role-playing that players know when and by how much their characters have been injured. This section helps calculate any penalties the characters incur and how long wounds take to heal. Hara heal faster than humans.

Penalties and Outcomes

As explained on [page 285](#), when a character's Minor Wounds reaches 0, they fall unconscious. Therefore, a character with Minor Wounds should seek medical attention on a regular basis, as Minor Wounds take time to heal. Although there are no real penalties for Minor Wounds, the consequences of not taking care of the character will be a rapid descent into a prone state, in which they won't be able to defend themselves. Wraeththu are more powerful and resilient than the humans they sprang from, but that does not make them unstoppable; they bleed, therefore they can die.

Major Wounds affect hara similarly to how they affect humans, but the harish form has a better chance of recovery. A human can only take 10 Major Wounds before dying. A Wraeththu can take 15. Also, the first 5 taken by a har bestows no penalty to his actions. However, such wounds should still be regarded as severe, and they will cause deterioration if they are not attended to.

Once a human starts to take Major Wounds, or a har takes 6 or more, they begin to suffer penalties. This is a standard -5 Action Modifier, applied to all actions, regardless of whether they are physical or mental. As the body will be in the process of 'shutting down' to repair the injury, even the strongest characters will suffer mental setbacks.

Beyond this, if a human takes 6 or more Major Wounds, or a har takes 11 or more, they will suffer a -10 Action Modifier to all actions. Their injuries are now debilitating. Should the final Major Wound point be lost, the character will have only a few minutes left to live. At this point, it's vital for the character to be treated by a healer of some kind. The character's condition should be stabilised very quickly or they will lapse into a coma and die. For more information on *Coma and Death* see [page 294](#).

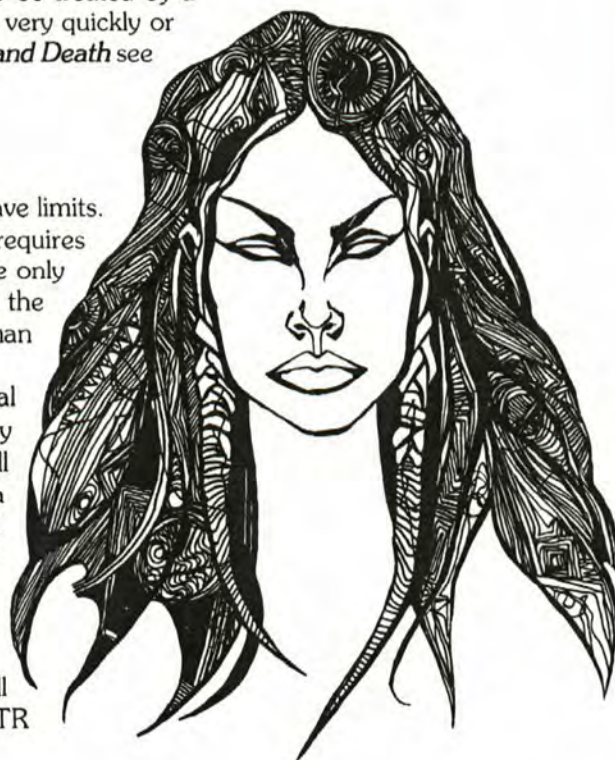
"Waste not, want not!"

- Myth, Uigenna

Natural Healing

Every living organism has a built-in self-repair system, but it does have limits. Should the body be damaged too much, it becomes inefficient and requires outside aid to repair it. The organic form of humans and hara alike only has the capacity to heal Minor Wounds under its own steam. As the harish form is more efficient, it heals Minor Wounds faster than a human form can.

System: Whenever a character is unable to receive medical attention, or has no method of artificially healing themselves, they have no choice but to rely on their body's ability to self repair. All humans heal a base of 2 Minor Wounds per day, plus their Stamina and Strength Stat Modifier. Hara heal a base of 3, plus Stamina and Strength Stat Modifier. Though this may seem fast, the wounds are only healed to a stage where they are not considered damaging. They might still be discoloured or have obvious scabbing and redness, which will heal over time. Major Wounds cannot be healed this way, and if the character doesn't get medical attention, their condition will continue to deteriorate. (Base of 2 [4 for hara] + STA Mod. + STR Mod. Minor Wounds per day.)



Healing with Skills

For a character to be able to heal quickly, or to heal any form of Major Wound, they will need the help of a skilled medic or Churgeon. These Skills are hard to come by in the Wraeththu world, so hara who possess them are prized by their Tribe. Human medical students are desirable candidates for Inception.

Groups of hara sent out by their tribe on various types of business will be accompanied by a Churgeon, who is skilled with First aid or Folk Medicine. The Churgeon will also be responsible for the destruction of any harish corpses, to ensure that knowledge of harish physiology is kept secret from humans.

Skills that deal with Minor Wounds are **First Aid**, **Folk Medicine**, and **Doctor**. These give a character the ability to aid the healing of Minor Wounds, which can speed up the healing process considerably.

System: For healing to be performed effectively, a successful roll is required for **First Aid**, **Folk Medicine**, or **Doctor**. It takes about 20 minutes undisturbed to dress and treat Minor Wounds. If the healer is disturbed, it takes longer. There are no penalties for the healer if he is disturbed. The only penalties that are applied to this roll are those from the environment. See the UMT (Universal Modifiers Table) for a sample of such Action Modifiers.

On a successful roll, the healing rates are as follows for humans and hara. Human characters heal a base of 4 points of Minor Wounds per day, and hara heal 8 points per day. To these base points, add the number of points equal to the total of the Stamina and Strength Stat Modifiers added together. If the roll is unsuccessful, then the character being healed will heal at the natural rate. If it is a Fumble, they gain 3 additional Minor Wounds. (On a successful roll, gain 4 [8 for Wraeththu] + STA Mod. + WIL Mod. in Minor Wounds. On a Fumble, lose 3.)

To treat Major Wounds, a character requires a higher level Skill such as **Doctor** rather than the basic **First Aid** Skill. The procedure for healing is more difficult and takes longer. It might require surgery, and the required tools for operations.

All Major Wounds are potentially life threatening, and will need some form of medical attention to stop them getting worse. For more information on the worsening of Major Wounds, see **page 293**.

System: To heal Major Wounds, the healer needs to have the **Doctor** Skill, and make a successful roll on it. If the roll is successful, the patient regains one Major Wound point. See the table below to calculate how long it takes for the point to be regained. It might take several hours in game time for the first Major Wound to be healed, dependant on the situation and the severity of the wound. This is left up to the Storyteller to decide. The remaining Major Wounds only require 10 minutes of the healer's time, as this is just general care of the patient.

For each Major Wound that requires healing, the healer needs to make a successful roll to heal every point. If the rolls aren't made frequently enough, or are a failure, the character will neither deteriorate nor recover until the next roll is made. If the roll is a Fumble, the patient begins to deteriorate. See the section on deterioration later, and follow the standard rules. Once the patient is completely healed, they do not require any further medical attention.

The table below provides a quick reference for how long each Major Wound takes to heal. It also lists the penalties for all actions taken by the wounded character. Some characters might be out of action for many days, if they have taken a large amount of Major Wounds.

	Major Wounds 6-10	Major Wounds 1-5	Major Wounds Harish 5
Human Healing	1 Major Wound per 72 hours.	1 Major Wound per 48 hours.	N/A
Harish Healing	1 Major Wound per 48 hours.	1 Major Wound per 24 hours.	1 Major Wound per 24 hours.
Penalty	-10 to all actions	-5 to all actions	No Action Modifier.

"If you can take this pebble from my - HEY, give THAT back!"

- Myth, Uigenna

Healing with Magic

Many hara can channel Agmara energy to help heal the wounded. In some cases, this will need to be done in conjunction with more conventional methods. For example, if a bone has been broken, it needs to be set before healing energy can be applied to the wound. All tribes have access to such healing, although each one uses it in a manner compatible with their tribal beliefs. The Kakkahaar, for example, would include a certain aspect of ceremony and perform healing rituals, whereas the Varrs would simply have their Churgeons apply Agmara with no ceremony whatsoever, in more clinical conditions. Some hara, without access to the knowledge of more organised tribes, use Agmara instinctively, without even knowing what they're really doing. The Obliviata know they can heal others, but believe their god is responsible and that Agmara is his energy, which uses their bodies as a conduit. Other tribes use different rituals and methods to heal the wounded, but all of them need at least some practical medical knowledge to heal Major Wounds. For more information regarding *Agmara Healing* see page 261.

Deterioration and Stabilisation

Whenever a character takes a Major Wound, their condition will get worse, from bleeding to organ failure. Such wounds should be treated as very serious, since even one can cause the death of a character over time. Any character with a medicine skill such as *First Aid*, *Folk Medicine* or *Doctor* can stabilise a wounded character. The rules below explain the process of Deterioration and how a character can stabilise wounds.

"Okay, you hold this end?
And I'll stand somewhere
over there?"

- A Uigenna who finds a new gun prototype

System: If a character suffers any Major Wounds, they will begin to deteriorate, but this rule does not apply to the extra 5 points of Major Wounds given to harish characters. A Wraeththu character will not deteriorate if his Major Wound total is still within these bounds. See the table below to determine when an additional Major Wound is taken by an untreated character. It is essential that the character receives medical attention before his wounds worsen to such a degree that they use up all the character's Major Wound points and cause death.

The table also shows the rate at which additional Major Wounds occur.

For example a human who has already taken 7 Major Wounds takes the 8th wound after 5 minutes, and the 9th after 10 minutes, until they are stabilised, healed or they die. A harish character at the equivalent wound level (12 Major Wounds) would take the next point after 15 minutes, and one every 15 minutes after that. See the following section for details on *Coma and Death*.

	Major Wounds 6-10	Major Wounds 1-5	Major Wounds Harish 5
Human Degradation	Gain 1 Major Wound every 5 Minutes.	Gain 1 Major Wound every 10 Minutes.	N/A
Harish Degradation	Gain 1 Major Wound every 15 Minutes.	Gain 1 Major Wound every 30 Minutes.	N/A
Penalty	-10 to all actions	-5 to all actions	No Action Modifier.

When stabilising a patient, the healer needs to make a successful roll against his medical Skill once every 10 minutes in game time. He might wish to make his next roll before the 10 minutes is up, just in case the roll fails. Additional rolls can be made once per minute while the character is attempting to stabilise the patient. If a successful roll is not made within the 10 minutes, the character will continue to deteriorate and incur Major Wounds. Should any medical Skill roll be a Fumble, the patient will take an additional Major Wound and continue to deteriorate. This makes the process of making multiple rolls more risky to the patient. If a stabilisation roll is Fumbled more than 3 times on one patient, in one healing session, there is a chance of mental scarring or physical trauma. It is up to the Storyteller to make decisions in such cases. If they think it's appropriate, they can deduct 1 permanent composure point from the ailing character.

To keep the patient alive, stabilisation rolls need to be made every 10 minutes until a Churgeon has healed 1 Major Wound. Once this has been achieved, stabilisation may cease, and the healer can continue with the rest of the treatment. (A successful stabilisation roll is needed every 10 minutes, until one Major Wound is healed, to prevent deterioration. If the roll fails, deterioration continues. Should the stabilisation roll be a Fumble, the patient will take 1 additional Major Wound.)

Coma and Death

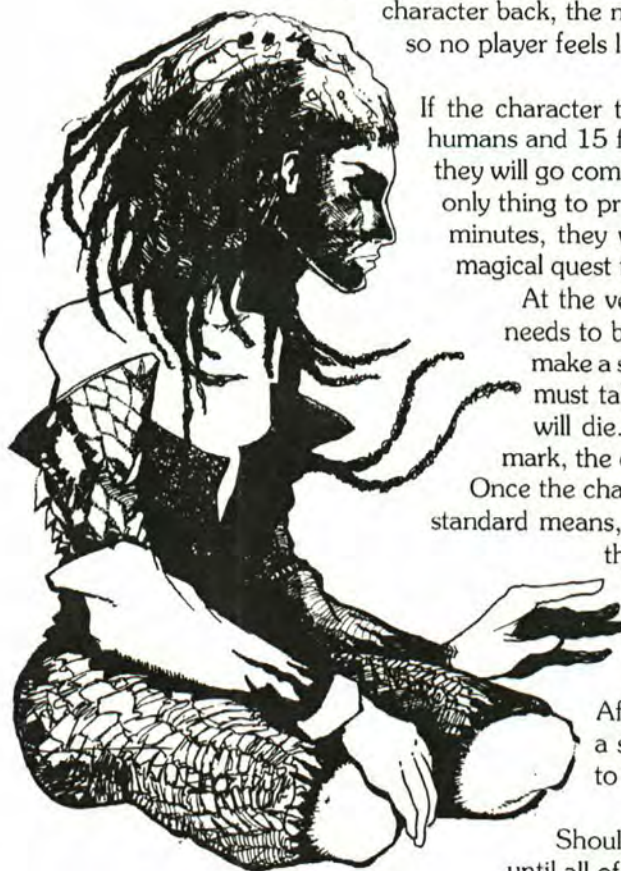
Even though becoming Wraeththu has lots of benefits and imparts a feeling of virtual immortality, hara can still die due to excessive physical damage. Whenever any kind of combat or danger presents itself, a character should always assess the situation and take into account the risk of fatal injury, as combat is generally fatal for one party. Should injuries reach a point that they become fatal, the following rules apply.

"Listen, I think I feel something. It could be lunch related."

- Zip Hamstring, Uigenna

System: When a character has all their Major Wound Jewels filled in, they are in dire need of medical attention. If a character takes more than 5 Major Wounds beyond their maximum (more than 15 for human and 20 for hara), they will suffer some form of catastrophic organ failure, due to blood loss or trauma. This is instantly fatal and the character's body will die. (If a human takes more than 15 Major Wounds and a hara takes more than 20, they will die instantly.)

Physical death does not necessarily mean the end of a character. Should the Storyteller permit it, the rest of the group could partake in a quest to bind the character's soul to a new body. However, it is not easy to do, and could take many years for the characters to accomplish. It is probably better for the affected player to develop a new character. With the permission of the Storyteller, they can develop one equivalent in level to the rest of the player group. Should the group still wish to bring the dead character back, the new character could be an integral part of this quest, so no player feels left out of the game.



If the character takes Major Wounds up to their maximum (10 for humans and 15 for hara), but less than enough to kill them instantly, they will go comatose within 3 minutes and their heart will stop. The only thing to prevent this is medical attention. After an additional 5 minutes, they will die beyond any form of recovery other than a magical quest to resurrect the spirit into a new body.

At the very least, an injured character at the point of death needs to be stabilised. A character with a medical Skill should make a stabilisation roll, with a -5 Action Modifier. Stabilisation must take place before 8 minutes are up, or the character will die. If stabilisation is accomplished after the 3 minute mark, the character will only lapse into a coma rather than die.

Once the character is stabilised, they need to be kept that way by standard means, while the Churgeon or medical professional heals the first Major Wound point. From then on, normal healing for Major Wounds takes place. If the stabilisation roll succeeds, the character survives. If the roll is a Fumble, the character dies instantly. (After 3 minutes, the character will fall into a coma. After an additional 5, they will die, unless stabilised with a successful stabilisation roll with a -5 Action Modifier to the medical skill. On a Fumble, the character dies.)

Should a character end up in a coma, they will not wake until all of their Major Wounds are fully healed. It might take a few weeks before the character is ready to return to action. The Storyteller can choose to advance time in the game so the players don't get bored waiting for a party member to heal.

Optional Rule: Although this rule will add more realism, it is advised not to use it unless all the players agree to it, since it can slow down play.

A character in a Coma will not awake automatically once all their Major Wounds are healed. Instead, the player needs to make a roll on 1D20 and score less than or equal to 1 + the character's Willpower Stat Modifier. If the roll is a failure (Fumbles and Criticals do not count in this situation), the player must roll again after another 24 hours have passed for the character. This is repeated until successful. (Roll less than 1 + WIL Mod.)

If the Willpower Stat Modifier is in minus figures, their roll can never be made, and it will then be up to the Storyteller to decide what needs to be done in order to wake the character. This could be some form of psychic quest for the group, in which they work with the spirit of the character to wake them.

Group Healing

A group can work together on healing, especially where Major Wounds are concerned. It is useful for two characters to work together, as one can stabilise the patient while the other heals the Major Wounds. However, more than two characters can work together. In a group, each character performing the same action, either to stabilise or heal, should roll simultaneously. All that's required is that one character makes a successful roll. It doesn't matter if the others fail. However, should a character Fumble the roll, it will negate the effects of the other rolls and the whole group will have failed on that roll. If the final outcome is a Fumble, the character will take one Major or 3 Minor Wounds, whichever is applicable.

In group work, only one successful roll is needed for the healing to be effective, and only one Fumble makes the whole team's actions a Fumble.

Poisons and Illness

Because of their superior physical form, Wraeththu are immune to the illnesses and diseases that plagued humanity. Even poisons that affect humans don't affect hara.

However, the Uigenna are in the process of developing new toxins that do have effects on the harish form. Although most of these aren't fatal, the effects are varied and often quite nasty. These poisons are varied and custom made, so they cannot be listed in these rules. The Storyteller and players with Uigenna characters can use their imaginations to invent some insidious poisons. No rules have been provided for the use of toxins, as this aspect should be included only in the storytelling part of the game and not used by a character on a regular basis. There are two reasons for limiting the use of poisons. First, it would unbalance the game, and secondly a poisoner character could have big advantages over others. For the purposes of a balanced game, it is probably best to restrict Uigenna poisoners to NPCs. They might not be easy to find, but could be part of a quest when the group needs to acquire a particular substance.

As for human characters, there are too many illnesses to list here, so again it is left to the discretion of the Storyteller how they are applied to the game, and how much authentic detail is researched.

"You don't know what it's like to be one of us until you've slipped into the arms of a har and tasted the wine of life."

- Jakana, Varr

ADDITIONAL RULES

Physical Activities

Every character, both human and harish, has a limit to which they can push their physical frame. This limit is determined by your Stats. The better a character's Stats, the better their physical abilities will be, up to the maximum of their physical capabilities. For humans, this is 20 points, and for hara it's 21 points for Stats. In this section, there are rules for calculating how much a character can carry and lift, how far and high they can jump, and how fast they can run.

Feats of Strength

A character's Strength rating determines how much equipment they can lift briefly, or whether they can 'power lift' such things. A power lift only lasts for a few seconds and is worked out in Kg as follows: Strength x 23.6. The object lifted can be held up for a number of seconds equal to the character's Stamina rating. See the table below for quick reference to the weights that can be lifted. For more information on the weights of various items, to give you a better impression of what can be lifted, see **Appendix 1**.

Strength	Max Lift	Strength	Max Lift
1	23.6 Kg	11	259.6 Kg
2	47.2 Kg	12	283.2 Kg
3	70.8 Kg	13	306.8 Kg
4	94.4 Kg	14	330.4 Kg
5	118 Kg	15	354 Kg
6	141.6 Kg	16	377.6 Kg
7	165.2 Kg	17	401.2 Kg
8	188.8 Kg	18	424.8 Kg
9	212.4 Kg	19	448.4 Kg
10	236 Kg	20	472 Kg

"It wouldn't hurt if you smiled once in a while, or perhaps if you did your face might crack...right?"

- Myth, Uigenna

To work out how much a character can carry, a slightly different calculation to the one for the power lift is used. A character's Stamina directly affects how much equipment they can carry without detrimentally affecting them. The calculation is as follows: Strength x 2 + Stamina. This represents the total amount in Kg a character can carry for an extended period.

Jumping

There are two main types of non-combat Jumping: the long jump and the high jump. Both of these rely on a good Strength Stat. In terms of the game, the better a character's Strength, the further or higher they can jump. These calculations do not take into account any professional training the character might have had.

Long Jump

This type ranges from jumping from one moving vehicle to the next, to leaping over a patch of acid. To work out how far a character can jump, use the following calculation in metres: Current Strength x 0.4. If the jump is taken from a standing start, or a short lead in, then use only a quarter of the final score. Use the table below for quick reference.

Strength	Distance	Standing Start	Strength	Distance	Standing Start
1	0.4 m	0.1 m	11	4.4 m	1.1 m
2	0.8 m	0.2 m	12	4.8 m	1.2 m
3	1.2 m	0.3 m	13	5.2 m	1.3 m
4	1.6 m	0.4 m	14	5.6 m	1.4 m
5	2 m	0.5 m	15	6 m	1.5 m
6	2.4 m	0.6 m	16	6.4 m	1.6 m
7	2.8 m	0.7 m	17	6.8 m	1.7 m
8	3.2 m	0.8 m	18	7.2 m	1.8 m
9	3.6 m	0.9 m	19	7.6 m	1.9 m
10	4 m	1 m	20	8 m	2 m

High jump

To work out how high a character can jump in metres use the following calculation: Current Strength x 0.15. However, if the character is making the jump from a standing position, then use only half of the final value. Use the next table for a quick reference.

"Your stupidity isn't just the icing on the cake; it's the whole kit and caboodle!"

- Blackrose, Sulh

A high jump is measured from the ground to the feet of the character at the highest point of their jump. Should a character tuck their feet in or use a special technique to move their centre of gravity, they may be able to make that distance greater. For a character that wants to jump and grasp hold of something, add that character's height to the distances shown on the table.

Strength	Height	Standing Start	Strength	Height	Standing Start
1	0.15 m	0.075 m	11	1.65 m	0.825 m
2	0.3 m	0.15 m	12	1.8 m	0.9 m
3	0.45 m	0.225 m	13	1.95 m	0.975 m
4	0.6 m	0.3 m	14	2.1 m	1.05 m
5	0.75 m	0.375 m	15	2.25 m	1.125 m
6	0.9 m	0.45 m	16	2.4 m	1.2 m
7	1.05 m	0.525 m	17	2.55 m	1.275 m
8	1.2 m	0.6 m	18	2.7 m	1.35 m
9	1.35 m	0.675 m	19	2.85 m	1.425 m
10	1.5 m	0.75 m	20	3 m	1.5 m

"We are gods, we are strong
and we are free. Does that
make us monsters?"
- Solasus har Kakkahaar

Note to Storyteller

It is up to the Storyteller to determine penalties for weight carried, in particular in relation to the weight of the character. An overweight character might not be able to jump as far as a physically fit character with the same Strength rating. It is advisable for the players to work out their limits before game play, and to write them down in the notes section.

Alternatively, if you don't want to do the maths, the Storyteller can have a look over the character's equipment to see what they are carrying and decide if that sounds reasonable. If they have just a pack with provisions, a bedroll and a weapon, that is probably ok. However, if the pack is carrying a load of spare engine parts they are going to feel weighed down. Weight aside, you should also take into account the bulk of any item. It may be possible to carry a mattress, but it will require both hands and get in the way a lot!

Running

It is important to be aware of the physical demands of both running over long distances and sprinting. Speeds and distances are worked out below:

Top Speed

At top speed, a character might only be able to run for just a few seconds, and the distance covered might not be as great as they could manage at a steady pace. To work out how far the character can run in meters per Phase, use the following calculation: Strength x 2.5. Running can be sustained for as long as the character has enough Energy to maintain it. A character will lose 2 points of Energy for every Phase they run at top speed. After this, they will need to slow down to a jog or rest. To convert this in to km/h, use the following calculation: Strength x 1.8. Use the table on next page for quick reference.

Once a character has run at top speed for a while and exhausted their Energy, they will need to rest for at least for one minute before they can run again. For this first minute of rest, the character will regain 3 Energy points. However if they slow down to a constant jog rather than stop, then it will take 5 minutes before they can run at full tilt again, as it will take this long to regain 3 Energy points.

Optional Rule: During a chase, the Storyteller might want a character to gain an edge through an adrenaline rush. This will give a character a little boost and enable them to hold top speed for longer. They get 6 free Phases in which they can run without depleting their Energy. Under normal circumstances, the character can keep

"I was so wasted, I wasn't
just seeing dancing horses,
they were doing the
Macarena!"
- Myth, Uigenna

"The truth of the matter is: I do not like you!"

- Cest Nara, Uigenna

top speed for 10 Phases. With an adrenaline rush, they can keep it up for up to 16 Phases. After the adrenaline rush has worn off they will need to rest for a while. However should the character still be involved in the chase after their Energy has depleted to less than 3, they may slow down to a steady speed in order to keep running. At this speed they can recover slowly, as detailed above.

When involved in a chase, it is usually best for a character to run for 6-8 phases, and then slow down a little to recover. Then when they need to, they can increase to full speed to keep the distance.

Strength	Distance / Phase	Km/h	Strength	Distance / Phase	Km/h
1	2.5 m	1.8	11	27.5 m	19.8
2	5 m	3.6	12	30 m	21.6
3	7.5	5.4	13	32.5 m	23.4
4	10 m	7.2	14	35 m	25.2
5	12.5 m	9	15	37.5 m	27
6	15 m	10.8	16	40 m	28.8
7	17.5 m	12.6	17	42.5 m	30.6
8	20 m	14.4	18	45 m	32.4
9	22.5 m	16.2	19	47.5 m	34.2
10	25 m	18	20	50 m	36

Constant Speed

This is similar to long-distance running in that a character may maintain a constant, steady speed rather than sprint. This constant speed is a little faster than jogging. To work out how far a character can travel in one Phase and how long they can sustain their speed, use the following calculations. A character can travel the equivalent of their Strength rating in meters per Phase. This can be continued for many hours, dependant on the character energy rating, using the following calculation: $\text{Energy} \div 4$. Refer to the table below to work out at which speed in km/h a character is travelling, and use the following calculation: $\text{Strength} \times 0.36$.

Strength	Km/h	Strength	Km/h
1	0.36	11	3.96
2	0.72	12	4.32
3	1.08	13	4.68
4	1.44	14	5.04
5	1.8	15	5.4
6	2.16	16	5.76
7	2.52	17	6.12
8	2.88	18	6.48
9	3.24	19	6.84
10	3.6	20	7.2

"Nicely done, now you have not only made them mad, you've made them really mad!"

- Blackrose, Sulh

Asphyxiation

There may be instances in the game where a character has to hold their breath for a reason, such as in airless conditions, under water or even in combat should their opponent try to strangle them. The rules here will help the Storyteller and players work out the consequences of this. Bear in mind that if the brain is starved of oxygen for too long, permanent brain damage will occur.

First, the player works out for how long the character can hold their breath, then how long their body can survive without air. Beyond this point, the character's brain is liable to be damaged, as per the rules below:

Blackout

Use the following calculation to calculate how many minutes a character or NPC can hold their breath for in minutes: $(\text{Strength} + \text{Stamina}) \div 6$. After this point blackout occurs. At the blackout point, the body will automatically try to resume normal function over which the character will have no control. Should there be a noxious substance, such as gas, in the area then the body will be affected by it.

"I think I would be more scared if you weren't such a gimp."

- Cest Nara, Uigenna

Suffocation

Beyond the point of blackout, if normal breathing does not resume within a specific time period, the character's body will be liable to suffer further damage. To work out the length of time the character can survive in minutes, use the following calculation: $\text{Stamina} \div 5$. After this time, the character's brain begins to die, and they will lose permanently 1 point of Intelligence for every 4 Phases they are starved of oxygen. When their Intelligence reaches 50% of its original total, they become severely impaired. If a player finds their character reaches this condition, they might wish to generate a new character for the game. When Intelligence reaches 0, the character stands no chance of recovery.

If a character still has an Intelligence rating, they may recover through standard resuscitation, provided another character has a First Aid rating of 5 or more. However, to make a full recovery they need to be given First Aid before their Intelligence rating drops below 50%. Below 50% Intelligence, a character might become unplayable.

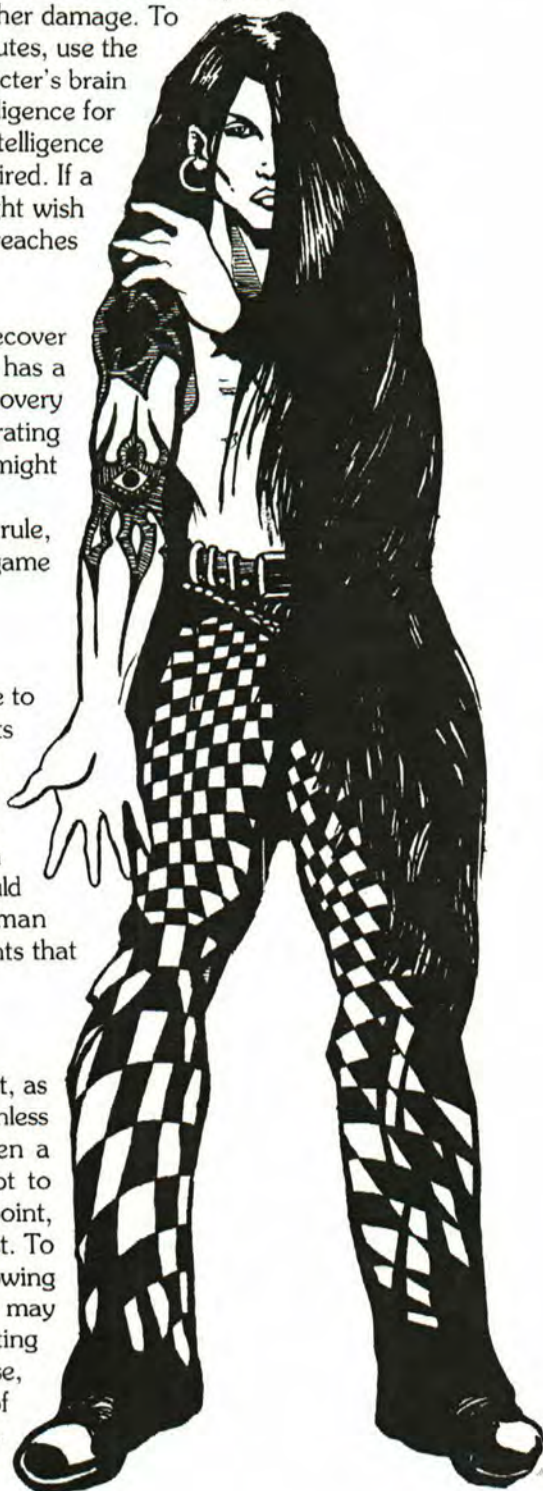
Should the Storyteller wish to make changes to this rule, they must ensure all players are aware of changes before the game begins.

Gassing

Following a blackout, an unconscious character will continue to inhale any gases in the environment and will succumb to its effects. Depending on the gas involved, the end result could be anything from severe sickness to death. There are too many gases in existence to list their properties and effects here. However, should they be needed for a story, you can research these through various means. Harish characters would be more resistant to the effects of toxic gas than human characters, although they would succumb to air-borne agents that cause suffocation.

Drowning

When immersed in any liquid, a character will first black out, as detailed above. Beyond this point, they will begin to drown, unless by chance they land in a highly oxygenated liquid. When a character blacks out under water, their body will attempt to function as normal, and will breathe in the liquid. At this point, the character will only have a few minutes to survive at best. To work out exactly how long they can survive, use the following calculation: $\text{Stamina} \div 6$. Up to this point, the character may recover, if administered to by someone with a First Aid rating of 6. Beyond this point, a character's body functions will cease, and will require another character with a First Aid rating of 13 to be able to resuscitate them. Should the character's body functions cease while they are still under water, use



the standard rules for suffocation and brain damage, as the character's brain will die at the same rate.

Impact Damage

These rules offer a simplified version of the trauma suffered by the body as a result of impact damage. This damage can be sustained in several ways: from falling, from colliding with a moving or stationary object, or from an object falling on the character.

Level	Speed	Distance	Weight	Falling	Impact
1	Below 16kmh	Below 4 Metres	Less than 5Kg	No damage, or additional multipliers	
2	16-47kmh	4 -12 Metres	5-15Kg	2D6+2 damage // No additional damage from weight (Minor Wounds Only)	
3	48-80kmh	12 - 20 Metres	15-25Kg	2D10+5 damage // Add weight divided 20 to the damage	
4	81-200kmh <i>120mph is terminal velocity for a falling humanoid</i>	20 - 70 Metres	25- 70Kg	2D10+5 damage plus 4 points for every 1 Metre above 50 (Max 200 Metres) // Add weight divided by 2, to the damage total.	2D10+5 damage plus 2 points for every 2 mph above 80 kmh (max 56 kmh additional) // Add weight divided by 10, to the damage total.
5	200+ kmh	70+ Metres	70+ Kg		2D20+10 damage plus 1 point for every kmh above 200 // Add weight divided by 5, to the damage total

N.B.: All damage taken by a character is classified as a blunt impact. Start taking points from Minor Wounds until the damage becomes Major Wounds: 1 point for 1 Major Wound. For each multiple of 10 points of Minor Wounds, a character takes one Major Wound point. The only exception to the rule is that damage level 1 cannot spill over to Major Wounds.

"I would not even deign to call you a moron; you're lower than that...much lower!"

- Blackrose, Sulh

To use the above table, determine both the Speed and Weight of the moving or largest object for collision damage, or the Distance and Weight of a falling object or body for falling Damage. This will enable you to calculate the amount of damage taken by both body and object.

First, work out the damage for the speed or distance by looking at the four right hand columns at the relevant level. Once you have worked that out, work out the damage from the weight of the heaviest object in the impact. Look down the weight column and refer to the far right columns to determine the type of collision. You do not roll a die to work out the damage taken from the weight of an object, but simply note the relevant calculation, which is shown after the // mark in each section. To assess the impact damage taken by the body further to being hit by whatever is falling, multiply the total damage by 5.

Example: Agroth has 37 Minor Wound points and 10 Major Wound points. He is hit by a vehicle travelling at 45mph and weighing 125Kg. First, the damage he takes from the speed is damage level 3, rated at 2D10+5. Agroth rolls a 6 with the two dice so the total is 11 (11 Minor Wounds and 1 Major Wound).

Now the weight of the moving vehicle is taken into account. The damage it causes is level 5, which is 125Kg, divided by 5. This adds an additional 25 to the total damage Agroth takes, giving him a total of 36 Damage (36 Minor Wounds and 3 Major wounds).

Agroth is lucky this time, since he escapes death, due to the fact he still has some Wound points remaining, in this case 1 minor Wound and 7 Major wounds. He'll be in pretty bad shape and in need of medical attention, as otherwise his condition will deteriorate and he will die.

Optional Rule: To work out the distribution of damage, and which part of the body was hit, roll a die as indicated on the hit locations table (see **page 287**). Distribute the damage as shown. The impact point of the trauma takes the total damage (i.e. 10 Wounds points), and adjacent areas take half of the total damage (i.e. 5 Wounds points each). It is up to the Storyteller to decide on the final result of the fall or impact.

LEXICON TWO

3 Round Burst (3RB)	A firing mode where one trigger pull will fire a volley of 3 missiles. This conserves ammunition and offers a chance of greater accuracy and doing more damage.
Action Modifier	The value either positive or negative which alters the character's Skills or Stats, when the player rolls a D20 for them.
Action Slice	A 1 second segment of time, the smallest measurement of time to perform actions.
Agmara	The energy of the universe which is part of everything and can be manipulated by the Wraeththu.
Armour Penetration	[AP] - The weapons rating for penetrating armour. If this is less than the AV then the weapon has not penetrated, but may cause Shock Damage.
Armour Value	[AV] - A rating for armour; the higher this value the better the armour, however it comes at the cost of BP.
attack/action	An opportunity to use a Combat Action, which is calculated for each weapon.
Badgers	Furry black and white creatures that are normally found in forests, they lead a secret double life as agents for the undead. On occasion they will hold parties and listen to banging techno music, while drinking Earl Grey tea; if caught at these events they will start impersonating Elvis.
Bon.	Bonus.
Bulk Penalty	[BP] - The Action Modifier from heavy or bulky armour, this is the price a character pays for having a high AV.
Called Shots	This is used when a character wishes to aim at a specific location on their target.
Churgeon	A harish healer, who specialises in healing using Agmara.
Churgery	The practice of a Churgeon.
Combat Action Modifier:-	
<i>Base</i>	This set of modifiers is calculated from the Stats and can affect combat actions.
<i>Close</i>	Used for combat actions where the combatants are in close proximity, fighting with Close Combat weapons.
<i>Ranged</i>	These Modifiers work only with ranged weapons that are fired or thrown.
Combat Actions	A series of actions defined during character generation, including elements such as Aim, Dodge, and Leap. They comprise the basic building blocks of strategic combat.
Combat Moves	A combination of Combat Actions which result in a specific Combat Move. These can be anything from a jump kick to impaling a character and drawing the weapon up through the body.
Combat Phase	A five second segment of time which is split into 5 Action Slices, used in combat.
Complementary Weapons	These are not weapons as such, but complement other weapons. They are used in the character's off-hand, and they offer no offensive capabilities.
Composure	Is affected by un-Wraeththu-like actions; the loss of this can lead to serious social problems for a har.
Contested Roll	Two characters working against each other; both parties try to achieve the highest Success Level .
Critical Success	When 1 is shown on a D20, used in conjunction with Skill and Stat rolls.

Cur.	Current.
Development Points	A number of points used during character generation, which the player can use to further tweak the character.
Downtime	A period in the game where the characters are waiting for the next piece of plot, or they are engaged in some lengthy procedure. The Storyteller can skip a number of days in the world so all the characters are ready to continue.
Extremely Extended Action	(EEA) - This is a Skill based action which lasts for a number of hours or days in game; it will also require multiple Skill rolls.
Free Movement	A movement in combat which does not require the use of an attack/action.
Fully Automatic	(A) - A ranged weapon which can fire a constant stream of missiles with one trigger pull.
Fumble / Critical Failure	When 20 is shown on a D20; used in conjunction with Skill and Stat rolls.
Knockout Blow	[KB] - A designation for weapons which are designed to render the target unconscious rather than doing damage.
Lvl.	Level.
Main Weapon	A weapon which is used in the main hand of the character, and from which they will take most of their Combat Action Modifiers.
Major Wound	A serious injury which is potentially fatal to the character, caused mainly by sharp or ranged weapons.
Minor Wound	A minor injury, which is not fatal to the character; this represents damage to the skin and muscles of the character.
Modifier	Modifies a Stat or another numerical value in the game.
Normal Roll	A player rolls a D20 and tries to score under a Skill or Stat, after it has been adjusted by Action Modifiers.
Phase	A five second segment of time which is split into 5 Action Slices.
Secondary Stats	A set of Stats which help the player role-play better and also define the Wraeththu as a unique race. Only the Energy Secondary Stat is used by human characters.
Shock Damage	Damage taken by a character from an impact that has not penetrated their armour.
Single Shot	(S) - A designation for a weapon that can fire one missile per trigger pull, a weapon which needs to be reloaded after each missile is fired, or archaic Ranged weapons, such as bows.
Skills	Represent the knowledge and training given to the character over its life. These are rated in numerical values from 1 to 20.
Snap Shot	Used when a character needs to act first in a Combat Phase, it offers a good statistical advantage, but at the cost of a high negative Action Modifier.
Spare attack/action	Defines any attacks/actions a character has over 5, for a particular weapon.
Stats	A list of 6 physical aspects that go into making the character, each represented by a number from 1 to 20. These statistics help the player relate the die rolls to action in the game world.
Storyteller	The person who controls the story and NPCs, they are also responsible for administering the rules.
Success Level	The difference between the Skill or Stat after Action Modifiers have been applied and the roll of a D20. This is a very important factor in the game mechanics.
Tot.	Total.



"Their day will come, we just have to buy our time. The Varrs over estimate their weapons and capabilities, they deny magic and are unaware of our Megalithican base of operations. The fall of the Varrs is inevitable, whether it's by our hands or their own folly."

– Sharaze, *Gelaming Archon*



MAGIC

THE FORGOTTEN HERITAGE: WRAETHTHU AND MAGIC

By Malakess-har-Sulh, High Codexia of the Library of Kyme

From the dawn of their civilisation, humans worked magic, which is the understanding and manipulation of natural energy. But magic is also more than that. It is being aware of the connectedness of all things and having an understanding that we are but a part of the whole.

The earliest human hunter-gatherers observed the turning of the seasons, the movement of the sun, moon and stars, and the strange processes of birth, life and death, and ascribed to these things mystical causes. They invented gods, demons, spirits and elementals to explain the workings of the mysterious world. The shaman of a tribe would enter the otherworld to fight for his/her people against unearthly denizens. It was believed that their actions in trance would determine the outcome of a crop or whether the herds would thrive. People were aware they were part of Nature and that her claws were often bloody. They were in tune with and respected the natural rhythms of the earth, and they sensed the subtle energy of the life force all around them.

However, as time went on, and the species became more advanced, they estranged themselves from the natural world and sought to impose order over it. Despite periodic renaissances of magical activity, on the whole humanity became robotic and isolated. The further they moved from nature and magic, the more isolated they became, and eventually this led to madness and decay – and finally to us: Wraeththu.

We don't know why or how we are here. Are we an accident or a deliberate creation? Were we created by the planet itself, to destroy parasitical humanity, to save the world before they abused and killed it entirely? Or are we simply a random result of some unknown genetic flaw in humanity? Perhaps we will never know the answers to these questions. But for most of us, one thing is clear. We are the guardians of this world, not its owners. We are part of its eternal cycle. It is our home and our resource. Without it, we cannot live. Would we wantonly destroy every atom of oxygen that exists? No, because then we would die. The earth is similarly precious. We must preserve and tend it. We are perhaps just a new form of humanity, and we have been given a second chance to get it right.

From our Inceptions, we discover abilities that seem 'superhuman' to us. But are they? We can manipulate the natural energy of the universe with astounding ease, almost as if our systems have been somehow retuned to accommodate it. Humans could achieve certain magical effects, but only after lengthy and arduous training. For

*"You have no idea the pain
you're going to be in when I
am through with you!"*

- Blackrose har Sulh



them, it was always difficult, always done through a veil. We can see and indeed pass through that veil. Few humans were telepathic, and even those who were did not possess the degree of skill enjoyed by hara.

Perhaps much of this is down to perception. We know that everything in the Multiverse is comprised of energy. An oak tree is energy, as is a mountain, as is a horse, as is breath, as is emotion, as is thought. If your consciousness could perceive the microcosmic world, all the atoms and sub-atomic particles that make up creation, perhaps all you'd see is a buzzing mass of formless energy, with no boundaries or limitations. The oak tree joins with the thought with the water with the breath with the mountains with the desire. It's all one thing. Only from our perspective does it divide into things that we can touch, smell, see, taste, hear or think. Indeed, our senses are the interface between ourselves and what is 'not us'. Perhaps it is only these fragile, limited perceptions that create our environment around us. Who is to say that what I perceive as an oak tree resembles anything that you might perceive as the same thing?

If we were to swap bodies for a day, perhaps the world would be incomprehensible to us, an alien environment of monstrous, unrecognisable forms.

We are workers of magic, but this does not mean we possess supernatural abilities. The unguarded thoughts and emotions of others are, to us, like leaves caught in the wind. Energy seeps from the harish mind and body continually. We possess the ability to perceive and interpret it, as we can perceive leaves drifting from the trees in autumn. This is not supernatural. It is entirely natural. We are less isolated from each other than humans ever were. We are aware we're on the same web of energy, interlinked with everything around and beyond us. Although we are yet young as a species, I envisage a day when all hara on this web will be able to communicate along it, as if it were some vast psychic network. That is something of which humans could only dream. Their information networks existed beyond themselves, reliant on an outside power source, and as such were very vulnerable to malfunction and attack. A fluid dynamic network composed of living beings is far less vulnerable. If one component is destroyed, it does not affect the whole. There can be no breach or interruption of the pathways, because limitless pathways exist at the same time. However, our network is not yet fully operational. For now, we are able to communicate fairly easily with hara local to our area, i.e. in close proximity, or else, in trance, with hara who are close to us emotionally and who might not be nearby. Also, those who have received intense training, such as the Listeners employed by the Hegemony in Immanion, can pick up energy transmissions and interpret them as messages from non-local hara unknown to them. Few of us yet possess this level of skill.

Our communications take place via the ethers, which is a model to represent the web of energy that exists beyond normal perception. In trance, this can be perceived as a shining network, like a maze of boundless spiders' webs. Other hara might be seen as pulsing stars upon this web. We can reach out to them with intention, which is to say our own energy, and make our presence known. Of course, not all hara perceive the ethers in the same way. To some, I have heard, they are like an endless vista of alien landscapes, and other hara appear in them in various forms. Yet more hara do not

*"It's like a square only
someone's sanded the
corners off, so I guess that
would make it a circle, right?"*

- Myth, Uigenna

perceive the ethers in a visual sense at all, and merely sense its existence. They are able to feel the presence of others, but might not receive any images of them. The ethers can be used for purposes other than communication. Trained individuals can project their minds to observe events in different locations. Some are even able to see through time, into future or past events.

The otherlanes are distinctly separate to the ethers, although they are related. They are pathways beyond consensual reality, which humans might have grasped at blindly with the concepts of wormholes and ley lines. I have been privileged to ride one of the Gelaming 'sedim', which at present are the only means at our disposal to enter the otherlanes. A 'sedu' is a creature that in our reality takes the form of a horse and whose origins are unknown to anyhar but Thiede of the Gelaming. They are able to open portals into the otherlanes and transport passengers along them. Using these pathways, a journey that would take weeks on foot can be accomplished in what we perceive only as minutes. This perhaps is what humans would regard as the most magical of our abilities. Yet to me it is not. It is simply that we lack the knowledge of how it works. I paid great attention during my otherlane journey and observed that the 'sedu' changed form beyond this reality. Unfortunately, I lack the words to describe what it became. All I can say is that I was 'in' it rather than 'on' it. I could call it a being of pure energy, but the message in that would be inaccurate, since we are all beings of pure energy. We can only hope that Thiede will one day enlighten us about the 'sedim', but I can't help but suspect he came upon them by accident and hardly knows himself how they function and what exactly they are. Few hara have experienced the otherlanes as the Gelaming exercise tight controls over the 'sedim'. This, of course, gives them an immense advantage over other tribes and in a militaristic sense makes them virtually invincible. They can transport troops over vast distances in the blink of an eye and then vanish just as quickly. It is hardly surprising that many tribes view them with suspicion and mistrust, but this is not a discourse about the political ambitions of the Gelaming. This is about magic.

We can manipulate the universal life force to affect healing, to influence events and to perceive things beyond the limitation of our senses. We are shamans and seers, but we are also pioneers of a technology vastly superior to anything conceived by humankind. We are like children who happen upon the entrance of an ancient tomb, where lost knowledge resides in the form of strange glyphs and symbols. As we grow, perhaps continual study will enable us to interpret these marks correctly, to understand and read them. I like to think that the possibilities presented to us now are merely things that were lost by careless humanity, who became less civilised and less erudite the more they advanced scientifically. Science, spirituality and magic are one. The moment we acknowledge that there is no division, and that what we perceive as magic is merely science beyond our comprehension, is the moment we truly inherit the guardianship of this world that humanity wantonly squandered. It is up to us. Tribal in-fighting and petty squabbles over territory are meaningless in the grand scale of creation. We had our childhood, running wild like animals in the ruins of human civilisation. Now, we must grow up. If we don't, we deserve the same fate as those we came to replace.

"You want some words of wisdom from me? Something to think about? OK, I can do the Hienama bit. Think on this: never wipe your ass with broken glass."

- Clench, a hienama of the Uigenna known for his 'ways'.



THE TERMS OF WRAETHTHU MAGIC

Hara have their own terms for magic users and operations, listed below in brief.

Agmara

Universal life energy, the power behind all magic. The term derives from the name given to, the first Wraeththu.

Magari

A spell, a magical operation performed fairly quickly without recourse to a full-length Majhahn. Magaris can, of course, also be cast within Majhahns as part of a ritual.

Majhahn (mazh-arn) Nayati – (Nigh-ah-tee)

A full-length ritual, as opposed to a quick spell-casting. A temple or sacred site outdoors. A rehuna might create temporary Nayatis when he's travelling and needs a space in which to work magic. He does this by calling Agmara into a particular area to enliven the natural energy there. This equates roughly to 'magician' or 'magic user'. It applies to a har when he is engaged in magical operations. It is also, more consistently, used to denote a har who has devoted his life to the study of magic but has not yet become a Hienama.

Rehuna (reh-hoo-nah)

The term for a group of rehunus working together. The plural of this is *ruhahna*.

Ruhahn (roo-harn)

"Did you see him go down...he went down like a sack of iron kittens!"

- Jazran, Varr

These terms are further defined later in this section.

WHAT IS MAGIC?

A Brief History

Agmara is universal energy. Every object, whether living or inanimate, is linked with this energy; it flows through living creatures and helps hold the inanimate together.

Ancient peoples believed there were five basic elements: Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit, which comprised the world in which they lived. Then came the Age of Reason and the advancement of science. Science at that time was seen as a form of magic by many who did not understand it, at least until it became widely accepted.

But even this new 'magic' could not explain many aspects of the universe; the unknown was given the name 'Dark Matter'. Many claimed that large portions of the universe were made of this substance, or at least shrouded by it. However, Dark Matter was nothing more than an excuse for the holes in scientific theories, which no scientist could explain. Pure magic cannot be measured or examined by science; it defies explanation. It is perhaps the one thing that would help scientists understand their theories and explain much of what is unexplained, but now it is too late for humans to take advantage of it. Before the advent of Wraeththu, a new theory had begun to emerge that Dark Matter, or at least the presence of the unknown, was in fact magic beyond human comprehension.

Thousands of years ago, a secret magical practice developed, which could have bridged the gap between science and magic. It offered an explanation for entities such as angels and gods and would have assisted humankind to understand its true purpose. Unfortunately, human scientists could not tolerate the idea that ancient peoples, who they considered primitive, could have known more than they did. Sadly this contributed to humankind's destruction. Practitioners of the old ways found solace in the fact that the inheritors of the earth would find a new path.

The ancient concept of magic drew its elements from observation of the world. Without microscopes and the abilities to see such things as atoms, scholars used the model of

"I am constantly amazed by how bright these beings burn, since they are but a flicker in the whole of time."

- Sshasha har Colurastes

five basic elements: Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Sprit. More advanced practitioners incorporated other forces, such as Temporal, Chaos, Order and Phase. These lesser-known elements completed the magical construct, which enabled the most skilled practitioners to perform true magic.

A few magical groups tried to teach their fellow humans how to use magic. To their surprise, students were able to pick up the basics quickly, but the higher reaches of magical theory went beyond general human comprehension at that time. Maybe it was because they could not perceive or accept the more rarefied elements, or because human physical and mental capabilities inhibited their use. As science became more powerful as a movement, interest in magic dwindled or became outlawed, forcing it underground where select groups continued to teach in secret.

It was only towards the end of humankind's reign, when science could not save it, that humanity turned once more to religion and magic. If humanity could have worked together earlier, they would have unlocked many of the secrets of magic and might have secured a future working with Wraeththu rather than against them.

"I will give you an embrace of death...then perhaps you'll understand why I don't like you."

- Karrana har Kakkahaar

Is Magic Difficult To Do?

Magic becomes easier with practice. However, the amount of Agmara needed for different tasks varies and the drawing of this energy can take a toll on the user. The most difficult aspect is judging what's required to make any magical operation as efficient as possible.

Usually, there are two major forces at work: Creation and Destruction. Creation is always difficult, whereas destruction is only as hard as you make it. For example, if your character wanted to destroy a table there are many ways he could do it. He could burn it or blow it up or have something land on it and crush it to pieces. However, all of these methods involve a degree of creation; something has to be created in order for the table to be destroyed. But from a magical perspective, the table contains an amount of magical energy. This can be used in its own destruction, and requires nothing more than a magical trigger. The trigger isn't created as such; it's merely primed. The table will simply cease to exist, as its own magical energy will be used to destroy it.

A more difficult method would be to drop something onto the table, heavy enough to destroy it – if we assume the character has no heavy objects on hand. To accomplish this, your character would first have to create an object to drop, or else move an existing object into place. If the area is enclosed, he would also need to accelerate the object; this would require the creation and manipulation of energies. He could, of course, cause someone else to trip over and land on the table, thereby utilising other forces than his own to do the destruction for him.

The magical destruction of any object is only as difficult as your character makes it. The easy way is simply to utilise the object's natural Agmara to destroy it in a cascade effect. It requires very little input, and any other method would require him either to create a force or an object to do the work for him. However, the easy option might only use an insignificant amount of power, but the actual casting can be demanding on the rehuna, both mentally and via the actions of Probability. The universe is elastic, but it is averse to events occurring that are against the natural order. Therefore, it tends to cause problems for rehunas.

Bearing all this in mind, when your character needs to use magic to destroy something, he should use the most practical and efficient method for the circumstances. It is pointless and a waste of magical energy when all he needs to do to accomplish the destruction of a table is to pick up a nearby axe and hit it. In most situations, he would not need to use magic. The more cunning your character is, and the better you think through what he's doing, the better and more powerful a rehuna he will become.

To create an object your character would usually have to convert latent magical energy into a physical force. While an experienced rehuna might find this relatively simple to do, it would be difficult for the average har. The magical power can spiral out of control, depending on the size and complexity of the object being created. In effect it swings the

"You can worry all you want about where the next meal is coming from or where you are going to travel next – but in the end compared to the deeper meanings, they are trivial things."

- Loman Ra har Obliviata

balance of destruction the other way, so although a har might know how to achieve the effect he wants, it might require an amount of power beyond his capabilities.

Why Use Magic When an Axe Will Do?

The most adept rehunas use psychology and clever engineering of actions to reach a result with minimum magical effort. If a rehuna wants to destroy a table, he might as well use an axe. He's not likely to fail, and this method is normal and natural. Therefore the laws of Probability would not be affected. Using magic to destroy the table might raise some unwanted questions, such as: where the hell did that table go? In some cases, the rehuna might even be persecuted by others for his actions, which could be seen as unnatural and dangerous. However, he can use magic to create plausible natural effects that no one would even notice. For example, if he caused a drunken har to trip and land heavily on the table so that it breaks, it's not an unlikely occurrence. Or he could influence somehar to light a cigarette and leave it burning on the table, so that eventually the table catches fire. This again would not go against the force of Probability.

The most effective rehunas trick the mind and find inventive ways around Probability. In the world of Wraeththu, you should only have your character use magic effects as a last resort. If there's a natural way to achieve his desires, he should use it. Even if your character is not creating amazing effects in reality, as a har he is an innately magical being. He *lives* magic. Period. He is attuned to the universe far more intimately than a human ever could have been. His senses are more acute. He hears, sees and perceives things human could not. Most of the time, he would not need to recourse to an overt magical operation, simply because his natural abilities would be sufficient for most situations. But if he is living the life of an adventurer, there are bound to be circumstances where he'll have to do something out of the ordinary to survive or succeed.

Magic is very powerful and can do wondrous things, but abusing it can have dire consequences. Most rehunas choose not to use magic unless they absolutely have to, and when they do observers are not likely to be aware of it, unless the rehuna is forced into a situation where he has to work overtly. There are many ways to disguise the blatant use of magic, such as through Majhahns. A cleverly planned Majhahn can be used as a physical representation of a rehuna's magical power. This would be more acceptable to the universe, as raw, unplanned Magaris will incur the effects of Probability. A character could also use 'toys' and simulated items, such as a gun that fires bolts of energy.

A Word from the Wise

By Zackheal har Kakkahaar

Though magic is a powerful tool and many wondrous things can be created using Agmara, when the rehuna faces the decision to use it, many factors need to be taken in to account.

One of these factors is if the Magari is actually worth performing. Many hara have spent hours researching items of human construction to see if they can create them magically. However, many of these items have been flawed, even fatally so. By that, I mean certain hara have been found dead after unwise magical actions. It seems that the big problem is uncertainty. Humans spent thousands of years of experimentation and study to reach a stage where they could create computers and projectile weapons. It would be arrogant of any har to think such things could be created instantly, using magic.

One of the main ways hara go wrong is trying to replicate complex items of human construction without spending time studying the universe, to see if the items could be emulated by magical means. While it might seem desirable to create a projectile weapon through magic, the end result of that creation would be the ability to disable a threat. Using Agmara, there are many other ways to damage and disable foes.

"If I had...some money for every time someone said that, then I'd have...er...more than I started out with, yeah!"

- Twitch, Uneeah

"Take it from me...you can only experience true enlightenment if you drink yourself stupid first."

- Myth, Uigenna

Even a weapon that seems relatively simple to design, such as a sword, is in fact very difficult to create magically. It will inevitably be flawed, and this might not manifest until a crucial moment. The wisest hara know it is better to find a good **Weapon Smith** than risk compromising Probability, or else creating something that ultimately won't be of much use.

Why would you need a computer to store information when you could simply use a crystal to store impressions, emotions and thoughts? A collection of crystals, charged in the proper manner, are incredibly effective.

Always practice safe magic. You might have heard stories of fantastic Magaris that could move mountains, but what's the point of that if the benefits of such actions cannot be reaped because the universe has taken offence? It always best to alter someone's perception of the truth than to alter reality itself.

"If I repeatedly slam your head on the counter, are you going to stop bugging me for a discount?"
- Blackrose har Sulh

The Terms of Magical Operations in Depth

Majhahn - A ritual is known as a Majhahn; this involves a certain amount of invocation and the creation of magical space, or a Nayati, in which to work. Several rehunas might work together to do this. Within a Majhahn, a rehuna might call upon various forces to work for him, or he might perform ritual actions to achieve a specific effect. To perform Majhahn, the rehuna would need time and space to work effectively. Majhahn is quite a theatrical and intricate process. It would be used for achieving long-term or far-reaching effects, or to affect a large group of individuals. For example, if a har wished to change a potential leader's destiny, he would use Majhahn. If he wanted something simpler, such as to prevent a single enemy from harming him, he would use a Magari.

Magari - This is the harish term for 'spell', and is a procedure that can be performed at any time, in any place. It does not require a lot of 'set up' time, or the creation of magical space in which to work, and might be as simple as projecting intention into a situation or object to acquire the desired result. Magaris can involve bits of equipment, such as stones, crystals, feathers or whatever else the rehuna wishes to use, which act as focuses for the spell.

Magaris are rarely written down and preserved, as no two would ever be the same. Two rehunas might use magic to create the same effect, but they will most likely use different combinations of magical forces and varying amounts of Agmara to achieve their aims. Every rehuna thinks in a different way and what works for one might not work well for another.

Magaris cannot be taught in a direct manner. The rehuna can only be tutored in how to manipulate magical forces for best effect, but once a rehuna is aware of the ingredients of magic, it is up to him how to mix them. The only books of spells that exist in the world of Wraeththu are those left over from human times. Some rehunas might be interested in these, out of curiosity for the past, but they would consider them a primitive way of working.

Magaris put into an object with a trigger can be created by anyhar, but it does require quite a high degree of skill to accomplish. Many rehunas have an abundance of crystals or other appropriate objects that can be used as magical batteries. Some of these objects might seem inconsequential to the untrained eye, but a magical lighter, or a coin that lands on the same face each time it's thrown, are quite potent magical tools, and also light and easy to carry.

"Many human magicians and witches sought to make a mother of their Great Goddess; in fact they simply pulled her claws and teeth. They were desperate for comfort, for meaning. We all know what they found."

- Velisarius, Archon of the Kakkahaar

How Does Magic Work?

There are twelve different forces used within magic. These forces are split into four sections. First, there is Chaos and Order. Then there are the four Elements of the

"I swear that if I were given my head I would kill every last one of you. Just count your lucky stars that my companions are merciful..."

- Jazran, Varr

physical world: Earth, Air, Fire and Water. These are followed by the four Energies: Spirit, Kinetic, Attraction and Plasmatic. The final forces are Temporal, Phase, Conversion and Destruction; they are the most powerful in the universe, and using them can have severe consequences. Each element can be used to create and manipulate matter and reality, but doing so may constitute Vulgar Magic.

The use of magic revolves around the twelve forces and the rehuna's ability to use magical energies. He can combine various forces to create different effects. No two rehunans are required to combine forces in exactly the same way to achieve a similar result. It is all down to creativity. Only the guidelines for Majhahns can be passed on from a teacher, not the exact way rehunans would manipulate the forces, as this is as individual as personality. The rehuna's task is to understand what each force is capable of, and then combine them to best effect.

Expertise with the force of Conversion can be very useful, especially in sticky situations, such as when the rehuna needs food or air, and other forces in the environment can be converted to create them. However, the use of Conversion is demanding on the rehuna, as it's likely that it will automatically compromise Probability, and thereby make him subject to the actions of the universe. Most hara do not develop their use of this force beyond the need to purify liquids or materials.

Magical forces are the true source of magic and creation. They were not accepted or studied by human scientists, most of whom were conditioned not to look for magic in the universe. In the human world, magic was confined to the realm of the 'supernatural,' when in fact the forces behind it are the most natural of all.

Magic is Dumb as Well as Blind

The forces behind magic are not intelligent themselves, but they are elastic. They hold the universe together. The universe has a certain amount of tolerance against 'unnatural' events, but eventually, if its forces are used too much, it will seek to snap reality back into place.

Any rehuna wishing to create an effect will need to have some skills at his disposal which can help him. Somehar trying to create a complex item will run into problems unless he knows what he is doing. For example, trying to create a gun, without prior ballistic knowledge and the necessary skills, could result in a lump of metal that might resemble a gun physically, but have no functionality. Even if the gun was well conceived enough to fire a projectile, if the creator lacked ballistic knowledge, the gun would most likely be inaccurate or even dangerous to use. However, somehar with knowledge of ballistics and how guns are made could mould energies and metals to produce a rudimentary working projectile weapon. Even if they lacked the knowledge of each precise measurement, an appreciation that such things are essential would result in their presence in the created object. Because of the issues and problems with creating such items, a har would be more likely to create an illusion of a weapon. If such a Magari is programmed correctly, the illusion will be so realistic, that others would 'believe' in it, thereby giving it the ability to harm them.

Magic is also blind. The rehuna must have some knowledge of his target's location and appearance. Magic takes the path of least resistance. If a rehuna just creates a magical force to work for him, and simply lets it loose against nothing more than a name, the universe will pick the first target which comes close to the criteria. The target may not even be the intended victim; it could simply be that they are thinking of the victim or have even just mentioned their name.

The instructions given at the time of the Majhahn or Magari will be taken literally and the magical forces will take the fastest possible path to the result, even if this means killing innocent hara along the way. All rehunans should specify their intentions minutely, and augment them with images of their intended target. Negligence in this respect can result in the rehuna being hunted down or killed for their careless use of magic.

"There are those amongst us that would see humans as nothing more than slaves. I argue that they are much more than menial workers and toys."

- Sshasha har Colurastes

Dogma

Dogma is the track on which religion and belief run. It is the belief that certain actions and chants will cause certain effects. Dogma is the set of rules that governs a system, and if a rehuna ascribes to Dogma, he would never deviate from it. A few rehunas use a system of Dogma to enable them to perform magical effects, but this is often seen as a weakness. Their Dogma becomes their crutch; they need it to perform effective Majhahns and Magaris. There is really no need for Dogma in magic. A truly talented rehuna can conjure effects without using rituals or chants, or he can change his practices to suit his circumstances.

Some aspects of Dogma might not relate to magic, but are simply rules on how to lead your life, while others will have consequences in a magical sense. Not all Dogma is bad or restrictive; sometimes it is just common sense on how to live.

The Obliviata's magical practices are steeped in Dogma. They believe that all their magic is performed by their god Allavé and that they have no personal magical power. Other tribes believe in various godforms, but they work directly with the gods to produce effects. Other, more scientifically minded tribes, work with tools and objects to produce their effects.

Dogma still has its place within many of the Wraeththu tribes. Because the majority of them are fairly new, their Dogma is still under construction, continually being expanded by the Hienamas and tribe Archons. The lesser members of a tribe are usually left in the dark about this; they are simply told what to believe and given some reason for it. This reasoning is generally very well constructed to prevent hara asking questions. Throughout human history Dogma was used by religions and governments as a tool of control over the people. Some unscrupulous Phylarchs, being aware of this, use it in the same way.

Science

Science, in a human sense, has had its time. Its tools have either been abandoned or broken, and the more rigid of its views have been rejected by the majority of hara. This does not mean that Wraeththu are not interested in studying their universe in an objective manner. They simply have a less restricted and more open view than humans did. Science will in fact enter a new era, as certain hara explore their powers and abilities, and the forces of the universe, in a magical sense.

With the influx of magical knowledge, the unknown now has a framework for explanations about how the universe functions, and scientific facts aren't as cut and dried as they were. New theories and ideas are showing themselves and the mysteries of Dark Matter will be explained.

Human scientific discoveries still have some place within the world of Wraeththu, as without access to the knowledge of the past, hara would use magic in ignorance. With some scientific knowledge, a rehuna could create effects incorporating compounds and chemical reactions.

The universe runs upon a set of rules. Science aims to work out these rules, and magic has just added a new section. There is no intelligence behind these rules. They are simply there for intelligent species to discover and utilize.

"A haunting piece of music is like the threads of a cosmic tapestry...weaving through life at its own pace...leaving behind in its wake something profound."

- Loman Ra har Obliviata

"Laugh and the whole world laughs with you, laugh at the wrong person and you're in a world of hurt."

- Aceama har Uigenna

PHILOSOPHY OF MAGIC

When it comes to magic, each har believes something different. Their beliefs are coloured by their past experiences, their current abilities and perhaps what other hara close to them believe. There is no right or wrong way to practice magic; there is only the

individual path. Everyhar who works magic has their distinct techniques and beliefs. Although their philosophy might be different, some common elements still prevail.

Good vs. Evil: the Misconception

The forces behind magic are impartial; it is only practitioners who aren't. To the majority of humans, magic was either Black or White, but hara would say it is really a multitude of grey shades.

Magical energy has no intent; it is neither Good nor Evil. It has no agenda or malice, and is only programmed with intent by a rehuna or Hienama. There are no such forces as Good or Evil, only the intentions of the rehuna. One har's perception of Evil is another's perception of Good. Every magical act is a means to an end, and that end might be good for one individual yet bad for another. The concept of Good and Evil lies in the mind of the individual.

"Purple is the colour of psychic protection...or as Myth of the Uigenna will tell you...it's the colour of fluffy creatures of the mind."

- Kallan, Gelaming

Is killing another living being always an act of evil? What if you knew that someone intended to blow up a building, which would kill thousands of people, and the only way to stop it happening was to kill the potential killer? You would no doubt believe you were doing something good and might perhaps think it would be evil *not* to stop the killer. But the killer has a rationale for what they are doing, perhaps seeing it as political. In their eyes, they are not perpetrating an act of Evil, and those allied to them would think they were in fact good and honourable. By them, you would be seen as evil to stop the killer. It is all down to perception and the view of reality you choose to live by.

A har would not see things in terms of Good and Evil, but rather as two conflicting worldviews coming smack up against one another. Both simply *are*. The best a har can do is live his life to the best of his own capabilities and by his own, or his tribe's, code of ethics. Most hara accept that cooperation among Wraeththu is the best way to live, and that each har should be tolerant of other's beliefs and ethics. Sometimes, it might be necessary to take action against another in order to survive, but this would be seen as an expedient act, rather than an act of Good or Evil.

Agmara Energy

You can have the most sophisticated technology in the world, be it a television, a computer or the latest stereo system. But that piece of equipment is pretty much useless unless you have a power source from which it can run. Magical practices are seen in a similar way. All the candles, incense, robes, and even the words of a Majhahn are the equipment a rehuna can use to create a specific effect. But without a power source, they are useless.

"I had this downer once, went on for days and then I got incepted...talk about riding high and rocking on."

- Myth, Uigenna

All matter is made up of energy. At the microcosmic level, objects such as tables, trees, cats, stones and people, do not exist in the same way they are perceived by human senses. At the atomic level, they might be seen as a buzzing mass of energy: atomic and sub-atomic particles that whiz about and collide. If hara had the ability to perceive the particles of which things are made up, rather than just the wider view of solid objects, it might be difficult for them to discern the boundaries between 'things'. In essence, all things would be linked, blending into one another. Energy is life. It is creation itself. It is what things are made of and is also the 'glue' that holds them together.



Aghama

Many belief systems incorporate the idea of 'universal life energy', whether that is known as chi, ki, barraka, prana, Holy Spirit, or by any other name. Rehunas have access to this energy as a continual and limitless power source for their workings. It can affect changes in the environment or be used for self-development. It is healing and promotes self-awareness.

Everyhar is part of this force, forever connected to it, born from it, returned to it. Wraeththu might be able retain a form of consciousness beyond physical earthly incarnation, and there is much speculation about it, but as yet no hard evidence. But few would argue that once a har dies, the energy of a physical form doesn't (and indeed can't) just disappear. Energy can only change form, so therefore it could be said the soul is absorbed back into the source. This boundless fount of energy is referred to as 'Agmara' by Wraeththu. The name derives from the Wraeththu progenitor and demigod, the Aghama. It is the primary power source.

However, another form of energy, which is actually part of the first, is a har's own will and intention. When they apply themselves to a particular task, be it magical or practical, and their intention is focused upon it, they are guaranteed more success than if they do it half-heartedly. This applies to a full-blown Majhahn or baking a cake. If you're baking and just throw in random ingredients in the wrong proportions, its unlikely that what comes out of the oven will be that palatable. That's a simplistic analogy, but it helps illustrate a point. Emotions, thoughts and intentions, the ingredients of magic, are energy too.

The energy of Agmara is in and around everything; it's the fuel that enables a har to harness their abilities. Some tribes describe it in other ways, such as a god form, but all of them recognise the universal term Agmara.

Each rehuna can only hold so much of this power, before the physical body can no longer take it; the results of overdose can be deadly. However it can be stored in certain objects, whether it's a weapon or a jewel; it is always useful to have a place to store Agmara. Once a har is drained, it can take a while for him to regain the lost power. A rehuna's body requires a base amount of Agmara to function. His store of Agmara cannot fall below the level needed for survival, since the natural order of the universe will normally prevent such an event. However, in some cases, when a rehuna has pushed themselves too hard, and totally drained their body of Agmara, it has resulted in his body literally disintegrating, which is obviously a circumstance to avoid.

The colour of Agmara is different to every user, as it has no physical form and is perceived rather than seen. The rehuna's perception of its colour can be influenced by his own beliefs, or even the circumstances under which he's working. Most hara see it as a pure, sparkling white, while others see it with a tinge of blue, green or purple.

Majhahn Tools

Any magical tools, be they knives, candles, incense or extravagant robes, are merely props. They do not make the magic. They simply help a rehuna get into the right state of mind to perform a Majhahn or Magari. However, that can often be useful, and if a rehuna prepares himself and his ritual space before working, it helps alter his state of consciousness, to step from the mundane world into the ethers. Also, the more he works with tools and invests them with his own energy and intention, the more effective the tools become.

Vakei

The vakei is a ritual blade, used during Majhahn. It is never used for anything but the directing of magical forces. A vakei would be polluted if it was used aggressively against another har. The vakei's is common ritual dagger, the Gelaming and Kakkahaar tend to use the Tibetan phurba, a ritual weapon used by lamas to control demons of the earth. At its centre it contains a special crystal, to which rehunat attune themselves when they begin working with it. This crystal is attuned also to the source of creation, to Agmara. Many legends have arisen around the vakei. Not all rehunat use them, since they are not easy to come by. Usually, a har would have to

"The sound of your bones breaking would be me kicking your ass."

- Aceama har Uigenna

"Do you have one of those in 'extremely expensive' looking but 'hideously cheap' to buy?"

- Twitch, Uneeah



Uigenna Vakei

commission one to be forged by an amenable blacksmith, and somehow would have to acquire the relevant crystal, perhaps through visionary questing. The highest-ranking Hienamas, and rehunas of more magically advanced tribes, such as Gelaming and Kakkahaar, use vakeis.

The vakei is not essential to perform magic but it helps the rehuna focus his powers more efficiently, since distractions and environmental circumstances may cause a lapse in his concentration.

As for the legends surrounding the vakei, it is said that the stone placed at its heart is a fragment of the Kalamaph, a crystal from which Agmara first flowed. Once all the energy had flowed from the crystal, it started to form the universe. During this period the Kalamaph cracked and eventually shattered, spreading the shards to all corners of the universe. These shards can be used to focus Agmara energy.

Nohar has ever proved the Kalamaph legend. However, rehunas who use vakeis insist that the blades help them perform Majhahns more effectively. They also enable a rehuna to store vast amounts of Agmara energy for future use. In this instance, the vakei can be used to channel the energy directly into a storage place, such as a quartz crystal.

"Humanity's main problem was its lack of longevity. Just as a human became a useful member of their community, they got senile."

- Huriel Har Sulh

Shards of the Kalamaph are extremely rare. A har might never find one in his lifetime. However, it can be part of a spiritual quest to reach higher caste levels. The shards are no bigger than a golf ball and act as a natural spring for Agmara. If a character ever finds one, it's likely other hara will desire to take it from him. Therefore, the typical rehuna only uses his vakeis in private, when others (except for those they trust) cannot see it.

System: If a character ever manages to acquire a shard of the Kalamaph, it will produce 60 points of Agmara every minute. It can be used to empower magical items. It requires no spirit to be bound to the stone, it cannot store Agmara energy it only produces a constant flow.

Shayyai

These are small metal or ceramic bowls, which are filled with flammable substances and lit. They are used during lengthy Majhahns and meditations, and can help hara transcend the physical form and enter a trance-like state where visions and magical energies abound. In this state, rehunas can quest to find new ways of manipulating magical forces.

Usually a rehuna will use four shayyai, on an altar, or placed around him on the ground, to help him meditate and enter trance. Though they are not essential, they can help in situations where a har might otherwise be distracted.

Rehunas believe the flame of a shayyai creates a physical tether between the mundane and the etheric worlds. This tether enables a har to return to his body by creating a light for the astral form to follow. Even though the fuel that burns in the shayyai eventually gets used up, the fire in the astral plane keeps burning until the har has returned.

Like a lighthouse or a beacon on a hill, the shayyai's flames are a guiding light on a dark highway. They will show a clear path back home.

Naqi

This is the tool of creation, the blade that is used during the Inception process. It can be any item with an edge that can penetrate the skin. Every tribe uses a different method to make the cuts on inceptee and inceptor, and each uses different tools. The Uigenna may use a broken bottle or whatever appropriate object is found nearby. The Varrs use a sterilized knife, while the Colurastes use a decorated pair of golden bracelets, which are conjoined and fitted with sharp blades on the inner cuffs. Each of these tools is called a naqi for the process of Inception.

"The fact that I was once human is irrelevant. That body was just a temporary vehicle; my soul was born to this world to be what I am now."

- Kuvari Har Gelaming, in strained discussion with Sshasha har Colurastes

Some tribes will have a dedicated tool, others won't. There is no significance in the naqi itself, as it is simply a device for opening a wound so harish blood can pass from inceptor to inceptee, to spread the Wraeththu gene and create a link to their magical form. The significance is in the name, and its origins. Naqi was the term applied to the shattering of the Kalamaph, once all Agmara energy had left it, and its shards scattered to seed the universe, and to enhance life with magic. As the shards embedded themselves into newly forming worlds, they changed those worlds and initiated a process through which life was created, and magic entered into them.

Nayati

A Nayati can be a physical place, such as a building dedicated to magical or spiritual work, or else a sacred site outdoors. Some tribes use existing buildings, such as old churches and other spiritual places, while others build their own. Yet more prefer to create temporary Nayatis in the landscape, by empowering a particular site for the duration of a Majhahn.

The Nayati can also be an etheric temple that exists only in the astral realms beyond the physical world, and is created in the imagination of the rehuna. A rehuna imagines – literally dreams up – the entire design of his etheric Nayati, according to his person preferences, with more detail added each time he 'visits' it. He visualises himself in this place every time he meditates or performs Majhahns. The creation of a visualised temple is found in several magical traditions, and is often known by the term 'inner plane temple'. The inner plane refers to the astral realm, the realm beyond mundane reality, the spiritual realm, a realm of pure energy. To the Wraeththu, it is referred to as 'the ethers'. The 'etheric Nayati' refers to that of the inner plane, while plain 'Nayati' refers to sacred space in the real world.

Aruna or Sex Magic

Sexual congress between Wraeththu is called aruna and is considered by the majority of hara to be a highly spiritual practice. It is not simply for pleasure, but can be a Majhahn that affects reality. A har is both male and female and has all the required organs for both function. They can take a dominant or passive role in aruna, and do not have to stick to the same role. Aruna is not just about physical gratification. It is a spiritual practice, and a way to connect with the Agmara energy. Role-playing out such actions would be inappropriate, so players should decide upon how much detail they wish to give if their character takes aruna. This matter should be discussed between Storyteller and players, prior to play, so that everyone present is comfortable with the limits set for such descriptions. All a player needs to do is state their character is about to take, or already has taken, aruna with another har.

The Hienama

A Hienama is a phyle's shaman and priest. He is usually in the direct service of the Archon or Phylarch and of higher caste than the majority of the tribe. Larger phyles might have more than one Hienama in service. A Hienama presides over all Inceptions, often using his own blood, but occasionally that of another har. After Inception, he will be in charge of training a new har in any spiritual teachings, magic and psychic powers; some Hienamas also offer basic instruction in aruna magic.

The other important role of the Hienama is that of a healer and he will often be skilled in Agmara healing and meditations. Unlike the Churgeon, who concentrates on healing the physical body of a har, such as traumatic wounds, the Hienama has a much wider base of knowledge and skills. While most Hienamas are attached to a tribe, some are also nomads who seek a higher cause or just wish to help Wraeththu reach their full potential.

"Didn't your hienama ever tell you that you should always take heed of omens?"

- Omen Febrice, Gelaming

"If their texts are to be believed then it's hard to see how such meek creatures compared to us could inherit the Earth."

- Sshasha har Colurastes

Aruna plays a big part in the novels, so should not be ignored in this game.

Enchantments and Hexes: the Practice of Magari

A Magari is a casting, an action with intention, whether that's the skewering of a wax doll with a needle, the creation of an herbal sachet, writing symbols or words down on paper and then burning it, or eating or drinking something the rehuna has imbued with intention. Magaris are versatile because the rehuna can design his own, incorporating whatever tools, forces or actions he wishes. The secret is that the tools and forces are used with intention to achieve a particular result.

A Magari can be performed as part of a Majhahn, i.e. the magical working that takes place once the ceremonial invocations and so on have taken place. But Magaris can also be performed at any time, in any place. The decision concerning when and where to do them is the rehuna's alone.

To cast a Magari, the rehuna decides upon the focus of the working, and then designs it, incorporating whatever forces he desires. Finally, once the focus and design are perfected, the rehuna casts the Magari. He might simply empower an object to do a specific job, which is then placed in a particular place. He can programme it for how long the effect will last, concentrating on this as he casts.

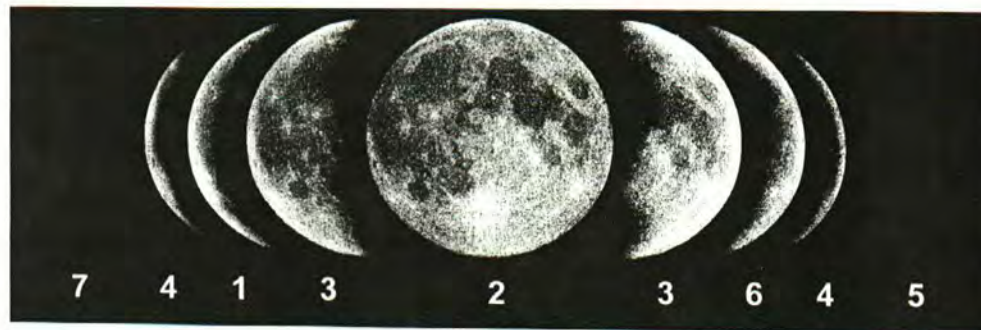
As for the timing of workings, as a rough guide, Magaris and Majhahns associated with growth and expansion should be performed in the waxing and full moon, and banishings or bindings in the waning moon, or even in the dark of the moon, depending on the seriousness of the situation.

Lunar Phases and Magical Actions

The image below shows the phases of the moon and the bonuses that relate to them. The Action Modifiers only apply when a Magari relates to the moon phase during which it's performed. If the Magari is not related, then the character receives no Modifier. While most rehunahs would want to take advantage of these bonuses, they cannot guarantee that the moon will be in the right phase when they need to cast a particular Magari.

In emergencies, a Magari would have to be performed at any time, but the shrewd rehuna can still take advantage of the moon phase to empower their work. For example, if a rehuna needed to perform a Magari to attract direly needed wealth, and the moon was in its waning or dark phase, he could design his working so that it concentrated on banishing negative energies or physical obstacles to him achieving his desire, rather than concentrate on simply acquiring abundance. Similarly, if a binding on an enemy needed to be cast in the waxing phase, the rehuna could design his Magari so that it focused more on the enemy being removed from his life through massive good fortune i.e. the har who's enviously been tracking him to steal his vakei suddenly gets one from another source.

As with choosing which magical forces to use, an effective rehuna is creative when working with the phases of the moon, and thinks laterally as to how to achieve his aims.



1. First Quarter - Inception and Growth Actions (+3 Action Modifier)
2. Full Moon - Powerful Positive Actions (+5 Action Modifier)
3. Half Moon - Closure and Decline Actions (+3 Action Modifier)
4. Darkening/New Moon - Null Period (0 Action Modifier)

"I respect power and skill...you seem to have been blessed with an abundance of both."

- Karrana har Kakkahaar

"Tell that to Mr. Tall Dark and Scary here; he seems to think he's intimidating for a human."

- Twitch, Uneeah

5. Dark Moon - Banishing and Negative Actions (+3 Action Modifier)
6. Last Quarter - Holding and Lessening Actions (+3 Action Modifier)
7. Eclipse - Powerful Negative Actions (+9 Action Modifier)

For Example: if a character was to perform a Magari to aid others around him, on the night of a Full Moon, he would gain them +5 Action Modifier on his Manipulation roll. If it was performed during any other lunar phase, the character might gain a smaller or no Action Modifier.

N.B.: As it can be difficult to track the phases of the moon it is up to the storyteller to decide when a full moon is, and from then keep a rough check of the days in the game world before the next full moon.

"We do not weave spells like book-based wizards. There are no pointy hats or beards...nor do we arrive exactly when we mean to."

- Kallan, Gelaming

RESULTS AND CONSEQUENCES

Whenever Agmara is used to perform a Magari, the rehuna puts his existence on the line. Reality, though elastic in nature, will snap back or at least try to snap back into place. Also there might be times when the target of a rehuna's magic resists his efforts, making his task more difficult.

Probability

Probability and reality both have an effect on magic. Perhaps a more accurate term would be Probability of Reality. It comes into play every time any kind of magic is performed, and it covers two areas: Subtle magic and Vulgar magic.

A Magari that alters the natural flow of probability and changes what *would have happened* if the rehuna hadn't cast his Magari could suffer serious backlash on him. The extent to which the universe will attempt to reassert mundane reality depends upon how implausible the effects of the Magari are. Even if the universe does 'lash out' in this fashion, the results of the Magari might still be successful; it's just that the rehuna might also suffer a negative effect.

Subtle magic is the art of hiding Magaris from the view of others. If a rehuna can do this well enough, he will not compromise reality. For example, if he destroyed a table by causing a drunk to fall onto it and break it, it would be a probable event, and the elastic nature of reality would not be affected. However, Vulgar Magic causes a ripple in the fabric of reality, which could cause serious fallout. For example, if we go back to the table, and magic was used simply to make the table disappear or explode through a ball of flame from a rehuna's fingertips, Probability would be compromised. It is Vulgar magic, visible to all.

"The universe is one of the most difficult tomes to read, for it is an ever-shifting book of diverse probabilities."

- Loman Ra har Oblivata

Resistance

All living beings have a natural capacity to resist magic, whether that is through the ability to use magic themselves, or protection through plain ignorance. They have a chance to resist whatever is thrown at them, and the higher their level of Resistance, the more likely they will remain unaffected. You cannot upgrade your character's resistance through direct character development. Every character's Resistance is based upon their intelligence and willpower. A rational mind, coupled with a strong sense of person, creates a field of Resistance. An intelligent mind will rationalize whatever it perceives, whether it is observing science or magic, or experiencing the narrative of the story. Each method of Resistance is different and automatic, unless the character knowingly wants the effect to happen to them.

A character's resistance can only be upgraded through caste progression, or through owning a powerful magical artefact.

"Have you heard this one about the three Ugienna that walk into a bar?"

- Aceama har Uigienna

CHURGERY AND HEALING

Wraeththu are physically superior to humans, but they are not invulnerable. Most hara are about 30% more resilient than humans. Their immune systems have developed to deal with most known illnesses and nearly all human toxins. Hara also heal at an accelerated rate, and if Agmara is applied, healing takes place even faster.

Agmara Healing

If a healer has knowledge of physiology and is adept at channeling Agmara into a wounded patient, they can achieve amazing things. The energy of the universe, working with the knowledge of the healer, can cause bones to knit in hours rather than months, and tissue damage to be reversed at miraculous speeds. However, without knowledge of human or harish physiology, the healer could make the situation far worse than it already is. The best an untrained healer can do is to stabilize the patient.

Churgery

This is the art of the healer. A Churgeon is a har who has studied harish physiology, and is interested in the advancement of such knowledge, from unravelling Wraeththu DNA to coming up with healing techniques. They also work on advancing techniques to help cure mental illness.

Many tribes specifically hunt down humans with prior medical knowledge or who lean towards a vocation to help others. These humans are prime targets for Inception, and are taken aside and specially trained in healing and harish physiology and psychology. This training can last many years. As Churgery is a developing art, all experience in the field is seen as some form of training. Once a relationship has been established between the trainee and their mentor, advice and further training can be undertaken via telepathy. A telepathic link is enough to transfer new information and techniques, but it cannot be used during an actual Churgery procedure, unless both parties are in close proximity. Many Churgeons are engaged in experiments to push the boundaries of their telepathy, and try to create a subconscious link that can be used during Churgery procedures. If advancements in such areas can be achieved, a veritable ocean of medical knowledge could be on hand for all Churgeons.

Group healing is also possible. If one Churgeon has skills essential to the operation and the other trainees don't, they can establish telepathic communication to share skills. Though not perfect, this function allows other hara to use the Head Churgeon's medical skills at 50% of their maximum. If those in the group are not undertaking Churgery training they can still partake, but they have access to the skills at 25% of the Head Churgeon's maximum.

Churgeons can share knowledge of physiology and other aspects of the Wraeththu physical form, since it flows especially easily through a telepathic link. It might be that a subconscious knowledge of their own form, or even genetic instinct, is awakened in the recipient when the link is established.

Other Responsibilities of the Churgeon

One of the main responsibilities of the Churgeon, next to healing, is keeping the knowledge of harish physiology out of the hands of humans. A Churgeon will generally be present in any official scouting party or group of Wraeththu travelling across country. They will tend to the group and ensure that any bodies are disposed of, usually through burning, so that no evidence remains. It is one of Wraeththu's top priorities to keep humans in the dark about harish physiology. Even if a group should be on a mission, bodies have to be destroyed. Any humans who discover the truth must have their memories removed or else be incepted. In extreme cases, hara might kill someone to preserve their secrets.

"It's interesting that you talk about humans as if you'd never been human yourself. Is your memory short or simply selective?"

- Sshasha, Colurastes

"I'd ask you if you had a death wish, but since you already proved that by dying...there doesn't seem to be a point in the question."

- Jazran, Varr

Like human doctors, Churgeons have a form of the Hippocratic Oath by which they all abide. This forbids them, when requested, from discussing the details of any patient with non-Churgeons. They may discuss such things only with a har's inceptors or chesnari. In any conflict, their priority is healing the injured and saving the lives of their own tribe members. Some might extend this help to hara of other tribes, but if those hara are enemies, such assistance would be frowned upon by the Churgeon's Archon or Phylarch. The only tribe whose Churgeons will treat any injured party regardless of their affiliations is the Obliviata, since helping other tribes and those less fortunate is part of the Obliviata way.

HUMAN MAGIC

Humans have believed in magic for many thousands of years, even though political, scientific and religious systems sought to suppress this belief.

Human Nature: A Tragic Tale

An extract from the musings of Malakess-har Sulh

Throughout human history, esoteric groups and societies have passed on secret and exclusive knowledge of the unknown. Each group claimed they had found the key to true magic, but each fell by the wayside as Dogma and paranoia crept in to destroy their groups from within. The cultish behaviour of many humans accomplished only one thing: making magic farcical or else something to be feared.

Humans are random creatures, who rely on instinct more than the knowledge and wisdom they have garnered over the years. Fear is a big factor in the life cycle of the human. Many human organisations believed in miracles but abhorred magic, stating it was the work of some evil force, and therefore to be mistrusted.

The human instinct of fear is the major controlling force in all their magical endeavours. Maybe it's their fear of success or the unknown that limits their growth in all magical areas. Also, humans have a distinct inability to work together for a common goal, as certain members of any human group will always want all the power. Groups eventually break down due to infighting, which inevitably halts all productive magical progress.

Humanity's inability to work together for the common good is illustrated throughout their history. Every society and civilization recorded wars and conflict that arose from what often appear to be petty reasons. The most common cause for hostilities was belief and religion: often instigated by religions that espoused the concept of miracles but rejected magic with distaste. When two factions held different beliefs, they each felt the other should be eradicated or converted by force. Maybe this is why human magical development was stunted, and in some cases regressed.

It seems that war was part of human life, while magic was mostly confined to the realms of 'make believe.' They took power-mongering, and the art of war and destruction, far too seriously. If they had worked together, they could have reached a stage of magical development where they found the key to true magic. Then maybe they could have saved themselves from their own oblivion.

"The scales of the cosmos must remain in balance if we are to reach a truth...each of us must become a weight on both ends."

- Loman Ra har Obliviata

Of course the Varrs believe their wars are never pointless. They are too blind to see that they are making the same mistakes as Humanity. The almighty Gelaming could be accused of the same thing.

Subconscious Abilities and the X-Factor

Occasionally, humans subconsciously tapped into the energy of the universe. Quite often, such individuals were shunned as being evil, or locked away in institutions. In reality, these psychics, mediums (and others that were branded as a menace to society)

tapped into something astounding. They managed to access Agmara, and in some small way manipulated the forces of the universe. If these few had pushed themselves and developed further, they might have been able to improve their abilities to connect with the universal energy through their conscious minds.

If hara come across any such humans, they are regarded as prime candidates for Inception, as they already have a subconscious link to the universe. Even though the link might be tenuous, Inception will strengthen it. Such individuals generally experience faster magical development and caste progression than other hara.

TRUE MAGIC

"If we put slot A into tab B and...wait...I'm confused here."

- Twitch, Uneeah

Humans only scraped the surface of what magic really is. Hara possess an innate link to the energy of Agmara, but even so their progression has surpassed every expectation.

Agmara is the true source of all magic; everything in the universe, whether it is physical or etheric, is intertwined with the energy of Agmara. Those who have been attuned to this energy's wavelength have unbridled power at their disposal. The act of Inception attunes all Wraeththu to Agmara, and with the development of their minds and their androgynous spiritual being, they are capable of great wonders.

There are limits to what a hara can do, but in most cases those limits are based purely in the mind of the rehuna. With most rehunans, the problem is subconscious, and they require Majhahn or some other meaningful physical act to enable them to achieve a greater level of power. The quest for enlightenment, or the achievement of a particularly difficult magical goal, might convince the subconscious mind that it has the ability to wield greater power.

The forces of Matter, Energies and Conversion are the basic building blocks of the universe; Agmara flows through them all. An experienced rehuna can manipulate these forces like potter's clay. A keen intellect and a fair amount of creativity will help any rehuna achieve the greatest effects with minimum effort. Because the size of the effect is dependant on many factors, the wildest rehunans will use small effects and let nature continue its course to reach the desired result.

With enough knowledge and a modicum of power, a rehuna can create almost any effect they desire. They just need to know what is required for the desired result to manifest and decide on the best group of forces to manipulate.

Magical Forces

The twelve elements that make up the universe, to which all hara who are magically inclined have access, are divided into three groups. The elements are collectively called Forces; in many cases both terms are used. The first group is comprised of the physical elements, based in the physical world, dealing with all forms of matter. The second is comprised of all Energy forms. The third is comprised of Meta Reality and changes of states.

A character would rarely refer to the forces by name, since many hara don't know exactly what it is they manipulate during the working of magic. The names given here would have little or no bearing in the game world; they are merely pointers to help players construct their Magaris. A character would know their limits but would probably never name them specifically. They might say 'I can manipulate fire and create objects' rather than 'I can use the Fire and Earth elements.'

Every force has an aspect that can affect the appearance of a character. Intense use of a particular force will change a rehuna slightly. This is not necessarily a major difference, and in most cases might be unnoticed by outside observers. However, hara with a keen eye will notice the subtle changes, even if they do not attribute them to the use of magic.

"There is nothing more I can teach you; some lessons must be learned from life itself."

- Kallan, Gelaming

A rehuna will gain the traits of the force, or forces if there are more than one, which dominate their magical abilities. Some forces will slightly alter the personality of a character, while others will modify their physical appearance slightly. Mostly, the effects of magical forces are beneficial, although in some cases there might be detrimental effects.

A campfire would contain the elements of Earth and Fire; Earth for the wood that burns and Fire for the spark that burns. Mist contains Water and Air.

The perception of what elements are needed is what is important. As perceptions change from har to har, one might perceive steam as the domain of **Water**, while another would see it as the domain of **Air**. Magic is not an exact science; it has a lot to do with perception. As long as the rehuna's intention is correct the end result will be the same, no matter how they perceive the elements.

Both the Physical and Energy Forces are capable of creation and manipulation. However, the use of Physical Forces to create things will suffer the effects of Probability most of the time it is used.

N.B.: Each element has the relevant Stat indicated after its name; this is so the Storyteller and player know which element to take any bonuses from.

Physical Forces

Air, Earth, Fire and Water are the four elements that are the basis of any magic which uses physical components, such as gases and metals. These forces can be combined for specific Magaris that require the use of more than one element. The effects of physical elements can range from making it rain to harnessing the power of a volcano. However, it's rare that a Magari will involve only physical matter elements; most employ a combination Matter and Energy forces.

Air [INT]

The element of **Air** covers all gases and emissions, from Oxygen to Chlorofluorocarbons. These elements can be created and manipulated by the rehuna, according to their needs. Air has always been seen as a vital element in any magic where transportation of objects or energies is involved. However, this is a common misconception. **Air** deals only with gases of all kinds. It can be used to fill a room with combustible gases or to create a cloud designed to choke a foe.

*If used correctly, Air can hide a har's scent from animals hunting them. It can create rainfall through the manipulation of winds. As water-based travel is common, Air can be used in conjunction with **Kinetic** to fill a sail with wind or to diminish winds. Creating oxygen to fuel a fire is also common, as it makes the fire burn hotter and faster. In the hands of a creative rehuna, the uses of Air are limitless.*

Example: Gasses, wind manipulation, scent masking, feeding and starting a fire, enriching oxygen content to be ignited by a spark.

Aspects: Many hara who have air as their primary Element are seen as being intelligent and occasionally aloof. These individuals will take on many characteristics of the element. Though they may seem airy and appear to float, they are far from it. They are swift and quick-thinking, and able to adjust themselves to many ways of thinking.

Earth [STR]

Earth includes solid matter, from wood to radioactive substances like plutonium, all of which can be created and manipulated by the use of this element. It can be used to create solid objects, and can even be used to shape earth and rock. The Earth element represents all solid materials. These materials can be manipulated like a sculptor works with clay.

Hara can use this element to form rudimentary defences in times of need. It can also be used with knowledge and foresight to create a multitude of objects.



Example: Manipulating rock into a sculpture or a wall, creating small and useful objects when required, creating blades and weapons when combined with the right skills, such as **Kinetic** to create missiles.

Aspects: The rehuna who has this element as their primary will take on many Earth characteristics, being strong and sturdy. (This does not mean bulky in appearance, since all hara have a tendency to be lithe.) They may be seen as having an iron constitution. Some of them will wear clothes of earth tones and be seen as good, solid, dependable hara. They might be travellers and nature lovers.

Fire [DEX]

The **Fire** element includes such things as combustible materials, heat and flames. **Fire** is used in magical operations, such as creating explosions and white heat, or the essential spark to light a fuse or a campfire. Every Magari that produces heat incorporates the **Fire** element. It can also be used in situations where heat needs to be extracted from an area or object.

*Though this may seem to conflict on some level with a har's innate ability of Thermokinesis, the **Fire** element offers a much wider range of uses. It can be used at a distance and with other forces to produce different effects. The wild and unpredictable nature of the **Fire** element can cause problems in rehunars who work with it exclusively. It can give rise to unpredictable and explosive personalities, who are sometimes doomed to self-destruction.*

Example: Creating fires, subduing them, explosive effects, aiding explosive materials to produce a greater radius of destruction. Also it could be used for heating, cooling or changing the temperature of anything.

Aspects: The primary attributes of the **Fire** elements are a short temper and a fiery attitude. The rehuna who attunes themselves to this element will usually have red, orange or radiantly golden hair and favour clothes in shades of crimson and scarlet, colours so bright they almost seem to explode out of them. Many will be tanned and might feel continually hot, as though they were on fire. Although **Fire** rehunars might seem rash, they will dance and bend like flames, and are almost impossible to confine, since they are adept at escaping most dangerous situations.

Water [WIL]

Fluids and liquids of all kinds can be created and manipulated using this element. **Water** includes all liquids, from oil, water, wine or coffee, to sulphuric acid. Producing some of the more complex liquids such as wine or oil requires the knowledge of their creation or refining.

*The ability to manifest water, one of the most essential elements to any travelling har on the road is a huge advantage, since it's not always easy to find a clean water supply. The rehuna who studies the **Water** element will never die of thirst.*

Example: Forming liquids of all kinds. For the more complex, such as acids, the rehuna must have knowledge of their structure and effect. A **Water** specialist can create either a small spring or even a vast torrent. The most experienced rehunars can even cause the destruction of a large body of water.

Aspects: The main attributes of rehunars attuned to the **Water** element are graceful and fluid movements. They have the ability to adapt to any situation. They are also a formidable force: when a **Water** rehuna sets his mind to something, he will keep at it in his sinuous, flowing way, until he finally erodes away all obstacles.

Energy Forces

Some of the energy-based elements are so subtle, you might never notice them. These Energies also include the forces of movement and gravitation, as well as electricity. Energies are the binding force of the universe and are found in everything from a basic single cell creature to the most complex life form.

"Aruna. It's like smoking a bong only imagine the bong gives you the biggest high you've ever known and you don't come down for weeks."

- Myth, Uigenna

"Thank you very much...I really appreciate the gift of your talent...no...I am being serious, this is me being nice."

- Cest Naran har Uigenna

Spirit [INT]

Spirit, the Energy of life-force, is found in every living creature. It is this which makes a har unique and individual, and keeps him alive and thinking. Without **Spirit**, living beings would be no more than a mindless pulp of chemicals and organs. A rehuna can use **Spirit** in the creation of living or animated matter. As this Energy is susceptible to 'programming', it can also be used to create etheric beings that only exist for short periods to do specific tasks.

*Even if a rehuna is not attuned exclusively to this force, he will use it in conjunction with his favoured forces in his Magaris. This is to vitalize the Magari, and give it a subtle form of intelligence. Locking enchantments, and similar works, may incorporate **Spirit** so that only a selected few may pass the lock. **Spirit** instils any Magari that incorporates it with the ability to make limited decisions or judgements.*

Example: **Spirit** can link sentient creatures through a form of telepathy, which opens up a wide variety of communications and uses. Some less scrupulous rehunars may use it to implant alien thoughts into a mind, or to mentally attack another. **Spirit** can be programmed in many ways to perform tasks or show signs of intelligence.

Aspects: The main attributes of rehunars attuned to this force are a wild, free and unpredictable personality. Full of life and energy, they always seem to be more than they are. Many who concentrate on **Spirit** will show signs that they are thinking on many different levels.

Kinetic [DEX]

This force is found in every moving object, whether it is alive or dead. If something moves, it has some amount of kinetic energy. If a rehuna wants to create a projectile or an object in motion, he would use this force. The amount required is dependent upon the desired speed of the object in question, or whether it needs to perform a series of complex manoeuvres.

Kinetic energy is used by hara to move bodies of water, to change the direction of the winds or simply to move objects around. Some hara have questioned whether this is a force at all, but its proponents simply state that life requires movement of some form, even if that is only blood moving around the body or breath entering and leaving the lungs.

Example: **Kinetic** can be used to create moving objects, or to add motion or extra speed to objects. Though its scope seems limited, its uses are varied and essential to most Magaris. Although there are other ways to move an object, such as expanding gas in a closed chamber, it far easier just to accelerate it.

Aspects: The main characteristics of a rehuna who favours **Kinetic** are the ability to bounce back from any situation, and to fall and move quickly and precisely, so as not to harm themselves. They might also have a tendency to fidget a lot or constantly keep moving as though they're uncomfortable with sitting still.

Attraction [STR]

The force of gravity is everywhere. Gravity wells are like dips in the fabric of the universe that attract all objects within their influence towards them. Although **Attraction** might appear similar to **Kinetic**, this force can affect multiple objects, whereas **Kinetic** only affects one object at a time. Gravity wells can be infinitely sustainable. **Attraction** covers the forces of magnetism, which enable the sustaining of a gravity well.

***Attraction** is used by many hara to influence situations, pull groups of people together or to manipulate others around them. It can also be used to magnetize metals or produce artefacts that can be attuned to detect certain conditions in the environment.*

Example: **Attraction** includes all forms of magnetism, even animal magnetism. When combined with **Spirit** it can produce interesting effects. It is also useful in situations where one central body – either metallic, planetary or spiritual – attracts other objects.

Aspects: Some of the attributes associated with users of this force are magnetism and attraction. They are literally magnetic hara to whom others are irresistibly drawn. Often, they seem to absorb the light around them.

"We will one day all understand the deepest mysteries...on that day we shall be at peace."

- Loman Ra har Obliviata

"Some have accused me of falling in love with the humans...I cannot say if it is love or not, but I know in some way I do love them."

- Sshasha har Colurastes

"Time for some home truths...you and I will never get along, because we're not of the same tribe."

- Jazran, Varr

Plasmatic [WIL]

Plasmatic includes types of Energy not covered by **Spirit**, **Attraction** and **Kinetic**. This includes electrical energy and charges in particles or objects. All **Plasmatic** energies share a common factor: they cannot sustain themselves without a catalyst, such as a battery. Most **Plasmatic** energy will dissipate shortly after it's been created, unless it's bound into an object. Even then, the effect will not be permanent and will eventually drain away.

Plasmatic has been used by many hara to keep the odd piece of old technology running for a little while longer. Though it can't be sustained for lengthy periods, it can give those vital few minutes' life to a piece of equipment that could be life-saving for a har in need.

Example: The days of electrically powered machines have passed and now only a few things require electricity to function. However, the resourceful rehuna can use raw electricity in many different ways, especially when they combine it with other forces. Electrical energy can be used to weld metals or even restart an injured har's heart.

Aspects: Many of the advocates of **Plasmatics** seem to feel tingly to the touch, which might even be strong enough to feel like a mild electric shock. Although this is not harmful, it can be a little disconcerting to those not used to it.

Changing States

These forces are the lesser known, and are far more difficult to comprehend, learn about and use than other forces. They are the hidden forces that make the universe and its infinite probabilities possible. Their power is beyond measure and the cost of using them can be great.

The Changing State forces do not reflect on the rehuna like the Matter and Energy forces do, so a rehuna would not manifest physical signs of practicing with these forces.

Temporal

This force involves the manipulation and traversing of time. A rehuna attuned to this force has immense power at his disposal, as he has the ability to change the entire course of a timeline. But this is not without cost, and the gravest cost at that. A true temporal paradox cannot only destroy the rehuna but also the entire dimension they have altered. That's why it is rarely used for travelling into the past, although some experienced rehunahs might visit the future, in which case they would not be able to return to their own time. This is because in the multilayered universe, there are infinite possible futures at any one time, as well as infinite possible pasts. In dire situations, a rehuna might choose to go only minutes or at most an hour into the future, to avoid danger, as there would be less chance of ending up in an alternate timeline than the one he previously inhabited, but even so there is a risk he might not find himself in the reality he knows. Mostly, the **Temporal** force is used for accelerating or decelerating time for an area or an object. It's also used to obtain foresight and hindsight; to view the future and past, rather than visit them. Misuse of this power is very dangerous and Magaris involving **Temporal** should not be attempted without a great deal of knowledge and experience.

*Very few hara have experimented with the use of the **Temporal** force, simply because those who have are never seen again. The use of foresight and hindsight are of limited use, as the future or past that is glimpsed might not apply to the current reality or timeline. Also, once a rehuna is aware of a possible future, he cuts himself off from all other possibilities, and might even alter his timeline with his foreknowledge.*

Example: Hindsight enables a rehuna to observe past events, but this view is often distorted. Foresight will show possible future events, but the further into the future the rehuna projects his vision, the more likely it is that his current reality will not comply with the particular timeline he glimpses. Time travel itself is fraught with dangers, for both the rehuna and reality itself. At most, a rehuna might project himself only minutes into the future.

"If you can walk a mile in my shoes, wow...that's totally cool dude...because I don't wear any."

- Myth, Uigenna

Temporal can be used in any situation where the distortion or alteration of time is desired. If a rehuna speeds up time relative to himself, he can move unseen, or give himself a better chance of completing a difficult or dangerous task.

Phase

Phase enables the rehuna to manipulate Probability. He can make changes to reality, the effects of which can be as varied as a city suddenly having a different name, to the entire world being populated only by insects! **Phase** can be used to traverse the otherlanes and access other realms. However, though this is relatively simple to accomplish, as yet hara do not possess the ability to examine a realm before entering it. Therefore, the issue of surviving a hostile environment prevents sensible rehunas from attempting this. As with the **Temporal** force, **Phase** is rarely used to visit other realms without careful consideration, as it can land the rehuna and his accomplices in dire trouble. An extremely experienced rehuna could combine the forces of **Phase** and **Temporal** to lessen the risks. Foresight could give the rehuna an idea of whether a realm was hospitable to harish forms or not. In some realms, where different laws of physics apply, a rehuna could use these combined forces to traverse great distances in short periods of time. The wise rehuna remembers that in unknown realms, anything is possible. The few reports concerning the Sedim that have been released by the Gelaming talk about how proficient these creatures are with this Changing State force.

*As with **Temporal**, this force is rarely used because of the danger to the rehuna and those around him. Experiments have been carried out with this force, but the results, though astounding, have been physically and mentally demanding on the hara concerned. Some hara have been lost in other realms unable to return home, until other hara have managed to locate them and bring them back.*

Example: **Phase** can be used to travel to other realms, but such travel is fraught with dangers. It is possible the rehuna will vanish, never to return. However, if used with **Temporal**, **Phase** can provide a more accurate picture of the future, or at least the most possible future. **Phase** can be used in many creative ways and with experimentation it may be possible to travel great distances almost instantly, or track down artefacts or materials from other realms.

Destruction

As all the other forces are concerned with creation this force's sole purpose is to annihilate energy and matter. This has already been explained to some degree in an earlier section. **See page 44.** What follows gives more detail. As with many of the magical forces, **Destruction** should be manipulated with care and sense. Once something has been destroyed it cannot be brought back exactly the same as it was. Most of the time, the use of **Destruction** is considered Vulgar magic, and any resultant deficit in matter is usually taken back in kind by the universe. The ability to destroy anything instantly obviously has benefits, and it is relatively easy to accomplish. It takes very little magical energy to set cascade **Destruction** in motion, and thereafter the object will fuel its own destruction. Unfortunately, wilfully destroying something using this magical force almost always has unforeseen consequences.

***Destruction** is used sparingly and always as a last resort. Many hara have suffered mental illness when over-using it. The universe reacts aggressively to matter within it simply ceasing to exist. It will lash out at the rehuna, giving him far more problems than he can cope with.*

Example: Though the practical uses of this force are limited, its effects can be devastating. If a rehuna wanted another har to be removed from existence, with no physical trace left behind, he would use **Destruction**. Combined with **Spirit** or **Temporal**, is it possible the har in question's soul could be destroyed. They could even be erased from history. However, using such levels of power, the rehuna would end up suffering worse than their victim.

Used in small amounts **Destruction** can be combined with other forces for some potent effects.

"You really have no idea of the concept of a bargaining chip do you?"

- Blackrose har Sulh

"No matter how many times you ask...and request it...you shall not be made into one of us."

- Kallan, Gelaming

"Do you know how much one of these things costs? And you have, like, two!"

- Twitch, Uneeah

N.B: This is the only way in the known universe to truly destroy something. When a har dies their spirit will travel to another realm. However, with Destruction that spirit can be destroyed,

Conversion

Conversion is the most useful of the Changing States forces; it conveys the ability to convert one thing into another. This does not apply to complex organisms or structures, but certain base physical elements or magical elemental forces. Usually, **Conversion** is used in conjunction with other forces, especially the elemental ones. **Conversion** is useful to skilled rehunas, even though it is rarely used on its own. Used creatively to compliment other forces, it can facilitate powerful Magaris and defences.

*Accomplished rehunas use **Conversion** in many of their Magaris. The ability to convert matter to energy, and matter into other forms of matter, is very useful to hara who require rare materials and items.*

Example: Conversion is not an easy force to manipulate and unless used with care the rehuna might end up with negative effects from Probability. The use of Conversion is usually limited to purification of materials or the conversion of different types of energy.

Any Vulgar interaction with the physical world will result in the character gaining 1 point of Probability.

Other Aspects of Magic

As well as the main twelve forces of magic, there are other aspects at the rehuna's disposal that do not actually manifest physical changes. They do, however, provide control over Magaris and their results.

Chaos and Order

The force of **Chaos** is an intrinsic part of nature; **Order** is almost always imposed on nature by living creatures. Any object in this world, or any form of energy, possesses a degree of **Chaos**. For example, a natural lump of rock possesses **Chaos**; it does not conform to a preset shape. **Order** can be imposed upon it by carving it into a particular shape. A rough and jagged natural rock possesses more **Chaos** than a smooth stone. A rehuna can impose **Order** upon a Magari, to focus it accurately, so that it's more likely to behave as the rehuna desires, with fewer random elements likely to affect it. **Chaos** would broaden the spectrum of the Magari, and might result in random effects.

Every Magari requires either **Chaos** or **Order**, even if it's only in a minimum capacity, and one or the other of these is relevant in every effect.

Manipulation

Magaris are made up of different forces, but the responsibility of how effective they are ultimately rests with the rehuna himself. He needs to hone his skills in manipulating the magical forces, as well as how they relate to the universe.

As the rehuna's knowledge grows, his ability to manipulate the forces should grow with it. If a rehuna concentrates too much on acquiring knowledge, without putting that knowledge into effect, i.e. becoming proficient at manipulating magical forces, his Magaris will be ineffective. Levels of understanding must match levels of experience for the rehuna to be proficient in his work.

Resistance

Every sentient creature has a certain natural ability to resist magic directed against them, even if it's a subconscious defence. The only sure way to get past this resistance is if the target of the Magari consciously accepts the result. There is also the possibility that a willing recipient will still block the Magari subconsciously.

The ability to resist magic is innate and cannot be increased consciously. Even if a rehuna were to practice, setting himself up to resist certain high-level Magaris, it's more likely he'd die or be mentally impaired rather than build up resistance to attacks.

"By digging deep inside yourself you may break through that barrier I sense in your mind."

- Loman Ra har Obliviate

"Humans are really not all that bad, simple folk that need careful guidance and perhaps a little poke now and then."

- Sshasha har Colurastes

The best way a rehuna can increase his resistance is through training and mental conditioning, i.e. through caste ascension.

Probability

If a har has the ultimate power to control and manipulate the universe, there have to be some drawbacks. Though many wondrous effects can be created with magic, the universe can react against them like an enraged rattlesnake.

If the universe notices a rehuna taking any action against it, it will then strike. Subtle movements and apparently inoffensive actions will get a rehuna a lot further than rapid obvious acts. This is how the universe works. Most rehunars perform Magaris that draw little attention to themselves; the more subtle and unnoticeable the effects the better. To do otherwise is Vulgar magic, which is potentially dangerous to the rehuna and others around them.

In Vulgar magic, a Magari and its effects are obvious to anyone in the vicinity where it's cast. Vulgar magic goes against the natural rhythm of the universe. The wisest rehunars study each situation in which they need to use magic and think of ways in which the effect they desire can appear to have occurred naturally. For example, the best way to bring down a building is to find a weak spot in the foundation – or make one – and cast a Magari against that spot, rather than bombard the building with brimstone from the sky. The brimstone would be Vulgar magic, because such bombardment just would not happen unless there was an active volcano nearby, whereas a structural failure in the building's foundation is quite possible.

The universe is elastic. Any effect that goes against the grain, or fails to skim successfully the surface of plausibility, will result in the universe snapping back into place. It might not cancel out the effect, but it will certainly snap back against the rehuna. The snap will leave an invisible but debilitating mark on the rehuna, which takes time to fade. The more the rehuna creates Vulgar effects, the more he racks up debts to the universe. At some point, something has to break. For example, he might start to find that things he does in normal life go wrong. The more he persists in Vulgar magic, the stronger the side effects will be. Eventually something really serious will happen, which could result in the rehuna being psychologically scarred or even snatched into another plane of existence, from where he cannot escape. (For more information on the effects of Probability and what actions the Storyteller should take concerning them, see page 360.)

At worst, the rehuna will lose the ability to manipulate the magical forces, irrespective of what knowledge and experience he has. Some rehunars would rather die than lose their magical abilities; it would represent a life of study wasted. The most important thing in their lives, which defines them as a har, would be removed and become inaccessible.

Magic might seem like a way to infinite power, but the abuse of such power will lead to a rapid descent into situations where a rehuna will have all that power taken away from him. The universe is mostly tolerant, but reacts severely against those who go too far or take too many risks with the fabric of reality. The most powerful rehunars do not go for big impressive effects. They know that the most devastating Magaris are those that are the most subtle. With experience comes the awareness of how best to place Magaris to cause the maximum effect with the minimum of effort.

"Come in number six, your time is up!"

- Jazran, Varr

"Humans! I can't stand their filthy bodies or their ways."

- Karrana har Kakkahaar

CASTE PROGRESSION

Caste Progression from Ara – Brynie

By Cassiel Agrimony – Gelaming Scribe

The tribes of Wraeththu hold diverse views on caste progression. Some start to train inceptees from the first day they wake from althaia, while others allow their new tribe members a month or so to become accustomed to physical and mental changes, and to give these transformations time to take hold and settle. The first lessons will be fairly

"Wow...compliments...keep that up and you might just get somewhere."

- Aceama har Uigenna

basic, answering the questions that newly incepted hara always have, such as 'What am I?', 'Where did we come from?' and 'What happens next?' Tribes generally start their indoctrination at this time, while the mind of the inceptee is still fairly weak from all it's gone through. The answers a new har receives will shape him for the rest of his life, even if in time he changes his views and his tribe.

Advanced training varies wildly between the tribes. Most will start by teaching the basics of telepathy, healing and meditation, with the exception of the Varr and Obliviata tribes. The Varrs and the Uigenna will also teach fighting skills, while the Sulh, Kakkahaar and Unneah will concentrate on magic from a very early stage. The Gelaming already have a very structured and disciplined system for training and guiding newly incepted hara.

The new har will be taught the basic structure of the caste system and will also learn the history of the Wraeththu (or least the tribe's own version of it). By the time a har begins training, he should feel comfortable with his new body and be at ease with himself. Any psychological scars from his previous life should be healed with a course of Agmara, before any magical or physical training begins. Unfortunately, not every tribe (or phyles within tribes with fanatical or misguided Phylarchs) allow new inceptees the privilege of healing time. Caste progression for hara who are the results of botched Inceptions has not been fully studied at this time.

History of the Caste System

It is obvious that the caste system must have been the work of an inventive mind and was possibly based upon some human occult system that has long been forgotten by most hara. While the Uigenna were undoubtedly the first tribe, it seems unlikely that Manticker founded the caste system himself and those who ran with the Uigenna in the early days say that the basics of the system were already in place at that time.

Many high-ranking hara believe that the caste system is the work of the Aghama, which he left behind him to guide our race to purity and completion. Some find it hard to believe that such a complicated and complete system could derive from one har and be accepted by all Wraeththu so quickly. Surely the Aghama must have had guidance from wherever he came? It's possible he was a member of some human magical sect before he began creating Wraeththu in Carmine.

Another explanation is that the Aghama received knowledge of the system magically, and passed this inspired information on to those he first incepted. In turn, they passed it on unconsciously or instinctively to those they incepted thereafter. Perhaps knowledge of it resides in Wraeththu blood itself. Maybe, as in the old human religious texts, some higher power (the true source of Agmara?) chose hara to be the new race of this world, and their purpose is to continue their/its work in the universe. This hypothetical higher power might have passed knowledge on to those who became the first Nahir Nuri.

Who knows what knowledge may lie in wait for hara who aspire to Nahir Nuri: maybe even that of the Aghama himself?

"You have no idea of the danger you are in...or the danger you put everyone else in either..."

- Kailan, Gelaming

Why Do All Hara Use the Standard Caste System?

While most tribes appear determined to state their differences loudly at any given opportunity, all seem quite willing to accept the standard structure of the caste system. Even hara of outstandingly different tribes can quote their Tier and Caste Level if you ask them what it is. Of the known tribes in Megalithica and Almagabra, the only one that does not adhere to some form of caste system is the mysterious Obliviata. It's rumoured that they have Arch Hienamas amongst them, who possess understanding of magic, but no har who is not Obliviata has met them.

Unless a har has chosen voluntarily to disassociate himself from his tribe (i.e. become unthrist), or has had this forced upon him, he will be obliged to undertake training in some capacity. A har with undeveloped healing or telepathic abilities is of little use to his tribe. Among the Kakkahaar and the Varrs, certain hara are kept deliberately at the basic level of Ara, as their function is to act as servants to the higher ranking hara, or else as consorts, in which case they are required to do hardly more

than appear attractive. Most hara can at least expect to reach Neoma within their first year, but actual advancement is down to the skill and enthusiasm of the student rather than the practices of the parent tribe. Only a handful of hara have reached beyond mid-level Ulani, but a few Nahir Nuri do exist.

Most young hara appear to take to training without asking why it is necessary. Newly incepted hara need lessons on how to become Wraeththu, to help them to forget what it was like to be human. The caste system provides a safe and certain structure, which enables a har to get over and forget his previous life.

"Well I suppose some har must have invented it. Some say it was handed down to us from the Aghama, others accredit the Kakkahaar founder Velisarius with its creation, something that surprisingly the Kakkahaar themselves seem reluctant to confirm or deny. Like the legend of the Aghama himself, the true origins of the caste system are shrouded in mystery and speculation. Considering the brief history of our race, it seems absurd that such secrets are commonplace. I guess, in the very early days, everyhar was too busy fighting for survival to sit down and take notes."

- Finneaus har Unneah, Bard and Trader.

Will it Make Me a God or Lead Me to Enlightenment?

The ultimate aim of caste progression is to create balanced, well-rounded hara, who are comfortable and proficient with their unique abilities. Exceptions to this are the Varrs, whose sole aim would seem to be to create efficient, disciplined killing machines. The Kakkahaar and Sulh wish to understand the universe, the Obliviata wish to join their God. As for the Ugenna and the Unneah, they appear only to want to survive, which is perhaps a noble enough cause in these hard times. Nohar really knows the aim of the Colurastes, but as they generally stay out of everyhar else's way, it can be assumed their aim is not hostile to other tribes.

Some hara desire power over others and see swift caste progression as proof of their newfound strength and wisdom. But in reality, slipshod training, undertaken by unskilled hara and overseen by incompetent Hienamas who have insufficient magical training or healing skills, truly serves no point.

Do I Really Need Caste Progression?

(Other alternatives, see Obliviata)

It would be impossible for most hara to imagine never having received training. Telepathy has become second nature to them, and they would no doubt wonder if they could ever have managed to achieve such effortless thought transference without the guiding hand of their Hienamas to push them along. Limited skills would be possible without caste training, but would in no way match those of hara who had undertaken proper ascension. Those abandoned after Inception are the ones who might have no knowledge at all of their powers. Even the unthrist outcasts have some level of self-discipline to improve their innate skills.

Even though caste progression gives a har firm grounding for his magical training, the actual magical practices of his tribe, and in turn his skills at magic, are not reliant on his caste level. All hara are capable of affecting great changes in the universe, even at



Ara level. While it is true that a har with a more disciplined and less cluttered mind can produce greater and longer lasting results, there are many hara of chaotic and undisciplined natures who can wield magic effectively, even if they have never ascended beyond Ara.

The Magical Caste System

Caste does not apply to rigid social status, but to one of the nine levels of three tiers through which the student progresses.

First Tier:	Kaimana	-	Ara	Neoma	Brynie
Second Tier:	Ulani	-	Acantha	Pyalis	Algoma
Third Tier:	Nahir Nuri	-	Efrata	Aislinn	Cleatha

"Hi...hey wait...come back, you're missing out on my company already!"

- Twitch, Uneeah

These three tiers can be looked upon as, roughly, 'student,' 'undergraduate' and 'graduate'. None of them should be regarded as implying particular status or hierarchy. It is simply a system of learning. A title does not confer knowledge or expertise. Experience does.

Each level of the caste system incorporates the use of a symbol, which has a specific meaning. The idea behind this system is for the har to work through all the levels, gaining experience and knowledge as he progresses.

The first level, Ara, is concerned with an introduction to Agmara, the Wraeththu term for universal life energy, and how to use it. However some tribes choose to teach other things at Ara. The Varrs teach basic military manoeuvres and tactics. The Obliviata, on the other hand, teach the basics of hidden languages and the many paths that lead to their god Allavé.

Symbols and Sigils

In Kaimana, there are three symbols associated with the different levels: Ara, Neoma and Brynie. They have been 'programmed' to control energy invoked or created during Magaris and Majhahns. For example, a har will draw the symbol Ara to represent a portal to the imaginary realms, before partaking in any Magari. To close that portal, he will draw the symbol in reverse.

There are also different sigils for each tier and sometimes for various etheric locations, as well as for various aspects of magical belief.

The Path of the Aralid

From the Teachings of Velisarius har Kakkahaar:

Come walk with me upon the path that leads between the stars...

Kaimana is the first tier. It is the outer court of the caste system. Its name means 'the path of the seeker'.

Ara is the first level of Kaimana. Aralid is the student. Ara is the approach to and understanding of Agmara. Agmara is the life force of the universe, which is within everything

Proceed along the path of Ara with a steady yet measured pace. The star of knowledge hangs in the firmament, but if you run towards it, you will never reach it. Walk slow but true and your feet will lead you there.

The tools of the Aralid are the breath and the mind. Ara is Inception, the gateway to the inner realms of the imagination. Inception is transformation. The name of this ceremony is Harhune.

Harhune is the first Majhahn. It is conducted by a Hienama, who is a shaman concerned with Inception, initiation and magical training.

Those who are practitioners of magic are known as rehunas. This is the term for both seeker and priest – one who studies the unseen and who

"It's just a little blood – worry not, we are not asking you to die for us."

- Loman Ra har Obliviata

might officiate at Majhahns when a Hienama's services are not required. All those who have studied to Brynie level, and have practiced at that level for three years, have enough knowledge to lead high-level Majhahns and to become Hienamas.

Kaimana

Kaimana is the first tier of the three-tier caste system. By the time a har has reached Brynie, he should have a firm grasp of his abilities and have made some kind of decision on what his role in life will be. Those who wish to become Hienamas, or desire some say in the ruling of their tribe, will continue their study on to the Ulani tier – if their Archon or Phylarch views them as worthy.



"I saw a human cry once...it broke my own heart...so I incepted them out of remorse for what another har had done to their mate...was I wrong?"

- Sshasha har Colurastes



Ara

Ara means altar. As soon as a har is incepted he becomes Aralid. He will be taught the basics of his new powers, basic telepathy, healing and possibly something about the magical and religious aspects of his tribe. This is the minimum that any har should learn. Those destined, through whatever ill fate, to remain at this level would possibly be instructed in whatever menial tasks their tribe wishes them to do.

Neoma

Neoma means New Moon. Most hara reach this level about a year after Inception. They will be expected to learn more about the politics and history of their tribe and Wraeththu in general. Tribes that are magically inclined will encourage hara to build on their base magic skills and develop new ones.



Brynie

Brynie means Strong. It takes the average har about three years to reach this level. By this time, the har should understand his powers and abilities – even though not fully skilled, he should know what all the aspects involve – and have a firm grounding in magic. Tribes that prize strength and learning will at least expect hara to reach this level to play a full part in tribal politics. If a har is rushed through to Brynie, it will affect the control he has over some of his skills.

Beyond Kaimana

Only a minority of hara have reached (or yet want to reach) the higher levels. Even those who pass through to Brynie with ease might find it difficult to reach Ulani. Also, hara might encounter difficulties finding a teacher of high enough caste to take them beyond first level Ulani. In general, phyles will only include a couple of high-ranking Hienamas, who are available at any one time to focus on caste progressions. Only hara who are truly exceptional will ever be chosen for further training. If a har is considered to be skilled enough, or to have a rare skill or outstanding magical ability, he will probably have little choice in whether or not he takes his training further. Those undertaking training for Ulani might be taken away from their phyle for private training, sometimes for many years.

It's estimated that in the known Wraeththu territories of Megalithica, only a couple of hundred or so hara have achieved Acantha, first level Ulani. It is at this stage impossible to know how many more exist in other countries. Hara are generally told that they should not spend their time actively hunting a teacher to take them to Ulani; when they are ready to progress, a teacher will find them.

Nahir Nuri are rare. It's estimated there are around half a dozen of them in Megalithica, but many hara believe there are only three of them: Thiede, Orien and

"Take aim...breathe deeply and pray...praying comes after pulling the trigger..."

- Cest Naran har Uigenna

Velisarius. If there are others, they keep themselves hidden, and have perhaps dedicated themselves to a solitary life, devoted to the search for understanding and knowledge. It's very unlikely an average har could get close to the aforementioned three Nahir Nuri, never mind receive training from them.

Even though there are relatively few higher caste hara, it's generally believed these individuals are actively seeking inceptees of high calibre who they consider worthy of training. For the system to work, the higher levels must be made more accessible. However, at this stage of Wraeththu development, if the wrong hara receive this advancement, it could be disastrous for all.

As with all estimations, figures and dates are to be taken with a pinch of salt, but Hienamas believe it will only be a few years before caste progression to Ulani becomes commonplace for the most skilled and dedicated hara.

The Tribal Perspective

Almost all of the major tribes use the caste system. There are cultural variations, dependant on the tribe's origins. The major differences will be expanded upon in this section, along with many of the accepted caste advancement goals for each tribe.

"Look man you're not just treading on my dreams damn you; you're treading on my foot!"

- Myth, Uigenna

Colurastes

The Colurastes favour incepting humans who are very young. After Inception, the education of new hara is very important. All Colurastes are encouraged to learn about the past, so that they know and understand what went wrong, and that repeating the mistakes made by humanity will lead to disaster. In most tribes, hara are considered to be Ara immediately following Inception, but among the Colurastes, a har will only enter the caste system once his phyle's Hienama considers he is ready to start training. This is generally when the Hienama is satisfied that any psychological scars left over from Inception and the har's previous life have healed, or they are fully physically developed.



The Colurastes are known as the Serpent Hara, because not only do they emulate the behaviour of snakes, but they worship a divine serpent, Nagataka and claim they are in contact with a mysterious snakelike elemental race, the Ophidra, who grant them power and visions. Many hara of the tribe carry pet serpents with them at all times, which they regard as 'familiars', who assist them in contacting elemental or divine energies.

The Colurastes are an extremely secretive tribe and will not divulge the format and content of their Majhahns to anyhar else. If one of their hara should breach this code of conduct, retribution from the tribe's leaders can be extreme. Caste progression is likely a trial by fire that only Colurastes can survive, due to their extensive training.

"The finest merchandise you're likely to get, without a hefty finder's fee attached..."

- Blackrose har Sulh

"Hara of other tribes call us strange and weird. They are ignorant. We do not take offence at this, because we know outsiders fear what they do not understand. Our Majhahns are different to what other hara consider 'normal', because we have the way of the Serpent that they do not. Sciamander, our gracious Archon, weaves an intricate web of lies to other tribes to hide our true nature from those who don't understand us."

- Gabriel Chamberg, Colurastes

Ara – A har will become Aralid once the Hienama of his phyle announces him mentally and physically fit enough to complete his Inception. At this time, a Colurastes will first experience aruna, which is a sacred ceremony, rooted in ancient shamanic practices.

Neoma - To reach Neoma, a har will have advanced along his magical path, learning about his tribe's practices. Psychic skills will already be well developed and the har will be given specialised training to help him reach his full potential.

Brynie - At Brynie a Colurastes har will already be a skilled magician and the secret traditions of the tribe will be ingrained deeply within him. Hara lacking specialised skills will probably not advance much higher than Brynie.

Ritual and Magic

Among the Colurastes, who favour elaborate Majhahns, caste ascension ceremonies are lengthy and complex. They believe that extensive ritual is pleasing to their Ophidian god. Each level of caste ascension is regarded as a serious rite of passage to draw hara deeper into the tribe.

While the Majhahn of ascension itself will be attended by many hara of the phyle, eventually the initiate will be left alone in a cave sacred to his hara. Here, he will receive visions from the Ophidra about his own future or the past of the world. If he is truly blessed, Nagataka himself might make an appearance. As a har makes his way up the caste system, he will appear to change, transforming from a typical har into something far stranger. The snakelike tendencies of his hair increase as his spirituality progresses. By Brynie, his skin might have taken on a pearlescent sheen.

Much of Colurastes magic concentrates on advancing a har's natural psychic abilities. Training also involves learning about the magical forces of the universe, but specialisation in these is undertaken by only a few. It is rumoured that some Colurastes dabble in necromancy and commune with the dead. However, this is not a common practice, and no formal training in it is ever given.

Afterwards

A caste ascension is seen as proof of learning. Hara of exceptional magical power will be singled out by the Hienamas and trained as seers, healers or Hienamas. Beyond the first three levels of the caste system, the Colurastes are extremely secretive about their practices, and even conceal them from hara of their own tribe. Hara who advance to Ulani do not associate greatly with those of lower caste. If a phyle leader is advised by their Hienama that a har of Brynie level is ripe for further training, the Phylarch summons the har to a private meeting to tell him of this decision. Supposing the har is willing to continue his training, from that point forward he will break all contact with those around him, at least until his Ulani training has been completed.

Caste Goals

Goals of the Colurastes revolve around the study of history and the expansion of psychic abilities. This can include learning about philosophy and psychology, to give insight into how to deal with any confrontations with outsiders, and how best to react and act in any situation.

Example: The study of human behaviour and psychology, as well as the study of human history and philosophy, are important during the first two levels of caste advancement. From Neoma onwards, the har concentrates on expanding his psychic abilities and advancing his magical skills.

Magical Direction

The magic of the Colurastes revolves almost entirely around their belief in the god Nagataka and the Ophidra. Snakes and snake imagery play an important part in their Majhahns. Most phyles will have a serpent charmer in their ranks, who cares for and communes with a snake that hara treat as an oracle. The charmer is the only one who can interpret the movements and hisses of the creature.

"Ooooh that's shiny! Can I touch it please, can I?"

- Twitch, Uneeah

"Of course, I will do as you ask. I can do nothing less since you are my superior."

- Karrana har Kakkahaar

Gelaming

The Gelaming adhere strictly to the caste system and regard the training of their hara as extremely important for the good of the tribe. Despite this desire for high-ranking hara, no har is rushed through the process and all are allowed to set their own pace. The Gelaming favour incepting humans who already possess skills in one area or another, or they 'head hunt' hara from other tribes who they consider will be useful. All hara of the Gelaming are encouraged to continue working on their specialisations. The Gelaming like to think of their hara as the best in the world. Most Gelaming believe their tribe invented the caste system, but this belief does not correspond to the predominant historical evidence.



"I used to think of them as simple...but now I realise that in many ways, they are even more complex than I first thought."

- Sshasha har Colurastes

One of the main advantages the Gelaming have for caste advancement is schooling. In the fabled city of Immanion, there are a number of colleges and study centres that help with caste advancement. The Gelaming might have been the first tribe to take the study of the caste system seriously, but they are by no means the only one.

"The average har might groan if you mention the word 'school.' Their memories of being human come flooding back. However our study centres are free and open establishments, where hara of higher caste gather to teach and pass on the knowledge they have gained from their experiences. There are no set timetables or classes. Study groups with common interests gather together, and it's those interests that keep them coming back for more training."

- Zackary Raven Black, Gelaming Phylarch

Ara - After Inception a har will be taught the history of Wraeththu according to the Gelaming and the basics of magic. He will hear the legend of the Aghama and the stories concerning the volcanic Ring of Fire. He will also learn about how to wield and develop his innate abilities.

Neoma - At this level, a Gelaming is taught the intricacies of magic, including how to keep a low profile so that others are unaware of his magical actions. If the har is not magically inclined, he will be inducted into the Gelaming military, where he will improve his fighting skills. If the har has talent for magic or combat, his skills will be assessed to help him best choose a future path.

"If you so much as speak to me, I will rip out your tongue and cut out your eyes."

- Karrana har Kakkahaar

Brynie - By now, a har will know his path and should be setting his own goals for advancement. Gelaming can be quite competitive with each other, but this is regarded as a positive trait, since it encourages each har to reach his full potential. In exceptional cases, a Phylarch, or even Thiede himself, might take an interest in a har, and give them a special assignment for the greater good of the tribe.

Ritual and Magic

A Gelaming caste ascension Majhahn is similar to a university graduation mixed with a religious ceremony. After the main speeches have been given and the significant rites have been performed, the initiate will be taken to a party with his friends. A caste ascension Majhahn might involve a single har or a group, depending on circumstances. Whatever the case, it is a cause for great celebration. If the har has good contacts, there might be very high-ranking hara at the party, and on some occasions even important envoys from another tribes.

On occasion, Thiede might don a disguise and hide in the crowd at an ascension ceremony. In this way, he likes to assess any hara who might be of use to him in his expansion projects for Gelaming. Some Gelaming claim that Thiede attends every ascension in Immanion, on the lookout for hara of quality.

Afterwards

The Gelaming limit the number of hara who advance to Ulani, mainly to ensure that only the very best receive this training. The majority of hara do not conform to the rigorous standards set down by the tribal Phylarchs, but those who are dedicated to advancement are given every encouragement. All Hienamas of the tribe are trained in Immanion, and are then sent out to act as envoys for their kind, and to recruit hara from other tribes.

Caste Goals

Because the Gelaming prize many different skills, a har has a host of opportunities to choose from. He might go for a route involving the building of settlements, or the development of trade and diplomacy. He might decide to expand his magical skills or take up military service. Unlike the Varrs, the Gelaming expect all of their military personnel to be well trained in magical skills. Those who pass to Ulani would be the leaders of hara: heads of projects, diplomats, engineers, craftshar, teachers, healers, local Phylarchs, military commanders and Hienamas.

Example: Once a har has learned the basics of magic and what it is to be Wraeththu, he must decide upon his future course in life. Most hara take either magical or military training, to establish their strength in those areas.

Magical Direction

Gelaming favour magic that encourages self-development. They like pomp and ceremony, and whenever possible, Majhahns are elaborate affairs. Gelaming are encouraged to take an academic view of their training, and to regard what is seen as supernatural as simply science that has yet to be understood. That said, the average Gelaming is also spiritual and reveres the Aghama.

Sulh

The Sulh use a structure very close to the standard caste system, which is perhaps surprising, considering their independent nature. They encourage full development of Wraeththu powers and have researched their limits. Magic, especially elemental magic based upon old human pagan practices, is widespread among the Sulh. Those gifted with visions, or the ability to read the future, are offered special training opportunities within the tribe. It is yet unknown how the phyles of the Sulh were initiated and expanded, so it is difficult to determine why a tribe that prides itself on its individuality, and its island separation from other tribes, has elected to use the standard caste system.



"This island was nothing more than a breeding ground for magical beliefs, which in turn weremutated by other nations who had none of their own. This mutated magic came back to this green and fair land as historical fact. If you ask me, it was only the iron resolve and strength of the Wraeththu which helped restore and keep sacred those practices and beliefs that firmly belong here."

- Malakess har Sulh, *High Codexia of the Library of Kyme*.

"It's called a plan. If you actually bothered to think...you might walk away from this alive."

- Cest Naran har Uigenna

Ara - Once incepted as a Sulh, a har is taught about the tribe's earth-based religion and origins, as well as the skills of Divination, Healing and Telepathy. A phyle's Hienama will assess the har's magical ability and guide him down the right path. Some hara will begin studying history at this point.

Neoma - More in-depth study of Herbalism, Meditation and Divination will take place. The har will be initiated into a magical group that is most suitable for his needs. From there, he will progress and hone his skills in magic to aid the greater good of the Sulh.

Those hara who wish to go further will be encouraged to study diplomacy, politics and other related topics.

Brynie - At Brynie, a har will be expected to plan for further training at Ulani level. Hara who wish to pursue the path of the Hienama will start their preliminary training at Brynie. A har will continue to expand his telepathy and vision questing skills. Hara interested in the political life of the tribe will usually begin to study Psychology and Philosophy, to enhance their diplomatic skills.

"Aww pretty...but I think I'd be happier if you paid me with money or services."

- Blackrose har Sulh

Rituals and Magic

At each level, the initiate will fast for several days and then experience a series of ritual cleansing techniques and healing. The actual Majhahns are kept secret from those outside the tribe. Many of the Majhahns bear similarities to the beliefs of the Sulh's Celtic forebears. The Sulh claim their rites are more in keeping with the indigenous magic of Alba Sulh than those practiced by human pagans before the fall of human civilisation.

Not every har of the Sulh wishes to advance their magical abilities to the top level, but those who do are extremely dedicated to their path. Magical techniques, and other methods for commanding the magical forces, are always encouraged. A har of the Sulh will learn basic Magari-craft for when he's on the move, but the tribe as a whole favour elaborate Majhahns.

Afterwards

Once a har has learned the basic philosophy of his tribe's magical system, and has been taught about the uses and construction of Majhahns, he will be encouraged to research. Some will even undertake this study at the celebrated Library of Kyme, which is a repository for many interesting texts rescued from the ruins of human civilisation. A great many Sulh have an intense interest in the past and seek to understand it so that their tribe does not make the same mistakes that humans did. All Sulh love knowledge and believe it is one of Wraeththu's main tasks to expand upon human work. Some magical groups within the Sulh dedicate themselves to venturing out beyond their island home to become mediators in other tribes' conflicts and disputes.

Most hara believe that the Sulh are able to see the truth in everything, but if this were correct, then surely they would have found true enlightenment by now. However, as other tribes believe they possess this ability, the Sulh's services as mediators and advisers are highly valued within the world of Wraeththu. The Sulh hone their abilities to see a short distance into the future, so that they can get an impression of likely eventualities. They know that what they perceive might not always come to be, so they are skilled at delivering apparently 'mystical information' to hara who rely upon them. Each Sulh is taught that what they see is not always true, which is a valuable lesson in their homeland, owing to the magical 'hot spots' that abound there. These areas can cloud the mind of those not trained to deal with them.

Caste Goals

The Sulh are a highly magical tribe. Many of them use and study magic every day, and their goal is to reach the highest levels of the caste system. Training in this regard can be rigorous, with some phyles being more exacting than others. Sometimes, a har would be expected to double his abilities before passing from Ara to Neoma. Then, from Neoma to Brynie he would have to double the effectiveness of his skills yet again.

Some Sulh, who travel the world acting as mediators or Truth Sayers for other tribes, have the additional goal of digging deep into history, to learn about the follies of the past. Others might take a more diplomatic or political path, and develop new ways to manipulate hara around them, whether for themselves or an employer.

The most enlightened of Sulh phyles encourage their hara to set their own goals, as it is regarded as an essential aspect of personal development.

"You are not interested in the magic; you crave the power that can come from such things."

- Kallan, Gelaming

Example: Doubling their magical skills and knowledge. Advancing their knowledge of the past and their diplomatic techniques. In many cases, hara take on increasingly difficult goals to distinguish themselves from the others around them.

Magical Direction

Of all hara, Sulh are the most interested in what humans discovered and wrote about magic. While on the one hand, they have a very Pagan attitude towards it, and favour working with elemental and nature spirits, on the other they can be quite academic. A Sulh usually adopts one path or the other. He will be a highly mystical shaman or a learned proponent of ceremonial magic. Whatever his path, he uses his skills to be proficient at diplomacy and mediation.

Kakkahaar

The Kakkahaar are exclusive concerning which humans they will incept. Their Hienamas choose only those with magical knowledge or potential. However, phyle leaders might select pretty faces to become their attendants, and these hara would not undertake any training beyond Ara. Kakkahaar caste training revolves around honing magical skills to their utmost, but hara of the tribe are also effective warriors, so fitness and agility are equally prized. The Kakkahaar treasure anything pretty or unusual, even if it happens to be a har. They are oblivious to any accusations that they subject other hara to slavery. To them, they are merely providing shelter and the security of a tribe to those who might otherwise be living on the streets, foraging through rubbish to find something with which to barter for their next meal.

The Kakkahaar are not afraid to go into some very dark places indeed on their quest for magical knowledge. They are often seen as barbaric and fearsome because of this, but they themselves believe that in order to appreciate light, you have to experience darkness.



"We must keep to the path; we must not let the vagabonds of the Uigenna, the snobs of the Gelaming or even the armies of the Varrs distract us from our goal. If we should leave the path before us, it will be through our own choosing. We must never fear the darkness of our past and the power within our souls...Only through patience and study can we understand the universe and those things that lie hidden beyond it."

- Lianvis, Archon of the Kakkahaar

Ara – After Inception (and in some cases even before), the phyle Hienama will assess a har's magical abilities. If he had some experience of magic when still human, he would undertake some in-depth training very early on. If a har shows no magical ability whatsoever –and in truth it's rare such types would be incepted by this tribe– he will be kept at Ara level and will act as a servant to other hara of the tribe. In some extreme cases, such hara might even be disposed of for research purposes. Study of human history, harish psychology and physiology, and even old world science is encouraged. Divination is also taught, but mainly for its value as a trade item. Some Kakkahaar are trained as warriors and could easily defeat the skilled Varrs, if they had the same number of hara.

Neoma – At this level, the har studies magical practices and the religion of the tribe in more depth. The caste progression of the Kakkahaar is one of the most difficult and study-intensive of any of the Wraeththu tribes. It can take many years for some of the slower members to progress, but sluggishness will only be tolerated if a har has some kind of special skill that the Hienama or Phylarch requires.

Brynie - Kakkahaar who reach Brynie are truly a force to be reckoned with. To attain this level, they must prove themselves to the Hienamas of the tribe, if not the Archon himself. Many Kakkahaar claim to have reached high-level Ulani. Because of their

"Open your mind and shut your mouth."

- Loman Ra har Obliviata

"The bullet went right in and came right out again, in and out...like the hokey cokey!"

- Jazran, Varr

exclusive nature, the numbers of the Kakkahaar are relatively small, but most of their numbers are high calibre hara.

Ritual and Magic

The Kakkahaar Majhahns for caste ascension are quite elaborate and lengthy. The process is kept secret from initiates prior to their ascension ceremonies, which are regarded as important rites of passage; in essence a form of rebirth. Hienamas of the Kakkahaar prefer to perform these Majhahns underground, and the tribe will travel to secret ritual locations at certain times of year for seasonal observances or to conduct ascension ceremonies.

Kakkahaar Majhahns are complex, and consist of a blend of different traditions, taken from human occult works. Although they might favour high ceremony, any Kakkahaar can summon great and devastating power instantly if he needs to. However, some rash Kakkahaar adepts have suffered with the backlash of these effects. Group Majhahns are held to celebrate special days in the Kakkahaar calendar and at these times hara perform Magaris for the good of their tribe.

Afterwards

Although the Kakkahaar often appear to be effete dilettantes, this is just a front. In reality, they are extremely disciplined and hard-working. They also co-operate with each other well, making them a formidable force. Once training has begun, new hara will be encouraged to advance quickly through all the disciplines of magic, and then to develop their own methods. Once they have begun Brynie training, they will already be thinking about taking their skills to the next level. Kakkahaar do not travel from their homelands very often, but if they do, it is generally to visit some distant corner of the world, in their search for esoteric knowledge.

A few Kakkahaar have delighted in finding undisturbed human cultures south of their lands, in isolated spots. There, they have pretended to be gods, selecting various humans for Inception and creating new and secret phyles based on the original indigenous cultures. Lianvis, when questioned on this subject, said that the Kakkahaar work with these people sympathetically, as this approach is more fruitful than simply trying to dominate them. Other hara of the tribe are not so altruistic.

Caste Goals

A Kakkahaar's goals always revolve around magical and spiritual development, and furthering the knowledge of their kind. As Velisarius has said, more than once: 'Humans took thousands of years to find out about their bodies, minds and souls. Let's hope we can do it a little faster. And better.'

To advance from Ara, a har will be expected to at least have a basic grasp of the elemental and energy forces and how to manipulate them. If this is not achieved within the first year following Inception, the har's training might well be abandoned. He will then end up as a servant, or even be cast out from the tribe.

During Ara, a har generally concentrates on one magical force, aiming to take his knowledge of it to the limit. Once he attains Neoma, he will attempt to double his knowledge, and will also begin to tackle a second force. The most advanced hara might even take on learning about two new forces at this level. At Brynie, the har will again work towards doubling his knowledge.

A few hara take a different kind of specialisation. They might begin Ara training by covering all twelve forces, but not in so great a depth. Their aim is to study the more dangerous and powerful aspects of magic, and their interests lie in the cosmic implications of Majhahn. Many maintain that a smaller amount of knowledge, spread across all twelve magical disciplines, is better than specialisation in one force.

Example: At Ara, a har can go one of two ways. He can either study one of the eight physical and energy forces (i.e. Fire or Plasma) in depth or seek to acquire basic knowledge of them all. At Neoma, he will be expected to double the knowledge and skills he learned during Ara training. At Brynie, some will delve into the riskier four disciplines of magic (i.e. Temporal) and experiment with foresight and probability, while

"My tribe is not known for their love or tolerance of humans."

- Karrana har Kakkahaar

"You could say that I like to walk on the razor's edge."

- Aceama har Uigenna

others will continue to concentrate on the eight physical and energy disciplines. Some set their goals even higher, and study Martial Combat in conjunction with magic. They might even develop their own schools of combat.

Magical Direction

When it comes to magic, the Kakkahaar are very hard working. They tend to favour the use of Divination, at which they are extremely proficient. The Kakkahaar are known to charge hara of other tribes, as well as humans, for divinatory readings. Of all hara, the Kakkahaar are most adept at conjuring unpredictable entities. They are not squeamish about working magically for whatever they want, whatever the cost and the consequences.

Obliviata

The Obliviata do not adhere to the caste system as such, but still appear to have different ranks that match roughly the advance from Kaimana to Nahir Nuri. However, it is based upon age and experience rather than knowledge or magic. The Obliviata see all magic, including their innate abilities, as gifts from their god. They don't believe they have any powers themselves. However, they do use magical abilities subconsciously, through their belief system. The development of magical skill within an Obliviata is completely subconscious. When asked about their abilities, they will tell you how their god grants them anything they desire, providing they stay true to his word.



All Obliviata believe in freeing the mind from worry and turmoil. They shun possessions, other than those needed for survival, such as their swords, their clothes and headgear, and their caravans. Beyond this, all other possessions are given away or used to barter for food and supplies. In the early years, the tribe travelled the world helping any co-operative humans they came across, and teaching them the Obliviata way. They would never force anyone to follow their path and would only accept those who would come willingly. As Inceptions can only be performed once every four years, when the entire tribe returns to their homeland, any humans are taught the ways of the Obliviata beforehand. They are free to leave the tribe at any time.

The legendary Alluka are the only members of the Obliviata who travel alone. They are seen as sages and of Allavé's lineage. They are the only tribe members to progress to Brynie and recognise the caste system as a gift from their god. They will study and meditate for many days, following the word of Allavé strictly. From this dedication, they believe that they can command their lord's will, as and when they see fit. They do not see this as magic, but regard themselves as channels for miracles, which come directly from Allavé. Other tribes see this, and know it as magic.

"Allavé taught us how to live. If we are true to his teachings and to ourselves, we will prosper where others will fail. This does not mean we are superior. It means that others have not found the path to enlightenment. We should rejoice in our fortune and tell them of our path. We will give them a choice to join us. As Allavé said, 'I only want willing followers. Those who are forced onto the path cannot be true to our ways.'"

- Omar of the Dry Sea, Obliviata

Ara - Soon after Inception, or in some cases up to a year before it, those wishing to join the ranks of the Obliviata must prove their worth to the tribe and to their phyle's Alluka. It is not unusual for a human to travel with the tribe for months, if not years, prior to Inception, as the Obliviata hold Inceptions only once every four years, and only in their distant homeland. After Inception, hara will be taught the Obliviata's secret language and some will be chosen to be trained as warriors or Alluka.

Neoma - It is impossible to determine the rank of any Obliviata and, as they claim to have no caste training, it is hard to discern which level they might have reached.

"Speak softly and carry a big gun...what is it with you people and guns?"
- Cest Naran har Uigenna

"Who taught you to haggle?"
- Blackrose har Sulh

"Fab!"
- Twitch, Uneeah

Despite their beliefs, hara of the Obliviata do have some talent at magic and often quite impressive control of their innate powers. Yet they all see this as an extension of their god's power and will.

Brynie – Only those who are truly dedicated to Allavé will be able to progress to Brynie. These are the Alluka, and each of them sets himself personal goals for self-development and enlightenment. All Obliviata seek to eradicate negative traits within themselves. The most admired hara among them are those who have achieved this almost impossible goal.

Ritual and Magic

There is little in the way of Majhahn in the Obliviata belief system. They use simple prayers and incantations to call upon Allavé in times of need. The Alluka tend to add to known incantations by either shortening them or writing their own. They do not use lengthy Majhahns in their work.

Afterwards

There is very little to teach beyond the basic philosophy of the Obliviata. Hara of the tribe are required only to learn the truth about their inner selves, which they must find through dedication and discipline. The Alluka take this more seriously and become virtually ascetic.

Caste Goals

Unless an Obliviata becomes Alluka, their only goal is to remain true to their god and keep the tribe's secrets safe. Should they choose to become Alluka, they will take the word of their god in the strictest possible manner, and based on this they will make choices about the way they live and what they can do. This could incorporate a strict diet or a highly disciplined daily routine; abstinence is seen as a virtue, and Alluka generally deny themselves anything in which they find physical pleasure.

Example: Because of their beliefs, the caste system is not the same among Obliviata as for other hara. Their magical powers might develop unconsciously, but they are not regarded as favourable attributes. If anything, they are seen as excess luggage for the mind. As a sign of devotion, the Alluka practice abstinence, and deny themselves foods and pastimes they enjoy. As long as they stay true to their god's word they will slowly progress through the stages of development that other hara measure by the caste system. The Obliviata do not regard this development as having any kind of label. Alluka are the only Obliviata with the ability and knowledge to incept others. This is partly why Inceptions are performed so rarely.

Magical Direction

Obliviata do not consciously follow a magical path. Alluka see themselves as priests. Regardless of their beliefs, Obliviata have disciplined, focused minds, and can wield their innate abilities with devastating effect, when circumstances call upon them to do so. They would simply call what they do a prayer to Allavé.

Uigenna

The Uigenna uphold the caste system completely. As the oldest tribe, one of their hara might even have invented it. While the Uigenna are often regarded as nothing more than savages, they have embraced their powers and learned magic to help them in their fight against humanity. At first, their magical development was no doubt essential for their survival, and if it wasn't for their skills in telepathy and healing, Wraeththu might never have left Carmine. The Uigenna prefer their hara to progress fairly quickly, as those with well-honed abilities are more useful in a fight than those without. They value magic that can be used to capture humans. In the early days, it was a well-known ploy of the Uigenna to send out a telepathic call to those suitable for Inception. Such



"Summon your courage and control; you will do well in this."

- Kallan, Gelaming

"They just don't make people like they used to."

- Aceama har Uigenna

skills require a well-trained and disciplined mind, and these are things not often associated with the Uigenna. In some ways, they are misunderstood by other hara.

"We have been called savage and brutal killers, but throughout history war has been considered an art form. To speak openly I would say that every Uigenna worth their salt is a true artist of the highest degree. The caste system has been implemented to advance and progress the Uigenna's artistic skills. Call us butchers if you will, but remember that every butcher has to know how to produce a truly flavoursome and attractive cut of meat."

- Manticker, Archon of the Uigenna.

"Wait and see what happens when you drink that, you'll be seeing horses in the sky...or maybe the horses will be seeing you...oh man...look a flower."

- Myth, Uigenna

Ara - Uigenna who belong to the smaller phyles will probably only receive the most basic caste training. They will only progress further if their Phylarch is high ranking and chooses to favour them. Despite the low rank of most Uigenna, their caste training covers all they need to survive and function in hostile territory, including healing, telepathy, mind control and combat magic. Some Uigenna have become quite adept at pyrokinesis and are usually willing to teach this skill to new inceptees. All hara incepted in the cities are taught the distinctive Uigenna fighting techniques: kill anything that moves, in the fastest, most efficient manner.

Neoma - At Neoma, a har is expected to be able to stand up for himself and fight his own battles, as long as he observes the will of his Phylarch. The only way a har is likely to get to Brynie quickly is by impressing his Phylarch or Hienama. Some Uigenna dedicate their studies to the art of toxicology. The true secrets of Uigenna toxins will not be taught until a har reaches Brynie.

Brynie - Hara who reach this level will probably already have some influence in their phyle. They will certainly be skilled and vicious fighters, as well as adept with their innate abilities. Some Uigenna specialise in healing, while others will follow the path of the Hienama and become inceptors. Both healers and Hienamas are skilled at using Agmara energy.



Hienamas learn which compounds and toxins can affect the Wraeththu physical form, and swear an oath never to let the tribe's secrets fall into the hands of another tribe or humans.

Ritual and Magic

The Uigenna do not greatly favour Majhahn, but if they do use one for caste ascensions, the experience is often quite harrowing. The initiate might be blindfolded and subject to what nearly amounts to abuse. Uigenna Majhahns are typically low on ceremony and fairly short by Wraeththu standards. Caste ascensions are usually conducted for groups of hara rather than individuals. When Uigenna need to use magic, they prefer to do so in the field, focusing their intention in any situation to affect events. They are mostly impatient with formal ceremonies and consider them a theatrical waste of time. The majority of their training focuses on honing their combat abilities, but much of what they do magically is so subtle it would not be noticed by the average onlooker. What might appear to be luck, or raw speed and power, rarely is.

"Here...I'll incept you with this!"

- Karrana har Kakkahaar

Afterwards

It's unlikely a Uigenna will progress beyond Brynie. Their way of life is fast and usually very violent, and many of them end up dead before they can consider advancing their skills further. A few have dedicated their lives to toxicology and have vanished from public life. Others have deserted the tribe to join the Unneah or the Varrs, or to set up new tribes in keeping with their particular worldview. Other groups have disappeared while travelling.

Caste Goals

While advancing through the caste levels, a Uigenna learns all he can about survival and combat. His goals for advancement will usually involve trial by combat, usually to defeat an opponent of a higher caste level.

Example: One of the tests for survival involves a har being drugged and then dumped in the middle of hostile territory. He then has to find his way home. Uigenna Hienamas have thought up various ingenious methods for testing their hara, many of which are potentially fatal.

Magical Direction

The Uigenna mainly use magic to influence others. This extends to combat, when they can affect the emotions and physical states of others through the power of their voices, or intention alone. They are adept at telepathy and mind control.

Unneah

The Unneah teach a mixture of practical and magical skills to their hara. Everyhar is taught a trade, through a system akin to an apprentice system. The Unneah tend to be superstitious, but are generally friendly to strangers and will often train hara from other tribes for a price.



Following the breakdown of human society and the collapse of manufacturing, Unneah skills and trading have great value among Wraeththukind. If a Unneah cannot make or acquire an item you want, he will surely locate somehar who can find it for you, whether you're seeking a spare part to keep an old generator running, clothes, tools or fine jewellery. Among the Unneah, there are hara who use their psychic abilities to track down rare items for their customers. Similarly, they are prized as trackers. The Unneah usually pick humans for Inception who already have skills or potential that can be turned into a trade or used to turn a profit. Unneah are hard bargainers, and use their sharp instincts to help them close their deals to their liking.

Hienamas are the highest ranking of magical teachers, but each phyle will usually include one or more shamans, who are glorified rehunas. These individuals are called

"I would argue that the human soul exists and it is not a dark pit of self-destructive emotion out of control."

- Sshasha har Colurastes

upon to conduct Majhahns and are regarded as 'wise hara', who can heal and advise others.

"Come on, you know you want to buy one of these. It's fucking great – just what you need for the road. It's got pockets for your water and food supplies; it even has places to hang things from. Look, for no extra cost it can double as a pillow or seat. Such a fucking bargain! You will not find one cheaper this side of Galhea. See that wanker over there? He hasn't got one of these. And look at him – he looks like a right sad fucker, trying to carry all his stuff."

- Yanosh Sale, *Unneah Scavenger*

Ara – At this level, a newly incepted har is taught the basics of Wraeththu abilities. He will also learn about trading and scavenging in the ruins of abandoned settlements for tradable goods. Hara who live on the rivers of Megalithica teach new inceptees the magic of the water and the creatures that live in it, and how to pilot boats. If the shamans of a phyle consider an Aralid to show promise, they will instruct him in divination and shamanic practices.

"And so falls another...how many does that make now...sixteen to me?"

- Jazran, Varr

Neoma - Caste progression is often slow in the ranks of the Unneah. Unless a har is lucky enough to have a high-ranking har on his boat or in his settlement, nohar will be available to perform the ceremonies to raise his level. Fortunately a lot of Unneah Hienamas are wanderers, who will continually travel the land, offering their services for caste ascensions and Inceptions. At Neoma, a Unneah will be taught more about magic and the subtle skills involved in trading. Hara who live in permanent Unneah settlements will be expected to pull their weight in the community once they reach Neoma and, unless they have exceptional talents and have been spotted by the shamans, will thereafter have little time to devote to caste training.

Brynne - Unneah who reach Brynie will usually want to train to become a shaman or Hienama, and will concentrate their learning on divination and healing. Or they will set out on the road to trade with villages and camps, usually with some lower caste Unneah in tow.

Ritual and Magic

Once a year, phyles of the Unneah gather together for a tribal meeting in a secret location, which they term Convergence. Here, various magical ceremonies will take place, such as caste ascensions and Inceptions, but it is also a time of storytelling. Hara stand before their tribe and speak of their achievements over the past year. If the high shamans consider that individuals have put their skills to good use, they will be acclaimed and rewarded with a caste ascension and/or valuable goods. The Unneah live by commerce, and they wish to prove that the trade of their old human life for that of a har was a good one. Although outsiders might be sceptical about these glorified boasting sessions, what really occurs is that the shamans use their acute psychism to 'weigh up' the souls of their hara. If a har stands before his kind and lies, or if he is considered to have spent his time wastefully, not advancing his craft and skills, he will be required to return the following year. If there is no improvement by that time, he risks exile.

"I suppose you're going to swear undying love to me now?"

- Blackrose har Sulh

Much of the magic of the tribe appears to be nothing more than simple slight of hand or at most acts of divination. But fortune telling is as valid a form of trade as any other, and the predictions of the Unneah are renowned for their accuracy. Thus they are often sought out by others who need glimpses of the future.

Afterwards

A har of the Unneah is expected to become adept at trading, but the tribe also values each of its members having a full and happy life. The most important part of caste ascension is that the har can affirm he is leading the best life he can. The Unneah believe in quality of life over quantity.

Beyond Brynie, there is little training. The Unneah do have a spiritual life, but very few of them would choose to pursue a path of learning and study. Brynie is more than enough for most of them. By this time, a har is expected to be adept in his craft, and perhaps to have set up valuable trade links. Hara who wish to become shamans or Hienamas might choose to become apprenticed to one, and would eventually pass to Ulani.

Caste Goals

The most important thing to the Unneah is to lead a good, high quality life. They believe the path they have chosen, that of the merchant and trader, is the best way to achieve their aims. To an Unneah, anything in life is possible, so long as you're prepared to work for it. Hara of the tribe who roam the land and waterways of Megalithica lead an almost idyllic life, free from care or worries. They are not greedy hara, but simply regard trading as a method of survival.

During Ara, a har learns the basic skills of trading and might also learn divination, should he show an interest or proficiency in it. To reach Neoma, an Unneah is expected to be self-sufficient and established upon the path of life he wants to follow. During the Convergence meetings, the Hienamas do not really test hara, but help them test themselves. Ultimately, the har himself must decide if he is ready to ascend a caste level or not.

Example: At Ara, hara will be expected to learn their trade and hone their craft, to a point where they are fairly self-sufficient. During the higher-level training, they should aim to reach a point where they are happy with life and free from the worries that plague hara of other tribes.

Magical Direction

The magical path of the typical Unneah is that of the free form shaman. Unneah identify with animal spirits, or totems, and favour the use of out-of-body experiences to gain knowledge and insight into situations, whether they are in the past, present or future. Like the non-military Varr, they are superstitious by nature and pay great attention to omens. An adept omen reader would no doubt end up in the service of a Phylarch.

Varrs

It is unclear why the Varrs practice caste progression, considering that they deny so much of their harish nature. The common opinion is that they do so to maintain credibility among the tribes with which they seek to form alliances, such as the Kakkahaar. Also, the typical Varr likes to prove to himself that he is superior. If unorganised tribes like the Uigenna can advance through the system, so can the Varrs.

Only hara who are part of the fighting force, or associated services such as medical, educational and ineptual, are likely to receive official training beyond Ara. As the Varrish army has no formal status structure, they use the caste system as a means to denote rank. Ponclast's advisors are currently developing a different military system, which in some ways will mirror the typical caste system, but will involve intermediate ranks to expand the number of levels from nine to eighteen.

Hara who are not in the military, especially those who have been forced into a predominantly soume role, might take an interest in the magical and spiritual side of life. They generally keep this secret from their employers and consorts, who would consider such interests a sign of insubordination. Also, a lot of Varrs are farmers rather than soldiers and tend to observe a nature-based magical system for working with the land, which includes a lot of folklore.

Even though the Phylarchs and Archon of the Varrs disapprove of magic and superstition, it's rare you'll meet a Varr who doesn't pay attention to omens around them, such as the behaviour of birds before a battle. Away from the eyes of their leaders, the average Varr might take advantage of the witchery skills of the soume-hara, whether to swing luck in their favour or to harm a rival. If they are caught doing

"Slick! And for an encore, are you now going to sneak in there silently?"

- Cest Naran har Uigenna

"When you reach spiritual enlightenment, you will know deep in your soul."

- Kallan, Gelaming



such things, they would most likely be subject to discipline, since Ponclast believes that sorcery is a conceit that seduces and weakens the mind.

"I look around and I see order, I see progress, yet I feel that the Gelaming are for more organised and structured than we are. I need to set standards and send agents out to distribute this new regime of training. They will be my eyes and ears as to how well some of the distant camps are performing. If humanity could develop a structured military system, surely we can."

- Ponclast, the founder of the Varrs

Ara - The Varrs do not generally concentrate on psychic training for their hara, except for individuals who will be used as scouts and spies. ninety-nine percent of inceptees are taken to one of the large barracks dotted around Megalithica for their indoctrination to begin. They will be trained in various fighting styles and military tactics. There is no focus whatsoever on magical practices. The Wraeththu abilities Varrs admire are improved physiology and agility, along with well-developed instincts for survival and combat.

"I like it...but next time can you actually hit what you were aiming at?"

- Cest Naran har Uigenna

Neoma - Hara with talent rise quickly to Neoma, sometimes even within the first month following Inception. Anyhar who was previously part of the human military, or has a background in science, will make rapid progression. While military rank and caste level do not yet have fixed standards, it is always beneficial for a har to aim for a higher level of caste training.

Brynie - Unless a har lives in a particularly peaceful area of Megalithica or has a high rank within the army, he will probably not reach Brynie that quickly. Only hara who are regarded as truly exceptional will progress to Ulani. Recently, Ponclast has decreed that all troops should be trained to Brynie level.

Ritual and Magic

The Varrs have no magical or spiritual Majhahn as part of their caste ascensions, although they do like ceremony, when the Phylarchs and Hienamas appear in their official uniforms and formally declare hara as having achieved their next caste level. As with the Uigenna, ceremonies are held for groups of hara rather than individuals. Those of higher rank have parties given in their honour, whereas standard troops just get a night off and some sheh to celebrate. Hara stationed close to or in Fulminir have more impressive ceremonies and receive a medal of rank.

Afterwards

As hara of the Varrish army do not practice magic, their goals revolve around perfecting their physical skills, rising in rank and furthering the cause of their tribe. They are not interested in spiritual pursuits and spend most of their time travelling Megalithica subjugating weaker phyles of other tribes for their Phylarchs. If a har is not part of the military, he might observe the local folklore associated with the land or, if he has been designated a soume-har, he might devote himself to studying magic apart from the caste system, in an attempt to claw back some power and control over his life.

"It's not broken, it's a feature and NO you're not having your money back!"

- Blackrose har Sulh

Caste Goals

For the military har, caste goals revolve around training with various types of weapons, learning field medicine and how to organise military campaigns. The idea of Varrish perfection is a har who is in complete control of himself and not subject to any of the traits associated with the soume side of his nature. To ascend in caste, a har must be physically fitter than the average har who works in the fields. **Example:** Varrs will ascend a caste level once those of higher rank deem their skills and military record are good enough to warrant promotion.

Magical Direction

The Varrs see magical progression in terms of disciplining their innate abilities. They have no time for what they perceive to be 'mumbo jumbo', and those associated with the Varrish military are encouraged to shun a spiritual life, which the tribal Phylarchs regard as at best a waste of time and at worst a big lie propagated by the Gelaming, who want to control others. Varrish hara outside the military are in tune with the land, and adhere to a kind of folk magic.

Gods and Goddesses

Several of the main tribes have in essence created deities for their religious and magical practices. The majority of these are androgynous, as hara are. The most organized religion is that of the Obliviata, with their worship of Allavé. The Kakkahaar revere Hubisag, a deity created by Velisarius and Lianvis soon after the tribe was formed. The Colurastes believe in Nagataka and his minions the Ophidra. The Gelaming respect the Aghama as the creator of life. While the military Varrs have no time for spirituality, those who work the land believe in various nature spirits, and of all hara have retained the idea of masculine and feminine godforms, which in some areas are slowly being amalgamated into one.

Other tribes have local deities, dreamed up by Hienamas during vision quests, or else have adapted them from earlier human beliefs. The Unneah have an empathy with the indigenous ancient spirits of Megalithica, as do the Sulh for the spirits of their own homeland. The Uigenna tend to create outrageous demons, which they direct to undertake tasks for them.

Whatever hara's tribal beliefs, most believe in the Aghama. Although he is not worshipped as a god, he is respected and regarded as a benevolent supernatural being, who can be petitioned to grant favours. It's not uncommon to come across rough shrines to the Aghama, erected by the sides of roads, or to find Nayatis dedicated to him in the towns and settlements.

Similarly, a har might come across a shrine in a hollow tree or next to a pool in a forest that local hara have constructed for a god or a nature spirit. It is considered good luck to leave offerings at such spots.

As time goes on, it's inevitable that the existing rough spiritual systems of the tribes will become more formalized and organized.

"You put the black one and the red one together, crunch and ride the wave dude..."

- Myth, Uigenna

MAGIC SPECIFIC RULES

Caste Progression

As a har progresses through the caste levels, noticeable physical and mental changes take effect. This might be a result of the discipline required to achieve a caste goal, or it might be the result of some inner spiritual trigger. Whatever the natural mechanics are, every har manifests signs of change during, or a short while after, caste ascension.

Once the ascension Majhahn has been performed, the initiate will discuss with his Hienama his future direction, and the path he will take to the next level. He will be counselled regarding what areas of study and development will be best for him. He will also be required to revisit his Hienama at various intervals so that his progress can be assessed.

A Stitch in Time

Although it does not have to be adhered to strictly, all tribes observe a rough guideline for how long each har should study and practice at any particular level before ascending. Each level requires greater effort, so it can take several years for a har to progress to Brynie, depending on their natural abilities and propensity to learn.

Most hara become Aralid after basic induction into their tribe. An induction can take anything up to three months. During this time, a har learns the basic philosophy of the tribe and what it is to be a har. The only tribe to break from this tradition is the Colurastes, because they incept humans at a very young age. These young hara are allowed to develop naturally and live out their childhoods before they have to address training and caste. Once they reach maturity, a Colurastes will experience aruna for the first time and be taken through the official Majhahn of Ara.

Ascending from Ara to Neoma takes from six months to a year, depending on how well the individual progresses and assimilates his teachings, and whether he reaches the goals he set for himself. Some hara may take longer than this, if their goals are more difficult to achieve. Occasionally, a Hienama might advise a longer training period.

To reach Brynie, a har is expected to spend between one and two years studying and training. The initiate will generally discuss his future goals with his Hienama, if this har is accessible. As some hara travel around quite a lot, it might be that they will have different Hienamas for their various caste ascensions.

At the current time, beyond Brynie, it becomes more difficult to progress, since there are few Hienamas who can offer the training. This situation will no doubt improve, as Wraeththu mature and more hara take their studies further, providing a greater number of suitably qualified Hienamas. Those who have achieved Ulani or higher are generally in high demand by Phylarchs or Archons for their magical services, so have little time to devote to training ordinary hara of the tribes. It's unlikely that a large amount of Nahir Nuri will appear, however. Most high-ranking hara believe this tier will always be for the exceptional few. For those who do manage to find a Hienama who can take them to Acantha, first level Ulani, it's recommended they should spend at least two or three years studying. There are always exceptions to this rule, since some hara are very gifted.

Progressing Through Caste Levels

A har is expected to divide his time between studying, working for his tribe and striving towards personal goals. No Hienama would expect his students to spend all of their time studying and practicing magic, since they appreciate that a healthy social life and personal advancement are just as important as magical progression.

Some hara might, of course, choose to devote more time to their studies, to reduce the amount of time between caste ascensions, but too intensive a training schedule could have detrimental effects upon a har. Consequently, most Hienamas would not



recommend fast track caste progression, unless the tribe urgently needs a har to progress for some reason.

The Caste Ascension Majhahn

As with all aspects of role-playing, it is up to the individual players how much detail they wish to act out concerning the ceremonies of caste ascension. It is not essential to role-play such events in detail, unless an important event is going to occur during the Majhahn. For example, a har might find they will meet an important har during their ascension and be offered a snippet of information or given a task to perform.

The Goals

Once a player has created a character, they should discuss with the Storyteller what that character's caste goals will be to reach Neoma. These goals will depend on the character's current skills and abilities, and how much opportunity the campaign will allow for the character to gain the relevant experience to advance these attributes. There are a number of factors that should be considered, from Skills, to Magic, to personal goals and quests. The player should choose to advance skills and abilities that will encourage good role-playing and work well with the development of the character.

Once a character has reached his goals, the Storyteller should find time within the campaign for the character to access a Hienama of their tribe to undergo the ascension Majhahn, and to discuss their next stage of development. The discussion does not need to be role-played in great detail, but doing so can be fun. The object of the exercise is to determine the next set of goals and therefore the direction the character will take within their tribe. As when determining how to reach Neoma, the player and Storyteller should choose a fair set of goals for the character to achieve.

From Brynie to the first level of Ulani, the player and Storyteller should choose more challenging goals that will push the limits of the character. When the game begins, there will only be a few Hienamas capable of advancing hara to their next level, but by the time the character has reached their goals a few years in the game world should have passed, and there will be more Hienamas available to them.

The Benefits

The advantages of caste progression are that a character will become more effective in his world. He will become more composed and his psychic abilities will be enhanced. Physically, he will be more agile and able to defend himself. A spiritual or genetic trigger after the ascension Majhahn gives the character access to these enhanced abilities.

System: After ascension Majhahn, the player has 5 points to distribute between magical **Resistance**, **Psyche** and **Composure**, which can be allocated as the player sees fit. These points are added to the character's permanent scores on the relevant stats. However, none of these stats can go above 20. Any spare points are lost. The benefits of these points will manifest over 5 days following the ascension Majhahn. They will come into play 1 point per day over the five days. The player should choose in which order they will manifest. (5 points, to spend on **Resistance**, **Psyche** and **Composure**, the stats cannot go above 20.)

"Wonders of wonders you actually did something useful!"

- Cest Naran har Uigenna

"I have a vested interest in the outcome of this particular event..."

- Kallan, Gelaming

MANIPULATING AGMARA

The ability to manipulate Agmara, and use it effectively, is the basic ability offered by the Manipulation Skill. Manipulation, used in conjunction with the character's knowledge of magical forces, including at least basic knowledge of Chaos or Order, will enable him to produce a myriad of Magaris. The only limit to what can be done with magic is the imagination of the player.

System: The Manipulation Skill works in the same way as any other Skill. It requires the roll of a D20, and the score needs to be less than the character's Manipulation Skill

+ Action Modifiers. For more information on the various types of Skill rolls, see **page 242**.

When a character uses magic against another sentient creature that consciously or subconsciously resists it, the victim's Resistance value is taken as a negative Action Modifier against the character's Skill. The Resistance Modifier is only taken into account for Magaris directed against the physical body or mind of an intelligent being. A missile which is thrown is not a direct effect, and therefore the victim's Resistance cannot be taken into account.

Should a situation arise where two characters are locked in magical combat, it should be treated as a standard **Contested Skill Roll**, and the two characters **Success Levels** are to be compared. Extreme Externally Extended Actions (EEAs) are worked out the same as for other Skills, when a Magari takes more than one Action Phase to cast. An EEA is any Magari that is cast over more than 12 Action Phases; this requires one Manipulation roll every 12 Action Phases (1 minute in the game world).

*"There's dumb and then
there's YOU!"*
- Blackrose har Sulh

Working with Others

The rolls involved in group magical workings are performed in the same way as normal Skill rolls for groups. The difference with magic is that the magical force knowledge of the group is combined, so if one character does not have any or enough knowledge of one force and another does, the Skill of the character with the highest level is used for scoring during die rolls.

For a Magari that requires a **Water** of 2 and **Air** of 4, a har with a **Water** of 3 and **Air** of 2 would not be able to perform the Magari. However if another in the group has an **Air** of 4 then the Magari can go ahead using the combined knowledge of the group.

Another benefit of working in a group is the amount of each force that can be manipulated is increased, depending on what each character can manipulate. If a group had characters with **Earth** 2, **Earth** 3 and **Earth** 1, they would be able to manipulate a combined total of 7 kg of **Earth** based matter per Action Phase (2 kg for the character with **Earth** 2, 4 kg for the character with **Earth** 3 and 1 kg for the character with **Earth** 1). The bigger the group, the more matter can be manipulated simultaneously per Action Phase. This is especially useful where speed is required or large Magaris are needed.

Using Knowledge with Magari

Unless a character knows how an object works, he has little or no hope of creating it with magical force. Simple objects are easy, such as clubs or rocks, but when it comes to properly made swords or complex chemicals, the character needs to know what he is doing. Unless you can prove your character knows how something is put together and works, you will have to rely on a Skill roll for the relevant Skill, such as **Weapon Smith** for swords and other weapons, Chemistry or Physics for chemicals and other natural reactions. Many other skills can be used to create a number of different Magaris; it is all down to the imagination and the creativity of the player.

*"All talk...no action...that's
why you're the inferior being."*
- Cest Naran har Uigenna

Because of the multiple factors involved in creating any weapons or complex objects, many hara never venture down this road. A **Weapon Smith** may employ magic to heat the materials or refine the metals. However, if he attempted to create a fine, working sword from thin air he would encounter many problems, such as flaws in the material. A **Weapon Smith** trusts his physical skills over magic. He's aware how a good block of steel can be folded and formed into a sword, and during this process he's able to detect flaws and problems. The physical act of creating the sword will produce a far superior weapon, rather than a lump of metal that might look like a sword, but be otherwise unusable.

The more complex the object the rehuna wants to create, the more likely flaws or errors will occur. Many Wraeththu don't even attempt such actions, as failure could end in disaster and even death. Until all hara have a better knowledge of how Agmara interacts with the universe, many are taught by their Hienamas that they should not attempt such Magaris.

System: if the character has no experience with the item or Magari they want to create, they should roll a D20 on the relevant Skill, before they make their Manipulation roll. No Action Modifiers are needed for this Skill roll, as it is just drawing subconsciously from the character's knowledge. Should this roll fail, the Magari may create something similar to what the rehuna wants, but it won't work in the way it is expected to. (Roll 1D20 on the relevant Skill before the Manipulation roll.)

"You got a vicious streak,
don't ya?"

- Aceama har Uigenna

There is more to magic than just the Manipulation roll. The following section explains how other factors are integrated into the desired effect.

Manipulation Limits

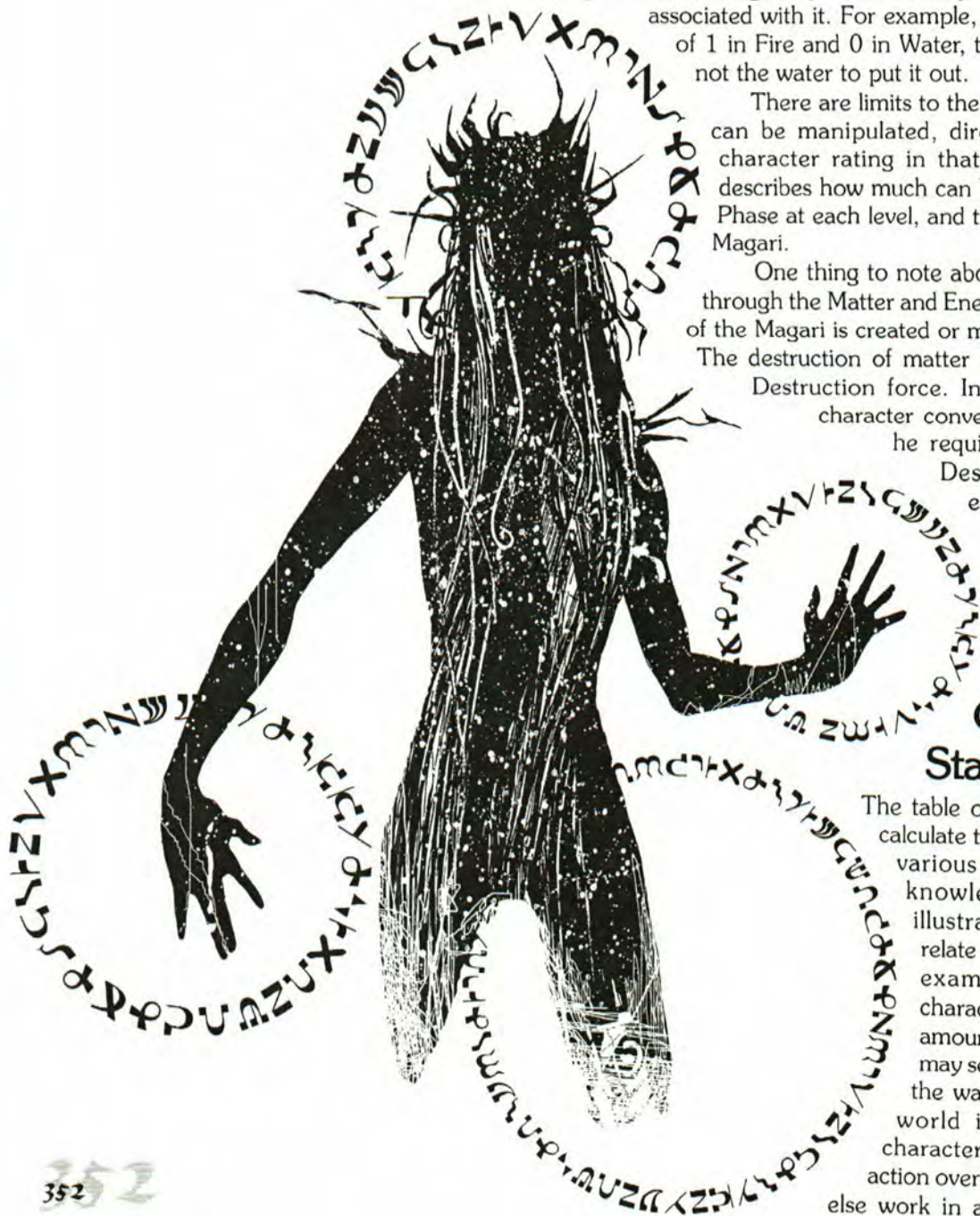
A character's knowledge of magical forces dictates what Magaris they can create. If they have a 0 rating, they cannot manipulate that force or anything associated with it. For example, if a character had a rating of 1 in Fire and 0 in Water, they could create a fire but not the water to put it out.

There are limits to the amount of each force that can be manipulated, directly proportional to the character rating in that force. The next section describes how much can be manipulated per Action Phase at each level, and the other requirements of a Magari.

One thing to note about manipulation of matter through the Matter and Energy forces is that the object of the Magari is created or manipulated, not destroyed. The destruction of matter requires knowledge of the Destruction force. In creating something, the character converts Agmara into the thing he requires, which is easier than Destruction, since the core essence of magic is creation.

The Units of Elements, Forces, and Changing States

The table on page 355 will help you calculate the numbers involved in the various levels of magical force knowledge. This section will illustrate what those numbers relate to in the world and give you examples of the amount a character can do. Some of the amounts that can be manipulated may seem small in comparison to the way magic in the Wraeththu world is treated. However, a character can perform a magical action over multiple Action Phases, or else work in a group, to produce very powerful Magaris.



N. B.: The information below offers a rough guideline, so that players can get the scale of their Magaris into perspective. Essentially, all that the players need to know is that every level of knowledge in a magical force allows their character to do double what he was capable of at the previous level. There are no hard and fast rules for this; it is up to the player to convince the Storyteller that their character has the capabilities to perform the Magaris described. The following information is given as a guide, but does not have to be regarded as the letter of the law.

N.B.: Each Force listed below has an *Example* with it; this is to give you an idea of what volume it will take, and will make it easier for players and Storytellers to visualize the extant Magari. It is always useful to know roughly how big your effect is.

"By saying nothing I have already said too much."

- Loman Ra har Obliviata

Air, Fire (Metres³ - m³)

The volume of **Air** and **Fire** are measured using the same units. The physical space that 1 unit of **Air** and **Fire** takes up is 1 metre³ (39 in. cubed). Once a liquid has been turned into a gas through evaporation it will become the domain of **Air**. **Fire** is one thing that can aid this.

Example: A rough guide to give the players and the Storyteller an idea as to the space 1 metre³ takes up is the area of eight 17" monitors, including the casing.

The amount damage that can be done to a character proficient with the **Fire** element is 1D6 per Action Slice.

Earth (Kilograms - kg)

When creating any physical matter, which is the domain of **Earth**, the physical units involved are kilograms. This means that at an **Earth** level of 6 the character can create or manipulate 32 kg of solid matter.

Example: As it's quite difficult to visualize a kg of matter, the best way to get an impression of what space it takes up, is to get a 1 litre (33.8 oz) or 2 litre (2.1 quart) bottle of soft drink. 1 litre of water is equivalent to 1 kg. This will give you a rough idea as to the size of the matter that can be manipulated. Obviously, heavier matter like gold and lead will be smaller in size; lighter materials will take up a bigger space.

Water (Litres - l)

Liquid substances are measure in litres. All liquids are the domain of **Water**, but once they evaporate they become the domain of **Air**.

Example: As above, a bottle of soft drink gives you a good representation of what 1 litre of liquid looks like. Again, heavier liquids will take up a smaller space and lighter liquids take up more space.

Plasmatic (Kilojoules - kj)

Almost all energy in the universe is measured in kj. It is difficult to physically represent what 1 kj would look like. **Plasmatic** represents raw power such as electrical energy, or other forms of energy not corresponding to the other areas.

Example: An AA (LR6) battery holds about 15 kj of power. Although this does not seem like much, it is designed to be used in a stream at 1.5 volts, over an extended period. Two of these batteries can power a CD Walkman for about 8 hours. If all the power was to be pumped out in a fraction of a second, you would have considerably higher volts and amps outputs for that brief period. The kj is the amount of energy, not the voltage or amps. It is up to the player to decide how this power is put out, and over what period.

The amount of damage that can be done to a character from electricity is the numerical equivalent of the rehuna's knowledge of the force in Major Wounds.

Kinetic, Attraction (Kilometres per hour - km/h)

Everything in motion travels at a different speed, which depends on the weight of the object moving and the energy behind it. **Kinetic** is represented by motion; every object with motion has kinetic energy.

"Tip the scales; hold back your head and drink of the jug!"

- Jazran, Varr

Attraction includes magnetic fields including gravity. All energy dissipates after a while, whether through friction or just draining away.

Example: The value of each level of the force is the equivalent of moving a 1 kg object at a speed in km/h. So with either **Kinetic** or **Attraction** at 6, the character would be able to move 1 kg at 32 km/h, or a 2 kg object at 16km/h. The larger the object, the slower it will move, because there is more of it to move. If the Magari is maintained over an extended period, it will keep the object at a constant speed, otherwise it will slow down. For faster speeds, the character would need to build up the Magari over a number of Action Phases, or get their friends to help out.

Spirit

Spirit is the manipulation of the soul of a living creature and can also be used to influence the actions or thoughts of another sentient creature. A soul cannot be created, as it has to be born. However, spirit can be used to communicate and draw in the spirits of the dead.

Example: There is no way to measure accurately the energy contained within the harish, human or animal body. So where any magical action requires the use of the spirit force, it is taken that the character level in the **Spirit** element is the number of spirits living or dead, whose minds and souls can be manipulated per Action Phase.

*"I pity those who cannot see
the true beauty behind the
eyes of the world."*

- Sshasha har Colurastes

Temporal (days)

There can be serious consequences should a character use the **Temporal** force; see **page 326**. Whenever a character uses **Temporal** effects that involve looking into the future or the past, events will distort the further the character looks. **Temporal** can be used to age an object or as a form of stasis. More often than not, **Temporal** magic is Vulgar and the character might suffer adverse effects from it.

Example: The standard unit of time measurement is 1 day. The greater the character's knowledge, the more the character can see into a distant time or hold a temporal effect.

Phase

This is even more difficult to measure than spirit; it relies on the creativity of the player and the judgment of the Storyteller. **Phase** will aid the character in reaching different realms of existence. However, it is advisable that the character uses **Phase** to check where he is going before he actually travels. To look into other realms the rehuna would need plenty of research behind him, as reality in those places might be drastically different from what he perceives. It might just be a mishmash of colour and noise. When looking into other realms the rehuna would need to create a form of etheric interface to interpret the energy he is seeing. This can be done through experimentation, but the process can take many years, so a rehuna might prefer to do some research and see what, if any, knowledge he can glean from ancient texts, which could help him visualize what he might find in other realms. Once the rehuna has this knowledge, he will be able to travel astrally to the realm. Physical travelling might be detrimental to the rehuna's body.

Example: The best way to manage the **Phase** force is to consider that the higher the character's **Phase** knowledge the more accurate he will be at getting what he wants.

*"A broken heart is easier to
mend than a broken face,
buddy..."*

- Twitch, Uneeah

Destruction, Conversion (relevant unit)

These two forces can only affect the matter and energy elements. The units that can be affected depend on the elements that are being converted or destroyed. So from **Earth** to **Water** it would be one unit of **Earth** for one unit of **Water**.

Example: For both of these forces to be useful, the character needs to have knowledge of the relevant elements being affected. The amount of each element that can be manipulated depends on the lowest level element that is being used. So when converting from **Earth** to **Air**, and the character has **Earth** 3, **Air** 2 and **Conversion** 3, the amount for conversion would be base of **Air** and would be 4 units per Action Phase.

Limits

Depending on his knowledge of each force, a character has a number of 'units' in the relevant forces that he can make use of when building Magaris. You'll need to know how much of each unit he can manipulate during each Action Phase. As this is directly proportional to the character's knowledge of the force(s), it is important that characters who wish to be proficient in a wide range of magical abilities study multiple forces. The numbers on the following table show the amount of relevant units that the Rehuna can manipulate.

Level of Element	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Units	0	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128	256	512

If necessary, a character can build up a force over multiple Action Phases. However, the Agmara cost for such an action will start to spiral up. For example, if a character has **Earth** 3 and needs **Earth** 5, he could spend four Action Phases building the power in that force (to reach 16 units), as two Action Phases would not generate enough **Earth** power (only 8 units) to reach the amount of units needed for **Earth** 5 (which is 16 units). Because the har with **Earth** 3 can only produce 4 units of earth every Action Phase, he would have to spend 4 Action Phases to produce the 16 he could produce at once if he had **Earth** 5.

The player should let the Storyteller know how many Action Phases it will require to build their Magari; this should be incorporated into the description of how the character builds it.

Chaos and Order

Chaos and **Order** are essential in the construction of a Magari. No matter what the desired effect, it will at least have 1 point of **Chaos** or **Order**. As with the use of other magical forces, there is no hard and fast rule about how much of each is needed. What follows is a guideline.

A character should develop **Chaos** and **Order** in conjunction with other forces. **Order** allows the character to create ordered Magaris, such as smooth edges and precise lines. **Chaos** allows a more natural element to manifest in the Magaris. Another way to look at it is that **Chaos** is a rock that you would find out in the desert. **Order** is that rock which has been cut in to a rectangular shape for building with. Dependant on the desired end result, the character needs to use either **Chaos** or **Order** in the Magari.

The character should then decide how much of each force is needed. **Chaos** and **Order** work as a cap on the maximum level of the forces the character can use in their Magaris. For example, if a character is creating a large volume of shapeless energy he would need to use **Chaos**. However the character's **Plasmatic** is at 6 and his **Chaos** is at 5; this will limit the Magari and only allow the character to use **Plasmatic** at 5. If the same character had **Order** at 7, he would be able to create energy with form and then once it has form he would be able to impose control with **Plasmatic** of 6, therefore doubling the size of the Magari.

"I don't trust them or you, but
out of my choices I choose
you over them."

- Karrana har Kakkahaar

"You have to give me credit
for that!"

- Jazran, Varr

BUILDING MAGARIS

Now that you know the basics of how magic is constructed, it is up to you to choose what forces your character needs to build the Magari he requires. Bear in mind that the numbers of units a character can create are per Action Phase. Two forces cannot be drawn upon simultaneously, so Magaris with multiple forces or greater Magaris will take longer to cast, unless the characters are working as a group, in which case each member can concentrate on a different force. The players also need to check whether to use **Chaos** or **Order**, and see if this will limit the level of the forces they can use.

"We are all here to
understand a cosmic truth."
- Loman Ra har Oblivata

"No humans...If I see another
human I'm going to scream."
- Cest Naran har Uigenna

The best way to build a Magari is to create a little story about how the character manipulates the forces. You have to convince the Storyteller that your character can do what you want him to do. Once a character has created a Magari a few times, the player can write it down for future reference, although they shouldn't have to describe the process in detail again to the other players. Once a character is proficient at a certain Magari, it's assumed he's taken time to study and practice in order to create the desired effect quickly.

You can also think about the Magaris before play, if you think your character will need them during the next gaming session, or he's working on a particular Magari in his spare time. If you do this, you can get the Magari approved by the Storyteller before you start playing.

The only other factor in building Magaris is the expenditure of Agmara energy.

Agmara Expenditure

In the creation of every Magari, there is some toll on the character's body. Agmara used to fuel magic is taken directly from the body of the har. This will have adverse effects on the character and may even cause him physical injury.

The Toll

The bigger the Magari, the more it will drain the character's natural Agmara pool. Some of the larger Magaris can kill or do serious physical damage to a character. It is rare a har would go beyond reasonable limits, as this could seriously impair him when he needs to be alert and functional.

Once the player has designed a Magari for their character, they should determine how much Agmara it will cost. The table below shows the costs for each level of every force used.

System: For every force used in a Magari, there will be a cost involved, which is directly proportional to the level of force the player is using. The total for the Magari is the Agmara cost for each individual force used. This cost is per Action Phase, so if the character needs to build up the power to create a more powerful Magari, the cost is multiplied by the number of Action Phases this takes. The power for one of the forces might be built up in one Action Phase, but it cannot be used until all the required forces are at the right level. Magaris involving multiple forces require multiple Action Phases to power up each force, so complex Magaris can be quite costly, unless the character works with a group.

Level of Element	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Cost per Action Phase	1	2	8	16	24	28	32	36	40	44

Example: Agroth wants to create a Magari with the **Spirit** and **Air** forces. He decides to use **Spirit** 3 and **Air** 5; the cost of the Magari would be 64 Agmara, as it takes two Action Phases to build up two forces. (**Spirit** 3 costs 8 Agmara, **Air** 5 costs 24 Agmara, multiplied by the 2 Action Phases needed to cast equals 64)

If Agroth only had **Air** 4, he would need to spend an extra Action Phase building up the **Air** element. Because he will have to use **Air** twice, the costs are increased again; the end cost would be 104 Agmara. (**Spirit** 3 costs 8 Agmara, **Air** 4 costs 24 Agmara, **Air** 4 costs another 24 Agmara to build it to the right number of units. This is multiplied by the required number of Action Phases to build the **Air** force to the right level, in this case 3. The final total is 104.)

N.B.: It is advantageous to work within the limits of the character's magical force knowledge, as the cost of any effect that requires an amount of knowledge above his own will work out very expensive. Though it is possible, it is not advised for a character to use multiples of a single force to build power, as this will drain his Agmara faster than when working within his limits.

Personal Agmara

Each character has a stock of personal Agmara; he has a maximum and minimum level. When Agmara is restored, it cannot go above the character's maximum. He will suffer adverse effects if he goes below his Base limit. The character's personal Agmara is worked out in the **Character Generation** Section on page 191.

Pushing the Envelope

Once a character has used up all of his personal Agmara, he should not cast any more magic; if he does the Agmara will be drained from his Minor Wounds, and then his Major Wounds, at 1 Wound point per 1 point of Agmara. Treat this as normal physical damage, with all the adverse effects of such damage.

If a character were to push himself beyond safe limits, it could cause a literal physical disintegration, resulting in death.

System: No roll is required for this action. However the character's Manipulation roll may be affected if he takes a severe hit to his major Wounds. Once his Wounds points have been depleted, and no medical attention is forthcoming, he will fall unconscious and die.

Group Magic

When working in a group, each member can input any amount of Agmara that is needed. This makes group working advantageous, as it potentially doubles the pool of Agmara available. Also, it means Magaris can be built up faster, cutting down the required number of Action Phases. Each character in the group can draw on a different magical force and can share the Agmara cost, and it reduces the time taken to cast a Magari, thereby reducing the overall cost.

Other Sources

It is possible for a har to draw Agmara from other sources, but he might suffer at the hands of the universe for such actions.

System: A character can draw additional Agmara from other characters, providing those characters have enough to spare. If a character is willing to give up this energy, then no roll is needed and the player can use that character's Agmara pool as their own. Should a character resist, or not be willing to submit their Agmara, the player makes a **Manipulation** roll with that character's **Resistance** as a negative Action Modifier. If the roll is a success, the player's character can drain that victim's Agmara pool into his own. A victim need not necessarily be consciously aware that his Agmara is being drained, at least if the character draining it is subtle about his actions. However, once the victim's pool has been reduced by half, he will automatically know who is draining energy from him.

Agmara can be taken from the character's environment, such as rocks, buildings (Nayatis, for example, would have a lot), trees and plants, even humans. However, as these things do not have an Agmara pool to drain from, it is taken that they have 1 point of Agmara for every kilogram of weight. A rock weighing 200 kg will have 200 Agmara. As the energy is drained from the item, it will slowly break down and crumble to dust. Living creatures will suffer the same fate as a har who goes beyond their base Agmara. If the character drains Agmara from living creatures, he will need to make a Manipulation roll with that creature's magical Resistance as a negative Action Modifier.

Draining power from a source that is not willing to supply it will incur the wrath of the universe. It will automatically be Vulgar magic. The character will then suffer backlash for such actions. For every item or creature from which the character drains additional Agmara, he will also gain 1 point of Probability.

Building Magical Energy through Aruna

Other than group Magaris, aruna can help build up excess magical energy. This is one of the few physical acts hara can perform to build up more magical energy. Because of the partly spiritual aspect of aruna, it interacts on different levels, opening up reserves of Agmara that were previously unavailable.

"Duck means that you move out of THE WAY!"

- Blackrose har Sulh

"We know all about free love, baby...we invented it...not those damn hippies."

- Myth, Uigenna

"Silence is golden and should be worth something!"

- Twitch, Uneeah

System: The act of aruna is most potent at temporarily increasing a character's available Agmara. Though the act itself does not have to be described in detail, it is essential they the player lets the Storyteller know who their character is taking aruna with, as both characters who take part will effectively have their Maximum Agmara doubled. So if a character has 425 Agmara to start with they would have 850 points of Agmara after aruna. (Both characters who partake in aruna will have double their Max Agmara.)

This additional Agmara will drain away at the rate of 1 point per minute in game time, or 1 point every 12 Action Phases. Once the temporarily increased maximum has reached the character's normal Maximum, the drain will stop.

This benefit of aruna is not cumulative and cannot be performed multiple times to gain massive amounts of Agmara. It will however top up the character's temporary Agmara to double maximum. This also means that if aruna is performed again, either before or after all the Agmara has drained away, the characters involved will still gain the advantage of a double maximum pool of Agmara.

Pelki, or forced aruna, is frowned upon by most tribes. However, it can offer untold power to a har who performs such an action. It is considered as rape by every har, and those who commit it are usually hunted down and killed as dangerous perverts.

The act of pelki will offer a bigger boost to the character's temporary Agmara. It will essentially quadruple the character's max Agmara. So a character with a max Agmara of 425 will end up with 1700 temporary Agmara at his disposal. This will drain away at the same rate as the Agmara boost of normal aruna, but if the character is found out, he will most likely be hunted down and suffer punishment at the hands of others.

Restoring Agmara

There are a few ways to restore Agmara energy; these can increase the har's natural process of regeneration. Meditation and sleep are two of the slower ways. Aruna is the faster option, but it might not be every player's preference or always available to the character.

System: The Wraeththu body will regenerate Agmara energy at a rate of 1 point per minute (12 Action Phases). This will occur, no matter what the character is doing, until the character's Max Agmara is reached. (Wraeththu characters regenerate Agmara at 1 point per minute)

Sleeping will increase the rate to 2 points per minute (12 Action Phases). The first two hours of sleep do not count in this process. Also if the character is disturbed, it will reset the two-hour countdown. Meditation is a more viable option, although it still has the two-hour count down before the regeneration speed increases. During Meditation the character will gain 4 points per minute.

Aruna offers nearly instantaneous benefits, as long as the player takes into account the time for the act of aruna. Both characters involved will regain all lost Agmara and they will be topped up to double their maximum capacity. Pelki offers the same instantaneous boost to quadruple the character's Max Agmara.

Human characters can only regain stolen Agmara at the rate of 1 point per hour. Sleeping is of no benefit, but the effects of meditation still apply to human characters.

Permanent Magaris and Magical Items

At some point a character may wish to create a continually Agmara-charged magical item or a permanent Magari. Both of these options require a method by which the Magari or item can regenerate the Agmara to keep it functional. Sadly, there are no infinite springs of Agmara energy easily available. The only way a permanent Magari can be fuelled is with the spirit of a living creature. All living creatures regenerate Agmara over time. If a spirit is bound to an item or effect, it will create a pool of Agmara energy that the object can use as fuel. Most hara prefer to ask the spirits of the dead to perform this function, rather than kill living creatures.

System: The desired Magari is built up in the same way as any other, using the magical forces and the abilities of the character. Once the correct amount of Action Phases has passed, the character needs to extinguish the life of a chosen sacrifice or call in a spirit of the dead. The player rolls against any relevant Skills to make sure their character has sufficient knowledge to accomplish the task. They also roll for Manipulation to ensure the character controls the process successfully. If all is successful, the Magari is bound to whatever the character desires, along with the spirit of the sacrifice or the dead.

The Agmara cost of generating the Magari is taken from the character's temporary Agmara pool, and is calculated by how much Agmara the Magari needs to perform the magical action stored within it. For example, it costs 127 points of Agmara for the character to generate a permanent Magari of his own design. Once the permanent Magari has been cast, it does not disappear, but needs time to regenerate the Agmara that empowers it.

Also the **Success Level** of the character's Manipulation roll should be recorded, as it will be relevant should another character or being attempt to counter the bound Magari. Once everything has been recorded and worked out, and the Magari has generated enough Agmara to be effective, it will be ready for action.

"I never did things by halves!"

- Jazran, Varr



"Time to spill some human blood!"

- Karrana har Kakkahaar

Essentially the Magari that the rehuna creates is bound to an object; the spirit within it regenerates the Agmara when required. Once the Magari has been used, all the available Agmara within it is 'burned up'. If a bound Magari is completely drained of Agmara, it will be useless until it has had time to regenerate enough energy to be activated again.

Willing sacrifices always offer a greater regeneration rate of Agmara. A bound spirit can communicate with the user. It will have access to all the mental skills it possessed in life, but will not be able to affect the physical world (other than through the Magari) and will have no access to magic. The user of the bound item or Magari will have no control over the spirit, which will communicate as and when it sees fit. It can share some of its knowledge if it wishes, but the user can only tap into the bound Magari and not into the actual (previous) abilities of the trapped spirit. A rehuna can also instruct a willing spirit to prevent others from tampering with or activating the Magari it inhabits. A bound spirit can also be used as a messenger.

An unwilling spirit can communicate with the rehuna if it wants to, but it is more than likely going to be very upset and uncooperative. The Magari and its regeneration rate cannot be stopped or controlled by an unwilling spirit, but it can be really irritating in other ways. As the spirit communicates through telepathy when touched, it can start singing irritating songs or just being sarcastic and annoying when you need to use the permanent effect.

Multiple spirits can be bound to one object, which will in turn add to the regeneration of Agmara and the amount that can be stored, but there is no guarantee they will get along.

The table below gives a list of what spirits will regenerate at what rate and what amount of Agmara they can hold. The regeneration level is how many points of Agmara it will regain every minute (12 Action Phases). The storage is its maximum Agmara value.

Soul Type	Unwilling		Willing	
	Regeneration	Storage	Regeneration	Storage
Animal	1	50	2	100
Human	2	100	4	200
Hara Kaimana	4	400	8	800
Hara Ulani	8	800	16	1600
Hara Nahir Nuri	16	1600	32	3200

Probability

Although the universe itself is not an intelligent being, at times it can appear to be. It's certainly never happy when a har performs magic, especially when that magic overtly affects reality. The universe is elastic in nature; the bigger the Magari the bigger the ripple it will cause, and the more likely it will be that the character will get some backlash from it. Sensible rehunas create Magaris that cause minimal ripples in the fabric of the universe, or else just skim the surface and cause no ripples at all.

System: The distribution of Probability points is the domain of the Storyteller. If any Magari is obvious to observers, such as a fireball shooting from a character's eyes, the character will gain 1 point of Probability. Overt effects are called Vulgar magic. Should a Magari be shrewdly constructed, and affect reality in a likely way, such as an occupied table moving slightly so a character trips over its leg, it's regarded as Subtle magic and the character would not gain any points of Probability. There is a fine line between the Vulgar and the Subtle, and the Storyteller should decide into which category a Magari fits.

Draining Agmara from characters or sentient creatures that are unwilling will also gain a character 1 point of Probability per character or creature used. Draining Agmara from inanimate objects will gain the character 1 Probability per object used.

"One...two...three...and fire!"

- Aceama har Uigenna

"Leave me alone!"

- Aceama har Uigenna

Any magic performed in a Majhahn will not incur points of Probability, no matter how flashy or obvious it might be. This is because a Majhahn is seen as a cause leading to an effect, rather than just an effect. Majhahn is the best way to build and perform complex Magaris; it can also be used to perform multiple Magaris. The actions performed during a Majhahn are based on the choices of the player. The bigger the Magari, the more elaborate the Majhahn needs to be.

Losing Probability

There is only one way for a character to lose any Probability points he incurs, and that is over time and through his own actions. Things will go wrong for a character while he has any amount of Probability points, and sometimes the detrimental effects can be quite serious.

System: The Storyteller should decide when these events take place, either at a critical moment or during everyday events. They should also decide when 1 point of Probability is removed. When the Storyteller feels a moment is right and 1 point of Probability drains away, they should refer to the following table. The Effect column gives an overview of what happens and the Consequence column lists the direct effect on the character.

The Storyteller should look up the character's current Probability rating, and see what the Consequence is. They should let the player roll for an Action and then tell them to apply the Action Modifier in the Consequence column. Once the Consequence has taken effect, the player can remove 1 point of Probability.

Rating	Effect	Consequence
1-3	No discernable problems. Occasionally you might find things not quite working how they should do.	A temporary -10 Action Modifier.
4-6	Noticeable things don't work in your presence, small machines stop, electronic devices malfunction. Animals will either avoid or be overly friendly to you.	A temporary -15 Action Modifier.
7-9	Most mechanical devices will stop or break. Electronic devices will spark and might explode. Animals will flee from you in terror or flock to you in droves. You might find that when you're around all hell breaks loose, as if Chaos itself has been let free.	A temporary -20 Action Modifier, also inconvenient events might occur.
10+	If you ever have the misfortune of getting to this level, hand over your character to the Storyteller and accept the changes they have made. You only have yourself to blame.	Remove 25 points from the character's Skills, Stats, Magic Abilities or Secondary Stats. These changes are permanent, but can be regained through the standard expenditure of experience.

"Is it so hard for a novice to keep their room free from clutter?"

- Kellan, Gelaming

MAKING MAGIC

The system of magic used in this game is free form, where spells and rituals can be used, but they are individual to the magic user. The spells themselves cannot be taught directly to another character. Only the end result can be taught through guided teaching, as each individual will use the forces of magic in different ways to reach a desired effect.

An example to show how this system works is that of how people decide upon travel arrangements. When people travel from one country to another, they have different

options at their disposal. Some might prefer to travel by plane, others by sea or train, or yet more by using ferries and then motor vehicles. Overland, you could ride a horse, travel rivers and canals in a boat, or simply walk to your desired destination. The end result is the same; whatever method of travel you choose, you will reach your destination. This is similar to how this magic system works; the end result of a Magari or Majhahn might be the same, but the route taken and the items used will be different for each har. There are no set lists of ingredients or actions or words to say; that is down to the creativity of the individual. As you can tell a person about all the different ways to travel, so a magic teacher in the Wraeththu world can explain about the different forces, but it is up to the students to choose the method.

Telling the Story of Magic

When designing a Magari, players should be cunning and think laterally. The components used in each Magari are individual to the rehuna; some players will be more adept at devising subtle and simple solutions.

To build a Magari, first decide what you want the end result to be and then think of everything that your character will need on the journey to achieve that end result. A thorough breakdown of what he'll need will make it easier for you to select the appropriate magical forces. Also, it will give some insight as to how you might reduce the cost in terms of Agmara. In addition, if the Magari is well thought out, it's less likely to have holes in it, which the Storyteller will spot. For example, if your character wanted to create a projectile weapon to deal with a powerful enemy, it would take some very complex and time-consuming Magaris. In most situations, it would be better for the character to create an illusion so convincing that their enemy really believes they've been shot or struck with a blade. The most powerful illusions work in tandem with the belief of the victim; their body reacts as if they really have been injured. The skin will break and they will bleed. This is the type of Magari a Uigenna would create very successfully.

Once you've completed the breakdown, decide which forces are closest to each item within it, then decide on how much of each force will be needed. After this, determine whether **Chaos** or **Order** is more pertinent to the Magari, and make sure you have enough of each to allow the required forces to be used at the desired level. If **Chaos** and **Order** limit the forces too much, an additional Action Phase may be needed in order to build enough power in each force. For example if **Water** is 5 and **Chaos** is only 4, and the Magari needs **Water** 5 and uses **Chaos**, the rehuna would need to spend an additional Action Phase to build up enough Energy to manipulate the force. See the **Chaos** and **Order** section on page 328 for more details.

Next, work out how many Action Phases it will take to cast the Magari. Each force, or multiple of the same force, takes one Action Phase to build up, so it might take a while to complete some Magaris.

Now you've decided upon the forces you'll use, you need to know the values of each, as well as the number of Action Phases required for the character to cast the Magari.

Work out the Agmara expenditure, referring to the relevant tables or section of the character sheet, to determine the cost of each force. Count multiples of the same force as individual forces. When you have this total, multiply it by the number of Action Phases it takes to cast. This gives you the total Agmara that must be spent.

A breakdown for Magaris

- O Decide on the end result of the Magari.
- O Break down the Magari into the individual components and actions it will need to succeed.
- O Match each component to a force that is most significant; if it can't be matched to one force, then use two or more that are appropriate.

"You have a dark soul. I like that...."

- Cest Naran har Uigenna

"Those colours are like black and white only in colour, man."

- Myth, Uigenna

- Decide if **Chaos** or **Order** is most appropriate, and check the character's magical force knowledge. Some components of the Magari may require multiple uses of one force.
- Work out how many Action Phases the Magari will take to cast. It takes one Action Phase per force used. Multiple uses of one force should each take 1 Action Phase.
- Determine the Agmara cost by using the relevant tables (which are also replicated on the Character Sheet) to see what the expenditure is for each force or multiple forces. Multiply this by the number of Action Phases needed to cast.
- Convince the Storyteller your Magari will work.
- Remove the Agmara from the character's temporary Agmara pool.
- Make any necessary Skill rolls, then a Manipulation roll, on a D20.

The player must explain to the Storyteller in brief details what the effects of the Magari will be, and explain how each force will be used. If the Storyteller agrees, then the player needs to make any relevant Skill rolls, then their Manipulation roll, and cross off the temporary Agmara that is spent on creating the Magari. Even if the role is a failure, the temporary Agmara is lost. If the roll is a success, the Magari goes as planned.

"I would only admit that to close friends."

- Zip Hamstring, *Uigenna*

A Note to Storytellers on Magic

It is up to the Storyteller to decide if the player's explanation is convincing. If it is, and they are successful in their Manipulation roll, everything goes as the player said. Should the player leave out something important or make a mistake, then this will cause them a problem. The Storyteller acts as the judge, and can interpret what the player said, in any way they wish. Magic is like electricity: it will always take the shortest route, even if that means trampling on a few innocent victims along the way.

The Storyteller might allow a Magari that isn't completely correct, approving a margin of error so that the Magari *might* produce the results desired. Again, the Storyteller should decide upon the effects.

Even a failed roll is not always a complete failure, since the energy that built up during the Magari can be used somewhere. The desired Magari might take place, but there might be significant side effects. Skill rolls and Manipulation rolls can be used to determine the outcome.

A skilled player will be clever enough to specify carefully the components and intent of a Magari, and leave little to interpretation. Other players will learn through trial and error. It's not advisable to criticise and shred every Magari a player constructs, as this will detract from the playing experience. As a rule, pick only on those that have glaring holes in them, or if the character makes a mistake.

Magic is just that, magic. Technology was by and large developed without the use or knowledge of magic. This can cause many problems when characters try to use magic to create a technological device. Even simple items such as swords can suffer because of the nature of magic. Any character trying to create anything technological will find that it's riddled with flaws and in some cases may explode in his face.

The best way for a player to handle this is to emulate technology, by looking at the end result and seeing if there is a way to avoid the use of technology. At the end of a day, a computer is nothing more than a device to store and manipulate data; a human spirit can also do the same. A clever rehuna will be able to create some form of computing device which uses bound spirits and crystals to store them. They may even think of a way to avoid using spirits.

The same goes with the less advanced technology. Why do the characters need to create a sword to do damage? You can inflict damage internally to a character without even being close to him. Any players who find ways of doing things in new ways should be rewarded with a small amount of Experience the first time they come up with the idea.

"If you have heard the saying where there's a will there's a way. I should remind you, I have a strong will..." - Fragease, Sulh Warmonger

With Probability the Storyteller should be hard on the players. Anyhar who creates anything physically, such as a lump of stone, is seriously messing with reality and the fabric of the universe. However, the Forces and Magari can be used in the same manner but it can be an illusion that will disappear after a few minutes. This is acceptable as it is just an illusion and a magical construct, which can still force the mind of another character to believe it is real. The character will act accordingly, even to the point of taking physical damage which is formed by the mind's effect on the body. However if the item's creation is seen, it will be recognized as an illusion. For any characters witnessing the effect, the difficulty of disbelieving the illusion should be the **Success Level** of the Manipulation roll that was used to create it. This will become a negative Action Modifier to any character making a perception roll to see through the illusion. However, to make the roll the character has to have some reason to believe the item is not real.

"What difference does it make if you beg or not? The real test comes if you survive what I am about to do to you."

- Duras Vin, Varr

Always remember that if a Magari has a physical manifestation, it will more than likely give the character a point of Probability, unless it can be disguised. Moving objects, or creating illusions or subtle changes, will be okay and the rehuna will suffer no ill effects. Purifying metals and changing things slightly to cause future events to turn out differently are also acceptable changes to reality. Remember, Creation of objects is usually always bad; changing something is usually okay.

Probability is a tool for the Storyteller to keep magic out of the realms of high fantasy, and bring it to the level of a narrative tool, which the players can use to subtly change the course of the game. Remember, a good description is the key, and a description of how the Magari will go unnoticed should always rewarded by not applying Probability.

Familiarity with Magari (optional)

Players may keep track of what Magaris they use most often. Roughly every 10 times they use the same Magari, they get a reduction in Agmara cost. This will encourage players to start building Grimoires for their characters, and keeping a track of what they are up to.

A few guidelines: don't let the reduction of Agmara reach more than 50% of the total. It is advisable to give the characters a 5% reduction every 10th casting of the Magari. This will simulate the magical energies within the characters shaping themselves to become better rehunas.

COMMON MAGARI

Here are a few samples of some of the simple yet useful Magaris many hara are taught before they reach Brynie. This will give players an idea of how to construct a Magari, and will also help the Storyteller tell if the players are doing things right.

Agmara Torch

This is a magical item that requires a small rock or crystal, and the spirit of an animal. The Agmara-charged stone emits a 10 metre pool of bright light; beyond this limit the light diminishes in intensity. Many tribes teach hara how to create Agmara torches before they reach Brynie.

Elements: Fire 1, Order 1.

Other Components: The willing or unwilling spirit of an animal and a small rock or crystal.

Agmara Cost: 1 to make / 1 per Action Phase to use.

Creation Time: 1 Action Phase

Recharge Rate: 1 per minute unwilling / 2 per minute willing

Storage: 50 unwilling / 100 willing

Notes: An unwilling spirit will provide enough Agmara to maintain the light for about 5 minutes. The torch will then require 50 minutes to recharge. A willing spirit will maintain the light for about 10 minutes, but it will still take 50 minutes to recharge. Any Agmara stored in the item can be used by the character to add to their Agmara Pool; this will not incur any Probability penalties.

A willing soul gives the user the ability to control the light and also to set a trigger for when the light will turn on and off. If the spirit is unwilling, the user will have to manually trigger the bound Magari in the item. Multiple spirits can be bound to such an item, so that it is effective for longer periods.

Location Finder

This type of Magari enables a hara to find north, when environmental conditions hamper other methods of locating it. It gives the user a rough idea of in which direction he should be going to find a specific place within 20 km of the caster.

Elements: Attraction 1, Spirit 1, Order 1

Agmara Cost: 4

Cast Time: 2 Action Phases

Notes: The Magari will instantly give the rehuna the knowledge of which direction is north at the time of casting. It utilises a local animal spirit to gain a rough idea of the area and provides the rehuna with a guide to direction for whatever area he was focusing upon while casting the Magari. This Magari is useful for finding water or nearby settlements. Once cast, the Magari will not continue to give directional readings, so from that point it is up to the rehuna to head in the right direction. Once he has travelled for a while, he may cast the Magari again.

Compass Stone

This is a small stone or crystal which when dropped or activated, will always point north. Many travelling hara will carry such items as an aid to navigation.

Elements: Attraction 1, Earth 1, Order 1

Other Components: The willing or unwilling spirit of an animal.

Agmara Cost: 4 to make / 4 per use

Creation Time: 2 Action Phases

Recharge Rate: 1 per minute unwilling / 2 per minute willing

Storage: 50 unwilling / 100 willing

Notes: This stone is often tied to a piece of string and used like a pendulum or cast like a die. It can be used like a normal compass to locate north whenever needed. It is unlikely this item will run out of charge because it is rarely in constant use. If it should be required for constant use, the caster can incorporate more spirits into the Magari to increase the recharge rate.

If used like a die, the stone or crystal will be conical in shape, and the tip will always point north when activated.



"I prefer to use a spoon to open an egg rather than a mallet..."

- Gabriel Chamberg, Colurastes

Spirit Attractor

This calls a spirit that can be used in Magaris. Individual forms need to be called upon, the more specific the better. Undirected calls nearly always bring forth malevolent forces. The attractor is an object temporarily imbued as a beacon to attract a specific type of spirit.

Elements: Spirit 2, Attraction 2, Order 2

Agmara Cost: 8 Agmara + 2 per minute, beyond the first that the Attractor is to remain active

Cast Time: 2 Action Phases

Notes: Any object can become an Attractor. Once the Magari is cast, the rehuna needs to imbue the object with more Agmara to keep it going. It takes one Action Slice to add 2 Agmara to the Attractor, and each two points keeps it active for one minute. The attractor can be topped up if need be.

The more specific the Spirit required, the longer it will take to arrive. If the rehuna is looking for a specific spirit, it may take up to a day for the spirit to come, unless the har knows where the spirit haunts.

"I wouldn't fear death if I were you. I would fear the events that lead up to it however."

- Solasus har Kakkahaar

Spirit Guardian

This Magari conjures up a spirit that can act as a guide or guardian for a limited amount of time. Some of these spirits can take the form of dead hara, humans or animals. They are usually bound to a particular location, building or object. They are unable to interact with any physical objects and can pass right through them. However they are visible and can communicate and share knowledge. They have a blue sparkly glow all round them, and in bright light are partly transparent. Spirit Guardians are commonly used to protect a site or camp while the occupants sleep.

Elements: Earth 1, Spirit 2, Order 2

Other Components: The willing or unwilling spirit of an animal, or in some cases the spirit of a dead har or human.

Agmara Cost: 6 Agmara

Cast Time: 2 Actions Phases

Notes: Willing spirits are the most reliable. Unwilling spirits can cause great mayhem, and if the power to bind them is not maintained they can easily escape. A Spirit Attractor can be used to attract a specific entity, then using this Magari they can be made into a temporary guardian. The table below gives the duration the spirit will be able to interact with the character.

"The trick is to shake the cans. If it feels solid its dog food, if it sloshes around its human food."

- Yanosh Sale, Unneah Scavenger

Soul Type	Duration	
	Willing	Unwilling
Animal	25 minutes	10 minutes
Human	1 hour	30 minutes
Hara Kaimana	6 hours	1 hour
Hara Ulani	24 hours	6 Hours
Hara Nahir Nuri	72 hours	24 hours

Telekinesis

This is the ability to move things with the mind and is taught to most hara soon after Inception. But when hara need to work together to move something larger they often turn to magic.

Elements: Earth 2, (**Grade 1:** Kinetic 2, Order 2. **Grade 2:** Kinetic 5, Order 5. **Grade 3:** Kinetic 8, Order 8)

Agmara Cost: (**Grade 1:** 4 Agmara, **Grade 2:** 52 Agmara, **Grade 3:** 76 Agmara) per Action Phase

Cast Time: 2 Action Phases

Notes: The object to be moved should be in line of sight of the caster(s), although the Magari can also be used remotely through telepathy, as long as one of the hara involved has a direct visual link with the object. Each grade can move a different weight, (Grade 1: 2kg, Grade 2: 16kg, Grade 3: 128kg). A contested Resistance roll is needed for moving a living object.

Psychic Barrier

This barrier prevents the use of Telepathy in any form. Those within the barrier are protected from 'invasions' from outside it, but still can communicate between themselves.

Elements: Spirit 5, Plasmatic 2, Order 5

Agmara Cost: 52 Agmara then 5 Agmara per Action Phase, after the first, to maintain the barrier.

Cast Time: 2 Action Phases

Notes: The barrier only lasts as long as the rehuna casting the Magari concentrates and spends Agmara on it. The barrier can protect up to 5 characters in close proximity to the rehuna. The Barrier puts a -25 Action Modifier on all Telepathy rolls that try to pass through the barrier. This also goes for the rehuna and his companions inside the barrier.

This Magari is also useful when it is bound to an object, as it can be activated when needed. However, it will require a spirit to be bound to the object.

*"I have dug your grave now
you must make the choice,
do you lie down in it or fight
to live?"*

- Duras Vin, Varr

Sense Magari

This is used to find out what kind of Magaris are being used against your character's party, or are affecting the surrounding area. It doesn't necessarily give him a way to combat any hostile actions, but it will give him the upper hand in respect of taking precautions or having the time to construct the most effective counter-Magaris.

Elements: Spirit 3, Air 2, Order 2

Agmara Cost: 20 Agmara

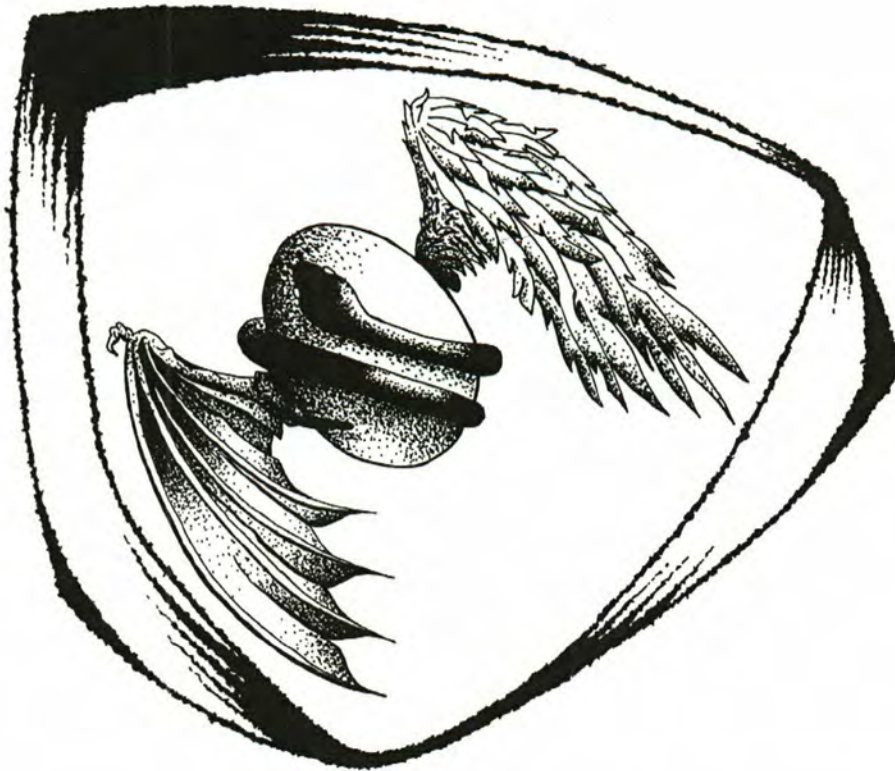
Cast Time: 2 Action Phases

Notes: The Magari allows the rehuna to know what forces are in operation around him and at what levels they are being used. It will not tell him who is responsible, only what components are being used. This Magari will also identify any spirits that were bound with the opponents' Magari. Sense Magari activates over 1 Action Phase, and has a range of 28 metres. Once cast, the rehuna knows exactly what forces are active in the area.

LEXICON THREE

Aghama	A spiritual being who some hara believe to be the first Wraeththu.
Agmara	The universal energy that fuels life and magic. It is one aspect of the Aghama.
Aruna	Sexual union between two hara that goes beyond the physical plane. It can also offer a boost to any magical practices.
Changing States	4 forces of the universe that refer to a change of state (Temporal, Conversion, Phase and Destruction).
Churgeon	A har who has dedicated his life to healing and the study of harish physiology.
Churgery	The act of magical healing.
Elements	4 forces which refer to the physical world (Earth, Air, Fire Water).
Energy Forces	4 forces which refer to the non-physical world (Spirit, Attraction, Plasmatic and Kinetic).

Forces	The 12 components that comprise the universe and are manipulated during the performance of magic, including the Physical Forces, the Energy Forces and Meta Reality Forces.
Hienama (hy-en-ah-muh)	A spiritual teacher who is usually involved in Inception and caste ascension. He is often viewed as a fountain of magical knowledge.
Library of Kyme	A great store of human and Wraeththu knowledge, the library is located in Alba Sulh and managed by Malakess har Sulh – High Codexia.
Magari	The manipulation of Agmara energy to produce an effect upon reality, similar to a spell. It is performed without the aid of a ritual.
Majhahn (mazh-arn) Manipulation	A magical casting performed as a full-length ritual. The ability to manipulate the energy of the universe and bend it to produce a desired Magari.
Meta Reality Forces	A sub group of the Changing States forces they consist of Temporal, Phase, Chaos and Order, these deal with Realities and Meta Realities an changes to the fabric of reality.
Physical Forces	Another term for the four Elements, the four forces that pertain to the physical world (Earth, Air, Fire and Water).
Naqi	The ritual blade used during the Inception process; it is not always a knife or dagger. Some tribes use any object that has a sharp enough edge.
Nayati	A temple or sacred space that is either created in reality as a building or a specially charged area in the landscape, or else it is created solely in the mind of a har, when it is known as an etheric Nayati. Some hara create a physical location to match that of their inner world.
Pelki	Similar in nature to the human act of rape. Pelki is anathema to Wraeththukind, who hold aruna in the highest possible respect, but to the unscrupulous and depraved, it can offer untold power.
Probability	A build up of negative energy in a har that manifests itself in daily life as it drains away.
Rehuna (reh-hoo-nah)	A practitioner of magic, or a har who is taking part in a Majhahn.
Ruhahn (roo-harn)	A magical group; the term is often used in Majhahns as a name to represent that group.
Shayyai Subtle Magic	Small bowls used for burning oils during a Majhahn. Magic that incurs no backlash from the universe, it is often unseen or not noticed by others. Subtle magic creates effects that are likely to happen in reality without compromising probability.
Table	It's not that we have anything against tables, in fact we quite like them and it's just an example and we apologies to any tables that were offended by our comments. Agroth was not available for this example. So you can see the dilemma we faced - no Agroth - so we had no choice but to use a table. Next time we will pick on chairs for you. So calm down and don't come waving your legs at us. Or we will turn you into our next book.
Vakei	A ritual knife used in Majhahns. Some vakeis contain crystal shards embedded in the cross section of the blade.
Vulgar magic	Magic which is obvious and improbable.



"You have but to look in their eyes to see the passion and fervour within. They will lay their lives down far more readily than we...for what they believe in."

- Sshasha har Colurastes



APPENDIX 1

EQUIPMENT AND AVAILABILITY

Although manufacturing has collapsed, many tribes have founded small workshops to produce essential supplies. The average har carries equipment that has either been scavenged or traded for with other hara they have met. Many small towns and settlements hold markets every few weeks, where a variety of useful items can be purchased or bartered for. If there are no markets in your vicinity, do what the Uigenna do and make your way to Unneah territory. Soon enough you will meet a wandering trader.

Availability

A variety of useful equipment and supplies can be scavenged from towns and cities vacated by humans. Some cities will still be occupied, so finding tradable goods can be problematic. Later in this section are tables you can use as a guide to how easily and quickly you might acquire or find certain items.

The first table below denotes the meanings of the letters in the Availability Column, marked Av.

Availability	Av.	Description
Common	C	Common items are easy to find; almost every abandoned settlement or trader has a stock of these.
Uncommon	U	It may take a few weeks to find a trader who deals with Uncommon wares; only the larger abandoned settlements or Wraeththu cities have these items.
Hard to Find	H	A har might have to search for months to find a trader who carries Hard to Find items. The larger human cities, many of which are still populated by the remnants of humanity, may stock them. Galhea, Greenling, Immanion, Freygard and Avalona are the few Wraeththu cities which will stock such items.
Rare	R	Rare items will often be guarded by the remains of humanity; they know that Wraeththu will often come on hunting expeditions to try to get hold of these valuable commodities. On average, a har might meet once a year with a trader who has rare items for sale. Fulminir, Avalona and Immanion are the few cities which keep a stock of such items. Unless a tribe has set up a workforce to manufacture such items, they will be very hard to find.
Extremely Rare	E	Extremely Rare items will more than likely be heavily guarded in some of the largest human-occupied settlements. Some might be specifically manufactured by certain tribes for trade or their own needs. It may take a long time for a har to find such items in the larger Wraeththu cities.

Equipment

The following table gives a list of items which are commonly sought after or used; this is just a sample of what is around. The Storyteller should use this table as a guide to what a trader might have or what the characters may find in a city. (All weights are in Kilograms)

Category	Item	Notes	Weight	Av.
Vehicles	Car (working)	Contains no Fuel	-	H
	Van (working)	Contains no Fuel	-	R
	Truck (working)	Contains no Fuel	-	E
	Mule		-	C
	Pony		-	C
	Horse (small)		-	U
	Horse (large)		-	H
	Horse (work)		-	R
	Diesel		-	R
	Row Boat		-	H
	Sailing Boat		-	R
	Barge		-	R
	Galleon		-	E
	Bike		-	R
	Motorbike	Contains no Fuel	-	H

Category	Item	Notes	Weight	Av.
Trade Goods	Tobacco (1kg)		1	R
	Snuff (1kg)		1	E
	Perfume (1kg)		1	H
	Make-up (1kg)		1	U
	Soap (1kg)		1	H
	Glue (1 litre)		1	R
	Moonshine (1 litre)		1	U
	Sheh (1 litre)	Apple liqueur (common in Galhea)	1	R
	Wine (1 litre)	Poor quality	1	H
	Ale (1 litre)		1	C
	Spirits (1 litre)		1	R
	Tea (1kg)		1	R
	Coffee (1kg)		1	U
	Spices (1kg)		1	R
	Herbs (1kg)		1	U
	Gasoline (1 litre)		1	E

Category	Item	Notes	Weight	Av.
Clothing	Socks		0.1	C
	Shirt		0.3	C
	Vest		0.2	C
	Jacket (short)		1	C
	Jacket (long)		2	C
	Jacket (leather)		4	U
	Trousers		1	C
	Skirt		0.5	C
	Dress		1	C
	Boots (ankle)		1	C
	Boots (long)		2	U
	Boots (work)		2	U
	Shoes		1	C
	Sandals		0.5	C
	Hat		0.2	C
	Belt		0.2	C
	Cloak		3	U
	Underwear		0.1	C
	Robe		2	C

Category	Item	Notes	Weight	Av.
Containers	Saddle Bag		3	H
	Saddle		7	E
	Bag (small)		1	C
	Bag (large)		2	C
	Sack	Woven Cloth	0.5	C
	Back Pack		1	H
	Water Skin (leather)	Empty	0.1	U
	Vial (glass)	Volume 500ml	0.2	H
	Jar	Volume 300ml	0.3	C
	Bucket		1	C
	Wooden Box	Volume 30cm ³	2	C
	Metal Box	Volume 30cm ³	5	H
	Trunk	Wooden with metal strapping, volume 1m ³	10	U
	Cup/Mug		0.2	C
	Drinking Glass		0.2	H
	Goblet		0.3	U
	Bowl		0.2	C
	Cooking Pot		1	C
	Kettle		1	C
	Bottle (plastic)	Volume 1 litre	0.1	C

Category	Item	Notes	Weight	Av.
Writing	Paper (50 sheets)		0.1	U
	Parchment (50 sheets)		0.2	C
	Blank Book (200 sheets)		0.5	R
	Pen		0.1	U
	Ink Pen		0.1	C
	Chalk		0.1	C
	Ink (100ml bottle)		0.2	R
	Quill		0.1	C

Category	Item	Notes	Weight	Av.
Camping	Sleeping Bag		1	H
	Tent (small)	Sleeps 2	3	U
	Tent (medium)	Sleeps 6	7	H
	Tent (large)	Sleeps 10	15	R
	Blanket		1	C
	Compass		0.1	E
	Hammer		0.5	U
	Tent Canvas	Sleeps 1	12	C
	Hammock		2	C
	Rope Hemp (10m)		20	U
	Rope Nylon (10m)		2	R

Category	Item	Notes	Weight	Av.
Lighting	Candle	8 Hours burn time	0.2	C
	Flint/Steel		0.2	H
	Tinder Box		0.5	R
	Torch (battery)		0.5	U
	Oil Lamp	No oil, 10 hours burn time when full	0.7	C
	Oil (litre)		1	R
	Charcoal (1kg)		1	C
	Kindling (1kg)		1	C
	Torch (Flame)	3 Hours burn time	2	C
	Batteries		0.2	E
	Lighter		0.1	U
	Matches (Box of 100)		0.1	H

Category	Item	Notes	Weight	Av.
Hunting	Fishing Hook (pack of 10)		0.1	C
	Fishing Line (10m)		0.1	U
	Animal Trap (bear)		4	H
	Net (fishing)		3	H
	Net (large)		7	R
	Snare		0.1	C

Category	Item	Notes	Weight	Av.
Misc.	Crowbar		2	U
	Spyglass		1	R
	Spade/Shovel		3	C
	Sledge (1man)		5	U
	Lock Pick		0.1	R
	Mirror		0.5	H
	Chain (10m)		35	U
	Tool kit	For use with Skills (Specify which Skill)	10	H
	Specialist Tools	For use with Skills (Specify which Skill)	2	R

Starting Equipment

All starting equipment is based on the resource level of the character. Each resource point will give the character access to a number of items, determined by their availability. These items are split into Weapons and Armour (See **Appendix 2**) and General Equipment (See **Appendix 1**). Use the table below to see what you can choose for your character after Character Generation has been completed.

Resource Level	Weapons & Armour	General Equipment
0	1 x Common	5 x Common, 1 x Uncommon
1	1 x Uncommon	5 x Common, 3 x Uncommon
2	1 x Hard to Find	5 x Common, 5 x Uncommon, 3 x Hard to Find
3	1 x Common, 2 x Rare	5 x Common, 5 x Uncommon, 5 x Hard to Find, 1 x Rare
4	2 x Common, 2 x Rare	5 x Common, 5 x Uncommon, 5 x Hard to Find, 2 x Rare, 1 x Extremely Rare
5	1 x Rare, 1 x Extremely Rare	5 x Common, 5 x Uncommon, 5 x Hard to Find, 3 x Rare, 2 x Extremely Rare

Trade Example: A character wants to exchange a Hard to Find item for an Uncommon item. In this exchange the character will gain 2 Uncommon Items for the 1 Hard to Find. However should the character want to trade some of their old equipment in for a Rare item then they will be looking at trading a number or lesser items, such as 2 Hard to find items or 4 Uncommon items.

If the player chooses, they can take equipment from Lower Availability Levels, but they would not get any extra equipment, as it's a one for one trade. For example, if a character wanted a Common item and only had allowance for 1 Rare item left to choose from, they could take the Common item instead of a Rare item, but would use up their allowance in doing so.

After character generation, the player should take the items they can from each level of Availability, and also any they might not want immediately so that they can barter with them during game play. This way a player can be prudent and obtain more useful equipment later.

Trade

When a character trades an item, that item is worth two items of a Lower Availability Level. This type of trade can only be done during the game itself and Starting Equipment cannot be traded this way until the Scenario gives the characters opportunity to do so. So 1 Rare item is worth two Hard to Find items, and 4 Uncommon items. Use the table below as a quick reference to what each item can be traded for.

	Common	Uncommon	Hard to Find	Rare	Extremely Rare
Common	1	2	4	8	16
Uncommon	-	1	2	4	8
Hard to Find	-	-	1	2	4
Rare	-	-	-	1	2
Extremely Rare	-	-	-	-	1

APPENDIX 2

WEAPONS & ARMOUR

While it is usually best for your character to avoid combat if he can, sometimes there is no alternative but to fight for survival. This appendix gives examples of weapons and armour, as well as guidelines on how to convert your favourite weapons to this system.

CLOSE COMBAT WEAPONS

Since the complex weapons of humans are hard to find, and even harder to maintain, most hara would prefer to use a blade for close combat. Their maintenance is easier and they do not require any ammunition. The close combat weapons table provides all the information needed for a range of weapons.

Major Wounds (Maj)

Some weapons have an edge that penetrates the skin and damages internal organs. The successful use of this type of weapon is likely to result in all damage being transferred to the character's Major Wound points, making them fatal to the victim.

Any weapon on the Close Combat Weapons Table marked with a 'Y' in the Maj column has a chance of delivering Major Wounds, if the player rolls well to strike an opponent in combat. See **page 266** for further explanation of this.

Combat Style

As explained in the Character Generation Section, Combat Style is an important part of all close combat. Without it, a sword would be little more than a shiny metal stick. Style adds essence and flow to combat, and also teaches the character about defence and survival in combat.

The Style column lists the major Weapons style for each weapon; it is not a list of all the styles, but the Main one suited to that type of weapon. For a full list of all the basic styles needed for each category of weapon, see the **Combat Styles** section on **page 267**. Remember, a character can develop their own combat styles and tailor their bonuses to the needs of that style.

Weapon Damage

Each weapon has a damage rating; this includes the number and type of dice needed and any extra bonuses from each weapon. Dice are used to add a random element. Not every strike from a weapon results in the same type of wound and damage; some hits are good, some are not so good.

Some Combat Skills or Combat Styles developed by the players may offer additional bonuses to damage. These are added to any damage done by the chosen weapon. For more information on Weapon Skills and their bonuses, see [page 222](#).

Some weapons are marked with [KB], Knockout Blow. These weapons are designed to render the victim unconscious quickly and do minimal physical damage. For more information on Knockout Blows see [page 287](#).

Category	Weapon	Maj	Style	Damage	AP	Speed	Weight kg	Size m	Av.
Axe	Hand Axe	Y	1H	1D6	11	1.3	1.8	0.9	C
	Silepe	Y	1H	1D6+2	15	1.2	1.4	0.6	U
	Tomahawk	Y	1H	1D4+1	13	1.1	1.5	0.4	C
	Venmuroo	Y	1H	1D6+2	12	1.4	1.9	0.8	H
Blunt Weapon	Club		1H	1D6 [KB]	2	1.5	1.3	0.6	C
	Mace		1H	1D8 [KB]	6	1.8	2	0.7	C
	Nunchaku		2H	1D6+1	4	1	1	0.8	U
	Spiked Mace	Y	1H	2D4+2	13	1.8	2	0.7	H
	Black Jack		1H	1D4 [KB]	1	1	0.5	0.2	U
	Shield (bash)		1H	1D4	1	1.2	Varies	Varies	Varies
Dagger/Knife	Dagger	Y	1H	1D4+1	4	1	0.6	0.3	C
	Stiletto	Y	1H	1D4	8	1	0.5	0.4	R
Pole Arms	Spear	Y	PA	1D4+1	6	2	0.9	1.7	C
	Halberd	Y	PA	2D4+1	8	2.1	2.8	2.2	R
	Pike	Y	PA	1D6+2	12	2	6.5	5.5	R
	Berdiche	Y	PA	2D6+2	11	2.3	3.1	2.1	E
	Glaive	Y	PA	1D6+2	8	1.8	4	2.3	E
	Voulge	Y	PA	2D6	15	2.1	2.7	2.1	E
	Quarterstaff/Staff		PA	1D4+2 [KB]	6	1.5	2.1	2.2	C
Sword	Bastard Sword	Y	1H, 2H	2D4+2	8	1.5	2.1	1	C
	Katana	Y	1H	2D4	6	1.2	1.4	1.1	E
	Claymore	Y	2H	2D6	11	1.8	2.9	1.2	R
	Scimitar	Y	1H	1D8	5	1.3	1.4	0.9	U
	Flamberge	Y	2H	2D4+1	12	1.7	3.4	1.3	E
	Foil	Y	1H	1D4	3	1	3.4	1.3	U
	Sabre	Y	1H	1D6+1	6	1.2	0.7	0.8	H
	Small Sword	Y	1H	1D6	6	1.1	0.8	0.6	C
	Zweihander	Y	2H	3D6+5	20	4	6.3	2	E
Whip, Chain and Rope	Bull Whip		1H	1D4	1	1.2	1.4	2.5	C
	Lasso		1H	0	0	10	5	15	C
Improvised	Fist		I	1D4	1	1	0	0	-
	Head		I	1D4-1	1	1	0	0	-
	Foot		I	1D4+1	1	1	0	0	-
	Chair Leg		1H	1D4+2	1	1.1	0.5	0.4	-
	Bottle (broken)	Y	1H	1D4-1	1	1.1	0.1	0.2	-
Other	Fire		-	1D6 / Slice	1	1	1	-	-

Armour Penetration (AP)

This represents the level of penetration each weapon can achieve. It is measured against the armour's AV. If it is higher, all damage goes through. If it is lower, then little or no damage will affect the target. For more information on armour penetration, see **page 283**.

Speed

Some weapons are slow and cumbersome, whereas others are lightning fast. The number in the weapon's speed rating represents the time in seconds that the character needs to perform the attack and be ready for the next one. This number is generic and is modified by the Skills and Stats of the character; a highly skilled character will be quick and deadly.

To work out how many times per Combat Phase the character can attack with any weapon, use the following calculation: $((\text{Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier} + \text{Base Actions}) \div \text{Weapon Speed})$. The Weapons Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier is a value worked out on the character's Base Combat Actions and any bonuses for his Stats or Styles. Base Actions are listed on the main page of the character sheet, and Weapon speed is listed on the Close Combat Weapons Table in this section. To work out this calculation quickly see the table on **page 384**.

Example: Agroth has a Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier from his Skills and Base Combat Action Modifiers of +3. His Base Actions are 6, giving him a total of 9. He needs to divide this by the Weapons Speed. For a Katana it is 1.4. This equals 6.24. Because of the round up or down for Stats, this then becomes 6. So Agroth has 6 Close Combat Actions with a Katana, which means he can take an attack/action in every Combat Slice of any Combat Phase he is part of, and has one spare attack/action he can use as he wishes.

Availability (Av.)

The column marked **Av.** is the availability of the weapons and how hard any of them are to find. See **Appendix 1** for more information on the availability codes.

Close Combat Weapon Upgrades

Like armour, Close Combat weapons can be improved by a skilled Weapon Smith. Each improvement takes 40 hours' game to complete. During that time the weapon will remain at its original Stats. A successful Weapon Smith roll needs to be made every 8 hours in game for the weapons to be upgraded. If one roll fails, it will take an additional eight hours to finish. This means an inexperienced Weapon Smith might take weeks to finish a job. If one of the rolls is a fumble, the weapon is destroyed and becomes useless due to flaws in the materials or damage.

The amount you can upgrade each Stat by is limited, as the raw materials for each weapon can only be manipulated so much before they become weak and brittle. The table below lists which stats can be altered and by how much. It also lists the maximum upgrade level.

Stat	Upgrade Increment	Max Upgrade
Damage	+1	+5
AP	+1	+2
Barrel Length	- 0.1	-0.5
Weight	-0.1	-0.5
Size	+/- 0.1	+/-0.3

Each increment of each Stat takes 40 hours to complete, so to do a full weapon upgrade will take 1000 hours, and require 125 rolls on the character Weapon Smith skill. As you can see, upgrades to weapons are few and far between. Such services do

not come cheap. The proper tools are essential for such upgrades, so it is unlikely a character can accomplish it on the road, as they would need to use a foundry and anvil.

Characters may also make their own weapons or find weapons during the course of their adventures. However, it is up to the Storyteller to find out about these weapons and use the weapons listed in this book as a base to work from.

RANGED COMBAT WEAPONS

Though the stocks of such weapons are becoming more and more limited, they are still a useful resource, not only for defence but also as a tradable commodity. Because of the rare nature of most ballistic weapons and their ammunition, most hara who come across firearms are likely to trade them for a trusty sword. After all, one day a gun is going to run out of ammunition and the har will be stuck with a useless lump of metal. Many hara will use a bow for ranged attacks, as fletching is a growing trade once again, and making arrows is a lot simpler than making modern ammunition.

The Ranged Weapons table uses columns similar to the Close Combat weapons table. Please refer to those descriptions if more insight is required.

Where Have All the Guns Gone?

Zillah Shemercy – Ex Varr General

The continent now known as Megalithica was once home to large stores of guns, weapons, ammunition and other military hardware. In a human society where gun ownership was just about mandatory, civil unrest caused by the rise of Wraeththu resulted in many bloody and brutal battles.

The first large-scale fights were fronted by the human military, but the growing Uigenna and Varr tribes quickly overpowered most of the northern military installations and claimed anything they could find. With the collapse of the government, and the defeat of armed forces in the larger cities, people took their safety into their own hands. Anarchy spread. No one trusted anyone and many humans fled to the far north.

Most of the military hardware was split between the Uigenna and Varr forces. Fuel for aircraft and assault vehicles ran out quickly once the supply from abroad dried up. Unrefined oil was available, but no one was around to process it, and fighter jets and other advanced technology quickly became useless. Once the power supply was cut, the generators didn't last long at the hands of untrained Wraeththu.

Guns still exist, and smaller handguns are fairly commonplace, but a full clip and well-made ammunition is worth more than gold. The Varrs make some of their own ammunition, but methods are still not perfect and it has led to disasters. Varrs are told that regular weapon maintenance is essential. Varr-made ammunition is rough at best and they will shred the barrel of a gun quickly if the har does not keep the weapon in good order. In the next few years, many of the weapons the Varrs use will become useless, unless they can get enough supplies and expertise to build a manufacturing plant for ammunition.

More archaic weapons such as swords, spears and bows are appearing once again. Magic is slowly taking a foothold, but the Wraeththu still have a lot to learn about the use of such powers as weapons.

Effective Range S/M/L

Every ranged weapon will become less and less accurate over the distance a projectile travels. The S/M/L Short, Medium and Long range values, are the distance in metres that the projectile travels. Beyond the value for Long range, the weapon is ineffective; the other values are the ranges at which range Action Modifiers have to be taken into account. For example, an AK-47 firing at a target 120 metres away would be Short range. If the target was 200 metres away it would be Medium. Anything from 250-500 metres is Long range. Beyond that, the weapon is useless. Some weapons are designed to keep accuracy over great distances, while others are designed as close range weapons. It is down to the needs of the character and his Skills as to what type of combat they prefer. All Action Modifiers for ranged combat can be found on the Universal Modifiers Table on **Page 246**.

Reload Time (RT)

The reload time for all weapons that hold multiple rounds of ammunition is measured in attacks/actions. Faster and better trained characters will have the advantage, as they will have more Spare attacks/actions to spend reloading. The number listed next to each weapon is the number of Attack actions the character needs to spend to reload. Fast characters may be able to do this in 1 Combat Slice. Though these times might seem long for some weapons, remember that if a character does not insert a clip correctly, the weapon might jam, which will cost valuable time, and perhaps even the character's life.

Ammunition (Ammo Capacity/Type)

It is vital to keep a record of what ammunition has been spent. Because ammunition is hard to find, every bullet counts. The Ammo Capacity represents the total amount of shots you can have with each weapon before it needs to be reloaded. The Ammo Type lists what type of ammunition the weapon uses. Powerful weapons that use extremely rare ammunition may be useless most of the time.

A weapon fired in Fully Automatic mode will use up ammunition swiftly. The 'A' value listed in the Speed column is the amount of bullets fired in one Combat Slice. Any character firing in full automatic mode will need to strike off that amount of ammunition each Combat Slice that they fire for. Fewer rounds can be fired if the player wishes, but this will adversely affect the amount of damage done by the weapon. The value marked next to the 'A' in the Speed column is the maximum amount of rounds that can be fired in one Action Slice.

Speed

Almost all firearms are mechanical in their actions, but the speed at which a weapon can fire is limited by the mechanism of the weapon. Below is a list of fire modes and an explanation of how they work with the game mechanics.

For each shot fired, strike off the same amount of shots from what is remaining in the current clip. Keep a check of clips and rounds left on a piece of notepaper to save having to correct the character sheet constantly.

All ranged weapons have the chance of doing Major Wound damage. If the **Success Level** of the attack roll is at least 5 points higher than any defensive **Success Level**, then the damage is taken directly to the character's Major Wounds. The Damage Combat Action Modifier from any relevant Weapons Skill is added to the damage roll of that weapon; with 3RB weapons the Damage Combat Action Modifier is only added after the damage has been multiplied by 3.

Single Shot (S) – Single shot weapons or fire modes will only fire one shot when the trigger is pulled. This is the best way to conserve ammunition, but it is not much use for multiple opponents or for weapons that don't do much damage. Some weapons are Automatic, which means they will automatically ready the next bullet to be fired, but won't fire it until the trigger is pressed again. Other weapons need to have the next

bullet loaded manually into the chamber; this manual loading time is built in to the 'S' rating

To find out how many attacks/actions a character has with the weapon they are using, use the following calculation: (Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier + Base Actions) ÷ Weapon Speed. The Weapons Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier is a value worked out on the Base Combat Actions and any bonuses for the Stats or Styles. Base Actions are listed on the main page of the character sheet, and Weapon speed is listed on the Close Combat Weapons Table earlier in this section. To work out this calculation quickly see the table on **page 384**.

Each shot will do the damage listed in the Damage column.

Three Round Burst (3RB) – This works in the same way as single shot, but rather than firing one shot it will fire a volley of three short bursts every time the trigger is pressed. This gives the advantage of ammunition conservation, as well as greater accuracy reflected in the damage done.

The calculation for the number of attacks/actions for this fire mode is exactly the same as a single shot attack/action. It uses the number after '3RB' rather than after 'S'. However each attack/action will expend 3 rounds of Ammunition and the damage total is multiplied by 3, as it is more likely each round will hit the target. To work out this calculation quickly see the table on **page 384**.

Fully Automatic (A) – All weapons with this fire mode have the capacity to fire a constant stream of ammunition at a target, but the ammunition will run out after a few seconds, and when fired the weapon will buck like a wild bull, which in turn will greatly reduce accuracy. The reduced accuracy is represented in the damage rating for weapons fired in Fully Automatic mode.

The amount of attacks/actions for a weapon fired in Fully Automatic mode are the character's Base Actions; because of the mechanical nature of such a weapon, no amount of skill will make it fire faster. Any Spare attacks/actions cannot be used to fire again, so if the Base Actions are above 5 the character can fire in every Combat Slice and must use the Spare attacks/actions for other combat actions.

The damage done in such fire modes is worked out as follows: take the Damage rating from the Damage column, plus the number marked after 'A.' The 'A' number represents the damage from additional bullets. Because they are inaccurate, not all will hit. Also it would be too time consuming to roll damage for each bullet and work out where it has gone. If the player has opted to fire less than the max round designated by the 'A' rating, the damage from additional bullets is reduced to the number of rounds the player fires. When firing at multiple opponents with this fire mode, each opponent needs to make a successful defensive attack/action and compare their **Success Level** to that of the aggressor. Some opponents may not take Major Wound Damage and some may avoid damage altogether. The attacking character needs only to make one offensive attack/action. The damage done to multiple opponents is spread evenly across each opponent successfully hit.

Fully Automatic mode might seem a quick and exciting way to deal with enemies, but it's only useful if your character is faced with multiple opponents, and even then it should be used wisely.

Blast Radius (R)

Some weapons are designed with explosive rounds that have a blast radius that will affect multiple opponents. All weapons whose ammunition has a blast radius are marked with an **R** in the Effective Range column. The 'R' number represents the effective radius in metres of where the full damage from the weapon will be taken. Take half the **R** rating, and that distance beyond the blast radius will take half the damage, and half the distance again will take a quarter. For example, a weapon with a blast radius of 3 will do full damage to any character within 3 metres of the epicentre, half damage from 3 to 4.5 metres and a quarter of the damage 4.5 to 6 metres. The 'AP' of the weapon

will also be reduced by the same factor. Larger blast radius weapons will do tremendous amounts of damage and will make it almost impossible for a character to escape.

All damage taken beyond the 'R' rating is always Minor Wound damage. Anything within range is always Major Wound Damage, even if the difference between the offensive and defensive **Success level** is less than 5.

If a Character wishes to make a defensive action, and there is no time left, they can only perform the Dodge, Leap or Roll Combat Actions. If they fail this roll against the offensive attack/action, they will take the full force of the explosion or blast wave, dependant on where they are. On a successful roll, a character may get behind adequate cover and avoid all damage, or get enough distance between them and the epicentre to avoid Major Wound damage. Armour is vital in these situations as good Armour can prevent any blast wave damage from smaller explosions and may even reduce the amount of Major Wound damage if multiple layers of the right type of armour are worn.

Availability (Av.)

The column marked **Av.** is the availability of the weapons and how hard they are to find. See **Appendix 1** for more information on the availability codes. Ammunition has different availability codes. See the later section for more details on this.

Category	Weapon	Damage	AP	Weight kg	Effective Range S/M/L	RT	Ammo Capacity	Barrel Length	Speed	Ammo Type	Av.
Archery	Short Bow	1D6	6	1.5	50/125/250	-	1	-	3.2	Arrow	U
	Long Bow	2D6	13	2.6	150/375/750	-	1	-	3.5	Arrow	H
	Cross Bow (Small)	1D6+2	12	2.5	25/75/150	-	1	0.45	2.6	Bolt	C
	Composite Bow	1D6+2	7	1.8	60/145/350	-	1	-	3.3	Arrow	C
Auto Arms	FN P90 (Armour Piercing Only)	1D8+2	11	2.8	50/100/200	2	50	0.263	(A 15, S 0.5)	5.7mm	R
	Uzi 9mm	1D8	9	3.5	50/100/200	3	25-30	260	(A 10, S 0.9)	9mm	R
	MP5K 9mm	1D8+1	10	2	50/100/200	3	15-30	0.115	(A 15, S 0.7, 3RB 1.2)	9mm	R
	Calico M-950	2D4-1	6	1.81	10/35/75	2	50-100	0.356	(A 12, S 1)	9mm	E
Machine Guns	7.62mm FN MAG	2D10+2	12	10.85	250/600/1200	5	250 Belt	0.545	(A 13)	7.62	E
	5.56mm Steyr	2D6+2	10	4.9	200/500/1000	5	35	0.621	(A 11)	5.56	E
	7.62mm M60	2D10+1	12	10.51	200/500/1000	1/1	250 Belt	0.560	(A 9)	7.62	E
	50 Browning Heavy	4D10+10	23	39.1	1000/3000/6000	1/3	250 Belt	1.143	(A 9)	50 M2	R
Pistol /S. Shot	Glock 17	1D8	6	0.6	12/25/50	3	17	0.11	(S 0.9)	9mm	H
	Desert Eagle	1D10+5	9	1.71	20/42/85	3	8	0.152	(S 1)	.44	R
	Walther PPK 7.65mm	1D6-1	6	0.568	10/20/40	4	7	0.86	(S 1.2)	7.65	H
	Parabellum Mauser	1D6	7	0.910	10/20/40	4	8	0.150	(S 1.1)	7.65	R
	Derringer	1D4-1	3	0.19	5/10/20	1/4	2	0.063	(S 1.3)	.22	H
	44 Magnum	1D10+4	10	1.5	15/27/55	1/2	6	0.190	(S 1.2)	.44	H
Assault Riflea	WA2000 Walther Sniping Rifle	2D10+5	12	6.95	500/750/1000	4	6	0.650	(S 1.7)	.300	H
	Dragunov Sniper (SVD)	2D10+7	12	4.3	600/850/1300	5	20	0.547	(S 2)	7.62	E
	AK-47 Assault Rifle	2D8+2	10	4.3	150/250/500	4	30	0.415	(A 10, S 0.8, 3RB 1.3)	7.62	H
	XL 70 E3 Enfield - SA80A	2D6+2	9	3.12	200/300/600	3	30	0.518	(A 12, S 0.5)	5.56	H
	Winchester 1300 Shotgun (Pump)	2D6	7	3.06	10/25/75	6	7	0.457	(S 1.5)	12 g	H
	Remington 1100 Shotgun	2D6+1	7	3	7/20/50	4	5	0.457	(S 1)	12 g	H
Support	Flamethrowers	3D20+15	3	21	15/30/50	24/0	30	0.635	1.3	15litre	E
	Grenade Launchers	4D20+20	22	3.4	40/150/350 (R: 3)	3	1	0.356	2.8	40mm	E
Thrown	Spear	1D8+1	13	0.9	[STR] x3	-	-	1.7	4	-	-
	Axe	1D6+1	12	1.5	[STR]+5	-	-	0.4	2	-	-
	Dagger	1D4	4	0.6	[STR]	-	-	0.3	1.3	-	-
	Dart	1D4-1	1	0.1	[STR]+5	-	-	0.2	2.2	-	-
	Shuriken	1D4+1	3	0.1	[STR]	-	-	0.05	1.2	-	-
	Grenade	2D20+10	7	0.9	[STR] (R: 2.5)	-	-	-	2.3	-	-
Accessories	Red Dot Sight (Aim + 2)										R
	Laser Painter (Aim + 5)										E
	Telescopic Sight (not for rifles)				+10 to +100						E
	Silencer/ Suppressor	halved									H
	Extended Clip						+8 to +90				H

Ranged Weapon Upgrades

Upgrades for Ranged Weapons are worked out the same as for Close Combat upgrades. The table below indicates what can be upgraded and how much by:

Stat	Upgrade Increment	Max Upgrade
Damage	+1	+3
AP	+1	+2
Barrel Length	+/- 0.01	+/-0.05
Weight	-0.1	-0.3
Effective Range	+/- 10	+/-100

Weapon Smith Specialisations - *Firearms require the knowledge of Ballistics and Modern Weapon making. Because such Skills are extremely rare, they can only be taken as a specialisation to the Weapon Smith Skill. They are not listed in the Skills section as Specialisations, because of their rare nature. It is advisable that only NPC characters have such specialisations, or they are only taken by trusted players, or characters with appropriate backgrounds.*

If the Barrel Length of a gun is altered, its effective range will also be altered. Each 0.01 increment will extend the range values of S/M/L by +10. If the Barrel Length is reduced, the effective range will also be reduced by -10 for each increment. Further modification to the Effective Range can remove negative effects, making the weapon more accurate and extending the Effective Range. However, this type of modification would take a very long time.

Ammunition

Ammunition is a tradable commodity between many travelling hara. The Varrs and other such aggressive tribes need a stock of quality ammunition and will eagerly trade for such items. Due to the rarity of such ammunition, the availability rating will increase by 1 (see Appendix 1 for more on availability ratings) for every multiple of 100 rounds. If anything goes beyond extremely rare, such a quantity of ammunition is unheard of.

Many tribes will attempt to make their own ammunition, but will only make the common varieties, which are listed on the table opposite, along with the tribe most likely to make such ammunition. Some ammunition is mass-produced, but it is unknown which tribes make it. These are marked as 'Not Known'. Other ammunition is just not made, so is marked with 'None.' The base damage for ammunition is listed as well, should a player or Storyteller want to convert another weapon to the game.

There are different types of ammunition available for ranged weapons; at the bottom of the table opposite is a list of upgrades. Each affects damage, AP and availability, as some of these types of ammunition are rare.



H&K MP5K

Type	Base Damage	In Production	Availability
Arrow (short)	1D6	All Tribes	C
Arrow (long)	2D6	All Tribes	U
Bolt	1D6+2	All Tribes	C
*5.7mm	1D10+2	Varrs	E
9mm	1D8	Varrs, Unneah, Uigenna	U
7.62	2D10	Not Known	R
5.56	2D6+2	Not Known	R
.50 M2	4D10+10	None	E
.44	1D10+4	Varrs, Unneah, Uigenna	H
7.65	1D6	Not Known	R
.22	1D4	Varrs, Unneah	U
.300	2D10	None	E
12 g (shot)	2D6	Varrs, Uigenna	U
12 g (slug)	4D6 (AP +5)	Varrs	E
40mm (shell)	4D20+2-	None	E
Upgrades	Damage	Availability	AP
Armour Piercing**	-2**	Upgrade by 1	+3
Hollow Point	+5	Upgrade by 2	-5
Silenced Ammo**	-4**	Upgrade by 2	-5**
Explosive**	+10	Upgrade by 3	-2

* The 5.7mm round for the FN P90 is always Armour Piercing, no upgrades or changes to it can be made. The Armour piercing upgraded values are already added to the ammunition and weapon damage and AP.

** Arrows and Bolts can be made Armour Piercing (Armour Piercing takes no negative damage modifier), or Explosive. Silence Arrows require specialist feathers; though arrows make little noise, they still make a sound audible to some (the ability of silenced arrows or bolts to pierce armour is not reduced nor is their damage).

Weapons Other

Should the need arise, the Storyteller can convert any real world weapon to this game. Most of the necessary information is available on the Internet. Some discretion is required by the Storyteller as to what the Stats for such weapons will be. Damage and Speed can be worked out from a base of similar weapons already listed here. A good source for weapon information will always include comparisons to other weapons; use your imagination and common sense to construct your own weapon. A good site for information on modern weapons is (<http://world.guns.ru/>).

Some useful notes:

- The weapon speed is the amount of time in seconds it takes to ready the weapon for the next attack/action.
- Weapon speed for **Single Shot (S)** ranged weapons is the time taken for the next round to be chambered and the mechanism to be reset. **Three Round Burst (3RB)** is slightly higher than Single Shot, usually 0.2 of a second, and Fully Automatic (A) is the weapon's rate of fire in rounds per minute divided by 60.
- Weapons with longer barrels have longer ranges, unless they are shot guns or grenade launchers.
- Longer and heavier Close Combat weapons are generally slower than small, light weapons.
- Variations in damage are dependant on a number of factors; a little research can be very useful.
- Armour Penetration (AP) varies based on the weapon type and ammunition type. This information can also be gathered with research.

Weapon Speed Table

Use this table if you want to work out quickly the number of attacks/actions per Combat Phase. This only applies to Close Combat Weapons and ranged weapons that have Single Shot or Three Round Burst capabilities. For automatic weapons and modes see the Ranged Combat Weapons Section.

WEAPON SPEED	Weapon Skill Speed Combat Action Modifier + Base Actions														
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
0.5	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30			
0.6	7	8	10	12	13	15	17	18	20	22	23	25			
0.7	6	7	9	10	11	13	14	16	17	19	20	21			
0.8	5	6	8	9	10	11	13	14	15	16	18	19			
0.9	4	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16	17			
1	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
1.1	4	5	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14			
1.2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	13			
1.3	3	4	5	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12			
1.4	3	4	4	5	6	6	7	8	9	9	10	11			
1.5	3	3	4	5	5	6	7	7	8	9	9	10			
1.6	3	3	4	4	5	6	6	7	8	8	9	9			
1.7	2	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	8	8	9			
1.8	2	3	3	4	4	5	6	6	7	7	8	8			
1.9	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8			
2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8			
2.1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7			
2.2	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	7			
2.3	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7			
2.4	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	6	6			
2.5	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	6	6			
2.6	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	6			
2.7	1	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	6			
2.8	1	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	5			
2.9	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5			
3	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5			
3.1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5			
3.2	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	5			
3.3	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5			
3.4	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	4			
3.5	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4			
3.6	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4			
3.7	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4			
3.8	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4			
3.9	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4			
4	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4			
4.1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4			
4.2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4			
4.3	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3			
4.4	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3			
4.5	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3			
4.6	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3			
4.7	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3			
4.8	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3			
4.9	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3			
5	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3			

ARMOUR

Armour is one of the most important pieces of equipment your character can have, but it's also one of the most difficult to find in a good, serviceable condition. Many hara will refrain from deadly combat, and choose to disable their opponent to facilitate a quick escape; armour can help in those situations. The following table gives examples of basic armour, a standard outfit that covers the most vital parts of the body. However, it does not provide total cover. Total Cover armour would have double the Hitpoints [HP], Bulk Penalty [BP] and weight listed in the table below.

Armour	AV	BP	Weight	HP	Availability
Heavy Woven Cloth	2	4	3	30	Common
Leather	4	3	5	50	Uncommon
Hardened Leather	5	4	5	75	Hard to Find
Carbon Composite	23	2	1.5	500	Extremely Rare
Kevlar	8	5	3	125	Rare
Chain Mail	8	4	20	160	Hard to Find
Steel (Plate)	10	5	30	200	Rare

The **Art of War** section on **page 266** explains how armour works in combat. For ease of use, the common terms are explained here.

Abbreviation	Long Form	Description
AV	Armour Value	This is the rating of the armour and how well it will resist a weapon's penetration.
BP	Bulk Penalty	This is the negative Action Modifier, for the user of the armour. All physical action, including combat, will receive this modifier.
HP	Hitpoints	This shows how much damage the armour will take before it becomes ineffective as protection.

Upgrading

A character may improve his armour if he has the appropriate skills and is willing to spend time on the work required for upgrading. A 10% upgrade on AV or HP takes 40 hours in game time to complete, and requires a successful **Armour Smith** roll every 8 hours. (If a roll fails, it adds an additional 8 hours onto the upgrade time. If the roll is a fumble, the Armour is destroyed and becomes useless.) Each Stat can be upgraded by 100%. BP and Weight cannot be reduced without a change in materials. Treat all armour modification as Extremely Extended Actions (EEA).

Armour Construction

Not all armour is for the physical body. Vehicles and buildings also have armour ratings. This section helps Storytellers and players develop new armours and ways of defending themselves. Sometimes a critical moment may occur, or a lot of points will need to be accurately calculated. These rules help the Storyteller resolve such actions. A Storyteller who is either new to this system or to role-playing might not grasp all of these rules straight away; use your imagination and common sense when constructing armour.

All the values on the next page are worked out from the base armour material of steel. All the other materials are better or worse than steel in each area. The numbers represented on the next table are multipliers that should be used to work out the Statistics for each type of armour.

Reference Armour: Steel plate 1 metre square, 5 mm thick, AV: 10, BP: 5, Weight: 40 kg, HP: 250

The best way to show how this works is by example. To work out the equivalent to the steel plate in a stone-like material, multiply the values of the reference Armour (listed above) by those on the table on the stone row.

Stone Block: 1 metre square, 50 mm thick, AV: 50, BP: 50, Weight: 320 kg, HP: 1250

[Reference the Stone Row for multipliers: AV = 10 x 5, BP = 5 x 10, Weight = 40 x 8, HP = 250 x 5]

To reach these values, each Stat of the material is multiplied by the relevant values, so a stone block twice the size would have all its Stats doubled. The only exception to this rule is AV. If the thickness of the material is not doubled, then the AV will remain the same. This also applies if the wall is thinner; then the AV will be reduced exponentially.

Storytellers may wish to use these values for other reasons, or adjust them for similar materials. The following guidelines are for working out armour or the capacity of different materials to block damage to a body.

- To work out an equivalent piece of armour, you need to multiply the **Reference Armour** values by the Armour Type values listed in the table below.
- Once you have the values for the desired material, multiply BP, Weight and HP by the number of metres square the Armour is.
- If the Armour thickness differs from the Armour Type values calculated, the AV will differ accordingly. If the armour is twice as thick, the AV will be doubled. If it is only half the thickness, it will be half.
- For materials that are similar, tweak the values in the table until you get something which seems to be about right.
- Remember these are only guidelines and not hard and fast rules; they can be changed depending on the needs of the story or the skills of the har who is making the armour.
- When a character is making armour, it will take him a long time to create anything useful and durable. It will require a successful Armour Smith roll every 8 hours of work. Treat this as an EEA.

Armour Type	Material	AV Ratio	BP Ratio	Weight Ratio	HP Ratio	Availability
Steel	Metal/Conductive	1	1	1	1	Common
Silvered Steel	Metal/Conductive	2	1	1	2	Hard to Find
Soft Metals	Metal/Conductive	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	Common
Kevlar	Rubber	0.8	1	0.1	0.8	Rare
Titanium	Metal/Conductive	2	1	0.5	1.5	Rare
Aramid	Nylon/Cloth	1	1.1	0.1	0.9	Extremely Rare
Carbon Composite	Carbon/Plates	2.3	0.4	0.05	2.5	Extremely Rare
Aluminium	Metal/Conductive	0.4	0.9	0.3	0.2	Common
Iron	Metal/Conductive	0.9	1.2	1.5	0.7	Common
Stone	Brink/Stone	5	10	8	5	Common

A Note on Aramid

When a bullet hits a woven ballistic fabric, thousands of individual fibres engage the projectile to "catch" the bullet and disperse its energy throughout the area. The points where the fibres cross over each other in the weave absorb the most energy. With Aramid composite, Aramid fibres are aligned next to each other (like strapping tape), cross-piled at right angles and held in place by flexible resin, then sealed between two thin sheets of polyethylene film. This provides the best energy absorption and most efficient bullet deformation, especially against full metal jacketed rounds, resulting in an extremely high level of ballistic protection.

APPENDIX 3

RUNNING YOUR FIRST GAME

Running a role-playing game can be likened to directing a play. There are numerous things that you have to remember, the rules being just one of them. The job of the Storyteller can be daunting, and if you've never done this kind of thing before, you might feel a little out of your depth at first. But that's OK – there's a chance that your players feel the same way. In this appendix, we'll discuss how you can make sure your first session runs smoothly.

The Bottom Line about Rules

It's important to be aware that the rules of this game are provided only as guidelines. If you don't like something, you can ignore, change or simplify it. The rules help you resolve the outcome of tasks or actions of the characters. Dice add the random factor of chance. But ultimately, it's your game. As a new Storyteller, you can start off simply by using basic rules and can then add more as you become more experienced.

Dealing with Numbers

For some players, the thought of adding and subtracting numbers to provide a modified score seems too daunting and complicated. However, these processes are in essence the core of most RPG rules, including the ones in this book. So you'll have to deal with various aspects of the core mechanics – such as skill resolution and combat. For the first few sessions, you can ignore aspects of the core rules with which you're uncomfortable and slowly introduce them as you and your players become more confident and experienced.

Until everyone is familiar with the rules, we recommend you use only the basic Skills and Stat system. Once these have been assimilated, you can then begin to add the various modifiers for task resolution and combat.

If you and your players wish, you can experiment with and test the rules between you. You could simulate a few skill checks for the party and work out the results of some light combat or magic. During such tests, the players will know their characters are not in danger of injury or worse, and they can have fun playing out things they might not normally be able to do. For example, should a couple of players want their characters to take part in a duel, they can do so within the confines of a rules test.

You'll find the rules will begin to stick in the mind once you've used them repeatedly. Eventually, you'll know certain pages of the core book by heart and will be able to call out modifiers without looking them up. This might take a little time, but a lot of patience with yourself and your fellow players will help ensure you become a good Storyteller.

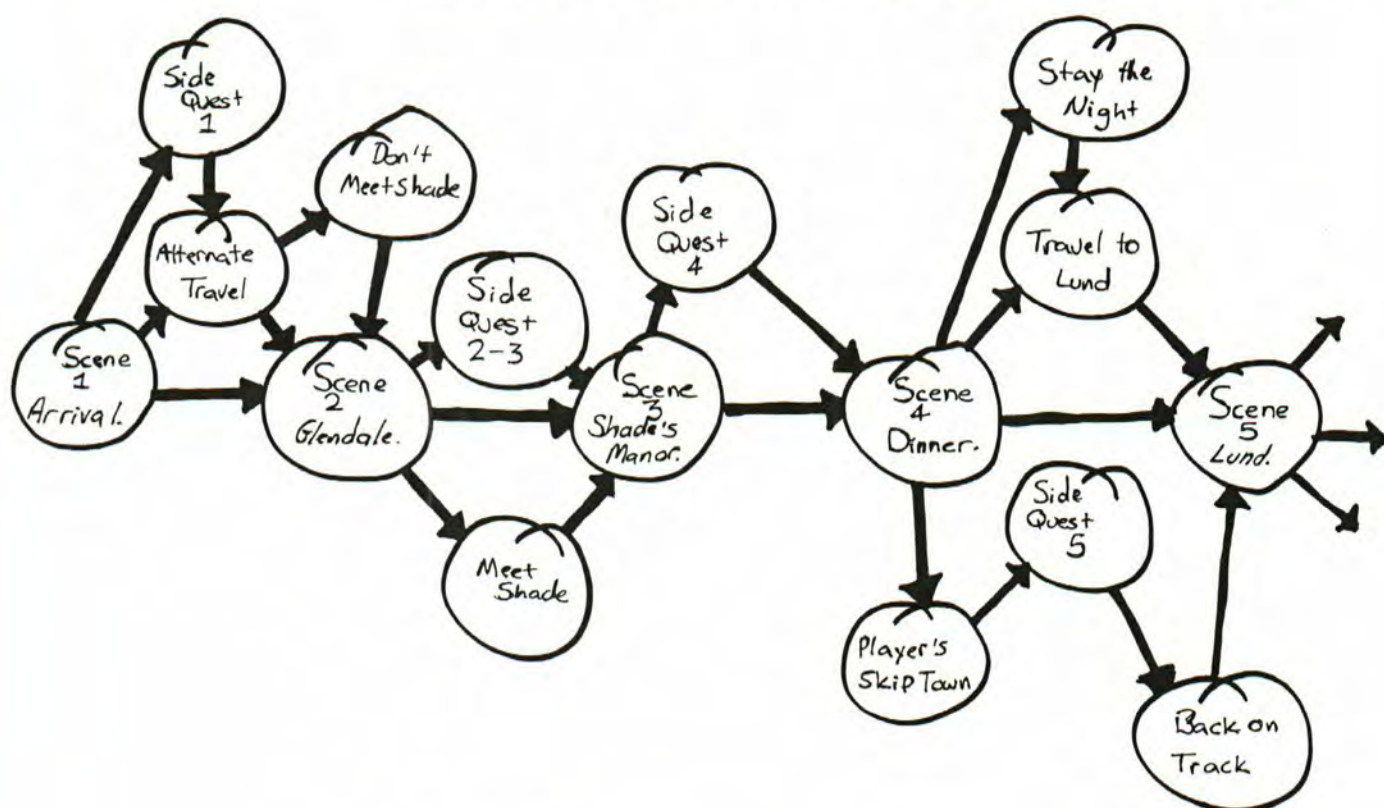
Preparing for Your First Game Session

Preparation is everything; we can't stress this enough. You should never jump right into the deep end and try to run a game without knowing the core rules. Being fairly clued up on the rules can save you time and prevent embarrassment. You don't want to risk your players getting bored as you constantly have to flip through the rule book during play.

Once you've read the rules, and are fairly familiar with them, it's time to plan out your scenario. You can use the storyline we've prepared for you in advance, or else come up with something completely new. Preparation is the key to making sure the game runs smoothly. Keep blank paper to hand, and if you plan on having maps of your scenarios, prepare those in advance too.

Ideally, you should prepare your scenario at least a week in advance, as this will give you plenty of time to expand your ideas and change or amend fine details.

You should always have a clear idea of how your story will progress. Constructing a 'spider diagram' or a flow-chart will help you organise your ideas and provide a rough representation of the story from beginning to end, including possible tangents.



As part of creating your scenario, make some small cards for the Non-Player Characters (NPCs) you want to include, which provide details of their characteristics and skills. This will save you time if you later need to calculate quickly the results of a fight or other interaction with the players. You can also create cards for the various items and equipment the players might find during the adventure. This ensures that the flow of the game isn't interrupted because someone needs to pore through the rule book looking for a particular detail.

Before your players arrive, it's a good idea to go through the checklist below. As the Storyteller, you should ensure that everything is ready and the environment duly prepared for play, including lighting, music, incense, etc. If you're visiting someone else's house to run a game, try to arrive at least an hour early to give you time to prepare properly.

- *Set up your work space (a table, a Storyteller's screen and so forth) and make an effort to create the right atmosphere for your players. If you wish, play mood music or a soundtrack.*
- *Make sure pens, pencils, dice and paper are all readily accessible for you and the players.*
- *Put the rule book within easy reach. If you have more than one copy, make sure your players can access it. Rulebook flipping should be limited, since it disrupts play, but sometimes there's no alternative.*
- *Mood lighting can work wonders. If you start your adventure with a trip to the lands of the Sulh, then you should have understated lighting, such as that of candles. If you wish, light incense.*
- *Provide snacks, or make sure everyone knows they should bring a contribution to the snack store. It keeps players happy if there's a communal snack-pile.*

Something to remember: Wraeththu is a game about Storytelling and not confrontation, so you should try to tailor your scenarios towards an investigative style. Combat in the Storm system is deadly and brutal. No one will want to take time creating their Wraeththu character only for him to perish the moment he encounters something challenging.

I Am the Law!

As the Storyteller, when it comes to the rules, you always have final say. To get by, you'll need to know at least the basics. You can learn other rules as you progress and become more competent at running a game. Players can help you by learning certain rules or flipping through the book to find a required detail while you run the scenario.

You should encourage help from the players, but keep a tight rein on them, as some might be tempted to 'play' the system with their knowledge. In such cases, you should take them to one side and explain politely that they really shouldn't try and use the numbers to their advantage, as it only spoils the game for them and could make them unpopular with the other players.

The 'Rules Lawyer'

During play, don't allow arguments to develop between people Out of Character (OOC). The OOC rule arguments should be dealt with swiftly and without conflict. You are the Storyteller – it's your game and scenario.

If you don't like way a certain rule plays out, change it or ignore it. Players do have the right to call you on what they think is a bad judgement, but you also have the right to tell them to discuss it after the game has ended.

'Rules Lawyers' will pick through every aspect of the game and attempt to prove their knowledge is greater than yours. Although this can sometimes be helpful, most of the time such players only disrupt the game to get their point across. Again, you have the right to tell them to pipe down or leave the room.

A Storyteller should learn the art of Player/Storyteller diplomacy. You might get hot under the collar and be tempted to blow your top at a player because they're causing a problem or their behaviour is disruptive. Don't give in to that temptation. You should be the face of 'nice' and sort out any problem that arises with fair detachment. If you lose your temper, you risk losing players.

Dealing with New Players

You might be a veteran at running role-playing games or someone who's just begun to, and your players might have different levels of experience at role-playing as well. If you have an established group and a new face joins it, you can recruit a more experienced player to help out the newcomer. Not only does this make the newcomer feel more comfortable and welcome, but it will also shorten character generation time considerably.

If you're a new Storyteller, and you have a group of inexperienced players, make sure that they create their characters together. Encourage discussion between them and see if any of them are willing to incorporate the backgrounds of other players' characters into their own character's history. Work with your players to formulate interesting and playable characters. Don't be afraid of saying 'No' to something that could break your game's balance or just isn't 'canon' of the Wraeththu world.

For the first few sessions, be prepared to answer a lot of questions about the game world. Some people might take a while to get used to the world of Wraeththu. It includes a lot of new dynamics and character types – aspects that even a die-hard role-player might find tricky at first, so a new player could be extremely daunted, unless they're already quite familiar with the world through reading the novels and the game rules.

Be patient with your players, and don't force them to look things up themselves in the books. Don't be averse to a bit of 'hand-holding'. The more friendly and helpful you are, the more comfortable everyone will be in your game session, and the better reputation you'll earn. Very few people tolerate a mean Storyteller.

Dealing with Late Arrivals

Sometimes players will be unable to make a game session on time, and they might have very good reasons for their lateness. If this is the case, don't chastise them. All that should concern you is that they get into the game quickly. If a latecomer has missed the character generation part of the game, make sure you have a few spare Pre-Gen characters ready for use (see below). Very experienced players might prefer to generate their own very quickly.

Ease the late arrival into the game quickly and without fuss or disruption to the other players, whether the game has been running for only a few minutes or over an hour. It's better to allow the late arrival to join in rather than tell them they can only sit and watch.

Quick Characters

Pre-Generated (Pre-Gens) characters allow you to tailor a scenario in specific ways. You might want the players' characters to get on well together for the first few sessions, so it's useful to have a bunch of Pre-Gens tailor-made for that purpose. It also means that, if the whole group agrees, you can jump straight into the action of the game and not spend time creating the characters.

Character Backgrounds

Obviously, players will want to play their characters in ways that appeal to them. Occasionally, this might be contrary to the Wraeththu world or involve concepts that are not canon. This situation can be tricky to tackle in a first session. You should really try to stick to the Wraeththu world as it's presented in the rule book, unless you are extremely familiar with both the world and the rules.

You should allow your players to give their characters cool backgrounds, but don't let them go too over the top regarding the character's history. The temptation to create a direct blood descendant of Thiede might be all too overwhelming. Trust your players, but just don't trust them too much! Always check their characters before the game starts and make sure everything is workable. If someone has a concept that doesn't fit, tell them in plenty of time to change it. Once you've approved a character, it's too late to alter things.

Starting Your First Session: Game On!

So, you have a group of players, everyone has generated their characters, and you're prepared and raring to go – how do you actually begin? It's likely your players will already be friends, or else they'll be busy getting to know everyone in the group. Jokes and chatter might be flying around like there's no tomorrow and it might seem that no one is in the right frame of mind to stop chatting and start the game. You might even find yourself embroiled in more than one discussion with your players. So how do you actually break out of this and get things going?

You should allow around 15-20 minutes' chat-break before play and inform the players at what time the adventure will begin. You can use this time to peruse your adventure or simply gauge what kind of group you'll be Storytelling for.

Once the allotted time has passed you should just make a quick announcement, something like:

"Ok folks, we're going to start now... everyone ready?"

You might have to wait for bathroom breaks, but you should have the whole group assembled before you begin.

You should already have a scenario worked out, or at least a good idea of what you want to do. All you need to do now is get the players' attention and keep them focussed on the game for the duration of the session. One of the tricks that we use (as in a good film or novel) is to begin the scenario with a bang, i.e. in the thick of some action or mystery. You could start off by assembling the characters in a place of social activity, such as a bar or night club, but it's far more interesting if you throw them into a situation where they must begin interacting immediately to help each one another.

In media res: *This means in the middle of the action. It is how the movie Star Wars: A New Hope begins. It's a great way to get everyone focussed upon a common goal (survival) and interested in what's going on. Chances are that if the players think their characters are safe, they'll be a little complacent and might drift into idle chatter – but if they think the characters are in deep trouble and could be hurt or worse, you're more likely to get their full attention. You should not, of course, kill a character off at the beginning of the first session, because that's not what role-playing is or should be about, but you should start things dramatically.*

Keep the story flowing and interesting. Observe your group and take note of how they react to your story. If you feel that it's progressing too quickly, you can slow down events and give the players a chance to catch their breath and wits. If they look a little bored, and their attention is beginning to wane, you can spice up the game with action, something that gets them back into a more focused mindset.

You should react constantly to your players' actions. Try to keep ahead of them and don't railroad the characters, (or their players), into a particular course of action the players don't like. You are a director, a teller of stories and someone on whom your group relies, so you should be fair, even-handed and, most of all, fun.

Keeping Things in Check

No matter what kind of Storyteller you are, you will eventually run into problems with players or their characters. Dealing with problem players in-game takes a lot of practice. You might have a group member who's constantly looking for ways to ruin the plans of the party and derail your scenario. You might have a loud player – who's boisterous or fond of digression.

Dealing with these things takes patience and, most of all, a certain degree of tact. If you're rude and aggressive towards the offending group member(s), you'll simply provoke confrontation. Be fair and detached, but not patronising. If you have several problem characters in a party, such as those whose players want them to go off and do

things on their own rather than follow the storyline, there are many ways you can deal with it.

- *Kill the character. Yes, this might sound harsh, but Wraeththu is a harsh world with many dangers for the unwary. If, for example, you're using the start scenario we've created (see **page 395**) and a player wants their character to explore the Ruins of Lund on their own, they should be warned OOC (and, of course, IC as well) that this is a dangerous course of action. If they insist on continuing with it, let fate take care of them.*
- *Devote a small amount of time to the split-party members, but give more time to the core-party. Disruptive players often get bored when they're not the centre of attention, so watch out for digression and various other player tricks, such as provoking fights with NPCs or getting into dangerous situations. After all, if combat is centred around them, they're in the spotlight.*
- *A gentle nudge – use an NPC to redirect the plot so it's back on course. If your players skirt around the issue and don't bite the hook – don't panic, just continue running the game. There's always a temptation to close the books and walk out, because no one likes to be ignored. A clever Storyteller will change their tactics mid-flow and draw the players into something else or back on track. Remember: if you keep 'losing them', it means your scenario isn't interesting to the players. In that case, be objective and change it so that it is!*

The tips above are not the be-all and end-all of the Storyteller's arsenal of game-related tricks and tools. You'll no doubt develop some of your own, which is how it should be.

My enemy's enemy is still my enemy, and should be kept in check.

Bringing Together Different Tribes

Inter-party relations will be one of the core aspects of your game. Regardless of how the players feel about each other OOC, IC it may be different. The Wraeththu tribes have differing views of each other, which can include aversion. You might discover in-party conflicts and political backstabbing during a game. It makes for good role-playing if some characters have different views and ethics, but monitor these things carefully and ensure they do not spill over into OOC disputes.

Players can be temperamental and might become extremely attached to their favourite character. As soon as someone harms that character, they might attempt to seek retribution against the offender. This situation can spark all kinds of arguments. You should deal with it as soon as you detect it happening.

Party conflict creates fun and interesting role-playing opportunities, but as soon as it spills over into real life and becomes a bone of contention, you have to be prepared to step in and put a stop to it. In some cases, you may have to take conflicting players off to one side and speak to them privately. If they refuse to reach a resolution, you may have to omit them from the group for a while.

Always use the politics of the Wraeththu tribes to your advantage when you're making up an adventure. Be sure to ban any tribes you truly don't want along. Tribal leaders often form diplomatic alliances to counter threats to Megalithica – you should be able to work something out – so it's not unfeasible to have a Uigenna form an alliance (if only temporarily) with a Colurastes, or to introduce a Sulh into a group of Varrs. All it takes is a little imagination and perhaps a few moments to explain how and why your group came together.

Keeping a Consistent Story/World

By this stage, the game should be going really well and the players having fun. What you need to do now is keep that up. Players will notice any holes in your story, and nothing damages the 'suspension of disbelief' more than spontaneous alterations to

the game. You might think that changing the name of an important NPC won't be a big deal, but the players might have been calling them Ianan for the last few hours and it will only annoy them if you decide the NPC is really called Bob. The time for detail changing is during scenario design. Once you begin play, stick to what you've created, or otherwise the players could come to distrust you.

If you spot a mistake, point it out and rectify it. To keep mistakes to a minimum, make notes. Jot down important names and places in your Storyteller's notebook; if you don't have one, get a ring binder or book and create one.

Pay close attention to names and places of importance and, if you've mentioned them already, make sure you don't change any of them without good reason. Renaming Immanion to Octonomicon, for instance, will spoil things for the players. If you want to change any city names, do so before play so that your players will always know them by their new names.

Keep notes on the weather and any important events, to avoid slip ups such as when it's raining and night-time one minute, then bright and sunny the next.

One Down: What to Do?

It's bound to happen: A player is missing from the group and their character is an important part of the story – perhaps their character has some special role to play because of something that took place in the previous session. If this should happen, don't panic!

- *Take over the character yourself, but resist the urge to change the way he's played to suit the rest of the game.*
- *Have the character as part of the background and don't allow other characters to interact with him, or other players to make choices for him.*
- *If possible, ask the missing player if they'd mind someone taking over their character for the game. If they agree, get one of the other players to play him.*
- *You could amend the story so that the character is called somewhere on important business and has to be absent for a while. Remember that just like in the real world, a character's life will not be static; he could have his own personal relationships and situations to deal with.*
- *Omit the character entirely without any explanation in-game. We don't recommend this, but we have seen it done.*

Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better

There's a temptation amongst both experienced and new Storytellers to include NPCs that can do virtually everything, usually better than the player characters. Good Storytellers don't let their major or minor characters overshadow the players. They are the heroes of your story and should be allowed their moments to shine – not the NPCs.

In battle, if there are NPCs in the group, have them doing their own thing, such as covering the rear of the party or engaging in combat in another location. You can always use them later on to rescue your group if things go too wrong.

The use of overly high-powered NPCs is known as 'God-modding' because the NPCs are like invincible demi-gods with statistics through the roof and powers that no man or har would have. Such characters ultimately only spoil the game and the enjoyment of everyone involved. Their inclusion builds resentment between you and your players, until eventually they'll find another Storyteller and another game.

Ending a Game Session

The end of the game session should leave the players with something to remember, especially if it's their first time at playing. You should try to leave the scenario at a cliff-hanger situation, so that your players are eager for the next session. Once you've called

a halt to the sessions, spend some time getting feedback from the players on how they think the game went. Ask them what they did and didn't like and pay close attention to what they say. If the players know you'll listen to them, and perhaps make changes from their best suggestions, it helps build a good relationship between you.

You might not agree with what you hear, and the temptation to argue your point could be foremost in your mind, but just let it go and concentrate on taking on board what's been said. Even the most destructive critique from a player can have useful pointers in it. The trick is to recognise what's useful to you and not get upset by any blunt comments.

The only things left to do now are to award any experience or gifts (such as weapons or items) to characters that may be intrinsic to the story, and to make arrangements for the next session. Hopefully, everyone had a great time and will be eager to get back to play.

We wish you the best of luck with your first game and hope that this document has been useful. It's not the ultimate fount of Storytelling knowledge and you might think a lot of it is common sense – which it is – but we have all been in situations where things have gone wrong. We want this appendix to be your first-aid manual for accidents and mishaps within your group.

See you in Megalithica.

A SAMPLE ADVENTURE FOR WRAETHHU

(For first-time players and Storytellers)

You've read the rules and you've got a group of people eager to play the game, so what do you do next? How do you put everything in this book into practice?

There's no right or wrong way for anyone to mediate a role-playing game. There are certainly things you should and shouldn't do when running a session, which you'll learn by experience.

However, establish the following guidelines when you are about to run a session.

- 1 *You are the Storyteller, responsible for making decisions based upon your understanding of the game's core rules. If a player should disagree with your judgement during play, and you know it will require lengthy discussion to resolve, you should tell them that you'll discuss the matter after the game. The most important thing for all players is to keep the game running.*
- 2 *Keep the rulebook close to hand. If other players have copies of the book, ask them not to read them without good reason. There's nothing more distracting than people flipping through the book while you're trying to set the mood or explain something important. Inform players that you'd like them to keep book-flipping to a minimum and reward those players who do.*
- 3 *The GOLDEN rule: There are no rules. Everything in this book is a guideline. Feel free to change/amend and alter things as you see fit.*

The Opening Gambit

A good story is a drama of three acts: the beginning, the middle, and the end. The beginning sets up the plot and the characters, the middle provides the 'meat' of the story, when the characters deal with any dilemmas or conflicts, and the end is the resolution, when all the loose ends are tied up. If you don't capture your players' attention from the very beginning of your adventure, you'll be on the slippery slope to an unfulfilled game session.

Rather than provide a fully prepared adventure for the game, we've left certain areas within this scenario 'blank', so you have the room to add your own details to it. After all, this is a game about telling stories.

In this adventure, we will provide such factors as location and the initial plotline. It's up to you to decide where the story goes and what happens next.

You can use the Pre-Gen characters to get into the story quickly. Some of these have their own backgrounds and histories. It's up to you to decide how and if they fit into your story. Feel free to amend them if necessary.

THE SHADOWS OF ALBA SULH

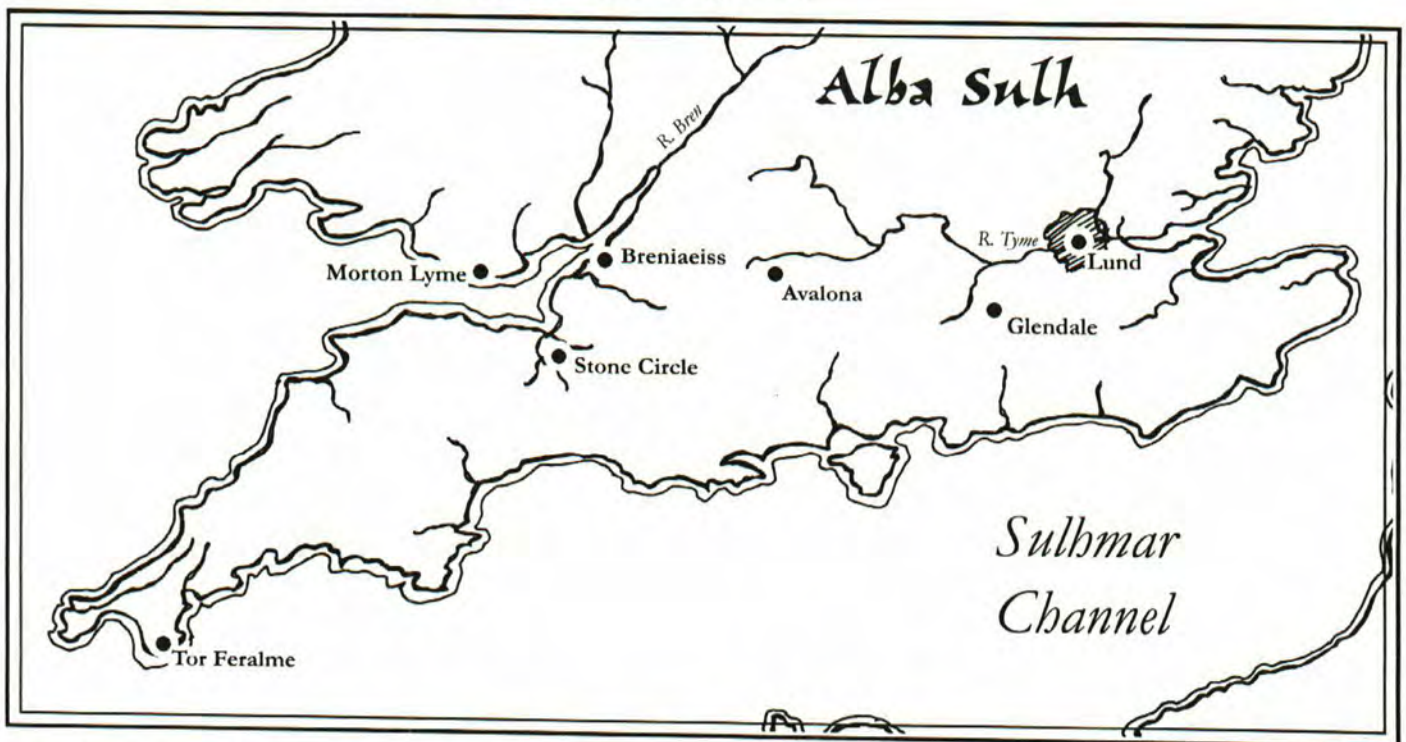
Scene 1: The Arrival

(Read Aloud)

A circle of stones stands proudly before your group as you finally arrive upon the mysterious and distant shores of Alba Sulh. The stones seem to have been here for thousands of years. Your former human life has gone. As a newly incepted har you have embarked upon a path towards the next evolution of Earth's children.

Three months have passed, during which you were given knowledge of your tribe, learned some of its secrets and began to understand the politics of this new life.

You have been summoned here at the bidding of one of the psychics of the Sulh. This har had a vision that he wishes to share with you. Now is the time. You are here and turning back would be tricky at best.



This is the hook that you hope will catch the attention of your group. There are likely to be questions asked about the how and why of the characters' arrival in Alba Sulh. You can provide information like this now if you want to, but it is best to lead the characters gently to the first Non Player Character (NPC) and explain In Character (IC) the reasons for the summons.

If you tell the players information Out of Character (OOC), then you're already setting a bad precedent for times to come. The players might then expect to be given every scrap of information OOC, which makes for a lazy player. Strive to include the dissemination of information as part of the game, not as OOC asides.

You should make sure you only feed the players the barest sliver of information and try to be cryptic at best.

Strike while the iron is hot and let them talk IC for a short while, then as they're busy interacting, you can introduce the following har.

N.B. If a character tries to use their knowledge to see if they have read or heard about the stone circle, they will find that it has never been catalogued. This is distinctly odd as the stones appear to be thousands of years old, yet there is no record of them.

Shade

Description: This har is over seven feet tall and his dark hair billows about him. His eyes are bright blue and his skin a shade of near white. He is an ethereal presence that is both beguiling and striking. His clothing is of a fine make; black leather trousers and high boots. His bare chest is covered by a long coat of a vibrant purple shade, decorated with the twists and spirals of Celtic knotwork. Around his neck he wears a circular pendant made of bright silver, a Celtic cross. There can be no doubt that he is Sulh.

RP Notes: Shade is an ethereal har in both looks and manners. His voice is of fairly high pitch, with a slight whisper to it. Lyrical and musical in tone, it rises and falls as he speaks and is full of mystery. This har can be used to impart useful information and act as a guide for the whole game session. For inexperienced players, it is better to have a 'guiding' hand.

(Read as Shade)

"I see you have come; this is good. So many hara would have ignored the summons of a stranger. Yet you have taken this first step, albeit blindly, towards a mystery yet unfathomed."

Now this is the tricky part. Unlike a film or a book, there's no set script for dialogue – all you have are the notes for the character. You might not feel confident enough to speak as Shade, but this is where the Storyteller can really shine. Go ahead and give it a go. Answer any questions put to you in the manner of this enigmatic and ethereal creature.

As a few pointers, here are some of the questions Shade might be asked:

Q) How did the characters get to Alba Sulh?

A) This is up to the players to decide; planes are most defiantly out, however the Freyhellans or Smalt may have taken them. Due to the way the characters have been called it is possible somehar with a ship could have been waiting for them, adding yet more to the mystery of these events.

Q) Why are we here?

A) Shade had a vision, a strong one, of this group of hara coming to Alba Sulh to uncover the mystery of the vanishing hara near and around the ruined city of Lund.

Q) Who are you?

A) The har is called Shade.

Q) What is it that you do?

A) Shade is a powerful psychic of the Sulh. He has become increasingly troubled of late that something terrible is going to happen regarding Lund; it must be investigated.

Q) Can you tell us more about your vision?

A) Shade will, but not yet. He has a small dwelling not far from the circle, and it is there that all will be revealed. The other hara must be tired and in need of rest after their long journey.

This is a perfect point for a scene-break, when you can lead the players to the next segment of the adventure and allow them time for more interaction.

Travel

This game isn't centred on combat, so the characters aren't going to have any mysterious bandit or monster encounters along the way. They will undertake a narrated journey of many miles to a small village where Shade and his companions live.

(Read Aloud)

A cool chill is in the air of this early morning as you follow Shade across the verdant landscape of Alba Sulh. The barest hint of sunlight tries to cut through the cloud cover but fails miserably, while tall trees are still touched by the fingers of winter; frost whitens their bare branches.

Now, you may allow your players more interaction time. They need to get to know one another and are probably eager to discuss things. (The players might already have discussed elements OOC amongst themselves. While this isn't always a bad thing, it can lead to digression and a lack of focus. Monitor any discussion and feel free to get things back on track.)

Once you feel enough time has passed and the group needs to move on, narrate the arrival at the village of Glendale.

Scene 2: Glendale

(Read Aloud)

After your journey, you find yourselves heading down into a small valley. Just off to one side is a quaint rural village. A sign at the roadside indicates that this is called Glendale. It seems to be a smallish community of Sulh outside one of the main population centres. Shade leads you along the main road and towards a medium-sized manor house. It seems that this har has some influence and enjoys a respected position here.

If your players ask questions about the village, feel free to fill in details of the hara who live there. Remember that Alba Sulh has a definite Celtic feel to it, so there might be small standing stones by the side of the road and Celtic symbols dotted around the village itself.

Glendale is free for you to populate and describe as you will. There are no predefined locations within it, apart from Shade's manor. He continues to lead the group there, unless they ask otherwise.

Your players might decide they want to visit shops or bars, or speak to the local hara, or go off on their own to explore for a short while. A good Storyteller will allow them to do so. You might not be prepared for such eventualities, but there's nothing to stop you from ad-libbing along the way.

The last thing you want your players to feel is that they are being railroaded. There's nothing worse than a player discovering, in a so-called open game environment, that wherever they turn, there's an invisible wall erected by the Storyteller. If you allow players freedom to wander, and invent details for them on the fly, they will have more respect for your abilities and feel more at ease with the game and their characters. If you give them time to do their own thing, you needn't fear they'll simply wander out of your story. You'll find more than enough opportunities to steer them back on course.

They could get in trouble with a local group in Glendale, befriend a shopkeeper or another har, or perhaps even be invited to indulge in aruna. Wraeththu aren't exactly prudes and they don't have the same hang-ups as humans do. This is important to remember, as either a Storyteller or a player. Players should be encouraged to step beyond the boundaries of being human. After all, unless they're playing a human character, they're going to view the world as a Wraeththu har would.

Regardless of what happens, whether the players decide to explore or simply follow Shade, they eventually end up at Shade's manor.



Scene 3: Shade's Manor

- *By now you've been running the game for while, so you can decide what Shade's dwelling is called and actually looks like. Just bear in mind the following details:*
- *It's an old manor house in the style of an English country gentleman's home.*
- *It has a generous stable area and numerous hara to act as servants and so forth.*
- *There is a large garden at the back of the house, where hara can gather for important meetings and social occasions.*
- *There are enough spare bedrooms for everyhar in your party, unless you decide otherwise.*
- *Dinner will be at 7:00 p.m. and Shade invites all the hara of the group to discuss matters further with him.*

Shade settles the guests into their rooms and gives them a quick tour of the house. They are free to roam where they will apart from the private rooms and so forth. Shade gives them enough time to get used to their base of operations and to go wandering. This is when Storytelling can be immense fun; you can sit back and watch your players interact.

If the game has gone on for a few hours, you might want to schedule a break for thirty minutes or so, let your players stretch their legs, get snacks and chat for a while. You can also use this point as a natural break, if you wish to end the session.

Scene 4: Dinner

At 7:00 p.m., members of Shade's staff inform the group that dinner is being served in the dining room and they are to make their way there. Shade is waiting for them and will inform them that once the meal is over he will explain everything to them.

If any of your player group is absent at this point, they don't learn the rest of the scenario and can't use information IC, until another character informs them.

As to what Shade reveals, we'll again give you space to create your own details for the story. The Storyteller should speak as Shade on the subject of Lund. Below, you'll find the most important pieces of information. Your task is to incorporate them into what Shade says and provide players with enough clues to continue to solve the mystery set before them.

The Vision: Shade was sitting in the garden at the back of the house. He had closed his eyes to meditate for a while beneath the pale winter sun. He was suddenly struck by a powerful feeling of vertigo and his inner vision was assaulted by images of the ruined city of Lund.

He saw a dark shadow grow over the city, which formed into a black ash-covered hand. It clawed at the buildings, pulling upon their very foundations. As the stones of Lund began to fall even further into decay, the mysterious hand took the broken rocks and formed a new structure at the centre of the city.

Slowly over time, Shade is not sure how long, the dark stones formed into a twisted pyramid, which rose up taller than the surrounding ruins. Lines of hara were drawn towards the door of this structure and went inside it. Shade is not sure what happened to them but he sensed terrible feelings of danger and despair.

Before his vision could go any further, Shade was forcibly ejected from the scene. He came to his senses to find his nose bleeding.

Shade doesn't know what the vision means exactly, but feels he must go and investigate the ruins. He thinks that what he saw could be linked to the disappearances of hara in the Lund area. He received a definite feeling of dread from the vision. Shade can provide no more information on the subject. He can only explain that some hara have gone missing around Lund and the surrounding areas, and that they have never been seen again.

When you think that the Dinner scene has gone on long enough, Shade will explain to the group that they will be heading to Lund (a journey of twenty miles) at first light in the morning, and he will then wish them a good night and retire to their chambers, adding that everyhar that wishes to go is to meet outside in the back courtyard.

Scene 5: Lund

After a journey of around 75 Kilometres the group approach Lund. The journey can be entirely narrated, or you can include a mixture of narration and IC interaction, so that your players get the chance to discuss matters with one another. You might have a disparate group of hara on this journey, who all have various goals and sub-plots of their own. (If you're using the Pre-Generated Characters, some won't exactly get on with each other.)

Regardless of their motivations, the party is in the lands of the Sulh and in the company of a very powerful psychic. Shade, however, must not be used as a foil for the group. Let the players make their own mistakes. If you use such a powerful character too much, it could lead to problems later on. One of the worst things you can do is use Shade to do everything and overshadow your group.

Use Shade to keep the characters in line, but allow the in-party IC rivalries to be dealt with IC. Only step in if you really have to. If necessary, bring the adventure back

on track, but don't be heavy handed about it. Use the politics of the game to your advantage and manipulate the group into doing Shade's bidding.

The group will arrive at the ruined City of Lund. Here, set the atmosphere and mood. You can play dramatic or spooky music in the background, or perhaps have a little incense in the air. Describe the desolation and the ruin of this once proud city, and how it now seems to be little more than a giant graveyard.

As in Shade's vision, a black pyramid towers over everything. It seems to draw the very life from the land around it, as if it were sucking the soul of Lund into its hidden centre. The group must press on towards this structure to learn more about its purpose.

During the journey you could add a few false scares:

- ☐ *A wild animal that's scavenging nearby is startled by the player's arrival.*
- ☐ *A loose brick falls from the top of a building as they pass. Is there someone up there?*
- ☐ *In the shadow of an alley, they spy a mysterious shape. It looks humanoid, but it is only a broken mannequin that stands forlornly, as a relic of a life that has faded.*

Congratulations, your party has made it this far and now the true mystery can unfold.

The pyramid is real and not just a figment of a har's psychic vision, but what is its purpose and why is it there? Who or what made it?

The best way to learn to be a Storyteller is by answering these questions yourself and putting your own spin on things. We'll provide a skeleton for you to work from, but the rest is up to you.

Here are a few questions you can ask yourself to get the ball rolling.

- ☐ *Is the pyramid of Wraeththu origin or was it created by something else?*
- ☐ *Is the pyramid's purpose a positive one or something sinister?*
- ☐ *Is someone inside it or is it an automated structure from another time or place?*
- ☐ *Is the pyramid a weapon or a gateway – or something else entirely?*
- ☐ *Is the pyramid guarded?*
- ☐ *Is the pyramid made of stone or some other material?*
- ☐ *What happened to the hara who went into it?*
- ☐ *Has anyhar ever been able to escape from the pyramid and if so, do the characters run across them?*
- ☐ *What powers this structure?*
- ☐ *Is your party the only one investigating it?*

You can answer as many of these questions as you like. Have fun coming up with unique twists on the material presented and remember the Golden Rule: There are no rules, only guidelines. You're the Storyteller and you're the one that directs the flow of the game. If it's moving too slowly, spice it up. If it's going too fast, slow it down.

Most of all: Have fun and allow your players to have fun as well.

BREAKING THE HABIT (AKA DICELESS ROLE-PLAYING)

Rules are made to be bent or broken in role-playing. This might sound a little odd considering how we've spent considerable time telling you the rules for the RPG and how to implement them. But Wraeththu is a game of Storytelling and it can be played without our rules, if you see fit.

People daunted by the idea of dice, calculations and so forth, but who like the idea of acting out another persona for a while, can play this game without dice and number crunching. You can run it as if it was an interactive drama, where there are no dice, and you are the final judge of any action taken by the players. This requires a mutual trust between all participants, and especially trust in the Storyteller.

However, if you elect to run a game using this freeform style, there are a few things that you need to bear in mind.

First of all, it's not an easy option. Right from the start you have to be attentive and pay close heed to everything your players say and do, because there are no rules for you to fall back on if something goes wrong. We call this 'The One Step', as you must always be One Step ahead of your players at every turn.

The freeform style of role-playing encourages people to be more open with their descriptions and narration. As there are no tables or rules to refer to, you have to be ready to adjudicate everything based on common sense. The characters themselves should be created via the game rules, but are played without them.

Just because you're not using the rules for combat, magic and skill resolution, it doesn't mean that the characters can break the laws of physics and common sense. You might get people that want to carry a whole armoury's worth of equipment, guns and ammunition: You need to be ready to say 'NO' and explain that it wouldn't be possible to carry all of this, and once their gun is out of ammo, where are they going to get more from?

If you're not sure about something, just veto it.

You might also encounter arguments about hit resolution in combat. Since you'll have to work out who strikes or shoots, who is struck or shot, and what the result is, you must be sure about what's going on. Dice usually provide the random factor in combat situations.

It is very rare for even the most skilled marksman to hit a target a hundred times out of a hundred. It's not impossible, but you have to bear in mind the factors surrounding the situation. Cover, movement, weapons, wind and wielder's skill all play a part.

In a freeform game, you have to check the stats of your characters, and then listen carefully to how the players role-play the attacks and actions. It is advisable to swing your judgement in favour of the person who is the most effective at describing the action or attack, in comparison to their opponent or one of your NPCs.

Remember, it's not about winning or losing, it's about telling the story. Heroes in fiction are just that because they beat impossible odds with very little cost to themselves (depending on the author of course). They overcome challenges that normal people would have trouble with.

Example One:

Twist, Falco and Jonish are three Wraeththu hara who have come under fire by a band of human scavengers while they were exploring a ruined city. There are two scavengers but they are high up in a building and they have one long-range rifle.

Storyteller: A single sharp report echoes into the air. Part of the ground next to Twist's foot explodes. Shards of stone scatter and cover Twist's leg. A cry follows the shot; a shouted warning.

Scav 1: "Stay away from this part of the city, it's ours!"

Storyteller: So folks, what are you going to do now? We'll take this in turns... starting with Twist.

Twist, Falco and Jonish are not going to take this lying down. Twist has a pair of swords but this har isn't very effective in ranged combat, so Twist's player decides to head into cover. Falco has a pistol and the scavengers are just within this har's range.

Jonish is more of a brawler, but he has other plans.

Twist: I slide down onto the ground and inch my way towards a nearby wall. I jump at the last minute and put my back against the wall, out of the line of fire.

Falco: I pull my pistol and fire off a couple of shots. I'm not trying to hit them, but I am trying to make them keep their heads down.

Jonish: OK, Falco's doing that. I'm going to break into a run because my character is really good at running. I head towards the left hand side of the building.

Storyteller: OK, well, Falco is a good shot, so he fires a couple of times and one shot gets really close to the hidden sniper. The scavengers don't see Twist get under cover or Jonish run over to the left side of the building.

Storyteller: There are no more shots, and Falco just catches a glimpse of someone duck behind another wall. During the confusion, the people in the building don't seem to be doing much.

Storyteller: So, what now?

Twist: I'm going to stay under cover and keep an eye on the rear of the group. I don't want this fighting to draw the attention of any other surprises.

Falco: I'm going to lower my aim and get a bit more into cover behind a broken down car, just moving around to get a better shot if I have to.

Jonish: Now I'm at the side of the building. I'm going to climb up it slowly and grab a broken piece of rock on the way up, if I can.

Storyteller: OK. The spotter of the scavenger pair looks over the top of a broken window. They seem a lot more cautious now, especially since they know one of you has a gun.

Jonish: Am I up there yet? Or can I see them?

Storyteller: Not quite yet. You're not the fastest climber and the wall is quite unsteady, so you're still climbing.

Jonish: OK. When I get into range, I want to hit the guy with the rock I picked up, throwing it while I hang onto the wall.

Storyteller: That's possible and considering you're not bad at throwing things, I can let you do that.

Falco: If he spots Jonish, I'm going to shoot at him.

Storyteller: I was just getting to that. As Jonish is climbing and the wall is unsteady, part of it breaks off and lands with a crash onto the floor below – this startles the spotter and he looks towards the climbing har.

Falco: I take a steady aim and try and hit the guy in the head. Since he's behind cover that's really all I can aim for. I gently squeeze the trigger, taking a breath to steady myself and fire.

It's at this point that you're being tested as a Storyteller. You should have the advantage but your players are working together and they're being reasonable in their descriptions of their actions. No one has done anything over the top and everyone seems to be into the scene.

What do you do?

The temptation is there to let the bad guys escape and try to kill the players, but this would be bad Storytelling and a scene should never play out like that. Yes, your bad guys are up high and they have a long rifle, but the moment one of them pops up to shoot, Falco has that angle covered.

The spotter has been made aware of Jonish's presence and this is the perfect chance for Falco to shoot him. Falco has put a lot of skill points into his use of the pistol and his player described the attack action reasonably well. You should rule that the spotter is hit and taken out of the fight.

Storyteller: Almost in slow motion, the spotter hears the sound of the gun and looks towards Falco. He can't do anything but stagger backwards as the bullet penetrates his skull. He drops like a broken doll and leaves his companion shaken.

Now you have to decide what to do regarding the sniper. Will he try to take revenge or throw down his gun? If you had rules to refer to, there'd be some kind of morale check and so forth, but since you don't have rules to fall back on, you must now decide how the rest of the scene plays out.

Does the sniper carry on the attack? He could have a clear shot at Jonish as the har continues his climb. Or does the sniper surrender and fall upon the mercy of the group? (If they have any mercy, since he's human and they are Wraeththu. Also, he shot first and they were defending themselves.)

Perhaps he tries to bargain with the hara. Perhaps he decides to kill himself rather than trust the group. There are many directions this story could take. Without the rules to help you make decisions, it's up to you as the Storyteller to create the story and carry it through.

This sample scene illustrates a fairly problem-free version of freeform role-playing. There are no calculations for damage nor any skill checks or combat die rolls. It's pure interaction between the characters and the Storyteller. When this works, it can be a wonderful way to play, but when it goes wrong it can be a disaster, and fixing the problems will require an even hand on the part of both the Storyteller and the players.

Compromise, compromise, compromise. The art of freeform play is based around the concept of give and take. When you take too much from the players, they will balk, become uncomfortable and chafe at your story-bit.

There will be times when confrontation comes not from outside the party, but from within it, when tempers flare IC. In some instances, this will result in a fight. Normally, this is when rules come in, but you're not running the game with rules. You might be tempted to favour certain players. Perhaps one of them is a better role-player or they don't upset you like someone else in the group?

What do you do?

To be respected by your group, you must be even-handed and fair. Show that you do not pick sides or favourites. You could try to get the characters to diffuse the situation

IC with the aid of an NPC, but if that fails they will want to beat on one another. Some players thrive on this kind of thing.

You must examine the combatants' character sheets closely and make a note of their various combat related skills. Keep a close eye on this when the combat starts and make the players take turns, just like you would if you were running a party versus enemies fight.

Freeform character conflict battles should never result in a character's death. Players will naturally be unwilling to lose their character and arguments can start over who killed who, and why they didn't really die. It's best to avoid this right from the start and state that, regardless of what the players think, no one will die during this fight.

To help you adjudicate the combat, you can use the relative skill scores of the characters involved in the fight. If you compare them, it will give you a good idea of who should have the best chance of winning. You must also make the players describe their combat actions in a fair amount of detail. If they simply say for each combat round 'I hit them with my sword', it isn't going to cut it.

Note: You are the Storyteller. It's up to you, not your players, to decide what happens after the description of the attack takes place.

Example Two:

Player 1: I hit them with my sword!

Player 2: I hit them with my knife!

Storyteller: Er, you both miss! Can we try and be a little more descriptive here, people!

Not only are the above descriptions extremely boring and repetitive, they're also bound to cause an argument, as stated above. Try to encourage the players to describe in more detail how their characters are attacking, and how they are defending themselves, and so forth.

Player 1: I swing with my broadsword in a wide arc and attempt to hit my opponent. I'm trying to use the size of my blade to batter down any defences and my natural strength to break his guard. I want to land a blow across this har's chest.

Player 2: It's pointless for me to even try and block a big sword with this short knife, so I'm going to use my character's speed and physique to try and avoid being hit, get in close and attempt to stab with the knife a couple of times into his gut.

Storyteller: Your broadsword inflicts a terrible wound, as you are very skilled with it, but your opponent is quicker and faster than you are. So he manages to weave around your blade a little. He still gets hit and takes a nasty wound to the side. You find he's actually in and under your guard and his knife strikes a couple of times into your belly – the pain is like a white-hot fire.

As you can see from this example, the second style is much more fluid and actually sounds like a fight instead of a playground brawl. The Storyteller compared the two characters, and while the first player's har has a better sword skill, the second had the edge with both his speed and the speed of his weapon – not to mention the first player didn't say if they were going to defend at all.

In this case, the Storyteller ruled the sword-wielder was stabbed a couple of times in the belly. It takes time for a character to recover from using a heavy sword, whereas a knife fighter can get in and under the sword to deliver a couple of telling blows.

It all comes down to trust, common sense and a sense of the dramatic. If you can handle these concepts and be fair as an adjudicator, you can run a freeform role-playing game of any genre. We encourage you, of course, to try using the RPG rules the first few times you play and only drop them if you're confident enough to handle the extra pressure that freeform role-playing can put upon you.

While you don't really need to create detailed adventures and characters for your gaming session, you might want to make a couple of notes on the types of adversaries your party will encounter. These can just be a general idea of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the enemies or allies, their weapons and motivations. Having these notes will help you keep things on track, and you won't need to crunch numbers. You can say things like: 'Well, Amordin avoided your sword blow because he is a much better fighter than you are, and your attack description was a little basic.'

There are many nuances to dropping dice and rules in favour of a more story-orientated freeform game. You won't know what you prefer until you try it so happy gaming, and most of all: Have fun.

OTHER ADVENTURE IDEAS

Below, you'll find a few sample adventures to get you started in the world of Wraeththu. You could use them as preliminary adventures, in which you can get the characters together and lead them into your story.

In Megalithica

The city of Carmine, on the northern edge of the country now known as Megalithica, is not as grand as it once was. While it might have been the birthplace of the Wraeththu, hara quickly grew up and abandoned their home town.

You belong to one of the last few phyles of Wraeththu to inhabit this crumbling city. Do you choose to leave along with everyhar else, or do you try and make a future amongst the ruins? Gangs of outcast Uigenna still roam the streets. Maybe you still sympathise with these hara or maybe you wish to destroy any evidence of Wraeththu's barbaric past.

Also, there are those who claim that the city itself is trying to force hara from its streets. Ghosts from both the recent past and prehistory seem to be slowly taking over. Strange creatures have been spotted crawling out from the lakes around the city. Of course, this could all be down to the tall tales of the Unneah, playing on local hara's imaginations.

Plot Options:

1. Leave Carmine and go to Duwamish to the North-West, if you are still loyal to the Uigenna or want to fight for them. Your party may wish to try and escape to the South through Varr territory or even wish to join the Varr tribe.
2. Stay in the city and investigate the rumours of ghosts and strange happening, while defending yourself against the remaining gangs of Uigenna.

Galhea

In the heart of Megalithica lies the peaceful town of Galhea. It was once a human settlement but now it is one of the central settlements of the powerful Varrs. Many hara choose to seek out Galhea, as you can generally find work there easily, even if it is just among the ranks of the Varr army, but others choose to avoid Varr territory at all cost.

Maybe you will venture into this town looking for work or maybe you have been given the dangerous job of spying on the Varrs?

Plot Options:

1. Receive a mission to spy on the Varr army and find out their plans for expansion. Possibilities of finding out the truth about what happens within the walls of the citadel, Fulminir.
2. Join forces with the Varrs to help draw up a treaty between the Varrs and the Kakkahaar.

Imbrilim and Greenling

The town of Greenling may be the first free town for the outcasts from the north. Hara of many different tribes shelter within its walls, but the threat of the Varrs to the north grows closer ever day. Out across the dry desert to the north something strange is brewing. Hara talk of a new settlement called Imbrilim, where magic shivers in the air. Some blame it on the Gelaming, but the wastelands of central Megalithica are a long way from Almagabra.

Can the residents of Greenling put their faith in the distant Gelaming or will the Varrs overcome whatever bewitchments are forming at Imbrilim? Maybe you should seek out the help of the powerful but dangerous Kakkahaar to the south.

Plot Options:

1. Investigate what is happening around Imbrilim, while risking coming face to face with the Varr army.
2. Go and seek out the mysterious Kakkahaar and see what their seers have to say about the Gelaming.

In Almagabra

Immanion, the city of dreams, is the capital of the Gelaming. If Thiede has his way it will become the First City of all Wraeththu. No har finds Immanion by accident; if you have found your way there it must be for a reason.

Plot Options:

1. Try and arrive in Immanion by chance. If the city is real it must be possible to find it.
2. Arrive in Immanion by invitation, but what could the powerful Gelaming possibly want with you and your friends?

Other Plot Options

1. Your party ends up in the hometown of one of its members. There is still a fairly large human population. What do you do: track down your old friends and family and incept them, or do you pass through quickly and silently? Perhaps you are driven to kill. Another possibility is you are drawn to your town due to rival tribes fighting over the territory.
2. A note arrives for one of your group. There is no reason anyone would contact them. It could be from a former friend, an old lover or someone with a more sinister purpose.

Name **Saasilervus** Player
 Current Tribe **Colurastres** Caste **Kaimana** Level **Ara**
 Age **25** Height **205** Weight **105** Hair Colour **Black** Eye Colour **Blue**
 Place of Birth **Carmine** Current Town **Neowik** Current Country **Megallithica**
 Distinguishing Features **Unkempt Hair**



		Lat.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.	Mod.
Strength	[STR]	[6]	[]	[6]	[]	[+0]
Dexterity	[DEX]	[12]	[]	[12]	[]	[+1]
Stamina	[STA]	[12]	[]	[12]	[]	[+1]
Perception	[PER]	[9]	[+2]	[11]	[]	[+1]
Willpower	[WIL]	[13]	[+1]	[14]	[]	[+2]
Intelligence	[INT]	[8]	[]	[8]	[]	[+0]

Secondary States			
Energy	[EN]	[54]	[1]
Psyche	[PSY]	[6]	[1]
Composure	[CMP]	[9]	[1]

skills	Stats		Lvl	Bon	Tot
	WTL / INT	WTL / PER			
Occult	5	+2	7		
Persuasion	10	+3	13		
Hypnotism	7	+2	9		
Grace	4	+1	5		
Disguise	PER / PER	8	+1	9	
Intuition	PER / INT	7	+1	8	
Slight of Hand	DEX / PER	6	+1	7	
Tracking	PER / INT	5	+1	6	
Ride (Horse)	DEX / STR	4	+1	5	
	/	/	/	/	E
	/	/	/	/	F
	/	/	/	/	W
	/	/	/	/	W

[illegible]

Combat Skill Bonuses
Base Close Combat Modifiers
Base Ranged Combat Modifiers

[illegible]

Matter	Inl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.
Air	[INT]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Earth	[STR]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Fire	[DEX]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Water	[WIL]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Energy				
Spirit	[INT]	[2]	[1]	[1]
Kinetic	[STR]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Attraction	[DEX]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Plasmatic	[WIL]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Changing States				
Temporal		[1]	[1]	[1]
Phase	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Destruction	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Conversion	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]

[illegible][illegible]

<i>Weapons</i>	Damage	AP	Attacks S/RB/A	RT	Weight	Size	Ammo	Range (S/M/L)
_____	[]	[]	/ / /	[]	[]	[]	[]	/ / /
_____	[]	[]	/ / /	[]	[]	[]	[]	/ / /
_____	[]	[]	/ / /	[]	[]	[]	[]	/ / /
_____	[]	[]	/ / /	[]	[]	[]	[]	/ / /
_____	[]	[]	/ / /	[]	[]	[]	[]	/ / /
_____	[]	[]	/ / /	[]	[]	[]	[]	/ / /
_____	[]	[]	/ / /	[]	[]	[]	[]	/ / /
_____	[]	[]	/ / /	[]	[]	[]	[]	/ / /
_____	[]	[]	/ / /	[]	[]	[]	[]	/ / /
_____	[]	[]	/ / /	[]	[]	[]	[]	/ / /

<i>Merits & Flaws</i>	Pts.	M/F	References	AV	BP	Hipoints
Magic Sense	[2]	[●] [○]		[]	[]	[]
Synaesthesia	[3]	[●] [○]	<i>Armonia</i>	[]	[]	[]
Addiction (Alcohol)	[2]	[○] [●]		[]	[]	[]
Memory Fragments	[2]	[○] [●]		[]	[]	[]
_____	[]	[○] [○]		[]	[]	[]
_____	[]	[○] [○]		[]	[]	[]

Equipment	
Background Notes	
Human Name	Richard Morris
Age Looks	15
Inceptor	Juwansis

Soasilenus had trouble remembering his life before he was incepted. In his dreams he saw visions of himself being brutally beaten by an older man. He is still unsure whether these are past memories resurfacing or just wild visions of the future.

Everything after Soasilenus's inception is crystal clear. He remembers having three months of intensive training, and during this time strange things started to happen. He started to be able to smell sound and hear colour, as if his senses began to overlap.

One day, while out scavenging for food, Soasilenus's senses started to play a trick on him, or so he thought. It was as if a tall figure had approached him, yet Soasilenus could not see this individual. He could, however, hear the colour of his clothes and see the smell of his perfume as patches of colour. This strongly indistinct figure told him of a task he must perform, which will help him better understand what is happening to him. Soasilenus learned of travellers who would come to him over the next few days, and with whom he must undertake a journey to Alba Suli.

Castle Goals
 Learn Water Magic
 Learn Folk Medicine
 Increase Air Magic to 2
 Complete the task in Alba Sulh



Name **Zillbrack** Player _____
Current Tribe **Kakkahaar** Caste **Kaimana** Level **Ara**
Age **19** Height **200** Weight **100** Hair Colour **Blond** Eye Colour **Blue**
Place of Birth **Neovik** Current Town **Nomadic** Current Country **Megalithica**
Distinguishing Features **Deeply tanned skin and wears gold makeup finely applied to his skin, this gives him an exotic sheen.**

Stats	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Experience	Fate	Base Actions	Minor Wounds
Strength	[STR]	[7]	[1]	[7]	[+0]				
Dexterity	[DEX]	[9]	[1]	[9]	[+0]				
Stamina	[STA]	[6]	[1]	[6]	[+0]				
Perception	[PER]	[12]	[+1]	[13]	[+1]				
Willpower	[WIL]	[13]	[+1]	[14]	[+2]				
Intelligence	[INT]	[12]	[+1]	[13]	[+1]				

Secondary Stats	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Experience	Fate	Base Actions	Minor Wounds
Energy	[EN]	[46]	[1]	[46]	[1]				
Psyche	[PSY]	[8]	[1]	[8]	[1]				
Composure	[CMP]	[6]	[1]	[6]	[1]				

Skills	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Experience	Fate	Base Actions	Minor Wounds
Occult	[WIL / INT]	[5]	[+4]	[9]	[1]				
Intuition	[PER / INT]	[5]	[+2]	[7]	[1]				
Stealth	[DEX / PER]	[5]	[+1]	[6]	[1]				
Slight of Hand	[DEX / PER]	[3]	[+1]	[4]	[1]				
Linguistics (Ancient)	[INT / INT]	[4]	[+1]	[5]	[1]				
Wraeththu Lore	[INT / PER]	[5]	[+1]	[6]	[1]				
Divination	[WIL / PER]	[2]	[+2]	[4]	[1]				
Theology	[INT / INT]	[3]	[+1]	[4]	[1]				
Ride (Horse)	[DEX / STR]	[6]	[1]	[6]	[1]				

Combat Styles	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Experience	Fate	Base Actions	Minor Wounds
1 H Fighting Style	[5]	[1]	[5]	[1]	[1]				
	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]				
	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]				
	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]				
	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]				
	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]				
	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]				
	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]				
	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]				
	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]				

Combat Skills	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Experience	Fate	Base Actions	Minor Wounds
Sword (Kukri)	[5]	[1]	[5]	[1]	[1]				
Sword (Katana)	[3]	[1]	[3]	[1]	[1]				
Rifles (AK-47)	[3]	[1]	[3]	[1]	[1]				

Combat Skill Bonuses	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Experience	Fate	Base Actions	Minor Wounds
Base Close Combat Modifiers	[+1]	[+0]	[+1]	[+1]	[+1]				
Base Ranged Combat Modifiers	[+1]	[+1]	[+1]	[+1]	[+1]				

Sword (Kukri)	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Experience	Fate	Base Actions	Minor Wounds
Sword (Katana)	[3]	[1]	[3]	[1]	[1]				
Rifles (AK-47)	[3]	[1]	[3]	[1]	[1]				

Weapons
Kukri

Damage
10d+2

AP
7

Abcs (S/RB/A)
5

RT
1

Weight
0.8

Size
0.6

Ammo
1

Range (S/M/L)
1

Merits & Flaws
Magically Adpet

Destiny
2

Addiction (Cleptomaniac)
2

Beacon to the other Realms
4

Resources
Arms

Background Notes
Human Name James Smith
Age Looks 16
Inceptor Lianvis

After the destruction of his home city, Zillbrack travelled Megalithica, scratching a living through theft and trickery. He scorned Wraeththu and sought to avoid them at all costs. At one point he tried to organise a small group of humans into a religious cult so he could fleece them for valuables. After being unsuccessful as a religious messiah, Zillbrack headed south, in the hope that conditions would be better for surviving humans there. Throughout his travels, Zillbrack always found himself on the receiving end of trouble. Sometimes, he felt that something or someone was watching him, making sure that nothing went right for him.

But things were not always bad. After a few days' good luck, which had left him decidedly better off, Zillbrack decided to celebrate by getting drunk. He can't remember anything of what happened next, only that the following morning he woke up and wondered what had hit him. He had been incepted to Wraeththu. Feeling different and looking different Zillbrack panicked, until his inceptor calmed him down.

Zillbrack then spend a few months in caste training, until he had a dream in which he learned there was a reason for him becoming har, and that he was to partake in an important meeting in Alba Sulh.

Caste Goals

- Increase Fire Magic to 2
- Learn Attraction Magic
- Increase Theology to 5
- Complete the task in Alba Sulh

Name **Oded** _____ Player _____

Current Tribe **Obhiviata** _____ Caste **Kainana** _____ Level **Ara** _____

Age **26** _____ Height **185** _____ Weight **85** _____ Hair Colour **Black** _____ Eye Colour **No Eyes** _____

Place of Birth **plathe** _____ Current Town **Nomadic** _____ Current Country **Almagabra** _____

Distinguishing Features **Blend yet some how competent**



Stafs	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Car.	Mod.
Strength	[STR]	[8]	[8]	[+0]	[+0]
Dexterity	[DEX]	[10]	[10]	[+1]	[+1]
Stamina	[STA]	[7]	[7]	[+0]	[+0]
Perception	[PER]	[8]	[8]	[+0]	[+0]
Willpower	[WIL]	[10]	[+1]	[+1]	[+1]
Intelligence	[INT]	[10]	[10]	[+1]	[+1]

Experience **Fast** **Basic Actions** **Minor Weapons**





Energy	[EN]	[50]	[1]
Psyche	[PSY]	[4]	[4]
Composure	[CMP]	[9]	[9]

[illegible]

	Human	Wraethlinu	
		Agmara	
Magic			
Manipulation			
Resistance			
Probability			

[illegible][illegible]

Combat Skill Bonuses
Base Close Combat Modifiers
Base Ranged Combat Modifiers
Ld.

Aim	Dodge	Damage	Speed	Block	Roll	Leap	Repair
+2	[+1]	[+0]	[+1]	[+1]	+1	+1	[+1]
	[+1]	[+1]	[+1]	N/A			[+0]

Sword (Scimitar)	12
Longspear	1
Warhammer	
Warhammer (Basic)	

[illegible][illegible]

Merits & Flaws	Pos.	M/F	Resonances	AV	BP	Il points
No Eyes	[5]	O ●	Armstrong	[]	[]	[]
Blind Fighting	[25]	● O		[]	[]	[]
Shyness	[4]	O ●		[]	[]	[]
Destiny	[1]	O ●		[]	[]	[]
	[]	O O		[]	[]	[]
	[]	O O		[]	[]	[]
	[]	O O		[]	[]	[]

Background Notes		Equipment
Human Name	Oded-Sasama	
Age	Looks 20	
Occupation	Harrac Jumazic	

Equipment

Caste Coals
 Increase Dagger to 2
 Learn Water Magic
 Learn Meditation to level 2
 Complete the task in Alba Sulh

	Aim	Dodge	Damage	Speed	Block	Roll	Leap	Repair	Order
Icons	0000	0000	0000	●	●●000	00000	00000	00000	00000
	+2	+1	+0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1
		+1	+1	+1	N/A				+0

Name **Gorath** Player _____

Current Tribe **Sulh** Caste **Kaimana** Level **Ara**

Age **18** Height **155** Weight **55** Hair Colour **Brown** Eye Colour **Blue**

Place of Birth **Jorvick** Current Town **Jorvick** Current Country **Alba Sulh**

Distinguishing Features **Very Analytical of anything he cannot rationalise**

Stats

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Experience

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Major Wounds

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Minor Wounds

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Secondary Stats

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Skills

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Combat Skills

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Combat Skills

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Combat Skills

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Combat Skills

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Combat Skills

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Combat Skills

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Combat Skills

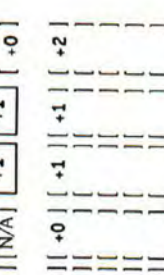
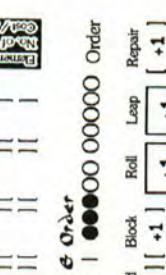
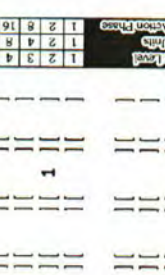
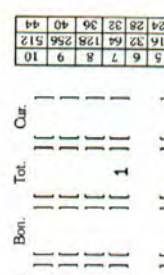
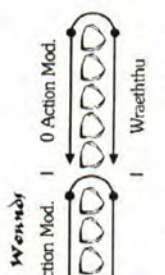
	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Combat Skills

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10

Combat Skills

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10



Weapons

Short Bow

Damage: 106

AP: 6

Attack (S/3RB/A): 2

RT: 1.5

Size: 0.9

Weight: 1.5

Range (S/M/L): 1

Merits & Flaws

Ps: 4

M/F: 0

Resources: 0

Armour: 0

Hitpoints: 0

Background Notes

Human Name: Kevin Percival

Age: Looks 21

Inceptor: Borence



Being a grade 'A' science student was easy for Gorath; however those days are long gone. His skills are more suited to analysis than survival. His best friend Silstress had vanished over a year before, during a trip to Lund, where they had both hoped to find a solution to the problem affecting the people of their country. On the verge of a nervous breakdown after the loss of his friend, Gorath was comforted by a travelling stranger named Borence, who was har. They spent many days talking about Gorath's problems. On the way to Kyme, Borence told him about the Wraeththu, and that his good friend Malakess would be able to help him find answers.

Upon arrival at Kyme, Gorath was incepted by Borence, as this was the only way he would get access to the library. During his weeks of research, he received basic caste instruction from Malakess himself. Malakess also gave him the news that once his current training was over, in three months' time, Gorath must travel to Glendale for an important event. During these three months, Gorath discovered what haka called magic. However, the idea would not sit right in his mind. He felt that magic was fantasy and that there had to be a rational explanation for it.

Combat Skills

	Lvl	Str	DEX	INT	WIL	PER	STA	PSY	CM	Mod
Strength	6	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Dexterity	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Stamina	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Perception	11	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Willpower	12	11	8	11	12	13	12	10	10	10
Intelligence	8	11	8	11	12	13	12	10		

Name Jarlon Swallow		Player	
Current Tribe Unneah	Caste Kaimana	Level	Ara
Age 26	Height 180	Weight 80	Hair Colour Black
			Eye Colour Black
Place of Birth Carmine	Current Town Greenling	Current Country	Megalithica
Distinguishing Features Though agile joke seems to sway and stagger around as though perpetually drunk			

Stats	Lvl.	Ben.	Tot.	Cuz.	Mod.	Experience	Face
Strength	[7]	[]	[7]	[]	[+0]		
Dexterity	[13]	[+1]	[14]	[]	[+2]		
Stamina	[7]	[]	[7]	[]	[+0]		
Perception	[14]	[]	[14]	[]	[+2]		
Willpower	[13]	[+1]	[14]	[]	[+2]		
Intelligence	[8]	[+1]	[9]	[]	[+0]		

Secondary State	Stats	Lvl	Bon.	Tot.
Energy	[50]	1	50	1
Psyche	[4]	1	4	1
Composure	[8]	1	8	1

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	/					Matter	
						Air	[INT]
	/					Earth	[STR]
	/					Fire	[DEX]
						Water	[WIL]
	/					Energy	

Fighting Style		Changing State	
7	7	Kinetic	[STR]
		Attraction	[DEX]
		Plasmatic	[WIL]
		Temporal	

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Merits & Flaws	Pts	M / F	References	AV	BP	Hipoints
Photographic Memory	5	● 1 0	Armen			
Addition (Rum)	2	0 1 ●				
Slightly Botched Inception	1	0 1 ●				
		0 1 0				
		0 1 0				
		0 1 0				

Background Notes		Equipment
Human Name	Jack Davis	
Age	Looks 19	
Interceptor	Jullian Haram	

Jack-an spent his childhood on the water: his human parents ran a small pleasure boat on the Mississippi. They were able to

keep apart from most of the troubles in the country, simply by staying in the mountains. But a day came when Jarkon's parents entered an area wracked by plague. Jarkon alone survived. He took solace in his father's store of rum, and tried to drown the feeling surrounding his parent's death. After many months of barely surviving, Jarkon was on the edge of suicide, when the boat grounded near a small Unseah camp. The Unseah

On his travels with his phyle, Jarkon came across a travelling Obliviata called Oded, who had been blind from birth. Inception had not changed this, but Oded's other senses were acutely developed. Oded told Jarkon that there

was to be a gathering of hara in Alba Sulh. If Jarkan wished, he could travel with Oded. Something about the idea intrigued Jarkan greatly, and even though he was now somewhat reluctant to part company with his phyle, he headed off for Alba Sulh with his new friend.

Caitie Coals
Learn to use a Pistol
Learn Air Magic

Complete the task in Alba Sulh

1

Name **Asterion** Player **Kiaimana** Level **Ara**
Current Tribe **Varr** Caste **Kiaimana** Level **Ara**
Age **19** Height **180** Weight **80** Hair Colour **Blond** Eye Colour **Brown**
Place of Birth **Varr Province** Current Town **Fulminir** Current Country **Megalithica**
Distinguishing Features **Loud Dominating Voice**

Stats	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Exp	Ess	Base	Minor
Strength	[STR]	[11]	[+2]	[13]	[+1]				
Dexterity	[DEX]	[13]		[13]	[+1]				
Stamina	[STA]	[13]		[13]	[+1]				
Perception	[PER]	[11]		[11]	[+1]				
Willpower	[WIL]	[7]	[+1]	[8]	[+0]				
Intelligence	[INT]	[7]		[7]	[+0]				

Secondary Stats	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Exp	Ess	Base	Minor
Energy	[EN]	[50]		[50]					
Psyche	[PSY]	[3]		[3]					
Composure	[CMP]	[4]		[4]					

Skills	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Exp	Ess	Base	Minor
Intimidation	[WIL / PER]	[3]	[+1]	[4]					
Persuasion	[WIL / PER]	[3]	[+1]	[4]					
Survival	[PER / INT]	[8]	[+1]	[9]					
Hunting	[WIL / INT]	[5]		[5]					
Tracking	[PER / INT]	[6]	[+1]	[7]					
Climbing	[STR / DEX]	[4]	[+1]	[5]					
Military Tactics	[INT / PER]	[4]	[+1]	[5]					

Combat Skills	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Exp	Ess	Base	Minor
1H Fighting Style	[5]		[5]						
Two Weapon Fighting Style	[5]		[5]						
Sword (Saber)	[5]		[5]						
Pistol (Desert Eagle)	[4]		[4]						
Rifle (WA2000)	[5]		[5]						

Combat Skills	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Exp	Ess	Base	Minor
1H Fighting Style	[5]		[5]						
Two Weapon Fighting Style	[5]		[5]						
Sword (Saber)	[5]		[5]						
Pistol (Desert Eagle)	[4]		[4]						
Rifle (WA2000)	[5]		[5]						

Combat Skills	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Exp	Ess	Base	Minor
1H Fighting Style	[5]		[5]						
Two Weapon Fighting Style	[5]		[5]						
Sword (Saber)	[5]		[5]						
Pistol (Desert Eagle)	[4]		[4]						
Rifle (WA2000)	[5]		[5]						

Combat Skills	Lvl	Bon	Tot	Cur	Mod	Exp	Ess	Base	Minor
1H Fighting Style	[5]		[5]						
Two Weapon Fighting Style	[5]		[5]						
Sword (Saber)	[5]		[5]						
Pistol (Desert Eagle)	[4]		[4]						
Rifle (WA2000)	[5]		[5]						

Weapons	Damage	AP	Attacks (S/3RD/A)	RT	Weight	Size	Ammo	Range (S/M/L)
Saber	[106-1]	[6]	[6]	[1]	[0.7]	[0.8]	[1]	[1]
Desert Eagle	[1010-3]	[9]	[7]	[1]	[1.71]	[0.15]	[8]	[20 / 42 / 85]
WA2000Walther Sniping Rifle	[2010-5]	[12]	[5]	[1]	[6.99]	[0.65]	[6]	[500 / 750 / 1000]

Merits & Flaws	Ps	M/F	Relatives	AV	BP	Hipoints
An Eye for the Target	[4]	[0]	[0]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Ambidexterous	[4]	[0]	[0]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Sexual Perversion	[3]	[0]	[0]	[1]	[1]	[1]

Background Notes
Human Name **Andrew Calero**
Age Looks **20**
Inceptor **Ponclast**

After inception, and basic training, Asterion was put to service in the Varr army. He was trained as a sniper and became known as an excellent shot with different types of ranged weapons, both modern and archaic. Although his inception was rough by Varr standards, Asterion overcame the difficulties of his early Wraeththu life, and spent a lot of time helping other inceptees. His phylarch eventually commissioned him to train a select group of snipers.

Asterion nearly lost his life during combat, but the timely invention of Ponclast himself saved the day. After his recovery, Ponclast requested Asterion to go to the island realm of Alba Sulh on an intelligence gathering trip. He was also entrusted to sabotage any Gelaming plans he uncovered.

On the journey to Alba Sulh, Asterion was assailed by the conviction that he was meant to go to this land, and to take anyhar with him who was willing to join him.

Carte Coals
Increase 1 H Fighting Style to 6
Increase 2 Weapon Fighting Style to 6
Learn New Weapon Skill
Complete the task in Alba Sulh

APPENDIX 4

STORYTELLING

The Art of Building a Story

There are many aspects to telling a good story; in fact too many to list in this book. However, we've broken the process down to a few basic elements.

Some people have a natural gift for story-telling. They are the ones who can tell the most mundane and trivial anecdote, but somehow everyone who hears it is gripped. But you can also develop a knack for it, if you know some of the components of the craft.

The first sentence of a story is its hook. It's called this because, just like when you're fishing, you throw out the line, nicely baited, and trust it'll generate a bite. The hook must be swallowed by the reader or player, who then can't let go. They want to know more.

Here is an example of a first sentence: 'Elicia turns on the light'. The implication here is that a woman is in the dark, which is a bit of a hook, but there's no sense of menace, excitement or foreboding.

'In the dark, all she can hear is the swift hiss of her own breath.' This says more. Our unknown protagonist feels threatened or frightened.

'Something is moving in the darkness. Elicia can't see it, but she can hear it. She can *smell* it.' This says even more. The threat becomes real and immediate.

Once you have your hook, you need to think about description. Too much and the players will get bored; too little and they won't have a sense of where they're supposed to be. Going back to our fictional woman in the dark, you could say:

'She is in a low-ceilinged room, which smells of coal. Perhaps it's a cellar. She can't remember how she got there. When she reaches out to the walls, they're made of rough wood.'

Description is part of what brings a story to life. The more colourful details you give, the more the players know more about the world they're playing in. Really good description might even negate the need for a player to make a roll. Below is an example of story concerning Elicia and her dark place.

The room was pitch-black. In the dark, all Elicia could hear was the swift hiss of her own breath. Something was moving in the darkness: she

couldn't see it, but she could smell it, sense its movement. She fumbled for the light switch. Eventually, she caught the hard plastic edge with her fingernail. Then, as swift as a snake, she slid her hand across to the switch and pressed it.

It didn't work.

There was movement in the dark. Images sprang to Elicia's mind. She thought she knew what was there. The stories must be true. Spitelings were hidden in the walls and ceiling of every house. They could listen to your thoughts and steal your dreams. They stored up all the bad things you hid inside. It's what they lived on. They ate so much badness they were bent and broken, like old sticks. They had nails for eyes and tongues of old leather. They breathed light, sucked it out of the air. Now they were closing in on her.

The Start

As we said earlier, the start of any story is its hook. It needs to be gripping, something to reel the reader in and make them keep reading: the promise of answers to questions or the resolution of a conflict. The start is the most important part. No writer wants to lose their readers before they've even finished the first page.

Another aspect of storytelling is setting the scene and building up a 'feel' for the story. In a written story, near the beginning, you set up the major characters. You describe key elements of the world and each character's appearance, giving a little information about his or her history. This establishes a basic construct in the mind of the reader; the stage upon which your story will play.

When you construct a story for role-playing, you should offer a similar set of elements. There has to be something to grip the interest of the players, and a plot hook that can be resolved towards the end of the session. If story is to span a number of sessions, or chapters, then you should offer multiple plot hooks, with some resolution at the conclusion of each session and the final result at the end of play. You should also provide a basic overview of the current state of the world. Even though the player can derive much of this information from this book, you might need to describe current events, and those local to the game setting, in order to construct the stage in the mind of the player.

Let's look at Elicia's story, and see which of these elements appear in it. '*The room was pitch-black*' This describes enough of the current events, and world the reader needs to understand the story. Also it offers the first plot hook, and the drive of the story, that hook is 'Can Elicia find the light switch and will the light come on?'

We know Elicia is scared and there's something with her in the darkness. Two more hooks.

From '*She fumbled,*' to '*she pressed it*' gives you more information about the main character. It reveals that she does not have much knowledge of her location, because she is uncertain where the switch is. Also, because her hand's movement is likened to that of a snake, it tells us she's either lithe or agile. Finally the fact that her mind fills with images shows she has a vivid imagination.

Now another plot hook comes in to play, it offers a titbit of information the reader will want to know more about, *Spitelings were hidden in the walls and ceiling of every house*. Many things will be on the mind of the reader: what are these creatures, and why did Elicia think of them at this time? These questions will be answered in the progression of the story.

As you can see, in the space of a few sentences, we have set up enough information for this story. When setting up a game, you need to judge how long it will last: one or two sessions, or many more. Some role-playing stories have no definite end, as each story can flow into the next. Before the game starts, you should decide how much you need to tell the players so that they understand the situation, or at least get an idea of the direction of the story. Tell the players enough for them to be able to picture the

current scene. If they ask, you can add further description to what you have already said.

Keep the players involved. Rather than tell them everything, leaving nothing to their imagination, give them a chance to delve deeper into the scene themselves, by the questions they ask you and their own impressions of the imaginary environment.

You can begin a game by narrating a short piece that sets up the story, a sort of prologue. This can comprise the events that lead to the characters' involvement in the plot, or be an event the character would want to investigate.

You'll find examples of stories you can use in Appendix [x]. Enough information is provided for you to start one game session. It provides a number of plot hooks and threads you can follow to a conclusion in your own way.

Middle

This is where the real juice of the story starts to flow. By this time, you should have established all the characters, and set the stage for the entire story to come. Don't be too sparse with description, because even once the game is well under way, it's still interesting for the players if you describe new elements or reveal things that they might have missed.

During the middle section, you can reveal plot elements that are *keys* to the conclusion of the story. Key elements, of course, can lead the players astray, by sending them down paths of false plot threads. You can reveal later on the truth about what's really happening.

The middle section is where most of the characters will make decisive actions based on available evidence. The evidence doesn't have to be true. You decide that.

In role-playing, the middle section is the most important, as it is where the real game begins. By now, all the characters should have got to know each other. They will also know what the main plot is and have an idea as to what their place is in it. Depending on the mood and theme of the game, your character could be the hunter or the hunted. They could be on a voyage of discovery.

A good storyteller will dangle false plot hooks and lead the characters astray, while offering titbits of real evidence. Eventually, one or more of the players will cotton on to your plot and start to recognise the true material.

End

An ill thought out conclusion can destroy a story. The key elements of the ending, or denouement, are when you tie up the plot hooks, so that the characters are safe and happy for the foreseeable future. In cases where you know there is going to be a direct sequel, the story can end on a cliffhanger. Should you want to leave the story open for a possible sequel that you have not yet planned in detail, make sure the characters are safe, but also leave some vital plot hooks unresolved.

At the end of each session, you can tie up a few basic threads but leave the characters in a cliff-hanger situation. This will encourage the players to come to the next gaming session and continue the story; the better the cliffhanger, the more likely they will return. The book 'A Thousand Nights and One Night' or more commonly known as 'The Arabian Nights,' is a prime example of plot hooks and cliffhangers at work. This story takes the reader on a journey through the eyes and mind of a newly wed princess, who knows her paranoid prince wants to kill her on their wedding night. So she weaves a story for her prince, and constructs it in such a manner that he will let her live one more night, so he can find out what happens next. Over a period of one thousand nights, she weaves a story that changes his perception of her and the current events. On the last night, he rides out against the attacking hordes led by his brother, and the princess lives on.

Game sessions can be seen as like the chapters of a book. Each session should have a start, middle and end, but should also contain ongoing elements and clues in respect of the main plot. It's an art to blend the sessions into one another, so that they don't feel like individual stories, but a whole epic of which the characters are part.

The resolution or climax is very important to a story; the characters should be fairly safe, but you can still leave things open for future adventures within that world. A tight story, where every aspect is concluded, is feasible, but in role-playing it's better to leave some elements unresolved. This gives the players something to think about, and leaves hooks where new adventures can start.

As the storyteller, you have to know the conclusion of each plot hook, as well as the conclusion of the main story. Everything else is open to interpretation and exploration. Always remember where your story is going and why the characters are there. If the story begins to deviate too much, pull it back in line with a bit of evidence or a plot hook that gently steers the characters in the right direction. You have to be careful not to force the characters back to the plot, as they might resist, which would cause problems.

Sometimes, you might even be able leave the main story for a short while. You can lead the characters on a merry dance, only to bring them to a situation where they have to go back to the main plot in order to continue.

Story Loops

Here is an example of how you can take the story on a loop and bring it back on track.

Let's say the characters had to rescue a prisoner to advance the story, but they decided the task was too hard or not in their interest. In this case, you could introduce them to some wondrous object, which through their own ignorance of its working, takes them to an unfamiliar world or realm. Once in this realm, they can take part in another story, but their over-riding aim is to get back home, because this place is so alien to them, and they don't want to stay. So, they get back to the device only to find it missing. This leads them on a convoluted quest to find it, all the time building a bigger drive in the characters to get home. Eventually, they find the device, only to discover someone else has found it too. This other character makes demands of them they cannot fulfil, and in frustration does something to one of the main party members and leaves. The main characters get the device back, and manage to return back home, to seek out the advice and help of a wise elder. In turn, the elder needs a task doing before he will help the characters. You have probably guessed it: that task is to rescue a friend of his who has been imprisoned.

This brings the story back on track, and the players have no idea you have pushed them the way you want them, and not the way they want, to go. One thing to keep in mind: make sure the character who is affected in the other realm can still take part, otherwise they could be left doing nothing for a long time.

Flow and Pace

One of the most important aspects of telling stories is to keep the reader gripped so they want to continue reading. If, for any reason, the reader finds that the plot deviates too far from the main story, or leads them onto a dull side quest, they might not continue reading.

Also, too much description in the wrong place at the wrong time can shatter any aspect of suspense or action you have built up. Always keep description brief. Let the players have enough details to build a mental image of the scene, but no more. There's no point in describing a library full of books in minute detail, if there is nothing remarkable about it. Everyone knows what rows of shelves with books on look like. However, should there be an interesting section that's glowing or holds a particularly strange selection of books, it might warrant a brief description. Unless the characters have to inspect a section of the scene, or there's something there that's vital to the plot, don't bother describing it.

In role-playing, you're not just dealing with the attention of one person, such as a reader; you will have several people whose interest you need to keep. Your descriptions need to be short and vivid. You can expand on them should the players ask for more detail.

It's also fun, and far more involving, if you allow the players to expand upon your description with their own ideas. As long as they add sensible details, they can embellish the scene with their own description relating to their actions.

For some useful tips on how the flow and pace of stories work, you should try to watch as many audio commentaries for movies as you can. Many directors will explain why they cut out scenes or reduced them, so they could keep the pace and flow of the action constant.

ARUNA AND THE SINGLE GAMER

Sex or 'aruna' is extremely important to the Wraeththu, so much so that their physical, mental and even spiritual wellbeing depends upon it. It may be important to humans as well (and we can get very grouchy if we don't get it) but we can live without it; the Wraeththu can't. Unfortunately, sex and sexuality are, for many people, a very embarrassing subject, and not one they really want to discuss while doing a hobby, especially when their mother may be in the next room. However, in a game of Wraeththu the subject must be broached somehow, after all the characters' lives quite literally may depend on it.

In Wraeththu you cannot ignore the whole aspect of character sexuality. What you can do however is play down that aspect until you are ready. In any role-playing game, character relationships and intimacy can add an intense and powerful aspect to the story. Such relationships bring characters closer together and can often generate plot and story in their own right. Love triangles and dark passionate pasts are a staple of fiction, and can only improve your game. When you think about it, it does seem ludicrous that we can even think to omit such an important aspect of our characters. Most of our time in the real world is taken up with the pursuit of love and sex, so how can our characters be so ambivalent towards such issues? In most other role-playing games such issues are optional, but in Wraeththu they are essential.

So the first question the Storyteller and the players must decide is how far they want to go (and you can infer from that sentence what you will). You must at least have this discussion while creating characters or the game will suffer for it. It need not be a long conversation. If everyone is looking at the floor and mumbling "Well, I'll do what the others do," then you can assume sexuality is a tricky subject. Be aware of your shy players not speaking up, and ensure you get everyone's opinion, not just the loudest person's. Players forced into embarrassing situations will soon leave your game, so be sensitive to everyone's choices. On the other hand, opening up the discussion may spark new levels in the characters being created and excite everyone about the game they are about to play. In fact, one of the things that may have drawn your players to Wraeththu is its unique opportunity for such a role-playing experience. Once you know what your group is ready to accept then you can decide where to begin. Experienced gamers can jump right in at any level. But if you are new to adding this sort of layer to a game you would do well to start at the beginning and work your way up to make sure everyone is comfortable.

The first level of play allows you to mostly brush over this aspect of the game, without ignoring it as such. As a storyteller you can assume the characters are taking Aruna with each other, simply as often as they have to. You still need to actually mention what is going on though, not ignore the act completely. Simply say "So once in the inn you all take aruna and wake up the next morning." This way you (as the storyteller) can ensure that the characters have had the opportunity to take aruna as often as they need to. So if the characters don't have the opportunity to take aruna, you can treat their characters to the physical and mental effects they would incur. With everyone aware that aruna is going on, it becomes easier to take the next step.

When you are comfortable, you can move to the second level. Here you ask the characters to pick partners for aruna. They still need only explain who and when rather than how and what they like. However, sex and relationships are now part of the game. By picking partners for aruna, deeper relationships may develop, and players can start to form an idea of the sort of other characters who might be 'their type'. All characters need to do at this stage is specify which character(s) they are taking aruna with, and (perhaps more importantly) who they do not. This develops relationships in the game, as well as sex.

The third level brings more role-play into the activities mentioned above. Now it isn't enough to say what is going on, now you must describe it as well. It is essential at this point for characters to take on aruna as an essential part of playing their characters. At this point you can bring sex magic into the mix as well. While you can do so earlier, Grissecon and aruna magic deserve the same emphasis as any other magic. So unless you are comfortable going into reasonably graphic detail you can't do them justice in your game. By now the players should feel comfortable with their characters taking aruna and describing the way they like to do such things. Are they gentle or harsh lovers? Do they prefer Soume or Ouana? Is Aruna an itch they like to scratch or a sacred spiritual union? Do they like it a lot, or not so much, and how do they treat their partners afterwards?

The last level allows you to be as graphic as you like. You can now bring in elements such as pelki and all the darker sides of sex and aruna. This need not be restricted to the NPCs either. Players should feel free to create quite nasty or sexually predatory characters, if they so desire. The storyteller is also now able to bring in NPCs designed purely for sexual storylines and adventures. Such NPCs can act as sexual foils for characters, forming jealousies and love triangles in established relationships. Don't mistake this level for an excuse to make everything dark and paint sex as evil. The point here is that there are no more limits to the sexual choices and descriptions you can use. So save anything dark and twisted until everyone is comfortable about this aspect. Describing acts like rape and abuse can be traumatic, even in a game. So do not underestimate the effect they will have on your game, and your players. Gaming groups and real world relationships have been broken up for less.

These four levels are just a guide for you, so don't feel limited to working within them. Take things at the pace determined by the group, working with what is comfortable for you. Don't get fixated on sex, as it can easily dominate a game. Like all things in role-playing, don't overdo it.

The last thing to remember is that your characters are as new to this as you are. Sure, they may have had relationships before Inception, but they are new to being Wraeththu. Although they will have taken aruna at least once to 'fix' their Inception, it is still strange and possibly a little frightening to them. Young men who are used to heterosexual relationships suddenly find themselves involved in what they may easily perceive as homosexual relationships. Even stranger to them will be that such relationships feel natural and desirable to them. So the characters are learning how to deal with their sexuality in much the same way as the players are. It is perfectly in character for them to be hung up, embarrassed and tongue-tied about the whole issue. So take the journey in time with the characters; it is perhaps the greatest adventure they will ever have.

APPENDIX 5

CHARACTER SHEET

Traits

Name: The name your character uses.

Current Tribe: The name of the tribe you currently belong to. If your character's human, put "human". If they're of no tribe, put "Unthrist".

Player: Your own name, so the Storyteller, or whoever looks after the sheets between sessions, knows who the character sheet belongs to.

Age: The current age of your character.

Height: Your character's height.

Weight: Your character's weight.

Caste: If your character is a har, put the caste tier you belong to here, i.e. Kaimana.

Level: This is the level your character is at in his caste, i.e. Ara.

Hair Colour: Your character's hair colour and style.

Eyes Colour: Your character's eye colour, and any other eye detail, i.e. vertical pupils.

Distinguishing Features: Features such as scars, tattoos, piercings, etc. or any other unusual appearance trait.

Place of Birth: Where you were born as a human.

Current Town: Where you live at the moment, (if applicable, you could be nomadic.)

Current Country: The country you are in. See page 58 for more information.

Name Rosko Player Gabriel Strange
Current Tribe Uigenna Caste Kaimana Level Ara
Age 19 Height 187 Weight 90 Hair Colour Blue Eye Colour Green
Place of Birth Carmin Current Town Carmin Current Country Megalithica
Distinguishing Features

Stats

The row of boxes is for your base stat levels, which are the results of your die rolls and the points you've spent.

Stats		Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.	Mod.
Strength	[STR]	[12]	[]	[12]	[12]	[+1]
Dexterity	[DEX]	[15]	[+1]	[16]	[16]	[+2]
Stamina	[STA]	[10]	[+1]	[11]	[11]	[+1]
Perception	[PER]	[9]	[+1]	[10]	[10]	[+1]
Willpower	[WIL]	[9]	[]	[9]	[9]	[]
Intelligence	[INT]	[7]	[]	[7]	[7]	[]
Secondary Stats						
Energy	[EN]	[32]	[]	[32]	[32]	[]
Psyche	[PSY]	[2]	[]	[2]	[2]	[]
Composure	[CMP]	[7]	[]	[7]	[7]	[]

The second is for any tribe and/or other bonuses you have gained.

In the third column, put the total of the last two columns (This is the total for that Primary Stat).

The next column is the current level of your stat and will be only used in game play not character generation.

The last column is for any stat modifiers you have gained, to be used on skills and in other areas. See page 172 for more information.

Magic

This section is explained in more detail in the character generation section. All boxes should be filled in at the appropriate levels.

See page 189 for more information.

Magic	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.
Manipulation	[6]	[]	[6]	[6]
Resistance	[0]	[]	[0]	[0]

Probability

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Matter

	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.
Air [INT]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Earth [STR]	[2]	[]	[2]	[2]
Fire [DEX]	[1]	[]	[1]	[1]
Water [WIL]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Energy

	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.
Spirit [INT]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Kinetic [STR]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Attraction [DEX]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Plasmatic [WIL]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Changing States

	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.
Temporal	[]	[]	[]	[]
Phase	[]	[]	[]	[]
Destruction	[]	[]	[]	[]
Conversion	[]	[]	[]	[]

Chaos & Order

Chaos OOOOO OOO●● | ●OOOO OOOOO Order

Agmara

Element Level	No. of Units	Cost/Action Phase
1	2	8
2	4	16
3	8	32
4	16	64
5	32	128
6	64	256
7	128	512
8	256	1024
9	512	2048
10	1024	4096

The Agmara section works thus: the Base is as detailed in the character generation, the Mod is if you have any items or abilities which may give you a bonus to the amount of Agmara you can store. The Total is the maximum your physical form can hold without any side effects, and the Current section is for the running total of Agmara energy.

Resistance is as worked out in character generation; the modifier is to be used if you have any items or abilities which may modify your resistance ability, and the Total is the combination of previous two stats, taking into account any modifiers.

Skills

Skills are separated into two sections, Skills and Combat Skills and Styles. While Combat Skills and Styles will be listed in full on the second sheet it can help to have them on the first page just for reference.

After you have entered the name of the Skill, the **Stats** column is to note the stats that embody the skills. The **Lvl.** box is for you to put the level of the skill you have bought with skill points. The **Bon.** column is for you to put your stat modifiers and tribe bonuses in. The **Tot.** column is the final result that you will use in game play. See page 178 for more information.

skills	Stats.	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.
Climbing	[STR/DEX]	6	+2	8
Stealth	[DEX/PER]	8	+2	10
Butchery	[WIL/INT]	8	-	8
Survival	[PER/INT]	4	-	4
Streetwise	[INT/PER]	3	+1	4
Toxicology	[INT/PER]	3	+1	4
	/			
	/			
	/			
	/			
	/			
	/			
	/			
	/			
Combat Styles				
Two Weapon		8		8
1H Fighting		5		5
Combat Skills				
Brawl/Unarmed		4	+1	5
Dagger (Basic)		8		8

Experience and Hitpoints

Experience: You will gain experience points at the end of each gaming session. Record them here for later use.

Fate: Record any fate points you bought at character generation or earn during game play.

Base Actions: Your base actions need to be noted as they are calculated in the final stages of character generation. See page 194.

Wounds: The modifiers above the Major Wounds Jewels represent what penalties you receive to each roll when you start shading in Jewels.

Major Wounds: Note your major wounds by shading in the Jewels on the Wound Bar. Hara have 15 major wound points, whereas humans have 10. (If you are playing a human ignore the last five Jewels.) When taking major wounds, fill in the Jewels from right to left.

Major wounds will only be received after you have used up all your minor wound points or take any serious injury.

Minor Wounds: The total (Tot.) of Minor Wound damage points you can take is worked out during character generation. It's the maximum damage your character can take. The Minor Wounds stat never changes. Therefore, this enables you to keep a track of how many more minor wounds you can take before you start having major wounds.

Cur.: Your current level of minor wounds can be noted here during game play. See page 193 for more information.

Experience	Fate	Base Actions	Minor Wounds
Major Wounds			
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>-10 Action Mod.</p> <p>Human</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>-5 Action Mod.</p> <p>Wraeththu</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>0 Action Mod.</p> </div> </div>			

Combat Skill Bonuses

This section is for your combat bonuses, which are worked out during character generation.

The base combat modifiers need to be entered into the relevant space once worked out; taking into account anything that permanently affects your combat modifiers. Then, when you enter your skills and the bonuses from those levels, you add your skill bonuses to your base modifiers and enter those in to the row relevant to the skill. See **Page 180** for more information.

Combat Skill Bonuses	Lvl.	Aim	Dodge	Damage	Speed	Block	Roll	Leap	Repair
Base Close Combat Modifiers		+3	+2	+1	+1	+1	+2	+1	+1
Base Ranged Combat Modifiers		+3	0	0	+2	N/A	+2	+1	0
Dagger (Basic)	8	+5	+4	+1	+1	+1	+5	+1	+2
Brawl/Unarmed	5	+4	+3	+3	+1	+1	+3	+1	-

Weapons

Here, you list the weapons you own and information about them. Taking the information from the Weapons & Armour appendix, fill in any data for each weapon your character has. This will save you having to hunt for it during game play. See **Appendix 2**.

The Attacks for each weapon are to be calculated as described in character generation. See **Page 194**.

Weapons	Damage	AP	Attacks (S/3RB/A)	RT	Weight	Size	Ammo	Range (S/M/L)
Dagger (Basic)	[104+2]	4	8 / /	-	0.6	0.3	-	- / - / -
Brawl/Unarmed	[104+3]	-	8 / /	-	-	-	-	- / - / -
			/ /					/ /
			/ /					/ /
			/ /					/ /
			/ /					/ /

Merits and Flaws

List your chosen merits and flaws here, along with any brief notes you need to help you understand them. See **Page 176** for more information.

Merits & Flaws	Pts.	M / F
	[]	O O
	[]	O O
	[]	O O
	[]	O O
	[]	O O
	[]	O O

Background Notes

You can put notes here from your full background. It is up to you what you feel you need to have at hand regarding your character. A few useful examples are given. A section is also provided for you to list the names of your party members' characters, which will be useful in game play. It may also help if you list their tribes. These notes should be the highlights or important points you have detailed in your character's background.

Background Notes

Human Name Bobby Jacobs
 Age Looks 19
 Inceptor Maleferus

Caste Goals

Improve - IH Fighting Style - 8
 - Survival - 8
 - Streetwise - 6
 - Air Element - 1
 - Fire Element - 2

 Learn - Sword (Katana) - 4
 Tracking - 5

Equipment

Any level of resources you own will be listed here, along with a list of your belongings, separated into what you carry with you and items that are stored elsewhere. Fill in the Jewels to indicate how many points of resources you have. See Appendix 1 for more information.

Resources ○○○○○○

Armour

	AV	BP	Hitpoints
<u>Clothes</u>	[1]	[-]	[-]
	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]

Equipment

Leather Jacket
 Canvas Tent
 Blanket
 Boots (Ankle)
 Trousers
 Underwear

Name _____ Player _____
Current Tribe _____ Caste _____ Level _____
Age _____ Height _____ Weight _____ Hair Colour _____ Eye Colour _____
Place of Birth _____ Current Town _____ Current Country _____

Distinguishing Features

Wraeththu
from enchantment to fulfilment



Stats		Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.	Mod.
Strength	[STR]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Dexterity	[DEX]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Stamina	[STA]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Perception	[PER]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Willpower	[WIL]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Intelligence	[INT]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Secondary Stats

Energy	[EN]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Psyche	[PSY]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Composure	[CMP]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Skills

	Stats.	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]
	/	[]	[]	[]

Combat Styles

	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]

Combat Skills

	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]

Combat Skill Bonuses

Base Close Combat Modifiers
Base Ranged Combat Modifiers

	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Experience	Fate	Base Actions	Minor Wounds

Major Wounds

-10 Action Mod.	-5 Action Mod.	0 Action Mod.
Human		Wraeththu

Magic

	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.
Manipulation	[]	[]	[]	[]
Resistance	[]	[]	[]	[]

Probability

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Matter

	Lvl.	Bon.	Tot.	Cur.
Air	[INT]	[]	[]	[]
Earth	[STR]	[]	[]	[]
Fire	[DEX]	[]	[]	[]
Water	[WIL]	[]	[]	[]

Energy

Spirit	[INT]	[]	[]	[]
Kinetic	[STR]	[]	[]	[]
Attraction	[DEX]	[]	[]	[]
Plasmatic	[WIL]	[]	[]	[]

Changing States

Temporal	[]	[]	[]	[]
Phase	[]	[]	[]	[]
Destruction	[]	[]	[]	[]
Conversion	[]	[]	[]	[]

Chaos & Order

Chaos OOOOO OOOOO | OOOOO OOOOO Order

Lvl.	Aim	Dodge	Damage	Speed	Block	Roll	Leap	Repair
		[]	[]	[]	[]			[]
		[]	[]	[]	[N/A]			[]

	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Agmara

Base	Max

Element Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No. of Units	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128	256	512
Cost/Action Phase	1	2	8	16	24	28	32	36	40	44

Weapons	Damage	AP	Attacks (S/3RB/A)	RT	Weight	Size	Ammo	Range (S/M/L)
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[] []	[/ /] []

Merits & Flaws

	Pts.	M / F
[.....]	[]	[O] [I]
[.....]	[]	[O] [I]
[.....]	[]	[O] [I]
[.....]	[]	[O] [I]
[.....]	[]	[O] [I]
[.....]	[]	[O] [I]

Resources

Armour

	AV	BP	Hitpoints
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[] []
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[] []
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[] []
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[] []
[.....]	[] []	[] []	[] []

Background Notes

Human Name

Age Looks

Inceptor

Equipment

Caste Coals

MEGALITHICA





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PLAYERS GUIDE

Further Meditations on the Wraeththu

Catalogue Number: IP5001

The Player's Guide will add more depth to the world of the Wraeththu, introducing new tribes and countries, and helping players to develop their characters. This book will bring greater depth to the Wraeththu story and help explain some of the secrets of hara and their past.

'Further Meditations on the Wraeththu' will contain detailed information on diverse topics, including Archons and Phyles, Angels, History and Nightlife. New areas will be covered and mapped, as hara continue to increase their grip on the world. You'll also find expanded details on the powers of Wraeththu, such as telepathy and the magical Otherlanes that allow hara to travel in the etheric spaces between realms.

Six new playable tribes will be included such as the mysterious Olopade, the Polynesian Hokule, the far spread Smalt from the southern seas and rainforests, the seafaring Freyhella, the northern raiders known as the Kheops and the arctic Inukshuk. Also to be featured are the tribeless hara known as the Unthrist. More information will be added about the tribes from the core rules.

- This book contains an in-depth study of hara society, and many aspects of Wraeththudom, which will expand your role-play abilities.
- A collection of in-depth skills which covers herbalisam, aspects of martial arts and an array of skills for storytelling in a different time period.
- An exploration of harish nightlife across the globe. A look at current affairs, will the Gelaming and Varr tribes risk open war.



COMING SOON

Cover artwork by Jean Tay.



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COMING SOON

Cover artwork by Jean Tay.

STORYTELLER'S HANDBOOK

The Inner working of the Wraeththu

Catalogue Number: IP5002

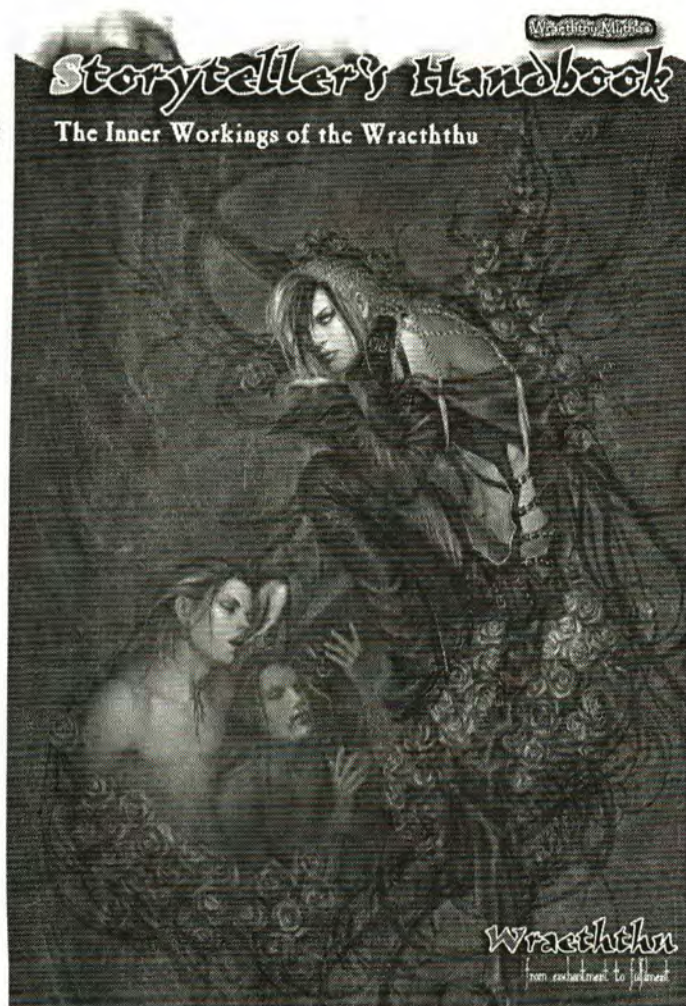
This book will feature new information about the secrets of Wraeththu and give further insight into what is happening in their world. New campaign ideas will be included, as well as extensive advice on becoming a better storyteller, and more details on running your first campaign. You'll also find information on the construction of campaigns that will keep your players begging for more

Several new playable tribes will be included, such as the bizarre Elhmen and Sahale, the artistic and beautiful Ferike, and many more from distant parts of the world. The books will provide more details on magical rites and the other realms beyond those of harish perception. Topics like Botched Inceptions, Reproduction and the Sedim will be covered in detail, as well as new information on the various secret societies, on both sides of the harish/human battle for the planet. How will you master your new mystical powers?

- War is coming, the signs are everywhere, many aspects of conflict have built up to what looks like an inevitable war are covered in this book.
- Tribes from the new east include the Bo-So-Zo-Ku from the orient, and the bizarre and secretive Aboriginie, who come from an inaccessible land.
- The truth about reproduction is finally revealed but is it just a hoax or, are these reports of harlings real.

COMING SOON

Cover artwork by Jean Tay.



Wraeththu Mythos

Wraeththu (ray-thoo)

In the near future, humanity is in decline, ravaged by insanity, conflict, disease and infertility. A new race has risen mysteriously from the ghettos and ruins of the northern cities: humanity has evolved into a new species, which is stronger, sharper and more beautiful than any that have come before. They possess psychic powers and the ability, through a process called inception, to transform humans into creatures like themselves.

They are the Wraeththu....

Destined to inherit the earth. Humanity has only a few years left before they have lost control completely, but they will not give up without a fight.

Over the past decade, **Wraeththu** have begun to leave the northern cities of their 'birth', and have spread across the continent and beyond. While many are still little more than savage barbarians, no better and in some ways worse than the race they superseded, others have become more organised. They have glimpsed their own potential, and now want to understand and wield their unique abilities. Some **Wraeththu** 'hara' have formed tribes and councils, and their originally rough settlements are becoming towns and cities. But whether they are wild or enlightened, one thing is certain: through magic, passion and war, **Wraeththu** will change the face of the world forever.

What will become of them once all suitable humans have been incepted? Will they learn to reproduce amongst themselves, or are the stories of **Wraeththu** 'harlings' only myths and rumours?

Wraeththu must learn from humanity's mistakes, or risk extinction themselves. Their challenge is to rise above their origins, to understand who and what they are, before it is too late. So they can become the myths and legends of the future.

- ☛ This book features detailed descriptions of the eight largest **Wraeththu** tribes, information on the subjects of Wraeththu Psychology, Physiology, Society, History and Magic.
- ☛ Also included are maps of two main continents of the **Wraeththu** world and guides to some of the countries, towns and cities of the hara.
- ☛ The world of the **Wraeththu** is the backdrop for a series of internationally renowned novels written by Storm Constantine.

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