

Marast World Overview

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History

The first races to live in Marast were the Elder, the Wyarch, and the Goblins. Each held a large portion of the galaxy. Elder had around half of the galaxy at large, using it as an experimentation ground for science. The Wyarch held more than a third of the galaxy, practicing the arcane. Finally, the rest of the galaxy was home to a semi-civilized form of Chaos Elemental known as Goblins.

Elder and the Petri Races

The Elder were a race of morally questionable scientists. Though they knew of magic, they considered it to be an ancient and outdated practice, like stone tools or developing agriculture. Their interest was primarily in advancing their technology and understanding the rational universe. In doing so, they played god on many occasions. Any sentient species which arose in their territory was heavily experimented with.

These civilizations are contemporarily called 'Petri-Races'. They were given some amount of space - be that strictly a planet or several star systems. They then would regularly be visited by the Elder with or without their knowledge in many cases.

There were two types of Petri-Races: Willing and Unwilling. The Willing were docile and allowed the Elder to do as they pleased. The Unwilling knew nothing of the limitations set by the Elder. Such races often did not leave their home star systems.

It's largely unknown what the purpose of Petri-Races were. However, it's well known that the Elder showed favoritism to certain races. The Arc-Wraith were allowed some autonomy for instance. Other races, such as Humanity, were kept secret. Around 30% of the Petri-Races remain today.

Wyarch Nihilism

The Wyarch were a small and content race of magic users. Their most notable features were their shorter stature and six appendages. The species physically had 2 arms for manipulation, 2 legs for locomotion, and a pair of arms which were used for both purposes. Much of their ceremonial magic involved the use of all 4 hands.

This species both predated and outlived the Elder. They evolved very little over the millenia, perhaps due to their excellent terraforming skills. Their philosophies also changed, though mostly early on.

First, the Wyarch were highly religious, believing in all manner of deities. This dwindled as they discovered their place in the universe. Philosophy replaced God over several generations. As they lost their gods, they lost, too, the inherent meaning to the universe. The race became nihilistic.

Soon, the Elder arose and spread quickly. The Wyarch, uninterested in spreading themselves, refused to interfere. Their philosophy caused them to hesitate when dealing with

the Elder. Though they had certain conflicts in morality, the Wyarch were non-interventionist. This prevented them from stepping foot into the dealings of the Elder.

The Philosophy of the Wyarch said that the universe has no meaning, and that nothing could give it meaning. This philosophy leaked into every aspect of Wyarch dealings, from their foreign affairs to their domestic affairs. It eventually lead to the non-reproduction act, wherein the species committed to sterility. This was the ultimate suicide of the Wyarch as a race.

Hiraeth Traders Guild

The Elder, wanted the best for the Wyarch. As a less philosophically charged race, they didn't understand the Wyarchs hopelessness. Being somewhat philanthropic, however, they attempted to gift the Wyarch an entire synthetic species: The Hiraeth. This species was formed from the DNA of the Wyarch and Elder, among other select species from across Marast.

The Wyarch did not interact much with this species. The Hiraeth were independent, building their own vessels and moving nomadically. They needed nothing but the Wyarch's blessing to move about freely. This allowed the Hiraeth to find a passion of their own: trading.

This passion extended to the Petri-Races. Any species they were allowed to interact with was a species they gathered interesting or novel technology from. They were closely regulated by the Elder early on, but the extinction changed that.

The Wyarch became the primary authority over the Hiraeth during the Power Vacuum. Though they were allowed to wander freely, they were told to interact primarily with races which the Elder were in closer communication with, as the less interacted races were naturally more volatile.

Today, Hiraeth are the most neutral species in the galaxy. Their trade is sought far and wide, as they gather interesting technology from all over. Although the Wyarch are no longer around to enforce it, their guild is still considered to have diplomatic immunity, and all borders are to be soft borders.

All Hiraeth are born as members of the Hiraeth Traders Guild. Other species must gain membership very much like one gains citizenship. Non-Hiraeth are also rarely trusted and are even more rarely given executive positions. They are, however, reasonably compensated for their efforts for the guild.

Elder Extinction

The Petri-Races had very little contact with the outside galaxy. They were carefully isolated by the Elder, who themself frequently interacted through observation only. None of the Petri-Races understood the silent extinction of the Elder.

Petri-Race Data Collection

There were many thousands of species that existed in Elder Space. The Elder actively sought new life for experimentation, either isolating them, studying them, or causing their

extinction. A majority of Petri-Races, in their isolation, were unaware of life beyond the galaxy-spanning Elder.

There were two types of Petri-Race which the Elder did experimentation on. The Open and Closed Communications or O-Comm and C-Comm races.

The O-Comm Races were the races which knew of the Elder. These same races may or may not have known they were an experiment. Regardless, the Elder made it clear to these races that they existed at the very least.

C-Comm Races, however, had no clue that they were an Elder experiment, instead building their own cosmologies and meanings to the world. These races tend to hold less sway in today's society.

Extinction Vacuum

O-Comm Races were the first to discover the Elder extinction, as is to be expected. The Elder silently vanished overnight. The exact date is difficult to pin down due to the nature of Petri-Race Interaction, but it's certain that all the Elder (numbering in the quadrillions) disappeared within the span of several months. Two races were quick to act.

First, the Hiraeth nomads discovered they were not receiving transmissions from the Elder any longer. They initially brought this to the Wyarch, who reacted immediately. The Wyarch took over Elder operations and released the quarantines on most Petri Races before retreating back to their area of the galaxy.

O-Comm Races were sold Hyperdrives by the Hiraeth on order of the Wyarch. C-Comm Races were untouched, their quarantines remaining active. The galaxy was warned of the warlike tendencies of these species before being given full reign in the Elder territory.

Immediately, races vied for power across their territories, the Wyarch refusing to interfere. The Arc-Wraith, having saved as much tactically useful technology they could from the Hiraeth, quickly found their way to the top and offered the galaxy a choice: enslavement or extinction.

Wyarch-Arc-Wraith Relations

Within decades, the Arc-Wraith made good on their promise. They filled the power vacuum by enslaving any willing races they could and wiping out the rest. The Arc-Wraith were quite adept at ruling, but knew their limits. They held an area they knew they could keep without overreaching. This area often roved about the galaxy to prevent new races from getting to their feet.

The Wyarch's non-interference policy cemented the Arc-Wraiths respect. The Arc-Wraith often went to the Wyarch for council. Though the Wyarch were willing to give council, it was aimed at stopping what the Wyarch considered abominable. However, something was lost in translation.

The Arc-Wraith gained a new world view from the Wyarch. One with similar nihilistic outlooks, but with a more proactive and less secular stance. They viewed the meaninglessness

of the universe as a simple mistake on the part of the Wyarch. Though they sought no inherent value in the universe, they decided that it's goal was to wind down.

Arc-Wraith Entropism

The Arc-Wraith believed that the ultimate force in the universe was Entropy - the gradual tendency for things to shift from orderly to disorderly. This made up their moral compass, causing their society to strive for the end of the universe.

This led to an entirely different sociology, involving a distaste for the old, and a hunger for the new to pass. Though death was celebrated in the culture, it was never encouraged outside of motivation. A common battle chant of the Arc-Wraith roughly translated sounds something like "Your death is required for my death."

Unlike the Wyarch, the Arc-Wraith were highly interested in the creation of life. They considered life to begin at conception. Though life was considered non-sacred, they sought to raise their young in their ways.

Primary Arc-Wraith Slave Races

After the Extinction Vacuum had ended, the Arc-Wraith had only a handful of races left. These adopted a philosophy of 'the strongest leads'. They numbered few, but were required under the Arc-Wraith to produce many offspring, increasing the populations of the races. Each race had a purpose based on their innate abilities.

Laeori

This was the Elder first Petri-Race, and it shows! Lanky with bulbous eyes and fragile silky skin, they have their share of genetic problems. These include early onset organ failure. They also have no natural reproduction cycle, causing their species to grow via carefully monitored cloning procedure.

They also have advantages. They have added intelligence and the ability to hold their breath for extended durations, giving them about an hour of air in space. Finally, they have a vacuum aspected flight ability, using reactionless propulsion in space to maneuver. This is largely done through Magic.

From a young age, Laeori are given artificial organs. They are then challenged to create better ones. The Laeori are some of the best cyberneticists alive for this reason. Though incredibly rare, Laeori can mutate an intolerance to their cybernetics.

For the Arc-Wraith, Laeori were naturally executives and medics. Their intellect and medical knowledge made them perfect for the job, though their near religious devotion to their species survival caused them on more than one occasion to sacrifice another species in their place.

Foalchu

The Rat-like Foalchu race is actually a monaker placed on a collection of similarly evolved creatures. Most planets tend to evolve rats of some kind. Sapient or not, they are considered a member of this race. This race was a C-Comm Petri-Race which the Elder watched and monitored instead of creating.

This race may suffer from lower strength and shortened stature, but they benefit from their heightened senses and reaction speeds. If applicable in the RPG System being used, they should have something equivalent to Danger Sense. Additionally, any templates made for the race should be editable within reason, as not all Foalchu hail from the same environment - or even the same planet!

Natural born scavengers, the Foalchu were used by the Arc-Wraith as war-time cleanup crews and occasionally as spies. They often served aboard vessels as well, their stature allowing them to squeeze into places larger races cannot. Today, Foalchu are often engineers.

Zheiesh

The Zheiesh were the last species created by the Elder before their mysterious passing. They are taller humans (5'6"-6'8" avg) who sport feather-like pointed ears. They are also slightly psychic, allowing them to astrally project for short distances.

These creatures are otherwise strikingly similar to humans. Their race was O-Comm with the Elder. If applicable, they will suffer from being easier to hit, but have increased Dexterity to compensate. Finally, this psionic race will have some short range form of Clairsentience, with the ability to displace their being for a distance relative to their intelligence or wisdom.

These were the Arc-Wraith's Infantry. They are talented at most tasks given to them, highly capable at working together, and vitalous enough to take a few hits before going down.

D'Vunk

This species were also discovered as opposed to created, but they were an O-Comm Species. They're known for their intense magic studies. In fact they're such talented diviners, they knew long prior to the Elder Extinction that they would fall to the Arc-Wraith.

The D'Vunk are magic users to the point that they use nothing else. Opening a door? Magic. Walking? Try hovering. Maneuvering a vehicle? Better hope you're not in a dead-magic zone! Mechanically, this race accomplishes everything they attempt magically in some way. This has caused them to grow weak and malformed. Though humanoid, they are extremely weak, sickly, and easily killed. However, they're uniquely intelligent or wise.

Originally, this species had no access to magic. However, they were talented alchemists. They created an elixir which opened their being to the magical realm. However after centuries of taking it, they've become dependant on it. Without a monthly dose of the stuff, they begin to die as organs shut down.

The D'Vunk were the Arc-Wraith's supporting units. They often sat back in battles, throwing spells or healing other species. However they were excessively easy to kill, making them medics most frequently.

Rok

This stone race was created by the Elder likely to prove life didn't always have to be alive. The Rok are potato-like lumps of amorphous rock. Shortly after a seed takes hold in stone, a nervous system develops and takes hold of surrounding rock. This can then reform itself over the course of days.

Rok often prefer a humanoid appearance, but can really take on any appearance. They're shorter than most species, averaging around ½ a cubic yard of material. They tend to be about 2.5-3' tall, but it really depends on how long they gestate for.

Additionally, this species sees via scanning sonar. They can speak at a high pitch beyond human hearing, allowing them to communicate in secret. These same pitches are used for sight. Because of this inaccurate scanning sense, the race is non-iconographic and communicate primarily through sound.

For the Arc-Wraith, this species made up a large portion of the military. Their naturally stoney bodies made them difficult to hurt. Their ability to phase through stone and metal made them excellent infiltrators, though only for shock value, as they are noisy while doing so. They often were pointmen.

Dragons

This species was created by the Elder likely to experiment with life stages. They begin as a scaled egg. This egg retains magical properties, preventing it from hatching if another Dragon or egg is within a light second of it.

After hatching, the Dragon appears worm-like, and is about the size of a mid-sized dog. It will burrow into the first patch of stone it can find and create a series of tunnels to live in. These are often catastrophic for any foundations in its path. The larva requires no food, feeding off ambient mana instead. This larva can raise its body temperature to absurd degrees if aggravated.

As it develops, its fleshy skin hardens into keratin as the internal creature develops. It will grow roughly to the size of a small car before shedding its larval form. At this point, a bipedal creature forces its way out and seeks out civilized society. Their brains are developed to learn quite quickly, picking up language within several days of exposure. They never quite get social habits down though.

Several days after shedding its larval form, its Breath Gland develops to counter the environment it finds itself in (breathing fire in a cold environment, lightning in a metallic one, etc). Its wings allow it to fly for short distances and are often used as shields in combat.

Through its development, and over the course of several centuries, the upright creature grows in size, becomes hunched, and eventually transitions to being nearly fully quadrupedal. Their minds begin to degrade, losing sapience and becoming animalistic.

These creatures were used by the Arc-Wraith as soldiers. Their quick learning meant training could be done in nearly a quarter of the time and their size and natural defenses made them a formidable enemy.

Today's Nations

There are three galactic civilizations: The Humanoid Coalition, the Arc-Wraith Clergy, and the Insectoid Hives. Remaining races tend to hold their own tiny civilizations if not part of one of these three factions.

We'll begin with the Three Galactic Civilizations and the races they play home to. Then we'll take a look at any species with the slightest significant influence in the galactic field. We'll also explore major Companies and Guilds each of these entails.

The Humanoid Coalition

Standing against the Arc-Wraith

The Humanoid Coalition is an arrangement of several dozen Humanoid Races. The most notable members of the Coalition are Humans, Zheiesh, Foalchu, Karlings, D'Vunk, and Kriegg.

The Humanoid Coalition was formed upon the Liberation of their sister 'Petri Races' from the hand of the Arc-Wraith. After loosing their societal chains, the child-like civilisations sought leadership. Humanity taught these races to govern themselves. However, this was not executed benevolently. Humanity has its reputation as independent leaders, causing other more submissive races to do what they say.

Human

Humanity was a C-Comm Race when discovered by the Elder. Though not created, they bear a striking resemblance to other races the Elder *did* create. They were stumbled upon by Arc-Wraith scouts. Though the Arc-Wraith quickly invaded with an auxiliary force in the area, the invasion was repelled without much difficulty.

It's thought the Elder were interested in what technologies were acquired naturally. Thus they did not allow trade with C-Comm Races. If this is the case, humanity discovered Nuclear Physics well before other species had. It would have happened some centuries prior to the Elder extinction as well, meaning that the Elder allowed it.

It was their nuclear weapons which proved too much for the rest of the galaxy. Encountering this new technology worried the Arc-Wraith, as only the Elder had held such power in the past. Invasion after invasion failed until invading ships were reverse engineered and space travel became a reality for the species.

During the invasions, the Arc-Wraith rarely fought themselves. Instead, they used their slave races to invade. Humanity quickly realized that such races were vassals of the Arc-Wraith.

They began a project to turn these slave species against their masters. This was the beginning of the Humanoid Coalition.

Karling

Parts of humanity, after accepting Magic, embraced it wholeheartedly and evolved a symbiotic mana requirement. This caused vibrant skin colors, crown horns, and in rare cases cloven hooves. Most of humanity dislikes the Karling subspecies. They are granted a small territory in Humanoid Space, not unlike Native American reservations. Karlings are magically gifted, but socially ostracised. Their readily dangerous and evil appearance is a problem for most humans.

Android

Humanity isn't without its pride. Another technology Humans found independent of other races was Artificial Intelligence. In fact after cementing their place in the Humanoid Coalition, they acquired as much A.I. technology as was available at the time and created a race of artificially intelligent humanoid robots.

Androids are highly advanced robots with a sapient artificial mind. They are composed of mechanical, electric, and biological parts. The early phase Androids designed the later models, improving on their design within limits set by Humanity itself. These limits closely follow Asimov's Laws. They are as follows:

1. An Android may not harm any sapient creature, or through inaction allow a sapient creature to come to harm.
2. An Android must obey orders given to it by a Human, as long as it does not contradict the First Law.
3. An Android must protect its own existence, provided it does not contradict the First or Second Law.

The Arc-Wraith Clergy

Entropy Supreme

The Arc-Wraith were a favorite of the Elder, though it isn't quite understood why. Their race has long sought the death of the universe. However, after the loss of their slave races, they had to begin drafting their own into their armies. Luckily for the innately Psychic Arc-Wraith, their potent powers make for a formidable enemy. The entire Arc-Wraith Clergy is warlike and tends to kill on sight. Travel to or through Arc-Wraith space should be done with extreme care.

The Arc-Wraith destroyed around a third of their galactic arm, scattering the area with dust and debris from dead stars. This was initially where their push to destroy the galaxy began. However, it had a lucky side effect of making Slipspace easier and faster to traverse in their regions. This allowed the Arc-Wraith to quickly reinforce their borders, preventing invasion.

Insectoid Hive Space

Organized Stars

As they Wyarch died, they gave up areas of space to naturally rising species. These races tended to be Insectoid, though why is unknown. During the decline of the Wyarch, the Arc-Wraith refused to step into what was once their territory. They made it clear that after the death of the last Wyarch, they would invade Insectoid Space without mercy.

This caused the Insectoids to reinforce their area of space. They amassed resources for a fight, building great solar engines around nearly every star they could. These allowed the stars to provide the Insectoids with more than enough power. This power was stored in great energy banks known by humanoids as Insectoid Batteries.

Their solar engines also allowed the Insectoids to move entire solar systems. The Insectoids maneuvered their area of the galaxy into a very regular hive of stars, each placed equidistant from each other. Each system houses a single Solar Engine, several Insectoid Batteries, and usually a number of Insectoid Planets used for infantry. There are several species of insectoid as well.

Termian

These 4 legged, 2 armed ant-like centaroid creatures share a hive mind with each other. Individuals are called Drones and, despite their name, are sapient. All drones share a telepathic connection which extends several light years. If allowed, this connection can use another Drone as a new signal source to extend its range further. This creates a massive network almost all Drones are capable of accessing.

This network, known as the Termian TeleNet, is incredibly advanced and allows for emergent complexity. When looked at from afar, the Termians make up a massive Hive Consciousness which Humanoids call The Queen. It is this they serve, as opposed to any central authority. A socialistic democracy of the rawest type.

Termian Drones come in two variations. Though these are called Male and Female, they have nothing to do with the sex of the creature. Male Termians are workers, politicians, and soldiers. They are denoted by prominent stingers. Female Termians are especially equipped to take care of larval Termians and act as docile Network Nodes the rest of the time. These Termians tend to be less sapient than Male Termians and lack a stinger. Experiments on these creatures shows that they have a unique connection to The Queen that Male Termians lack, however.

Termians have no access to magic and deny its existence. They are also incapable of cybernetic enhancement. Drones are considered expendable. However, they still need protection. For this reason the Termians began a Eugenics Project early on, creating the race known as the Chitivore.

Chitivore

This species was made to be a slave race to the Termians. This vassal race is surprisingly dissimilar to the Termians although they are their descendants. They resemble upright crickets with a fine hair adorning their chitinous plates. These hairs are actually thousands of antennae, all picking up minute variations in air currents. This allows them to see in a way not dissimilar from Earth Sharks.

This species' evolution was carefully documented and shaped by the Termians. They eat almost anything biological and require a special atmosphere laced with cyanide - a gas harmful to almost all Humanoids. They often wear a mask which adds this ingredient to the ambient air as it's inhaled.

The Chitivore are the footsoldiers of the Termian Army. They are mute and non-sapient, but share the Termian TeleNet with their masters. They cannot act as range extenders, and when beyond the range of a Termian master they become docile.

Squat'o

These creatures are technically crusteations, but they are also within the Insectoid Territories. They are a species with four legs and two pincers. They don't have the best eyesight, but they make that up in amphibious communication. They're able to speak underwater as easily as above water.

They hear through their chitinous shell. They also express emotion through sound, causing a constant clicking. While it's possible to suppress this, it makes stealth very difficult for a Squat'o.

These creatures, too, share a psychic connection. However it is exclusively with their life mates. It is possible to psychically bond to more than one partner, but the act is considered taboo.

Squat'o have the ability to detach body parts without losing control of them immediately. Like starfish, these grow into new Squat'o over time. As they do so, the original Squat'o loses control of the limb in question. Unfortunately reattaching limbs requires more medical prowess than the average Squat'o has.

Datrew

Technically a subset of the Foalchu, these 4' mammalian creatures are enslaved by the Termians. They are, in fact, a byproduct of Termian experimentation. Many centuries ago, the Termians wanted to know how to suspend a star's life while continuing to produce power from it. In doing so they created a planet sunk into eternal day. From this planet evolved the Datrew.

This species is adapted to bright environments. They are literally solar powered, drawing 100% of their energy from readily available sunlight present on their home planet. After exposure to darkness, the Datrew gradually hibernate until death OR until exposed to light again.

Feral and brash, this species tends to prefer a fight. Their mouths don't allow them to speak common, so they need to use special voice boxes. This species is often used by the Termians as a diplomatic species, as humanoids tend to be distrusting of the more insectoid races.