

SPECIES NAME: SIRENS

SUMMARY

Sirens are a non-human, trans dimensional species of creatures that have existed long before written history. Little is known where they come from or how old they are as a race. Some say that they are living facets of the night sky, while others say that they are deities from another plane of reality. To date there is no concrete truth, as even the oldest among their people have either sworn their origins to secrecy, or hold onto only myths and legends in kind.

Nevertheless, sirens are an old people, their history attached to the world for as long as history itself has existed. Some call them magical, some call them demons and some still call them nothing at all. Their true name has been lost to the sands of time, with only the nickname coined by mortal men to give them any identity at all.

Siren Tag | Siren Art Base

ANATOMY / PHYSIOLOGY

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

To the naked eye and especially if they are glamoured, sirens look no different from humans. They have eyes, hair, arms and legs all just like a human; a human-shaped face and a human-shaped smile, all so easily assumed to be the parts of such a mortal, fragile species.

Sirens have the ability to glamor themselves from the moment they are born, hiding away their true form until a time when they choose to do so in moments of intimacy, trust or simply because they want to. Because of this among other cultural aspects, they tend to hide easily among human populations--it's almost a rarity to find a pocket of humanity that hasn't a small population of sirens secretly living among them.

When not glamoured, sirens are nebulous beings who look like the night sky. They are shadows in the evening, the dark shifts of movement in the corner of your eye, the very essence of the dark universe itself born into sentience. They can take any shape, gender or sex of body they desire, though many choose to look humanoid with more or less the right number of limbs.

Their eyes vary in number and color, looking like glittering gemstones against the dark backdrop of their face. When they smile, they don't do so only with a mouth--they do so with their entire form, their very being glittering with speckles of light that truly look like someone cut out a piece of the night sky and breathed life into it.

The only markings that sirens keep upon their body, whether in true form or glamoured as a human, are the living tattoos that live upon them. These marks shift over their form as if

they are living creatures themselves, growing and developing into rich designs that tell the tale of the siren they live upon. In such a way, sirens are storytellers even visually, though it takes a deep knowledge of their culture to read the tattoos in such a way.

A young siren may have but a few lines and symbols marking their form, but an elder siren may have a tapestry of history written on their shadowy skin, growing brighter and more beautiful with every word that they speak.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Sirens certainly can get sick, though they don't get sick in the same way or through the same methods as humans or similarly mortal, squishy beings.

Humans develop infectious diseases due to things called pathogens, such as bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites. These pathogens can enter the body through the air, food and drink or even cuts in the skin. Since sirens have a vastly different biology and may or may not technically come from another plane of existence, earthly pathogens don't normally affect them.

There is certainly the rare exception to the rule, but for the most part humans and sirens have very unique illnesses to one another and those illnesses can't normally, usually, don't pass over the species barrier.

Take the common cold, for example, or the symptoms associated with it. Headache, fever, general feeling of malaise. Though humans tend to get this common illness through either viral or bacterial means, sirens develop a similar illness through exposure to certain forms of radiation, most commonly forms of sunlight.

Some sirens are more sensitive to this radiation while others are not, but the same activity that might give a human a sunburn would instead leave a siren with several days worth of an aggravating cold. Perhaps it is the way the earth's atmosphere filters solar radiation, or perhaps it's simply a kind of radiation that didn't exist as strongly in the plane of existence their species originated from.

Regardless, it's just one of many different kinds of illnesses that sirens can develop.

It's usually not hard to find a sick siren—most of the time they're unable to keep up glamor while ill, and their bodies often have a lackluster, washed-out appearance. Any color is dull and their powers are severely weakened, to include their signature power of oral influence and pressure.

It's not a fun time for anyone, as the siren looks more like a shadowy ghost than anything else, but they usually get as much comfort out of soup, blankets, sleep and comfort by loved ones that humans do when they are sick.

SPECIES BEHAVIOR

Sirens are usually a kind sort, seeking solely for people to listen to their words, as they believe that they live on for as long as they speak, as death is only permanent when their last words die away into the void of nonexistence, forgotten and silent.

Because of this, they are known primarily for the power of their voice instead of their metaphysical abilities. They are not particularly strong beings, at least not in comparison to other eldritch creatures of the universe, and they are certainly not ones that are worshiped by any cult or group of people.

The power that lies within each siren's voice compels those around them to listen and take heed. Because of this, sirens often find themselves in the roles of storytellers or leaders, always in a place where all beings of their non-siren community can hear their voice and listen to their words. Powerful politicians, infamous storytellers, fabled historians—you'll always find a glamored siren somewhere in between.

Despite this cultural significance to wisdom and knowledge, sirens—especially younger ones—can be easily manipulated, as they are also naturally curious and open-minded creatures.

Culturally speaking, the worst tragedy that can befall a siren is for them to lose or damage their voice. A siren with no voice or one who is unable to speak, which in itself is considered a grave injury, is perhaps the most sad, immeasurably disturbing sight. They often lash out, seeking a power no longer there and seeking an existence that lies in limbo. Sometimes this can cause massive damage to the other living beings around them—or, if manipulated, they themselves can be used as a devastating tool of destruction.

Sirens can live for many, many years—ranging into several millennia—and so often are they known as storytellers of mortal history or the foreboding sound of warning. They are words that come to life, whispers made dancing, stories and information made so real you can almost reach out to touch them. Because of this, a large amount of their culture is tied to oral recitation in some form or another. Some even say that sirens were the earliest known prophets and oracles, masking their knowledge of history and future events as something divine, if only so humans wouldn't fear them.

REPRODUCING COURTSHIP

Sirens, due to their semi-shapeshifting nature, don't have a default sex that they're born with. Though sirens can certainly mimic or even live as any sex they find most appealing to them, their natural form is both sexless and genderless (at least to the perspective of most human cultures). The concept of gender is much more open in the Siren culture, tied loosely to the role they play in the world around them than anything else—in a sense, gender is almost treated like a class or perhaps even connected to a character trait or talent.

Because of this, all sirens are considered very open in terms of finding and bonding with mates. A romantic group can be as few as two sirens, or as many as several, with all combinations of gender presentation and sex if any of them choose to present a certain way. These pairs or groups will usually mate for life, travel the world together and perhaps even start a family of their own.

A siren's voice—whether it's used in a song, a story, a poem—is considered a form of courtship to both sirens and non-sirens. The only difference between courting a siren and a non-siren with said voice is simply in how strongly the potential mate is affected.

Non-Sirens, such as humans, are more affected by a siren's voice, especially if the intention in the use of the voice is to attract a mate.

For example, a Siren can talk casually all day long without the fear of having prospective mates thrown at them, but if the same Siren were to consciously shift their voice ever so slightly, it would have an entirely different effect.

They'll make a courted mate feel safe and protected, making them feel at-ease and open to deeper conversations; it doesn't inherently control a non-Siren's mind, but it certainly can lower their guard and, if used malevolently, can certainly cause a lot of damage.

Between Sirens, the voice is seen as a measure of health and a quality of a mate, so they are judged upon that aspect of themselves when presenting for courtship.

PREGNANCY

Pregnancy isn't a very complicated topic—all it takes is two or more sirens bonding with one another with the *intention* of creating a new life for one of them to conceive. It will depend on the unique circumstances of the carrying siren that will determine how long the child will remain in their body—it can be for as little as a month or as much as several years. They are quite flexible creatures, especially since they often live in the shadows of other races, such as humans, and will most often try to mimic those around them.

During a pregnancy, such a siren (not glamored) can be identified by a dim, but beautiful glow within the center of their body. Depending on the shape they are taking, the glow will often emanate from their belly, in much the same space a baby would be found within a pregnant human. This light will only continue to grow in intensity until the siren child is ready to be born.

When a siren child is born, they themselves are born a small shadow, shaped similarly to a human infant but with all the wonder and aesthetic, inhuman beauty of the siren species. The child will often stay close to one of their parents for many years, and only leave their parents once they feel they are ready to experience the world on their own.

Siren children are able to glamor themselves from the moment they are born, but they do not have control over the power of their voice until they are several years old; if someone is knowledgeable enough about the siren people, that keen person might just be able to connect the dots of things when a new child in a group of people is suddenly so disproportionately

liked and cared for by non-sirens around them, family members or not, as non-sirens are most affected by the powers of a siren's voice.

Though some siren children choose to stay with the group they are born within, it is considered a wondrous occasion when a coming-of-age siren chooses to leave and explore the vast lands outside of their family group—such an occasion is often met with celebration, gifts and encouragement.

A group of sirens is referred to as a chorus.

DIETARY HABITS & NEEDS

Sirens certainly are a unique bunch. They're not entirely mortal in the same ways that humans are, so they don't have the same requirements like food, water and the like, at least not in the same way as their less-eldritch counterparts.

It's not to say sirens require nothing at all; it's an easy assumption to make, especially since a siren's needs are often hidden when they blend in with other groups and cultures. They'll often tend to assimilate biological and cultural needs to better fit into the larger group.

Simply put, a siren's body does not conform very neatly into the realm in which they populate. Food and water, physical forms of nourishment at least, are not a requirement for them at all. They have every capability to eat and drink, even things that might otherwise be toxic to a human (and many young sirens have used that to a tactical or intimidating advantage). Most benefit in the consumption of food and drink largely comes from the emotional benefit of comfort, closeness or similar things.

Some sirens can get so used to these very human needs that it almost becomes a requirement or a dependency, so much that it's thought that it in itself is an integral part of siren physiology: *the need to be a part of a community*.

The only need of a siren that can be assured, the thing that a lack of which can leave them weak and dying, is simply the need to be around others. Family, friends, romantic or sexual partners—they all play a very important role in a sirens life, connections keeping them anchored and healthy, emotionally stable.

This is likely why many, if not most sirens, have sought out human groups to exist within. This need for community and connections is a powerful force unlike any other, and a siren who is utterly alone or has no connections is a horror like none other. They have no allegiance, they have no anchor, they have nothing to keep them attuned to the realm of earth or to any set of morals.

Some speculate such a nightmare is the original form of a siren, the very beast that they chose to reject and instead turn towards something greater. Some even say that their introduction to earth and humans as a whole helped change them, thus creating this ever constant need for connections and communities with others—animals, humans or other sirens. They may not need to eat or drink or even sleep most of the time, but this single need for community is more important than anything; the lucky will die, but the unlucky will turn into the very nightmare they fear the most.

LANGUAGE

The language of the sirens is very unlike the human tongue. Rather than a pattern of specific sounds like vowels and consonants, sirens will "speak" to each other by vocalizing, humming, and even whistling. Oral communication is common, but they are also capable of "singing" with their whole bodies, usually when they are trying to express strong feelings like joy or despair. Specific tones and pitches mean specific things and are comparable to words, but *rhythm* is unique to the individual. Some sing slowly and methodically, others are faster and impatient, and oftentimes one's rhythm is an indicator of where they're from and who they associate with, as sirens tend to adapt to the languages they're surrounded by.

While sirens do have names, they're considered a mere formality. In practice, a siren will have a specific vocal and musical pattern associated with them used in lieu of a name, much like how a fictional character would have their own theme song.

Since they are a species that thrives on community, it is considered vital that those who cannot sing or hear are still included in some way. Thus the sirens have their own sign language -- known to them as notation -- by way of musical instruments of the wind and string varieties; percussion instruments are thought to be cacophonous by many sirens, though there some involved in a sort of counter-culture that is trying to elevate their status in society. Notation borrows the same tones and pitches from the sirens' oral language, making it easy to learn and understand even to non-sirens.

Because of their innate ability to learn and adapt to new sounds, sirens make for excellent linguists. They can learn a new language in a matter of months -- or even weeks depending on the resources available -- when it would take humans a couple of years to become comfortably fluent.

BASIC SOCIAL STRUCTURE

MANNERS/ETIQUETTE

PLATONIC

INTIMATE

FAMILY LIFE

GENDER RELATED SOCIAL NORMS

LEGENDS/FOLKLORE

ARCHITECTURE/SHELTER

ART/SUBCULTURE

CLOTHING/FASHION

Sirens view fashions the same way they view names; as formalities. As they are naturally genderless and sexless creatures, they don't have a concept of physical modesty, and they don't really need to kept warm on account of them being living nebulas. The majority of sirens simply aren't interested in clothes, as they would cover up the living tattoos that adorn their bodies and tell their life stories, something that they hold great personal and cultural pride in.

Sirens aren't as ambivalent when it comes to jewelry. They love sparkly things since they are reminiscent of the galaxy they're born from, they don't often actually wear jewelry since their own bodies easily outshine the luster of gems and metal. Instead, they are kept for special occasions, particularly as gifts for those who decide to explore the vast universe outside of their home. They are also seen as fun hobbyist collectibles for the young and old in the same way a human child would collect rocks or coins.

There are some sirens residing on Earth who gain a genuine appreciation for fashion. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they gravitate towards whatever reminds them of the stars, such as galaxy prints. And, of course, anything that sparkles.

SPECIES HISTORY

During the age of the Greeks, and later the Romans, the clans of sirens living in that part of the globe weren't particularly fond of humans. So much fighting, so much warring—it was all very annoying, really, not something that the sirens wanted to be apart of.

Since sirens didn't want to spill any blood themselves or even eat the squishy creatures (humans taste weird anyway) they instead took great joy in, say, glamouring themselves to look like beautiful men and women, lounging on some rocks or cliff-faces, and singing sweet lullabies that very few (if any) passerby's could ever resist. Myth and legends greatly stretched the number of people this singing genuinely hurt (though plenty stupid sailors and soldiers alike did, of their own volition, jump off a perfectly functioning ship) and humans sure do love to make themselves look so strong and noble.

A lot of people believe it was at this point in history that the shift in name happened, as more and more humans started calling them 'Sirens' and they began to remember less and less of the name before—or did they even have a name for themselves before humans gave them one?

Regardless, the name stuck as more sirens took to it, leading to them being forever immortalized in human myth and lore—though there were certainly a lot of errors that, nowadays, most historically-learned sirens find more amusing than anything else.