

RACE

RIVENER

Indeed, there is much in pure humanitarian culture, as opposed to rigid scientific thinking, which encourages absorption in the affairs of mankind, and more or less indifference to the unfathomed abysses of star-strown space that yawn interminably about this terrestrial grain of dust. . . I am not very proud of being an human being; in fact, I distinctly dislike the species in many ways. I can readily conceive of beings vastly superior in every respect.

- H.P. Lovecraft, The Nature of God

Whether by a stroke of luck or sheer force of will, riveners are the result of an incomplete or failed attempt by kaortis to convert the creatures and environment of this dimension to be more like their own.

The kaorti are an alien people from the Far Realm. They are said to have originated from a group of ancient elves who opened a Vast Gate to puncture the barrier between reality and the outer madness. Within minutes of passing through the gate to enter the Far Realm, they were transformed into a deranged facsimile of their former selves, now known as the kaorti.

After untold eons in the Far Realm, their curiosity drove them to pursue a kernel of a memory of their former home, tracing what little fragments of the Material Plane they could find back to their source. Kaortis who have made their way to the known multiverse exist solely to overwhelm and transform our worlds to resemble their extradimensional home.

UNYIELDING SPIRIT

Nearly every creature subjected to the kaortis' otherworldly essence succumbs, becoming one of them in a vile transformation either immediately or within the days or weeks following. This is the only method by which the kaorti can propagate their kind in our dimension.

The only documented cases of a humanoid creature resisting this complete, corruptive transformation are a select few humans, who are known to have a remarkably steadfast and unshakable determination and sense of self. Those who are able to resist the transformation adapt to the foreign essence infused within their body and become a rivener.

WANDERING MIND, BODY, & SOUL

Riveners experience maddening chaos in their minds, grounded and controlled by their human resolve; this chaos often manifests as distant voices or intrusive whispers audible only to them. They still retain their memories and much of their human nature, but they generally no longer fully identify with their former selves. They shun

their human family and venture forth in search of meaning and purpose in their new life, touched by a realm beyond reality.

Their body—a fusion of the essence of two disparate dimensions—truly belongs in neither. What remains of their soul is often left unclaimed by the gods of the Outer Planes upon death, abandoned to drift and roam aimlessly within the Astral Sea.

PROTECTIVE RESIN

Kaortis secrete a thick, durable resin from their palms, which they must coat themselves in as a safeguard against the elements of our dimension. Riveners, too, must protect the Far Realm aspects of their form, though the process is much more intensive, requiring hours of care each day to adequately maintain their protective coating.

Some riveners form a full suit of this resin armor, similar to kaortis, while others may choose a more patchwork appearance, covering only that which is necessary for their survival. Riveners usually wear cloaks and other heavy clothing to help disguise their true nature.

RIVENER NAMES

Some riveners continue to use their human names, but many identify with their past selves only distantly or not at all, at a minimum removing their surname to symbolize their detachment from their former human family.

Riveners may be inclined to take on a variation of their human name more akin to the Deep Speech language that now rings in their head—for example, Anton may now be called “Anthoon,” and Kara may now refer to themselves as “Xaradun.” They may also look to the naming conventions of illithids, beholders, and other aberrations for inspiration.

RIVENER TRAITS

Your rivener character inherits a number of traits characteristic of the kaorti.

Ability Score Increase. Your Charisma score increases by 2, and your Dexterity score increases by 1.

Age. Riveners mature at the same rate as humans, but can typically live about 10-20 years longer, sustained by their mysterious Far Realm nature.

Alignment. The maddening and destructive influence of the Far Realm causes riveners to tend toward chaos. The majority are evil, though the most resolute may be able to maintain a neutral or even good alignment.

Size. On average, riveners are about 6 feet tall and only weigh between 120 and 140 pounds. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. Touched by unreality and darkness, you have superior vision in the dark and dim conditions of this realm. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Corrupted Nature. You have two creature types: humanoid and aberration. You can be affected by any spells or effects that affect either of these types.

Kaorti Resilience. Your extraplanar biology makes you especially hardy against the poisons of this dimension. You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage.

Far Magic. Riveners are predisposed to drawing magical energy from their unearthly essence. You know one cantrip of your choice from the sorcerer spell list.

When you reach 3rd level, you can cast *disguise self* once with this trait, and when you reach 5th level, you can also cast *ray of enfeeblement* once with this trait. You regain the ability to cast these spells with this trait when you finish a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

Resin Armor. Your ultra-durable, lightweight resin coating provides protection fundamentally necessary for your existence. You have a base AC of 13 + your Dexterity modifier. You gain no benefit from wearing other armor, but if you are using a shield, you can apply the shield's bonus as normal.

Otherworldly Respite. When you take a long rest, you only require 4 hours of sleep to satiate your human nature, but you must also spend at least 2 hours tending to and secreting your resin to protect the Far Realm elements of your body from the environs of these foreign planes.

Whenever you end a 24-hour period without finishing a long rest, your protective resin begins to deteriorate; the AC provided by your Resin Armor trait is reduced by 1, and your hit point maximum is also reduced by 1d10. Finishing a long rest restores your Resin Armor trait and your hit point maximum to their full capacity.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Common, and you can speak Deep Speech.