

**The Havenites**  
**Ascension Humans / High Ogres**  
**OFFICIAL ASCENSION CULTURE PACKET**

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Tialia watched as two children ran through the village, laughing and shrieking. The Sefondre child chased a Pastiche in a game of tag. As more children began to join in the game, Tialia realized she was dawdling. She needed to get to the forest before she was scolded for not participating in the gathering.

She moved through Haven and stopped at the storehouse to get her basket. She noticed that most of the baskets were already gone and knew she would hear from the older gatherers that she was late. Shrugging the basket onto her arm, she moved towards the gates. Tialia had no problem finding the others, as the songs they sang gave away their location. She spotted her friend Tomas and moved over to him.

"You're late, Tialia," he said with a laugh as he picked berries off the bush.  
"I know. I was watching the children play. It always makes me happy to see them all together. The Havenborn and the Foundlings." She began to pick berries alongside Tomas.

"Well, you better pick quickly before the elder comes by and sees how much less you have than I do. She wants to try to clear most of the bushes before lunch today." He started to drop a few berries in her basket as he filled his own.

Tialia laughed and nudged his hip with her own. "Thank you Tomas. How long until she comes by, do you think?" Tomas looked over his shoulder and shrugged. "Could be an hour, could be the next couple o..." "Tialia, you are late this morning!" Both Tialia and Tomas jumped at the elderly voice.

"Elder Yama! I'm sorry. I was watching the children." Tialia bowed her head at the old woman. Yama smiled at her and nodded. "It is a wonderful thing seeing them all together. But remember, we need to work together to be able to provide for them and all the others here. You two need to make sure we clear all we can. But also save some berries on each bush for the birds. Without them we won't get more bushes in the years to come." She moved on to the next pair further off.

Tomas covered his mouth to hold in a laugh and Tialia whacked him on the arm. "You knew exactly where she was, didn't you!?" Tomas shrugged and let out the laugh. "I did. But I also wasn't expecting her so quickly. Come on, let's get this bush cleared and move on." The two of them worked together and by lunchtime both of their baskets were overflowing with berries that would eventually be turned into wine and jams.

-Tales of Haven by Tomas, Child of Izo

### **Human Racial Basics**

Humans in Haven are known as the Pastiche (pronounced past-EASH). They are sturdy survivors who adapt to challenges without any of the benefits that other races have. Due to their heritage, Humans are enslaved or removed from the Protectorate and left to die outside of the Cairn.

### **High Ogre Racial Basics**

Also known as the Sefondre (pronounced si-FOND-ray), High Ogres are a curious result of the Fall. Theirs is an inadvertently created race, pieced together from broken bits of spirits and given flesh by the Earth. Short-lived but sturdy, High Ogres are well-suited to the harsh life of the surface. Just like the Pastiche, High Ogres are enslaved or removed from the Protectorate and left to die outside of the Cairn.

High Ogres' bodies do not process fruit in the way that most others do. Instead, the fructose causes a sugar rush, filling them with an agitated energy that often makes them want to fight. Many also report a mildly intoxicated or "buzzed" feeling, with their sense of pain being slightly dulled and their inhibitions faintly lowered.

### **Haven History**

At first the elementals raged against being locked in the mortal realm. They could not understand why suddenly they were unable to return home. Death was final now. Why was this happening? Apparently the mortals did something and drastically altered what they were.

Things changed even more for them after that blunder with the spell. Mortals disappeared, the animals went into hiding, and death came for them. The elementals did not know what this enemy was but they swept across the lands destroying the magic the mortals had harnessed. Circles of power were destroyed, cities fell from the sky, the sky ships crashed, and everything changed again.

Within a decade, they had lost half their numbers. Something had to be done for them to survive. For all they knew, they were the last of their kind. Ice banded together with flame, and stone made a pact with lightning. Life and chaos, however, would never work together. In fact, the elementals of ice, flame, lightning, stone, and life united to wipe the chaos elementals from the world. As far as they know, it worked.

Within half a century of the cataclysm, the elementals accepted their new life. They would now live and die in this realm. They began to build a new society for themselves in order to maintain some kind of normalcy.

After a thousand years, they began noticing changes around them yet again. Sometimes while on patrol, scouts would hear crying coming from the mouth of a cavern or old mine shaft. At first they did not pay it any mind, knowing they were ruins of old mortal areas. It was Song of Life who first chose to look.

-History of Haven by Anubina, Child of Anubin

Song of Life was the first Elemental to find those left outside by the Protectorate. She found a young High Ogre girl and took her back to the area the other elementals had made their home. As a collective, they choose to take in others that were found in the area.

They had no name for the creatures that they had found, so created one for them. The Sefondre were the first they found outside, ranging from very young to very old. Like the Wild Orcs, they had facial tusks, but these had yellow skin, not green. Each Elemental took charge of helping them to figure out what they were and how to live in the world in which they found themselves.

Only a short time, about five years, after finding the first Sefondre, they came across a new species. Not knowing what the round-eared creatures were, they named them the Pastiche. One of the Sefondre told them that the Pastiche came from the breeding of two different races. Most of the Pastiche that were found were infants or young children. Very rarely would they be older than four years of age.

After a generation of the Pastiche had passed, about five generations of the Sefondre had gone by. The population of both became too much for the small settlement they had. So the Elementals agreed to split into three settlements in different areas of the lands. This way there was always a place for them all to go to in case the Protectorate ever came after them.

Thus the three Havens were born. Each Haven has three Elementals that govern it. There are nine total Elementals between the three Havens.

#### **Original Haven - Within Protectorate lands**

Song of Life - Life Elemental that presents as female.

Isfrid Aubin - Ice Elemental that presents as non-binary.

Adhir - Lightning Elemental that presents as non-binary.

#### **Second Haven - In the Northwestern area of the continent**

Knox - Stone Elemental that presents as female.

Kenna Ember - Flame Elemental that presents as non-binary.

Izo - Ice Elemental that presents as male.

### **Third Haven - Near the settlement of the Collegium Cairn**

Forge Father - Flame Elemental that presents as male.

Mistress of Storms - Lightning Elemental that presents as female

Roc - Stone Elemental that presents as male.

Over the years, the Protectorate has assaulted the original Haven on a smaller scale, causing the Havenites to have to move it a few times. But they never left the area because they did not want to leave the Pastiche and Sefondre to die outside of the Cairn.

The Second and Third Havens were left in a peaceful environment, never having to worry about attacks from the Protectorate. They were told about the attacks by the Elementals who established the Havens. The Elementals insisted that they still held to the ways of staying hidden from others, because of the way they had been persecuted by the Protectorate.

Residents of all three Havens have steps to be implemented to hide the settlements from any who attempt to find them. Havenites are very secretive about the location of their home. They do not allow outsiders to remember where they live and administer Amnesia to those who come too close. Children who are brought into the Haven from outside are called "Foundlings," and those who are born within are "Havenborn."

### **Haven Human History**

Song of Life heard crying again - the small yet loud wails of a babe. She moved through the clearing searching for the bundle she knew she would find. She was shocked when she came upon two sitting against a rock. The older child held the baby in his arms as his eyes moved up to her face.

She knelt down in front of the children. "Hello little ones. I am known as the Song of Life. Do you have names?"

The child hesitated before answering. "I am named Adrian. My sister's name is Mary."

Song of Life smiled and nodded. "Were you left out here?" When the child nodded she sighed softly. "I have a place that I can bring you where there are a lot of other children. You would have a home and be taken care of. I see you are old enough to remember some of your life below. In Haven you would learn and grow and be able to be happy. Would you like to come with me?"

The child sat mutely for what felt like ages. Finally he stood and nodded. "I need to take care of Mary and I can't do that alone."

Song of Life nodded and smiled. "How old are you, dear?" She reached out her hand for the child to take.

"Six." He took her hand and began to follow her to Haven.

"Why did they send you here then? You seem old enough for them to have kept." Song of Life guided the child while keeping an eye out for any others.

"I have an injury. My foot got crushed when I was really little. Momma couldn't take me to a healer cause I would've gotten taken." It was then that Song of Life noticed the limp the boy had.

"We will have that looked at and see if we can help you. You will be safe in Haven. We will make sure you have everything you need. Mary will be able to grow up right next to you and I believe the two of you will be happy."

She paused in her walking and took the baby from Adrian, resting her in one arm. She reached over and picked Adrian up as well. "I think we will take a shortcut." Song of Life smiled and rifted herself and the children away from the Protectorate Cairn.

~A Home Among Elementals by Rosa, Child of Knox

Humans were unknown to the world of Ascension for eons. They did not appear until roughly one thousand years within the Protectorate Cairn.

Even then, Humans were hidden from others and spoken of only in rumor, until they became more common. Humans, also called the Null, are the byproduct of the other races' interbreeding. The act was shameful, and the result - these plain, "bland" creatures who had never known a world full of magic were deemed unwanted.

As such, the Protectorate would enslave or exile human offspring. Officials would come to the family with a Human child and remove them from the household, regardless of the parent's wishes. These children would be evaluated, and if not found suitable for work (or if below the age of four) they would be left outside of the Protectorate Cairn to die.

Due to the malice behind the label "Null," the humans of Haven refer to themselves as "Pastiche." They despise being called Nulls and will not hesitate to let that be known. When speaking with those not from Haven, many simply use the term "Human," but they readily spread usage of "Pastiche" (and "Sefondre" for High Ogres) as they are able.

Song of Life was the first to find the discarded beings outside of the Protectorate Cairn. Humans within Haven are treated as "children" of one specific Elemental who takes charge of their upbringing. In many cases, the Elemental has a community of adults ready to care for young Havenborn and Foundlings alike.

### **Haven High Ogre History**

Song of Life had found children, or at least that is what they looked like at first. These children looked different than any race she had ever encountered. At least the bodies laid out in front of the entrance were. She had seen rounded ears on many of the races, but there were no racial features she knew. There seemed to be two types of people here. Ones with yellow skin and tusks like the Orcs, but Orcs had green skin. Then there were the beings that looked somewhat like Biata, but they had no eyebrow feathers. This was quite strange.

Then she heard it. The cry of a child. She looked around herself and saw a child that looked to be a teenager. It was one of the beings that had yellow skin. She approached it quietly and knelt down in front of it.

"Hello." She smiled at the child. It turned its face to look at her.

"P—please don't hurt me." It cowered away from her.

"Oh dear child, I'm not going to harm you. I would like to help you. What happened?" The Song of Life waited for the child to speak again.

"I came out of the apparatus. They quickly called me an outlaw. I don't know anything that happened before that. They took me up here during the night and left me all alone." Tears began to fall down the child's face.

"I am so sorry this happened. Do you have a name?" The Song of Life felt the pain in her heart for the loss of life that was happening.

"N—no. I don't even know who I am. I don't know anything before waking up in that room." The child looked at her expectantly. "Do you know me?"

The Song of Life shook her head. "No, sweet child, I do not. But since you've nowhere to go, why don't you come back with me?" She had made up her mind already. Whatever was going on here, she had to put an end to it. She had to keep these innocent lives safe however she could.

~A Home Among Elementals by Rosa, Child of Knox

In the wake of the Fall, the appearance of the High Ogres was a surprising - and at first disconcerting - occurrence. The attacks by the Vreech had left everyone on edge, and the first Reformed to walk the Protectorate quickly found themselves being interrogated at blade point. As such the Protectorate would enslave or exile High Ogres. Officials would find High Ogres and remove them from where they were. These High Ogres would be evaluated and it would be determined if they were suitable for work within The Protectorate or (in cases where it was a High Ogre under the age of four years) they would be left outside of The Protectorate Cairn to die.

Song of Life was the first to find the 'discarded' beings outside of The Protectorate Cairn. She began to take in any she found that wished to go with her. Ogres within Haven are treated as children of one specific Elemental who takes charge of their upbringing. In many cases the Elemental has a system of adults who care for the High Ogres in a place for raising foundlings. Many of the High Ogres are not children though so this is mostly a way of integrating them into Haven.

Due to the way that the Protectorate treated them High Ogres despise being called Circle Born and will not hesitate to let it be known, among those they know. They much prefer to be called Sefondre. If faced with outsiders many use the terms that the majority know. However when talking about their race or their brethren race they will use the terms Humans and High Ogers (or just Ogers) to refer to their people.

As time passed, and new generations of the Sefondre were born, the younger generations reported inheriting similar sensations to that of the first generation. The spirits of the High Ogres seemed permanently fragmented, some strange result of their origin that rendered them permanently a pastiche. Because of this many have been seen talking to what seems like nothing. However it has been explained that they see spirits that are unable to resurrect.

### **High Ogre Racial Makeup**

As Ogres, the Reformed have the signature tusks and yellow skin of their race. All exposed skin should be yellow, either due to makeup, or some form of lightweight “base layer” type clothing (such as Underarmor™). Tusks can either be store-bought prosthetics, or made with crafting supplies such as moldable plastic.

### **Havenite Dress**

Clothing within Haven is relatively simple. They tend to coordinate colors based on the Elemental they see as their parent. They see this as a way to honor the one who helped to raise them.

#### **Original Haven**

Song of Life- (Life) White and pastel colors.

Isfrid Aubin- (Ice) Any shade of blue.

Adhir- (Lightning) Yellows, grays and white

#### **Second Haven**

Knox- (Stone) Greys, browns and black

Kenna Ember- (Flame) Reds, oranges, yellows.

Izo- (Ice) Any shade of blue.

#### **Third Haven**

Forge Father- (Flame) Reds, oranges, yellows.

Mistress of Storms- (Lightning) Yellows, grays and white.

Roc- (Stone) Greys, browns and black.

### **Recent History**

The Third Haven has encountered those they believed to have lived in a Cairn. Some of the Elemental's children had come across them while trading with the different groups in the area. After learning about them through interacting with them they were deemed to be a good ally against the threat of The Protectorate. Even if they were the reason for the sudden attention to the area.

When The Protectorate announced that they would be coming to assimilate the new settlement into their collective, Haven began negotiating with the adventurers living there. Over the winter before The Protectorate arrived they worked to create ambush spots and helped prepare for the attack.

During that time Cassius acted as liaison between Haven and the Adventures. He negotiated with the group that had assembled and found them to be disorganized. However their actions after that gathering were not the same. The adventures worked tirelessly to make sure they were able to attack and defend their home as well as Haven.

In the spring The Protectorate arrived. The ambush spots and traps that had been set up slowed them down. However it did not stop them from advancing. Their numbers were too great to stop completely.

One night The Protectorate attacked the Adventurers' settlement. The adventures fought hard to defend their home, little did they know it was a diversion tactic. The Third Haven was attacked at the same time. How it was found may never be known. The casualties were huge, many young and old died, while the able bodied were taken prisoner.

The worst of the attack was when Forge Father was subjugated. He had been fighting alongside Mistress of Storms and Roc to defend the ones that needed to escape, while those who had the abilities to fight fought alongside them. He was no longer on their side. At that turning point, the rest of the Third Haven retreated.

In the end the survivors fled to the settlement of the Adventures and asked for asylum. They were given the chance to recover with the Adventurers. The following night The Protectorate attacked again. The Adventures did their best to defend the settlement and fight them off. However it was a losing battle. Roc had been working to fortify the fortress the Adventures had and saw the attack. He had rifted to the Original Haven and asked Song of Life for aid, telling her that they would be wiped out if help wasn't given.

Song of Life, Isfrid Aubin and Adhir rifted to the settlement to assist. An exchange of words happened between Song of Life and The Protectorate's leader, Inquisitor Thorne. In the end he taunted Song of Life with the knowledge that Forge Father was under his control. Song of Life informed him that he had declared war on Haven and that there would be consequences because of this. Thorne then spirit recalled away from the battle. Isfrid Anubin and Adhir wiped away the rest of The Protectorate's soldiers. Any who were injured or near death were healed by Song of Life.

The Third Haven is lost, Forge Father is lost, but perhaps there is a new home among the Adventures.

### **Havenite Culture**

"It is the duty of all to provide for all. Without each other we will not survive."

~Adhir

All Havenites have strong ties to their community. They work hard to make sure that every person in the community has a job to benefit everyone. Resources are shared among all within the Haven. No one has ever had less than others.



Havenites are very secretive of the location of their home. They will never willingly give up the information. They also do not talk about their culture unless the council deems it appropriate.

### **Havenite Holidays & Celebrations**

#### **Spring Feast (Gathering Feast)**

A feast to celebrate the end of winter and beginning of warmer days. Also a time to plant new crops. Many tend to clean out their homes to get rid of any lingering feelings that winter tends to bring about.

The festival itself is held in the middle of the day. Usually a feast made from fresh plants that are gathered in the days leading up to the feast. Everything is foraged for this feast. The celebration is for the gatherers for without them they would not have this festival, medicine, or fresh food in the spring.

#### **Summer Festival (Elemental Festival)**

A feast and party to celebrate the longest day of the year. This is normally an all day and night affair. Large bonfires are built in a field that is nowhere near any of the Havens. All three Havens gather in that location and intermingle with each other during the festival. The main celebration of this festival is life in general and to honor the Elementals that saved so many lives.

#### **Autumn Festival (Harvest Festival)**

The day that the last of the harvesting is finished a large feast is held. Every household brings a dish of some kind. This celebration is a gift to those in Haven who do the farming. The community as a whole celebrates them and thanks them for all their hard work. This is also the time that winter rations are finalized and announced.

There are games for the children to play and dances that are held. This is a joyful time and one of the last before the new year.

#### **Winter Feast (New Year Feast)**

During this feast children build snow people and adults compete to see who can build the best snow sculpture. This is a time for fun. Snowball fights are had, snow forts are built for the children, and a feast is held. This is a time to celebrate the hunters and the farmers tending animals that are providing meat for the community. It is also the mark of the New Year for the Havenites.

#### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are celebrated in a small way among those who are closest to the individual. If an individual does not know their birthday then the day they were welcomed into Haven is usually the day marked as their 'birthday'.

#### **Death Feasts**

Havenites understand that death is a normal part of life. They mourn their losses, but also celebrate the life the individual had. All within the Haven of the individual that passed wears

white to honor the life of the individual. Stories are shared and a feast is held for all who knew the person.

No death feast has been held for an Elemental in over a millennium. Only the Elementals know when the last one was actually held and they do not speak of it.

### **Havenite Councils**

Each Haven has a village council of nine. On the village council there are the three governing Elementals, three of the oldest humans, and three of the oldest High Ogres. They determine how the village is run and governed.

If the Village council cannot make a choice on something then they move the matter up to the Elemental Council. This council is made up of the nine elementals that govern all three Havens. It is very rare that they are all gathered in one place.

There are very few laws within Haven. Below are the only recorded laws that are regularly enforced.

Take in all Sefondre and Pastiche you find.

Do not give away the location of Haven.

Do not harm others.

Do not kill another person.

Do not take what is not yours.

Work together to survive.

Work always to better Haven.

If there comes a time where it is deemed necessary the Council will gather and work to find an appropriate punishment. However in all of the history of Haven there have only been three times that any of the councils have been needed to punish someone.

The first occasion was over three hundred years ago. A human man came across a group of Havenites. He was brought back and seemed to be living with them quite well. But about six months after he began to live with them, he attacked during a common meal and killed two people. He was brought before the elemental council and they executed him for his crimes.

The second time was about a hundred years before. A woman stole clothing, trinkets, tools, food and just about anything else she could from another. She was brought before the village council that has both elementals, Circle Born and Humans on it. They required her to pack things for her survival and to give what she owned to the person she stole from. Her children were taken from her and their Aunt took them in. She was sent out into the wilds to find her way to another Haven village. She eventually made it to the Second Haven, which is not near the Protectorate, after about six months of travel.

The final time was only fifty years ago. Some teenage boys attacked another group of teenage boys. There were many witnesses to this and they all explained that the first group attacked the second for what seemed like no reason. After the village council looked into it they found out

that the second group of boys had been verbally attacking the first group for months. Neither group was in the right, however both have caused issues. Being that each group had three boys, the village council chose to split the groups evenly. Two boys went to the First Haven, two boys stayed at the Second Haven and the last two were sent to the Third Haven.

### **Havenite Names**

The Forge Father held the small bundle in their arms gently. This being was so strange to him even after all these years of seeing them. No innate magical prowess, no traits that made them stand apart other than the lack of them, and no home, until now.

This child was now his responsibility, given to him by The Song of Life. So he would now bring the child up within the culture of Haven. He wondered what the child would grow up to become and how they would impact Haven in the future.

The Forge Father moved to the home where the young were kept. He went to the Keeper and handed over the child. She held the babe and looked over it. "Father, this is a boy child. Do you wish to give him a name?"

The Forge Father pondered for a moment. "I would name him Cassius. Is that a good name Deila?" He never felt comfortable naming the children, but he knew that they needed to be called something until they were old enough to choose a name they wished to have. Deila smiled and nodded. "That name is perfect for now father. He will be able to choose to keep it or change it when he comes of age." She turned to place the child into one of many cribs lining the walls.

"Thank you for caring for so many Deila. I will be going to teach the Celestial class for those focused on Flame now." With that the Forge Father turned and left the building.

There is no set way that names are chosen in Haven. Names are usually given to the children upon their arrival by the Elemental that is in charge of their care. If the new arrival is older and has a name then the Elementals do not give them a new name. No name is permanent in Haven. Every person is afforded the option to change their name upon arrival or when they come of age.

### **Interactions with Other Races**

The only races most Havenites have come across are Human, High Ogre, Wild Orcs and Feral Wilderkin. Until recently the other races were a threat to them as they are all associated with The Protectorate.

Biata - You do not know much about them as you haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate. Be cautious.

Dark Elf - You do not know much about them as you haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate. Be cautious.

Dryad - You've never seen one that was awake that was not affected by the rot or part of The Protectorate. Be cautious

Dwarf - You do not know much about them as you haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate. But you have heard stories that they built the Cairn. You don't know much more than that. Be cautious

Fallen Elf - You do not trust them. The Elementals told you that they caused something to happen with the ritual that caused all of the problems in these lands.

Forest Elf - You do not know much about them as you haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate. Be cautious.

High Ogre - You're curious about what Elemental raised them. When you find out that they were not raised by one it confuses you because all Oggers you're aware of have been raised by an Elemental of an earth nature. There are a few tribes that are aggressive that you have heard of.

High Orc - Because of the wild tribes in the area these people scare you. You will not speak with them unless one of the other races you are aware of are present. You also haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate if they aren't from the wild tribes. Be cautious.

Hobling - You do not know much about them as you haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate. Be cautious.

Human - You're curious about what Elemental raised them. When you find out that they were not raised by one it confuses you because all Humans you're aware of have been raised by an Elemental. There are a few tribes that are aggressive that you have heard of.

Oathsworn - You do not know much about them as you haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate. Be cautious.

Selunari - You do not know much about them as you haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate. Be cautious.

Stone Elf - You do not know much about them as you haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate. Be cautious.

Sylvanborn - You do not know much about them as you haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate. Be cautious.

Wylderkin - You do not know much about them as you haven't met one that isn't part of the Protectorate. You learned early on that if they have the ability to speak clearly and rationally they aren't really a threat if they aren't from the Protectorate. You have heard stories of feral versions of them. Be cautious.