

The Null
(Pronounced Nool)
Ascension Humans
OFFICIAL ASCENSION RACE PACKET

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Silas crawled down to see what the new Null scout was doing. The rocks in this long-abandoned passageway were still unstable, and finding purchase for footing was difficult. They had been assigned to find an alternate entrance into some old medicine stores that were believed lost after a war with the deep trolls, and Silas was assigned this round-ear of all things. Still though, the Human calling themselves "Tara" moved well in the caves and, judging by their dress and the way they carried themselves, they probably had some Dwarf in them.

Silas's eyes darted to where Tara crouched, fingers sliding down a seam in the rock... or was it? A distinctive "click" was heard, and Silas could taste the poison in the air. Concerned for their safety he moved closer to Tara's position and saw her grinning. Of all things, the damn fool Null was smiling! That's when his eyes caught sight of what she had done. She had plugged the small gas slits used for the trap with wax from the hooded candle lamp she was using, and pushed the remainder of the gas...tasted like sleep...yes sleep gas all to his position leaving her area clear. Silas couldn't help but grin a bit himself as she swung the now untrapped door inward. Maybe these Null were smart enough to be useful... Too bad he hated the taste of sleep gas; like sour lilacs.

Human Racial Basics

Humans in the world of Ascension are known as the Null. They are sturdy survivors who adapt to challenges without any of the benefits that other races may have. This has earned them a reputation as clever thinkers and problem solvers. Due to their nature of their birth, and being reared by the Orphanarium, Humans are welcome in almost every environment, and treated as cousins by other races.

Human History

Humans were unknown to the world of Ascension for aeons. They did not appear until roughly one thousand years within the Cairn. Rumors at first, and hidden from others until they became more common, the Humans, called the Null (sounds like Nool), are the byproduct of the races interbreeding. While most often a Dwarf and an Elf would produce a Dwarf or an Elf, now roughly 1 in 100 were born Human. This was deemed shameful, and these creatures who had never known a world full of magic were deemed unwanted. As such the Orphanariums had become the receptacle of nearly every Human baby. Raising these children as part of the community, the Orphanarium (with assistance from the Collegium) trained and educated them. The interesting thing is how much the Cairn, as a whole, adopted these beings. They could be related - and maybe even their own children - so the Humans gained a unique place as the "ever-welcome relative". Without the inborn abilities of, say, a Dwarf or an Elf, and without the predestined and long-trained traditions of others, the Humans have forged their own path and adapted in ways others had never thought. They even improved on the methods of the other races in hunting, healing, etc.

Finding their own way, they have earned a reputation for their cunning and guile which has even put some into positions of leadership and trust.

Recent History

Humans were not around before the Fall. They have had to forge their own way by filling in roles others could not in society or improving upon them. Due to the relative youth of their race, it puts them in a unique position in many cases, where they can delegate or administer without any bias. Called on often to mediate disputes as one would a Sonarant, the Null are still finding their way, but they seem to be becoming more and more common as they continue to prove themselves.

Human Culture

Robare watched the two Hoblings square off. Each was a prestigious influencer in their communities. It seemed they were in some type of culinary turf war. While the outcomes were non-violent, these things were intense. Each had brought a covered dish to present to the other. These foods were supposed to be delicious and difficult to obtain. The young Human could see sweat forming on each of the participants' brows.

Slowly each of the Hoblings reached for their own dish and slowly raised it, watching the others face to see how they reacted. Robare shifted in his seat to get a view of each. "Chicken sausage with rare herbs cooked in a wood fire, pepper and seasoned with grains of a viper plant." Those around gasped as the first Hobling showed off his dish to the others. He had about 8 of them. The smell was delicious, and somehow made your nose run from the heat as much as the smell made your mouth water.

The second Hobling scowled and then slowly nodded as he raised his dish. "Grilled sections of the finest duku beast, seasoned for a fortnight in rare wines, and then grilled to perfection atop a forgemaster's forge!" He brought the dish around for others to see and many gasped.

Neither man seemed to recoil from the other and in turn took a bite of the other's food and slowly - painstakingly slowly - chewed it and narrowed eyes at each other. This culinary stare-down seemed intense for the... um.... combatants? The other observers were transfixed. Robare, not as much. Robare was hungry, and while eyes were on the two, he carefully wound an arm through and got a sample of each. He then turned around and sat with his back to the Hoblings as they espoused what they had gone through to make such things and how they had gotten them.

Robare, though he really did enjoy both, realized something was missing. Each had such a potent flavor that it drowned out all the work they had done. If only there was a way to mellow it and allow the subtle things to pop. A little sweet, a little bitter, and a little salty. "Hmm... cheese and bacon in a sauce for dipping... That's what they need." Everyone around him gasped and the two Hoblings both spun and pushed others out of the way to get to the Human. "What did you say, Null?" the first one barked.

"Your food... Both are amazing but..." he paused, choosing his words carefully. "I think for my personal taste... I could better appreciate all the work put into it if... maybe...you added...a beer cheese sauce with hints of Taltusk bacon..." he smiled sheepishly and shrugged.

Both Hoblings eyes widened at first in fury and then in...agreement? "Your salon, you have some of the best beer on tap," the first mused. "And you have that deal with those orcs that raise the pigs..." the second added.

Almost immediately, each looked to the other and smiled, shaking the others hand as onlookers whooped and cheered. Robare exhaled slowly and reached for a bit more food. With no culture of their own before the Fall, the Null have bonded together and look out for one another. They tend to take what they like or appreciate from other races, and then focus on it in a way few other races can.

Human Holidays & Celebrations

Humans don't have celebrations of their own, per se, but are welcome wherever they go, and it's very common to see a Human even at the most raucous or solemn of events.

Human Names

Humans tend to have simple names given to them by the Orphanarium, and they tend to begin with the letter of the alphabet based on when they arrived. The first may be named Ala, where the 4th to arrive would be Dana, and so on. Often Humans have adopted other names based on the professions they choose to follow or the image they wish to present.

Human Racial Notes

The Null have something to prove. The other races have their specialities; the Humans feel they are the “younger sibling”, and want to show the other races that they can be as important and belong just as the others do.

Human Dress

Humans take a bit of everything. They may dress to favor their parents, if somehow they know who they were, or what races they feel the most kinship with. Humans are often very practical, and you can tell what one does based on their gear. Humans are functional, and usually have a few tricks to help them out in a pinch, such as potions and elixirs to overcome situations where their more frail forms may be an issue.

Human Racial Makeup

None are required. They may adopt markings and tattoos, but they cannot be done in a way that would allow them to be mistaken for another race.

Interactions with Other Races

Humans are welcome and treated like family with all the races from the Protectorate. If any race is said to be closest to them, it would be the Harbingers. The Humans feel a kinship to them, in their being outsiders in a world they are not a natural part of. Many troubleshooting teams will see the Harbingers paired with a Human. The Harbingers, to their credit, treat the Null as equals in every respect, and even defer to one they find cunning and insightful, often supporting them for leadership roles.