

The Ariantu

The remnants of an ancient empire, the Ariantu are a cunning, cautious warrior race who once ruled a large interstellar empire. Modern Ariantu tend to be ruthless, opportunistic, and scheming- and long forlornly for their ancient glory.

Personality

Steeped in legends of past glory and trapped in a mediocre present, the Ariantu are highly stratified and resentful. The nobility (regardless of actual power or importance) are extremely jealous of their own prerogatives and ruthlessly quash any upstarts or those who challenge their power and position.

Depending upon their mood, the Ariantu take even the mildest contradiction (and even basic eye contact) as a challenge to be crushed and punished. Submission- if not abject groveling- are expected of subordinates and baring the throat (offering the opportunity to rip it out) is a common Ariantu gesture of resignation or compliance.

Because of their history, many Ariantu are possessed of a sense of racial superiority which makes Romulans look humble in comparison.

Although the Ariantu describe themselves as “hunters”, their opportunism and ruthlessness have earned them an unenviable reputation as untrustworthy, exploitative, and cruel. More than one observer has described them as “more weasel than fox”.

Physiology

The Ariantu stand an average of two meters tall, with thin, lanky builds which emphasize their musculature. They possess narrow, vulpine faces and bushy tails, and a thin coat of fur.

Governmental/Societal Structure

Ariantu culture is separated into clans called “paacs”) and is fundamentally divided between the commoners and the aristocracy and by gender. The Ariantu are a matriarchal species- females are given overt preference in position and power.

The Ariantu are divided into functional caste (such as laborers, engineers, artists, and warriors) all nominally ruled by the High Paacs of Ariant.

The council-of-clans format guarantees that politicking, back-biting, blackmail, conspiracy, and

Attributes:

+1 Reason, Daring, and Presence

Traits: Ariantu. Tall, rangy, and physically powerful, the Ariantu are descended from pouncing and pack hunters- vestigial traits that drive them to exploit the weaknesses of others to achieve their own ends.

Notes

The Ariantu first appeared in the TNG novel Doomsday Planet.

power-brokering are the norm within the government rather than the exception. In nearly all cases, any success on Ariant is based more on **who** you know rather than **what** you know.

Interstellar Relations

Ariantu relations with other species are essentially non-existent- though they seem to know an awful lot about the Federation, its laws, and its policies.

The Ariantu spent generations terrorizing and brutalizing most of the sector and even five thousand years later, remain reluctant to draw too much attention to themselves- leading many to believe they are extinct.

Enigmatic and mysterious the Ariantu remain hidden, lest their former subjects come seeking revenge. As one historian put it, the Ariantu “crawled into a hole and pulled it in after them”.

Technological Summary

The Ariantu are a Tech Level 5/6 society comparable to the early Federation (circa the 2180s) unremarkable and commonplace.

In the distant past, however, the ancient Ariantu were the most technologically advanced societies of their era; shunt drives (folded space transport), advanced subspace weaponry, and the ability to create an artificial world (Kirlos) made the Ariantu a people to be feared.

As fatigue with the seemingly endless war with the K'Vin set in, however, the Ariantu slowly retreated back to their homeworld and soon lost both space-flight capability and nearly all of their technological development. The Ariantu finally returned to space in the 24th century.

The crown jewel of ancient Ariantu technology is the artificial world of Kirlos- built as an ultimate weapon, and then reluctantly abandoned. Kirlos' ultimate function was mutual destruction alongside its target, transported by a powerful, but short-lived wormhole.

The Sullurh

The Sullurh are the descendants of the few Ariantu who remained on Kirlos as the Ariantu Empire retreated into itself. Their name literally means “those who stayed”. The Sullurh have taken great pains to obscure their true ancestry and are now all-but-unrecognizable as Ariantu.

Personality

Unlike their arrogant and aggressive kin, the Sullurh are diminutive, outwardly compliant, and self-effacing. With few exceptions, they take care not to draw attention to themselves, and tend to fade into the background during any sort of social exchange or event.

During their long stewardship of Kirlos, the Sullurh used selective breeding and surgical modification to alter their appearance and avoid being recognized when Kirlos was (eventually) rediscovered. To protect their secret, the Sullurh sacrificed their height, nearly all of their culture, and much of their pride. Characteristic of this sacrifice is the *enio'lo* ceremony- in which a Sullurh infant's vestigial (stump) tail is removed.

When outsiders finally arrived on Kirlos, the Sullurh worked hard to be unremarkable- even forgettable- to the newcomers while still infiltrating their administrations and operations. With no hope of resisting the invaders, the Sullurh instead assimilated with them, gaining influence and even control over their actions. The Sullurh carefully walked a fine line between cultivating the indifference and disregard of the newcomers neglect and earning their trust as laborers, functionaries, and ultimately, as trusted advisors.

Physiology

Despite being the same genetic stock as the tall, lithe, Ariantu, the Sullurh are short (usually under 1.6 meters in height) and small-boned- even delicate (at least in appearance).

Attributes:

+1 Control, Reason, and Daring

Traits: **Sullurh.** Diminutive, dutiful, and reliable, the Sullurh are descendants of the ancient Ariantu and faithful custodians of Kirlos.

Talents:

Unimposing: The Sullurh are annoyingly easy to lose track of. Whenever the character attempts a Task to slip out of a room, blend into a crowd, or otherwise “disappear” they may add an additional d20 to their dice pool.

Notes

The Sullurh first appeared in the TNG novel Doomsday Planet.

Governmental/Societal Structure

With a (comparatively) tiny population and a strong sense of purpose, the Sullurh manage their own affairs by relying upon common sense, their own strict code of conduct, and the wisdom of learned elders who function both as judges and religious leaders. Except when dealing with outworlders, the Sullurh prefer to handle their own affairs privately.

Interstellar Relations

Prior to 2366, the Sullurh are comparatively isolated from the galaxy-at-large by both the remoteness of Kirlos and their own strategy of “laying low”. The Sullurh have quietly (if indirectly) profited from the trade brought to their world by the K'Vin and the Federation, but- as in everything they do- have remained in the background while others take the lead and draw attention.

Technological Summary

Despite occupying the technological crown jewel of the Ancient Ariantu, the Sullurh gradually lost contact with their scientific and technological heritage, and are now largely dependent upon the K'Vin and the Federation for their science and technology. As the millennia passed, time took its toll on the machinery which maintains Kirlos, and the lack of maintenance led to decreased performance and spot failures. With the discovery of the Delta Level, however, K'Vin and Federation engineers have begun performing the necessary maintenance and repair.

Kirlos

Crown Jewel of the Ariantu Empire

Constructed more than five millennia ago by the ancient Ariantu Empire, Kirlos is the sole habitable world in the Sydon system, itself located at the edge of Federation space and bordering the nearby K'Vin Hegemony. As the Ariantu's reach exceeded its grasp (having expanded too far too fast) and wearied by endless war with the K'Vin, the Empire collapsed under its own weight, and the population withdrew to their homeworld, leaving behind a tiny population as caretakers until their return.

By the 2360s, Kirlos is (unreasonably) considered a forgotten, forgettable backwater with little strategic or intrinsic value- useful only for the trade that takes place on the world and as the sole diplomatic tie between the Federation and the K'Vin Hegemony. Even the various archaeological efforts to explore and preserve the nature of the ancient Ariantu are considered low-priority, and both funding and high-level interest from the Federation Science Council are lacking.

Kirlos is (unevenly) divided into several levels- Alpha, Beta, Delta, Gamma, and Omega each with its own function. Unlike the layers of an onion, however, the divisions within Kirlos are sectioned rather than covering the entire sphere. Much of the planet is unremarkable, homogeneous rock from the surface to its core.

Alpha Level is the exterior surface of the planet- barren and uninhabitable with a surface temperature of -62°C . Comprised of various unremarkable metals alloys, Alpha protects and seals the habitable volume of Kirlos from vacuum, radiation, and other astronomical hazards.

Beta Level represents the prime habitable volume of the world, but is only a tiny fraction of the theoretical interior surface area of just under $143,563,000 \text{ km}^2$ - rather than spreading out over the entire globe, Beta level is only a few hundred square kilometers in size and contains nearly all of the population (quartered in the capital, Kirlosia). Instead of vast internal vistas, Kirlosia is a broad shallow bowl bordered on all sides by unrelenting rock.

Beta and Gamma Levels (which comprise the habitable volume of Kirlos) are uncomfortably warm by human standards, as much of the life support machinery on the world is either out of adjustment or failing. Heat exhaustion is the most common injury (and cause of accidental death) on the planet. "Cool days to you and yours" is a common farewell on Kirlos.

Gamma Level is roughly eight kilometers (five miles) below Beta, and contains the machinery which keeps Kirlos habitable. Its discovery came none too soon as much of the machinery was become rundown and failing with age. The area is currently undergoing a continuous process of exploration and rehabilitation in an effort to improve living conditions on the planet. It is acknowledged, however, that the engineering teams could spend centuries on Delta Level without fully understanding the technology preserved there.

Five hundred meters below Gamma is the newly discovered Delta Level. Comprised of kilometers-long and kilometers-tall vaults of empty, echoing stone, Delta is believed to have served primarily as hangars, warehouses, and repair facilities- with only a single fly in the ointment; explorers have yet to discover any means in or out of Gamma Level. No doors, no transporters, no lifts, no tunnels.

Finally, the heart and soul of Kirlos is (until this adventure, the undiscovered) Omega Level, containing the weaponry and machinery by which the artificial planet would become a Doomsday weapon. Accessible by turbolift beneath the K'Vin Embassy, Omega Level contains a large number of armories- but more importantly- the Primary Control Center from which the Ariantu could target other worlds for destruction. Upon activation, the computers and controls of Omega Level would activate vast and powerful subspace engines, creating a temporary wormhole between Kirlos and its target world. Once the wormhole reached full strength, Kirlos would be pulled from its orbit and sent on a collision course with its victim, utterly destroying both.

Kirlosia

As noted above, the overwhelming majority of the population live in the close confines of the capital, with the result that the distinction between the two is often blurred, and the names are used interchangeably. Because the city has rigidly defined borders and a growing population, living space is at a premium and excavation, expansion, and construction are considered both an endless process and a high priority.

Kirlosia is quartered by two main thoroughfares: Embassy Run and "the Strip"- the only straight, normal roads

in the city. Embassy Run is aligned (essentially) north and south, leading from the Federation embassy to its K'Vin counterpart on the far side of the city. The Strip crosses Embassy Run at a diagonal (running northeast to southwest) , and that intersection is considered the heart of the city. The thousands of other, lesser roads in Kirlosia tend to be narrow, winding passages meandering between an *ad hoc* combination of ancient buildings and new construction. Visitors are advised to avoid these areas both because it is easy to become lost and because many of these streets are narrow, close, poorly lit, and occupied by unsavory elements from both sides.

The other major division in Kirlosia is political, and therefore harder to define and delineate. The Federation and Kirlosian sectors mark the sphere of influence of the respective embassy and coincide roughly with which embassy they are closer to from the Embassy Run/Strip intersection.

The Embassy Run/Strip intersection is widely considered to be both neutral ground and the economic and cultural heart of the city. A blaze of neon and holographic light and an eclectic mix of light and shadow, the junction is loud, boisterous, and blinding- usually deliberately so. The eclectic mix of light and shadow and of glitz and whisper provides access to every sort of (legal) establishment and vice. Merchants of every sort have their stores on hand, and services of every kind (licit and not) can be found, as the population of Kirlos (Federation, K'Vin, Sullurh, and others) mingle, but almost never mix. Even in the shoulder-to-shoulder atmosphere of Buseik's, members of the Hegemony do not casually mix with citizens of the Federation (or vice-versa).