

EX NIHILO



A SCI-FANTASY SETTING FOR
PATHFINDER SECOND EDITION



INTRODUCTION

The oldest accounts of recorded history tell of a cataclysm of cosmic scale. A great reckoning from which none were spared. This tragedy set back life throughout the cosmos to a more primitive stage. Whatever happened, the event had come out of nowhere, *out of nothing*. And so that became the event's name: **Ex Nihilo**.

Survivors didn't understand what had happened, but it didn't stop them from trying to come up with explanations. Stories varied from place to place, and as generations went by, fact became indistinguishable from myth. But not all was lost. Some knowledge managed to seep through the cracks of time, and was preserved in the form of religion. In fact, the trauma caused by Ex Nihilo replaced every previous creed and religion, and became the core of all new belief systems. Sacred rituals were passed down through generations, and with them crucial knowledge on how to operate the **Nexuses**, massive edifices that help channel fonts of raw arcane energy into practical applications. These locations became the new focal points for civilization, and it was because of their

preservation that civilization was not completely wiped out; for as long as the holy magical rituals have been enacted at these sites, they have somehow served to keep at bay the dangerous creatures that lurk the wilderness.

As generations went by, people learned once again how to grow crops, forge steel, and build castles. And now, after more than a thousand years of tribal war and suffering, empires and city states are beginning to coalesce. Many such nations hold to different versions of history, some more fervently than others. Wars continue to be fought over these beliefs, and over control of the Nexuses and the arcane fonts they channel.

But some insist the land still holds secrets about the past; legends rumor that the strange and ancient ruins which dot the planet hide relics of immense power, and tomes with unfathomable truths that would shake the foundations of every nation. They remain a mystery to this day; approaching them is no easy task. Dangerous creatures are a regular sight in the wilderness. Magical beings, some of them intelligent, roam the ruins and their surroundings.





But two decades ago, a magical codex referred to as the **Astrotechnicon** was retrieved from some ruins. Up until that point, practicing magic had always been a difficult task demanding lifelong dedication, an ascetic lifestyle, and teamwork; each spell was a complicated ritual undertaken by dozens of sages during day-long ceremonies. But when the Astrotechnicon was found, everything changed. Inside, the scriptures detailed more refined methods to undertake the arcane arts, and its practices spread quickly. Magic became a skill anyone could learn.

The Astrotechnicon also revealed many other methods of acquiring magical power: how to awaken a dormant magical lineage, how to commune with the powers of nature, how to receive the blessing of the **Astral Lords** through diligent prayer and worship, how to unlock the magic hidden in music and rhythm, how to forge pacts with powerful entities from other planes, and more.

With the exhuming of the Astrotechnicon, empires and city states focused their efforts inwards, on improving their cities with this newfound magic. But research also continued in other directions, and it was not long until magic was capable of utter devastation. As each empire understood how high the stakes of war had been raised, a fragile peace emerged.

Eventually, interest in uncovering additional magical texts grew, but in accordance with the peace, the empires agreed not to mobilize their own military forces into ruins. Instead, they jointly created a neutral company to undertake that task, **The Mandate**. The company organizes and trains adventuring parties of brave souls from the different empires to explore the ruins. The danger is very real; only the most courageous or desperate heed the call, and only the most outstanding have a chance of surviving the journey.

To make matters even more interesting, cities have started reporting on the appearance of a new race of people all over the continent. They call themselves the Jadra, and their unwelcome presence has put a strain on the delicate peace. They are a civilized people, but they've run into territorial conflict due to their sudden arrival, causing a cascade of skirmishes between empires. Tensions are high, and much rests on the shoulders of the adventuring parties.

You are one of such adventurers who will soon depart on their mission. During your journey, you will make friends and foes as you travel uncharted lands, you will gain power, wealth, and glory, and you will unearth secrets that will change the world around you. There are many choices you will take, but only the Astral Lords know what awaits you.



ANCESTRIES



There are no elves or dwarves to be found here. Although you might find a few similarities with ancestries you already know of, the people of this world are different because they are a product of the setting's land and history. There are seven main ancestries, with three hybrid ancestries, and many heritage ancestry feats that unlock sub-categories within each ancestry. After selecting your ancestry and starting ancestry feats, your character should feel like they come from a specific sub-group of your ancestry. This is why Ex Nihilo has a variant for ancestry feats: characters may begin with two ancestry feats, and do not gain ancestry feats as they level up, but can instead improve those they already have. More information about ancestry feats can be found in each ancestry's section.

Ancestry	Description	Ability Boosts	Ability Flaw
Alter	Alters are a fast, shapechanging people. Shrewd and creative, but aloof of grand schemes. They strongly relate with space and form.	Dexterity, Wisdom, Free	Constitution
Anxia	Anxia are an agile, beautiful, people. Highly vigilant and political, but often mercurial. They have both a lunar and tactile affinity.	Dexterity, Charisma, Free	Strength
Gauth	Gauths are a tall, strong, colorful people. Patient and traditional, but fierce if provoked. They are attuned to vibration and sound.	Strength, Wisdom, Free	Intelligence
Jadra	Jadras are pale, plane-touched people. Just and proud, but primed for confrontation. They are linked to the elements and alignments.	Strength, Intelligence, Free	Wisdom
Legate*	Legates are a diverse, widespread people. Ambitious and hopeful, but domineering at times. They have an odd connection with time.	Free, Free	—
Noct	Noct are dark, sharp-featured people. Austere and logical, but extremely adamant. They are aligned to both light and darkness.	Constitution, Intelligence, Free	Charisma
Saerlig	Saerlig are identical, fair-skinned people. Expressive and eclectic, but seldom serious. They are bonded to emotion and identity.	Constitution, Charisma, Free	Dexterity

*Half-alter, half-gauth, and half-noct are accessible through Legate ancestry feats.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In order to understand the ancestries, it's important to know a few details about the way people lived. The details presented here are just the basics, and are explored more in depth in further chapters. Years are measured starting from 0 EN, the time at which Ex Nihilo occurred.

AGE OF CHAOS (0EN - ~150EN)

Not much is known about the early years after Ex Nihilo, except for the common knowledge that the entire cosmos, and this world along with it, was consumed in absolute chaos. Scholars theorize that a vast majority of people on this world used to live in what are now the ancient ruins, and most of them died during or right after Ex Nihilo. Survivors from all areas fled to the safety of the nexuses.

Even then, it was not uncommon for nexuses to partially shut down, due to general ignorance or incompetence on how to keep them operational, allowing occasional monsters from the wilderness to assault the otherwise safe havens. The operational procedures for the nexuses slowly became ingrained into society in the form of sacred rituals, eventually normalizing the state of nexuses.

Power struggles among survivors living in the nexuses were also common, fueled by fear, desperation, or outright greed and ambition. The death toll these civil wars took, along with the death from invading monsters, ensured population numbers did not rise during this age.

There were three exceptions to the general state of things during this age: alters, anxia, and jadras. Alters were one of many groups of people that for some unfortunate reason

were not afforded the protection of a nexus, but thanks to their ability to transform their bodies, they survived by navigating the wilderness in camouflage, hiding from monsters and scavenging for food.

Jadras have a different story. It's unknown if they lived on a different world, or just an unknown continent, but when Ex Nihilo happened, their entire region was invaded by legions of demons. Their age of chaos took the form of a losing war against seemingly endless waves of abyssal fiends.

Finally, it is unknown if Anxia actually existed during this age, since there is no record of them.

AGE OF ISOLATION (~150EN - ~750EN)

After the initial chaos subsided, settlements and cities still remained isolated out of necessity. Leaving the protective radius of a nexus meant facing the powerful monsters stalking the wilderness. Migration or cultural exchange were extremely rare during the first 700 years after Ex Nihilo.

Alters were instrumental to bringing about this age. Having mastered safely traversing the wilderness, and leading a nomadic lifestyle, they began trading increasingly more and more with settlements of other ancestries, thus forging the earliest trade routes. The start of trade brought about a relative abundance, which put an end to most of the violence and internal struggle that characterized the age of chaos.

During the first century of this age, Jadras discovered a way to seal demons within themselves and use their powers. As they mastered this ability, it helped them turn back the tide of war, but at the cost of their natural forms. By the end of this age, they had almost retaken all of their homeland.

GAUTH

Calm and quiet, gauths make their home on the edges of civilization. Deeply introspective, yet fierce if provoked, they defend their homelands against all invaders. Gauths are beings of heritage and traditions... traditions which have served them well against the changing times.

TALL AND COLORFUL

Gauths stand out. They are unusually tall, 1.90m on average, and have naturally colorful skin. Yet their skin color is not determined by parentage, but by random chance; red, blue, yellow, or their paired combinations; orange, green, purple. Likewise, how dark, light, or rich a particular individual's skin color is also random. Their irises are the same color as their skin.

Their hair is completely white, and they take great care to decorate, braid, or otherwise achieve intricate styles with it while keeping it as white as possible. This styling is seen not so much as aesthetic self-expression, but as a sign of hygiene, self-care, and respect for tradition.

Gauth clothing is functional and determined by their castes, although each settlement usually has variations in style due to different traditions. Crystals and gems are a common sight among their accessories due to their affinity for them, and are usually embedded in their personal belongings as markers of ownership.

DEEP VIBRATIONS

The minds and bodies of gauths are tuned to a low frequency resonant state. This gives them a curious relationship with sound and vibration. They can detect sounds in much lower frequencies than other races can hear. A gauth can feel rivers, coastlines, avalanches, earthquakes, volcanic activity, magma flowing underground, waterfalls, rain, tornadoes, wind moving through underground caverns, and other natural phenomena. This sense is heightened within a short distance, allowing them to feel the movement of nearby creatures and know their location.

Because of their attunement to low frequencies, gauths move deliberately and take things slowly, and because of their affinity for sound, they particularly enjoy music. Music is highly valued in gauth society; good musicians and singers are deeply respected and gauths produce some of the best musical performers and instruments in the world.

Gauths are generally calm and slow to anger, as they prefer to listen than to talk, but when words fail and push comes to shove, gauths can exhibit a burst of power and speed that has earned them their reputations as fierce defenders of their territory. These impressive displays of speed leave them exhausted, but fortunately their resonant state also makes their bodies recover from mental and physical fatigue faster than normal.

HEIRARCHY AND TRADITION

Gauths live under a strict caste system based on skin color, but each clan has differing ideas on which skin color should undertake which tasks. A blue-skinned gauth might belong to the caste of the spear in one clan, while in another they would belong to the caste of the mind. No matter which caste they labor under, a gauth can retire to leisure after a century

of service to their clan.

The clans are divided in two categories of three each. The clans of the spear, staff, and hammer represent the military, arcane, and construction forces, while the clans of the mind, body, and soul represent the administrative, agricultural, and religious forces. A gauth usually belongs only to one caste, but those who wish to take on additional responsibilities can join a second clan of the other category. Gauths of all castes take great pride in honing their skills to the highest degree, but gauth life is rife with rituals that slow everything down. Even then, their finished products are often superior to those of other races.

Gender roles in gauth society are strict. Men are expected to be self-sacrificing and, while women practice crafts indoors. Many aspects of their culture are divided by gender, and they do not tolerate any breach of tradition. Those who go against tradition are shunned and ostracised, and a sizable number of Gauths choose to leave their clans.

Even when living elsewhere, gauths usually like to live among each other, so it's common to see small gauth districts in cities of other races. Gauths living in other cities refer to themselves as Exiles. For some, it's a title which carries great shame, for others it's one they carry proudly. Gauths which reject their ancestral way of life usually dye their hair as a sign of liberation.



GAUTH LANGUAGE AND NAMES

Even though they were one of the first races to start recording their history in writing, gauths still have a rich oral tradition. Gauth scripture is more complicated than it looks; it has few runes, and words are often short, but there are a plethora of diacritical accents. This is because Gauth verbal communication relies heavily on inflection and intonation.

Gauths remain nameless from the time of their birth until the day they learn to speak. Upon uttering a word, any full word which isn't currently a name in that clan, that word becomes their personal name. This makes gauth names incredibly diverse, and oddly enough, their names are not tied to gender. When around other races, gauths often use a 'Legatized' version of their personal names to make them more understandable.

Apart from personal names, gauths also carry a caste name and a clan rune. Caste names are taken on upon reaching adulthood, the time in which each gauth must join two castes, and is formed by combining them, e.g. Têm-Àhl. Clan runes consist of a single letter, are only used when traveling outside of the clan, and replace caste names during that time. Exiles must rescind both their caste name and clan rune, and sometimes they also choose to change their personal names.

Personal Names (Legatized): Äpl (Apple), Băöx (Books), G'rín (Green), Jc'r (Joker), Mkāl (Metal), Mûén (Moon), Ócl (Oak), R-öp (Rope), Rë'k (Rook), Rvár (River), S-láz (Slice), Së'd (Shade), Tña (Tuna), Vsét (Vest), W'äj (Wall).

Caste Names (Legatized): Ísh (Spear), Têm (Staff), Dòl (Hammer), Àhl (Soul), Èhl (Mind), Ôhl (Body).

Clan Runes: can be any single letter or number, and usually carries a diacritic accent when written down.

GAUTH TRAITS

All Gauth characters have these traits in common.

Age. Gauths' slow metabolism makes them reach adulthood only until 30, but they can live up to 150 years.

Hit Points. Gauths have 10 base HP.

Size. Gauths are medium, stand between 5'10" and 6'6" and weigh between 15 and 23 bulk.

Speed. Your base land speed is 20 feet.

Ability Boosts. Strength, Wisdom, Free.

Ability Flaw. Intelligence.

Languages. Gauth.

Bonus Languages. At 1st level, with at least 10 INT you also know Legate. With at least 12 you also know another common language. With at least 14 you also know another common or an uncommon language. With at least 16, you also know another common, uncommon, or a rare language.

Traits. Gauth, Humanoid.

Infrasound. You can perceive natural phenomena through Perception, with a DC equal to the number of miles away.

Tremorsense. You can feel the vibrations caused by movement through a solid surface at a range of 10ft.

ANCESTRY FEATS

At 1st level, you gain two ancestry feats. Every 4 levels thereafter (5th, 9th, 13th, 17th) you choose one of these options:

1. Gain 1 ancestry feat and improve 1 ancestry feat's tier.
2. Improve 2 different ancestry feats to a higher tier.

CAREFUL PATIENCE

FEAT 1

Gauth *You take things slowly but you act deliberately, often giving you better results.*

Tier 1: You can spend twice as much downtime as usual on a downtime activity to receive a +2 circumstance bonus to all checks related to that downtime activity.

Tier 2: Time spent is x1.75, and the bonus increases to +3.

Tier 3: Time spent is x1.5, and the bonus increases to +4.

Tier 4: Time spent is x1.25, and the bonus increases to +5.

Tier 5: Time spent is x1, and the bonus increases to +6.

CLAWS (CASTE OF THE BODY)

FEAT 1

Gauth, Body **Prerequisite** You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the mind, soul, or exile traits.

You carry an ancient and savage aspect of your heritage, which allows you to produce or retract massive claws from your fingers.

Tier 1: You can cast *Dragon Claws* once per day. The damage and resistance provided depends on your skin color: Red (Fire), Blue (Cold), Yellow (Electricity), Green (Acid), Purple (Poison), and Orange (Sonic).

Tier 2: You cast per day is heightened (3rd).

Tier 3: You cast per day is heightened (5th).

Tier 4: You cast per day is heightened (7th).

Tier 5: You cast per day is heightened (9th).

CRYSTAL LIFE BATTERY

FEAT 1

Gauth **Requirements** a crystal or gem the size of your palm, worth at least 10gp per tier

You have learned how to infuse your own vital energy into crystals, for you to retrieve in times of need.

Tier 1: As a minute-long activity, you charge the crystal with positive energy. You are drained 1, or if you are already drained, it increases by 1. As an action, while holding the charged crystal, you can drain its charge to restore up to 5 HP. Only you can use this crystal in this way. The crystal can be recharged afterwards. The crystal can hold a charge for up to a week.

Tier 2: The crystal instead restores 10 HP.

Tier 3: The crystal instead restores 15 HP.

Tier 4: The crystal instead restores 20 HP.

Tier 5: The crystal instead restores 25 HP.

CRYSTAL SONIC BOMB

FEAT 1

Gauth **Requirements** a crystal or gem the size of your palm, worth at least 10gp per tier

You invest your vital energy to energize crystals into an unstable energy configuration.

Tier 1: As a minute-long activity, you charge the crystal with sonic energy. You are drained 1, or if you are already drained, it increases by 1. As an action, while holding the charged crystal, you can throw it like a thunderstone, with the same results, but its save DC is 10 + your CON modifier, and the crystal is drained of its charge instead of destroyed. Only you can use this crystal in this way. The crystal can be recharged afterwards. The crystal can hold a charge for up to a week.

Tier 2: It deals x2 damage, and its save DC is 15 + CON mod.

Tier 3: It deals x3 damage, and its save DC is 20 + CON mod.

Tier 4: It deals x4 damage, and its save DC is 25 + CON mod.

Tier 5: It deals x5 damage, and its save DC is 30 + CON mod.

FINE TUNING

FEAT 1

Gauth *You've honed your senses to perceive vibration at further distances.*

Tier 1: Your tremorsense increases to 15ft.

Tier 2: Your tremorsense increases to 20ft.

Tier 3: Your tremorsense increases to 25ft.

Tier 4: Your tremorsense increases to 30ft.

Tier 5: Your tremorsense increases to 35ft.

◆ FREQUENCY SHIFT (CASTE OF THE MIND) FEAT 1

Gauth, Mind **Prerequisite** You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the body, soul or exile traits.

You've learned how to generate intense psychic vibrations that shift your body a few feet across space and a second back in time.

Tier 1: Once per day, teleport up to 5ft to an unoccupied space you can see, and you restore up to 5 HP that you lost during the last action or activity.

Tier 2: Instead teleport up to 10ft, and restore up to 10 HP.

Tier 3: Instead teleport up to 15ft, and restore up to 15 HP.

Tier 4: Instead teleport up to 20ft, and restore up to 20 HP.

Tier 5: Instead teleport up to 25ft, and restore up to 25 HP.

◆ HARMONIZE BODY (CASTE OF THE HAMMER) FEAT 1

Gauth, Hammer **Prerequisite** You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the spear, staff, or exile traits.

Long hours of hard labor have taught you ways to manage your body's inner workings to avoid hurting yourself.

Tier 1: You gain 3 temporary HP, which lasts 1 hour.

Tier 2: You gain 6 temporary HP, which last 1 hour.

Tier 3: You gain 9 temporary HP, which last 1 hour.

Tier 4: You gain 12 temporary HP, which last 1 hour.

Tier 5: You gain 15 temporary HP, which last 1 hour.

◆ POWER BURST FEAT 1

Gauth **Requirements** You can't be fatigued.

You can bring forth a surprising burst of speed and strength, at the cost of taxing your body.

Tier 1: You gain the quick condition until end of turn. At the end of your turn, you are fatigued for 1 minute.

Tier 2: Instead, you are only fatigued for 1d2+2 rounds.

Tier 3: Instead, you are only fatigued for 1d4 rounds.

Tier 4: Instead, you are only fatigued for 1d2 rounds.

Tier 5: Instead, you are only fatigued for 1d2-1 rounds.

RESONANT ARMOR (CASTE OF THE STAFF) FEAT 1

Gauth, Staff **Prerequisite** You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the spear, hammer, or exile traits.

You can shape the natural vibrations of your body into an enveloping shell that protects you from harm.

Tier 1: You can cast *Mage Armor* once per day.

Tier 2: You cast per day is heightened (2nd).

Tier 3: You cast per day is heightened (4th).

Tier 4: You cast per day is heightened (6th).

Tier 5: You cast per day is heightened (8th).

ROBUST METABOLISM FEAT 1

Gauth *Your body can more easily overcome exhaustion.*

Tier 1: Resting reduces your drained condition by 2.

Tier 2: Reduce the penalties from fatigue by 1.

Tier 3: Resting reduces your drained condition by 3.

Tier 4: Reduce the penalties from fatigue by 2.

Tier 5: Resting reduces your drained condition by 4.

◆ SOUL BURN (EXILE) FEAT 1

Gauth, Exile **Range** touch; **Targets** 1 living creature.

Prerequisite You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the spear, staff, hammer, mind, body, or soul traits.

You invest your metabolism onto the target, setting off violent vibrations which burn their insides.

Tier 1: Make a melee touch attack, dealing fire damage equal to twice your level on a success, or twice that much on a critical success. You are drained 1, or if you were already drained, increase it by 1.

Tier 2: The feat gains a range of 10ft.

Tier 3: The range increases to 25ft.

Tier 4: The range increases to 50ft.

Tier 5: The range increases to 100ft.

◆ SOUL REACH (CASTE OF THE SOUL) FEAT 1

Gauth, Soul **Prerequisite** You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the body, mind, or exile traits.

Range touch; **Targets** 1 willing living creature.

You invest your metabolism onto the target, setting off resonant vibrations which heal their wounds.

Tier 1: You restore Hit Points equal to twice your level to a willing living target. You are drained 1, or if you were already drained, increase it by 1.

Tier 2: The feat gains a range of 10ft.

Tier 3: The range increases to 25ft.

Tier 4: The range increases to 50ft.

Tier 5: The range increases to 100ft.

VIOLENT BURST (CASTE OF THE SPEAR) FEAT 1

Gauth, Spear **Prerequisites** Power Burst, can't select this feat if you have a feat with the staff, hammer, or exile traits.

Your burst urges you to violence and empowers your blows.

Tier 1: When you use the Power Burst free action, you also gain a +1 conditional bonus to damage rolls with melee weapons and unarmed Strikes until end of turn. The bonus is halved if your weapon or unarmed Strike is agile.

Tier 2: The conditional bonus increases to +2.

Tier 3: The conditional bonus increases to +3.

Tier 4: The conditional bonus increases to +4.

Tier 5: The conditional bonus increases to +5.

WEAPON FAMILIARITY (GAUTH) FEAT 1

Gauth *You favor the traditional weapons of your people, used to fend off invaders since ages past.*

Tier 1: You are trained with the greatspear and the spear-thrower. In addition, you gain access to all uncommon gauth weapons. For the purpose of proficiencies, you treat martial gauth weapons as simple weapons and exotic gauth weapons as martial weapons.

Tier 2: Whenever you critically hit using a gauth weapon, you apply the weapon's critical specialization effect.

Tier 3: Gauth weapons you wield have deadly 1d6.

Tier 4: Gauth weapons you wield have deadly 1d8.

Tier 5: Gauth weapons you wield have deadly 1d10.

ANXIA

Sensorial and always alert, anxia can be found anywhere that's swayed by the moon's tide. This female-only race is split into factions, and they've been waging a covert war with each other ever since.

LITHE AND VIGILANT

Anxia are an all-female race. They are 1.60m tall on average, their skin ranges from pale to dark brown, and their hair from blonde to brown to black. Their skin is soft, delicate and sensible to stimulus, much like their own emotions, and they have perfectly symmetrical facial features, each one a designed and carefully crafted work of art.

Due to their increased sensory and emotional sensibility, anxia are restless and uneasy. They are naturally ready to act on the defensive, and have lightning-fast reflexes. In combination with their supple joints, anxia can pull off strange acrobatic maneuvers that seem to defy their anatomy. Anxia are usually thinking, feeling, and processing many things at once, which allows them to parse their surroundings instantly and be eerily aware of any danger around them.

Anxia usually dress in special clothing of their own making to soothe their sensible skin, but aesthetically they choose styles that are fashionable in their city or social circle.

SISTERS OF THE MOON

Anxia have a deep reverence for "Great Sister", their name for the moon. It holds a measure of power and control over them, and Anxia feel a soothing calmness when it travels the sky, making them cool, and confident. But when the moon is hidden, Anxia return to their natural state of restlessness.

Anxia have a visible tell: when Great Sister is in the sky their eyes glow a soft green, letting others know they are calm, and in its absence their eyes glow a rich red, warning others that they are likely on edge.

Anxia grow up in small, secret communities called dens, usually removed from civilization, and where non-anxia are forbidden. Upon reaching adulthood at 16, anxia are expelled from their dens and usually join their coven members in a foreign city. Anxia can only reproduce by mating with males of other races, and their offspring are always anxia. If they choose to mate, they must return to their den to give birth, then they must leave again. Anxia usually live up to 80 years, but at 50 they are allowed to retire to a den and become matrons, where they help raise young anxia to adulthood.

Anxia babies are born practically featureless, and as matrons nurture them with love, play, and affection, they literally give shape to their bodies and faces, crafting them into sublime objects of beauty after years of rearing and upbringing. Like a group of grandmothers taking care of their daughters' young, matrons take great pride in their collective efforts to further their coven's lineage.

THE COVEN WAR

Since the first years after Ex Nihilo, anxia have assembled into covens, each with their own way of life, and each at war with all the others. Not only do they have strong ideological differences, but they come into conflict with each other over "mating territory".

Anxia are naturally interdependent, but their restless personality make them distrustful. Anxia take bonds of friendship very seriously. If they trust someone enough to give them their friendship or love (which is not easy), they will give everything to help and protect them, but they will expect the same in times of need. Failure to do this is a grievous betrayal to an anxia... it usually means a death sentence set to the next moon, and even if they run, an anxia will hold a grudge forever. Even then, coven laws and orders take precedence over any other friendships, laws and associations.

Anxia try to keep the violence of the coven war between themselves, and loathe to cause collateral damage. They know if they start posing a threat to the cities they inhabit, they might no longer be welcome there, so it's in all of their interests to keep a low profile. There are places where the covert brutality of the Anxia has unintentionally come to light, and in those places people are outright hostile to anxia, seeing them as parasites to be exterminated. These are usually outliers and small settlements, as noble houses of major cities and empires welcome anxia for their beauty and company, and sometimes even work to cover up the few instances where the coven war spills onto others.



ANXIA LANGUAGE AND NAMES

Anxia share a common language, but it has no spoken form. Instead, it takes two alternate forms: hand prints and touch communication.

Anxia have the ability to leave magical impressions of their hands on any surface. These palm prints are full of coded information. An anxia can place their hand onto a palm print and read it by touch as any other person would read a page of text. Non-anxia can read these messages only if they know the language, but it takes them a week to decipher.

Anxia can also communicate secretly by holding hands; they can share information as fluidly as if speaking to each other. This has created the impression in many other races that Anxia enjoy holding hands, and that they naturally enjoy each other's physical company, when in reality this practice is mostly used to share coven war secrets, sometimes even to have verbal fights and send death threats to members of other covens without causing a commotion.

Anxia have personal names only, as they usually keep their coven allegiances secret while in public conversation. Personal names are assigned to babies by their mothers on the day they leave them in the care of matrons, and they are usually the names of flowers, minerals, or emotions.

Personal Names: Agate, Acacia, Belladonna, Calla, Despair, Devotion, Dahlia, Envy, Euphoria, Galena, Garnet, Holly, Ivy, Iridium, Jade, Jasper, Joy, Love, Opal, Poppy, Pride, Larimar, Malachite, Rage, Salvia, Silver, Solace, Topaz, Violet, Woe, Zircon.

ANXIA TRAITS

All Anxia characters have these traits in common.

Age. Anxia grow quickly, reaching adulthood at 16, and living up to 80 years on average.

Hit Points. Anxia have 6 base HP.

Size. Anxia are medium, stand between 5'0" and 5'5" and weigh between 8 to 12 bulk.

Speed. Your base land speed is 25 feet.

Ability Boosts. Dexterity, Charisma, Free.

Ability Flaw. Strength.

Languages. Anxia (see below).

Bonus Languages. At 1st level, with at least 10 INT you also know Legate. With at least 12 you also know another common language. With at least 14 you also know another common or an uncommon language. With at least 16, you also know another common, uncommon, or a rare language.

Traits. Anxia, Humanoid.

Lunar Tide. When the moon is overhead (from sunrise to noon, and from sunset to midnight) you treat the frightened condition as if it was 1 lower. At all other times you get a +1 circumstance bonus to perception instead.

Touch-speech. You can hold hands with other Anxia to communicate silently. You can also read or create magical hand-shaped coded messages up to 500 characters long, by spending one minute in direct contact with a surface. Prints are permanent, unless targeted with *Dispel Magic*.

ANCESTRY FEATS

At 1st level, you gain two ancestry feats. Every 4 levels thereafter (5th, 9th, 13th, 17th) you choose one of these options:

1. Gain 1 ancestry feat and improve 1 ancestry feat's tier.
2. Improve 2 different ancestry feats to a higher tier.

DANGER AWARENESS

FEAT 1

Anxia You have learned to stay aware of any potential threats even when you feel the comfort of the Great Sister.

Tier 1: Lunar Tide's perception bonus is always active.

Tier 2: Lunar Tide's perception bonus increases to +2.

Tier 3: Lunar Tide's perception bonus increases to +3.

Tier 4: Lunar Tide's perception bonus increases to +4.

Tier 5: Lunar Tide's perception bonus increases to +5.

EMOTIONAL SENSIBILITY

FEAT 1

Anxia You can easily see through the figurative masks people put on to hide their true emotions.

Tier 1: You can forgo rolling a perception check to know when someone is trying to hide their feelings and instead receive a result of 10.

Tier 2: The result increases to 15.

Tier 3: The result increases to 20.

Tier 4: The result increases to 25.

Tier 5: The result increases to 30.

FAERIE COVEN

FEAT 1

Anxia, Coven Prerequisite You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the coven trait.

Your covenant bonds with the land to infuse themselves with its charm, and to move without being noticed. They help their community and form an emotional symbiosis.

Tier 1: You can cast *Pass Without Trace* once per day.

Tier 2: You can cast *Charm Person* once per day, with a Will DC of 15 + your CON modifier.

Tier 3: The DC is instead 20 + your CON modifier.

Tier 4: The DC is instead 25 + your CON modifier.

Tier 5: The DC is instead 30 + your CON modifier.

FORBIDDEN PATH

FEAT 1

Anxia, Coven Prerequisite You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the coven trait.

Every coven forbids this process in which an anxia can transform themselves into a horrifying monstrosity.

Tier 1: You know Aklo, and you have darkvision, but you have a -1 penalty to appeal and you are shunned by other Anxia.

Tier 2: You gain a climb speed of 20, telepathy to a range of 30ft, and the penalty to appeal increases to -2.

Tier 3: You gain immunity to confusion, and the penalty to appeal increases to -3.

Tier 4: You gain resistance 5 to any damage, and the penalty to appeal increases to -4.

Tier 5: You gain a frightful presence (aura, emotion, fear, mental) of 30ft with a DC of 30 + your CON mod, you lose the humanoid trait and gain the aberration trait, and the penalty to appeal increases to -5.

LYCANTHROPIC COVEN

FEAT 1

Anxia, Coven Prerequisite You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the coven trait.

Your covenant can hybridize with animal aspects to ravage enemies and enhance themselves. They value bravery and prefer physical confrontation over covert action.

Tier 1: While the moon is overhead (from sunrise to noon, and from sunset to midnight), you can cast *Wild Claws* at will.

Tier 2: Your cast is heightened (2nd).

Tier 3: Your cast is heightened (4th).

Tier 4: Your cast is heightened (5th).

Tier 5: Your cast is heightened (6th).

MATRON

FEAT 1

Anxia **Prerequisite** You're at least 50 years old.

You're of advanced age, and you've retired from city life to live in a den, taking care of younger generations.

Tier 1: You have a +2 circumstance bonus to the craft activity and to survive in the wild.

Tier 2: The bonus increases to +3.

Tier 3: The bonus increases to +4.

Tier 4: The bonus increases to +5.

Tier 5: The bonus increases to +6.

PSIONIC COVEN

FEAT 1

Anxia, Coven **Prerequisite** You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the coven trait.

Your covenant can instantly notify allies of their location and force entry into enemy minds. The psionic coven weaves their power through institutions, silently and legally.

Tier 1: You can cast the *Message* cantrip.

Tier 2: You can cast *Mind Reading* once per day, with a Will DC of 15 + your CON modifier.

Tier 3: The DC is instead 20 + your CON modifier.

Tier 4: The DC is instead 25 + your CON modifier.

Tier 5: The DC is instead 30 + your CON modifier.

◆ PSYCHIC BEACON

FEAT 1

Anxia **Requirements** You haven't used Psychic Beacon in the past 24 hours.

You can send an instantaneous psychic message notifying allies that you are in distress and require help.

Tier 1: One ally of your choice on your same plane knows your current location, and knows you are in danger.

Tier 2: You can choose up to 5 allies instead, and they know your location for the next 24 hours even if it changes.

Tier 3: The chosen allies can also hear at your location as if with the *Clairaudience* spell, and this ability also works across planes.

Tier 4: The chosen allies can also see your location as if with the *Clairvoyance* spell, and you can communicate mentally with them for one minute every hour.

Tier 5: You can communicate mentally with your chosen allies at will, and this ability works across any and all effects that might block communication.

SANGUINE COVEN

FEAT 1

Anxia, Coven **Prerequisite** You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the coven trait.

Your covenant has ties to vampirism and blood pacts. The sanguine coven moves the underworld, controlling crime, and selling vice.

Tier 1: You can cast the *Stabilize* cantrip.

Tier 2: You can cast *Vampiric Touch* once per day.

Tier 3: Your cast per day is heightened (5th).

Tier 4: Your cast per day is heightened (7th).

Tier 5: Your cast per day is heightened (9th).

SPIRITUAL COVEN

FEAT 1

Anxia, Coven **Prerequisite** You can't select this feat if you have a feat with the coven trait.

Your covenant tugs at the souls of enemies, and channels spirits to collect them. They are outsiders and vagabonds, both unpredictable and depraved.

Tier 1: You can cast the *Phantom Pain* once per day.

Tier 2: You can cast *Phantasmal Killer* once per day, with a Will DC of 15 + your CON modifier.

Tier 3: It's save DC is 20 + CON mod, and heightened (5th).

Tier 4: It's save DC is 25 + CON mod, and heightened (7th).

Tier 5: It's save DC is 30 + CON mod, and heightened (9th).

SUBLIME VISAGE

FEAT 1

Anxia *Matrons took a particular care when designing your features, making your face and silhouette truly beautiful.*

Tier 1: You have a +2 bonus to appeal.

Tier 2: You instead have a +3 bonus to appeal.

Tier 3: You instead have a +4 bonus to appeal.

Tier 4: You instead have a +5 bonus to appeal.

Tier 5: You instead have a +6 bonus to appeal.

SUPPLE JOINTS

FEAT 1

Anxia *Your joints are extremely flexible, able to bend at angles that would seriously injure anyone else.*

Tier 1: You have a +2 circumstance bonus to Acrobatics when you Squeeze or Escape.

Tier 2: The bonus increases to +3.

Tier 3: The bonus increases to +4.

Tier 4: The bonus increases to +5.

Tier 5: The bonus increases to +6.

TACTILE DETECTION

FEAT 1

Anxia *Your palms are extremely sensible; they can detect trace particles even if they are floating in the air.*

Tier 1: While at least one of your hands is free and uncovered, you have scent 15 ft, and a +1 circumstance bonus to track and identify alchemy.

Tier 2: Your scent increases to 30 ft and the bonus to +2.

Tier 3: Your scent increases to 60 ft and the bonus to +3.

Tier 4: Your scent increases to 90 ft and the bonus to +4.

Tier 5: Your scent increases to 120 ft and the bonus to +5.

WEAPON FAMILIARITY (ANXIA)

FEAT 1

Anxia *You favor the precise and manouverable weapons that are a shared legacy of all covens.*

Tier 1: You are trained with the wristblade and the tri-claw. In addition, you gain access to all uncommon anxia weapons. For the purpose of proficiencies, you treat martial anxia weapons as simple weapons and exotic anxia weapons as martial weapons.

Tier 2: Whenever you critically hit using a rapier, shuriken, or an anxia weapon, you apply the weapon's critical specialization effect.

Tier 3: Rapiers and anxia weapons you wield have twin.

Tier 4: Rapiers and anxia weapons you wield have reach.

Tier 5: Rapiers and anxia weapons you wield have sweep.