ETHERNAUTS

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When the Shattering broke Celmae

None could have foreseen

That it would be the beginning

Of the end of the universe

The future is fractured
**ETHEREAUMS**

**Description:** Ethereauts, Void Pilgrims, Arkites, Mist Sailors, Gens Nodonti—these enigmatic wanderers have acquired many names on many worlds in their centuries-long quests across the Void and through the Ethereal Plane. Among their own kind, they call themselves the Phorwyrs (roughly translated, seekers). Phorwyrs most readily accept being called Ethereauts, for they are quite proud of their racial history of crossing the Deep Ethereal (which they call the Great Abyss.)

The species developed from human origins, as genetic tests and medical examinations have confirmed, but fusion with alien nanites and generations of exposure to null gravity and the strange energies of the Ethereal Plane have altered the Ethereauts far from baseline human stock.

The physical differences are obvious: slim or gaunt build with long limbs and spidery fingers, skin so pale it verges on translucence, quicksilver eyes, and an aspect of alien beauty.

Ethereauts can see ethereal emanations as well as in the range of light visible to ordinary humans.

Even as children, Phorwyrs look on the world with old, sad eyes and speak in knowing tones of places they have never visited. The dead seem as close as the living, at times. And the past is present.

A combination of physiological and psychological traits give Ethereauts improved social and emotional intelligence, and grants an array of latent mnemonic responses to dangerous situations.

**History:** The ancestors of the Ethereauts were human space explorers who discovered an alien vault in a demiplane in the Deep Ethereal.

The vault contained microscopic nanite swarms. These microscopic machines were accidentally brought back to the mothership by the survey party. Aboard the ship, the nanites infiltrated life support systems, and then colonized the bodies of most of the crew before being discovered.

Alien knowledge, dreamlike and fragmentary, flooded the minds of the affected humans. Madness and illness gripped many. In time, most recovered, but all those exposed had been altered down to the genetic level. The explorers had unwittingly raised the memories and history of a long-extinct humanoid civilization, the Awnoonen, from the demiplanar archival vault—in effect, becoming the new, living incarnation of the archive.

But the millennia-old records had decayed and the nanite colonization had been traumatic for the human hosts, factors resulting in numerous gaps and much fragmentation of the record. As much as was learned, was lost. The Ethereauts know of the final war that smashed the civilization of the Awnoonen, a great struggle between factions aligned to good and evil, and that the archive was created by the benevolent faction in the last years of that conflict.

Ethereauts experience the ancient information in a subconscious fashion, as dreams, hunches, foggy memories, and hallucinations. With practice they can increase access.
Society: Born aboard starships, Ethereonauts spend much of their lives travelling the Void and the Ethereal Plane, occasionally visiting planets in the Prime Plane and demiplanes drifting in the Ethereal fog. Ship captains reign among them like elected monarchs. The scattered starships all come together once in a decade, meeting in the Deep Ethereal, at which occasions the ships’ complements exchange information, transfer personnel, and so on.

Young Ethereonauts learn space safety protocols, teamwork, and obedience to orders. Many hours spent floating in darkened meditation chambers acclimate the young ones to the Ethereal Plane and help them to draw upon latent race memories, the legacy of the nanites from the archive.

Psychological maturity outstrips physical development. At age twelve, every Ethereonaut undergoes a rite of choosing, in which the young one feels himself to be chosen by a figure from the ancient archives who will serve the Ethereonaut as a model in life. After the rite, Ethereonauts accept the youngster as an (inexperienced) adult.

Ethereonauts marry for life. Some never pair-bond, but remain devoted to the unfulfilled quests of past generations. The race suffers little from the pangs of lust. Eyes accustomed to the ghoulish realm of the Ethereal and minds filled with voices of the dead have disposed the Phorwyrr to regard the spirit as more substantial and lasting than the flesh.

When an Ethereonaut dies, the friends and family of the deceased do not mourn. The deceased has simply passed into the Ethereal, as will all living souls in the natural course of things. An Ethereonaut, usually a close friend or relative of the dead one, stands watch over the corpse for four hours, scanning the Near Ethereal in case the deceased’s shade lingers of returns with a silent farewell to make or a last message to signal. Then the Ethereonauts incinerate the corpse and leave the ashes to drift forever in the Void between the stars.

Alignment & Religion: Ethereonauts hold Nodens, Lord of the Great Abyss, as their racial patron. Nodens rarely manifests to them. But when he does, it is always in a time of crisis or great discoveries, often to do with the Dark Tapestry. The Awnoonen worshipped Nodens in ancient times.

Most Ethereonauts adhere to Blazing Herald ideals, the philosophy of the good-aligned Awnoonen faction. The heroes of the Blazing Herald roam the cosmos like knights-errant, fighting against the Fungi from Yuggoth and foul manifestations of the Dark Tapestry. This sect sees Nodens as a protector, and a patron of noble quests and monster hunts.

The Dark Harbingers, evil counterparts to the Blazing Heralds, dream of a cosmos dominated by heroic masters ruling over billions of herd-slaves. The sect calls upon Nodens to shield them and guide them as they seek out lore of the Dark Tapestry, knowledge that they believe will enable them to destroy the existing order of reality and afterward create their longed-for utopia. Infighting and mad ambition plagues the faction.

Members of the small Deep Gazer sect argue that only by taking the best elements of both Awnoonen philosophies can the Ethereonauts come to terms with their alien legacy and avoid the fatal mistakes of their nonhuman predecessors. To preserve the past is better than to relive old wars. Deep Gazers obsessively seek out and acquire-by fair means or foul-art objects and antiquities for their Ethereal museums. They see Nodens as a wandering sign. By tracing his movements through the Great Abyss, they hope to discover lost treasures and wonders.

Relations: The Phorwyran racial classification system places humans as a demihuman race, with Phorwyrr/Ethereonaut classified as true humans. Ethereonauts show no more favoritism or hostility toward baseline humans than toward elves, dwarves, etc.

Pasimachi: Ethereonauts maintain good relations with Pasimachi, seeing the younger race of star explorers as a potential ally.

Transgenics: They mistrust transgenics, because so many of these hybrid creatures show the taint of the Dark Tapestry.

Mi-Go: Their worst and oldest enemies are the Mi-Go. Only the vilest of evil Ethereonauts will ever choose to work with these fungoid monsters.

Ethereonauts have fought both xill and phase spiders during their travels through the Ethereal Plane. In collective retaliation for past instances of capture and implantation of Ethereonauts by xill, the Ethereonauts follow a policy of killing or sterilizing any xill they encounter. Hungry phase spiders pose a lesser danger. Ethereonauts and phase spiders sometimes work together against the xill.

Adventurers: Blazing Herald heroes include an unusual number of paladins. Shamans are as common as clerics.

The Dark Harbinger sect counts more than a few blackguards in its host—and some of these began their careers as White Sun idealists before falling into corruption. This evil faction also includes numerous witches.

Deep Gazers lean toward occultism and thievery; many become rogues or oracles. Because Ethereonauts enter adulthood at the age of twelve, the race produces many teenage adventurers.
ETHERNAUTS

NAMES
Male
Aesu, Aun, Belatus, Comux, Dubnus, Inam, Kunaris, Maccus, Morirex, Segovax, Uricalus, Vapoc
Female
Aucissa, Banna, Cata, Comindo, Cuamenai, Deieda, Gleva, Minura, Ocone, Ria, Senna, Vatta

Favored Class Options
Arcanist: When casting arcanist enchantment spells, add 1/3 to the effective caster level, but only for the purpose of determining duration.
Bard: Add +1 to the bard’s total number of bardic performance rounds per day.
Cleric: Add a +1/4 bonus on caster level checks to remove afflictions (curses, diseases, poisons, etc.). Or add +1/3 to the amount of damage dealt when the cleric uses channel energy against an ethereal creature or planar creature.
Fighter: Add +1 to the fighter’s CMD when resisting a disarm or overrun combat maneuver.
Inquisitor: Add +1/4 to the number of times per day the inquisitor can change her most recent teamwork feat.
Investigator: Gain a +1/4 bonus on all inspiration rolls.
Kineticist: Gain a +1/4 bonus on damage rolls that apply the kineticist’s elemental overflow bonus.
Magus: Add +1/4 to the magus’s arcane pool.
Occultist: Gain a +1/2 bonus on Spellcraft checks to identify the properties of magic items and a +1/2 bonus on Use Magic Device checks to emulate a race.
Oracle: Select one revelation normally usable a number of times per day equal to 3 + the oracle’s Charisma modifier. Add 1/2 to the number of uses per day of that revelation.
Paladin: Add +1/2 to attack and damage against ethereal creatures and planar creatures.
Psychic: Gain 1/6 of a new phrenic amplification.
Shaman: Add one spell from the cleric spell list that isn’t on the shaman spell list to the list of spells the shaman knows. This spell must be at least 1 level below the highest spell level the shaman can cast.
Sorcerer: Select one bloodline power at 1st level that is normally usable a number of times per day equal to 3 + the sorcerer’s Charisma modifier. The sorcerer adds +1/2 to the number of uses per day of that bloodline power.
Spiritualist: Add 1 skill rank to the spiritualist’s phantom.
Summoner: Add +1/4 to the eidolon’s evolution pool.
Warpriest: Gain a +1/3 bonus on the damage dealt or healed with the warpriest’s channel energy ability.
Witch: Add one spell from the witch spell list to the witch’s familiar. This spell must be at least one level below the highest spell level she can cast. If the witch ever replaces her familiar, the new familiar knows these bonus spells.
Wizard: When casting wizard enchantment spells, add +1/3 to the effective caster level of the spell, but only to determine the spell’s duration.

Ethernaught (Phorwyk) Racial Traits
+2 Wisdom, +2 Charisma, –2 Constitution: Ethernauts possess enhanced social and emotional intelligence, but their development in null gravity has left them with gracile frames.
Medium: Ethernauts are Medium creatures and have no bonuses or penalties due to their size.
Humanoid: Ethernauts are humanoids with the Human and Ethernaut subtypes.
Normal Speed: Ethernauts have a base speed of 30 feet.
Dual-Minded: Ethernauts gain a +2 bonus on all Will saving throws.
Lucky, Greater: Ethernauts gain a +2 racial bonus on all saving throws.
Spaceborn: Ethernauts gain the Spaceborn feat (see below).
Improved Spatial Sense: Ethernauts gain a +2 racial type bonus to all profession (pilot) and acrobatics skill checks.
Ethersight: Ethernauts can see into the near portion of the Ethereal Plane when on the Prime Plane, and vice versa. This sense grants a +2 circumstance bonus to navigation using a phase box stardrive.
Languages: Ethernauts begin play speaking Common and Ancient Awoonea.
Ethernauts with high Intelligence scores can choose from the following: Aklo, Auran, Aurelian, Aquan, Ignan, Necril, Terran, and Pasimachi.

Spaceborn
You grew up aboard a spacefaring vessel, and are used to sudden changes in gravity. You’re also accustomed to the rigors of space travel.

Prerequisite(s): You may only select this feat at 1st level
Benefit(s): The weightlessness of the void and the dangers that lurk in the darkness are no stranger to you—you gain a +2 bonus to Survival checks when off-planet, and a +1 bonus to Reflex saves when in a no gravity environment.
**Ethernaut Jumpscout**

This mid-size vessel is coated in dull red heat plates and is semi-streamlined for trans-atmospheric flight, with radiator housings that double as airfoils when the broad but lightweight radiator arrays are retracted. Glossy sensor screens over the forward section. A long-barreled, gyro pod mounted launcher swivels beneath the main body of the vessel. Jumping out, it fades into vapor.

**Colossal space vehicle**
- Base hull junk
- **Squares** 312
- **Cost** 7,804,800 gp
- **Points Used** 17
- **DEFENSE**
  - AC 4 (including deflection +2 from shield);
  - **Hardness** 5 Bone
  - **hp** 4,680; **VP** 468
  - **Base Save** +6
- **OFFENSE**
  - **Maximum Speed** 15 for ethereal travel
  - 10 tactical; 2 Interplanetary & interplastic
  - **Acceleration 1**
  - **Weapons** ballista, lesser (pod-mounted with upgraded gyro-track providing 180 degrees field of fire)
  - **CMB** +8; **CMD** 18
  - **Ramming Damage** 1d12 + Speed VP
- **STATISTICS**
  - Engine Phase Box, Raid Boosters
  - Pilot Check Knowledge: Arcana (to operate phase box)
  - Profession (pilot) or Use Magic Device
  - Control Device phase box, levers and switches
  - Propulsion ethereal travel, external thrust
  - Templates landing (Terrestrial);
- **Additional Components**
  - Air Generator, Automated Crew, Climate Controller, Deflection shield generator 1, Heat Shield, greater HUD unit
  - **Crew** 1 with automation, 9 otherwise
- **Decks** 2
- **Cargo/Passengers** 100 tons/50 passengers
- **Escape pod** none

The Jumpscout needs only a single navigator to pilot it, as it comes equipped with automated systems that perform most crew functions. Still, a typical complement includes multiple Ethernauts.

During acceleration, deceleration, and combat maneuvers, the pilot-navigator sits in the mid-body of the vessel, encased within a peapod-like gelatious mesh couch, where they direct shipboard operations by integrated controls.

Similar pea-pods line the upper deck, shrinking to withered husks when unoccupied and opening and expanding to receive additional crewmen or passengers.

The couch pods are necessary for safety because Ethernaut jumpscouts, like most Ethernaut vessels, do not use gravity generators. The Ethereal is a null-gravity plane of existence, and so conventional gravitic technology that relies on manipulating, lessening, or increasing gravity is useless there.

The cargo section on the lower deck utilizes a simpler form of the same protective technology as that used in the seats of the upper portion.

Thick crosshatched wall-webs of green jelly soak impact of objects or creature sin the hold.

The craft handles well in the Ethereal Plane, and everyone aboard may float freely without fear of injury.

Jumpcraft crew enjoy the benefits of an advanced climate control system including carbon heatsinks and the expulsion of hot reaction mass through the thruster rockets (raid boosters).
ETHERNAUT ADVENTURES

SILK
An Ethernaut scientist has discovered a way, using a machine of her own invention, to capture the ethereal webbing of phase spiders and move it onto the Prime Plane in an altered, condensed, stabilized condition. The material resembles raw gray silk, but appears insubstantial in bright light. The phase-silk's properties as a substance present on the Prime but reaching into the Ethereal offer a wide range of potential applications in communications, security, hyper-spatial transport, and parapsychology.

The scientist, having just completed solitary and secretive trials in an isolated and backward world, now needs an escort to a safe port where she can rendezvous with other Ethernauts. If the party owns a ship, she may charter it.

And in any case she needs bodyguards. Xill are after her! The crafty egg-implanting aliens want the phase-silk samples and the machine used to make the stuff—if they can capture the female scientist, they will. The party just looks like good egg-host material to them.

THE CACHE

While scouting or travelling on a frontier or wilderness world, the party is attacked by hostile native therodont-humanoids (orcs by any other name would grunt just as loudly) who carry high tech weapons of exotic design—even though all previous reports have described these primitive aliens as possessed of nothing more advanced than copper axes. The savages are lousy shots.

If the party defeats the attackers—as a well-equipped and alert group with starfaring tech probably will do—it soon discovers that the weapons aren't any familiar make or model. They aren't in good condition, but show signs of extreme age like corroded power cells. Dirt and dust clings to inner crevices. The arms look dug up...

And that's exactly what happened. The therodont-humanoids unearthed an ancient cache of weaponry and other equipment. If the party loots the weapons of the fallen or searches out the cache and recovers the rest of the items there, it can sell these at a starport for a tidy profit. The artifacts are remnants of the interstellar war that destroyed the Awoonien civilization. Ethernauts are sure to seek out the PCs if word reaches them of the discovery.

GREEN KNIGHT

The party discovers the remains of some kind of large, green-skinned amphibian creature in and around a jungle blast crater or floating in a scorched bog. A few bloody scraps of high-tech armor and gear nearby, sizzling with what analysis reveals to be potent digestive fluids, may suggest to a ranger or other proficient tracker that the green predator had an explosive last meal.

The troll mutant slew and ate an Ethernaut paladin. Its stomach fluids reacted violent with the power leaky cells of the paladin's gear, and the resulting explosion blew the troll to pieces. The paladin's will to finish his quest was so strong it became a haunt upon his death. The haunt moved to possess the batrachian troll just before the explosion and somehow the haunt's ethereal body was ripped apart with the troll's form.

Now each crawling troll-bit wants to get into the PC's backpacks, sacks, pack animals, starship, etc. If a piece, even a finger, survives and grows into miniature frog-trolls, the creature will behave very strangely. The little monster is a troll, but altered by the haunt-fragment locked in its psyche. It only partly understands the haunt's mission. It refrains from attacking the PCs, but will plunder rations. The green critter writes cryptic messages inside their vessel or living quarters. If the PCs allows the creature to parley, it communicates in a croaking voice and broken Common.

Something about the quest, ancient evil, and a crashed ship in the swamps...
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Ethernauts

Post-human descendants of explorers altered forever by the ghostly legacy of a dead civilization, Ethernauts navigate the infinite mists of the Deep Ethereal, pursuing strange quests and grim vendettas inherited from eons long past. Fractured into two, theocratic sects, one side seeks to warn and protect against the foulness from the Void, while the other embraces the depravity of the spaces between the stars, promising to break and remake worlds in their image.

A new player character race with detailed history, new starship, favored race options, adventure hooks, and much more!

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