

Wakyambi

The Weavers

Physical Appearance

The Wakyambi look less like their legendary namesakes from Earth and more like beautiful humans with slim, sculpted bodies, long fingers, and equally long flexible toes. They have little-to-no body hair and can't grow beards, but sport heads full of thick, curly dark hair. Both their skin and eyes come in a range of colors from cinnamon to chocolate.

Life Cycle

Except for the fact that most of it happens high in the forrest canopy, Wakyambi mating, pregnancy, and birth work similar to that of Humans. Any telepathic babies are usually detectable by other telepathic family members after about the third month of pregnancy, and steps are taken to protect their emerging intellects as early as possible. Within a day after her birth, it can be established whether or not a telepathic child also has congenital deafness to go with her telepathy-related muteness.



Starting Wakyambi Characters

(596, 1,066*, or 1,026** Character Points)

B A S E W I P R Rep HP SP
Cm Cm Cm Cm Cm Cm Cm Dr Dr 24 19

Skills

- Languages: Ki-Wakyambi, Traveler's Creole

Powers

- Climb: **Gd**
- Telepathy: **Dr * ****

Limitations

- Deafness: **Ph ****
- Muteness: **Ex * ****

Wakyambi have opposable big toes and can accomplish anything with their feet that Humans can do with their hands, at a **(-1)** penalty. They are ambidextrous in both their hands and feet, and are as comfortable moving through branches and perching in trees as Humans are with walking on the ground and sitting in chairs. Between their ambidexterity and sense of balance, Wakyambi have a slight edge over Humans in hand-to-hand combat. The natural upper limit on Wakyambi Brawling is **Fantastic**, and even this limit may be exceeded through magic.

About half of all Wakyambi are born with Telepathy*, and can detect the minds of other creatures within 20 m (60 ft) of them, just by concentrating. They can hear the surface thoughts of anyone of their species that they detect, and can communicate mind-to-mind with them. Breaking off telepathic communication with a Wakyambi requires a Willpower check vs. the level of his Telepathy, unless he willing breaks it off himself. It operates with a **(-1)** penalty and range on the minds of other sentient species, and at **(-2)** on non-sentient creatures (animals), so starting Wakyambi characters can't use Telepathy on other species. Beyond increasing the level of her Telepathy power, a telepathic Wakyambi can also opt to add on any of the Telepathy power's feats later in the story.

All telepathic Wakyambi have Muteness*, and about half of those are also born with Deafness**. A Wakyambi with Muteness can only communicate with other characters through signing or Telepathy. A Wakyambi with Deafness has a **(-2)** penalty when defending in distance combat, unless he can telepathically detect his opponents.

Wakyambi minds are slightly more resilient than those of humans, with a natural upper limit of **Extraordinary** Willpower, that can be exceeded through magic.

Children with and without telepathy, a voice, or hearing are all raised and educated together in the same environment. Adult Wakyambi don't segregate themselves by their primary method of communication. In fact, most group conversations repeat themselves across multiple channels. Wakyambi live about a decade or two longer than Humans, but this may have more to do with the typical care they give their elders than anything else. When he dies and exits the story, a Wakyambi drops into his own shadow, then the shadow slowly fades away.

Habitat & Range

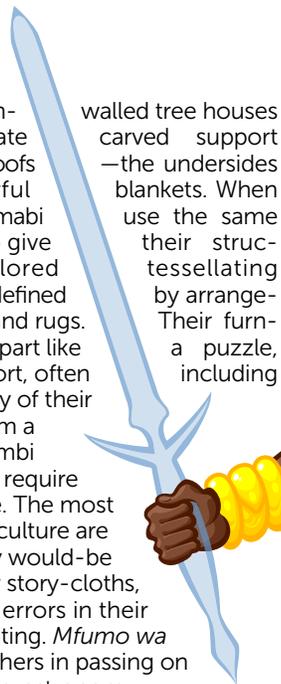
Most Wakyambi homes are open- with circular floor plans, elaborate arches, and lacquer-sealed leaf roofs of which are lined with colorful they build on the ground, Wakyambi general plan and roof, but also give tures outer walls of multi-colored clay bricks. Interior "rooms" are defined by arrangements of stand-alone screens and rugs. iture either folds up or comes apart like and is designed for easy transport, often a travel bag into its design. Many of their household goods are made from a patterned cloth that the Wakyambi weave on special looms, which require the use of four limbs to operate. The most precious artifacts in Wakyambi culture are the ones most often ignored by would-be raiders: their *mfumo wa kisa*, or story-cloths, which look like tapestries with errors in their weave, but are actually their writing. *Mfumo wa kisa* assist story-tellers and teachers in passing on their knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, agriculture, and even martial arts.

Wakyambi cities can be found in any climate that supports dense forests or jungles with large trees. Important municipal structures are often linked together with webs of rope bridges. On the outskirts of most towns are clusters of little houses for their domesticated tree-dwelling service animals and sentry birds. Settlements allied with certain very large flying creatures will build them "landing platforms" at the top of the canopy —as will some settlements who want their warlike neighbors to think they've made such alliances.

Culture & Customs

The Dignified Ones

Every Wakyambi settlement is guided by a council of elders who represent all major societal endeavors, from farming to trade to education. This council always includes at least one of the *Mzee* (dignified ones), their most skilled, experienced, and powerful telepaths. The Dignified Ones contribute to the mental health of society at large, nurture the minds of Wakyambi telepaths starting from the womb, and train anyone with psychic powers to be a valuable member of society.



Dangerous Minds

A long time ago, *Mzee* from different cities decided that one of the best ways to contribute to their society was to give its people a defense like no other, and started their first martial arts schools. Many Wakyambi martial artists—telepath and non-telepath alike— have developed martial abilities that seem almost magical, including the Combat Mind. One school even invented the silvery, tattoo-like *MindMark*: a psychic weapon built into a warrior's own body and mind. Then, when Wakyambi telepaths first encountered Humans, they made a series of discoveries that eventually led to the formation of the *Shujaa wa Roho na Kamba*, or Ghost Blade Warriors.

The magical catastrophe which cost Humans their powers had many horrible side effects, the worst of which was their separation from Mother Haven. Unlike other sentient species, when a Human dies, her mind doesn't reintegrate back into Haven's consciousness, and her body just rots away like an animal's. The minds of Humans who died in distress or with an uncompleted task sometimes remain as ghosts, compelled to obsess over some unfinished matter. A few ghosts can even cause harm with psychic replicas of the tools and weapons they possessed in life. It was from helping put these troubled minds to rest that the Wakyambi learned to create Ghost Blades.

The World's Healers

Their lack of great material wealth, combined with their legendary martial arts and mental weapons, has kept most Wakyambi settlements free from raids by other species for most of their history. Of course, they suffer as much as everyone else when the stars fall, but their injured and maimed manage to live far better lives than those of other species. This is mostly because the Wakyambi extend what they know—about thriving in a culture with multiple modes of communication—to a society full of people with differing abilities and disabilities. People whose injuries would confine them to a cot in other societies are still useful members of Wakyambi culture.

Ever since the Unquenchable Fire of 1372 AOW, standard treatment for burn patients now includes swaddling them in *ngozi mpya* (new skin) of the purest white cloth, then teaching them tasks that require less large-scale movements but more concentration. These people learn to support their home villages as weavers, tool-makers, or by attaining the state of *dhamira nzuri sana* (very beautiful intent/consciousness) and becoming powerful psychics.



Bluffing Your Way Through Ki-Wakyambi

The oral and written parts of the Ki-Wakyambi language of Haven are simulated by linking together real Kiswahili words and giving them a few twists. Players who speak Kiswahili will probably find that quite annoying to read, and should feel free to use some other language for Ki-Wakyambi, or even invent their own Ki-Wakyambi words for stories set in Haven. The signed part of Ki-Wakyambi is simulated with French Sign Language (LSF) signs, and the same suggestions apply to LSF signers.

Sometimes, a Human, Korobokuru, or Lutin parent may petition the nearest Wakyambi town to take in his disabled child for a year, so the child can learn better ways to function. This practice started after an incident where a bright Korobokuru with a communication disorder was hidden by his sister among his clan's best and brightest on one of his mountain's Great Caravans. She was his defender, and couldn't bear to leave him behind on a mountain where everyone else thought he was too mentally damaged to survive. One night, he wandered away from camp and met up with a group of telepathic Wakyambi, who had little trouble understanding his situation. The next morning they presented the boy back to his camp, and as he signed the Ki-Wakyambi he'd learned, his hosts translated his first real conversation with his own people. After that, the caravan leaders decided to take a side-trip to the Wakyambi's settlement and formed what became their first alliance, a medical and educational exchange between their two species.

Many joint projects followed that first alliance, the most important of which sent Wakyambi teachers on Koro caravans to meet the other sentient species of Haven. In those first encounters, they realized a need for a common trade language, and helped to shape what became Traveler's Creole. Then they built on that success and convinced traders from different cultures to use standardized weights and measures, and to use compatible currencies. All of these innovations worked their way into the traders' native cultures, and had the ultimate effect of connecting together the peoples of Haven in a slow, low-tech, but very strong communications network.



NPCs

Starting Ghost NPCs

A ghost can arise anytime a Human dies violently or with important unfinished business and isn't properly buried: at the base of an apple tree, inside an applewood box, with an apple bough across the chest, or at the very least with an apple seed or apple blossom in her mouth.

(1029+, 1129+*, 1641+**, or 2163+*** Character Points)

B A S E W I P R Rep HP SP
Pr Cm Cm Cm Pr Cm Cm Dr Dr 22 17

Skills

Languages: *All of the languages that she used in life*

Powers

Astral Body: Gd

The ghosts of Haven are beings of pure thought, who cannot normally be seen nor affect the physical world. With one exception (see below), they cannot be hurt by physical objects nor blocked by physical barriers. Ghosts can be hurt by mental attacks and blocked by Mental Armor. These beings have their own natural Mental Armor equal to the level of this power.

Telepathy: Gd

Any ghost can telepathically project an image of himself into the mind of anyone within 200 m (600 ft). This projection may change with his state of mind, and might be accompanied by sounds, smells, and even sensations such as dampness or cold. All of his experiences of the physical world come from the minds of living creatures.

- **Mental Control: Cm * * * * ***
Some ghosts can possess living humans, either to speak through them, or to take over their bodies.

Telekinesis: Gd * * * * *

Some ghosts have the ability to move objects with their minds, but cannot reach through anything made from any part of an apple tree (**Outstanding** limitation).

Ghost Weapons: Gd * * *

Some ghosts are able to recreate the tools or weapons they had in life, which can take one of two forms:

- **Telepathic** weapons that cannot be blocked by armor nor physical barriers, but which can be blocked by Mental Armor. They deliver a Mental Blast on contact.
- **Telekinetic** weapons that can be treated the same way as physical weapons.

Limitations

Trapped Out - Malus: Ou

Any part of an apple tree can act as an **Outstanding** barrier to a ghost. She can neither enter an orchard of apple trees, nor cross through the branches of an individual tree. Even as little as a ring of apple seeds or apple blossoms strewn across the ground can block her passage.

Compulsive Behavior or Obsession: Gd

Every ghost has a preoccupation with either a momentous event from his life or some important task left incomplete. When reminded of this, he must make a **Good** Willpower check or replay his part in that event. Helping a ghost to resolve his obsession will allow the Human to finally die.

Powers

Combat Mind

A warrior who attains *vita ngoma ya akili* (battle dance mind) is aware of the flow of an entire battle at the same time she notices one minute flaw in an opponent's defenses, and can anticipate attacks split seconds before they hit. She can substitute this power for Brawling and Agility when defending in combat, and for Perception when determining who goes first in a fight. In addition, she is capable of delivering a **knockback**, **knock out**, or **critical hit** to an opponent even when she doesn't inflict any damage. This discipline can lead to acquiring other combat-related feats, including:

- **Extra Attacks: +1**
- **Jump: Dr(-3)(1)**

Ghost Blade

The iconic weapon of the *Shujaa wa Roho na Kamba*, the Ghost Blade is a meter-long semi-transparent sword of pure mental energy. It can be called into being as quickly as a physical sword is unsheathed, and the abilities of individual blades will vary as much as the warriors who create them. They do, however, fall into two general types:

Telepathic blades, which pass right through physical objects, ignoring armor but being unable to affect creatures such as automata and golems. Depending on the blade, when they enter living beings, they deliver the equivalent of either a Mental Blast or a Mental Overload. When they sweep through beings of pure thought, such as ghosts, the blades do real damage and take away Health Points. This form of Ghost Blade can be blocked by Mental Armor.

Telekinetic blades, which act more-or-less like regular swords, and can be blocked by armor and other physical barriers. However, they create a sharp attack equal to the level of this power, making them potentially much more dangerous.

Some Ghost Blade Warriors have learned how to temporarily change their type of blade for a short time. Others have learned how to call on more than one blade at a time. At least one warrior can make his blade come into being a small distance from his body —often right inside an opponent. Most warriors, however, wield these blades just like physical swords.

While this power is not restricted to the Wakyambi species, it is only taught to members of the order of Ghost Blade Warriors.

Gear

Wakyambi MindMarks

These tools and weapons can only be "installed" by a Mzee into the body and mind of someone who already has at least one mental power besides Illusions, Magic or Protection from Magic. They look like raised silvery tattoos, usually appearing around the eyes. A Wakyambi can bear a number of marks equal to the modifier of her Willpower trait. The pattern of each MindMark is unique to its creator, and its function is not always obvious by its design. Examples include:

Wakyambi MindMark - Fanya

Price: — (557 Character Points)

- Mental Thrust: **Ou(+3)(20)** blunt distance attack

Create the telekinetic equivalent of an **Outstanding** punch or push from up to 20 m away.

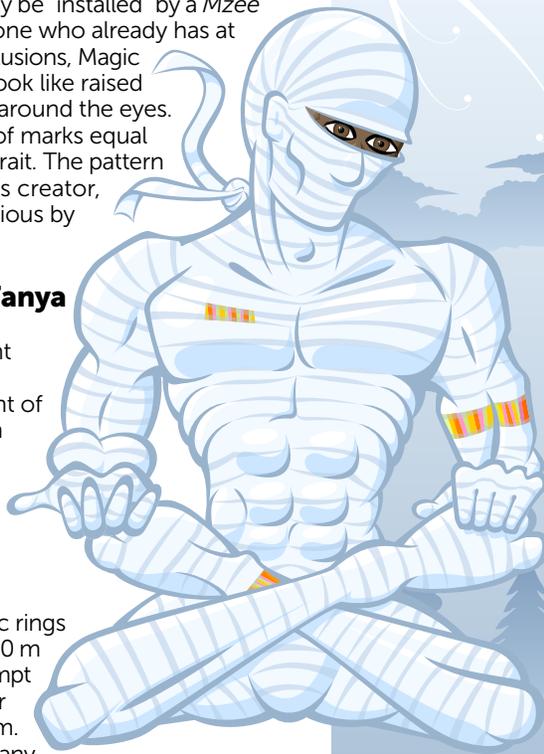
Wakyambi MindMark - Ngome

Price: — (557 Character Points)

- Entangling Attack: **Ou(+3)(20)**

Creates a set of open telekinetic rings that orbit around a target up to 20 m away. Once launched, they attempt to grapple with and restrain their target by contracting around him.

They can be fought off just like any other combat holds. Only one set of bands can be active at a given time. They fight independently, only requiring that their creator mentally check in on them every 20 turns. After a target is restrained, they require no supervision, and stay in place until they are dispelled or their creator falls unconscious.



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This should go without saying, but this work is a supplement to a *game*, **Ten Thousand Worlds**, and is meant to make a rainy afternoon more enjoyable for you and a few friends. This game requires you to use your imagination. If you have trouble telling the difference between fantasy and reality, then this game is probably not for you.