

Wild Things

Chimerae, Couatl, Living Clouds, Questing Blooms, Charioteers, Sun Trackers

Most of the flora and fauna on Haven would be familiar to someone from Earth. Even most of the unfamiliar life forms —human-sized spiders and scorpions, songbirds with peacock-like eye-spots on their wings, and red desert horses— are not that far removed from what she would know. There are, however, a few life forms on Haven that someone from Earth would only recognize from her dreams...

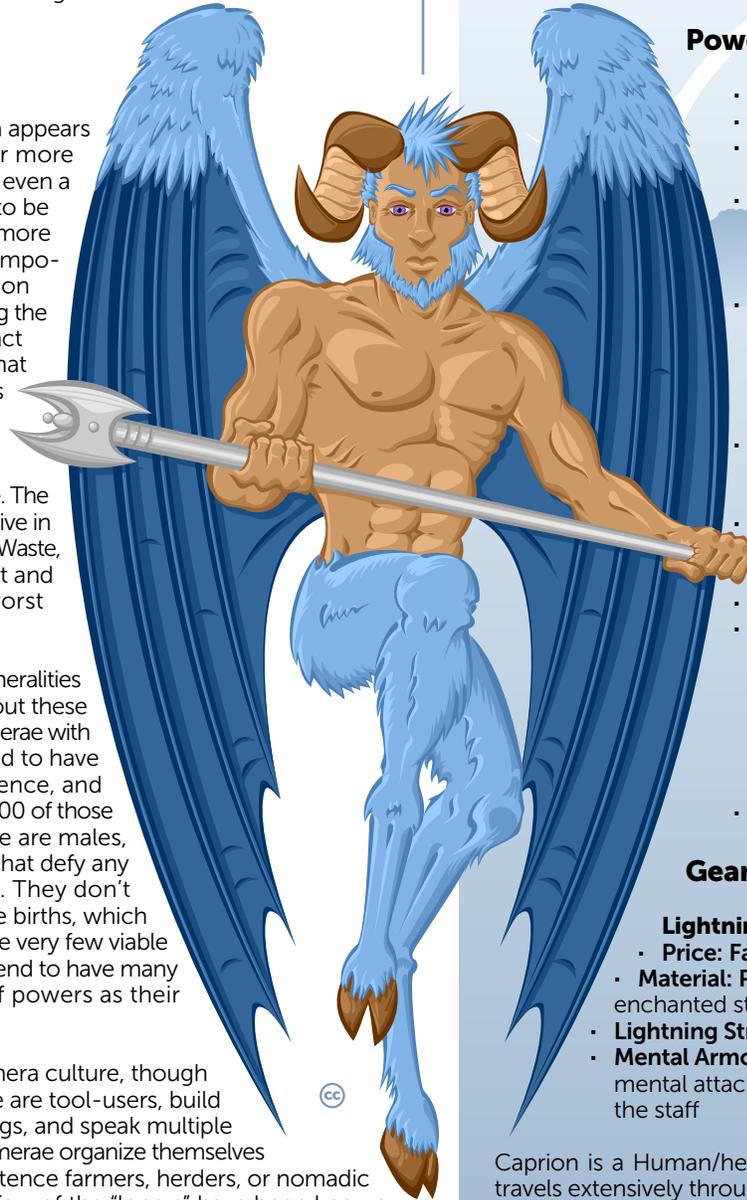
Chimerae

The “typical” Chimera appears to be a mix of two or more ordinary animals —or even a Human— and tends to be larger, stronger, and more robust than either component creature. Based on historical records citing the appearances of distinct Chimerae, it seems that many of these beings can live for hundreds of years; No one has actually witnessed a Chimera die of old age. The majority of Chimerae live in and around the White Waste, Haven’s largest desert and site of the world’s worst magical catastrophe.

There are very few generalities that can be made about these creatures: Those Chimerae with human-like faces tend to have human-level Intelligence, and there are only about 500 of those in all the world. There are males, females, and beings that defy any simple classification. They don’t lay eggs, but have live births, which unfortunately produce very few viable offspring. Chimerae tend to have many of the same types of powers as their component animals.

There is no one Chimera culture, though quite a few Chimerae are tool-users, build sophisticated dwellings, and speak multiple languages. Some Chimerae organize themselves into villages of subsistence farmers, herders, or nomadic hunters, and even a few of the “loners” have been known to form informal alliances for mutual defense. Still others have been adopted into Lutin society, where depending on their Intelligence, have become everything from pets to members of kin-groups.

Some intelligent Chimerae use powerful, possibly magical, devices; which they believe to be remnants of the *Abhivajchita Yantra* (Wish Machine) that created them.



Example Chimera NPC: Caprion

(4,046 Character Points)

B A S E W I P R Rep HP SP
Gd Gd Ou Ex Ex Ou Gd Gd Fa 70 70

Powers

- **Ears: Ou** enhanced hearing
- **Eyes: Ou** enhanced vision
- **Horns & Hooves: Ex** blunt attack
- **Regenerate: Ph**, recover 40 Health Points every 10 turns, plus one level in any trait per hour
- **Wings: Gd** flight, 120 kph / 75 mph

Skills

- **Language:** Lutinaise, Human (Central), Koro-go, Traveler’s Creole
- **Aerial Combat: (+1)** bonus when fighting while flying.
- **Knowledge:** Chimerae
- **Medicine: (+1)** bonus to Intelligence; Permanently stabilize a dying character; Help a healing character to recover an extra set of Health Points, plus one level per day.
- **Survival:** Desert

Gear

Lightning Staff

- **Price:** Fa
- **Material: Ph**, blunt & sharp, enchanted steel
- **Lightning Strike: Ou** project electricity
- **Mental Armor: Ph** protection from mental attacks for everyone touching the staff

Caprion is a Human/heron/ram/bat Chimera who travels extensively throughout the White Waste and beyond, collecting medical knowledge on his own kind. Unfortunately, it’s often acquired by trial and error. A deep-voiced, well-spoken creature, he’s helped to foster a better understanding of Chimerae among the scholars of other species, and has occasionally found himself in the position of acting as the de-facto spokesperson for his kind.

Couatl

The Couatl are a refugee species that fled to Haven from her sister world, Ghost, during the first War of the Falling Stars. Between the millions that died in the initial invasion of Ghost, the thousands that perished later in transit to Haven, and the hundreds killed by the Sidhe's Crystal Fleet on their arrival, there are perhaps 100 of these creatures left alive. It is possible that the Couatl had different physical forms on their home world than they did when they arrived on Haven, and the few new Couatl that have been born since all look markedly different from that immigrant generation.

Couatl resemble the dragons of Earth's legends, with long, serpentine bodies, scales, and leathery wings. They are the largest creatures on Haven, and many have traits at **Magnitude 1** levels. The new generation sport feathers, and are called Quetzal-Couatl. All of them can sense magic and are telepathic, with thought patterns that are extremely alien to other species. Beyond that, each one is unique in appearance and powers. Some can control the weather, project fire and lightning, or shatter stones with a roar. They tend to either ignore other sentient species on Haven or just kill them with as much thought as Humans give to swatting bothersome insects.

Natural philosopher Marius Thane, who has risked his life to study the Couatl, believes that they await the hatching of the "Paragon", a being that will lead them in the retaking of Ghost.

Living Clouds

Living Clouds are colony organisms, each member of which can attract and control a small amount of liquid, usually water or water vapor in the air. These creatures can fly through the air, gathering up clouds of vapor that move along with them, or float in bodies of water. When the colony reaches a certain saturation point inside a body of water such as a pond or lake, it can completely control the water's cohesion and surface tension, as if it was all one giant amoeba. When an aerial colony reaches a certain size, it will become strong enough to fly against the wind. These larger colonies have occasionally been known to pick up and carry off human-sized creatures. Under normal circumstances, these creatures can't be distinguished from regular clouds, fog banks, or lakes until members start emitting light pulses in patterns that sweep across the colony, something they tend to do around dusk and dawn. The Living Clouds may be the cause behind some of the odder weather phenomena on Haven, such as the Dream Mist, Devouring Fog / Blood Rain, and the Golden Fog.

Questing Blooms

The thick, multi-branched, corkscrewing vines of the Questing Bloom drape themselves along tree branches and cliffs. A single plant can spread over a **Great** distance, providing homes for hundreds of birds, reptiles, and small mammals among its coils. While its nutritious fruits are found all along its length, the plant's downward-facing orange flowers are only found within a very narrow range of heights, just above an average Human's head.

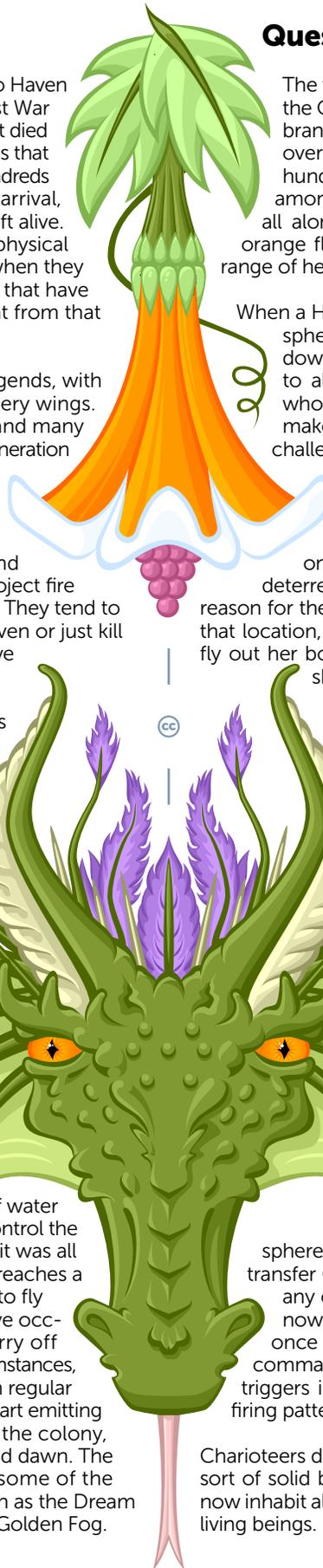
When a Human passes under a Questing Bloom, pink spheres within the flower will explode and rain down pollen. This pollen is completely harmless to all other lifeforms, but requires any Human who inhales it, swallows it, or gets it in her eyes to make a Willpower check against an **Outstanding** challenge or become afflicted with an **Ou(+3)(20)** level **Obsession**. She will be obsessed with traveling to a specific location, which could be a few kilometers to half a world away, and that **Obsession** will increase by one level for every month the trip is delayed or deterred. The afflicted Human will invent her own reason for the trip, and believe it. When she finally gets to that location, under another Questing Bloom, pollen will fly out her body and into the nearest flowers. After that, she will never be affected by that pollen again.

This phenomenon is thought to be a clue to the original powers possessed by precat-astrophe Humans and their role on Haven.

Charioteers

For over 300 years, Lutins have been breeding an invasive alien species they've dubbed the **Charioteers**, harnessing these creatures to run their most advanced technology. Charioteers were found during the Third War of the Falling Stars (WFS3), locked into their star chariots by delicate jade control spheres. Lutin mages adapted those designs, turning the spheres into mobile cages that allowed them to transfer Charioteers from one device to another, like any other mechanical component. These beings now pilot Lutin war machines as easily as they once steered falling stars, translating the simple commands sent by steering columns, switches, and triggers into complex multi-legged locomotion and firing patterns.

Charioteers do not enjoy living on Haven outside of some sort of solid body. Those few who've escaped the Lutins now inhabit all manner of mobile homes—including some living beings.



Example Charioteer NPC: Flux

(4,046 Character Points)

B A S E W I P R Evil Rep HP SP
Pr Cm Cm Cm Ex Ex Gd Gd Ou 22 80

Powers

Body of Negative Energy: Ex

Manifesting as flowing patterns of inky, barely-visible designs, Flux's body can penetrate and inhabit just about any physical object. On contact, he can drain an object of its heat or a living being of her Health Points with **Extraordinary(+4)(30)** ability, but rarely will. This Charioteer prefers to just sip the ambient magic of Haven.

Control Gear: Ex

Flux can take control of any piece of gear he inhabits. If it doesn't have a Speed trait, he can make the object bounce, flip, and roll around with **Extraordinary** speed. If the device has any sort of articulation, this Charioteer can animate every hinge, gear, and spring. He can also use a piece of gear's Material trait as Armor, a Strength booster, and an Endurance booster. At a **-1** penalty, Flux can assemble a temporary body from unrelated gear for up to 30 turns, 4 times a day.

Mental Probe: Ex

Mental Control: Ex

When Flux penetrates a living being, he establishes a telepathic link, sifts through her memories, then leverages that knowledge to control her with subtle suggestions that sound like her own ideas. A successful Willpower check can resist his control.

Limitations

Condition:

Powerless Against Jade (Ou)

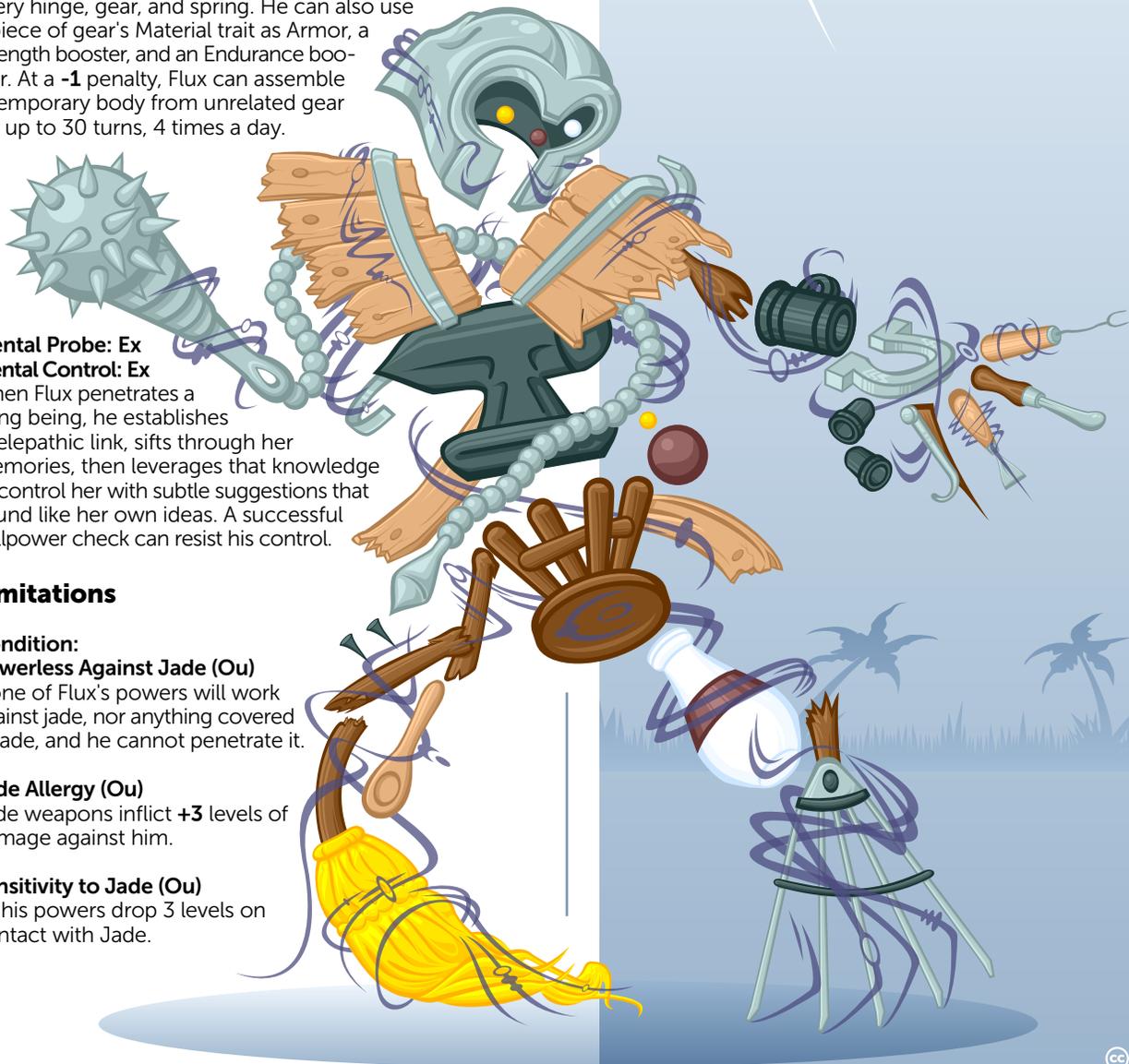
None of Flux's powers will work against jade, nor anything covered in jade, and he cannot penetrate it.

Jade Allergy (Ou)

Jade weapons inflict **+3** levels of damage against him.

Sensitivity to Jade (Ou)

All his powers drop 3 levels on contact with Jade.



Sun Trackers

The flowers from the Sun Tracker ground vine have petals that are a light-absorbing black on one side, and a mirror-like reflective silver on the other. Beyond just opening and closing, these petals can flip over completely, presenting everything from a flat black disc with a silver back, to a black cone with a mirrored interior, to a pinwheel of alternating black and silver petals. At the tip of the pistil-like structure in each flower's center is a round orange organ, which catches light in such a way that it looks like a miniature version of Prime, the largest of Haven's suns.

These flowers usually track Prime's movement through the sky, facing black petal discs towards that sun, absorbing as much light and heat as possible. However, as soon as a warm-bodied creature enters their midst, one flower after another flips into a parabolic reflector, aiming concentrated light on it, until the combined energy either makes the creature go away or burns it to ash. Sun Trackers are fast enough to lock on to the movements of most flying insects. They will also burn away parts of other nearby plants that cast too much shade over them.

These vines spread out in roughly circular patches, growing best on volcanic soil in Haven's tropical regions, but they can be found in lesser numbers as far north and south as her temperate zones. One turn after crossing into a circle of Sun Trackers on a sunny day, a character will be attacked by the equivalent of the **Project Light** power at a level equal to the area of the flower patch. For example, a 20 m (60 ft) or **Dreadful** size patch will inflict **Dr(-3)(1)** damage, while a 600 m (1,800 ft) or **Extraordinary** size patch will unleash **Ex(+4)(30)** damage every turn.

During Blue Dawns and Blue Dusks, when Minor is the only sun in the sky, these flowers will track it instead, but inflict **-1** levels of damage. They also inflict **-1** levels of damage on partly-cloudy days. On cloudy days and at night, Sun Trackers fold up their petals and go dormant.



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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.