



EARTH CASTE

THE DRAGYRI EARTH CASTE REAWAKENED

For centuries, the Earth Caste has been entombed in xenosathic hibernation chambers deep in the bedrock of Samaria. They submitted to putting themselves there by the will of their leader San'triahn, the Arbiter of Purpose, in protest against the chaos and madness that took the life of the last Grand Arbiter so long ago. Trueborn and slave alike entered hundreds of crystalline cocoons and fell into a deep, comatose slumber. The plan was to awaken every decade to check upon the state of the inter-caste politics of the Dragyri, rejoining the world when Secktest had chosen a new and suitable Grand Arbiter.

Unfortunately, this was not to be.

Carabella, the leader of the Shadow Caste at the time of the Earth Caste's hibernation, had no love for their stoic neutrality and unwavering loyalty to the "ideal Dragyri Empire." So great was her hatred that she immediately took advantage of their slumber and her connection to the vicious arachnae monsters of the underworld, setting up a deep and disturbing plot that would remove the Earth Caste from Dragyri politics for centuries.

Telepathically controlling the most toxic arachnae she could find, Carabella programmed the beasts to periodically seed the xenosathic crystals feeding the Earth Caste's hibernation chambers with virulent, paralytic venom. The crystals bonded with the bio-toxins and flooded them into the slumbering Earth Caste, making it utterly impossible for them to awaken as San'triahn planned. Instead they would sleep seemingly eternally,

bonding with their crystal-stone hibernation chambers on a level beyond other Dragyri. The Shadow Caste could machinate without fear of their rivals stepping in to bring order to chaos, and the programmed arachnae would continue in their duties perpetually.

That is until much later, after Carabella was long dead and Amabilia had taken the reins of the Shadow Caste. Her recent failed attempt to become Grand Arbiter forced her hand and she unleashed the



Huntress upon her enemies. The abomination from below was told to summon her children – ALL of them. Arachnae of all strains from throughout the abyssal caverns heeded her call, including those bred to envenom the hibernation crystals. The Huntress' connection to the spidery minions was far stronger than the remnants of Carabella's telepathy, and they ceased their instinctual duties to seek out their mother.

Without the arachnae flooding them with toxins, the Earth Caste began to slowly awaken. Those members entombed furthest away from where the poisons were introduced were the first to shake off their effects and break free of their hibernation chambers. The first few clusters of Earth Caste trueborn opened their eyes to a new world and, after some surprising and revealing encounters with other Dragyri roaming the Samarian subterranean tunnels, discovered just how long it had been. They learned of the emergence of the Shadow Caste and the ascension of Yovanka, Grand Arbiter of Balance. San'triahn and his plan to avoid Dragyri in-fighting until a new Grand Arbiter would be crowned had worked – just not exactly as he planned it.

Waking to a world now filled with enemies both old and new, what little of the Earth Caste have broken free of their crystal beds live to uphold the ideology of their absent Arbiter. They shall perform the will of Grand Arbiter Yovanka and work alongside their fellow Dragyri – even with the despicable Shadows.

Although incomplete and still seeking their ancient leader, the Earth Caste has awakened.

THE DRAGYRI EARTH CASTE IN DARK AGE

With the addition of the new Earth Caste units to the Dragyri Faction, there are a few rules that must be followed when using them.

- The elemental Earth Caste is now an official sub-faction of the Dragyri.
- Any reference to Dragyri “elemental castes”, such as in *Elemental Alignment* and *The Grand Arbiter Commands* rules, includes the Earth Caste as a possible elemental caste.
- Despite the low number of different model types at this time, players choosing the Dragyri faction MAY choose to play the Earth Caste as their primary elemental caste.

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JZA'MHI, THE FURY REKINDLED

(2016 IMMORTALS WINNER, JAMIE WOLFF)

"It can't be real... I killed you."

– Rath'zhi, Arbiter of Rage

When the usurper Rath'zhi leapt up into the air and brought his blade cleaving down into his own Arbiter's torso, dozens of witnesses within the Fire Caste saw the grisly blow. They watched in shock and horror as Jza'mhi slid backwards off the sword, internal organs spilling out in a waterfall of gore from the canyon that his upper body had become. He staggered there for a moment, his scepter-club dropping from numb hands, mouth closing and opening agape like a fish left on dry land. Rath'zhi planted his foot squarely on his victim's mostly-whole chest section and gave him a mighty shove, sending the ruined body of Jza'mhi spiraling into the crevasse that would be his grave. That was how Rath'zhi took over the Fire Caste, and it has always been thought to be the end of Jza'mhi. The world of Attr is a strange place with many secrets, and it was not yet done with him.

There was only a tiny spark of life left in Jza'mhi when he was forced into the crevasse, tumbling down into the darkness of the abyssal depths below the Dragyri territory. He slammed into the side of the rocky wall a number of times, feeling intense pain as the sharp stones stabbed into his flesh and shattered bones. In seconds he was covered in fresh wounds from the impacts, only to get worse when his near-lifeless form struck the crystalline shelf at the bottom. The force drove him into a mosaic of xenosathic crystals, which instantly enveloped him like grains of sand. Any normal creature would have surely met a bloody and painful end there, buried in a kaleidoscope of crystals, yet Jza'mhi survived. His natural Foci energies bonded with the energetic latticework within the xenosathem, and the agonizing cocoon of broken crystals surrounding him turned into a sort of life support system. Xenosathem is an odd mineral with many properties that almost seem fungal or viral, which caused the slow melding of Jza'mhi and the closest crystals into one amalgamate being. The crystals replaced flesh and bone too broken to heal, slowly changing the former Arbiter into a new being altogether. Just a few years into this hibernation he would have been ready to emerge and seek his revenge - but the insidious machinations of the Shadow Caste and their arachnae minions that got in the way of Jza'mhi being reborn at that time.

Their envenoming of the deep xenosathic crystal veins to keep the Earth Caste in hibernation had a similar effect on Jza'mhi and his crystalline womb. The arachnae sent to poison those crystals had no idea that the former Fire Caste Arbiter wasn't just another Earth Caste

trueborn to be held in stasis – so they added his location to their malicious rounds. It was because of this that Jza'mhi remained hidden away and comatose, the crystals of his tomb slowly infecting him more and more, until the rise of the Shadows caused the arachnae to cease their envenomation. In the weeks that followed, Jza'mhi stirred.

The new creature that is Jza'mhi was discovered by the awakening Earth Caste and he immediately exploded in a Foci-fueled rage that threatened his rescuers. If it were not for the well-practiced defenses and even-temperers of Ghrakun and his fellows, Jza'mhi might have killed them all or died in the attempt. He was restrained and calmed however, the network of crystals within his body picked up the Earth Caste's emotional evenness and fed that coolness into him. Together, Jza'mhi and his new allies rose to the surface and discovered just how much time had passed – and the current state of the Dragyri people. Jza'mhi was filled with new fury again, discovering that the usurper of his former role still had command of the Fire Caste. He needed vengeance, and to set this right.

Leaving Ghrakun and the awakening Earth Caste to their own devices, Jza'mhi sought out Grand Arbiter Yovanka and roared his claims that Rath'zhi was a false arbiter and that the Fire Caste should still be his to command. After some thought and deliberation, taking into consideration the instability of the Dragyri-crystal hybrid before her, she decreed that the challenge that happened so long ago was simply never concluded – and while the Arbiter of Rage has been leading in his absence, it would be up to Jza'mhi to seek him out and finish the challenge definitively. While it was not the answer he had hoped for, it gave him a direction to focus his thirst for revenge.

Jza'mhi now seeks out the Arbiter of Rage and hopes to retake his position at the head of the Fire Caste, but the world is strange and different now. He knows he cannot do this alone, and while he looks for allies within his own caste, he is forced to join with other caste's warbands to move safely around during his search. Despite his infamously unstable rage – which can boil over onto anything nearby at any moment – Jza'mhi is still a force to be reckoned with.

The crystals that have permeated so much of his body have made him remarkably durable and strong, going so far as to completely replace his ruined arm and turn it into a fiery vice of xenosathic claws. The crystals have done so much more for Jza'mhi however, feeding invisible streams of foci energy into his core from all around him. With concentration and the right motivation, Jza'mhi can actually tap into all of the mystic forces that make up Dragyri focus abilities. He was always a skillful focus user, but now he is a deadly weapon of the arcane unlike anything that has existed within the Dragyri in known history...

...and he is on the warpath toward Rath'zhi and bloody handed vengeance.



GHRAKUN, THE HERALD OF TENACITY

"I shall swallow my anger at what the Shadows did to us. We serve the balance our Grand Arbiter is trying to achieve. No matter the cost to my pride, order must be maintained."

Ghrakun is the protégé to the esteemed – and currently missing in the depths of the cavernous abyss to where they were entombed – San'triahn, Arbiter of Purpose and leader of the Earth Caste since before the Hibernation Edicts. Ghrakun is part Death's Device, part Spirit Lord, and one hundred percent loyal to the tenets of his caste. Before they turned away from the in-fighting between the castes, the Earth Caste was the backbone of Dragyri culture - its stability - and Ghrakun was among its most vocal members. Whenever someone needed a word of wisdom or some kind of support in their dealings, Ghrakun would be there with a wry smile and some anecdote from ancient history to lend a hand. Titled the "Herald of Tenacity", he has always sought calm and order in a world bent on chaos, sometimes in vain. Ghrakun has always looked for the peaceful way out of trouble whenever possible.

That was before his caste was poisoned for centuries and kept locked away by enemies of order within the Dragyri. They have awakened to a new age, a new Grand Arbiter, and new enemies all around. Earth Caste trueborn believe heavily in the honor of the duel, often using it to champion and solve others' problems as well as enforcing the will of whichever Grand Arbiter they bent knee to. Martial training combined with the thickly muscled bulk common in Earth Caste members to create fierce and powerful warriors. Like those he leads out of the depths, Ghrakun is a mighty instrument of violence that tries to live by the honorable codes of his teacher; something that is difficult to accomplish after your brethren have betrayed you and Those-Without-Honor now teem the surface in too many varieties to count.

Armed with Mountainheart, an ancient maul carved from the densest crystals of Secktes's (the Dragyri name for the planet) bedrock, Ghrakun can pulverize anything in his path to ruin. A single blow from his weapon can pass through any attempted defense and land a blow capable of cracking forged steel.

What does not simply pound a victim into a pulp will surely send it flying away like a rag doll tossed aside by a careless child.

Ghrakun is not the most powerful focus user in his caste, but he connects with the energies of the world's crust nonetheless. With a gesture he can hurl clouds of biting sand, cause the ground to rise up and hold foes in its rocky grasp, or unleash pulses of magnetic force to hurl them away like scattering pebbles.

While he seethes internally about what the Shadow Caste did to his people for all those decades, Ghrakun maintains the necessary composure to lead what has awoken of his caste in under the ideals of Grand Arbiter Yovanka. The Herald of Tenacity will live up to his moniker and keep the teachings of his master until the Arbiter of Purpose can be found and the mantle of leadership returned to its rightful owner. Until then Ghrakun shall serve the Grand Arbiter, and the Earth Caste shall serve Ghrakun.



PILLAR

“There is something admirable about a warrior who fights with his hands, even a giant alien one.”

– John “Clank” Carter

The Earth Caste, as a whole, breed larger and more physically powerful trueborn than any other, even the Ice Caste. They train in several forms of martial arts that help them harness their raw strength and size, most often in the form of specialized weapons designed to make the most of their might – but not the Pillars. Pillars are trueborn warriors that forego the use of weaponry and instead pummel their enemies with their fists.

Trained pugilists, these hand to hand combatants beat their knuckles against columns of bedrock to harden their surface against the armors of their enemies. In the early days, at the height of the Earth Caste’s strength, dozens of these warriors trained night and day within a forest of columns. It was this training regimen that earned the Pillars their name as well as spread the rumors about their abilities. Dragyri from all around would come and see the

Pillars tirelessly pounding on the stone columns and hear the staccato rhythms echoing through the caverns.

Before battle, a Pillar wraps its hands in thick hides studded with shards of crystal, adding a rasping set of tears and punctures to every left jab or right cross. Their training is versatile and quick, one-two punch combinations can shatter an opponent just as easily as when they clasp both fists together for a single haymaker. The added crystals, over numerous engagements, become fractured and tiny fragments get embedded in the callused flesh of the Pillars’ knuckles. The crystal bits become one with the Pillar over time, and help it gather the focus energies needed to wield Secktest’s own gravity as a trap to keep enemies from fleeing their next rain of blows.

The people of Samaria have never quite seen hand-to-hand warriors like Pillars come out of the Dragyri ranks before and, now that they have, all too many of their folk stories about the “dragons” are coming to life once more.



QUAKE

“Ouch. That stung. Maybe a little. Now... my turn!”

The elite corps of the Quakes once formed the Arbiter of the Earth Caste’s own personal security force. Wherever San’triahn or his highest echelon of officers went, he made sure they were accompanied by one or more of the mighty Quakes. When a pair of these massive towers of focus-infused Dragyri muscle entered a chamber flanking their Arbiter, none would dare cross them – and for good reason. Becoming a Quake requires strict martial discipline, unshakable selflessness, and a dedication to the neutrality of the Earth Caste that borders on fanaticism.

Quake training begins at a young age, as would-be members are chosen in their adolescence for their physical size and lack of natural talent for focus abilities. If they agree to become Quakes, their rigorous training begins in earnest. Intense strength and resilience training turns the recruits into hulks of muscle able to deliver

impossibly crushing blows with their signature crystal-studded tetsubo war clubs, and shrug off attacks that would otherwise bisect a lesser trueborn. By the time they are done, they are some of the most durable warriors the Grand Arbiter can call upon.

One of the facets to a Quake’s utility lies in its inability to wield focus powers directly. While unable to tap into the Dragyri’s natural mysticism, their genetics were still ready for those energies to course through them. Intermittently during their training, the Spirit Lords of the Earth Caste would take the recruits away, submerge them in “baths” of potent xenosathic crystal dust and fragments before flooding them with raw focus energy. After enough repeat efforts, the process infuses certain properties of Earth Foci into the Quakes, turning each one into a sort of permanent nexus of Secktest’s own gravity. When a Quake digs in its heels, it takes a tremendous amount of force to uproot it. The ground actually quivers when a Quake walks, an effect that combines with the tremors of fear their foes feel standing against them to highlight the name and power of their corps.



FISSURE

“The strength of their warrior women is remarkable. We can learn a thing or two from them, it seems.”

– Yovanka, Grand Arbiter of Balance

The division of the sexes and the roles they play within the Dragyri have often been a great point of debate from caste to caste; the inclusiveness of the Fire and Shadow Castes, the misandry of the Air Caste, and the misogyny of the Ice Caste. The ever-neutral Earth Caste, as always, found even ground on a matter – male and female warriors are always welcome within the caste, but they are trained to serve in ways that best benefit their natural attributes. The most notable of the female warrior-orders, the Daughters of the Mountain, are a prime example as to why this works so well.

The most numerous of warrior-women within the Daughters, Fissures are masters of “area defense” and when they run out and claim a piece of the battlefield, nothing stays to enter their territory for long!

Fissures spend years bruising and bashing themselves while they master the use of their signature weapon. A cluster of dense metal and crystal attached to a length of stout chain, the meteor hammer is a deadly close assault weapon in the right hands. As it twirls and spins around the user with practiced arm and body movements, the head of the weapon is only one gesture away from being directed at a target with significant force. Although the reality is quite the opposite, the meteor hammer’s spinning and twirling looks random

and unpredictable to the enemy, making it impossible to aptly defend against. When the Fissure has time enough to build up a good spin on her hammer, she can release it outward at a surprising distance to land a powerful strike on her target.

Practicing their movements to work with the constant spinning and motions of the meteor hammer, Fissures are always a blur of activity. The twirl of weapon gives the Dragyri a limited amount of protection from attacks as she closes to her target, and means she is always one bend of her elbow, knee, or even neck away from unleashing a flashing strike that could reach a target several meters away. Fissures are known to keep enemies at bay for hours in prolonged battles, sometimes just by standing defiantly in a place and letting the meteor hammer’s dance do all the work.

