

# The Vihr (VEER)

## Synopsis

The Vihr are one of three races living on Dal'Tera. Descended from a mythic race known as the Illik, the Vihr are a proud, aloof race. Their lack of technology has been greatly enhanced by the art of alchemy, which they regard as their legacy from their Illik fathers.

For 140 years the Vihr, along with their ancient foes the Norag, had been conquered and subjugated by a malevolent entity known as *Tareg-Siv-Khaina*, which translates roughly to "That which drains the mind and dries the soul." Twenty-five years ago, with the help of the third Dal'Teran race, the Hor'Data, were the Vihr and Norag able to throw off the shackles of oppression, and begin the long rebuilding process of their planet.

## Physical Description

The Vihr (Singular: Vihrin) are one of three intelligent races living on the planet Dal'Tera. They are bipedal, standing between 4' - 5'6" tall and weighing between 75 - 125 lbs. as adults. Their skin tones vary from bleached white to grey-white, hair color from platinum blonde to gloss black, and eye color generally purple, blue or green. They are typically muscular, yet wiry. The Vihr naturally do not have facial hair.

The typical lifespan for a Vihr is about 180 years.

## Sociological Profile

The Vihr's history is deeply metaphysical, telling of a race of beings known as the Illik, who came from the heavens and "created" the Vihr. The Vihr do not see a correlation between space travel and the Illik, since travelers from space are not omniscient and omnipotent like the Illik.

The Vihr do not track time in years; they measure large spans of time by ages. An age can be anywhere from one year to five hundred years. Each age ends and begins with a significant event of Vihr history. The Coming of the Illik happened 36 ages ago, and no Vihr could break that down into years. Thus, it is impossible to know exactly how old Vihr civilization is, though scholars can narrow it to between 1000 and 2500 years.

The Vihr tend to consider themselves one people with one spirit, so their thinking is more collective. The Vihr are not telepathic in any way, but they do not usually think of "me," rather than "us"... "How does this affect us?" versus "How does this affect me?" Even their grammar is affected by this thinking -- instead of "I", a Vihr would refer to himself as "this one". This would also apply to a group, i.e. referring to three people as "this one, this one, and this one." This communal outlook can be seen even in their governmental structure, as all Vihrin cities and towns fall under the direct control of Pra'Vihr, the capital city.

The Vihr are a proud, aloof race. They do not act impulsively; rather, Vihr contemplate a situation long before it comes about, if possible. They are loyal to their friends, but their

general demeanor is usually seen as arrogance by other races, so a Vihrin usually has few alien friends.

The Occupation (the term the Vihr refer to their conquest as) took its toll on the Vihr mindset, making them more distrustful of their own, since the way Tareg-Siv-Khaina carried out its plans was to control those Vihr who's minds were more susceptible to its power. All (?) of those who had been controlled have been slain, but the Vihr are now a bit more paranoid than they once were. Oddly, this mindset applies less to their ancient opponents, the Norag. Since both races were subjugated by Tareg-Siv-Khaina, a small but noticeable bond formed between the two races. There are still ideological clashes between the two races, but often members of the Norag and Vihr will refer to the two races collectively as "Dal'Terans."

At the present time, there are 110 million Vihr on Dal'Tera, plus another 75,000 off-world. This second number is the lowest it has been in decades, due to a high number of attacks by forces of the S'rall, possibly at the direction of Tareg-Siv-Khaina.

Dal'Tera's day is approximately 28 hours long, and it takes 350 days to revolve once around its sun.

The Vihr have a few curses they may utter, and are typically reserved for those that are sworn enemies. These curses tend to be "anti-liquid" in nature, i.e. "May your soul shrivel and die."

### **Family Structure**

The Vihr have traditionally had small families, usually raising only two or three per couple, with twins being a once in one-thousand births occurrence. Since the Occupation, the Primarchs have suggested that larger families would be beneficial to the Vihr, repopulating the race to pre-Occupation levels. This has led to some "growing pains," as communities already attempting to deal with rebuilding towns for their existing people deal with a larger-than-normal influx of new births. The Vihrin children, male or female, are expected to carry on the family name with pride, as well as to care for their parents when they become old and infirm.

Marriage is usually an intimate affair, with only the bride, groom, and their parents attending.

The naming conventions of the Vihr are quite structured. First of all, the family name is always listed first, and the given name second. Male given names are typically a word that means something in the Vihr tongue, or a past great Primarch. A family would never be so bold as to name their child after the Scion, since comparing one's child to a direct descendant of the Illik would be the height of arrogance.

Females are a bit more unique. Traditionally, the family gives the newborn daughter a standard name (along the same lines as the males, only more feminine), but attaches the first letter or syllable of *her mother's* name. As an example, Juba Krion (male) and Juba D'Nera

(female) give birth to a daughter. Her name has been chosen to be Kiaa, which further becomes N'Kiaa (the 'N' taken from Nera of the mother's name, separated by an apostrophe). Note that there is no hard and fast rule on how much of the mother's name is attached to the daughter's, though typically it's either the first letter, enough letters to get to the first vowel, or the first syllable.

In terms of the surname, the first-born parent carries on the family name, and dominates the family line, and the male has precedence over the female. So, the first-born male of Narna Eldin (male) and Narna Y'Stil (female) would be Narna Jion. If he marries Kutha V'Sia, she would become Narna V'Sia, and any children born to them would have the Narna family name. If the first-born of Narna is female, she would still carry the family name, and it would be dominant in the family unless the husband is first-born.

There is a high degree of honor existing in the family structure, with entire family lines smirched by misdeeds of past ancestors. Often, Vihr who have dishonored their family will undergo a ritual, known as *Di-Mor* (DEE-mor), which “separates” the individual’s blood from the family, cleansing the family’s honor. There is no reverse of the Di-Mor; once the blood has been separated, it cannot be rejoined. Furthermore, the Ka-Mor (“the Separated”) cannot be adopted by any family. He loses his family name, and from then on only possesses his given name. If he marries, the spouse keeps her name no matter whom was first-born, and any children take the non - Ka-Mor surname.

The Vihr ingest most of their food in liquid form. This is mostly plant-based. These drinks would closely be equated to a smoothie. They tend to gather in small groups, family and/or friends to eat. This occurs twice or three times per day. This is a very solemn occasion, and none may speak during dining.

A Vihr, when she passes on, is taken to one of twelve locations in Pra'Vihr for a special ceremony. In this ceremony, the body is covered in an alchemical solution that converts the flesh into liquid. This liquid is sealed in a small flask, and presented to the deceased's children. If the deceased has no heirs, the flask is interred in a special building in Pra'Vihr.

### **Government/Crime and Punishment**

The government of the Vihr is a Monarchy, ruled by the Scion. The Vihr believe the Scion is the direct descendant of the first ruler of the Vihr, an Illik who stayed behind to teach his people and help them grow. It is said that Scions possess vast power, since their blood is of the Illik. The Scion's word is the Law, and woe to the Vihr who would transgress it.

The Scion chooses her mate from the Vihr populace, and the firstborn child is considered the Scion-Apparent, whether it is male or female. It is not unheard of for the Scion to bypass his firstborn, but this is rare, and usually brought about by the child, who may not feel he or she is capable to rise to Scion. The child must defer to the Scion's wishes, and if for some reason the Scion feels the firstborn is incapable of fulfilling the role of Scion, the child must accept his fate.

In extremely rare circumstances, the Scion can choose another Vihrin who is not a direct blood relative as Scion Apparent. The chosen one must undergo a process known as *Khiva-Illi-Ulnith* ("the Cleansing for the Illik") to prepare his body for imparting of the life force of the Illik. If the chosen one survives this process (the process is a closely guarded secret, but is rumored to involve a number of near-lethal tests), he is considered to be a worthy vessel to hold the lifeblood of the Illik. As the current Scion breathes his last breath, the Scion Apparent is given a transfusion of the outgoing Scion's blood, imparting the Illik life force into the new Scion. From then on, the new Scion is considered a direct Illik descendent.

This procedure has only occurred three times in the history of the Vihr, the most recent time being at the end of the Occupation, when Ramia S'Vita, Primarch and lead freedom fighter for the Vihr, was elevated to Scion (becoming Scion Vastiravita, a name combination derived from both her original name and the name of a passed compatriot) when the previous Scion ordered the transition should be made.

The Scion appoints Magistrates, who establish zones of control throughout the Vihr nation. Their assignment is to mete out Justice in the name of the Scion, and the Vihr are told to respect them as they respect their Scion. All disputes, either criminal charges or civil complaints, are brought to the Magistrate of the area the event occurred, and the Magistrate determines the guilt or innocence.

*"Vihr do not kill Vihr. Those are the final words of the Illik as they departed Dal'Tera. And it shall be carried out, until the final Vihrin breathes her last breath."* - Scion Amara Se'Nilva, to a visiting group of Justices from Norag

The Vihr do not engage in capital punishment, something they see as barbaric and counter-productive. Vihr are forbidden from taking another Vihrin life, under ANY circumstance. Imprisonment and rehabilitation is preferred. This does not apply to those who have been expelled from the Vihr (see below). A vast exception to this was in dealing with the armies of Tareg-Siv-Khaina, many of whom were Vihr. The Vihr reasoned that the corruption of That Which Drains the Mind and Dries the Soul had destroyed the lifeblood of the subjugated Vihr, and they stopped being Vihr. Therefore, they could be slain without breaking the commands of the Illik. Many others who conspired with the corrupted Vihr but seemingly not corrupted themselves were expelled from the Vihr nation.

The worst punishment a Vihr can receive is expulsion. To be banished from Vihr society is like death to a Vihrin, and those who are expelled are considered dead by their family and friends. They are no longer considered citizens, and to consort with them brings great disfavor and suspicion upon the offending Vihr. It has happened that off-world Vihr have unknowingly dealt with banished Vihr, so the Vihr hierarchy tries to keep off-world citizens informed regarding those who have been banished.

### **Religion**

Vihr society is inseparable from Vihr religious beliefs; every Vihrin firmly believes the central tenets of the Radia, the state church. Yet, the church itself is not a central institution of Vihrin culture. All Vihr are baptized at birth (see below), but few, if any, religious

ceremonies exist beyond that. The religious leaders, known as The Primarchs of the Radia, guide Radia doctrine from ancient texts supposedly passed down from the Illik landing. The leader of the Primarchs is the Scion, further blending the line between the religious and secular.

The baptism of a Vihr newborn is very important to both the parents of the child, and the society as a whole. The ritual spiritually and physically connects the newborn to the first Illik, or as the Vihr say, "the Future to the Past." The newborn, being no more than five days old, is taken to a Radia cathedral (a place where the Primarch sits). There, she is given a name by the parents, which is accepted by the Primarch or an authorized agent of his, then given an injection of an alchemical liquid into her bloodstream. This liquid has been "blessed" by the Scion, imparting mystical Illikhin energies into the liquid, which will be absorbed by the child.

In fewer than once in 10,000 births, the Vihrin newborn either does not receive the injection by the time five days has elapsed since birth, or its body rejects the solution. These children are NOT considered Vihr, and are institutionalized by the state. The family considers the child having never been born to them.

The Radia's tenets basically detail the arrival of the Illik onto Dal'Tera, and their creation of the Vihr, who are usually referred to as "the Children of the Illik." These tenets were originally written down by the prophet J'Nira, who is now revered as a "Illikhaan," or "First Child of the Illik." It is believed that the word "Vihr" means "Children" in the Illik tongue.

The Vihr are rather casual towards death. They really do not fear it, since they know that upon death they will be judged as necessary to join the Illik. If someone resurrects a Vihrin, it is because the Illik guided their hand since the Vihr still has work to do on this plane of existence. But, a Vihr would have a very definite negative reaction to resurrection if accomplished through magic, since that (in the Vihr mind) was what brought the Occupation upon them. A Vihr resurrected through magic would be banished immediately upon realization of it.

The Vihr possess a potion that can stave off death for quite a while, and there are reports that one U-Xamra (see Magic) has actually created a potion that can resurrect a dead body.

### **Military**

The military is much like religion to the Vihr, in that all Vihrin adults are expected to fight for their people. Upon adulthood, each Vihrin is evaluated by the Primarchs of the Radia (the controllers of the military), and given instruction in a specific fighting skill that:

- a) fits the aptitude of the applicant
- b) is needed by the Vihr in general

The instructed Vihr would then serve a one-to-three year term in the Vihrin Legions, the time served determined by aptitude tests and the Primarchs' wishes. After that time has been served, the Vihr is free to re-enlist, or to move onto other endeavors.

The Vihr value skill over numbers, so their armed forces aren't usually as large as their opposition, but tactically they've been able to hold their own. Due to this philosophy, the Vihr military was not hamstrung as badly by the Occupation, and the Legions were able to be rebuilt quicker in the aftermath.

Vihrin weaponry is heavily influenced by alchemy (see Science and Technology).

### **Science and Technology**

*“And the Illik father tipped forth the font, and the liquid poured onto the dead earth, and it became verdant and fruitful. From the liquid came Life.”* – Chapter 4, Verse 20 of The Chronicles of J’Nira

According to the holy book *The Chronicles of J’nira*, when the Illik created the Vihr as well as the plants and animals that the Vihr would live amongst, they used "mystical and powerful liquids." The early Vihr took this as their legacy and concentrated on alchemy. Due to this concentration, other scientific pursuits were ignored or researched half-heartedly. But many technological achievements that the Vihr lack have been compensated by the use of alchemy.

Weapons, armor, building materials, and scores of other products have been altered, modified, and augmented through alchemical means.

Vihr armor, both personal and vehicular, is a brittle polymer bolstered by alchemical liquids. The armor crafters inject the liquid into compartments of the armor, and as long as the liquid is in contact with the polymer outer-coating, the armor has the tensile strength of steel alloy. Special heating units within the armor keep the liquid roiling, giving the armor a strange inner motion, along with a deep blue, indigo, or purple swirling color. If a blow impacts the armor with enough force to crack the polymer, the liquid would indeed leak out, but since the armor is compartmentalized, the liquid would only drain from that section, leaving the rest of the armor intact.

Vihr weaponry is wholly alchemical in nature, using a “multi-part mixture” approach. The gun is loaded with two or more chemical liquids in separate tanks, either right on the gun, or as a backpack. These liquids are inert and would not even activate if the tanks were ruptured and the contents mixed externally. The gun itself provides the catalyst, which is the alchemical component. When the weapon is fired, the tanks’ contents are expelled along with a specific “trigger,” such as electricity, flame, or magnetic force. This is what causes the mixture to activate, resulting in a variety of effects. The amounts of each tank, as well as the power/voltage/intensity of the trigger are unique to each weapon. These reactions are not merely chemical, since alien scientists have attempted to replicate the reactions with no success. The art of alchemy is the key in this. The three most common personnel weapons are the Force Rifle, Plasma Rifle, and Pulsar Rifle. Each of these weapons has a handgun variant.

The Vihr use hand weapons in a literal sense. Each gauntlet in Vihrin Illikhin armor (see Armor) has three 10" long blades that extend from the back of the hand. These blades are

kept in a special alchemical solution that keeps them in a semi-liquid form, allowing the Vihrin soldier to easily move her wrist when the blades are retracted. When the blades are extended, they are deprived of the solution, making them hard and extremely sharp. These clawed gauntlets are known as *Kirin-Ran* (“Sharp Fist”).

For more on alchemy, see the Magic section.

The Vihr are also capable of interplanetary travel, even though they technically don't possess warp technology. Their spacecraft, enhanced and modified with alchemy, are powered by what the Vihr consider their ultimate creation: a solution that simulates faster-than-light travel known as “Illik Fire.”

Master Alchemists are known as *Ul-Xamra* (ool-ZUM-rah), and are as revered as a High Priest would be in a religious society. Each Ul-Xamra presides over a school, which trains acolytes in the study of alchemy.

Many of the Ul-Xamra were killed in the Occupation, and the rest were driven into exile, their schools destroyed. As the rebuilding continued, the Ul-Xamra (who were descendants of the original Ul-Xamra who fled the armies of Tareg-Siv-Khaina) re-emerged to begin the process of repairing the Alchemy program.

### **Magic**

Vihrin alchemy basically takes one or more inert chemicals (either solid, liquid, or gas), and introduces one or more catalyst agents to produce a new chemical, either solid, liquid, or gas. Typically, the materials being mixed are usual elements and/or compounds. The catalyst is the element that creates the alchemical reaction.

As mentioned above in the Science and Technology section, a Vihrin weapon utilizes an alchemical process, which mixes two inert liquid chemicals into the chamber of the gun, then exposes the mixture to a catalyst. The resulting reaction is a conical concussive force that is projected out of the barrel of the rifle. If the gun is damaged, and the chemicals intermingle, nothing happens. Only if the chemicals are mixed at the correct ratios, then acted upon by the catalyst, will anything happen.

Grenades are also made, usually with small amounts of chemicals separated into different chambers. The grenade has a small timer on its top which, when activated, will first open the chambers inside the grenade and allow the chemicals to mix. Then a few seconds later (which can be adjusted by the "thrower"), a small catalyst will be set off, activating the effect, which could be noxious gas, concussive force, or freezing ice (among other things).

Alchemy can also be applied to metal to affect its molecular makeup, usually making it far stronger. This process is used for Vihrin armor (both personal and vehicular).

It is not alchemy if there is not a magical catalyst. The exact nature of these catalysts are a closely guarded secret of the Vihr. These catalysts come in many different forms, depending on the final product.

Some typical Vihrin uses of alchemy are healing and medicine, weaponry (both short and long-range), armor (personal, vehicular, and ship-mounted), fire-fighting, among a host of other uses.

Vihrin alchemy is not all-powerful, and there are areas that it cannot bring success. It cannot resurrect a dead being. It cannot imbue living flesh with additional abilities above its normal capacity (i.e., it can heal flesh, but cannot make it invulnerable). For the most part, alchemy cannot give an organic form something that it has not had before. It also cannot breathe life into that which is dead. Ul-Xamra and lesser alchemists will often, as a hobby, attempt to stretch the boundaries of this “rule,” but none of them seriously believe that the Vihr have the capability to break what they call “The Law of the Flesh.”

In the years leading up to the rise of Tareg-Siv-Khaina and the subsequent Occupation, the Vihr experimented more and more heavily with magic. Both the Vihr and their perennial foes the Norag continued to expand their magical research to defend against the other, until those who utilized magic were subjugated by Tareg-Siv-Khaina and turned against their brethren.

During this buildup, many Vihr warned that, in a rush to gain magic, the sacred art of alchemy was being pushed aside. Indeed, these Vihr believed the Occupation was a direct result of the Vihr falling out of favor with their Illik fathers for forsaking their gift.

Now that the Vihr have been liberated, they regard magic as taboo. They will not use it, and they tend to stay clear of those who are skilled in its use. They do not see it as inherently evil, but rather the incorrect path for the Vihr.

### **Art and Recreation**

*“To touch Heaven” – Master Architect Kia Baena when asked what purpose his ultimate architectural piece would serve.*

Again, the Vihr connection with alchemy dominates this category. Due to the augmenting and modifications of building materials through alchemy, the Vihr have gained a galactic reputation as majestic architects and sculptors. Only the Vihr have the unique combination of ability, patience, and experience to manipulate the stone-like substance, called Bala, and shape it into soaring towers that curve beautifully and gracefully, yet can support hundreds of tons, or to create stunning sculpture that seemingly defies gravity.

The Vihr do not engage in sport, and do not find any interest in watching the games of other races.

Pra'Vihr, the once beautiful Vihrin capital, was almost totally destroyed by the destructive armies of Tareg-Siv-Khaina. The Temple of the Illik, Primarchs' Hold, even the heavily fortified Sanctum of the Scion were utterly obliterated, even their foundations burned away. In the rebuilding, the Vihr have attempted to construct new buildings to replace their lost treasures, but this is slow-going, and many Vihr admit that whatever they create will never replace what they have lost.

## Economics

The Vihr are excellent farmers, and are frequently hired by other races to assist in agricultural matters. Also, many Vihr possess a latent empathic ability that allows them to control and breed animals very effectively.

The Vihr, not as technologically advanced as the other races, still use organic transport for the most part. There are three main species utilized by the Vihr:

- 1) Bulnar - Quadripedal. Domesticated early on by the Vihr, bulnars provide day-to-day transport for the vast majority of Vihr. There are at least eight different breeds of bulnars, with various fur color, height and weights. One of these breeds is known as the Ruhn ("War") Bulnar, for its natural stamina and lack of fear on a battlefield. Illikhin (see Armor) barding has been created for these bulnars.
- 2) Ghaur - Quadripedal. The ghaurs are fearsome feline creatures with long claws and sharp teeth. They are about nine feet long, and are carnivorous, and have a natural chitinous body armor. The Vihr have been able to breed a finite number of Ghaurs for wartime use.
- 3) G'Trok - Quadripedal. The g'trok are enormous, standing over 15 feet tall, weighing over five tons. The Vihr use them as heavy movers as well as for more offensive purposes (battering rams, stampeding enemy positions, etc.). The Vihr have been breeding the g'trok for quite a while and have nearly domesticated them, as much as these behemoths could be domestic.

The Vihr do not have any large corporations like the Vraxians or Norag. Food and other necessary materials are bought and sold through the Vihrin government's Ministry of Trade, and the proceeds dispersed to the people. Vihr society is quite communal, to the shock and horror of capitalistic societies.

The Vihr do *not* sell their alchemical methods. The Ul-Xamra may only teach the art of alchemy to a Vihr, *never* to an outsider. Note however, that while the ability to understand the science behind their art is not for sale, the final products of Vihrin alchemy (the aforementioned armor, guns, etc.) are definitely marketable items, again through Trade Ministers.

The main unit of currency for the Vihr is the Ita (EE-tah). It is a Coin, 2" in diameter, tinged by alchemical treatments making it very resilient while giving it a very cold feel. The denominations and colors of the Ita are: 1 (deep red), 2 (orange), 5 (yellow), 10 (forest green), 25 (medium blue), 50 (indigo blue), and 100 (violet).

### **Off-World Policy**

Since the end of the Occupation, the Vihr have had to come to terms with asking for aid from without, especially from their closest neighbors the Norag and the Hor'Data. They can be perceived as aloof and arrogant, but they themselves have attempted to change this perception since they know the entire planet of Dal'Tera is fairly vulnerable now and can use allies. Their relationship with the Norag has certainly changed, and the races' are struggling to come to terms with a new era of cooperation, albeit slowly.

### **Costuming Hints**

The Vihr tend to dress in dark colors -- deep shades of blue, purple, and red. Typically, they wear loose, flowing clothing. If they have armor on, the mystic liquid roils and flows beneath the surface in hues of black, blue, red, and indigo.

Vihr hair is usually long and straight, often pulled back into a ponytail, though just as often not. There has been a recent trend in Vihrin males within the Legions to cut their hair very short, and dye it a bright color. Earrings are popular, though that is the only body piercing that a Vihr usually has.

Vihrin alchemy rifles look very much like "Super Soaker" water cannons, only with deeper colors. The tanks would be filled with multi-colored liquids, and the gun itself would be silver, blue, or purple.

[Note: If you are going to bring a Super Soaker to our LARP, we do not allow it to be fired with actual liquid within the confines of the hotel. Furthermore, we would suggest that you paint the gun a uniform color, so as not to make hotel security believe you ARE actually running around with a Super Soaker.]

### **You Could Be...**

- A Legionnaire, either on leave or on a specific mission
- A representative of a Primarch, sent to represent your peoples' interests
- A student of alchemy, dedicated to be an Ul-Xamra
- An animal trainer/breeder, looking for clients
- An architect, looking for work

### **Typical Vihrin Merits, Flaws & Skills**

**Mandatory\* Merits:** Military Experience

**Mandatory\* Flaws:** None.

**Typical Flaws:** None.

**Typical Merits:** None.

**Typical Skills:** Animal Empathy, Animal Riding, Alchemy, Train Animal, Trapping

\* Please note that very little in this game is *truly* mandatory. If a player can justify why his or her character does not have a merit or flaw which is “mandatory” for characters of this race, a GM may allow the player not to take that particular flaw or merit. However, the GM might also suggest that the player might be better served by selecting another race.