



GREEN CLOAKS

EXPANDED PLANETARY LORE

—THE MASCEN RACE AND MASC—

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The Mascen Race and the Planet Masc: an overview

The recent history of this species has been riddled with exploitation and slavery since the war swept over their homeworld. After the One Bakkar ravaged their planet with technology and firepower far more advanced than anything the mascen possessed, they were enslaved in the wake of the ruin by a private organisation called the Terran Battlefield Reclamation, who fronted the atrocity by claiming they were salvaging anything left from the battle.

The slavery went unnoticed by the Terran Sovereignty until long after the mascen homeworld had disappeared behind the One Bakkar front line. By the time they had been freed and protected by Sovereignty law, there was nothing for them to return to. Many of the mascen adapted, forming tribes scattered throughout the Segovax cluster on the edges of Terran space. Many joined the military to aid the fight and reclaim their homeworld.

The mascen are unique in that they are comprised of two separate subspecies. They have simple names for things, and this is also true of the names they have given to these subspecies: "big'uns" and "little'uns". Mascen big'uns are typically primitive, violent, and bloodthirsty. They are tougher than the average humanoid and able to withstand far more punishment than a human before being incapacitated. A common saying among soldiers fighting alongside them is "when bullets start flying, hide behind a big'un". Their skin is usually green or grey and they have small horns protruding from their foreheads. Their ears also taper to a point.

The little'uns are responsible for building and invention, and given more time for their culture to develop they would certainly be a very innovative species. The concept of explosions is very appealing to these little'uns. As it stands, however, they have been thrust into a universe they were not ready for, and their tinkering is far more of an eclectic experiment that accidentally yields results than a careful and precise practice. Stranger still are the few little'uns that hold a shamanic position in the mascen society, and display an innate connection to the Omega.

Hierarchy in the mascen society is not based on size, however. Big'uns do not view the little'uns as inferior in any way; no more than a 6-foot human thinks any less about a 4-foot human. Even though they are physically stronger, they acknowledge the intelligence and organisation of the little'uns.

1. Timeline

Pre-4730: The history of the mascen people is legend and allegory due to the loss of information during the slave times.

4730–4750: The mascen homeworld, Masc, is riven by cold and proxy wars as the six largest tribes try to establish dominance through proxy fights using smaller tribes; only through united effort are the Karsk Hunters' ambitions of global dominance put on hold.

4800: Mascen society stabilizes into six main tribes at a tribal moot that agrees global government. The other tribes are subsumed into the main six or exist as minor tribes.

4910: As humanity pushes further into the Segovax cluster, it meets the mascen race. The two cultures are quick to adopt friendly relations, by and large. The mascen hold honour in high regard and they return the gesture of respect and friendship given to them by humans. The mascen tinkers quickly figure out interplanetary spaceflight and Terran technology, much to the surprise of the Terran engineers; however, they are reliant on the Terran Sovereignty to travel beyond their own stars. Not every tribe is welcoming, however, especially the Karsk Hunters, who choose to stay in their jungle rather than deal with the human race, often attacking and killing any human that strays too close.

5001: In the chaos of the outbreak of the One Bakkar war, many mascen are enslaved by corrupt Terran corporations for their ingenuity and strength. Even if morally repugnant, this action arguably saves the species, as the mascen homeworld is soon targeted and seized by the One Bakkar. It remains under enemy control to this day, located on the far side of the cluster, well beyond Sovereignty space. The slave times, as they are known, nearly destroy the mascen culture. Tinkers are taken to be put to work in factories, big'uns used for manual labour. Tribes are broken up and old lore is lost. Children are taken from families and put into re-education camps.

5002: In reaction to the enslavement of the mascen by many corrupt Terran corporations, Ardheim establishes the Sanctuary in Storborg, a place where mascen fleeing slavery may live. Ardheim extends a hand of friendship to the mascen race in the form of the Langa Treaty, which provides that any mascen may claim sanctuary and livelihood on Ardheim upon setting foot in the longhall in Storborg.

5185: Mascen slaves are sent to Tetrarch by MAVAE (Marazion V Aerospace) in an attempt to restart the planet's mining industry and win favour with other planets. After slavery was outlawed, many remained on the planet by choice, with both big'uns and little'uns finding work in the scrap collecting industry.

5325–5600: The Terran Sovereignty breaks the blockade of many border colonies including that of the Segovax cluster which is finally reached in 5577. It becomes the new front line in the Terran space. Civil wars break out among colonies that feel that the Terran Sovereignty has abandoned them. Several try to declare independence. Some are even tenacious enough to succeed. These places become havens for criminals and outlaws running from Terran Sovereignty law. The One Bakkar are rarely seen, and many suspect they have been defeated; however, reports from the front line indicate that they are gathering their strength after their main fleet was destroyed. The mascen are freed from slavery and their captors face severe penalties, including execution in extreme cases. The mascen are offered a place among the Terran society, which they gladly accept. Many join the military with a view to taking back their homeworld. The mascen are given the technology to travel between the stars as reparations by the Terran Sovereignty. Most mascen are reunited into tribes via the

use of genetic ancestry tracing, and resettled across the sector. Many of the shamans who managed to keep the traditions safe come out of hiding, but most of the mascen past is lost through hundreds of years of oppression, and most tribes have lost their way and identity. Multiple shamans claim that huge numbers of them were taken by the Terran Sovereignty Army rather than the corporations. The next 400 years are spent rebuilding their culture as the progressive tribes slowly gain ascendancy.

5325: Mascen begin to flock to Durgan, as to the other planets, and are met with a mixed reception. With the new pressure put on Durgan by the focus of the One Bakkar, the newly arriving mascen are forced into conscription to aid in the defence of the planet. Those who are unable to fight are forced to live in refugee camps established by the Durgan Temples.

5326: On Durgan, with the influx of mascen into the refugee camps and the Durgan forces, there is great unrest as their various tribes are forced to mix with one another. Territorial disputes break out, and the Durgan government responds by quelling each in a heavy-handed manner, believing the mascen to simply be ill-disciplined. As such, it is declared that all Mascen children must receive a Durgan education in the hope of teaching them discipline and dispelling their perceived feral ways. They are made to attend boarding schools, removing them from their families.

5327–5340: Disputes continue to break out amongst the mascen on Durgan, with a clear resentment building towards Durganites. In the Durgan Defence Force, mascen soldiers prove to be formidable shock troopers, but become increasingly unresponsive to commands, instead charging headlong into battle. Riots break out in the refugee camps, their inhabitants demanding the return of their children. Believing that mascen only respond to shows of power, the Durgan Forces establish permanent policing units to quell any disturbances.

5350–5400: With educated mascen increasingly integrating back into their home culture, tensions in the refugee camps on Durgan begin to decline. As such, Pilgrims of the Way are given permission to enter the mascen camps under invitation of these younger mascen. The Pilgrims slowly begin to form an understanding of mascen culture, and in turn the mascen learn more about that of Durgan. On the front lines, mascen and Durganite soldiers begin to form bonds of respect for each other and cooperation improves.

5430–5530: With the gradual success of the Pilgrims of the Way forming a bond of understanding between mascen and Durganite cultures, it is agreed that the mascen tribes will be permitted to establish homes outside of the confines of their refugee camps. Whilst Durgan society as a whole still treats the mascen with suspicion, the relationship between the two cultures slowly begins to heal as they become more cooperative.

5535: The Mascen Pact is signed on Durgan, formally accepting all mascen on Durgan as Durgan citizens, to be treated in every way as equals. Following this, many of the Temples welcome mascen scholars and teachers, and mascen culture becomes an accepted part of the Durgan curriculum.

5578: Mascen on their way to Marazion V are shot out of the sky by Tupper Corporation gunships who claim that they had shown up on sensors as the One Bakkar.

5580: The Nightborn, a relatively secretive tribe that remained hidden during the slave times, lands on Rossi and disappears.

5643: A group of tribes – The Axe Born, Jak’s Vengeance and The Rust Eaters – steal the TSA carrier Pride of Marazion, which was undergoing repairs, and head for what they think is Masc; they disappear off the radar and their location is still unknown. There are some calls for censure of the mascen race as a whole for this act if they do not condemn the actions of these three tribes.

5809: The Mascen are the first alien species to formally request an embassy on Marazion V.

5812: The Mascen embassy is set up in Sangomont, Marazion V. As a result, a small number of mascen relocate to the planet, and are drawn both to the military and the engineering facilities.

5815: A specialist military and engineering training facility for mascen is constructed just outside of Marazion City, named Bracktown. Bracktown has since become a rising star in the Segovax Cluster, drawing mascen in with the promise of training and education.

5899: The Blood Taker tribe is wiped out on Ardheim. 500 mascen are found dead in their settlement to the south of the planet; their children are missing. Every dead body has sub-cranial bleeds. The killers were never found.

5905: Following an outbreak of a serious disease amongst the humans on Marazion V, it is discovered that the myr’na and mascen are immune to it. While the cure is being developed, the mascen work the factories to keep the planet turning.

6001: A group of mascen outcasts start to attack tribal holdings across the sector calling for equal representation among the tribes. Retribution is swift, violent and bloody. Those who get away seek refuge outside of the sector using a blind jump.

6004: Rumours about TSA experimentation on mascen during the slave times surface again, and are again denied. The Coglore Gangers tribe come out to describe it as “paranoid ramblings of traditionalist tribes unable to move past old wounds”.

Now: Mascen tribes are calling for the tribes to speak as one voice on Masc and the future of their species.

2. Culture

Appearance and Dress

Mascen clothing is something that is often seen as a strong representation of their past. Many mascen will adapt to the type of clothing worn in the environment around them, but this is a natural process in which, through scavenging and hand-me-downs from tribal members past, their aesthetic steadily draws closer to wherever they have settled. A good example of this are mascen who have joined the TSA: although they are provided with uniform, mascen will often choose to layer it with the rest of their clothes passed through the tribes and eventually down from ancestors.

Most of a mascen's personal possessions tend to be wearable; it is not uncommon to see a tinkerer with tools threaded onto a necklace cord, or a shaman who has belted ritual paraphernalia to themselves. Over the span of a mascen's lifetime, they will often collect a large array of trinkets and trophies, whether handed down or taken; these are often of great importance, as they mark a person or event in the mascen's life, and the stories that accompany these items are imperative to the existence of the ancestors.

Totems

One of the cornerstones of mascen life within the tribe is the totem. This is often the centrepiece of a settlement and is used as a gathering point for the tribe. The totem is part flag, part spiritual centre, and a very important feature of a tribe's identity.

They are fashioned by a tinkerer to represent the tribe's ancestors, traditions and important parts of their history. The shamans use them as a tool in their rites, often to focus power to aid groups or even the entire tribe. The big'uns are responsible for the protection of the totem and by extension the tribe. This teamwork around totems strengthens the bond between the different parts of mascen society.

Totems are often made of wood and iron and studded with Omega focus crystals, however, less traditional tribes use other materials.

Often members of a tribe will fashion little versions of a totem to remind them of their tribe when away from home, and groups away from home will often fashion a totem for use in the same way as a tribal totem to keep their community focused and united.

Core Philosophies/Beliefs

At the core of the mascen belief system are the ancestors. Unlike a religion, the ancestors are real; they are not worshiped, they are simply spoken to for advice: as they have come before, they have the knowledge or experience. Tinkerers will ask for advice on technology to find out if an ancestor has tried a thing before, a big'un might ask for advice before a battle – all of this provided by a shaman who acts as an intermediary. But not only advice can be given: for certain tasks an ancestor may lend a little of their strength to a mascen for a limited time or a shaman can even allow an ancestor to enter them.

Every mascen lives their life to be remembered as an ancestor, even the most progressive ones. To be remembered, to pass on their knowledge and be part of the tribe forever. The shaman of the tribe teaches the traditions of their ancestors who are also the permanent moral compass of a tribe for as long as they are remembered. So much was lost during the

time of slavery, with shamans separated from their tribes and unable to contact the ancestors for advice; many ancestors were forgotten and those who remain are either young or seem to be missing memories. This is probably the worst damage ever inflicted upon the mascen culture in those dark times. Some think that only those deemed worthy may become an ancestor, however, this is not how it works – as long as the tribe remembers them, they will exist. Tales of dark deeds are also told and such acts are remembered as a warning. The very worst punishment a mascen can receive after being outcast is to be forgotten, as to be forgotten is to never be remembered, to never become an ancestor, as if you had never existed.

Young shamans will generally work with a collective of ancestors, however; as they become more experienced and discover more of their personal history, they will often choose to call on specific ancestors and build relationships with them. In some cases this requires the unearthing of history lost to time or in others seeking apprenticeship under an older shaman. As a shaman becomes more practised and channels the ancestors more often, they say they can hear their advice without an Omega sphere; some, however, put this down to lingering effects of having been an ancestral vessel. It is not only within the Omega sphere that advice can be sought. Many shamans can grant visions to answer the questions of other mascen that can range from a technical problem to relationship advice. Powerful shamans can take mascen on vision quests or even ask the ancestors to intercede with their aid for a group.

For mascen, honour is important but they think of it differently from humans. They honour their ancestors and the traditions of their tribe. Only a fool would assume that the honour of the KABOOM tribe and the honour of the Steel Rats is judged on the same criteria. The paths each tribe follows dictate the way in which honour is judged. These paths are handed down from the legendary first tribes that formed on Masc. The shamans teach that the paths are unbroken and that the current tribes are descended from these progenitors. Each path has bans and taboos for tribes to adhere to, practices that cannot be done. There are, of course, universal bans such as not indulging in incest or cannibalism but specific tribes often have their own taboos guided by the ancestors they call to, such as the Steel Rats' ban on taking slaves or the KABOOM tribe's taboo against turning away mascen orphans.

Alongside honour is their respect for the environment: for some tribes, this is a belief in living in harmony with nature, for others it is an adaptation to their current environment. Extremely progressive tribes see this as a silly barrier as industrialisation is the natural way forward and old beliefs are holding them back. However, there is one core part of the mascen culture that everyone agrees on. Loyalty. Every mascen is loyal to their tribe and then the race. This loyalty is never questioned and only the worst outcasts would ever dispute it.

Paths

Each tribe follows a path handed down from the first tribes. These matter as they define the tribe, who they are and how they view the world. Every tribe subscribes to them. There are, however, dark stories told of groups of mascen who have turned their back on these ways, regaled with a mixture of sadness, pity and loathing.

Hunter

A tribe that follows the path of the hunter holds cunning in high esteem. The hunter provides and protects, they know the secret paths and know when to be silent. Hunter tribes are often secretive, martial and celebrate triumph that has been found through careful planning. Traditional tribes teach about patience, planning and subtlety through the hunt and mysteries. The more progressive ones do not see the point in hunting animals or word play,

and often set challenges that involve long-term planning and subtle manipulations. The first of the hunter tribes was the Karsk tribe, renowned for hunting the great beasts they took their name from.

Typical bans for hunter tribes are that certain prey cannot be hunted or must be hunted at certain times, bans on rash actions, or the expectation that certain ancestors be remembered at the end of certain hunts.

Grak Ironarm is a legend – a legend lost in the mists of history and an ancestor that few have ever been able to contact. His stories are told around hunter tribal fires in hushed reverence. Grak was the first hunter, according to the stories, and possibly one of the first mascen. He slew the first karsk, a giant with iron teeth which Grak forged into a trap to teach others how to hunt. He stole the knowledge of iron weapons from the Omega in a riddle contest and when he lost his arm, his constant companion Yig remade his arm from the iron skull of the first karsk. The stories are many and vary in possibility, but some shamans, the very best, say they have spoken to the Ironarm and do so in awe.

Innovator

The first innovator tribe was the Rock Jumper tribe, the first tribe that left the Jungle to make their homes in the cliffs on Masc.

Innovator tribes are the tribes that look for the next thing, try new things and push forwards wherever is possible. They have some of the most 'inventive' tinkerers, shamans who are willing to try dangerous rites, and big'un who are happy to use new weapons that other tribes would look down on.

The innovator tribes are at the cutting edge of the mascen society, always adapting and changing. Most innovator tribes are part of the progressive movement and see traditionalist values as holding their race back. Some innovator tribes are a blessing to their race, others have started to ignore their traditions and the birth rate of shamans is slowing down. The progressives say this is because they have moved beyond superstition, while traditionalist innovators are horrified, saying that to innovate is not to ignore the ancestors, just to find new ways to interact with them. Innovators are currently the most powerful of the mascen tribes in the sector and are evangelical about their beliefs.

Typical bans for innovator tribes include only wearing modern clothes, breaking traditions, never staying in the same place; they must share new ideas, be always looking for new knowledge, be always willing to accept new ideas, never be close-minded.

Pesca was an explorer, a big'un who wanted to see what was over the next horizon; it was Pesca who first walked out of the forest, it is told, Pesca who first decided to climb a cliff, Pesca who first braved the darkness of a cave to see if you could live in it. It was Pesca whom others followed and decided to live in the cliffs with, and it was Pesca who created the Rock Jumpers.

Curator

Hardly any progressive tribes follow this path and many of the tribes that do are seen as old-fashioned and unable to adapt.

This is in many ways unfair. Descended from the legendary Iron Dweller tribe, the curators understand that with change and growth things can be lost, that sometimes you need to be the one who maintains the old so that there is a place to go back to if the new does not work

out. The role of the curator tribes has always been to keep the old ways alive, to tell the stories that teach, and to make sure the mascen culture does not become some warped mass damaged by external forces.

Without the curators, much more of the mascen culture would have been lost during the slave times. This has led to some extreme curator tribes who believe that humanity is only one good excuse away from enslaving the mascen race again, leading to hidden caches of knowledge, secret societies across tribes and a militant attitude towards the progressive.

Typical bans for curator tribes include bans on sharing knowledge, using new untested things; they must make sure the stories are told, assure the traditions are recorded, only wear natural traditional clothes or use traditional weapons like axes or hunting rifles, and hold special meetings to remember certain ancestors.

Shrew hid during the slave times. Some are divided on her behaviour, although none can doubt that the knowledge she held about the tribes most likely saved their culture. Following the freeing of the mascen, she handed over data files and books full of information, cultural documents, historical scriptures and even genetic information that reunited families and tribes.

Stories of how she hid from human hunters are legendary among the tribes, although many progressive tribes feel that she should have abandoned the information and helped free slaves instead.

Shrew disappeared soon after she handed over the information saying she wished to be with her tribe. Any attempt to talk to her via ritual has so far failed.

Balance

Some people assume that tribes that follow the balance are the default form of a mascen tribe but this is a very misguided opinion. Maintaining balance is hard. For a tribe following the path of balance, they must juggle the needs of tradition versus the need to evolve. The need to work within their environment whilst maintaining an industrial base. Balancing the Omega and the Alpha. For a tribe of balance, they strive always to keep a balance, to stay on an even keel. Their big'un balance war with peace, the little'un balance curiosity with wisdom.

A balance tribe holds those that can exist and adapt whilst staying themselves in high regard. They are one of the most adaptable tribes and are often also seen as peacemakers at multi-tribal moots.

The name of the first tribe of balance was lost during slavery, and those tribes that seek that knowledge have had a hard time finding any details, almost as if the ancestors from before the slave times have been completely lost.

Typical bans for tribes of balance include never going to an extreme, never letting either the Omega or Alpha gain dominance, always being available to be a mediator, never picking a side.

No one knows which tribe Gar was from and it was surprising that again he was a big'un. Gar made the tribes talk, it is said, when Masc was burning in little wars, it was Gar who united the tribes against the Karsk Hunters. It was also Gar who stopped the other tribes from destroying the Karsk Hunters through meditation. He was responsible for the forming of

six tribes to administer Masc and first suggested that tribes should be led by a council of three in balance.

Whenever he has been contacted by powerful shaman groups, Gar has always refused to confirm his tribe as in his words 'What would it prove? It would undo the peace and balance I brought.'

Might

Tribes of might often have a large number of big'uns, however, these are not typical big'uns. Might is not just about strength, it is about testing yourself, bettering yourself. Tribes of might often come off as arrogant warrior tribes, but equally they have some of the best tinkers and well-educated big'uns. Of course, for every tribe built around self-improvement there is a warmongering tribe that wishes to prove itself in combat against all comers.

In the might tribes, the strength of the body, mind and spirit are equally important; because of this broad focus, tribes of might are known to have some of the best teachers among the tribes, and any mascen who can help the tribe better itself is well respected. It is commonly accepted that might tribes make up the majority of combat troops alongside hunter tribes when mascen go to war *en masse*.

Typical might bans include: never show fear, never be lazy, always be willing to take on a student, never back down from a challenge.

Lurk was interesting for a little'un. She did not want to be a tinkerer and did not have the patience to be a shaman. No, Lurk wanted to go to war. As a member of the Chrome Razor tribe whose big'uns were known for their brutal close combats skills, she did not have the physical size to compete directly. However, they were a tribe of might so she was supported in proving her worth.

She created what translates as "Storm Sharp" – a mascen martial art. Focusing on the use of knives and short weapons, it allowed her to use her reflexes and size to her advantage. She gained a huge amount of praise from the tribe and many big'uns also studied under her, making the Chrome Razor tribe one of the most dangerous tribes to fight in close quarters. In fact, such became their reputation that the Chrome Razors took up a nomadic life of mercenaries focused on boarding actions.

Lurk's legacy of course secured her place as a very important and very martial ancestor.

Nurture

Nurture tribes are focused on growth. Much of their history and knowledge was lost during the slave times; however, such is their nature that they have taken those things that are remembered and have grown them into something greater.

The core of the nurture tribe belief is protecting and caring for the things. Often nurture tribes will take in an orphaned mascen, assist far less fortunate tribes and give aid where it is needed. They are seen as the protectors of the mascen race, not soldiers, but guardians – where the nurturers go, the mascen race often blooms. They were responsible for getting reparations for the slave times and getting the Terran Sovereignty to give the displaced tribes a place to exist.

Unlike the balance tribes, they are not mediators – they are proactive in their actions. Often this behaviour gains the mascen race a lot of political capital as nurture tribes stepping in to

aid and help give the race a good public image. They have a special attachment to the environment and the building of sustainable integrated environments.

Bans often include never taking more than is needed, never turning people in need away, living in symbiosis with nature, defending those who cannot defend themselves, and always improving their environment.

A popular nurturer ancestor is Dolk: she was a shaman once shunned for her obsessive need to help others even against the view of her tribe. When finally outcast, she was driven near insane before calling to the ancestors to help. Through guidance, she brought several small disbanded tribes ravaged by war together to form one united front; saving many mascen from an unbearable existence, the KABOOM tribe was formed.

Customs and Traditions

Every day the mascen honour their ancestors in their dress and their actions, and almost every part of their society is built around the remembrance of the ancestors. The mascen do not pray, however: if they need to speak to the ones before, they ask a shaman to speak for them or offer a vision quest. A tinkerer might honour the ancestors by naming an object, or working their master's ideas into it. Big'uns will call on great ancestors before a battle.

Path celebrations

The several paths have quite different celebrations, and these can differ from tribe to tribe. Some examples of how the paths are celebrated are given below.

- Tribes of Hunters play what can only be described as an elaborate game of hide and seek with an element of last man standing. Each tribe member is given a strip of when their piece is taken, and the game ends when one person has all of the pieces. coloured cloth and sent off to run and hide. They fall prey and are out of the game That person then becomes the Last Hunter; in some tribes, this Last Hunter is chosen as the tribe leader, forgoing the usual council.
- Curators have evenings devoted to tales and ancestors. Much like in nurturer tribes, these are weekly affairs where any tribe is welcome to discuss the stories of old, ancestors and new information that may have come to light that needs to be added to the traditions.
- Tribes of Might have great celebrations of prowess. These festivals involve not only duelling with weapons, but also duels of the mind and the spirit to show the mighty in the clan; brags of great accomplishments are shouted to the ancestors and the ancestors' brags are shouted back by shamans.
- Nurture tribes celebrate by opening their doors to those less fortunate than themselves once a week; they see this as a duty for those that have to give to those who do not. Often these affairs will also be celebrations of ancestors who are spoken of to those the tribe helps.
- Balance tribes often have celebrations that involve looking back on the year and trying to find balance in the time that has gone before and asking that the ancestors guide them to balance in the future.
- Innovator tribes meet in what they call "revelation moots". At a revelation moot, any member of the tribe can talk about what they have discovered. In more traditional tribes the ancestors are called to witness; however, more and more progressive tribes are ignoring the ancestors' role in these monthly meetings.

Birth

The birth of a new mascen is considered very important as every child is a new strength for the tribe. Children are generally adored and cherished in most tribes, and their birth is usually marked with celebrations and a naming ceremony. The nature of this is tribal but the themes of new life, naming, and welcoming to the tribe are universal. Often the ancestors are asked to watch over the newborn, and the child is given a named patron ancestor and a small token to represent the ancestor looking over them. For example, the Star Collectors perform a naming rite under starlight, calling on an ancestor associated with the ascendant star at the time before they take newborn into the jungle to celebrate. In the Steel Rat tribe, a birth is celebrated with drumming and a naming ceremony presided over by the three elders of the tribe, each one naming an ancestor that will guide the newborn.

Marriage

Again, much like birth, marriage is very much a tribe-by-tribe thing with certain themes involved. Those themes include the ancestors being called as witnesses, some proof of worthiness to each other, oaths and an exchange of tokens important to the giver.

Within the Karsk Hunters, it was said that a couple would hunt a karsk and bring it to their ceremony to be anointed in its blood, and to provide for their guests. Among the Basement Monsters, marriage is presided over by the parents of the couple where they make vows that explain how they bring balance and complete each other. Once the parents are happy that the pair are in balance, they then exchange gifts and leave to spend the night deep in the subterranean garden.

One thing, however, is frowned on: marrying outside of the mascen race. In more progressive tribes this is given some leeway, however, it is seen as a pretty aberrant behaviour and certainly not encouraged. In less progressive tribes it is seen akin to marrying back into slavery. In ultra-traditional tribes even taking a non-mascen lover can be seen as grounds for exile.

Burial rites

Mascen burial rites are very important to the culture, for that is the point where a mascen moves from living to ancestor. Every mascen has this opportunity unless their behaviour was so abhorrent that the ultimate sanction of being forgotten by the tribe was enacted. Mascen bury their dead as part of their closeness to nature; however, unlike most races, mascen prefer mass graves. This is because the idea of a lone mascen is so upsetting and wrong to the culture that even in death they wish to be together. In times of war mascen will allow allied races to be buried with them as they do not want their dead to be alone in an emergency, but never in a burial site that is used on a regular basis. Each tribe has its own traditions but certain things are the same across all tribes. There is time to talk about the ancestors' life, to pass out objects owned by them to remember them by, and of course burial.

Recycling, Sharing and Alien Relations

Nothing is wasted in the mascen society. This is not just because by carrying your ancestors' things you honour them, but also out of respect for the environment. In traditional tribes, this means not being wasteful to save damaging the environment, in more progressive tribes avoiding waste shows cleverness and a determination to make every resource count. Within each tribe information and resources are shared freely to a point; however, obviously an artisan keeps the best techniques of his art for his apprentices, and a shaman will not tell all of her most important secrets. What is good for the tribe is shared, but the tribe is not a communist utopia; to be the greatest of ancestors or to ensure that someone will always seek your knowledge after death mean that having some secrets is paramount.

Multiple tribes do share information and resources across political alliances, however, outside of their own race this is more complicated. Most tribes are still reeling from the losses to their culture which humanity inflicted on them; from the work camps, re-education camps, and the breaking up of families there is still a bitter resentment. Only the most progressive clans point towards the gift of space flight given to the mascen by humanity to make reparations for the cultural genocide they headed, as a sign that humanity should be embraced; the hardline traditionalists, however, see this as nothing more than a bribe.

The mascen tribes maintain that both the myr'na and vrede seem to look down on them for no other reason than the they believe they are culturally superior. Some of the more progressive clans court the more 'sophisticated' races, unlike the moderate and traditional tribes who tend to keep them at a distance. The tae'go are a different matter as they share a similar background in the loss of a homeworld, and the mascen see the tae'go as potential allies once they get past the racial memory of being hunted by karsk. Certainly there are rumours that one of the tribes is negotiating with a tae'go to attempt living side by side and investigate the depths of unexplored space.

Language, Writing and Names

Due to the guttural nature of the mascen language, this species prefers one- or two-syllable names in a simple alias style, often primarily consisting of nouns and adjectives. Hard consonants and combinations are also common, such as "k", "sc", "t". There tends to be little difference in female and male gendered names.

Naming conventions tend to differ from tribe to tribe. Some use things of importance, others add names based on an individual's actions. However, universally a mascen will generally be known by a single name with other names added as almost titles.

Examples: Grin, Skunk, Krot, Krunk, Brack, Tooth, Rocko

The mascen language is long dead, destroyed by human intervention and slavery when it was banned and suppressed. A few words have survived, but the language was not spoken for centuries.

What did survive is pictograms. Although there are basic symbols used in the mascen language, many tribes adapt and use their own pictograms that have been created in modern times even though their language is dead. These are often used to tell stories and create ideas rather than to function as an alphabet. Most mascen now use the Terran language and the Terran alphabet.

3. Civics

Political Environment/Societal Structure

The basic structure of mascen society is the tribe. Within traditional tribes, the leadership is made up of an elder shaman, a tinkerer and a big'un, chosen through traditional challenges that discern those who are right for the job. More progressive clans have adopted forms of democracy, much to the disgust of the more traditional ones. The interaction between the tinkerer, the shaman and the big'un can sometimes be tense, previously leading to clashes between more progressive tinkerers and traditionalist shamans.

Another cornerstone of mascen society is the moot; a standard moot is a meeting of a single tribe. These can be for celebrations or important meetings; however, they will often dictate the path of the tribe until the next moot. Great moots are when multiple tribes meet. These are for more important affairs that often dictate the course of the race as a whole. The tribes do not have political parties, but are divided down traditional and progressive lines to varying degrees. At the moment, it seems as though the progressives hold more power than the traditional tribes, however, this could change easily. Delegate moots are meetings of tribal representatives, often called to deal with a specific issue. Chosen delegates are trusted by the tribe leaders to negotiate and agree terms in their stead; often a moot will be called to discuss the issue at hand with the tribe agreeing and selecting delegates to send to a delegate moot.

Family is very important to the mascen: as they have no homeworld, the social structure is important. If the tribe is essential to their wellbeing, family is doubly so. These tight-knit families are the building blocks of the tribe. However, sometimes this behaviour can alienate other races who see them as cliquey. Mascen without a tribe are often adopted, as being tribeless is a fate worse than death. A good example of this is the KABOOM tribe, which will often adopt mascen who have lost their tribe and chosen to join the TSA.

Politically there are a few major issues that are currently being fought over in the political arena. The Adept Program has left many hardline traditionalists angry at the human race for meddling with things best left alone; however, the more progressive amongst tinkerers see it as nothing more than clever engineering and tool use, believing that others are being silly and paranoid about guarding their secrets. After all, if anyone could speak with the ancestors, why would you need shamans? Some progressives are pushing a line of extreme modernisation, which includes industrialisation, wholesale integration into Terran Sovereignty society, and the abandonment of the apprenticeship style of education. Even the moderate tribes find this abhorrent, however, and it seems that mascen society may fall into a civil war if some sort of balance isn't found quickly.

Education

Traditional mascen education is by apprenticeship. Apprenticeship matters. The knowledge of the master goes to the apprentice and that apprentice remembers them. The techniques and ideas become a legacy that ensures that upon the master's death they will be honoured as an ancestor every time their techniques, ideas and teachings are used. This tradition is utterly non-negotiable to traditional tribes who see human classrooms as a return to the time of slavery.

Progressive tribes argue that integration is important and that the teaching techniques of the human society can help develop new ideas and things that can help the mascen society grow. Although this view holds true for more technical and academic subjects, mascen

psychology leads to learning through intuitive steps, and big'uns are naturally gifted in kinaesthetic learning, so tend to excel in practical areas rather than academia. The one-size-fits-all education system may create more integration and be good for those in the mascen society that it is suited to, however, it can fail others and lead to poor self-esteem in big'uns who would flourish in a more traditional apprenticeship.

Crime and Punishment

Policing of a tribe can be an issue; on any planet where mascen live, they have to follow the local planetary law. This is usually enforced by local police; however, due to the tight-knit nature of a tribe and the difficulty for outsiders to navigate mascen social structures, tribal security forces often double as deputised law enforcers within the community.

Outside of planetary law, there are things to be taken more seriously – ancestral bans, traditions and taboos that are unique to each tribe. The breaking of these can lead to transgressors having a ban enforced via rituals, personal bans being forced on a criminal, exile from the tribe for periods of time or permanently, or in the most extreme cases being forgotten. A mascen who has been forgotten will never have their name mentioned again, their teachings will be burned and they will never become an ancestor.

Technology

Mascen technology is at the same level as the rest of the TSA, with space travel being a technology that they were given as part of the reparations for the time they were held as slaves. Mascen tech does, however, tend to be made from recycled parts, as tinkerers are loath to waste things. In fact, one of the technological marvels of the mascen society is their recycling centres.

Although technologically the mascen race is as advanced as most other races, the big'uns tend not to appreciate things for their subtlety and are more impressed with a big gun than the latest in handheld tracking devices. Tinkerers, on the other hand, love innovation, often for its own sake, and friendly rivalries are built around improving on each other's work.

Truly masterful tinkerers are known for their handcrafted and beautiful pieces within their society, where there is a fusion of tinkerers that have come before. Innovation and engineering precision are valued. Stylistically mascen equipment is often described as ugly by others, however, this is due to a different view of aesthetics as compared to other races. What might be described as loud and brash by a myr'na, is seen as passionate by a mascen. What is seen as ugly and a mishmash by a human, is thought of as a cultural expression of a mascen's thoughts on reuse and honouring those that came before by integrating old things.

4. Settlements and Population Across Segovax

Mascen live everywhere across the sector, generally in tribal communities. From the depths of Delmont to the isolationist tribes of Rossi, there are mascen adapting to their environment everywhere. There is no one central planet or leadership for all the tribes beyond great moots. This makes describing the mascen of the Segovax cluster somewhat problematic.

Founding Tribes

Very little is known of the founding tribes, as most information about them was lost during the slave times, often the ancestors who remember them are vague and unhelpful. Below is the information that is known of the first tribes that defined the mascen paths.

Karsk Hunters Tribe

The Karsk Hunters were named after the dangerous lizard prey they hunted. They were known for their cunning and intelligence, along with an uncompromising attitude towards survival. They are viewed as a very traditional tribe.

Their tinkers created traps and hunting equipment. The tribe believed that to survive and prosper the life should be austere and that luxury would harm the hunters' instincts, so the tinkers focused on things that aided the hunt rather than those that made life easier, which often put them at odds with other homeworld tribes. Their traditions of hunting to gain your name still survive in some modern tribes along with scarification to mark important moments in someone's life. Scholars also point to the Karsk Hunters allegedly defending the Jungles of Karsk as their own with violence, and this territorial behaviour led to many of the wars in the mascen history.

Rock Jumper Tribe

Most grey mascen are descended from the original innovator tribe. Mascen scholars believe that they moved from the forests to their new homes in cliff faces due to population growth and the threat of tribal warfare from groups like the Karsk Hunters.

The Rock Jumpers created intricate cities in and on the face of the great cliffs on Masc, but worked with the environment rather than against it. Their engineers created renewable sources of fuel, great vertical gardens for agriculture and other wonders long forgotten. Some scholars argue they were a balance or nurture tribe, but this cannot be further from the truth. They were the first tribe to migrate, the largest innovators in technology and, if some stories are to be believed, the first tribe to see the ancestors as less important.

Iron Dweller Tribe

The Iron Dweller tribe (often referred to as the "Keepers of Echoes") were the tribe who first discovered the Echo Chamber and forged the traditions surrounding both it and Mount Totem. They fiercely protected the Echo Chamber and the iron well it housed as a sacred place of great importance and link to the ancestors. Without the Iron Dweller Tribe, it is likely more ancestors would have been lost before the dark times; they believed above all that traditions must be kept, blessings and tribute to the ancestors upheld and the binding of totems be of utmost importance.

It is rumoured that when the Rock Jumpers initially chose to venture into the mountains and leave their lands behind, the Iron Dwellers banished them from the Echo Chamber for

slighting the ancestors. Generations of Iron Dwellers guarded the Echo Chamber and they were undeniably the first and greatest of the curator tribes.

Modern Tribes

These are examples of some modern tribes.

The Star Collectors

The Star Collectors are a space-born tribe that lives in the trash ring around Tetrarch. The image of the zany space goblin is what people expect, but not what they get. This nurturer tribe is trying to change their environment for the better. Yes, on the planet they sell the things they find in the belt, but the majority of them live in the stars. Giant habitats float in the belt collecting trash, like whales in the ocean, recycling resources to be taken below. Their bellies contain high-tech environmentally-controlled jungles that provide air recycling and refuge from the unnatural life on a ship. From their hangars, ice mining ships go out and hunt for water and other things in nearby asteroid belts – water that is shared with the planet below. The Star Collectors believe that one day they will be able to create a sustainable habitation ring around Tetrarch, with the ambition of eventually creating a Dyson ring around the local star.

The first of the Star Collectors was Talah Skywatcher. Interestingly, she was not a tinkerer but a shaman. She said that she was told by the ancestors that there was a destiny in the sky that should be followed. She organised the orphaned and the exiled for a second chance and the Star Collector tribe was born. Rumour has it that when she died of old age on the Skywatcher habitat, an Omega sphere formed there; however, the concept of a moving Omega sphere in orbit is scoffed at as fanciful by those in the Adept Program.

The Basement Monsters

In the lower levels of a Delmont spire there is a tribe of mascen who are spoken about in whispers and fear. Some say they steal babies to add to their tribe, others say they are cannibals, and the more paranoid say their little'uns are gremlins that turn the technology of the spire into dangerous monsters. The Basement Monster tribe do nothing to discourage these rumours, as they get left alone. They do not steal babies, although they will feed orphans. Like any good mascen tribe they do not integrate the orphans into the tribe but merely feed them and find them homes with humans. They only eat people when times are lean, and the technology thing? Well, their tinkerers do like to try and improve things. The Basement Monsters have actually created a subterranean garden in the spire depths, bringing life and nature to the place, while at the same time using technology in this process. They honour their ancestors, but are not afraid to try new things. Other tribes know of them, and know their elders are fair and wise, and will often go to them for mediation; however, their peaceful ways are kept a secret by other mascen, as they understand that this peace and safety relies on the people of Delmont believing this tribe are the monsters in the basement.

One of the most revered ancestors of the Basement Monster tribe is Lightbringer, the tinkerer who started the garden. Known for his knowledge of hydroponics and understanding of ecology, he decided to create a garden of fungus and other things that thrive in the dark. Lightbringer got his name from the bioluminescent garden that bloomed at his touch. It is truly a thing of beauty, which glows with soft light that permeates the darkness. When he died, he was placed at the centre of the garden where dark lilies grow around a pool – strange plants that seem to gain sustenance from the Omega rather than sunlight.

The KABOOM tribe

The KABOOM tribe are a collective of nomad mascen who live spread across the Segovax cluster, jumping from ship to ship within the TSA. They are known to take on honorary non-mascen members whom they look after as family. Although those who have retired often choose to remain in the tribe, it is very rare for those who do not serve in the army to join as new members because events such as the KABOOM tribe moots are held during transit between deployments. KABOOM tribe tinkerers have been noted as explosive experts, with a particular enthusiasm for loud noises – the louder the better, in fact. Most members of the KABOOM tribe are known to be pragmatic and fast-acting with little theoretical planning.

A key ancestor for the KABOOM tribe is Dolk, a shaman once shunned for her obsessive need to help others even against the view of her tribe. When finally cast out, she was driven almost insane before calling to the ancestors to help. Through guidance, she brought several small disbanded tribes, ravaged by war, together to form one united front, saving many mascen from an unbearable existence. Unsurprisingly, the KABOOM tribe follow the path of the Nurturer.

The Steel Rats

A very traditional tribe who honour the ancestors and are based on Rossi. The name comes from a famed tinkerer who gathered the first Steel Rats. Known as the “The Rat”, he was famous for turning his enemies’ technology against them. The tribe was created towards the end of the age of slavery, and the Steel Rats would run an underground operation to get mascen out of slave camps and to freedom.

Today they observe the traditions of the mascen people, as they keenly remember those ancestors who suffered and broke free of the slavery that took so much from them, hence they follow the path of the Curator. They believe that the mascen people should live in harmony with nature, keep the names of the ancestors alive, and respect the traditions that humanity almost stole from them.

One of the more important ancestors for the Steel Rats is Karllait Wrenchbreaker. Wrenchbreaker was a mascen little’un shaman who was known for his dealings with gremlin-like Omega beings, which he used to unleash on his enemies’ technology, along with the more progressive members of his own tribe.

Coglore Gangers

The Coglore Gangers of Cantiacorum are structured less like a tribe and more like a Delmont gang crossed with a corporation. They are seen as leading the charge for the progressive tribes, however, they are far more civilised than a Delmont gang and have a better education. Coglore is one of the most influential tribes due to their wealth and their location at the heart of the sector’s government.

Coglore have integrated into mainstream Cantiacorum life; their tinkerers work as highly paid engineers, and their children go to school alongside human kids as they live in mixed communities. However, friction is often caused by Coglore, due to them controlling a large amount of organised crime across the planet. Some other tribes put this down to the smaller number of shamans within the tribe, their integration into human society and their only passing lip service to the path of innovator. However, the sad fact is that Cantiacorum life has little in the way of opportunities for big’uns, leading to poverty and inevitably crime.

The most famous of their modern ancestors is Hargard. She was one of the first mascen members of the TSA, who proved her worth by laying her life down to save a human officer. This act of bravery not only secured a place in the army for mascen, but is also one of the reasons Coglore were allowed to settle on Cantiacorum.

5. Physiology

Big'uns have a larger cardiovascular system compared to humans but a slower, stronger heartbeat (when standing and relaxed): 50 beats per minute as opposed to 70. During exertion, however, a big'un's heart can pump 8-12 litres of blood in one minute as compared to 5-7 in humans. As a result, big'uns have a much longer natural lifespan, up to 150 years. Unfortunately, due to the mascen culture, most won't make it past their prime, 20-50 years. If a big'un becomes injured or 'spooked', adrenaline will suddenly flood their bloodstream. When this influx of adrenaline hits the brain and the muscles, their pain tolerances fly through the roof – numbing them to the pain and giving them a chance to get away from danger safely. Unfortunately, this numbing and increase in strength often leads to big'uns feeling invulnerable. The sudden rush of blood and hormones to the brain drives them to fight even harder and more savagely, rather than to take the opportunity to extract themselves from danger. This behaviour is also referred to as "berserking" among the humans.

Little'uns commonly have a higher heart rate and a slightly shorter natural lifespan than humans; due to their smaller size they have less blood to pump and tend to be more resistant to bloodborne diseases as they have a higher percentage of antibodies compared to humans. Despite their tribal nature, little'uns possess a highly developed cerebral network, which experts might argue is responsible for the creativity in the tinkerers and the shaman's innate connection to the Omega. Little'uns can use a higher percentage of their brain functionality for problem solving and their imagination: they have deeper and more frequent furrows and folds across their brains, giving them a larger surface area. Little'uns are known for being "squishy". This is also a risky defence mechanism – it is thought that if a little mascen is in such danger, they go down easily so they do not get in the way of the big'uns (who at this point are probably enraged) and thus escape the danger of being hurt by their own side. It's a high-risk biological strategy, but one developed for their natural environment: in the mascen wilds this works very efficiently, allowing big'uns to protect fallen allies while mascen healers work their craft.

Although as a race the mascen biology has adapted over time, they still retain some elements thought to have come from their home planet Masc. Examples of this are the higher concentration of iron in their blood, and green mascen being more susceptible to colder climates.

Preferred Environment

Mascen naturally gravitate towards and feel more at home in either dense warm jungles or unpopulated mountain ranges. This differs between tribes, and the arrangement of settlements has been hotly disputed in recent years. It is believed the mascen affinity for these two opposing environments comes from Masc.

Marazion V is a prime example of a suitable mascen environment, however, due to the constantly differing beliefs between tribes, they choose to spread across the Segovax cluster to avoid conflict. Tribes have been found everywhere from the isolated forests of Ardheim to the bustling centre of Cantiacorum.

5. Military Presence

The mascen navy is very small due to the expense of jump-capable ships. The ships they do have tend to be large and rely on heavy armour plating alongside clever engineering, which leads to curved bulbous vessels nicknamed “space hippos” by the TSA navy. Most tribes that can, maintain one jump-capable vessel that is home to smaller ships, however, these are rarely used in support of the main TSA fleet and act as protection for tribal interests. The technology itself is very similar to the TSA tech and little’un shamans act as navigators much as adepts do on TSA vessels. The weapons of the fleet tend to be oversized artillery which is useful against planets, but less so against other naval vessels that can engage at longer range with more accuracy, so the mascen navy tends to rely on its smaller ships and fighters in naval engagements.

There are no dedicated mascen regiments at this time within the TSA, however, there are companies such as “Hargad’s Shield” in the 45th Cantiacorum Dragoons, who specialise in line breaking, or “The Wrench Totem combat engineering corp” who serve alongside Durgan regiments. It is worth noting that the various intelligence groups in the TSA value little’uns, or as they put it, “No one thinks around a problem quite like them”. There are even rumours of little’un counter-terrorism units, although to date no one from NISRR has put an order in for little’un-sized power armour.

Mascen tribes tend to maintain their own tribal security forces. They are regulated in a similar manner to planetary police forces, however, they are often supplied with “special” equipment by their tinkerers.

6. The Planet Masc

Geography

Long before the inhabitants of any other race arrived, Masc was believed to be a natural wonder. Mountains towered high above the vivid rainforests that covered all visible land in a humid canopy, buzzing with life. Large natural springs ran down from stone crags, disappearing into the wilderness. Clearings would often be made around large pools of this iron water which was thought to have positive cleansing properties.

From initial TSA readings, it is known that the planet was of a consistent temperature with no real indication as to where on Masc you were, aside from the face of Mount Totem and the bearings one could predict from The 3 Plateau.

Orbiting Masc there are three moons of the same size and equidistant from each other. Some say that The 3 Plateau are intrinsically linked and that somehow the moons, the plateau and the dark pockets led to the evolution of Omega use in mascen. Whatever the truth, the three moons are a mystery that may never be solved unless the mascen retake their homeworld.

Fauna and flora

The only remaining proof of the fauna which existed on Masc is made up of crude drawings and a few well-preserved feathers and scales from before the dark times. The only publicly known of these are samples scavenged and collected by the TSA. From what little has been saved it is clear that very few creatures, if any, had fur; instead, all proof leads to the belief that local fauna were either scaled or coated in a sheen of iridescent feathers. Very few of these creatures are ever mentioned by ancestors other than their key predators the karsk, although on occasion an ancestor is found who has stories of an exotic bird who chirped for more nights than she could remember until her research was done, or a minute reptile who stoles screws and bolts.

As for the flora, due to the unique atmosphere of Masc, no samples were ever taken: the plants simply withered away within moments of being cut. However, many of the initial TSA landing troopers were poisoned within the first few days of roaming the surface of Masc, leading to the belief that many of the reported “vividly bright” plants on the planet secreted a poisonous ichor or gas that was harmless to mascen but perhaps acted as a natural defence.

Predators

Although few accounts of the predatory beasts of Masc were ever recorded in tales, the karsk were thought to be big hulking beasts, with leathery skin tough as armour, and large reptilian jaws. Silent hunters that stalked the denser levels of forest, noticeable only by the flecks of vivid colour that marbled their exterior. Often found hunting in packs of no more than three, they would tear through the outlying camps of many tribes. Despite the anger and disagreement from certain tribes, many mascen viewed the killing of one of these creatures to be a celebratory event, where the karsk’s head would be proudly displayed in the settlement.

Areas of note

Dark Pockets

During the time when the TSA monitored Masc, dark pockets would frequently take the place of areas of Omega interference, often spreading out from the focal point of Omega energy. Through further investigation it has been assumed that the shamans of many tribes had mastered what could only be described as "Omega cloaking". From what little information had been gathered, it was clear that during the times of the 'Great Separation' tribes had found a way to prevent separated tribes from scrying about one another through the use of large protection rites often physically erected around the naturally occurring Omega spheres.

Echo Chamber

It is thought that if there were ever a way for the mascen to regain their ancestors lost to the dark times, the Echo Chamber would be the last hope. Spoken of only in private rituals with ancestors that have almost faded from existence, it is believed that this was once a giant cavern located beneath Mount Totem housing an enormous iron water well. It is told that here tribes would gather to pay tribute to their ancestors and carve into the walls intricate pictograms of deeds done in their names.

Mount Totem

Frequently spoken of in ancestral tales, Mount Totem was thought to tower over as the highest point on Masc. Most stories of this magnificent peak have been gathered by the tribes of might, as during festivals it has been known that many an ancient ancestor boasts of how far they climbed up this Mountain to place their totem. From what little has been revealed, Mount Totem held a totem from every tribe member who had ever visited the Echo Chamber.

The 3 Plateau

Based on sketches and renderings on old TSA equipment, it is said that there were The 3 Plateau dotted around Masc; visually these could only be akin to mountains that had been sliced flat across the top. It is unknown if this is entirely true or how these distinguishable landmarks came to be, but it is widely understood that these were the gathering points for the initial great moots of the founding tribes, and one of these plateaus was the first point of contact where the first TSA ship landed.

The Rise

The Rise marks the point where Pesca first left the forest to explore; it was also the place where Pesca gathered those mascen who would become the Rock Jumper Tribe and ascended from the jungle for the last time.

Legend says that there is a single stone totem marking the spot of the exodus.

The Rise is a kilometre of brush land between the jungle and the sheer cliffs that became 'The Singing Place' – the first mascen cliff settlement so named for the sound the wind made across the cave mouths.

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