

## The Awakened Style Guide

The purpose of this document is to give writers and designers some guidelines on how to create new material for The Awakened setting

### General Do's

- Use the term "mindspeak" for when an awakened animal and human communicate and make sure the conversation is in italics.
- Use apostrophes when it's spoken and everyone (or at least all the significant characters in the scene) understands what's being said.
- Use apostrophes AND italics when only someone is conveying dialogue in a language that is supposed to be unknown to some of the characters.
- Use italics by themselves when the dialogue is mental, magical, or otherwise conveyed soundlessly.

### Setting:

In Grimaton most humans, when they go through their rights of adulthood, get a nice dinner and a few gifts but then there are the .5% of Grimatons, who during the ceremony, get altered or "awakened". Some get an affinity with a specific type of animal, some become healers or magic casters. Be it royalty or a roof sweeper's son or daughter it does not matter. When the awakening happens, you are forever changed.

### The World:

Grimaton is shaped like a big bloated S lying at a 45 degree angle with the northern half being hot or tropical climate and the southern half being more moderate and arctic to the far south. It has 2 moons, 1 sun and is on a 15 month per year cycle. There are islands on both sides of Grimaton that rumors state holds unusual races and monsters.

The moons' names are Alphus for the closest one and Delphus for the furthest.

The waters surrounding Grimaton are the Junsther Ocean to the east/south and Kronther Ocean to the north/west.

Humans are the only race currently residing on Grimaton, but the islands hold other races. Most cities/villages hold ceremonies celebrating a person's 19th birthday month. It is during this celebration when both moons line up when you will discover if you have been awakened. This could happen anywhere and at any time during the night the moons line up.

There are all types of differing cultures on Grimaton. There is a common tongue shared by all but some areas may have accents based on their locales.

In some of the cultures, being awakened is accepted and normal. However, in some areas the awakened are shunned. The reactions depend on what lands you are in.

### The Lands:

Cliffside is a capital in the Open Lands

Cliffside is broken up into areas, or zones. The closer to the water, the "more expensive" the real estate is. The zones breakdown like this:

*Outer Wall:* not really slums but more the area where guards and such live

*Outer Quarter:* this is low income, some slums, peasants etc; inhabitants called "outies"

*Inner Quarter:* middle class "innies" and the business district as well; largest area

*Central Quarter:* very wealthy area, government buildings, high end shops, nobles, wealthy

In the southern part of the Sovereign of the North area, and bordering on the Open Lands are the large Darooth plains and the Vawsooth forest.

### **Kingsland:**

Castle Klark is near a large city called Stanton. Also in the south-western area of that land is Fort Gallerton, a supply and training hub for specialty troops who are awakened or hunt them.

### **Fort Gallerton:**

Training takes a few weeks; each class of trainees has one person in charge of them (addressed as "sir" or "ma'am"), plus one null to help the ones with powers, and one person with an animal companion to help train the ones with animals

Awakened kids are called "trainees" and not "recruits" when they are in what could be described as "boot camp". They're called "trainees" because during training, they're not told that they will be serving with the army upon graduation. When they graduate from training, they're called "elects" (each one is an elect). The king's counselor Avilles (a woman with a snake companion) performs the graduation ceremony, which involves speeches about how benevolent the king is, how kind he is to help them, how peaceful the kingdom is, and how it's threatened by invaders from the north (so the trainees will be helping defend the kingdom when they become elect in some as yet unspecified way)

### **The Characters:**

When awakened, you are awakened attuned to 1 special type of animal (elephant/alligator/lion/bear, etc), nature, or magic (there are many different schools of magic you can be awakened to but only 1 school per person: healing, blood, fire, earth, wind, water, electrical, etc). There is no bolt of lightning, glow, special feeling, etc. when you are awakened. Some feel nothing right away. Others feel different and let their minds go and eventually figure out what happened.

Once awakened, you only have one animal or power. If you have an animal companion you will have no other abilities and you can speak telepathically to that one animal only. An animal companion will become awakened instantly, and instantly bond to its human partner. The animal will have human intelligence though and you will have telepathy allowing you to communicate.

Packs of animals are allowed but the awakened creature will have to be the leader, so they can tell the other non-awakened animals in the pack simple instructions like "food over here" or "threat over there" and get them to follow directions or do simple tasks.

Once bonded, the "mindspeak" link will only be available within a mile of each other. Also, once a bond has been formed, the animal companion will appear to age at the speed of its companion and not one of its own type or species.

If your specific awakened animal dies, you will get attuned to another of the same type, most likely a family member of your previous companion.

If an awakened human dies, his companion would lose the link of communication but would still keep his intelligence and memories.

### **The Politics/Conflict:**

There are a few different types of governments around the land:

The North is largely small monarchies with many differences. However, if a threat arises, they will group together for defense, although this has not happened in centuries.

There is a large democracy in the center of Grimaton in The Open Lands.

Down south right above the Frigid Lands is a monarchy (King Stewart), whose goal is to gather as many awakened as possible either by coercion or slavery to build an army to invade the democracy (The Open Lands) to its north. There are rumors that agents of King Stewart are in the north above and in the Open Lands gathering awakened for the upcoming assault.

The Frigid Wastes in the south contain many tribes that are very barbaric and independent of each other. Villages nearby may not even know what each is doing.

**Currency:**

Coins. Open Land and the North freely use/exchange their coins, they both refuse to deal with King Stewart's coins.

**Magic Items (on the mainland):**

If you need to have something of value, make it a rare wood/metal/gem of extreme quality.

So far we have:

*Wood of the Crying Trees* - wood of rare trees referred to as Crying Trees; the wood has a gray/black color to it. Items made of this special wood tend to be stronger and bows shoot farther and more accurately.

*Sindyll Metal* - when used in weapons, it creates sharper and stronger items. It appears to look like normal metal but weapons created using it develop a natural hamon, outlining the hardened zone which contains the cutting edge. Weapons created with this metal have to be made by a master blacksmith familiar with the proper forging techniques needed to enhance it. In the hands of a novice, the cutting edge can turn out extremely hard but brittle and have a greater chance of breaking.



If used to make armor, it seems to be more protective and stronger. Forged correctly, armor made with this metal is extremely durable and with proper upkeep, will last a very long time without a loss of effectiveness.

**Magic:**

There are magic spells, but no magic items. There are no specific components or objects needed to cast magic; no chants/runes/movements.

Power drainage will be based on your own inner strength. You will get exhausted using your power too much, causing yourself to become physically weak and in need of rest.

There is an extremely rare school of magic that it seems only The King's recruiters and some of his personal guard have access to---Null Magic. This powerful ability allows them to "turn off" a person's power or the communication with their companion. The effects are not permanent but when used at the right time, can definitely be a game changer. Using the Null Magic makes them very exhausted, so it cannot be done often.

**Technology:**

None beyond what would make sense in a straight fantasy setting. Gunpowder does not exist, so pistols, guns, cannons, etc would not be available in this setting.

Guns can be replaced with different variations on hand or pistol crossbows. Flame barrels and catapults can take the place of cannons as a viable long range weapon, if necessary.

**Historical Events:**

The Stewart family took over their lands about 450 years ago during the War of the Plains. The Awakened were also used then to push back all opposing forces.

**Maturity Level:**

PG-13ish

**Transportation:**

Horses are common but not cheap and coaches/wagons are available for horses as well. There are boats available but getting to the islands would be difficult and is an almost impossible event, due to bad weather and high winds the further boats get from shore. Sailing conditions are very unpredictable thus no long range travel occurs on the water.  
Do the creatures/races on the islands have more advanced marine craft? That may be answered in a later anthology.

**Some things to avoid:**

Too much magical power

More than one animal being awakened to the same person at one time

Magic items (for now)

Non human races (for now)

An animal already used (unless it plays a minor part)

The Awakened setting © Hal Greenberg 2012

