

## **The Awakened: Isle of Bones Style Guide**

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

On the Isle of Bones, the humanoids who become awakened will do so during their birth month at 1/3 of their individual races' average lifespans. So Dwarves would become awakened around 200 years old, since they live on average 600 years. Just like the mainlanders, 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.

### **Races:**

There are no humans or half-breed races (half-elf, half-orc, etc)

*Elves:* The elves on the island are mostly hunter/gatherers. The Elves have a darker tan complexion with darker hair.

*Dwarves:* Dwarves tend to be more general laborers. They also work well in military or law enforcement capacities, with their stern focused demeanors.

*Orcs:* The Orcs found on the island are intelligent and creative. They tend to be more political by nature, using their strategic thinking to lead. Also, many of the great craftsmen on the island tend to be Orcs as well, from painters to sculptors to writers.

*Gnomes:* The Gnomes on the island are very outgoing and charismatic. They are effective merchants and traders and people tend to trust them in business matters.

All races get along on the island and work together. The overall feeling is an "us vs them" thinking, with the humanoids viewing Bael Zorn and his growing forces as the presiding threat that out ranks any petty interracial disputes.

### **The World/Lands:**

The environment on the Isle of Bones is a varied one. The island is covered in forests with some small mountainous areas throughout the land, with the largest in the north eastern region. There are also some smaller areas of plains and light jungle mixed in. Up in the mountainous areas is located two sources of water that feed into several rivers that flow around the island.

There is one large main capital city with several smaller cities dotting the land. Smaller settlements, trading posts and villages and interspersed throughout the island and can be found almost anywhere it makes sense.

Bael Zorn is based in the lower south western area near a small hilly area and is slowly moving his influence eastern. Any area where Bael Zorn has established influence or domain over, the

plant life has turned an unnerving and creepy white. Everything is normal with the plants except the unnatural color drain.

### **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 humanoid partner. The animal will have humanoid intelligence and you will have telepathy allowing you to communicate with it. 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 humanoid dies, his companion would lose the link of communication but would still keep his intelligence and memories.

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

Most areas on the Isle of Bones are peaceful, with only minor disagreements and skirmishes occurring. The overriding conflict on the island is the growing power and influence of Bael Zorn and his intention to continue to amass an army and sweep over the land. Because of this threat, all the other races on the island work together in defense, trade and survival.

### **Currency:**

There is a common coin based currency that is prevalent throughout the settled island. Bartering is also popular in the smaller areas and between merchants and traders.

### **Magic Items:**

There are items that are rare because of the material used to construct them, just like on the mainland. 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.

To construct magic items, people who are awakened who have a very rare power called Infusion must be found. These “Infusers” have the ability to bond magical properties into items of very high quality, usually made from the previously mentioned rare materials or items made with high quality gems.

The process for this infusion is a long one, sometimes taking days or weeks, based on the power of the item. Once the Infuser is finished, they must rest for double the time the process took.

*Example:* An Infuser is needed to bestow a +2 bonus on a high quality Crying Tree Long Bow. It will take them 4 days for the initial enchantment plus 8 days of rest afterward.

### **Magic:**

There are magic spells on the Isle of Bones, and only very rare magic items, due to the difficulty of their construction. 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.

Null Magic does exist on the Isle of Bones just like the mainland, although it is even rarer on the island. This powerful ability allows those that have it “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 the user 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:**

Bael Zorn is a very powerful Awakened Necromancer of unknown origin. Many rumors persist that he is Elven, but no concrete confirmation has been able to be obtained. Little is known about him or his rise to power and influence. It is rumored he first appeared in the Wild Lands to the south and began calling to him the non-humanoid races of the island. Ogres, Hobgoblins, Goblins, Hill Giants, Lizardfolk, Demons and the like all began to follow Zorn and as his army grew, so did his influence. Several excursions followed as his "army" set out to spread and expand his territory, and wherever they went, destruction followed.

Bael Zorn is an awakened with a very special and very terrifying power. Through the force of sheer will alone, he can bring the dead back to "unlife" and gift them with a small part of his own twisted soul. He is limited to only animating three corpses at a time, unless he sacrifices one to replace it. He is researching methods to allow him to amass larger armies, looking at ancient legends and following every lead into the dark art of necromancy. There may come a time when Bael Zorn becomes so powerful that legions of the dead will awaken at his very thoughts. It will be a dark day in Grimaton if this should ever come to pass.

**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 other islands or to the mainland 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.

**Some things to avoid:**

Humans and half-breeds

Too much magical power

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

Extremely powerful magic items

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

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