

The Silma Tuaraine

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They were called the Silma Tuaraine, the People of Empathy.

Their planet of Aramy was very likely the most peaceful planet in the history of the universe. Violence was unheard of among its sentient residents. They shared every emotion, from pain to joy to sadness. That was the easiest way for them to communicate. It wasn't really telepathy. Telepathy is "saying" individual words in your mind; "forced empathy" is just the general feeling you wish to communicate.

Perhaps you are having difficulty understanding how this works. Empathy is the ability to "put oneself in another's shoes." This is basically the same concept. If one of the Silma was happy, that feeling jumped from mind to mind like wildfire. The same went for all other emotions. That was the primary reason that they were so non-violent; if they killed another creature, its pain and terror forced upon them would be too much to bear. Silma were known to die from such strong negative feelings.

Aramy was a beautiful planet. Trees and plants grew everywhere, covering the land in a blanket of green. Majestic cave-riddled mountains loomed high above the forests. The river Cyran flowed down from the highest peak, travelling through an intricate network of caves before emerging into the sunlight. Along its subterranean banks grew a magical glowing fungus, which was called Steelarine, the staple of the Silman diet. Silma lived in a variety of places. Caves had always been a favorite; stone walls with slabs of gemstone for windows. Another was the great sea dome of Shalin: an underwater dome of magic accessed by a long cave shaft. A third were the great tree cities. Huge wooden platforms were built up to 50 feet above the ground. From these great heights it was easier to see the stars.

The stars were a central aspect of Silma life and religion. It was said that they gave the power of empathy. Their light fell upon the high mountain peak and was carried through the snowmelt of the Cyran. The power was absorbed by the Steelarine. The stars spoke to the Silma Tuaraine in voices like a million chiming bells. They were Gods, guides, and friends to the peaceful people.

Silma children were often named after the stars. Laalta, Omarine, and Radann were some of the most beautiful stars in the heavens. (Ironically, Radann was the first and only Silma psychopath, but that's another story.) Other children were named for trees, animals, and gemstones (popular in most cultures throughout the known universe). Many were identified by a color: green for happy, blue for serene, and so on. These were meant to describe the color of the child's mind.

The Silma Tuaraine were a wonderful species with a great civilization lasting thousands of years. They were a prime example to pacifists everywhere. It was too good to last.