

# Biata

Racial Package 2003

Information contained herein is to be used primarily with the NERO® Tyrran Campaign, however cultural information, role-play directions, and makeup/costuming information may be considered universal to the NERO® Game System©.

-- Angela and Gaelon Morris

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# Introduction

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It is understood that several migrations would have happened and post the current published Avalon history, other regions would have modified cultures due to time, distance and geography.

## Biata Abilities:

### Negative Attributes:

This Race cannot buy Read Magic.

### Resist Charm:

With this skill, a Biata can resist one charm per day for each time the skill is taken. The resistible effects included are *Charm, Shun, Dominate, Fear, Enslavement, and Vampire Charm*. It does not include *Berserk, Love, or Love Potion # 9*.

In order to use this ability, a player **must** call "resist" when struck by the charm effect. The character must be conscious to use this skill. You cannot pretend to be affected by the charm effect and then call resist later. This way it is obvious to all observers that the charm effect has not worked.

If the Charm effect is from a spell or poison that would normally be stopped by a spell defense, then the spell defense will be lost before the *Resist*. You cannot save your spell defense because you would not have been affected by the spell.

This skill may also be used to protect against ingested potions, elixirs and gasses as desired.

### Resist Sleep:

With this skill a Biata can resist one sleep effect per day for each time the skill is taken. This does not include the skill *Waylay*.

In order to use this ability, a player **must** call resist when struck by the Sleep effect. The character must be conscious to use this skill. You cannot pretend to be affected by the Sleep effect and then call resist later. This way it is obvious to all observers that the sleep effect has not worked.

If the Sleep effect is from a spell or poison that would normally be stopped by a spell defense, then the spell defense will be lost before the *Resist*. You cannot save your spell defense because you would not have been affected by the spell.

This skill can be used to protect against ingested potions and elixirs as desired.

### Break Charm:

With this skill, a Biata can break all active charm effects on another creature at the rate of one sleep effect per day for each time the skill is taken. The effects included are *Charm, Shun, Dominate, Fear, and Vampire Charm*. It does not include *Enslavement, Berserk, Love, or Love Potion # 9*.

In order to use this ability, a player **must** touch the charmed person, have his or her full attention and spend one uninterrupted minute of role-playing conversation with the charmed victim. If you perform any other skills during this minute, if the charmed person is attacked, or if the conversation is halted then the *Break Charm* is unsuccessful. Attempting this action on a character that has not been charmed will still result in the ability being used for the day. This ability does not affect and is not affected by any Spell Defenses.

You cannot use this skill upon yourself.

## Costuming



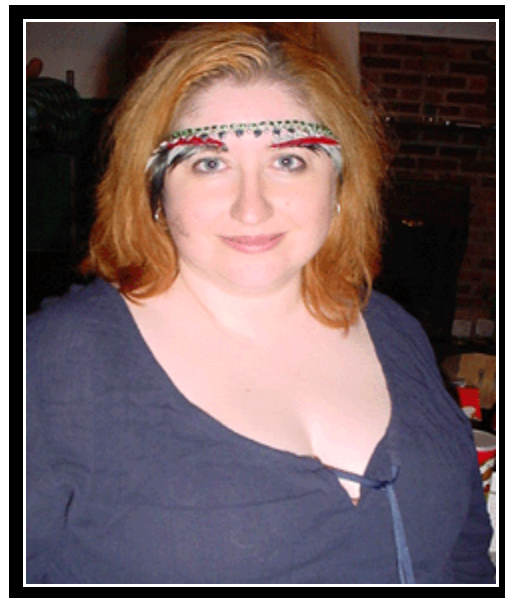
There is no specific racial garb for the Biata. Those once of the Gryphon clan will sometimes dress like Barbarians, in furs and leather, but other than that there is no difference in any attire.

If you wish you could also attach some fake claws to your fingernails, wear a feathered glove (only one unless earned by plot), put some feathers in your hair and otherwise make yourself more "Gryphon-like." After all Biata does mean "Of the Gryphon" in some dialects.

## Makeup

Biata must have sweeping, feathered eyebrows. A good way to do this is to buy some feathers from a craft/fabric shop, cut them to size needed and use some eyelash adhesive to attach them to your eyebrows. (*Do not cover up your real eyebrows with Spirit Gum - you may find that it is then next to impossible to get the spirit gum out without removing your eyebrows*). Removing them is done by peeling from the nose out... not vice versa. Any remaining eyelash adhesive can be washed out with soap and water. Combing through your eyebrows with a nail brush may help as well.

Recently, someone started using clear elastic with the feathers glued to the elastic, similar to a Mystic Wood Elf's horns on a string. The clear elastic is invisible against skin and can be tied in the back making it a non-issue for visibility. Keep in mind – your feathers are not supposed to make you look like you are about to take flight. Alternately, you can draw the feathers with makeup pencils, but this tends to smear and rub off after a while, taking on the look of Hobling brows.



White Makeup on your eyelids will help draw attention to your brows as well. Remember – you need to be identifiable as you in game race from a distance.

Some Biata will wear "War Paint", this is not to be confused with "Mark" or "Spirit Mark" Feather Colors

Familiarity with feather coloring is important, as feather colors are an outward marker of a Biata's inner-self. While the attitudes are not set in stone, the coloration chart below can be used as a guideline for discerning the outlook of your PC and the other Biata around. Feather colors can change in a Biata -- this is credited to extreme duress & emotion.

Black	You have your own mores and standards, which are immovable concepts.
Blue	At peace with yourself and your surroundings, potentially passive to the point of being walked on.
Brown	You tend to be isolationist in nature.
Grey	Grey's tend to be good at heart; however, they try not to choose sides
Green	Prone to bouts of cruelty for the sheer enjoyment of it
Orange	Your thoughts and emotions are immovable...
Purple	You can be rather solemn and unfeeling, deliberate in thought and action to the level of extremes.
Red	Issues are not easily let go; they burn with a deep passion in you. You carry resentments deep inside, and might be characterized as "Moody".
Tan	Everything has a price, and the only person you truly will rely on is yourself.
White	You indulge in your pleasures, you like your parties, and the last thing you really care about is what others might think about you. You are a creature of mischief, lust and chaos.
Yellow	You are likely to be voted Mr. / Miss congeniality - and you really mean it - it's not a front.

Metallicization or Pearlescence may happen in various colors. This is indicative of the personality trait being taken to its extreme.

## Role-playing a Biata:

Personalities of Biata are as wide and varied as the other races. However, upon initial contact, a Biata may appear aloof and potentially an extremist in their thought process. Unless you are an immigrant character, the odds are somewhere in your recent past your home has been over-run by wildly populating, shorter-lived races. You may have an attitude problem because of that. The life expectancy of a Biata is approximately between 750 to 1000 years. Years to a Biata are not as meaningful as to Humans. With such a long life span, Biata tend not to reproduce as often.

The level of acceptability and tolerance to celestial magics will depend on the individual Biata's physical and mental state. Those that are closer by blood to the Gryphons will find that their reactions are stronger, and you might role play something akin to an allergic reaction. How much pain and discomfort you feel is up to your own personal discretion. You can associate with Celestial casters, but will more than likely refuse any Celestial protective spells or scrolls *except in extreme life or death circumstances*.

The Biata culture would be considered a cross of the Norse and Native American cultures in Northern New England. Relatively new to the Biata is the political structure of nobility: Kings, Queens, Dukes, Counts, Barons, Knights, and Dames. Even the newer communities formed since integration with the shorter-lived races has conformed to this model. Many of the younger Biata (less than 200 years old) have also begun to obtain these ranks within the Human Kingdoms.

In the past, Biata formed a classed society based upon blood relationships with the Gryphons, the purer the Biata Blood, and the higher the social class. Mating outside of race, with the exception of Gryphon, was frowned upon, and the offspring were thought of as an impurity of the race.

Presently, due to devastating population losses from the war, and the slow birth rate (Biata bear children usually at a 10 to 25 year interval; more often than one every five years is not unheard of, but is not that safe for the mother), the race is in the process of redefining itself. It is coming to terms with the fact, in order to survive; the race must interact beyond friendship with other races. Although not wildly liked by all, it is an accepted but somewhat distasteful concept to many. As such the numbers of 'Low Blood' Biata swell, and the class division has fallen by the wayside. Each Biata is important. (If this is important to you – its role play only and does not mean one serves another.)

## Mental Abilities:

THESE SKILLS MUST BE TAUGHT/LEARNED IN GAME! It can not be stressed enough the importance of this role play. By attempting to get these powers off board or some other way you are cheating your self of some integral role play.

The Biata have role-playing-only "mind" skills. If a player is voluntarily playing insanity, is upset or has other mental problems, a Biata who has been taught this mind skill **in game** might fix the problem. The Biata must sit quietly, holding hands with the other person. Both should concentrate. If disturbed, they should both be upset and perhaps take some "mental damage."  
*Note: This is a role-playing thing only!* Both parties must want to do this; you cannot force this onto someone. Further, this can never be used to get rid of any in-game mental problems such as curses or diseases or anything! It can only be used if the player has chosen to have a mental problem and now chooses to "fix" it. **If/when in doubt, don't.**

To role-play properly, one must maintain constant physical contact, be it through holding the person's hand or placing your hands on the head of the person: WHISPER TO THEM WHAT THEY ARE SEEING. (Have them whisper what they are seeing) This conversation is not *In-Game* to the world around you -- no things read from the subject's mind are audible to the people around you. Should your hands disconnect, you need to start over again. The person whose mind is being read cannot lie about what they are seeing, however they can give partial details, omitting things. Make sure your subject is aware of this; if they do not want you to see that section of their memories, they can say that the section of memory is clouded, blocked or disjointed.

### The list of mental abilities is as follows:

#### Mind Reading:

This is a one-way exchange of information (a memory/story) in someone's head. It takes as long as it takes to talk it out.

#### Mind Meld:

2-way exchange of thought or memory. No side effects, takes as long as it takes. If you come across a trap, please refer to trap chart.

#### Repair:

Utilized in fixing all problems except for blocks and traps, but like any repair is not strong as original surface. All repairs are seen and felt as a wound being sewn together. (Similar to a surgeon giving stitches. Time: This action alone takes minimally one minute, and recovery time for both patient and mental healer is 2 minutes. Both feel weak afterward.

#### Restore:

This is a complete restoration of the damaged area of a person's memory. This is a rebuilding to make it good as new. The restoring of a PC's mind will give the fixer a migraine for an hour. Time: To do a restore takes 5 minutes of role-play. For each physical blow and action described in the story both PC's will feel and react to as the story goes on.

## Repair Blast:

This is the repair of ones mind against their will. Their will being the characters will, not the players. (Being forced OOG will not work - all parties must be in agreement OOG for this to work.) Time: 2 minutes. Side effects: Fixer is comatose ½ hr. Both PC's take ½ their body points as damage. BEWARE! SOME Biata SEE THIS AS EVIL AND INEXCUSABLE!

## Alteration:

A small change to memory, less than a 24-hour window. Time: 3 minutes to remove and 2 minutes to imprint a new memory. Side Effects: fixer has Migraine for 1 hr.

## Twist:

This is the same as an Alteration except it cannot exceed 30 minutes of altered memory. Time: 1 minute. Side effects: N/A

## Freezing:

This is the removal or altering of ones memory for up to one year of time. In this instance a memory is removed and another is inserted in its place. A Biata Stone MUST be used. Time: 15 minutes. Side effect: Both parties have a migraine for 1 hour. NOTE: Use of this skill must be preceded with notification to your plot committee at least 30 days in advance.

## Wipe:

An extremely painful process to the character having it performed on, this is simply the removal of ones memory leaving nothing in its place but an empty void. A Biata Stone MUST be used. Nothing known to Biata can counter this. Role-play consists of the victim twisting, turning, screaming & writhing in pain while this is performed. Time: 1 minute for every 5 minutes erased. **THE PLAYER MUST AGREE TO THIS, AND RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CONVENIENTLY "REMEMBER" LATER.** This is not to say that it is a common occurrence - nor should this right be abused.

## Block:

This is a setting of a defensive barrier in order to prevent tampering with a mind. It can be performed on any race. The block can be bypassed with a predetermined key or set of keys to the blocked mind. This acts as a door or wall in someone's mind. In order to break a block you must know how to set one.

## Trap:

This is a setting of a defense/offensive-trapped barrier to prevent tampering with the mind. A trap can be avoided by disarming it, or going around it to do something else. Any attempt to enter without disarming sets off the trap, any failure to not disrupt the trap sets it off. If a trap is set off, ALL PARTIES INVOLVED feel the effects, including the trapped individual.

There are other variations of the mind abilities, including the inclusion of memories being linked to each-other, IE: memories of an action triggering another set of memories or actions, similar to what could be called a post traumatic stress reaction.

The chart below shows how to role-play breaking through a trap or removing a block in someone's mind. A black square means that the block cannot be removed and any attempt will result in the backlash listed below. A blank square means it's removed without any problem. "D" means that the trap can be removed; "n" means there are no side effects. More information can be found in the section on mental abilities side effects.

## Person's removing the trap

	Biata, 20 years or less	2 Biata, 20 years or less	Biata 20 years or more	Stone Elf ; HighBlood Biata	Stone Elf; High Blood Biata	2 Low Blood Biata	1 High Blood & 1 Low Blood Biata	2 High Blood Biata	Elder	True Blood	Young Gryphon	Adult Gryphon	Old Gryphon	Great Gryphon		
Person who Set the Block or Trapped the Mind															Failure in removing the trap results in:	
Other races	D	D													Dizzy 1 min	
Low Blood	D	D	D n												Dizzy 1 min	
High Blood		D	D	D	D	D	D	D							Unconscious 1 min	
Elder									D	D n					Unconscious 10 min	
High Elder									D	D	D n				Unconscious 20 min	
True Blood										D	D				Unconscious 30 min	
Young Gryphon											D				Unconscious 30 min	
Adult Gryphon												D			Unconscious 45 min	
Old Gryphon													D	n	Unconscious 45 min	
Great Gryphon														D	n	Unconscious 1 HR

## Family Structure and Gestation

While Biata tend to only have one true love there are 2 different types of weddings.

### *Life Mating:*

This is done with the assistance of an elder that both parties trust. It requires the use of a Biata Stone and the willingness for both parties to allow an elder supervise a complete mental sharing. There are no secrets from each other in this type of a wedding.

### *Contractual Wedding:*

This marriage is usually anywhere from one to ten years long and has set contractual obligations, usually to provide an heir to a family or for elevation in societal station. This will not elevate ones blood level. (Although it might do something for ones blood pressure.)

### **When Biata mate with other races what happens? (All Chapters)**

<i>Parent</i>	<i>Parent</i>	<i>Child</i>	<i>Gestation Length</i>
Low Blood	Other Race	Either Race	10 - 12 months
High Blood	Other Race	Low Blood	12 - 14 months
High Blood	Low Blood	Either Blood	12 - 14 months
High Blood	High Blood	High Blood	12 - 15 months
Elder High Blood	Low Blood	High Blood	12 - 15 months
Elder High Blood	High Blood	High Blood	15 Months
Elder High Blood	Elder High Blood	Elder High Blood	15 Months
True Blood	Low Blood	High Blood	15 Months
True Blood	High Blood	Elder High Blood	16 Months
True Blood	Elder High Blood	Elder High Blood	16 Months
True Blood	True Blood	True Blood	17 Months
Lesser Gryphon	Low Blood	High Blood	18 Months
Lesser Gryphon	High Blood	Elder High Blood	18 Months
Lesser Gryphon	Elder High Blood	True Blood	18 Months
Lesser Gryphon	Lesser Gryphon	Lesser Gryphon	18 Months
Greater Gryphon	Anything	See Plot	See Plot

## Commonly asked questions:

### ***How long do Biata Live?***

Biata live between 750 to 1,000 years.

### ***How old is the race:***

No one knows truly how long the race has lived.

### ***What is a Homestone?***

A sentient rock being, approximately 3' in diameter.

### ***Is there more than one Homestone?***

Yes... there were... how many there are now is unknown.

### ***Where are they?***

Find out in game.

### ***What does a small Homestone do?***

It is believed that it assists in the returning of a Biata's spirit to the Homestone

### ***What is a True Blood?***

It is the lesser offspring of Gryphon and another race or Biata.

### ***What is a High Blood?***

A High Blood is as refined of blood as possible with out being a True Blood, they tend to be a little eccentric and are almost crazy.

### ***What is a Low Blood?***

A Low Blood is a little further on the family tree from the Gryphons. They are more relaxed, and enjoy simpler things in life of blood as possible with out being a True Blood, they tend to be a little eccentric and are almost crazy.

### ***What is with the blood thing anyhow?***

It is a status thing – being closer to Gryphons thats all. No matter what, most Biata breed true.

### ***What is the fuss about Honor?***

A Biata is very similar to a Dark Elf in its obsession to keep its Honor.

### ***How does one lose their honor?***

Lying, betrayal of the race...betrayal of racial secrets (this could easily become a death sentence for the offending party).

### ***How do you act towards a Biata who has lost its honor?***

They are completely shunned. They are invisible to you. You would not help a dying Biata if they were branded honor-less.

### ***How does one get its Honor back?***

A petition to the local council is the first step. A Formal Ceremonial Suicide is the second step-- there must be local Council witnesses and no life spells can be used. The offending party **must** resurrect.

The third step is the offending party must then go on a quest as assigned by the council.

***What does drinking one dose of Gryphon blood do?***

*Non-Biata* – it is deadly (don't use this as a way to kill your non-Biata enemies; if you feed them Gryphon blood – assuming you have any, their deaths will be adjudicated by plot as role-playing deaths and you might be brought up on murder charges.)

*Normal Biata* – unconscious for 5 days.

*High Blood Biata* – unconscious for 2 or 3 days.

*Elder High Blood Biata* – unconscious for 4 hours

*Rider* - unconscious for 10 minutes

If a player drinks more than one dose at a time, see plot.

***How much do Biata talk about their heritage?***

Not much...many communities are still extremely isolationistic and may have good reason to not speak of their heritage. Biata hold their racial secrets very sacred. However, it is commonly known that Biata are the offspring of Gryphons. Be wary when traveling as some communities will hold a person honor-less for telling its secrets, while other communities are very open about their histories in order to show that they are not without Honor. The settlers of New Home are a good example for a need for openness, as are the survivors of Ashbury. The level of discussion is still held in tight control however.

***Can more than one Biata mind meld into someone's head?***

Yes. Biata can even mix with Stone-elves in this way.

***Can a person whose mind is being affected resist?***

The player is always in control. Unless the person entering is a Gryphon, the subject (player) has the right to decline entry. The character having this done can try to resist, but may not always be able to. It is an OOG decision by the player.

***What is a 'Prophecy Dream'***

It is a vision of the future, but only a piece of the puzzle...

***What is the Council***

It is the ruling government formed by the people consisting of 3 to 7 Biata. They make the decisions that affect the race locally. Their authority is respected; however it extends only to Biata.

***What is the High Council***

They are the ruling body that makes decisions for the whole race. They do tend to be regional in nature. The local Councils defer to their judgment. When you meet a High Council member, there will be no doubt of whom you are speaking with. It is said that they have the ability to cause enough mental pain with just a flick of a finger that they could bring a person to their knees in agony.

***What are common last names?***

See page 14.

***What is a Blood Oath?***

A Blood Oath is an oath made with total commitment and honor to a cause. This is never given nor taken lightly. To break or go back on one's blood oath is forgivable only by a Formal Ceremonial Suicide. No other solution is acceptable.

***How is a Blood Oath Given?***

There are several methods of this – but it ultimately is swearing on your blood. Your blood as a Biata is your tie to your ancestors, and it is not dissimilar to swearing on someone's grave. You can verbally swear "By my blood I \_\_\_\_\_." Insert whatever you are oathing to in the

space.

You can also motion that you are slicing your hand and let the blood fall to the ground (In game only – please don't hurt your self for real.) Other methods used have been slicing (again in game only) your hand and dripping the blood into a cup, mixing with others blood and a little wine and ingesting the blood. This in game is a huge gamble as you may be ingesting Gryphons blood, and if so - "Nighty Nite" -- unless it's a human who's ingested the Gryphons blood with you, and then it's a matter of going to the Healers circle...

**What is the effect of Alcohol on a Biata?**

Alcohol (IG) does not intoxicate a Biata, nor does Dark Elven wine. The only substances that will intoxicate a Biata are an ingested intoxicant (Alchemical) and Fudge. Depending on the type of chocolate, a chocolate bar may be considered a low level intoxicant, as well as Chocolate YooHoo or Double Fudge YooHoo are often considered a forms of Fudge Ale. If you have Insulin issues, Adirondack Beverages makes a Diet Chocolate Fudge Soda that is not sweetened with aspartame.

**Is Avalon the only continent that Biata are found on?**

No, Biata are found on all continents, and on several islands. They are known to colonize in "Migrations" and will migrate when faced with a social schism in preference to thinning the numbers of their race.

## FAMILY LINES – Core Families

*You do not have to be of any of these families – this is a listing of the original Avalonian families.*

What your character's family is can say a lot about your character's personality – in tandem with the feather colors. The names are listed by approximate location but this does not mean that your character's parents could not have moved.

Generally the families that have the the suffix “-ik” are the oldest families, and are closer to their ancestors, the Gryphons.

### The North:

#### **Varik:**

This family line is believed to be missing or all dead. It is said they are the original family descended from the Gryphons. They are open minded and tend to be even handed. They judge based on the individual, not what someone else has told them about another.

#### **Vardik:**

This family is responsible for the Biata council working as we know it. They are also responsible for the joint goals and workings of the Hunters/Riders with the Elder, High, and High Elder Councils.

#### **Vargik/Varda/Vasskal**

This family is split off the Vardik line. They refuse to deal with Gryphons and see them as the enemy for creating the Biata race and meddling in its evolution continually. Most Vargik were killed by Sessuar Assassins, and most of their offspring have changed their names and gone into hiding. The Vasskal are more open and spend their time training their people to hate and assassinate Sessuar.

#### **Vardick/Vard/Vord**

This family line is responsible for the Biata being in control of their own lives. They urged separation from the Gryphons and to this day still despise them. Many dedicate their lives to eradicating their former oppressors.

#### **Vorgik/Vorg**

These families insist on mating only with other Biata. They are a fierce warlike family who take great pride in their battlefield skills, and scouting abilities. Many migrated to Volta and the far west, refusing to live in the land of the Evendarrian invaders.

#### **Vorg/Vaug/Vang/Vag**

Little is known of this warlike family line. They were abundant in the early years in the Northern Homelands and during the war against Evendarr. They were the fiercest fighters. They never showed compassion for the enemy, unlike other Biata, they seldom take Biata as their mates.

### The South

#### **Merik**

The Merik family almost died off to a man after the Evendarrian race war. The family never mates with other Biata families unless there is a great deal of trust between the families. They are friendly, good in nature, and kind as well as being soft spoken.

#### **Merdik**

This family is perhaps the most reactionary (next to the Vardiks). They are noted for their mental torture of the Evendarrian hunters during the race wars.

**Merdick**

Like the Merdik, this family is reactionary and are skilled at mental torture. To them, the race wars never ended and they have decimated their numbers in guerrilla style warfare.

**Merrick/Corak**

This line is noted for being specialists in Alchemy and Herbal Lore. They are known mostly for having hidden the recipe for the North Homeland Briar Poison. This recipe was reportedly stolen in 512.

**Merrick/Curak**

This line was almost as large as the Vardik line once was. They are calm, calculating and cold in their acts.

**Thardik/Torak/Thrommel/Thormek**

These families are known for their skill in double talk and subterfuge. They are very loyal to whom they trust and can be vicious fighters if need arises. They are even known to kill their own disloyal family members.

## The West

**Lovik**

This family line has never been known to produce a low blood. General hypothesis is that they are either all Gryphons or will not lay with a shorter lived race, even if the continuation of the race is at stake. They are from the far west past Quentari. They are obsessed with keeping a stone on them, next to their skin at all times. They are also obsessed with keeping the Biata secrets from reaching non-Biata. They are true Racial purists, believing that those who change from Biata to another race are insane or diseased.

**Lorik/Laone/Lorak**

This family line is rather snobbish as Biata go and are just as obsessive about Biata secrets as are the Lovik line. They have been known to strike down their own family mid sentence to keep a secret from being revealed. This family is responsible for leading the westward Biata to the east.

**Orvik/Thromek/Thorvek**

This family line despises Gryphons, seeing them as cruel masters who treat Biata as their toys. They associate freely and aggressively with Gryphon hunters of the east and west.

## The East

**Norik**

Presently this family has only been found in the Ashbury area. They consider any Biata with celestial protectives spells to be insane. They have been known to risk their lives killing these "Tainted" Biata. This family considers themselves completely good and honest.

**Norick**

This family line is very close to the Norik. They are known to have been very close to the Norik. They are known to have been near when a Biata with Celestial protectives "disappeared" suddenly.

**Nordik/Nord**

This family line is close to the Nordik and Norick family lines, and are just as obsessive, but they try hard to understand and tolerate the ways of other races. They will not have close personal contact with celestial casters.

**Norvik/Naultik/Nault**

This family line is also very concerned with Biata ways. They tend to be sadistic pranksters. They have been over heard calling the shorter lived races as "Pets".

**Durik**

This family is close to the Thardik family, and freely mingles and mates with non Biata. (they have even been known to take on Scavenger mates.) Because of their tolerance for other races, they are not treated too well by other Biata.

**Durick/Dorak**

This family despises the Thardiks and Duriks even though they share many of the same views towards the other races.

**Borik**

This family is from over the seas. They are very secretive in their business dealings and are stern about the Biata way of life. People who stand in the way of their business dealings are, well, dealt with.

**Borick/Borack**

This family is fudge-obsessed like a drug addiction. Many tend to be candy makers. They love to party and socialize with other races, however they rarely mate with non Biata.



## QUICKIE BIATA HISTORY:

*Note that your character may not be aware of any of this history or may have some information wrong. In fact, the history printed here, like any history, is based on conjecture in large parts and is not necessarily all-true. A longer, in-game history follows.*

The origin of the Biata race is lost in antiquity, but legends hold that they are the product of some sort of Earth Magic Formal Magic spell involving **Barbarians** and **Gryphons**. The Biata tribe lived among the other northern Barbarians and was considered by the other Barbarian tribes as being different in many respects. Although, like the Barbarians, they had no knowledge of Celestial magic's; the Biata stressed learning and "civilization." Legends are legends and there are Biata in other places than the "Homelands." After all, any time a Gryphon mated with another race other than a Gryphon, the resulting offspring has a strong chance to be Biata, instead of Gryphon, and WOULD NOT be any other race.

At this time, before the great Celestial Change, Biata looked Human to all outward appearances. The Biata tribe was comparatively small and primarily lived in caves to the north of Ravenholt and Volta. In those days before the Great Celestial Change of 590, Biata had the ability to do all sorts of mind control. They could charm like vampires and control others, read minds through mind contact, and otherwise "mind blast" and the like. *Other Biata taught these skills, they were not innate.* There are rumors of very ancient high elder Biata that still possess these skills, (NPC's in other words). Yet rumors of other ways of having other skills that the high elders might not even have. *(Not NPC only - and possible to learn in game, but also not Biata only abilities.)*

Mental Powers governed the Biata society. The Biata had magical items (known as the Homestones) that apparently were sentient and could be used as a library or computer of sorts to gather information. These stones were hidden deep within the Biata's Mountains. The more powerful in these skills became the tribe's leaders. Certain Biata who were purer in blood were known as the "High Blood" and at that time they were considered a "superior" version of the race and had more powers - they usually ruled, the "Low Bloods" had more fun with life, and tended to be friendlier. This caused some dissension among Biata, of course. (It was not a perfect society - there's no such thing as a perfect society. The Biata had plenty of minor political squabbles and arguments.)

As Evendarr began to expand into Barbarian held lands in the mid 500's, many minor skirmishes ensued in which the Barbarians almost always lost. Finally, in the late 560's, the Biata leader, a man named Thorheim Vardik (who was known to the Humans by his alias Theodorik), managed to gather all the Barbarian tribes together to fight against the intruding Humans. He did this primarily by charming the Barbarian tribe leaders who didn't join on their own. This gave the Barbarians a better advantage as they were now fighting under one leader instead of many.

It was still a hard fought battle. However, because in those days, Biata took damage from any Celestial spell cast at them. The Humans were still winning the battles.

Thorheim heard that King Roderick of Evendarr was traveling the front lines and managed to capture him. He had hoped to both use him as a hostage as well as try to convince him that the land could be divided up so that both Humans and Barbarians could live peacefully. However, before he could do any of this, the Humans made a great attack on the Biata camp (there was a traitor somewhere in the midst). This battle later became known as the Battle of the Blood River. The leader of the Humans was Captain Basil Ravenhurst. The battle was long and heavy until Basil (on horseback) spotted Thorheim (also on horseback).

Basil shouted "Prepare to Die!" and spurred his mount towards Thorheim.

Thorheim fell as Basil's blade was thrust into him, and before any Biata could reach him with a Life spell, Thorheim died his final death. (The Biata were able to retrieve the body and Basil's

weapon, however.) King Roderick was saved. The loss of the Biata leader signaled the end of the war. (Ironically, when Basil entered the mystical Hero's Graveyard, many years later, he was surprised to find a grave marked for Theodorik Vardik.)

The once numerous Biata were now down to a few hundred in number and were leaderless. Various political struggles ensued for control over the tribe and a very bitter exchange between Thorheim's widow, Arni Vardik and another leader named Luka Akira caused a definite split in the tribe, and many members left to try to hide themselves in Human society (stealing Biata stones to have for their own councils).

The Great Celestial Change of 590 had many profound effects on the Biata. Within a year or so, all were now showing signs of not being Barbarian (eyebrows, claws, whatever). They completely lost many of their powers and skills. Fortunately, they also lost the disadvantage of taking damage from Celestial spells although they still became uncomfortable when these spells were cast.

That's the basic history with lots of stuff left out for you to find out in game if you're interested. Your character is probably not very old (since you're starting at first level) and probably knows little about many of these subjects. It is possible your character was raised as a Human and nearly had a nervous breakdown when the feathers started to sprout. It is up to you. An in-game long history follows, but your character may not be aware of much of the information, and not all of it may be correct...

# The Myth of Creation

*This is certainly a viable account of the Gryphon Tribe's creation, keeping in mind that all Gryphons can change shape at will and more than likely had infiltrated the tribe to begin with to help the adaptations that were occurring mentally. These adaptations were more than likely helped through crossbreeding with the Barbarians, thus creating the race.*

Originally, Biata were all Barbarians of the Gryphon Clan. They seemed no different than the other clans except that they were larger and more organized than most. Perhaps there was some difference that even they did not know about. Perhaps it was just unyielding loyalty and devotion to their totem that led to their transformation. Whatever the reason, they were chosen to travel a different path from that of the rest of the barbarian clans. Many hundreds of years ago, during the night of a full moon, the Gryphon clan barbarians were performing the tribal ceremony of adulthood, performed many times before and by many generations. They gave praise to their totem the Gryphon, a symbol of strength and wisdom. They asked that the Gryphon accept a group of adolescents as adults of the tribe.

As the new adults, painted and feathered for the ceremony, danced around the great stone, the sky suddenly darkened overhead. As each there looked they were rewarded with the vision of a great Gryphon circling above, yet very close. As the creature descended, the ceremony froze.

Landing on the great ceremonial stone, the Gryphon surveyed the ceremony participants. As his eyes met with one, and then another, a voice spoke in each of their heads. It was friendly and comforting, perhaps even paternal. It was the Gryphon, touching their minds and joining with them. Changing them in a way, which they could not even begin to expect.

As the Gryphon spoke, it welcomed them as children and congratulated them at this first step. It told them they had been chosen... accepted as part of a new way. It called them "Biata", meaning in their tongue "of the mind".

Suddenly, his voice was gone, replaced now by dozens of other voices. The voices of the minds of all assembled. As thoughts flew like seeds on the wind, seconds seem like minutes or hours. Communication took place at the speed of thought. Slowly, the voice faded away, until all any could hear was deafening silence. Their minds, now returned to normal, seemed lonely places. After agonizing seconds, the Gryphon again touched their minds. It promised to never leave them and make for them a place where they could always be. It spread one great wing and the wind touched each person like a mother's kiss.

The noble creature raised its head and broke the silence with one great shriek, causing many to release a breath they did not know they were holding.

It spread its wings, but did not fly away. Instead, it lay down on the rock, closed its eyes, and stopped moving, even breathing, though some say they could hear the creature's heart beat. Its form then shifted, sinking into the great ceremonial stone and melding with it. As the stone consumed the Gryphon, it changed. No longer a dull gray it swirled with many colors, eventually settling on a cloudy marbled white.

All stared, frozen in disbelief. If not for the change in the stone, they probably would have attributed it all to a shared vision. Finally, one brave woman stepped forward to touch the stone. Others watched, and then jumped backwards at her gasp. Seconds later she turned her head, tears of joy running down her face. "He will never leave us", she said. As others touched the stone they too discovered its wonders. Warm to the touch, it invited each of them in and spoke with them. It guided each of them through its mind, a slow process compared to the mind talk of earlier. It began to teach them the ways of mind speech and mind healing.

The people noticed one other wonder, while in contact with the stone, they could enter the mind of another willing person. Each mind was portrayed differently with a mind totem representing each person. Usually a person's mind totem was an animal to which they felt represented themselves, but this differed, as greatly as there were people. Some were plants or even a voice on the wind. The people practiced and probed through the next day and late into the next night. Exhausted by this new form of exercise, they went home to rest tired muscles within their minds. As each left they were given a parting gift, a small piece of the stone. With this, they could continue to enter each others minds and explore the fascinating new world within themselves.

The Biata slowly drifted apart from the other Barbarian tribes. It seems they had been given a second gift, that of an extended life span. Combined with their new strange ways, they shunned the other Barbarians, guarding their new secret as if it were the greatest of treasures. To them, perhaps it was.

For generations the young were brought to the stone for their "first touch".

As the Biata grew and "evolved", councils were formed, each representing a different Gryphon known to the clan. These councils took the place of the tribes that had earlier divided the clan up into smaller sections. Not all agreed, but most felt the council heads spoke with the voice of the Gryphon, which they represented. None would speak out against the great lion-birds.

## How we lost the war (Snake nation perspective) As told by the Wise woman 'Shoud'

Theodoric Vardik, leader of the Gryphon Barbarian Clan, ran an amazing gambit to unite all the Barbarian clans. As a Biata, he used his mind powers to gain influence over many clan chieftains, persuading them to his cause. His bid for unity almost worked. Only through the Southmen's (citizens of the duchy now called Ravenholt) recognition of the threat that a united barbarian front could cause, and their willingness to rise up to war, was this unity squelched.

Theodoric, a good and virtuous man, meant only for peace through his actions. He wished to make clan territorial disputes a thing of the past. Fighting over seasonal hunting privileges and such was only weakening and dividing the clans. Theodoric, seeing the growing number of Southmen as a threat to his people and their society, attempted to bond the Northmen together into one people; a force, which could not be undone.

Unfortunately, not knowing what motivations drove these barbarians; the Southmen saw their actions as preparations for war (understandably) and did likewise. Although it is unclear who actually cast the first spell (each side blamed the other), it is only known that war broke out between the Snake Nation and the united Southmen. Many on both sides actually welcomed this war and that is most likely where the blood-shed began.

As celestial filled armies marched north, the barbarians rose from the woods in sporadic and brutal attacks. The Southmen were better armed, armored, and prepared but the barbarians fought with the vigor of people for their homelands. The biggest force for the south was their Mages. The powerful sky magic (as the barbarians called it) of the celestials was a foe unlike any the Northmen had ever known. They called lightning from the sky and made even their tents impenetrable strongholds. With these on their side it seemed obvious the Southmen would eventually win, though perhaps many bloody years down the line.

Remembering his original quest for peace, his people unwilling even to consider surrender, Theodoric set out for a cure to the bloodshed. Using information gained by his scouts of the Southmen's leader's (King Roderick) whereabouts, Theodoric set up an ambush. He took a group of his most trusted, skilled, and stealthy men on a dangerous quest to kidnap the King. Unfortunately, for the Northmen, they were not the only ones with spies. The information of this plan was discovered, although not in time to stop the kidnapping. It was, however, in time to alert local forces to the King's plight. (Run on sentence – consider revising) So, a contingent of Southmen, led by a young Captain Basil Ravenhurst, rode off to the king's rescue.

The two forces met and the results are history. Southmen, well armed and rested, on fresh horses came face to face with the wounded, bedraggled members of Theodoric's raiding party. The raiding party had but one advantage, the captured king. Knowing the king's death would likely make him a martyr and spur the Southmen on, Theodoric knew he must find a resolution involving as little bloodshed as possible. He challenged young Captain Ravenhurst to single combat with the king as the reward. Refusal of this challenged promised death for the king. Needless to say, the Captain accepted.

At the end of a quick but skilled battle, Theodoric lay dead and Ravenhurst and his forces had rescued the king. The remainders of Theodoric's personal group were allowed to escape and carry the word of his death with them. The leader of the great Snake Nation lay dead, and with him, his dream for a united people. Without his leadership the barbarians quickly scattered back into their own tribes. As smaller groups they found safety in the woods and mountains. Some even escaped south into the Evendarrian lands taking up the seeming of Southmen. Whatever the choice the result was the same, the war had ended and the Southmen were victorious.

# The Migration to New Home

By Kelsea Varik Laone Merdik,  
*Biata Culturalist*

It has been long thought that by the other races that this was an "Evil" race. Only recently, it has been discovered that a whole branch of the race had been struck mad. They had been driven to delusion by the effect of at least one cracked Homestone.

The Homestones were their link to this culture and being broken, the effect spilled into the everyday lives of the racial members associated with them.

In the late 560's, E.R. there was a great migration. War had over run the Homelands and several great warriors were simply tired of the fighting (Especially when they could not agree on tactics used - the thought of Creating Undead to fight their battles for them turned their stomachs and was not tolerated.). They wanted only to live in peace and have a sanctuary (Obviously to these settlers Necromancy was considered "Foul" and not condoned.).

Traveling to all regions *some* found sanctuary in the Northern Frost Peaks. In this haven, they built their settlement. Gryphon to Low Blood, everyone was treated equally, where the Homelands had a virtual serf class of the Low bloods - here all were treated equal. Dignity was considered an unspoken right. The Laws of 215 were discarded, as

Controlling Barbarians was considered a violation of free will.

No one could tell the younger Biata as to WHY the horror years were that and instead of keeping blood sacred it created a class system that was oppressive.

Too many of the Biata in the south had no Honor to accept their word as law.

Too many of the Southern Biata saw only Biata life as honorable.

The Secret Gryphon location & home didn't really exist anymore... the Gryphons as a race had assimilated their numbers into the Biata race, and in their eyes all were one.

Houses were built; ground was tilled for farms that terraced the sides of the mountains. Gryphons showed their desire for true harmony by being both protectors and pack creatures, importing raw materials for construction from around Tyrra. This allowed all to live in comfort in a relatively short period. Then after all appeared done and that the settlers would finally have their "Happily-Ever-After," mayhem struck.

Six of the thirteen founding members, having recuperated from their injuries, were still tainted with blood lust for all non-Biata. In a council meeting, they demanded that all humans be eradicated and that New Home be used as a base of operations for their war machine. Six others disagreed; they had their peace and wanted only their sovereign space to have as a Sanctuary for all of their kind and Descendants.

The argument escalated into physical combat when a seventh stepped in and declared his choice for peace. Feathers flew in deadly combat that saw the six who wanted war dead, and no resurrections.

Peace has been held for the last thirty years. As the Expansionism encroached again, (this time under the Leadership of Queen Naomi, of Avendale,) the cries for war were pleasantly absent. This time, wrongs could be set right and peace could hopefully be declared. Currently a treaty and an alliance are in the works. When Arundel (an estate within Queen Naomi's boundaries) was attacked by Elementals in the spring of 598, New Home's residents sprang into action. Materials for reconstruction were promptly provided and other supplies that could be offered were sent.

## The Sessuar Invasion of Ashbury

Author unknown

In the spring of 598, life was not as sweet for the Biata in Evendarr, more specific - the Ashbury region. The deaths of many due to the invasion off the Sessuar have until now been unrecorded... many of our kind have pledged their loyalties to the Sessuar, forsaking their blood oaths to clan and family, in order to find prestige, power and wealth within the Sessuar society.

Having tasted the possibility of power within the Human society while the youth (Bracuar Nautic) known publicly as Brian Nordenn held the throne of Duke for several years these individuals now saw the chance to have the humans kneel to them. They seemed to have lost care and interest for kith and kin, no longer impressed with the continuation of the race, they only seem to be concerned for their own well being.

Granted, the Hounds were a great problem, however the steadfast anxiety for the continuation and preservation of the race seems to have disappeared.

Once more the true colors of the Eastern High Council were shown

What the true count of the survivors is may never be known. All that is known is that the High Council led its people like lambs to the slaughter. The Biata race became Elder-less at that point in the Ashbury area.