

Teplians are a species designed for most settings that account for human-like and/or anthropomorphic species. As their biology is consistent with most Earthly standards, Teplians can be placed in any alternate Earth or earth-like setting that accounts for their evolution. They can also be played as having evolved on a different Earth-like planet in a sci-fi setting as they have some unusual properties and can thrive in more exotic environments. It is our hope that if you enjoy the race, you can adapt them into fiction, roleplay, and collaborative writing. If you do, all we ask is that you give credit to us for creating the species and possibly link to these documents on our pages! Thank you!

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Teplian Primer

I. Introduction and Appearance

Teplians are a short, humanoid species with extremely smooth, hairless skin. They most often are of a curvy build with wide-set hips and proportionally thicker legs than arms. Females tend to be built with a more well-rounded body shape while males average only a hair taller with more muscular upper bodies. The most iconic Teplian feature are their ears, fin-like protrusions from either side that almost give the impression of an aquatic race. Their noses are round and flat with forward-facing nostrils, while a broad ridge traces a shallow curve from the brow to the nose's extension. A short yet broad tail extends from the bottom of their spine.

Their skin is two-colored, a lighter tone covering most of their body with unique and fluid patches of a darker shade. Their base skin colors usually range from slightly rusty reds to pale tans or greys. Despite having universally smooth skin naturally, they do have hair on their heads. Their hair colors can be diverse, but a majority of Teplians have dark brown, black, or red colored hair. Their eye colors similarly can be a wide range, but the most common colors are greens, blues, and hazel. Brown eyes are only a recent introduction into their species and thus are considered somewhat unusual.

Teplians have a rich culture which prioritizes experience and experimentation, and they are aided in their endeavors by their physiological resilience and long natural life spans. Their most unique features include a keen sense of temperature and heat flux which many have misunderstood as a sort of thermal vision, dermal absorption that allows their bodies to take in liquids and adapt to new exposures and environments, and a keen sense of taste which not only gains them more information than scent but also allows them to have more detailed nutritional understanding. As a social and rarely routine-setting species, they are constantly searching for new personal experiences.

II. Biology

A. Skeletal and General Structure

Teplians are set shorter and stockier than many humanoid species. Females generally average about 148 cm (4'10") while males only average a hair taller at 150 cm (4'11"). They are thickly built, though, and prone to curviness. As such, their skeletal structure is set accordingly. A wide pelvis and wide set hips are clear markers of their more voluptuous bottom halves. This pelvis differs surprisingly little between male and female. Many of the leg bones are thicker in order to compensate. Their skulls are slightly rounder, but their jaw is loosely set. In addition, their ribs are spaced out slightly more, lay slightly flatter, and extend slightly further down on the body than a human's ribs. However, this difference is almost unnoticeable without taking close measurements.

The most noticeable difference in Teplian skeletal structure, however, is how far apart all bones sit from one another across joints. Small gaps space even between the femur and patella, providing far less skeletal support overall than one might expect. This skeletal structure, however, allows the body to expand and adjust, allowing for significant bodily movement or changes before serious damage is incurred. The skeletal structure's slacking in overall bodily support is instead picked up by their powerful and dense muscles and tendons and ensured by the unique nervous system's ability to maintain bodily function even without direct thought or control by the brain.

B. Nervous System and Brainpower

The Teplian nervous system is one of their most subtle biological adaptations. While they do have a mostly typical system, including brain, spinal cord, and general neurological properties, Teplians are unique in having some of their mental processes not be centralized in either the brain or spinal cord. In fact, many early biologists from other species often made the mistake of believing Teplians to be inferior in mental power due to their smaller brain to body ratio. Instead, many processes can be handled locally, allowing some amount of control and action in the case of serious damage to connections between or directly to the brain and spinal cord.

As a result, Teplian neurology is highly complex and difficult to manage. While many chemicals and electrical impulses create the same effects in a Teplian as they would in many other humanoid species, others become highly dangerous or highly ineffectual due to this more evenly distributed system. While not as efficient or decentralized as an octopus', Teplian body parts have been known to continue moving or performing neurologically-triggered functions even when fully separated from the body. It is mostly, however, short lived as the system as a whole is required to maintain the bioelectrical activity. There are just as many biological and philosophical mysteries to the specific workings of the human brain as there are biological and philosophical mysteries to the workings of the Teplian nervous system.

C. Muscular Structure and Cardiovascular System

The Teplian's muscular structure is, as previously mentioned, much denser and stronger than many species in terms of bodily support. The muscular structure picks up on that which their skeletal structure is less adept at. However, this does leave their muscles with a reduced tendency towards forming muscles for extreme sport, weightlifting, or bodybuilding. However, this does not limit Teplians' capacity for any of these things. Rather, in order to build the same muscular capacity as a human for a particular sport or act, a Teplian must work harder and longer. On the flip-side, Teplians do not atrophy as quickly as other species. The muscular structure resists change in either direction.

Teplian muscles, consequently, also have another quirk. While Teplians are still red-blooded oxygen-breathing creatures, their muscles can go without oxygen supply for an extraordinary amount of time without building up significant amounts of detrimental by-products. Despite their human-equivalent hearts and cardiovascular system, Teplians can function even through significant blood loss. Some suspect that Teplians have become so accustomed to anaerobic respiration that they tend to use it in large quantities. However, Teplians can and will still die of blood loss, and therefore it is extremely important for a Teplian to be aware of significant blood loss and act before the symptoms begin to actually set in. Symptoms of shock from blood loss often come too late for action. Teplian muscles also seem to still maintain significant amounts of activity even in high heat situations, although they will eventually denature and lose functionality if extreme enough heat is applied or a long enough period of time passes without treatment.

D. Senses and Perception

While many immediately assume that the Teplian's strongest senses are smell and hearing based on their unique ears and snout-like noses, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, their sense of smell is one of their weaker senses, and their hearing is akin to a human's in quality with only a slightly higher minimum and maximum frequency. Their sense of touch is only slightly keener due to the nervous structure and lack of interfering body hair, and their eyesight is mildly slower to adjust to variations in light. Instead, almost in reverse to the human relationship between smell and taste, their sense of smell is made up for by their superior taste. Their sense of taste is exceptionally strong. Teplians are often able to tell the most important nutritional aspects of something just by licking it. However, rather than being overwhelmed by strong-tasting dishes, their sensitivity is more about complexity. Many Teplians debate between the number of "basic tastes" while laughing at the concept of there being only five or six.

It is important to note that Teplians have two other differences between human senses. First, some believe that Teplians have a reduced sense of pain or nociception compared to humans. However, it is impossible to prove as pain is a highly subjective sense. It is somewhat agreed upon, though, that Teplians have a slightly lower "cap" on pain, many notable incidents occurring where reckless Teplians have not noticed a grievous injury and exacerbating it through continued action. However, it is their thermoception which is most intriguing to many. In addition to normal understandings, Teplians process patterns of heat almost as if it were a second form of vision. They are intensely stimulated and

fascinated with temperature differences, often describing them in terms of color or size much like how those with kinesthesia describe sound. The sense, however, is very non-specific at distances. Despite rumors, a Teplian cannot identify or see “heat shapes” of something on the other side of a wall from them; in this hypothetical situation, a Teplian would only be able to confirm there was something warm on the other side.

E. Digestive System and Metabolism

Thanks to an efficient digestive system and a preyish evolutionary past, Teplians eat as food is made available. Food is quickly digested and processed even in large sittings, but Teplians are also extremely slow to use up the nutrients obtained. Their stomach can even expand to fit large amounts of food if needed. Teplians, as a result, usually eat socially or to try new things rather than in meals of necessity. Because of the speed of their digestion, digestive system failures are more common than in other species. Luckily, many of these syndromes are not lethal or permanent and can usually be fixed through medication or changes to eating habits. Overeating can be a common issue as well, resulting in the plumper demographics of the species. Much of their digestive system, however, is quite normal otherwise.

F. Immune System and Biological Resilience

Teplians have incredible biological resilience but pay for it with extremely poor short-term resistance. While toxins, alcohol, drugs, viruses, infections, and other potentially threatening foreign introductions are extremely quick to take hold and slow to be dealt with, the Teplian immune system protects major functions while slowly processing all foreign matter. When combined with modern, advanced, or sci-fi level medicine, the result is that Teplians rarely die from illness or foreign introductions into their body. While initially cancer posed an extremely lethal threat to the species, their immune systems have adapted to detect such inaccuracies and contain them before beginning the slow process. However, a sick Teplian without medication will often take extremely long periods to fully recover. In addition, because of their short-term vulnerabilities and slow and long-term functioning immune system and filtration, Teplians are quick to feel the influence of drugs, alcohol, and similar substances and risk extremely bad hangovers while working it off.

G. Integumentary System and Dermal Absorption

Perhaps their most unique aspect, Teplians are almost entirely hairless, only recently in their evolutionary history gaining the hair on their heads and nails on their fingers and toes. Their skin is almost rubbery smooth. Despite that smoothness, the truth behind Teplian skin is that it is incredibly porous. However, most of these pores are not for sweat as they are in humans. Instead, it is for the intake of liquids. Teplians can absorb liquids through their skin, often using their ability to adapt to new environments and absorb water for increased hydration. In addition, modern Teplians use this ability for experimentation or direct effects on their physiology, often encouraging new functions or acting as an alternative delivery method for fast-acting drugs. More particularly unusual effects have been rumored as a result of this ability, and as such progression into biochemical engineering or alterations in more advanced timelines or worlds would not be unreasonable.

The skin is relatively resilient despite its smooth feel and pliability. Scrapes and rough abrasions are particularly difficult to create. However, bruising occurs slightly easier, and the skin is particularly vulnerable to cutting or puncturing. Thankfully, due to the muscular and nervous developments of the Teplian, these vulnerabilities are not too glaring or permanently damaging. The skin is also remarkably good at stretching and expanding as needed. Teplians, despite their fluid absorption, still do sweat in hot temperatures and during exertion, though some of it does end up reabsorbed. Their skin, however, does do a decent job along with fat supplies in warming them during cold temperature. However, as their tolerances are generally more suited for hotter temperatures, they will always seek warmth first.

H. Reproductive System and Life Cycle

Much of male and female Teplian anatomy remains consistent with most humanoids. Males are often jokingly compared to tanukis, however, in terms of their sexual anatomy. The scrotum and testicles are extremely large proportionally compared to human anatomy, and, as a result, store larger quantities of sperm than many humanoids. The penis has a lot of girth despite its shorter length. Much of the females' sexual anatomy is hidden from view, the surrounding skin of the perineum tucking where the vagina is, appearing to be in form a natural "camel's toe". However, much of the exterior anatomy inside when the vaginal tuck is stretched open is consistent. The vaginal passage is wider to account for increased girth but also shallow to account for the shorter penile length. The cervix is less effective compared to other mammalian females. The most major difference, however, is in the shape and function of the uterus and fallopian tube. Rather than a small chamber, Teplian females have a large, cylindrical uterus. Teplian fallopian tubes are located at the bottom side of the uterine cavity. This shape allows for easy growth and expansion within the womb as well as, mostly in earlier evolutionary stages, holding and aiding multiple male matings for impregnation.

Teplian male and females encounter puberty and sexual maturity at the same time, equivalent to the general timings of human female sexual maturity. Female Teplian breasts are easily stimulated to lactate, and often will grow larger when stimulated more frequently. Large breasts often signify mothers of larger numbers of children. Twins and triplets are not uncommon, though larger pregnancies often require outside aid or adaptations to enable given Teplians give live birth. Teplian males remain fertile for almost 80 years, and Teplian females often have enough eggs to remain fertile for 60. However, Teplians have been known to live for as long as 150 years in the modern era thanks to their long-term functioning immune system and waste processing. Ultimately, though, aging will take effect. Tremors, neurological disorders, and weakening of their immune systems are the most common effects of old age.

I. Other Biological Systems and Information

Much of the rest of Teplian functioning is akin to human biological systems. Only a few other differences must be described. The fin-like ears of the Teplian, as previously stated, only enable average hearing. However, the ears' "fins" can close together during colder weather. In extremely cold environments, the ears' fins can close completely together into a cone-like shape, conserving heat while still allowing limited hearing through a small gap at the tip of the cone-shaped enclosure. Their tongues are close to twice the proportional length of a human's. Their teeth are similar to a human's, though

occasionally some Teplians develop one or more larger canines. These “fangs” are recessive traits from having tusks in a distant evolutionary ancestor. Finally, Teplians have short, thick tails that only have limited movement capabilities. These tails function mostly for balance, but also can express some emotions in limited ways. Most Teplians cannot consciously control their tails or ear fins.

J. Fitness and Physical Ability

Given their body structure and tendencies, most Teplians are average in terms of physical ability and fitness. Teplian athletes are not necessarily rare, though. However, they do have disadvantages in certain sports and activities. In particular, Teplians are generally not very good swimmers and do not have any natural tendencies towards swimming as humans do. However, their flexibility can be extremely advantageous so long as the tendency towards being curvy is kept in check. Teplians are also not the most optimal at running for speed, especially over difficult terrain. As a result of these limitations, many Teplian athletes must account for more things than other races. However, their good endurance in stressful situations and harsh environments allows them some advantages. Overall, Teplians as a species tend to not prioritize developing such physical ability extremes given the immense commitment and overcoming of limitations, though Teplian athletes can very easily become stand-out competitors if they decide the commitment is worth it.

III. Psychology

While any sufficiently developed species will inevitably have a wide range of psychological profiles, there are certain inherent psychological tendencies which are identifiably Teplian. It should be noted that these are apart from culture, as rare orphan cases with individuals raised outside of Teplian culture have shown tendencies towards these sorts of behaviors and thought patterns.

The most obvious consistent element is the unique relationship with temperature Teplians have. Teplians, to a noticeable degree of severity more than other species, are stimulated by cold temperatures and relaxed by heat. As a result, Teplians view temperatures of 10-15 °C (50-60 °F) as optimal temperatures for high-level functioning. Additionally, temperatures of 35-45 °C (95-113 °F) are seen as highly relaxing, many home environments often being warmed to temperatures close to that range. Teplians, in stressful situations, will usually gravitate towards extreme sources of heat. These temperature affinities can become overwhelming, leading to almost hypnotic attractions or over-stimulation in temperature extremes in individuals with less willpower or command over their senses.

Additionally, due in part to their physiologies, Teplians generally are less cautious and often need some form of sensory confirmation besides pain to recognize injury or illness. This recklessness and willingness to experiment and explore new environments is thought to be partly responsible for the species’ quick evolution. However, this also leads to high rates of accident-related mortality, most often due to physical trauma. The most successful experimenters and those who are experts or enablers for new experiences are not only rewarded by survival but also are seen as more appealing for reproduction.

Finally, ironically so, this personal recklessness has also resulted in a related psychological tendency: a tendency towards communal living. Caution is often the responsibility of family, both biological and community. As injury can sometimes go unnoticed, it is highly advantageous for Teplians to have many individuals able to provide an outside perspective. This also makes Teplians psychologically less prone to violence and more prone towards diplomacy and social arrangements. This also may have played a part in the Teplians' quick evolution into an intelligent humanoid species.

IV. Culture

A. Values and Priorities

Teplian cultures are built upon two primary foundations: experiences and community. Experience often forms the foundation of Teplian societies, encouraging individuals to continuously either try new things and become well-rounded or to specialize and push the boundaries of what is possible within their field. Those who are seen as worldly or trailblazers are afforded exceptional amounts of respect and prestige, and in older societies often results in a sub-economy of storytelling or experience exchanges. Those who settle down or take up more sedentary lifestyles are not biased against but valued in the level they enable others to fulfill their desires for new experiences. This evaluation is extended beyond species borders, resulting in some cultural friction in official diplomacy or economic negotiations.

Community as a value among Teplians is not speciesist as one might expect. Rather, as long as a network of relationships of any type surround an individual, Teplians will consider that person successful. In addition, this does not mean the species emphasizes cliques. Those who do not extend opportunities to less fortunate individuals are seen as stingy and often shunned; their values emphasize the nature of community as an inevitable mutual exchange. Communities can be mutable and fluid, but the importance is in holding the values of community. Those who willingly isolate themselves, shun others, or are highly selective and choosy often are seen as shady and untrustworthy. Likewise, other cultures that take great measures to remain aloof will be treated with great distrust and caution. Other species quickly realize the strength of these two values when the normally open and reckless species turns sheltered and reserved.

B. Perceptions of Gender

Most Teplians are well aware of biological sex and the possibilities therein. However, there is very little pressure on individuals to perform the same sex they are, whatever it may be. Some individuals, when looking for romantic or casual partners, have shown discomfort or distaste for non-normative gender identities, but the culture as a whole accepts these performances in day-to-day life, professional environments, and friendly interaction. As a result, many Teplians can suffer stereotypes from less pro-gender species and cultures. This being said, Teplians, as a vast majority, identify the same as their biological sex and are assumed to do so until otherwise stated.

C. Families and Childrearing

In early Teplian societies and some modern ones, family is seen as a flexible term. After birth, the mother and father are seen as the rightful primary caretakers with full responsibility for raising and protecting their child. However, once the child has finished their first few early years of education, responsibility for the child shifts to the community as a whole. Children are often given opportunities to learn about all facets of their community and experience various ways of life, trades, and people. While the parents retain the final say in decisions about their particular child's raising and often continue to shelter them, this communal living is prioritized until the age of 12.

The traditional model of education and growth in early societies had Teplian adolescents live a year in new environments, rotating between trusted members of society with oversight provided by the community. Modern societies often utilize the larger world available to them to send adolescents into entirely different societies and cultures. Teplians view the raising of a community's child as a high honor, and those who regularly take custody of adolescents during these cultural exchanges and protect and raise them well often are given gifts and status within the community. This method of childrearing emphasizes giving the child exposure to as many different types of life as possible while also growing their network of contacts. Sometimes these stays are cut short when it is seen that the adolescent is not able to accept or adapt. Most importantly, the child's parents remain in contact, continuing to be the final say in major decisions and being a trusted confidant and advisor.

The final year of a Teplian's childhood generally brings them back within the community to reconnect with friends, family, and important figures. While many quickly make major plans or decisions regarding their future dreams and professions, others enter into conversation with their networks and continue to research and learn. At least two years are provided for young adults to begin to set up plans for independence or roles. Some parents and communal figures continue to support and advise young adults after these two years, but there is no cultural taboos to leaving a child to find their way once they reach the age of 20.

D. Communities and Elders

Communities of Teplians are often formed around previous networks of friendships and experiences, while Teplians in other cultures easily integrate and form their own less formal networks. They are simultaneously childrearing groups and support networks. Dissidents within one community can freely move to another, though many simply try diplomacy and politics to make their voices heard first. Inevitably, social status is derived from experience, and this usually results in a distinct advantage for older individuals.

Those above 60 are generally considered elders and, assuming their lives have been recognized for their experiences as well, are considered precious resources and advantages. Elders often assume leadership, advisory, and diplomatic roles when they begin to slow in their seeking of new experiences or retire from their chose field. Generational conflict can result in the formation of new, younger communities or internal strife. However, most recognize that, when splitting from an established

community, they will almost always be disadvantaged by their lack of elders and experience. More diverse pasts lead to more well-structured and stable communities.

E. Governing and Politics

Given the nature of the community, the formation of formal governments and politics is often seen in Teplian history as a direct result of contact with other species. The first governments were awkward republics formed purely for the sake of being taken seriously by other species. Elders, of course, often ended up in leadership positions while the positions beneath them had high rates of employee churn. It was only when discussions of safety regarding childrearing in exotic and untested cultures came up that government began to grow into a more developed and stable structure. Seen as a necessity for ensuring education, safety, and diversity, a democratic structure began to take shape with formal laws created to maintain freedoms while cracking down on violations of said freedoms.

Teplian governments are notoriously slow on matters unrelated to childrearing and education. In addition, there often are areas which are highly contested, including welfare, abortion, and religion. These topics differ wildly between societies, and the resulting different communities can be exceptionally diverse and polar opposites at times. On a species-wide level, however, the shared thought regarding differences in policy and governing is ultimately that it has only created more diversity and differing experiences to be had.

Violence, crime, and protest are no strangers to Teplian societies, and they were not strangers even before the establishment of government. While the above may establish a relatively peaceful norm, skirmishes and wars when diplomacy breaks down are not out of the question. It is crucial to consider Teplian societies as fluid and unique structures, not restrained by species. There are even some who enjoy fighting and war. Ultimately, the only thing that truly binds various societies and governments of Teplians together is their shared species and common ancestors.

F. Economy and Function

Initially, Teplian communities were based around complicated ritualistic systems of barter, experience exchanges, status, and respect. Breaks in the system resulted in community decisions, often sided against those perceived to have not given as much as they took. This meant that professions, exchanges, and roles in the community were all public affairs, often appearing in daylight with many witnesses. Elders respected for their perceived fairness often served as arbiters over disputes and ritualistic leaders. These systems, understandably, were misunderstood by other species' societies and led to stereotyping as savages and lawless peoples.

Teplian economies, much like Teplian government, came about as a reaction to encounters with other species. In order to facilitate exchange with these new groups, an economy was formed around soapstone currency. Sadly, the inherent value of such a common material was considered extremely low, and it took many longer years to formulate an economic system beyond that of bartering. Eventually, a gold economy took a tentative hold, and the symbolic soapstone currency was exchanged within Teplian communities for similar amounts of outside gold currency. This resulted in a highly corruptible system and often resulted in counterfeiting trials. The establishment of a fiat economy in outside societies

enabled Teplians to adjust accordingly and begin mutual economic exchanges on even footing with others.

Teplian cultures generally, as a result, put less priority on money even if they recognize it as ultimately the final say in operating in other cultures. Professions are still prioritized based on their exoticness, specialization, or ability to enable others to pursue other experiences. While not paid as well as some professions, many societies give exceptional social weight and influence to educators, civil servants, and physicians. Chemists, engineers, and explorers often find themselves both highly respected and highly paid. Artists, museum professionals, therapists, lawyers, and media personalities may have varying levels of pay but are also highly respected. Dedicated business professionals are often seen as self-centered and, despite their high pay, do not often earn much social standing.

G. Other Notes and Tendencies

Given their diversity and emphasis on experience, it is important to note that many unique developments often take prominent positions. For instance, thermal paint and heat sculpting are common artistic tools, allowing unique appreciation to those who have the ability to see. Other species should not find themselves alarmed when being handed a thermal visor when visiting a gallery. The culinary arts emphasize exotic and experimental dishes playing with the various additional flavors available to Teplians, often leading to some surprisingly good (and some extraordinarily revolting) experiences for those with more limited senses of taste. Finally, much of their education and educational facilities and museums emphasize non-passive methods. Museums designed by Teplians often allow artifacts to be interacted with, careful limitations taken to allow as much access as possible without leading to an exponentially increased degradation of collection materials.

The most unusual final detail of modern or advanced Teplian cultures are their fascination with their own dermal absorption and easily influenced bodies. Initially reserved for medical application, dermal rubs have been found to have advantages in...recreational usage as well. In addition, some enterprising Teplians show interest in bodily modifications using biochemistry, using their highly volatile biology, easy application method, and highly toxin-resistant bodies as a way of aiding in extreme or unusual modifications for enterprising youth. While seen as highly risky, especially given the possibility of damaging their usually resilient biology, opinions on whether it should be allowed are mixed to indifferent.

V. Evolutionary Origin

A. Progenitor

The Teplian species' earliest clear ancestor, a species called elotfin, was most akin to a boar. Smooth skinned, large herbivores, they were primarily a rooting species. Their highly sensitive tongue allowed them to identify high-content roots, vegetables, legumes, fruits, and nuts. In addition, during particularly dire situations, they could identify low nutrient foods to suit their needs, including scraping

bark or other rougher plant material with their tusks to then process with their highly efficient digestive system. Their skin allowed the absorption of ambient moisture during periods without extensive water intake. Their ears were vestigial remnants of a possibly prior stage of life in semi-aquatic environments, fin-like protrusions from the top sides of their head. Many other elements, such as the less centralized nervous system and easily permeable skin, are thought to come from that similar history. A flat snout allowed for some smelling but mostly kept close to the face to not be damaged while rooting.

The elotfin at this point were completely hairless, thick flesh making them environmentally stable but relatively weak to large predators. This hairlessness was initially an advantage because, not needing protection from UV or additional warmth, body hair attracted disadvantageous parasites. Hair follicles therefore were selected against. Their primary environment was boreal and temperate forests, areas in which dense vegetation impeded predators and gave them advantage during deep winters. In addition to their body type, their increased sense of temperature allowed them to find warm shelters even amidst heavy snows that impeded other senses. Stable in population, but not exceptionally widespread, they took advantage of their niche.

B. Adaptation and Changes

The earliest adaptations were that of nutrition. As the environment shifted, certain high value vegetation began to move and decrease. Soil uptake also altered, reducing the ability of some plants to serve as emergency food. These changes gave advantages to elotfins able to scavenge and stomach less herbivorous foods as opportune. The main changes occurred in stomach chemistry; their dentition was not as necessary to shift as quickly and their taste and bolstered immune systems aided in identifying spoiled or unsafe meat. Tusks began to quickly reduce, as they were now far more a burden than an advantage. Bodies became more mobile, and sexual adaptations began to allow for larger births.

With the sudden boost in protein and the reduced need for rooting, elotfin began to look to other sources of nutrients while seeking to increase their mobility to escape growing populations of predators. The transition to bipedalism was shockingly quick evolutionarily speaking given their initial body type, aided by the shift in weight distribution towards established hips and lower body structure. However, this shift was by far the longest period in the evolutionary process and made them highly vulnerable, many branching species suffering extinction and the various surviving links being reduced in population. By the time bipedalism and gripping hands were formed, the surviving population was highly endangered but still surviving in the densest forests at the highest altitude manageable.

C. The First Teplians

The first early Teplian in the modern Teplian's family had extremely short outwardly curved and pointed canines, remnants of their early tusks. Their dentition typified that of a typical omnivore's. They preferred bipedal motion, although their posture still was incredibly slumped. Finally, with the move to higher altitudes during previous evolutionary stages, they were exposed to increased UV rays. This resulted in the first stage in millions of years the mammalian tendency towards hair was selected for. However, given sexual selection showed a preference towards hairless bodies still, the only sufficiently

developed hair follicles were located on the top of the head, shielding the most vulnerable area while not interfering with sexual selection.

These early populations began to move to lower altitudes and less forested areas, their increased scavenging ability now bolstered by advancements in defense using early tools. Hunting was uncommon, though it did take place. Cooking was an extremely early advancement, using their advanced sense of taste to create especially advantageous meals. With the creation of cooking and management of fire, communities quickly formed, the distinct heat collecting groups of warmth-seeking progenitors. Cooperation was quick to follow as well, aiding in meal preparation and defense. With these steps, the earliest Teplian relatives quickly accelerated.

While predation was relatively low in their initial environments, the expansion into more diverse environments was still rewarding enough to encourage risky movements. While not as expansive or ubiquitous as some intelligent species, the expansion of Teplians allowed for enough exposure and experimentation to develop advanced technology such as metalworking, architecture, and basic sciences. With interaction with other intelligent species, other more exotic technologies were developed. Fascinatingly, writing was a late development in their early societies, but its introduction resulted in an even quicker acceleration. By the beginning of what some would call the Early Industrial Age, Teplians as a whole were on par with other evolved intelligent species. By the Atomic Age, Teplians were integrated into larger trans-national society both in their own communities and cultures and as a part of others.

VI. Adapting Into Existing/New Settings

This primer is meant as a guide to understanding Teplians and identifying unique ideas and concepts they can represent and be used for in creative fiction. While it is not recommended to change major design elements such as their relationship with temperature sense or their values of community and experience, most minor elements such as their evolutionary past and specific elements of their societies are editable as needed to adapt them for roleplay, short stories, art, or larger works. Hopefully, should you like the design and find yourself interested, the below sections might aid you in considering how Teplians can be placed in a world without disrupting the flow. Some things that have not been detailed in the above that you might want to consider include religion, language, written script, music, further evolution, media, and important historical events.

A. Adapting for a Modern Setting

The primer has been written with a modern, earth-like setting with many different species having grown and interacted across the eras. Here, some species have countries of their founding and predominant culture, others are of mixed compositions, and still others have complicated pasts. Technology levels have reached a point just beyond contemporary ones, and various possibilities are allowed. As such, modern settings can easily be adapted to allow Teplians without needing to change many details provided in the primer.

It is heavily recommended that Teplians only be introduced in settings where multiple species and races already exist. In these settings, many different origins or evolutionary pasts can be considered without disrupting each other. Teplians, therefore, can just as easily walk the streets as any other anthropomorphic species, human, or other unique creations. Very little adjustment is necessary, usually. In Earth settings, their origins can most easily be placed in North America where modern-day Canada and northeast United States are. In earth-like settings, it is recommended that some space be made for a Teplian country or two so that their larger society and culture has an area to grow and perform.

However, if you wish to have Teplians in a setting with highly limited species, take special care to think of how the other few species have interacted with the Teplians during their quick “catch-up” in evolution. How have Teplian countries been recognized or received? Have there been wars? Is there racism on either side? What issues do they not see eye-to-eye on? Does their existence call certain beliefs or ideas into question? In these limited settings, Teplians must be considered as a more major and world-shaping force than just another species among many. By imagining the history rewritten with Teplians accounted for, it is possible to adapt them into more difficult and limited setting.

B. Adapting for a Fantasy Setting

In fantasy settings, there are two recommended ways to adapt Teplians. The first suggestion maintains their history, adapting them to be a slightly technologically behind but shamanistic people depending on the level of fantasy. This allows them to have an identity not unlike a monster-race, a friendly, curious, and particularly advantaged one. Their population does not need to be large, and their encampments in the mountains can be made as natural setting pieces. Keep in mind their childrearing, though, as it may afford opportunities for Teplians to enter more urban or other species’ areas. These relationships can either be genuine, resulting in actual temporary hosting and sharing of magical or natural secrets, or advantageous, resulting in Teplian communities losing contact with children sent to learn new experiences and Teplian “servants” in certain homes or kingdoms. The most important step in adapting Teplians in this case is ascertaining the degree to which the fantasy world affords them new abilities or gives their current abilities magical origins. For instance, their dermal absorption can be transformed into a unique proficiency with magical concoctions and self-alteration.

The second suggestion is to make Teplians have a magical or otherworldly origin. Like dwarves having been crafted from clay or elves growing from the embrace of an elder tree, Teplians can be given an origin from another plane or a divine creation or arcane accident. If you do this, Teplians may be uniquely developed and advantaged in their own societies like that of dwarves and elves. Consider how the dynamics of power are changed by their introduction. Is the distrust great enough to discourage interested Teplians from visiting other communities? Are other races close allies or deep enemies? What was their plane like, or what purpose did the deity have in their creation, or what arcane happening formed them? This tactic is most useful in adapting to mythological or high fantasy worlds including roleplaying scenarios like Dungeons & Dragons.

C. Adapting for a Sci-Fi Setting

Teplians probably can most easily be adapted for sci-fi settings when there are already multitudes of other alien races, planets, and interactions. In this case, their evolution can take place on a separate world or on one alongside another relatively cooperative intelligent race. If this is the case, almost all of the primer can be maintained. Simply advance their technology level and adjust their cultural adaptations to the mood of the setting. If it is an earth-only sci-fi setting, simply choose a tactic from section A and then adjust the world history to match.

Another option is to make Teplians the result of an experiment, mutation, or other biological advancement. This option is best used as a last resort as, unless the creation act of the first few Teplians took place hundreds of years prior, this would make them completely separated from a culture or past. However, this is a good solution when a world would not otherwise support an additional species or would be difficult to adapt Teplian cultural elements for.

Given the choice between cybernetic augmentations or technological adaptations and biological adaptations in the forms of skin-based biochemical mutagens or body alterations, it is recommended that Teplians be given the latter. Their biology and culture most lends itself towards sci-fi progression of the biological sort. However, if the setting prefers cybernetics and robotics, keep in mind Teplian neurology; some adaptations may be easier than others due to the less centralized system.

End of Primer