

Everything you want to know about Cheshires...that they want to keep secret.

A Glossary of Insight

Cheshires are an naturally arrogant species and consider themselves to be above almost every species they know of. Even how they talk and write reflect that arrogance. If it is important enough to them they will give it a name and it will always be enunciated and spelled in capital letters. Ryt is no exception to this and in writing his story will make what are considered several errors in his grammar because of it.

So this glossary is a list of several terms with their definitions that pertain to Ryt's story. Its purpose is to help readers familiarize themselves with the Cheshire race and the style of terminology they use when classifying locations, events and objects of importance. Any ranks listed for the occupational titles are sorted by an ascending order where one is the most trained and experienced and the lowest number is the entry level position.

Occupied Space: Where Chessiss originated from before The Splintering. Normal space as we know it.

The Splintering: The cataclysm that ripped the planet Chessis apart when the sun went nova. It is also responsible for relocating the entire solar system into Void Space due to a forgotten, and still running, artificial phasing experiment going into overload before being destroyed. The phase bubble it created interacted with the sun as it was going nova. Somehow the violent death of the sun and the tentative existence of the phase field created an unstable passage which everything was pulled through. Another unknown is how the sun, while no longer active, seems to function and no longer appears to be in its death throes after passing over with the rest of the solar system.

Void Space: Where Chessis and its ruined solar system ended up after the sun destroyed itself. There are no suns, planets, comets or any other form of celestial matter present in Void Space except for what Chessis and what's left of its solar system brought with it. This does not mean it is empty though but rather is teeming with life not usually found in Occupied Space,

The Deep: The Deep is a chasm created by The Splintering , the cataclysm that tore the planet Chessis apart. This chasm splits the planet into two parts, one part is roughly two thirds of the planets mass leaving the other third loosely attached by only a few miles of matter. While it was not mentioned by name it is the rift Ryt was thrown down into for his execution.

Phasing: A Cheshire racial ability to become intangible and undetectable with an average duration of ten minutes. Near instantaneous movement is also capable when phased, up to 25 feet. Cheshires can become fully Phased in just a couple of seconds. While a Cheshire cannot be detected when Phased they do retain full use of all active senses.

Shifting: An acquired ability to move from Void Space to Occupied Space and back. Possible due to a hive minded microscopic organism which finds safe haven in carbon based entities due to dangers in Occupied Space. This organism is commonly called a Shiftant by Cheshires though no technical name has been given.

Shiftant: Indigenous hive minded microscopic organism of Void Space capable of remembering and passing along what other Shiftants have learned. It has been proven these organisms know Occupied Space is hazardous to them and will occupy organic bodies with higher tolerances for forces that are inimical to them at weaker strengths. If a colony of Shiftants are formed by occupying a living entity they are capable of imprinting a mnemonic template of their host in the colony memory which allows them to recognize foreign bodies intruding on its sanctuary. This when combined with Shifting provide beneficial side effects for the host body. One such is that Cheshires hardly suffer mundane illnesses such as colds or flu's for very long. As soon as an illness is detected a Cheshire will Shift to rid itself of the intruding organism responsible for the illness. The Shifting helps the Shiftant to reinforce the most recent mnemonic template they have in memory. This causes anything not recognized by the Shiftant to be expelled from the body thus protecting the Shiftants sanctuary. The few implants Cheshires use for language translation and spatial mapping must be imposed upon the mnemonic template by the Cheshire itself through primitive communication with the colony of Shiftants or else it would be lost the next time the Cheshire Shifted.

Damage to the body is not capable of being healed by a Shiftant colony. Anything that damages the body will also kill the fragile Shiftants occupying the immediate area of where the injury occurred. Once that portion of the template is lost in the hive mind it cannot be retrieved. The more obvious reason is that Shiftants are incapable of creating something from nothing. Therefore if a Cheshire were to have an arm cut off that arm could not be replaced by the mnemonic imprint shared by the Shiftant colony. Diseases are also hardly affected by Shiftant colonies and neither are most natural bodily malfunctions. Shiftants are also short lived but reproduce several times through asexual budding during its short life span. Each time a Shiftant reproduces a new mnemonic imprinting is made of the host sanctuary.

Shiftants are also the reason Cheshires have become a long lived race. Since Shiftants can live in Occupied Space it is not uncommon for a body to be carrying a few of them around. Since Cheshires live in Void Space, their bodies contain several million of them which form their own colony but are still connected to the original hive mind. This many Shiftants somehow have a rejuvenating effect on a Cheshire body allowing it to live for several centuries. Theory suggests the mnemonic imprint Shiftants make of the Cheshire body slows the aging process and forces it to return itself as close to the image as possible whenever a Cheshire Shifts. An average life span for a Cheshire is around 600 years. It should be noted Cheshires do not allow their young who haven't gone through puberty to Shift until after puberty ends so normal biological progress is not impeded by outside forces.

Phase-Shifting: By Phasing then Shifting a Cheshire can trick the Shiftant colony into thinking it is back in Void Space where it can move extremely easily unlike in Occupied Space. This allows a Cheshire to move at great speeds for long distances. While this does negate the 25 foot average distance limitation of moving when Phased it is not a viable alternative because Phase-Shifting takes much more time to accomplish than Phasing itself. Also the further distance a Cheshire moves when Phase-Shifted the more accumulated damage that Cheshire will suffer. If used for too long a Cheshire will die of systemic failure. Unable to be proven it has been calculated a Cheshire could circle the planet Earth in roughly 3.5 hours if it were possible to live long enough to do so. No Cheshire will attempt to accomplish this feat as every one that has tried before has died.

Origin Point: Through meditation and mental discipline, Cheshires have learned to impose their will to override the instinctual memory of the Shiftant organism to create a base location to fall back too when Shifting from Occupied Space to Void Space. This base can be anywhere in Void Space but is typically somewhere on Chessis a Cheshire calls a safe haven. A home point takes about three hours to mark and only one can be created. No Origin Points can be made in Occupied Space as the Shiftant can recognize the difference between its home environment in Void Space and what is found in Occupied Space.

Analyst: These Cheshires are the scientific heads of the Procurement Department. Versed in several fields they can determine the principles behind how the unknown parts of a new technology operates. If a new medicine can be purified to remove some, if not all, of the side effects it has. If a compound developed by another race will have what beneficial and or detrimental effects on the Cheshire body or mind if the new cleanser it was found in is used on Chessis.

Tinker: With Chessis being a dead planet all available resources are considered off limits since most necessities can be acquired from other sources. A Tinker is responsible for helping to adapt newly acquired technology for use on Chessis. Since physics are the same in most

Occupied Spaces a lot of technology can easily be put into use with only a few minor modifications. If a Sleuth sends back a piece of technology that requires more than just changing out the style of plug, battery housing or the cord itself then it is given to a research team consisting of an Analyst, a Tinker and a group of Technicians. Tinkers require thorough training in several engineering fields as well as an active yet logical imagination and have no classes or tiers.

Technician: Common assistants who help with the day to day needs of an Analyst or Tinker. They move the equipment or dispose of the toxic material in the correct manner. In a way they are nothing more than what are known as grunts albeit highly educated and trained grunts.

Obfuscator: These Cheshires are the first line of defense for protecting the Cheshire existence. If a Procurer finds evidence that there is a potential breach in secrecy a Obfuscator is sent to try and make sure any of the found evidence is discredited as myth, urban legend, conspiracy theories or anything else that will be quickly dismissed as fanciful fiction if it cannot be directly destroyed. Trained in stealth, espionage and other related curriculums along with potential Silencers, Obfuscators learn to maintain long term vigils to ensure any word of their race continue to be disregarded as bogus. Obfuscators also Meddle with the Target to make them discredit themselves. Either by making them act recklessly in public or by finding and bringing to light a scandal of some sort from the Targets past. Obfuscators are required to meet a minimum level of several courses and have no classes or rankings of their own.

Silencer: The assassins of the military and fully trained in all facets of combat, assassination and elimination of threats. The Silencers main priorities are maintaining the secrecy of the Cheshire race. Should it be found out someone knows of the Cheshire race, Silencers will be dispatched to eliminate the informant or informants when no other option is available. They are usually reserved for extreme situations and any necessary executions are made to look as random as possible or connected to someone who considers the Target an enemy or competitive rival. Silencers are ranked according to skill. There are 5 classes with 10 tiers in each class.

Meddler: An occupation where manipulation is the key factor to success. The term Meddler covers a few occupations that are more specifically named which are considered the actual rank of a Cheshire who is a Meddler. See Sleuth, Procurer , Custodian and Retriever.

Sleuth: With advanced computer skills and espionage training, Sleuth's are those that work almost independently of the system they belong too. It is their function to keep eyes and ears out for new technology just coming into production. They are constantly worming their way into secure computers and data bases looking for things that would benefit life on Chessis without it merely being a convenience. Once they have located such a thing it is then up to

them to find out all they can about it. Does it need a special power source or materials? How does it have to be moved? Can it be easily reproduced? Where is it being built? How much of a consideration is the security around it going to be? Should it be taken now? Will it be quickly missed if taken? What type of response can be expected if it is found missing? If everything looks positive they then contact the closest Procurer and set up a special retrieval team to acquire the object in question. Sleuths are ranked first in the Meddler class.

Procurer: Procurers are the bureaucracy and red tape that overwhelms businesses, commerce and industry at several levels. They cause shipments of items and goods to become rerouted, misdirected or lost. Anything Chessiss and its inhabitants need, Procurers obtain through subterfuge of any means available. Since Chessiss is a planet that can no longer sustain itself, Cheshires have made several steps in trying to restore it to a semblance of what it once was. Large amounts of construction materials and equipment were acquired to create bio domes for the purposes of agriculture and restoring some of the natural flora and fauna. The materials for these domes were found and waylaid by Procurers manipulating the systems of other civilizations to free up these materials for acquirement. Procurers are ranked as a level 2 position in the Meddler class.

Custodian: Responsible for the quick recovery of acquired goods, Custodians lead groups of Retrievers to the pickup point designated by the Procurer then direct them as to which goods should be sent back first. They also direct an escort of Guardians dispatched with the retrieval team to ensure their safety and secrecy. This command of armed forces lasts only until all of the items have been brought back or an emergency is declared such as when the group is discovered during the operation. Once the jaunt has been declared as done, the Guardian Cheshires return to their base to pursue their next duties. If the latter occurs the Custodian takes a step back and follows any instructions given by the leader of the Guardians assigned to them. Custodian is a level 3 Meddler class and a Cheshire can only become a Custodian after mastering all ranks of Retriever.

Retriever: As mentioned in the definition of Custodian, Retrievers make sure acquired goods make it back to Chessiss as quickly as possible. Once back on Chessis, they sort and prep the goods for distribution of supplies to local stores. Retriever is considered a level 4 Meddler class but also has its own rank system. This is because depending on the type of goods being acquired certain precautions need to be taken so training in these precautions is a necessity. There are 4 classes of Retriever with 10 tiers in each class.

Guardian: Guardians are randomly selected Cheshires enlisted in the military who meet the requirements of guarding a retrieval site based on where that site is located. The more technologically advanced a particular civilization is the more the Guardians need to be able to handle. Great lengths must be taken and maintained if secrecy is to be kept. Guardians are

directed by a Custodian unless a situation arises then all control is turned over to the lead Guardian known as a Warden.

Warden: The lead Guardian of a group of military trained Cheshires whose purpose is to help maintain anonymity during a Jaunt. Should a retrieval base be discovered all authority is turned over from the Custodian to the Warden. It is the Wardens responsibility to determine the level of action needed depending on the severity of the detection of the retrieval base. This can be anything from elimination of the memories to outright elimination of the accidental discoverers.

Jaunt: The term given to a trip from Void Space into Occupied Space. Cheshires make Jaunts for several reasons but mainly for the acquirement of needed goods.

The Game: The most preferred and sought after form of entertainment for a Cheshire is access to The Game. There are no teams and no regulated league of any kind. The Game is a test of a Cheshires ability to manipulate a Toy. This can be done without an opponent but almost all Cheshire prefer to pit their skills against another Cheshire. Wagers between opponents and interested side partiers are frequently made just like in any event of skill against skill. Games are often complicated and hard to follow as there are only a few rules that must be strictly adhered too. Once a Cheshire has picked their Toy for the game they must decide if they will be a Protagonist or an Antagonist. Cheshires cannot directly interfere in the life of their Toy or with their Toy itself and are also not allowed to interfere in any way with the opposing Cheshire's Toy except through their own Toy. They must manipulate their Toy to achieve a set goal within a certain amount of time or they lose The Game and they must do so by keeping to the role they have chosen for themselves, either Protagonist or Antagonist. Games can be very lengthy due to prior obligations of both Cheshire life and the life of the Toy. Absolute secrecy must be maintained during The Game so as not to alert anyone to the presence of Cheshires. The first Cheshire to guide their Toy to the goal wins. Most games actually do not have a clear winner or loser as Cheshires are more interested in the reactions to the manipulations of their chosen Toys. One thing to remember is the goal the Cheshires choose for their Toys will typically be different than the goal of the Toy itself.

Protagonist: A role a Cheshire takes in a Game. This role defines how the Cheshire will manipulate their Toy and there are different variations of this role. One role of a Protagonist is to make the path to the goal as easy as possible. Goals for a role definition such as this are less material than goals for other role variants as they would be too easy to obtain. Rigging a contest so the particular Cheshire's Toy wins a lot of money would make for a boring Game. Unless the goal would be to have the Toy completely fall victim to easily acquired debauchery.

Another type of role definition is to use positive results only, even if the road to achieving the goal is difficult. A very simple, and never chosen, example of this type of role purpose would be better health for the Toy. The strenuous activity of exercising to lose weight and become more healthy is a difficult choice to commit to with a positive end result of being in better shape. A better example would be that of conquest. If a ruler decided to enlarge the size of the land they ruled and set about making war on their neighbors to conquer those lands a Protagonist may smooth the road by manipulating the political atmosphere of the sought after lands to be full of strife and unrest. This would make it easier for the Toy to take control of those lands by removing the unwanted political system already in place.

Antagonist: A role a Cheshire takes in a Game. Like the Protagonist there are different variations of being an Antagonist. One such would be to make things difficult for the chosen Toy to succeed in a wanted achievement. The conqueror in this case could find armies standing ready to repel the invasion his army represents.

Another role definition would be to make the desired achievement or achievements have a negative impact on the Toy. This role would make the Toy suffer for obtaining what it wanted. A good example of this role choice would be having the Toy become rich and famous only to find having done so has completely ruined the Toys life. "Examples" of such Toys would be Jim Belushi, Elvis Presley and Blackie Lawless.

Toy: A Toy is a sentient individual a Cheshire chooses to be a part of The Game. The Toy never knows they have been tapped to be manipulated by a Cheshire. They are manipulated by indirect stimulus to fulfill a Cheshire's chosen goal of which they are also ignorant of. These Toys are usually figures of import or have the potential to be important. This is not always the case since some Cheshires prefer the grit and dirt of the common person for a more "real" reaction to being manipulated.