# Mythic Mastery: Mythic Aliens The Zeknari

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#### The Zeknari

A proud and mysterious people with a long and storied past, the zeknari (singular zeknar) were among the first races to explore the stars. Their interstellar quest for gold brought them into contact with a large number of less advanced races, and while the zeknari had a strong hand in the development of several of these races, these encounters had a strong impact on the zeknari as well, giving them an ingrained sense of superiority that has contributed to a long stagnation amongst their people.

**Physical Description:** Zeknari are humanoid in shape, with two arms, two legs, a head and a torso. Their bodies are somewhat taller and more slender than those of humans, especially their arms, which are only a few inches shorter than their legs (on average), and their fingers (which are about 12 inches long, on the average adult). Their skin has a metallic blue tint to it, though it can range from the deep, ocean-blue to a very pale blue that appears almost white in the right lighting. Their skin is very soft and smooth to the touch, but on close examination, is covered with intricate whorls and designs, much like those on a human's thumband fingerprints, except that they extend over nearly the entire body.

Zeknari do not have hair in the traditional sense of the word, although they do have something very similar, which they refer to as *drezz*. Individual strands of *drezz* are about three times as thick as strands of hair, and is made up of living tissue all the way to the tips. This makes drezz much more sensitive to touch than hair is. Further, drezz is prehensile, although it takes a great deal of training and concentrated effort in order to be able to deliberately move it, and this is a skill that very few zeknari bother to develop. Drezz grows much more slowly than hair, (about 1 inch per year), and never grows more than about eight inches long. Drezz can come in a variety of colors, including various shades of blue, green, purple, and white. While a zeknar cannot change the color of their drezz deliberately, it does tend to change based on their mood, diet, and similar factors, with bluish-green tones indicating a peaceful and satisfied life, whiter tones indicating greater amounts of fear or stress, and purple tones indicating ill health. As a result, some zeknari have "rings" in their drezz, indicating periods of their life when they underwent stress, illness, or similar.

Unlike most humanoids, the zeknari race does not possess two genders. Instead, each zeknar is capable of producing offspring with any other zeknar, or (in cases where no other zeknari are available) by themselves. Zeknari can exchange small bits of DNA with one another through prolonged physical contact (requiring about six hours of uninterrupted contact). Doing so "fertilizes" both zeknari (in fact, the zeknari can actually exchange DNA between three or more participants, effectively mixing the genetic code of all individuals involved, although this is not done very often, and can prove highly complicated). Each zeknar then has a pregnancy lasting between 11 and 14 months, during which she develops breasts and begins producing milk. These changes remain for another year or two after the child's birth, after which they fade. When interacting with gendered species, zeknari generally identify as female.

Society: Zeknari society is much like the society

of any other humanoid culture, although the average zeknar would take great offense at that statement. Their government is a peculiar mix of oligarchy and democracy: the main governing body of the zeknari is the *kez'bit*, a word which translates loosely as "council of the corporations." This council contains representatives not from geographic locations in zeknari society, as many democracies do, but rather from the largest corporations and companies. While this seems on the surface to leave little room for the interests of individual zeknari, the corporations themselves are far more democratically governed than similar entities in many other societies, and are in many ways more like guilds, with their policies and procedures being determined heavily by both the zeknari who work for them, and those who buy their products or use their services.

Because it is corporations that are ultimately in control of zeknari society, much of their culture revolves around business in one way or another, whether from a consumer perspective, or from a working perspective. Zeknari actually have much better workers' rights than many other species, and even though non-zeknari employees are not allowed to have equal representation within their companies, creatures from many races eagerly prize "cushy" jobs amongst the zeknari.

**Relations:** The zeknari are accustomed to being technologically (and, in their minds, at least, culturally) superior to the races that they encounter, and this expectation informs much of their mindset in dealing with other races. The zeknari were one of the earlier star-faring races, and so enjoyed the benefits of a strong head-start over many of the races that are now their peers. Many of the current spacefaring races were encountered by the zeknari while they were still incapable of stellar flight. The zeknari are directly responsible for helping several spacefaring civilizations reach the stars, and even claim to have created one or two races through genetic engineering. Over time, however, the other races seem to be catching up to the zeknari, who have made relatively little technological progress as they watched other races go from planet-bound "savages" to interstellar empires, leaving the zeknari with a sense of superiority that is increasingly difficult for them to justify.

The zeknari were driven to the stars by a need for gold. Zeknari biology is unusual in that they subsist entirely on gold, rather than consuming food or water in order to survive. While they are able to survive on much less gold, by volume, than most races consume of other foodstuffs, the metal cannot be grown or farmed in the same way as more mundane foodstuffs, and when it became clear that the gold supplies on the zeknari home world were dwindling, the race began seeking new sources of their precious food throughout the stars.

The fact that gold was the main reason for the zeknari to travel to the stars colored some of their first interactions with other races. The zeknar quickly discovered that gold was much rarer and harder to come by on most other worlds than it was on their home planet, and that they had little interest in going through the backbreaking labor of mining for the stuff. Instead, the zeknari eventually began to seek out planets with both abundant reserves of gold and available native races, whom they would subjugate and



force to mine for them. When this trend reached its darkest depths, the zeknari governors responsible for these colonies would force the natives to worship them as gods, and, in fact, traces of the zeknari can be found in several races' religions.

Not all of the zeknari approved of this slavery, and, especially as the race's gold reserves eventually replenished, there was a popular movement away from the subjugation and exploitation of the "lesser races" and in favor of helping to guide them to the stars. The zeknari gave the races that they had subjugated the choice of remaining with the zeknari and benefitting from their guidance, or being left to their own devices. Most races chose to go their own way, and the zeknari withdrew from their worlds. Although the official enslavement had ended, some enterprising and unscrupulous zeknari continue the practice to this day, although it is against zeknari law to do so.

In recent decades, zeknari gold reserves have been reaching lows not seen in the last thousand years, and the zeknari are once again on the search for the stuff. This time, however, they are doing so mainly through trade. As a result, zeknari have become equal-opportunity snobs: though they think little of most races, they will happily trade with anyone who is willing to pay in gold, rather than in zeknari droogels (small circular green stones with incredibly intricate etchings on them; one droogel is worth roughly 4 gp in most markets).

Alignment and Religion: Most zeknari take a dim view of religion, in general, feeling that such things are generally beneath them, as a race. This can seemingly be traced in large part to the zeknari race's early interactions with other, less advanced, cultures and religions, and their appearance in those race's own myths, legends, and religions. Though few zeknari will go quite so far as to deny the existence of all deities, most are quick to point out the numerous cultures who worship deities which, when compared to the more active and obviously existing ones, seem to be entirely made up. Further, the average zeknari is likely to argue that even if a powerful entity exists, and claims to be a god, that hardly makes it worthy of worship, pointing out the fact that their own race has been worshipped as deities in numerous planets throughout the galaxy.

Though they generally eschew religion, that does not mean that zeknari do not have a sense of spiritualism: it is simply expressed in another way. Most zeknari have a great deal of free time on their hands (both because of their betterthan-average labor conditions and because it gives them more time to pursue consumerism), and it is common for a zeknar to use a significant portion of this free time (often about two or three hours each day) in quiet meditation and contemplation. One zeknari philosopher in particular, Gaj-Eel, and her collection of teachings, *Zin Zo Va*, which loosely translates as "the path to the self," is particularly popular, and has become deeply intertwined in the mindset and culture of modern zeknari.

Zeknari can be of any alignment, and do not favor any alignment in particular over the others.

Adventurers: Relatively few zeknari feel the call of adventure. To a certain extent, this is due to the fact that zeknari culture glorifies itself, teaching young zeknari that their home is the greatest place in the galaxy, their people the most advanced. Most zeknari feel that their people have already found everything worth finding among the stars, and see no point in the risk and inconvenience that comes with a life of adventure.

Those zeknari who do seek adventure generally become privateers, and set out with their government's permission to find new sources of the precious metal that sustains their race, and secure access to it for their people. While it is vastly preferred for such individuals to use diplomacy and mercantile skill to do so, the dirty secret of the zeknari government is that they often turn a blind eye to more aggressive and unscrupulous means, provided that the gold makes its way back to the zeknari people, and that the actions involved don't lead to a messy public outcry.

A few even bolder zeknari strike out entirely on their own, without the support of their government. Going rogue in this way can prove quite dangerous, but there are some who simply cannot resist the allure of setting themselves up as a god over a lesser race, or simply find the government oversight of privateers too oppressive.

Zeknari adventurers are often rogues, although alchemists, gunslingers, and investigators are also common. Zeknari are not particularly prone to arcane arts, but zeknari bards, sorcerers, witches, and wizards are far from unheard of.

Names: Ab-tos, Des-rin, Far-das, Gan-zen, Hab-tu, Li-din, Mo-tar, Ras-gar, Tu-lit, Zib-tor

#### **Standard Racial Traits**

Ability Score Racial Traits: Zeknari are cunning and manipulative, but are unused to physical exertion. They gain +2 Intelligence, +2 Charisma, and -2 Strength.

**Size:** Zeknari are Medium creatures, and thus receive no bonuses or penalties due to their size.

**Type:** Zeknari are humanoids with the zeknar subtype.

Base Speed: Zeknari have a base speed of 30 feet.

Languages: Zeknari begin play speaking Common and Zeknari. Zeknari with high Intelligence scores can choose any languages they want (except secret languages, such as Druidic). See Linguistics, in *The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*, for more information on languages.

#### Feat and Skill Racial Traits

**Shrewd Negotiators:** Zeknari receive a +2 racial bonus on Appraise checks, as well as on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks made to make a request.

**Weapon Familiarity:** Zeknari treat any weapon with "zeknari" in its name as a martial weapon.

#### **Miscellaneous Racial Traits**

**Gold Eater (Ex):** Zeknari do not need to eat or drink, as other races do. Instead, they live by consuming gold. A zeknar does not require much gold in order to survive, and can comfortably subsist on the amount of gold contained in a single coin for one week, before needing to eat again. A zeknar can consume much greater quantities of gold, however, and doing so can provide her with a variety of different benefits.

- By consuming 250 gp worth of gold (an activity that requires one minute to perform), a zeknar can recover a number of hit points equal to twice her Hit Dice. A zeknar can benefit from this ability a maximum number of times per day equal to her Constitution modifier.
- By consuming 500 gp worth of gold (an activity that requires 3 minutes to perform), a zeknar can gain a +4 enhancement bonus to the ability score of her choice for a number of minutes equal to her Hit Dice.
- By consuming 1,000 gp worth of gold (an activity that requires 10 minutes to perform), a zeknar can gain a single use of mythic power. This use of mythic power fades after 1 hour if it has not already been expended. A zeknar cannot gain more uses of mythic power in this way on any given day than 1 plus 1/2 her mythic tier (to a maximum of 6 uses of mythic power, by consuming 6,000 gp worth of gold, at 10<sup>th</sup> tier).

#### **Mythic Racial Traits**

**Inherent Mythic Power (Su):** All zeknari have some mythic power which is inherent to them. All zeknari count as mythic for the purposes of spells and abilities that affect mythic creatures and non-mythic creatures differently. A zeknar that does not have another source of mythic power does not gain any daily uses of mythic power, but zeknar can gain temporary uses of mythic power by consuming gold (see gold eater).

Mythic Skill (Su): A zeknar can expend 1 use of mythic power in order to gain a +10 bonus on a single Intelligence- or Charisma-based skill check. This does not require an action (it is part of making the skill check), and can be used even on skill checks that take an exceptional amount of time to perform, such as Craft checks, but the benefit applies only to a single skill check, even if the zeknar engages in other activities during that time.

#### Zeknar Privateer

This blue-skinned humanoid has thick, green-tinted hair, and wears a strange-looking grey outfit, which is made of an unusual material, and seems both flexible and hard, like armor. A metal instrument of some sort covers her left eye, and she holds an unusual-looking firearm in her hand.

#### ZEKNAR PRIVATEER

#### CR 7 / MR 2

XP 3,200 Female zeknar rogue 5/trickster 2 N Medium humanoid (zeknar) Init +5; Senses Perception +7 DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge) hp 39 (5d8+13)

#### **Fort** +1, **Ref** +7, **Will** +0

**Defensive Abilities** deadly dodge, evasion, uncanny dodge, trap sense +1

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee zeknari electro-snare +6 touch (2d6 electricity) Ranged zeknari disruptor +6 touch (1d10) Special Attacks mythic power (7/day, surge +1d6), sneak attack +3d6, surprise strike

#### STATISTICS

#### Str 12, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 15 Base Atk +3; CMB +4; CMD 18

**Feats** Dodge, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>

Skills Appraise +12, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10 (+12 when making a request), Escape Artist +11, Intimidate +10 (+12 when making a request), Knowledge (local) +10, Perception +7, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +11; Racial Bonuses +2 Appraise, +2 Diplomacy (when making a request), +2 Intimidate (when making a request) Languages Common, Kassar, Xilit, Zeknari SQ amazing initiative, gold eater, hard to kill, inherent mythic power, mythic skill, rogue talents (finesse rogue, powerful sneak), trapfinding +2, wealthy patron

GEAR

**Other Gear** +2 *studded leather armor*, zeknari disruptor, zeknari electro-snare

SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Deadly Dodge (Ex):** As a swift action, a zeknari privateer can expend one use of mythic power to gain a +4 dodge bonus to her AC until the start of her next turn. During this time, whenever a creature misses on a melee attack against her, it provokes an attack of opportunity from her. The zeknari privateer can choose to either take this attack of opportunity or force that creature to reroll the attack and change the target to a creature of her choice that is adjacent to her and within the attacker's reach. This reroll uses the same modifiers as the initial attack roll.

**Surprise Strike (Ex):** As a swift action, a zeknari privateer can expend one use of mythic power to make a

melee attack or ranged attack against a target within 30 feet, in addition to any other attacks she makes this round. When she makes a surprise strike, the target is considered flatfooted regardless of any class features or abilities it might have, and the zeknari privateer adds her tier to the attack roll. Damage from this attack bypasses damage reduction.

**Wealthy Patron:** A zeknari privateer is outfitted by the zeknari government, allowing her to possess more equipment than a character of her CR would normally be able to afford. This increases her CR by +1.

#### Zeknari Technology

The zeknari are an advanced race that possess a wide variety of advanced technologies. This section describes a few pieces of technology unique to the zeknari, although they possess a great deal more technological wonders.

The following items make use of the rules for technological weapons and technological gear. The following rules should be sufficient to allow you to use these items in your game, but for complete rules on technological equipment, see the Paizo products dedicated to such items.

#### **Capacity and Charges**

Technological items require power to operate, and as they are used, they expend the power stored within them, which must be restored using batteries, generators, or other power sources. Each technological item included here has the following entries.

**Capacity**: Unless otherwise specified, this value is the maximum number of charges the weapon can hold.

Usage: This value lists the number of charges the weapon consumes from its capacity each time it is activated.

Charges that are expended must be restored with a generator or battery, or another power source. Doing so is a standard action. For more information on batteries, generators, and recharging technological items, see Paizo products dealing with this topic.

#### Weapon Special Abilities

The two weapons included here have special properties generally only encountered on technological weapons. They are replicated below.

Semi-Automatic: A semi-automatic weapon normally fires one shot as an attack. However, the user can take a fullattack action to fire twice, as if using the Rapid Shot feat (including taking a -2 penalty on all attacks). If the wielder has the Rapid Shot feat, she can use the additional shot from that as well, but the penalty for all shots fired in that round increases to -6.

*Touch*: Attacks with the weapon resolve as touch attacks.

#### New Technological Items

The following items are presented in alphabetical order.

#### **MUTATION POD**

Price 80,000 gp; Slot none; Weight 95 lbs.; Capacity 200; Usage 20 charges

**Construction Requirements** Craft Technological Item, nanotech lab; **Craft** DC 25; **Cost** 40,000 gp

Used by zeknari scientists in ages past to genetically modify lesser races in order to better serve them, these pods are still used by some unscrupulous zeknari today. It consists primarily of a transparent tube of heavily-reinforced glass, which is 6 1/2 feet tall and about 4 feet in diameter. It is held in place by two vertical metal beams, which attach to metal bands at the very top and bottom. A small hatch (roughly 4 feet tall and 3 feet wide) allows a creature to be placed within the tube, and a small panel with a touch-sensitive screen, mounted on one of the metal poles, allows it to be operated. Just above the tube is a device that can be used to bombard any creature held within with radiation that allows the creature's genetic code to be altered.

The tube has hardness 10 and 30 hit points. The hatch seals automatically when closed, and can only be opened from the touch panel outside the tube (DC 20 Disable Device or Knowledge [engineering] check for those not familiar with the device). The touch panel can also be used to activate the device, flooding the tube with radiation, and allowing the creature to be mutated, a process which takes 24 hours.

When this device is used, the creature is transformed into something almost completely unrecognizable from its original shape. The creature is affected as though by *polymorph*, except that you can choose a secondary creature, and the target gains the special abilities of the second creature, as well as the first (it only gains ability score and natural armor adjustments for one of the creatures). You can also choose any number of abilities that the target would normally gain from this effect, and prevent the creature from gaining those abilities. The subject suffers 2d4 points of Constitution drain.

These effects last indefinitely. Any effect which prevents the Constitution drain prevents the transformation effect, and removing the Constitution drain in any way reverts the subject back to her original form. A creature currently under the effects of a mutation pod can be affected again, but doing so causes all of the previously-gained benefits to immediately end, although the Constitution drain is not cured, and new, additional Constitution drain is applied. Creatures altered in this way are generally sterile while affected by this ability, although carefully-crafted genetic structures, requiring extensive and painstaking research, can allow for certain creatures created in this way to breed true.

#### ZEKNARI DISRUPTOR

Price 5,000 gp; Type one-handed ranged; Proficiency exotic (firearms); Dmg (M) 1d10; Dmg (S) 1d8; Critical x2; Range 50 ft.; Capacity 10; Usage 1; Special semi-automatic, touch; Weight 2 lbs.

**Construction Requirements** Craft Technological Arms and Armor, military lab; **Craft** DC 25; **Cost** 2,500 gp

These small, hand-held pistols feature a long "barrel" that ends in a metallic sphere, rather than an actual opening, and several transparent green rings are interspersed evenly down its length. Its handle and trigger are built for zeknari hands, and so it is difficult for most other creatures to use, imposing a -2 penalty on attack rolls made with the weapon by non-zeknari (it is, however, possible to custom-build zeknari disruptors made for more normal hands).

When fired, a zeknari disruptor releases a coruscating beam of yellow-green energy. A button on the side of the gun allows the user to set the weapon to deal lethal or nonlethal damage, and the change can be made as a swift action. Additionally, on a critical hit, or whenever maximum damage is rolled, the target must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 16) or be slowed (as the spell *slow*) for one minute.

#### ZEKNARI ELECTRO-SNARE

**Price** 12,000 gp; **Type** two-handed melee; **Proficiency** exotic; **Dmg** (**M**) 2d6 elec.; **Dmg** (**S**) 1d8 elec.; **Critical** x2; **Capacity** 10; **Usage** see text; **Special** touch; **Weight** 8 lbs. **Construction Requirements** Craft Technological Arms and Armor, military lab; **Craft** DC 30; **Cost** 6,000 gp.

A gleaming metal shaft about nine inches in diameter and six feet long, these weapons end in two short, flat metal prongs on one end, which crackle with electricity when it is activated. The weapon can be activated as a swift action by pressing a button near the bottom. A zeknari electro-snare consumes 1 charge for every 10 rounds that it is activated. When it is not activated, the weapon can be used as a normal quarterstaff.

As a full-round action, by expending 1 charge, the wielder of a zeknari electro-snare can attempt to create an electric binding around a target. This requires a successful melee touch attack, and deals damage as normal for the weapon, but also leaves a ring of crackling, self-contained electricity around the target's torso, preventing him from moving his arms. The target can attempt to break this binding as a full-round action by making a Strength check or Escape Artist check (DC 20), but a failure on this check causes the electric binding to shock him, inflicting electricity damage as though the target had been struck by the weapon. The binding lasts for 1 hour before dissipating harmlessly.

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## **Close Encounters of the Mythic Kind!**

Whether you're encountering them on a distant planet in a far-off nebula, or they've come to you, and are abducting innocent villagers for nefarious purposes, there's nothing quite like a strange, alien race to help breathe some life into your galaxyMand your game. Some Pathfinder products have even explored the idea of alien life in the past, and it's certainly true that many aberrations could serve as alien creatures in a pinch. But there's one thing that Pathfinder aliens have never been until now, and that is...mythic.

This book presents the Zeknari. A proud and mysterious people with a long and storied past, the zeknari (singular zeknar) were among the first races to explore the stars. Their interstellar quest for gold brought them into contact with a large number of less advanced races, and while the zeknari had a strong hand in the development of several of these races, these encounters had a strong impact on the zeknari as well, giving them an ingrained sense of superiority that has contributed to a long stagnation amongst their people.

The Mythic Mastery series of products builds and expands on the rules for mythic characters introduced in Mythic Adventures. Each Mythic Mastery provides new content and rules for mythic games, with a focus on a single theme or area of play. While some of the content provided in Mythic Mastery products requires the use of mythic characters and a mythic adventure, others, such as those focused on mythic monsters, can be used in games of every sort.

