



## Song of the Symbi

Human colonists from a distant star discovered a large planet covered in dense nutrient-rich fluid with a thick exotic atmosphere and attempted to terra-form it using machinery lowered into the dense jungle. Genetic research led to the creation of humanoids whose bodies leached off the nutrients in the exotic atmosphere and waters to feed, heal and breathe. These altered humans were called Symbi (from 'symbiotes').

Centuries after the colonists departed to wage war in a distant galaxy, the Symbi remain, awaiting the 'Gods' return.

The terra-forming resulted in the atmosphere being less dense in places, which has had the effect of stunting the flora and fauna in these areas, now marshland where the nutrient waters rise to knee-height. Further beyond the terra-formed areas are swamps, where the waters are ankle-height. Areas beyond the swamps are covered in dense Jungles, where the waters lie beneath a woven 'crust' of seaweed. This is the closest the PCs will get to walking on dry land. Each day the party travels the Referee should roll on **Table 1** to ascertain what the environment is. The ancient terra-forming machines often hibernate during self-repair, causing the atmosphere and surface to rapidly revert to swamp or even Jungle overnight.

Table 1 Roll on 2d6	Environment
2-5	Marsh
6-8	Swamp
9-12	Jungle

### Build a PC

You are **Symbi**, a humanoid with orange-speckled green skin and nutrient plasma running through your veins. The structural density of your body changes on a regular basis, usually when you are curled asleep in one of the nutrient ponds beneath the shifting vermillion night sky. When you awake to the hazy golden ochre of daylight you may feel physically changed (Roll on **Table 2**). If you ever forego a night in the nutrient ponds, you must roll under 7 on 2d6 or suffer a penalty of +1 to all rolls the following day. After a second night you also proceed as if you have a wound. (see **Fighting**)

Table 2 - Daily Character Density			
Roll 1d6, modify result by +1 in Marsh, -1 in Jungle			
Yesterday's Density	Today's Density		
	Low	Medium	High
Low	1-4	5-6	-
Medium	1	2-5	6
High	-	1-2	3-6

### Body Density Types

**Low:** Frail of body, you have empathic power, attuned to nature itself.

**Medium:** Lean and lithe, with some empathic power. You start the game at Medium Density.

**High:** Strong, fast, lacking empathic power. Predatory beasts will target you first.

### Rites of Passage

You begin the game as a young warrior (Level 1), trying to earn your place in the tribe along with other youths by completing hazardous tasks set for you by the Tribal Elders. For example, recovering an ancient artefact, vanquishing a predatory monster or renegade band of Symbi, escorting trade goods bound for a distant tribe etc. On your successful return the Elders will decide whether the surviving members of the party rise in status amongst the tribe. One of the players must roll equal or under to the number of survivors on 2d6 to Level up. Your exploits are added to the Song of the Symbi, to be passed on to future generations. Upon reaching Level 4 you have proved yourself fit to join the Elders.

### Starting Equipment

Each character wears a sarong and tribal wooden beads, possessing a bone-bladed dagger and one item off **Table 3**.

Table 3 Roll on 2d6	Weapons	Notes
2-3	Net	Successful attack entangles
4-5	Shortbow	20 Arrows
6-8	Spear	Can be thrown
9-10	Shield	-1 to AC
11-12	Bola	Successful attack entangles

Characters wear armour made from bone, padded hides and treated wood. Roll 1d6+2 for each character's Armour Class (AC).

Movement Rate (MV) is equal to AC + Level.

### Fighting

**Surprise:** All PCs must roll below own AC on 2d6 to successfully ambush their opponents (who then cannot attack during the 1<sup>st</sup> combat round). Modify the roll by -1 in swamps, -2 in jungles.

**Initiative:** If not surprised, each side rolls 1d6, the side with the lowest result attacks first., each member attacking in descending order of MV

**Attack:** Characters may each do a number of attacks in a round equal to their Level. Roll under your opponent's AC (+ own Level) on 2d6 to wound your opponent. If 'snake-eyes' or a double is rolled on a successful throw the opponent is killed. Otherwise the successful throw has wounded them. Anyone wounded must recuperate in a nutrient pool as soon as possible for a number of hours equal to 1d6 for each wound they have sustained. If a night passes without recuperation the Symbi will die from the wounds.

### Adventure

**Stunts and Stealth:** Roll under own AC on 2d6 to succeed.

**Fighting, Stunts and Stealth are modified by Table 4**

Table 4 Physical Task Modifier	Environment		
Character Density	Marsh	Swamp	Jungle
Low	-	+1	+2
Medium	-1	-	+1
High	-2	-1	-

**Hazards:** The Referee rolls under 7 on 2d6 to wound or kill you, as in the combat rules. This applies to traps, poison etc.

### Empathic Powers

Roll equal or under Level on 1d6 to use empathic power to influence other Symbi or creatures (Has no effect on Elders). If a 6 is rolled, the effect occurs but the empath is very fatigued (treat as a wound). Starting powers include:

**The Watchers Unnoticed:** A number of enemies equal to the empath's level will fail to notice the party (must all remain still) for one round in any environment. Acts as a successful **Surprise** the following round.

**Hearing the Song Within:** Can successfully detect and gauge a Symbi's true emotions at a range of 20ft per Level.

Other powers may be developed and taught by the Elders, one per new level attained.

Table 5 Empathic Ability Modifier	Environment		
Character Density	Marsh	Swamp	Jungle
Low	-	-1	-2
Medium	No power		-
High	No power		

### Encounters

These occur daily at melee range in jungles, Ranged combat range in marshes, roll 1d6 for swamps : 1-4 = melee, 5-6 = ranged.

Table 6 Roll on 2d6	Encounter
2-5	1d6 Creatures
6-8	Single Creatures
9-11	1d6 Symbi
12	Artefact

Creatures encountered are descendents of genetic experiments, mostly lizards and insects. There is a 1 in 6 chance they fly. If wounded, roll equal or under Level on 1d6 to remain in combat, otherwise they flee. AC = 1d6+2, Level = ½ AC

Symbi encountered will be wary of the party. Will fight if attacked, fleeing if outnumbered.

Artefacts = colonial gear that were not absorbed by the nutrient waters but cocooned and rose to the surface recently. Mysterious and unique.

By Sean Wills, based upon 'Searchers of the Unknown' by Nicholas Dessaux. This is a not-for-profit fan-work and is believed to reside within fair use.