

Caitians

Personality

The average Caitian is calm, collected and strongly individualistic. They dislike crowding, dirt, noise and commotion. Some Caitians seem finicky or prickly to outsiders and they remain non-demonstrative of even strong friendships. However, many Caitians put a veneer of flirtatiousness over their private core, especially with out-worlders

Caitians are moved by beauty, horrified by violence and anger, and wrestle constantly with their potential for each. On the whole, they are a peaceful people, who turn nasty only when their feelings are seriously wounded.

Physical Description

The Caitians are a bipedal feline race with thick manes, long tails, and large golden eyes that provide excellent low-light vision. Caitians have excellent hearing along a far broader range than terrestrial standard.

Physically, Caitians are extremely agile and fast. Their language is a tonal one, which utilizes many low-pitched noises like growls or purrs. Consequently, they have trouble adapting to human-style phonetic languages.

Caitians have a range of height and weight comparable to humans (some are slightly heavier). Their fur ranges from the short and glossy to the thick and shaggy, with any number of colors and patterns possible- a bewildering variety of races and subspecies that led to racial wars late in their development.

Caitians are born as twins or triplets, a fixed number depending on subspecies (the female Caitians are either double- or triple-breasted, accordingly).

Caitians have blunt claws that *can* be sharpened as dangerous brawling weapons, but most Caitians find the practice abhorrent and repulsive. Caitian fur is highly sensitive to both touch and temperature, though the Caitians themselves are adaptable to a wide variety of climates.

Culture

The felinoid Caitians were a sizeable interstellar culture for more than a century before the Federation made First Contact with them, having discovered warp travel at around the same time as humanity. The fourteen systems inhabited by Caitians were as populous as any of Earth's colonies at the time, and each controlled by a stable, global government.

When the *U.S.S. Pardalis* first entered Caitian space in 2240, those worlds were locked in a vicious interstellar war. What had started primarily as an economic squabble (over the highly limited supply of Caitian dilithium) had devolved into a tangle of racist and religious intolerance- the Caitians had discovered that their distaste for war was less powerful than their distaste for *each other*.

Although the *Pardalis* was crippled and ultimately destroyed by Caitian forces, the survivors returned to the Federation with assurances that the missile had been fired *despite* orders, and Federation negotiators found parties on all sides nervous, but eager to be friends- and peace with the Federation (and each other) came swiftly.

The creation of the Caitian Trade Alliance less than three years after the loss of the *Pardalis* and most sociologists now agree that the Caitians desperately wanted to break the cycle of war - but lacked the focal event needed to bring them to the table. The Federation provided that, along with FTL radio technology, and enough economic incentives to encourage even the most prideful Caitian to stop shooting for a while to talk. Introduced to their many neighbors via subspace radio, the Caitians set their talents to the long-term project of building what is now one of the most prosperous alliances within the larger umbrella of the UFP.

Caitians are sensualists in every sense of the word- relishing in activities that excite the senses (especially their eyesight and sense of smell), but favor physical artwork over the ephemeral. A Caitian might enjoy dancing as a kind of *sport*, for instance, but don't really regard it as *art* unless it makes something permanent that can be touched.

Each of the Caitian allied worlds prides itself on local variants of the *strovothra*, a form of organic-matter sculpture meant to stimulate the nose as well as the eye. A 60-meter column of

twisted fruit-bearing vines, bonded by damp clay, was erected as a centerpiece display at a Caitian exhibition in Paris, on Earth.

Language

Caitians Common

Homeworld

Cait II ("Dralaph" in the native *shanifir* tongue) is a heavily-forested world with several dozen small continents and thousands of large islands. The climate is on the cooler edge of temperate; the equatorial regions straddle the line between subtropical and tropical conditions. Nearly every island on Cait II is inhabited, and the world features many fine cities and excellent starport facilities.

While unquestionably the Caitian homeworld, Dralaph is only one of more than a dozen long-settled Caitian worlds, clustered across seven sectors of Federation space.

Favored Profession

Starship Officer, Scientist, Diplomat. Caitians are born explorers, and a well-motivated Caitian is capable of great tact and understanding. Their personal warmth provides a much-needed complement to the cool logic of the Vulcans, especially in the touchy conferences which can follow First Contact with new species.

Species Adjustment

+ 1 Agility, + 2 Perception, -1 Vitality, -1 Presence

Species Abilities

Bonus Edge: Night Vision: Caitian eyes are optimized for light intensification thanks to their ancestor's night hunting habits

Wide Spectrum Hearing: Although not as sharp as Vulcan hearing, Caitians can hear into the ultrasonic and subsonic frequencies. They have excellent sound discrimination and get a species adjustment of +4 to all *Observe (Listen)* tests.

Noted Characters:

Lt. M'Ress served on the U.S.S. *Enterprise* as the assistant chief communications officer from 2269 to 2271. Sculptor Shehi Pleth's bio-sculptures are gawked-at (and sniffed) in every part of the quadrant

Notes:

The Caitians first appeared in *Star Trek The Animated Series*.

Author unknown.