

SHARONIAN TALENTS

This is a partial list.

Animal Speaker—a Sharonian with a Talent which permits him to communicate with nonintelligent animals. No one is quite certain whether this is a form of telepathy, a form of telempathy, or a combination of the two. Animal Speakers have sufficient telepathic ability to receive Voice broadcasts and communications from Mind Speakers.

Coal Hound—a specialized sub type of Mineral Hound (see below) sensitive to the presence of coal and/or oil.

Detail Viewer—a Detail Viewer is a rare subtype of a Distance Viewer. Unlike a standard Distance Viewer whose viewpoint is *always* located in midair above whatever he or she is Viewing at any given moment, a Detail Viewer can locate his or her viewpoint wherever is desired in relationship to what is being Viewed. That is, a Detail Viewer could locate his viewpoint on the ground, looking up, or even project it into a solid mountain to View a tunnel or mine shaft. A Detail Viewer is still hampered by physical obstacles between his/her viewpoint and what is being observed, but he/she can move his viewpoint to the far side of the obstacle in order to defeat that difficulty. Ranges for Detail Viewers are approximately the same as those for standard Distance Viewers.

Distance Viewer—Distance Viewers are clairvoyants capable of Seeing specific distant objects and terrain. Unlike Plotters or Mappers, they See as if looking through their physical eyes. The vast majority of Distance Viewers See as if they were looking down from a point in midair above whatever they are observing. From a greater height, they can See a broader area, although with less detail, just as if they were using their eyes. And, as if they were using their eyes, cloud cover, bad weather, etc., can and does limit what they can See. They can control the altitude of their viewpoint, “zooming in” from a lower altitude for greater detail at the expense of sacrificing the general area they can observe. Most Distance Viewers can project their viewpoint to a range of no more than 20 or 30 miles (altitude is not a factor), but the strongest of them can project their viewpoint to distances of up to 200 miles. There are at least two major (and much rarer) variants of this ability: the Predictive Distance Viewer and the Detail Viewer. The rarest variant of all is the Predictive Detail Viewer.

Drafter—Drafters are capable of producing freehand versions of plans, maps, or virtually anything else which can be diagrammed. They are not necessarily skilled at painting or producing representational art (see “Sketcher,” below), but can produce detailed exploded diagrams and schematics of anything within the range of their Talent. They need not be able to see inside or dismantle an object to diagram its interior, but their range is generally limited to no more than 100-200 yards and they must be able to physically touch anything whose interior is to be diagrammed. Drafters with a secondary Mind Speaker Talent can produce detailed diagrams/plans transmitted to them by another Mind Speaker. The most powerfully Talented of Drafters can use their Talent to

diagram anything which can be seen or touched by another Mind Speaker (or Voice) with whom they are in communication as if the other Mind Speaker had the Drafter talent.

Flamer—a pyrokinetic, someone who can generate and control heat and/or flame. Flamers, in differing degrees of strength, and the most powerful of all are the Sunhearts, who can literally burn their way through armored steel. The Flamer Talent is among the most dangerous of Talents, and those who possess it are required to be tested and bonded. Perhaps fortunately, there are limitations on the range at which this Talent can be used, and the range is inversely proportional to the power of the Talent. A Flamer whose greatest power amounts to the ability to slowly and gradually heat a cup of coffee, say, can normally employ his power on any object within his visual range. A Sunheart capable of burning through a plate of face-hardened armor must be close enough that he could actually touch the armor in question. Sunhearts are highly prized in foundries and as welders.

Flicker—someone who can teleport small objects, such as tubes containing written dispatches. Range is limited, seldom exceeding much over 30-40 miles, and the Flicker must know exactly where he is sending it. Some of the most powerfully Talented Flickers have attained ranges of up to 50 miles or more.

Glimpse—a Glimpse might be thought of as a Precog on steroids, though the two Talents do not appear to be directly related in any way. Glimpses are restricted to members of the Calirath family (and only the Ternathian priesthood knows how to “activate” this Talent among those who potentially possess it) and are restricted to the ability to See the consequences of *human actions*. That is, someone with the Glimpse Talent could not See a naturally occurring forest fire or earthquake in advance but *might* be able to Glimpse such a disaster by Glimpsing the actions (and consequences of those actions) of humans *confronted by* the disaster. For most Glimpsers this Talent is uncontrollable, fragmentary, and offers little opportunity to determine exactly when that which is Glimpsed is to occur. (So far as is known, all Glimpses have been of future events, not past ones.) In addition, an individual experiencing a Glimpse is normally oblivious to his or her actual physical surroundings during the Glimpse. That is, he or she is so caught up in—almost entranced by—the Glimpse as to be literally deaf and blind to actual events around them. A Glimpser is unable, for unknown reasons, to Glimpse his or her own future, with one exception, although a Glimpse of *someone else’s* future may provide highly revealing clues about his or her own. No Glimpser can control Glimpses of events more than a very few hours into the future. Those more distant Glimpses come without warning, cannot be “focused” or controlled, and tend (there have been some notable exceptions) to be fragmentary and often chaotic. Some of the most strongly Talented Glimpsers have experienced Glimpses scores or even hundreds of years into the future, and a handful of the most strongly Talented of all have experienced clear, coherent, and detailed Glimpses. All Glimpsers are capable of a “Death Glimpse,” if their deaths are the result of human action. (Note that the action in question need not be deliberate; a Glimpser might very well experience a Death Glimpse as the result of a traffic accident or a pharmacist’s mistake in filling a prescription.) Not every individual capable of a Death Glimpse will necessarily experience one, although that is very uncommon and Death Glimpses tend to be very, very strong. It is possible for a Glimpser to effectively *summon* a Glimpse into the short-term future, i.e. up to 5-10 minutes from the present moment. To do so, however, requires the Glimpser to enter what is known as “fugue state,” which consumes large amounts of energy (physically, the equivalent of a 200-yard dash, let’s

say) and leaves the Glimpser even more oblivious than usual to his/her actual surroundings. For the vast majority of Glimpsers, a fugue state Glimpse means that they are effectively paralyzed, unable to see through their own eyes and unable to move. For those with a weak Talent, it is very difficult or even impossible to enter fugue state *except* in association with a Death Glimpse. Those with an extraordinarily *powerful* Talent, on the other hand, remain aware of their surroundings and the most powerful of all have actually been able to move and even fight in fugue state, which makes them extraordinarily deadly in close combat.

Healer—one who has the Healing Talent is able to perceive injuries and disease and to augment the natural healing process to deal with them. This is not the same as an Arcanan magistron's healing Gift, which can actually *command* the body to heal and recover from serious or even mortal injuries or fatal poisoning. A Talented Healer is able to accomplish seemingly miraculous results, but those results must have been at least potentially obtainable by the patient without the Healer's assistance. That is, a Talented Healer could cause a cut to close and began healing with extraordinary rapidity but would be unable to regenerate damaged or destroyed nerves or to save someone who had taken a bullet through the heart, whereas a magistron with a sufficiently powerful Gift *could* save someone who'd been shot through the heart if he/she could reach the wounded individual before brain function ceases. Talented Healers can (and do) serve as assistants and "guides" for un-Gifted surgeons.

Lifter—someone who can move objects with his mind. This is a short-range Talent; a Lifter can move an object from one location to another location which he can physically see at the moment he Lifts.

Live Tracker—a Live Tracker has a subtype of the Tracker Talent and can follow the trail of any living creature. The strongest Live Trackers have been known to follow trails as much as a full year old, but most Live Trackers cannot follow a trail much more than two or three months old. To use this Talent, the Live Tracker must know exactly where the trail he is following begins (or where he can intersect it, at least) and must know what sort of creature (including human beings) he/she is Tracking.

Mapper—someone who can see the terrain which surrounds him rather as if he was using imaging radar or sonar. Range varies with the strength of the Talent. A Mapper cannot detect living creatures; only terrain features (which includes trees and similar fixed, and moving plant life).

Metal Hound—a sub-Talent in the Mapper family. A Metal Hound can detect bodies of ore and give a very fair estimate of their purity and probable value.

Micro Viewer—a Micro Viewer is able to View objects on a microscopic level. This is a highly unusual Talent, but a very useful one in the medical and scientific professions. The most useful of all are Micro Viewers who have at least some Mind Speaker Talent and are able to work in tandem with Voices who can then distribute their actual observations to anyone who possesses a telepathy-based Talent, such as a Drafter who can then produce a detailed drawing/chart of the observation.

Mind Healer—a Sharonian with a complex of Talents which permits him to treat mental disorders.

Mind Speaker—Mind Speakers are relatively common among the Talented. Mind Speakers are telepaths, normally limited to a range of no more than a couple of miles. They normally cannot match the vibrancy, texture, and "completeness" of a Voice transmission and they do not have a Voice's perfect recall. Some Mind Speakers, such as Shalassar Kolmayr-Brintal, Shaylar's mother,

can communicate with intelligent nonhumans (in Shalassar's case with cetaceans).

Mineral Hound—The Mineral Hound talent is very similar to that of the Metal Hound, but he can detect and estimate the purity of nonmetallic minerals, rather than metals. They are especially valued for their ability to find gems and critical industrial materials. A particular subtype of Mineral Hound, sometimes referred to as a Coal Hound, is capable of detecting fossilized carbon and/or oil.

Object Tracker—an Object Tracker has a subtype of the Tracker Talent and can follow the paths of *inanimate* objects (i.e., vehicles). An Object Tracker can follow only the object which *left* the path he is Tracking. That is, he could follow a wagon but not a single bag of potatoes which was carried in the wagon. Object Trackers can track even boats or ships through (relatively) shallow water, in which case they are following the path's "shadow" on the bottom of the body of water in question. Most Object Trackers can track through 10-20 feet of water; exceptionally powerful Object Trackers can track a vessel's "path" through as much as 200-300 feet of water, but no Object Tracker has ever exceeded a depth of 400 feet. As with Live Trackers, very powerful Object Trackers can track a vehicle as much as a year after it has passed through, but most Object Trackers are limited to a time window of no more than two months.

Observer—an Observer has what might be called an extremely acute sense of situational awareness. An Observer generally knows exactly where persons and objects are in relation to him in his immediate vicinity, and Observers are renowned for their ability to catch balls thrown from behind them, to unerringly catch a falling glass as it leaves the table, etc. In some Observers, the basic talent is associated with a weak Precog Talent, allowing them to actually predict (in a window of a few seconds or, perhaps, a minute or so) what objects and persons around them are about to do. In a particularly strongly talented Observer, "situational awareness" translates into a sensitivity to detail and relationships which rivals or even exceeds that of the legendary Sherlock Holmes.

Plotter—a Sharonian with the Plotting Talent, a specialized sub variant of the Mapping Talent can detect the presence and locations of living creatures, like human beings. A Plotter's range varies with the strength of his Talent from a minimum of perhaps one mile to a maximum of 35 or even 40 miles for those with the strongest Talent.

Precog—a Precog, as the name suggests, is capable of pre-knowing or reaching into the future. Precogs are normally sensitive to specific *types* of pre-knowledge: weather, earthquakes, etc. About 15-20 percent of all Precogs, however, are General Precogs—that is, their precognitions can apply to almost anything. A Precog sensitive to a specific type of pre-knowledge, however, can focus his or her Talent in a way that a General Precog cannot. That is, the sensitive Precog can "focus" on his or her area of precognition (weather, earthquakes, forest fires, whatever). This ability to "focus" allows him or her to See farther into the future, up to as much as two weeks with a high degree of clarity and perhaps as much as a month with decreasing accuracy. A General Precog is unable to focus in a similar fashion and is much more likely to receive unexpected, unanticipated precognitions. A Precog should not be confused with a Glimpse, however, and the greatest recorded Precog extended no more than approximately 90 days into the future.

Predictive Detail Viewer—the rarest of all Distance Viewers, the Predictive Detail Viewer combines Precognition with the ability to locate his or her viewpoint wherever is desired in relationship to what is being Viewed.

Predictive Distance Viewer—this is a rare subtype of a Distance Viewer. This Talent combines limited Precognition with Distance Viewing, allowing the Viewer to See a specific location *as it will be* in the immediate future. The degree of Precognition varies from Talent to Talent, and is normally measured in no more than minutes (an interval of 30 seconds to around 6 minutes is most common) but can in some cases be as much as 25 minutes. The rarest of all Predictive Distance Viewers are limited to a *fixed* time window: that is, they always See the same exact distance into the future.

Predictive Observer—this is a rare subtype of an Observer. This Talent combines limited precognition with the basic Observer’s sensitivity to “situational awareness,” to such an extent that the Predictive Observer can actually predict and anticipate where persons and/or objects in his/her vicinity will be in the next several seconds or (for extremely powerful Predictive Observers) as much as two or three minutes. Individuals with this Talent have *extremely* difficult childhoods as they must learn to “turn it off” in order to interact with their environment and other people in “real time.”

Projective—in a sense, all Mind Speakers, Voices, High Sensitives, etc., are Projectives, but the term refers to a specific Talent which is capable of sharing sights, sounds, etc., even with those who are not Talented. Like Voices, Projectives have perfect recall.

Receiver—a Receiver is almost the opposite of a Voice. Or, to put it another way, a Receiver is a Voice with a very, very short transmission range (seldom much over 100 yards) but the ability to receive Voice transmissions from extraordinary ranges (up to 2,500-3,000 miles in some cases). Receivers are even more unusual than Voices and are usually reserved for the Voicenet where they are teamed with regular Voices to overcome significant water barriers or other major terrain obstacles. The Receiver is capable of receiving Voice transmissions from the far side of the barrier and sharing them with his or her normal Voice partner, who then relays the transmission to other Voices on their side of the barrier.

Rememberer—a very rare Talent, a Rememberer is able to “remember” scenes which he has never actually seen. He must be able to physically see the location where the scene to be Remembered occurred and must know approximately when the events he is attempting to Remember transpired. The most rare of all Rememberers (and the most prized for their forensic capabilities) have sufficient telepathic ability to share what they Remember with a Voice or a Mind Speaker so that it can actually be Seen by other investigators.

Scribe—Scribes are thought to be in some ways a sub variety of the Drafter (see above). They are able to produce a detailed, scrupulously accurate written version of anything they have read or heard. Most Scribes have a “window” of no more than 6 to 12 hours in which they retain the ability to transcribe the material without errors or corruption, although some very rare Scribes have been known to retain such information indefinitely. Scribes are often paired with Voices in the military or in business applications where written copies of messages are necessary for distribution or for filing.

Sensitive—Sensitives are empaths. They can detect (and share) the emotions of those around them. Projective Sensitives are much rarer and are capable of projecting emotions to those around them. A High Sensitive (and the rarest of all) can both detect *and* project the emotions of others.

Sifter—someone who can tell whether or not a specific spoken statement is true or false. A Sifter cannot read minds, but particularly sensitive Sifters can detect and accurately estimate degrees of tension in those being interrogated.

Sketcher—a Sketcher is a Talented individual who can produce photographic quality drawings and/or paintings of anything he or she observes. A Sketcher with a secondary Mind Speaker Talent is capable of Sketching anything another individual with the Mind Speaker Talent has seen or is currently seeing. Sketchers should not be confused with Drafters (see above), although a Sketcher could produce a faithful and accurately scaled rendition of a diagram produced by someone else. Sketchers are highly sought after for newspaper illustrations. They are also highly valuable working with Distance Viewers or Micro Viewers, and are often at least as valuable as Mappers for military purposes, since they are capable of rendering what terrain actually *looks* like.

Sniffer—see “Tracer.”

Sunheart—a Sunheart is an especially powerful (but short ranged) type of Flamer (see above), capable of projecting and concentrating sufficient heat to burn through heavy armor plate or weld objects together. A Sunheart’s effective range is normally limited to objects he or she can/could physically touch. That is, such concentrated foci of heat cannot be projected very much beyond arm’s-length of the Sunheart.

Tinker—a Tinker is a Sharonian whose Talent provides him or her with a pronounced “knack” or intuitive feel for various areas of engineering, technical design, etc. Many of the best Sharonian inventors are Tinkers.

Tracer (see also Sniffer)—a Tracer or Sniffer is a specialized version of Finder who is sensitive to the current location, or at least direction to, another individual or object. They are range-limited and must have a strong “feel” for the individual they are Tracing. Tracers with a particularly powerful Talent can work from a description of the individual or object from someone else who is familiar with that person or object; the majority of Tracers can work from an accurate image (or photograph); the weakest of Tracers require previous physical contact/proximity to the individual or object. *All* Tracers who are also Mind Speakers can work from Voice images of the individual or object. Tracers’ ranges vary from a low of 5-10 miles to a maximum of approximately 80 miles.

Tracker—a Tracker should not be confused with a Tracer or a Sniffer. A Tracker is psionically gifted in following literally someone or something’s tracks or trail. Trackers come in two varieties: Live Trackers and Object Trackers. A Tracker of either type must know exactly where the trail he/she is following begins and exactly what it is he is Tracking.

Voice—a Sharonian with the ability to project mental images and messages over great distances at the speed of thought. Voice range varies widely, with the strongest Voices able to transmit perhaps 700-800 miles. The shortest “commercially useful” Voice range is considered to be about 5 miles. The average for Voices in the Voice chain’s connecting universes is around 350 miles. Any Voice has a photographic memory.

Water Witch—also sometimes called a “Water Hound,” a Water Witch is sensitive to the presence and behavior of water in his or her vicinity. This Talent is very useful in digging wells for water, but it can also be extremely useful in mapping and charting currents and volumes of flow in rivers, streams, lakes, and even oceanic tides.

Weather Hound—a Precog subtype who is sensitive to weather. A Weather Hound does not appear to depend solely upon his precognitive ability, however. Weather Hounds are sensitive to wind directions and conditions, both current and future, in ways which do not seem to be completely reliant upon precognition. Weather Hounds are highly valued, especially aboard ship.

Whiffer—a Talented person sensitive to residual psychic impressions. A Whiffer normally focuses on a specific object and is capable of Seeing (and feeling) what an individual associated with the object saw or felt.