

Rite of Honour

The Rite of Honour is a passage that has been around since the feudal days of the [Neshaten](#).

A [My'leke](#) is the main focus of the Rite; they are the ones who choose who to have a bonding with. A bonding is not marriage, but rather, a pairing together where the My'leke and their chosen [Shukaren](#) partner share in pain and also memories. The My'leke also shares their micro-organisms with the Shukaren, thus improving their own healing ability. The Rite of Honour is considered sacred to the Neshaten, and when a My'leke chooses who they are to be paired with, plans are drawn up for the ceremony.

Preparations take weeks, and anyone is invited to attend the ceremony which is held the Neshaten Capital of *Netoshen*. The King, and Queen, presides over the ceremony along with the family of the chosen Shukaren and the family of the My'leke who chose them.

Although it is a Rite, there are three trials that the two must go through together to prove their willingness. Once the trials are finished, a ceremony marking the end of the Rite is held. The [Order of Marius](#) handles and oversees the ceremony and accompanying events.

Trial of Knowledge

The Trial of Knowledge is a series of cryptic messages and questions that are given to the My'leke and Shukaren. These messages and questions are different for everyone, and test the person to determine why they have been chosen and what they did to get where they are. It is essentially a mental recall, with the Shukaren taking the brunt of the questions and recalling their past and being asked if the actions they took, are the ones they felt were right.

Trial of Survival

The Trial of Survival is just as it sounds, the two are tested on their ability to survive in various situations and environments. During this time, no technology can be used, and the two must rely on one another. This is a test of whether the chosen Shukaren can get along with the My'leke who chose them, and whether the two can easily work together to solve problems presented to them.

Like with the Knowledge, the Trial of Survival is different for all.

Trial of Adversity

The last trial places the Shukaren and My'leke in a situation they have never been placed in, a life and death situation that ultimately determines whether they are capable of finishing the Rite or not. The possibility of death in the Trial of Adversity is actual, and not simulated.

Capabilities and Risks

When the ceremony is over, and Shukaren and My'leke chosen have bonded symbiotically, their memories, life experiences, and past are shared amongst one another through the My'leke's tail, which doubles as a biological link that transfers this information as a form of racial memory. At the same time, the Shukaren takes on the enhanced healing ability of the My'leke thanks to the implementation of the micro-organisms that appear in the Shukaren's body. For the My'leke, they are given the longevity of the Shukaren along with their memories.

However, this comes with a risk, much like how if the micro-organism are killed, the My'leke will die, so too will the Shukaren if the organism were to die in their body. However, because the two share in pain thanks to their symbiotic connection, so too are their lives. If one is killed in battle, there is a high likelihood that the other dies as well due to the pain they feel.

There is a chance, however, that the other bonded will not die, this is very rare but has happened.

Because this is a symbiotic pairing, the two can not venture to far apart from another without feeling mental pain. The actual distance that a person can get depends on how strong the person is mentally, but at most individuals can get around three to four hundred kilometers away before either starts to feel pain, the further apart a pair is the more painful it becomes, eventually they can collapse due to the mental strain they have been placed under. It is for this reason why bonded pairs are advised to 'serve' together, either in a military capacity or while in a civilian workplace, such as a starship.

Shukaren, upon completing this Rite, can not drink and the drugs that they are able to take are heavily restricted.

The pairing can be nullified if a crime is committed, this nullification can and in many cases, will, kill the two of them. Because of this, strict following of the law is paramount.

Eligibility

What determines a Shukaren's ability to undergo the Rite is left entirely up to the My'leke, each one has their own preference on what they are looking for. Because of how serious the Rite is, usually only a Shukaren who has distinguished themselves above all others can be chosen for undergo the Rite, but its largely left up to the My'leke. The age of the My'leke has to be at least eighteen years in order for the bonding to be possible; however, for the Shukaren they can be as young as eight.

[Laibe Shukaren](#) are not eligible to undertake the Rite of Honour. The reason is due to how their body is made up, their blood rejects the micro-organisms that come from the My'leke and their immune system goes on the attack, because of this, when the micro-organisms die it has a high chance of killing the laibe in the process.

Advantages

Although most paired individuals do not flaunt their new bonding, a My'leke and Shukaren who are bonded are automatically afforded the Royal Title upon their completion, this does 'not' mean they are part of royalty; a Royal Title is the mark of proof that they've completed the Rite of Honour. They are also allowed to take part in more government matters and can also run as candidates for the throne as long as the pair is male and female. They are also given a great deal of respect from all manners of the social ladder; this is because getting through the Rite is considered a very perilous and dangerous endeavor.

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