

Using the season themes to inspire you, send us a story that fits any of the following daily flash genres:

**MYSTERY MONDAY:** From cozy to crime scene, start your week off with a bit of mystery. Creep through downtown foggy London Town, spy on secret agents at a midnight meeting, catch up with an old friend who may or may not be a cat burglar, or just figure out who stole your homework before the last bell rings. It doesn't have to be a classic mystery with detectives, clues, murder, or theft. If it's mysterious, uncertain, or unknown, take us on a journey through the dark and shine a bit of light on the hidden—and maybe even startling—truth.

**Sub-genres:** Amateur sleuth (*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*), cozy/whodunit (Agatha Christie), crime (*The Departed*), legal/medical (*A Few Good Men*), noir (*Blade Runner*), police procedural (*Silence of the Lambs*), professional sleuth (Sherlock Holmes), supernatural (*The Woman in Black*), psychological horror (*Sphere*)

**TECHNO TUESDAY:** As your week hits its stride, don't be afraid to ask, "What if..." What if NASA really is covering for the aliens? What if your new cell phone comes with a free brain implant? What if a radioactive spider gives you superpowers? What if time travel vacations are a thing of the past? With Havok, even the mysteries of the universe aren't too great to explore over your morning cup of coffee.

**Sub-genres:** Hard sci-fi (*The Martian*), soft sci-fi (*Spider-Man*), military (*Starship Troopers*), space opera (*Star Wars*, *Dune*), steampunk (*The Time Machine*), cyber/bio/nanopunk (*The Matrix*), voyages extraordinaire (Jules Verne), gothic (*Frankenstein's Monster*), dystopian (*The Hunger Games*)

**WACKY WEDNESDAY:** Halfway done, and who couldn't use a little humor over their lunch break? Well, embrace the lighter side of Havok as you laugh your stress away, 1,000 words at a time. Whether you're running alongside a hilariously unfortunate private eye, hitching a ride across the galaxy, helping a kid defend his home from Christmas burglars, enjoying a "sick day" with a high school adventurer, or going on an epic quest to find a holy grail, you can rest assured that your adventure will be anything but serious.

**Sub-genres:** Forget 'em! What would Wacky Wednesday be with a bunch of rules? If it's funny, lighthearted, and downright entertaining, you're hitting the mark.

**THRILLER THURSDAY:** As your week races to a close, get caught up in some heart-pumping excitement. Run down a terrorist before time runs out. Infiltrate a secret society before they collect the last relic. Untangle a sociopath's plot before he pins the whole thing on you. Take down a crime boss before he takes you down. And do it all before your kids wake up from their afternoon nap.

**Sub-genres:** Action (*James Bond*), adventure (*Indiana Jones*), conspiracy (*The Da Vinci Code*), crime (*Die Hard*), medical (*Outbreak*), man vs. nature (*Jaws*, *Twister*)

**FANTASY FRIDAY:** TGI fantasy! Now, sit back and drift into another world filled with high elves, amateur wizards, magic wardrobes, suave vampires, and gun-slinging monster hunters. With Havok, there's no limit to how far the story will take you as you kick your feet up and usher in another fantastic weekend.

**Sub-genres:** Fairy tales (*Cinderella*), horror (*Dracula*), high fantasy (*The Lord of the Rings*), low fantasy (*Harry Potter*), magical realism (*Midnight in Paris*), medieval (*A Game of Thrones*), portal (*The Chronicles of Narnia*), urban/paranormal (*The Dresden Files*)

Like a phoenix from the ashes, Havok will celebrate six months of life's enduring spirit. Each month there's a different take on the season's theme, starting with Rebirth itself. This is a reference sheet only; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

### Rebirth

From butterflies to phoenixes, there's nothing mundane about being reborn. Become a master of disguise to outwit a sly sleuth. Download your consciousness into a world-crushing automaton. Wake up as a baby and babble your way to work. Stop a doomsday cult from releasing a "new world" virus. Or learn to use your new superpowers on your eighteenth birthday.

### Recycle

We're not talking plastic bottles, here. Think outside that cardboard box. Who keeps stealing your newspaper and replacing it with paper mache swans—and why? When will the oxygen and water run out on Earth's last intergalactic generation ship? What possible uses can you find for leftover fingernail clippings? Why is Jack the Ripper collecting all those organs? And how, exactly, do the fae turn a baby's laughter into magic?

### Relocate

Whether you're running away or running toward, bring us the horizon! Write a mystery novel in the comfort of your new haunted house. Explore the hidden depths in a state-of-the-art submarine, even if you can't swim. Take your pet goldfish on vacation to the Mojave Desert. Leave your desk job to track down a Columbian drug lord. Or stumble through a mirror into a world populated by people who look exactly like you.

### Reform

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men should do nothing." Investigate a corrupt police precinct. Demand freedom from the mad scientist who created you. Educate a shark on the benefits of veganism. Use your history as a mob boss to take down the whole organization. Or learn to resist your hunger for blood as you battle the creatures of the night.

### Recover

When tragedy strikes, you can either lie down, or you can rise to the occasion. Wake up with a headache and piece together your fractured memory. Reclaim humanity's last outpost from the alien threat. Find out where you left your head because you forgot to glue it on. Chase down the stolen Hope Diamond. Or find your glass slipper before the clock strikes midnight!

### Redo

Who wouldn't love a second chance? Redeeming your previous failure in the courtroom with new evidence from a crime? Saving your beloved with your Victorian-era time machine? Finally revealing King Arthur's secret love for show tunes? Giving it another go with your secret agent ex-wife? Reliving that fated day until you figure out how to save humanity from the time warlocks? At Havok, there's always time for a redo!

At first glance, our combination of season themes and daily genres might seem confusing. But like a new video game controller, it won't take long for you to get the hang of it. Below are some examples of how Season One's "Rebirth" theme can be combined with some of the daily genres. In case you're wondering, these story ideas are absolutely up for grabs. If an example sparks your imagination, run with it!

**MYSTERY MONDAY + REBIRTH:** Being reborn isn't only about butterflies and phoenixes. There's also pre-meditated metamorphosis, mysteries of mutation, puzzles that unlock true transformation.

**Examples:** A thief becomes a master of disguise to outwit a sly sleuth. A private investigator finds out more than she bargained for and wakes up with a hunger for blood and an aversion to sunlight. A retired cop finds a new calling hunting down the monsters that stalk the night; he's become one of them but cannot let go of who he was before. A murder investigation comes to the impossible conclusion that the victim isn't dead--she was transformed!

**WACKY WEDNESDAY + REBIRTH:** Being reborn, just like being born the first time, can involve some wacky events, humorous moments, and laugh-out-loud irony. Any genre will do. Mash 'em up, peel 'em, put 'em in a stew. No, not in that order, duh! Peel first. JUST MAKE US LAUGH.

**Examples:** A power-hungry and vain fairy eats the wrong mushroom and wakes up with more power than he bargained for--and more heads! A baby elephant tells her best friend she wants to grow up to be a giraffe; hilarity ensues on the African plains. When his own AI program tries to turn a nerdy coder into a man of fashion and sophistication for his first blind date, it's just one comedy of errors after another.

**THRILLER THURSDAY + REBIRTH:** Being reborn is about becoming something new, but it's not always a pretty process. It can happen under extreme duress, and sometimes the cost is high. We want to see how characters are reborn in the midst of intense action, intrigue, and adventure!

**Examples:** The daughter of an FBI agent must become someone else to infiltrate the terrorist group that has captured her father. An immortal at the heart of a conspiracy that goes back to Augustus Caesar's day must once again recreate himself to avoid detection. A kind-hearted factory worker taps into the berserker inside him when drafted by the military to defend his homeland.

Music moves us. It shapes the world and immortalizes each generation, telling stories in a way that stays with us forever. We are tapping the power of song from each decade between the 1950s-1990s. This is a reference sheet only; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

### The '50s

The music of the 1950s blended prewar big band, gospel, blues, and country/western. It birthed Rock & Roll as we know it, but how well do we know those hits that our parents and grandparents lived and died by?

*Great Balls of Fire*: a Hollywood man meets a fire witch and explores the darker side of 1950s

Tinseltown? What if Elvis heard about an actual police *Hound Dog* that tripped and slobbered and bumbled its way through a hilarious manhunt?

### The '60's

Emerging from post-WW2 patriotism and optimism into distrust and restlessness, the 1960s underwent some of the biggest social changes the United States has ever seen. Maybe *The Sound of Silence* was warning us of a virtual reality world where we seek simulated happiness and false gods to the point of our own destruction. *Sugar, Sugar* was almost certainly about an eccentric-but-lonely candy maker who built his own wife, right?

### The 70's

Ah, the 70s. You don't have to stretch your imagination to create mysterious, wacky, and out-of-this-world stories from these songs! *Bohemian Rhapsody*: a Spanish girl journeys to Hades to save her poor boyfriend, who died at her mother's hand. *Stairway to Heaven*: the path back to the real world for a kid who tumbles into a wonderland. Or join two friends in their ridiculous *Kung Fu Fighting* video game as they race to battle the final boss before dinner!

### The 80's

Some of history's best science fiction came from this era, and music was the sounding board of the culture. *Blue Monday*: a desperate cyborg would rather sink into the ocean than remain under the control of his oppressive creator. *Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go*: Dr. Jekyll's serenade to his own Jitterbug serum. An ancient relic known as the *Eye of the Tiger* grants its owner untold power but leaves him with a deadly desire to possess it forever.

### The 90's

Whatever. Who wants to be cool, anyway? Our parents don't understand, the government doesn't understand, and our teachers don't understand. The 1990s had all the social unrest of the '60s, but they were too cool to admit it. *Hey Man, Nice Shot*: the story of a world-famous sniper who sacrificed himself to save a young private from a horde of approaching enemies. *Good Riddance*: the last words of a woman from the distant, dying future, spoken to the time traveler she fell in love with when he leaves her to save his own life. What if a werewolf escapes her curse when she discovers a mystical symbol, but when she tries to show *The Sign* to her lover, he refuses to open up his eyes?

### Open Mic Night

Let's finish 2019 with a bang! Any song, any era. Broadway musicals, TV theme songs, nursery rhymes, or if you just missed your chance earlier in the year, our Open Mic theme has got you covered.

At first glance, our combination of season themes and daily genres might seem confusing. But like a new video game controller, it won't take long for you to get the hang of it. Below are some examples of how Season Two's "Stories That Sing" theme can be combined with some of the daily genres. In case you're wondering, these story ideas are absolutely up for grabs. If an example sparks your imagination, run with it!

**MYSTERY MONDAY + 1950's:** A mystery can be found in any genre. Whenever something is missing and needs to be found. Wherever something weird is going on and someone needs to figure it out. When someone is hiding and we don't know why or where.

**Examples:** Recount the events leading up to the *Folsom Prison Blues*. What's causing Little Susie to keep falling asleep (*Wake Up, Little Susie*)? Who is the mysterious, lovely woman who saved his life (*Earth Angel*)?

**TECHNO TUESDAY + 1990's:** Put on your science hat and look for ways to include a little "what if?"

**Examples:** The red swirls of Jupiter are caused by the massive magnetic fields surrounding alien creatures who live there (*Opposites Attract*). Scientists investigate mysterious tremors 100 kilometers from the Antarctic research station, finding a species of mushroom that smells like bacon and kills with a touch (*Ice Ice Baby*).

**WACKY WEDNESDAY + 1970's:** Put a funny spin on any song by giving us the absurd, the quirky, the unexpected. JUST MAKE US LAUGH.

**Examples:** What if *The Devil Went Down to Georgia* to steal enough souls to make his rent? Take us to the sedate museum fundraiser that ended with everybody *Kung Fu Fighting*.

**THRILLER THURSDAY + 1980's:** While songs are often about angst, beauty, or romance, there's no lack of adventure and suspense when you look for it.

**Examples:** An up-and-coming rock star tries to flush out her obsessive fan in *Every Breath You Take*, only to find that it's her washed-up mentor. A struggling actress stumbles into the Hollywood Forever Cemetery and has to fight for her life to escape the serial killer known as the Midnight Reaper (*Thriller*). An undercover agent discovers he's fallen in love with a terrorist but isn't ready to turn her in (*Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go*).

**FANTASY FRIDAY + 1960's:** Throw in a mythical creature, a magical item, set your story in a fantasy world, turn a fantasy trope upside down, and you may catch the attention of our Friday editors.

**Examples:** *For What Its Worth* may be about the spark that lit the fire of war between the elves and dwarves of New Amsterdam. Follow a paranormal bounty hunter to an underground club for vampires and werewolves (*Monster Mash*). Have a young girl try to tame a unicorn (*Born to Be Wild*). A shy young rock troll asks a river troll out in a sweet cross-cultural romance (*I Want To Hold Your Hand*).



These songs are just suggestions. Use your own favorites or do an internet search for "top songs" of any decade and then scan the list for suggestive titles. Lookup lyrics for even more ideas. immortalize in story an already immortal song!

**1950's:** *Fly Me To The Moon, Blue Suede Shoes, Great Balls of Fire, Earth Angel, Jailhouse Rock, Walkin' After Midnight, Wake up, Little Susie, Splish Splash, Folsom Prison Blues, Twelfth of Never, Sleep Walk, Strangers in the Night, Good Golly, Miss Molly, Who's Sorry Now?, Hard-Headed Woman, Mystery Train, Istanbul (Not Constantinople), Hey, Porter, Day-O (The Banana Boat Song), I Don't Care If The Sun Don't Shine, Sh-Boom, School Days, Shake, Rattle & Roll, Mister Sandman, Under The Sea, Everyday, Mack The Knife, In The Still of the Night, That's Amore, The Girl Can't Help It, Tequila, Got My Mojo Working, The Great Pretender, Back in the USA, Rockin' Robin, La Bamba, I Put a Spell On You, Rave On*

**1960's:** *Monster Mash, The Sound of Silence, The House of the Rising Sun, Wild Thing, Revolution, Born to Be Wild, Blowin' in the Wind, Yellow Submarine, Stand By Me, (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction, The Twist, I Get Around, Good Vibrations, Space Oddity, I'm A Believer, I Heard It Through The Grapevine, Tainted Love, Everlasting Love, I'm Your Puppet, You'll Never Walk Alone, The Lion Sleeps Tonight, Surfin' USA, Ring of Fire, Aquarius Let the Sunshine In, Hold On I'm Coming, Ain't No Mountain High Enough, Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head, Big Bad John, Hey Joe, Under the Boardwalk, Georgy Girl, California Dreamin', The End of the World, I Fought the Law, The Pink Panther, People Are Strange*

**1970's:** *The Ballroom Blitz, Dancing Queen, Dream Weaver, Riders on the Storm, Have You Ever Seen The Rain?, Rocket Man (I Think It's Going To Be A Long Long Time), Killing Me Softly, Another Brick In The Wall, Comfortably Numb, Hotel California, Lean On Me, Sweet Home Alabama, I Will Survive, Bohemian Rhapsody, Kung Fu Fighting, The Devil Went Down to Georgia, Stayin' Alive, Superstition, Come and Get Your Love, Stairway to Heaven, Rhinestone Cowboy, Goodbye Yellow Brick Road, Summer Nights, (They Long to Be) Close To You, The Candy Man, Anarchy in the U.K., One Way or Another, Crocodile Rock, I Can See Clearly Now, Midnight Train to Georgia, Take Me Home, Country Roads, American Woman*

**1980's:** *Walking on Sunshine, In the Air Tonight, We Didn't Start The Fire, Uptown Girl, Summer of 69, Everybody Wants To Rule The World, Eye of the Tiger, Living on a Prayer, Girls Just Want To Have Fun, The Final Countdown, Blue Monday, Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go, Walk Like an Egyptian, Take My Breath Away, Thriller, Never Gonna Give You Up, Every Breath You Take, Rockin' in the Free World, Super Freak, Time After Time, Rock Me Amadeus, Wicked Game, Nikita, If I Could Turn Back Time, Don't Worry, Be Happy, Endless Love, Owner of a Lonely Heart, Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For, Rebel Yell*

**1990's:** *The Sign, Mr. Jones, U Can't Touch This, Livin' la Vida Loca, Barbie Girl, Istanbul (Not Constantinople), (Everything I Do) I Do It For You, One Sweet Day, Truly Madly Deeply, Black Hole Sun, MMBop, Smells Like Teen Spirit, Hey Man, Nice Shot, Good Riddance, Gangsta's Paradise, Under The Bridge, Man, I Feel Like A Woman, The Power, Runaway Train, Say You'll Be There, Quit Playing Games (With My Heart), All Star, Kiss From A Rose, Smooth, Streets of Philadelphia, Waterfalls, Frozen, Thunderstruck, I Believe I Can Fly, I Swear, End of the Road, Circle of Life, Hero, Vogue*

There are some storylines and concepts that hook us every time. When done right, they transcend the label stereotype or the dreaded “cliché” and enter the realm of treasured trope and become the formula for a blockbuster hit. Havok’s third season is all about the stories that we watch, re-watch, and stay up all night to binge watch. Remember: This is a reference sheet only; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

### Dynamic Duos

Batman and Robin. Mulder and Scully. Spock and McCoy. Sherlock and Watson. Arthur and Merlin. Legolas and Gimli. Artoo and C-3PO. Tom and Jerry. Scooby Doo and Shaggy. And the list goes on. Whether they go together like peanut butter and jelly or oil and water, two heads are more entertaining than one. And that's why we're kicking off Season Three with a double-shot of awesome. Give us your partners in crime, your whimsical magical familiars, your plucky comic relief robots, your villainous pets, and your legendary heroes. Because this month, we're seeing double.

### Answering the Call

Every great hero's journey starts with a choice. Whether faced with an ancient prophecy or a secret admirer, the best characters are always faced with an important question: "Do I step up to the challenge or not?" What if Harry Potter had stayed under the Dursley's stairs? What if Walter White had remained a law-abiding chemistry teacher? What if Neo had taken the blue pill? What if Bill and Ted had decided to fail their history class so they could focus on music? What if Luke Skywalker had never left Tatooine? What if Elle Woods had decided to become a hairdresser because Harvard Law was too hard? Every decision comes with consequences, and this month, you get to decide the fate of the world, or at least the fate of the high school dance. Whether your hero answers the call or not is up to you. But don't make your choice lightly, because ultimately, it's the fate of your story that hangs in the balance.

### Strange New Worlds

The best stories transport us. They captivate us. They keep us awake late into the night, caught somewhere between our own world and somewhere... else. Without a magical wardrobe filled with talking animals, Narnia would have been dreadfully bland. Without an animated bunny, Who Framed Roger Rabbit would have died on the cutting room floor. Without a color-changing horse and an ill-tempered witch, The Wizard of Oz would have remained dreadfully black and white. And without a desolate red planet, The Martian would have failed to launch. So let your imagination run wild this month. From the ocean's uncharted depths to the ancient realm's oldest forests, wow us with stories filled with fresh, thought-provoking settings and exotic beings. Because nothing's stranger than fiction.

### The End of the World As We Know It

Nothing's more exciting than impending disaster, right? And there's no greater disaster than the end of everything we know and love. So this month, put us through the ringer. Take us to the brink of survival, and it's up to you whether you bring us back. But beware of tired tropes. Wouldn't a zombie apocalypse be better if it happened in Middle Earth, or if the undead were actually smarter than humans? Wouldn't a Russian submarine be more intriguing if, instead of threatening the United States with a nuclear warhead, it did so with a captive fallen angel? Wouldn't a giant meteor be scarier if it were made of ice filled with an alien virus? Wouldn't an evil wizard make more waves if he threatened to turn the entire realm into codfish? But whatever creative twist you decide to put on the end of the world, be sure it captures the essence of approaching doom. If we're not racing toward the big finish, we're likely to wish our existence had never been threatened in the first place.

### Super Duper

Heroes and villains don't need to be from Krypton to have super powers (but it helps). A movie buff can solve the case of the copycat murderer. A reindeer with a glowing nose can save Christmas. A father with a "special set of skills" can save his daughter from kidnappers. A sentient android can broker peace between humans and robots. And, yes, a nearly omnipotent Kryptonian can rescue humanity countless times. So fill this month with the widest variety of super-powers the world has ever seen. Turn the smallest skill into something lifesaving. Take an evildoer's negative traits and make them positive. Wow us with new perspectives on what it means to be extraordinary, because, as uncle Ben said, "With great power comes great responsibility."

### The One Thing

The MacGuffin isn't just a ridiculous word. It's a plot trigger capable of sprouting an entire story. The crystal skull, the Maltese falcon, the Infinity Stones, the raven, the Holy Grail, the Death Star plans, Private Ryan—whether it's a person, a place, or a ring, the Macguffin will inspire stories worthy to round out our binge-worthy season. As always, get creative. Tilt your head and squint a little. Find those things in everyday life that could unfold into a timeless tale. Dig up unfamiliar objects capable of capturing the attention of your characters and your readers. And then, in 1,000 words or less, allow the MacGuffin to inspire a story that we'll never forget.

This season we'll take a journey of the senses, and immerse our readers in everything that's possible for a human to experience—and take them even further. Remember: This is a reference sheet only; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

### Touch

Caress, deep pressure, temperature, vibration, pain—they're the first sensations we develop, and they connect us on an almost spiritual level to each other and to the world around us. Can an android truly be afraid if he can't feel the chill crawling across his titanium exoskeleton? What is the source of Earth's increasing barometric pressure, and can it be stopped before it's too late? Can a young peasant boy withstand the burning love of a fire elemental? There's no end to the depth of human feeling, so get creative and deliver touching story that we can't wait to get our hands on!

### Taste

Closely tied to smell and textural touch, taste stands apart in its unique ability to keep us alive. Poison is bitter. Rotten foods are sour. Nutrient-rich foods are salty or sweet. Protein-rich foods are savory. And, as we know, variety is the spice of life. So imagine the joy of a dragon that experiences a medium rare sheep for the first time. Or the fear of a hated dictator's taste-tester as he takes his first sip of tomato soup. Or the confusion of a celebrity food critic who wakes up with all her taste buds reversed. Or the suspicion of a virtual reality programmer when he notices the flavor of chicken in the "real world" is a little... off. Make your stories so tasty that they leave us salivating or so bitter that we cringe. Ideally, leave a good taste in our mouths so we come back for seconds.

### Hearing

March to the beat of your own eardrum in this theme that celebrates the sense of sound. From the deepest bass to the highest ultrasonic waves, we're bombarded by noise every second of the day. Raindrops on a tin roof can remind us where to find the murder weapon. An amplified dog whistle can drive us to madness without us ever knowing. The thrumming of cosmic frequencies can lead us to intelligent life among the stars. A near-forgotten chant can open magical doors to untold treasures. And a viral pop song can completely ruin our day. So whether these ideas ring true or strike a note of the impossible, don't miss the chance to let your story be heard!

### Sixth Sense

What if a detective could see sound or taste light? Give us some synesthesia, a perceptual phenomenon in which stimulation of one sense elicits a response from a different sense. Or how about proprioception? That's the sense responsible for letting you close your eyes and touch your finger to your nose. Imagine a ninja with superhuman proprioception! Go classic with extra-sensory perception. Do your characters see dead people, sense the past of objects when they touch them, or wake up with premonitions of alien invasions? Then there's the heightened senses of the animal kingdom—sensitivity to electricity, magnetism, x-rays, and sonar! Show us what life could be like beyond the five senses. We're only human, but we're capable of imagining so much more.

### Smell

Smell is closely tied to memory. And with our nose's ability smell over one trillion scents, it only makes sense (ha!) that the stories that could sprout from this outrageous olfactory organ are endless. Confused bloodhounds on the trail of a scent-specializing chemical engineer. A time traveler who follows the scent of honeysuckle to find the buried treasure. A young prankster who has to find his stink bomb before someone accidentally sets it off. A crowded pub with a thousand familiar smells, one of which may just be tied to an ancient curse. A giant who can't smell the blood of an Englishman because he's got a stuffy nose. Get your nose out of a book and don't be afraid to write a story that smells fishy or stinks to high heaven, as long as you take a deep breath and put your words where your nose is.

### Sight

Light in a relatively narrow window of wavelengths bounces off the back of our eyeball to create color and motion, foreground and background, orientation and shadow—the world as we see it, for better or worse. But sometimes, not all is as it seems. Optical illusions, sight-related disabilities, hallucinations, or even visions from beyond this reality can all alter our perception. A beloved painting is suddenly missing a key element that's always been there. A bat tries to raise money for Lasik eye surgery. An imploding star flares from blinding supernova to bewildering black hole. A beautiful Hawaiian wedding ceremony is watched through a sniper's scope. Can you see where we're going with this? Show us your talent by letting your vision become a reality.



There's a reason television and movies went from black and white to Technicolor™. The world around us is painted in a kaleidoscope of hues. And this season, we're going to wreak Havok with that color! Remember: This is a reference sheet only; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

### YELLOW

Sun and emojis. Brightness. Day. Yellow conveys happiness and sunshine. Hope—or perhaps cowardice. Write us a story with daffodils, a school pencil, canaries and chicks. It's also the color of warning signs, so take us on a thrilling New York taxi ride. Show us what happens when genetically modified corn, bananas, or lemons awaken to sentience. Feature a chest of gold, whether or not it's at the end of a rainbow. Or fill that chest with citrine and amber. Better yet, encase a *mystery* in that amber, or make the treasure part of a YELLOW dragon's hoard.

### RED

Energy, passion, danger. Flames, fire, blood. Red is a versatile color. Give us stories with sanguine magic or be-spelled rubies. Show us what happens when a man falls in love with a crimson-haired fairy. Make us bite our nails as your hero answers his red phone then races to prevent an explosion. Why explore the universe in a blue police box when you can do it in a speech-enabled, cherry-red firetruck? Discover the mysteries of an ancient volcano on the brink of eruption. In essence, write a story featuring RED that makes us *stop* what we're doing to read it.

### GREEN

Growth and renewal. Wealth and money. Jealousy. How about writing a story with leprechauns and magic shamrocks? Or introduce us to the chartreuse alien you found in your backyard. Launch a spaceship powered by emeralds. All the amphibian species on earth are going extinct—can your heroine discover why? Set your story among mossy rocks or verdant meadows. Whatever you decide, leave us GREEN with envy over your original tale.

### BLUE

Blue stands for calm, smart, and trustworthy. Give us your best stories of blueberries, bluebirds, and stolen sapphires. A magical pair of jeans that always fits perfectly. An enchanted U.S. mailbox that makes wishes come true—the good ones *and* the bad ones. Set your story on the BLUE planet Uranus. Bring us to a world where bluebells bloom eternally and azure oceans think for themselves.

### PURPLE

Luxury, mystery, royalty. We want stories about majestic dragons and heirs to the crown. Knights whose coats-of-arms include an eggplant upon a bed of beets. A missing Mother's Day bouquet of purple orchids. An alien species with amethyst eyes and periwinkle blood. A sect of killer monks who can only see in the ultraviolet. A planet whose plains are populated with violent violets. Better yet, take something that is normally another color—like the sky—and turn it PURPLE, then tell us what happens.

### ORANGE

At Havok, ORANGE is our favorite color! It blends together red and yellow to form a color that we associate with thankfulness and warmth. In branding, orange conveys creativity, youth, and enthusiasm. So, bring us story cornucopias filled with mayhem and magic, fireballs and sunsets, pumpkins and citrus. Entertain us with people who change color like leaves in the fall. Make us laugh when a carrot becomes self-aware and tries to take over a grocery store. Help a heroine defeat the zombie apocalypse that started with undead goldfish.

Classic character archetypes make for legendary stories! Throughout history, certain types of people show up again and again in the stories we tell. And sometimes, especially in speculative genres, they aren't technically... *human*, even though they fill an archetypal role (the Hero, the Jester, the Magician, the Lover, etc). Remember: This is a reference sheet only; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) for more details about each archetype and to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

### **RULER / REBEL**

Do you relate more to the king or the outlaw? Now is your chance to explore one or both archetypes. The mayor is seeking the source of a crime spree in a Mystery Monday puzzler. Or a maverick private investigator rejects the conclusions of the local police and finds the true culprit. Set the story a futuristic universe and you've got science fiction for Techno Tuesday. A rebel prankster (or stuffy headmaster) at a magic school could make for a Wacky Wednesday or Fantasy Friday tale. **Note:** your "ruler" can be any type of leader, good or bad. Your "rebel" (aka "outlaw") can be anyone bucking the established rules. Do these two characters clash or do they work together? You tell us!

### **HERO / MAGICIAN**

Heroes come in many shapes and sizes. They may perform a random act of kindness or a massive feat of self-sacrifice. Helping someone in need is heroic, whether it's a cup of cold water or an epic army arriving just in time. The Magician can be a shaman, healer, or wizard, often a trickster, and if you spin it as a technological whiz it could fit science fiction. Contrast Thor and Loki to spin the hero and magician in a mythological direction.

### **CREATOR / EXPLORER**

The creator can be anything from artist to architect, scientist to inventor. They love progress and forward thinking as well as the arts. The explorer loves freedom and individualism. To spin it as a mystery, have an engineer solving a problem or scientist facing a puzzle. A medieval blacksmith tale fits fantasy or put a mechanic on a spaceship in crisis for thriller or science fiction. An absent-minded inventor (or lost explorer) makes for wacky fun.

### **EVERYMAN / JESTER**

The everyman is also known as the orphan. They are looking for security and belonging in the face of crisis and trauma. What a great contrast with the jester, who seems to just want to have fun. But jesters can also use humor to heal or hide trauma. Pairing these two could provide an interesting contrast or comedic effect.

### **CAREGIVER / LOVER**

Publishing the month of Thanksgiving, this theme is about people who love and care for others. The lover is all about lasting, meaningful relationships and the fear of being alone. The caregiver is also known as the "mother" and is all about compassion and caring for others, sometimes to the point of martyrdom. Remember we're also looking for mystery lovers and comedic caregivers, and life-and-death thrillers (secret agent lovers, anyone?). Draconic fathers, shapeshifting playboys, and protective griffins are great fantasy material. For Techno Tuesday add a time travel twist, a long-distance relationship across the solar system, or a mothership.

### **INNOCENT / SAGE**

The sage can show up as a mentor, mystic, or guide, always pursuing growth based on truth. The innocent is all about happiness, sincerity and optimism. What a great theme for a theme publishing during the Christmas month. Only true innocence may touch the unicorn, they say. Bring a mystery before a wise oracle and see what happens. A vampire who's lived four thousand years has matured a bit—or has he? When naivete meets the real world it could be a near-death experience or something to laugh about for years to come.

## Supplemental Theme Notes

Below are some helpful links to resources about each of the twelve character archetypes we are featuring during our *Casting Call* season. We hope you will find this information useful in shaping your characters and crafting your plot! Check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) for information on submission deadlines for each theme.

**REMEMBER!** Our editors are looking for mysteries, action adventure thrillers, and comedic scenarios as well as science fiction and fantasy.

The twelve Casting Call archetypes (with alternate names to help you research ideas):

- Ruler (king, leader, captain)
- Rebel (outlaw, maverick)
- Hero (warrior, savior, rescuer)
- Magician (shaman, healer, visionary)
- Creator (artist, inventor, musician, dreamer, writer)
- Explorer (seeker, wanderer, pilgrim)
- Everyman (orphan, realist, citizen, good neighbor)
- Jester (fool, trickster)
- Caregiver (saint, altruist, parent, helper)
- Lover (spouse, intimate, friend)
- Innocent (child, romantic, dreamer, idealist)
- Sage (thinker, expert, mentor, philosopher, teacher)

## Online Resources

<https://www.helpingwritersbecomeauthors.com/category/characters/>

<http://charactertherapist.blogspot.com/search/label/Character%20Archetypes>

<https://arielhudnall.com/category/archetypes/>

<https://writersencyclopedia.com/character-archetypes-in-literature/>

<https://www.writerswrite.co.za/the-12-common-archetypes/>

<https://susannabarlow.com/tag/archetypes/>

The wild—and intimate—relationships humanity has with the living creatures of our world are as varied as the ones we have with each other. We have fought to keep from being eaten, we have nurtured and raised them as companions and partners in labor, we have driven them to extinction, we have stood in awe and studied them to increase our understanding of life. Explore the wonders, rewards, and tragedies of the animal kingdom this season. Remember: This is a reference sheet only; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](https://GoHavok.com) to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

### **PARTNERS & PREDATORS**

Explore the relationships we have with animals. From trusted mounts (horses, dragons) to comfortable lap cats, oxen laborers to rescue dogs, from livestock predators to pernicious garden pests. What emotions do animals provoke in these relationships? Show us!

### **SWIMMERS & SOARERS**

There's something about the sky that draws the human eye. Treat us to a closer look at flying creatures, their view from above and their eyrie homes. What if humans lived in the crags, riding the giant eagles? Don't forget the sea, though, broad and deep, mysterious and rich with resources. What if we lived on islands and had trained water creatures who retrieved treasures from the depths?

### **DISCOVERIES & EXTINCTIONS**

There's nothing like the thrill of discovery and the tragedy of permanent loss. What is hiding in the dense jungle or the dark depths of the sea? What is camouflaged in plain sight? Did your human colony drive a native species to extinction on accident? Tell us the tale of the last of the draco-griffins or how a mage brought the rainbow phoenix species back from a humble pile of ashes. What would a foodie pay to sample an exotic but forbidden meat? How far would someone go to poach—or preserve—an endangered species?

### **BEAUTIFUL & DANGEROUS**

It's time to push the limits of human emotion. We want to experience the awe of a herd that covers the earth for as far as the eye can see, the reverence of the birth of a precious baby. Make us dread the tall grass, tremble at a rustle in the bushes, gasp as we run from certain death. Poisonous spines, venom, or skin contact could cause a mysterious death. Rare markings could drive the price of a pet sky high or tempt a collector to thievery.

### **SYMBIOTES & PARASITES**

Some relationships with (or between) animals are very close, to the point their lives are intertwined. What if there were an animal that could regulate a human's failing heart or stabilize blood sugar levels? What if two creatures discovered on another planet had a hidden symbiotic relationship where reducing one population threatened the other? We're looking for creatures in symbiotic or parasitic relationship to humans or to other creatures. make it fascinating, make it rewarding, or make it terrible and horrific.

### **MACRO & MICRO**

Wow us with enormous creatures the size of cities that create an entire ecosystem around themselves. Astonish us with tiny creatures whose entire existence happens within 1 cubic foot—or within one human organ. Show us tiny mice, insects, or even bacteria. The world is full of small wonders. Or surprise us with a planet-sized creature inhabiting a distant nebulae and grazing on asteroids.

## WE NEED ALL FIVE MAJOR GENRES

Havok receives a lot of fantasy submissions. We love fantasy, but we also love science fiction. And mystery, thriller, and humor. In fact, because of the lower submission volume for mystery, thriller, and humor categories, your submission may have a better chance at publication if it fits those genres.

**TIP #1:** You can *still* write a fantasy or science fiction story while targeting mystery, thriller, or humor. Take your fantasy (or futuristic) character and setting and center your story around a mystery, a question, an unknown. Or make the story life-threatening and thrilling. Or give your characters a humorous personality or put them in a hilarious situation.

**TIP #2:** The Animal Kingdom theme offers many options suitable for all five genres. Here are some ideas to spark your imagination:

- *Mystery:* investigating an unknown creature; a mysterious attack or puzzling evidence of animal encroachment (“who is stealing lettuce from the garden?”); a scientist trying to figure out how a creature reproduces or where they hide their nests; a whodunit where the perpetrator used an animal accomplice; what animal to choose for a child’s birthday gift; a warrior choosing which long-term mount is the best animal to bond with.
- *Humor:* a mischievous creature causing havoc in someone’s life (a pet? a pest?); trying to train an animal with hilarious results; an animal mistakes the main character for a potential mate; a robotic animal companion with faulty (or poorly written) programming creates awkward situations for its owner; absurdity at an animal show.
- *Thriller:* put someone’s life at stake (could be the animal’s life, too); a critical countdown drives the action (must deliver the egg before it hatches; must find food before the baby animal dies; find the rare animal before the poachers do); survival of the fittest; animals in warfare, rescue, and law enforcement (note: animal survival preferred); journeying through or gathering supplies in an area inhabited by deadly predators or unpredictable and powerful herbivores.
- *Science Fiction & Fantasy:* aliens, hybrids, and cyborgs; both common animal legends and obscure cultural myths; innovative roles for animals in the future or in fantasy economies.

**TIP #3:** We need both real creatures and imaginary, historical and futuristic. Dive into details and wow us with animal trivia in your story.

**TIP #4:** Show animals in relation to humans or make animals the stars of your story. Sentient animal species or humanoid animal characters (a la “furries”) also acceptable. Talking animals (a la *Watership Down*) are fine, too.

## VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE—AND ANTHOLOGIES

We want to see all kinds of animals, both real and imaginary ones. Types of animals to consider:

- fish, undersea creatures
- birds, flying animals
- mammals
- amphibians
- reptiles
- invertebrates (insects, spiders, worms, etc)



You've heard of the Seven Deadly Sins. You've seen the four Greek virtues. And there are myriad other lists throughout history that define humanity's positive and negative character traits. But how often have you seen them applied to actual characters? We thought it would be a truly polarizing—and entertaining—experience to slap an entire season's worth of vices and virtues on those characters we love (and love to hate). So go ahead. Pull out the best and worst your creations have to offer and lay it on *thick*. But remember to **keep things PG-13**. After all, too much of a good thing is, well, a bad thing. Note: This is a reference sheet only; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

### **COWARDICE / COURAGE**

Here in America, July is the month we celebrate independence. But Freedom isn't for the faint of heart. It requires courage. This month, show us brave amateur sleuths bringing fearsome murderers to justice. Convince a cowardly service droid to stand up to a deadly battle bot. Heck, it's even the perfect opportunity for a timid toadstool to team up with a towering Tasmanian oak to overcome a horde of gluttonous goats. Not too gluttonous though. That's a different month.

### **LAZINESS / DILIGENCE**

As summer comes to an end, most of us are tempted to kick back and soak up the rest of the sun's rays before the days get shorter and the air gets colder. But this is no time for apathy! So, kick that sloth into high gear as he learns to appreciate the value of a hard day's work at the local zoo. Light a fire under that retired, overweight prizefighter by pitting him against a genetically enhanced assassin. Or just teach that twenty-something gamer the power of zeal by transporting him into the armor of his favorite video game knight and requiring that he practice daily to survive the boss battle and get home again.

### **PRIDE / HUMILITY**

Pride comes before the fall, but this fall we want you to show us the exciting side of humility. Throw cocky millionaires headfirst into the humble lives of blue-collar heroes. Pair a meek sidekick with a mighty superhero and see who really saves the day. And don't hesitate to feed a world-champion sumo wrestler a slice of humble pie. Again, not too much humble pie though. Gluttony isn't until November...

### **RAGE / PEACE**

While some parts of the world see the Halloween season as one filled with wrath and ruin, others see it as a time for patience and tranquility. Thankfully, in this month's theme, we're looking for both. Show us the redemptive spirit of a vengeful... well... spirit... when he takes haunting advice from a friendly ghost. Give a barbarian berserker a chance to stop and smell the roses. There may even be time to push peaceful monks over the edge by sending a vexing door-to-door salesman to their Himalayan monastery.

### **GLUTTONY / TEMPERANCE**

The best way for Americans to celebrate Thanksgiving Day is to stuff themselves like a turkey, right? Well, gluttony may be fun, but it also comes with consequences. Without self-control, even the most renowned war hero will drown himself in the bottle and never return to the battlefield. Even the most powerful world-eating celestial being will lose his appetite for destruction. And yes, you can now have all the gluttonous goats you want and feed that sumo wrestler all the humble pie that he can handle.

### **SELFISHNESS / SACRIFICE**

If there was ever a time to contrast greed and generosity, it would be during the Christmas season. It's during this time that the richest pirate on the high seas must learn the importance of a little charity. And a devout demon hunter must learn that it doesn't matter how many evil souls he captures if he's unwilling to lay down his own. Even an envious elf can learn the reason for the season when he gives Santa his last candy cane.

## WE NEED ALL FIVE MAJOR GENRES

Havok receives a lot of fantasy submissions. We love fantasy, but we also love science fiction. And mystery, thriller, and humor. In fact, because of the lower submission volume for mystery, thriller, and humor categories, your submission may have a better chance at publication if it fits those genres.

**TIP #1:** You can *still* write a fantasy or science fiction story while targeting mystery, thriller, or humor. Take your fantasy (or futuristic) character and setting and center your story around a mystery, a question, an unknown. Or make the situation life-threatening and thrilling. Or give your characters a humorous personality or put them in a hilarious situation.

**TIP #2:** The Vice & Virtue theme offers many options suitable for all five genres. Here are some ideas to spark your imagination:

- *Mystery:* Who is leaving generous anonymous gifts on the senior apartment balconies?
- *Science Fiction:* A hard-working asteroid miner wins the company lottery and quits her job only to discover sloth isn't all she thought it would be.
- *Humor:* A thrifty pennypincher goes on a spending spree to get back at a cheating soon-to-be-ex.
- *Thriller:* A brave superhero encounters something that reduces him to panic.
- *Fantasy:* A gold-loving dragon learns to share their hoard.

**TIP #3:** You don't need to include both the vice and the virtue in your story. Feel free to focus on *just* the vice, or *just* the virtue. However, contrasting the two can make a powerful story, so it's totally up to you!

**TIP #4:** Take your first idea and then brainstorm how to make it even *more* intense, *more* exaggerated, *more* emotionally impactful. Go for a visceral reaction in the reader, leave them with a lasting memory. (Just remember to keep it PG-13.)

**TIP #5:** We love straight up stories that show why a virtue is so noble and why vices are so destructive—but we also like stories that explore the complexities of the human condition. Illustrate the pitfalls of taking a virtue so far it becomes a vice (like working hard at the expense of precious family relationships). Show us the deceptive nature of some vices, how they hide behind a mask of virtue (like self-righteous generosity hiding a prideful heart).

Update your passports and put in your time off requests, because Havok is going on tour! North to South, East to West, we're celebrating every corner of this rock we all call home. And yes, we do mean *celebrating*! From geography to history to culture, we want you to craft unforgettable stories that immerse us in the awesomeness of, well, everywhere on Earth. And don't forget your sunscreen and your Chupacabra spray. You never know what'll happen when you step out your front door! Note: This is a reference sheet only; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

### THE AMERICAS

We're starting this world tour in the place many of you call home: America. It might have been the New World once, but North America, South America, and the Caribbean all have rich, diverse biomes and histories. Take us on a perilous dogsled race across the vast Yukon wilderness. Delve into forbidden caves beneath the Amazon River in pursuit of cursed gold. Harness Venezuela's Catatumbo lightning to power the future's greatest fighting mech. Or cause a bit of good-spirited Great Plains chaos with the trickster god Coyote.

### AFRICA

When it comes to unexplored possibility, the Mother Continent is unparalleled. Sign up for a slapstick scavenger hunt through Ghana's 30-acre open air Kejetia Market. Jump back 200,000 years to the dawn of humanity at the heart of Ethiopia. Set up a Great Pyramid bed and breakfast without angering the spirits... or the local law enforcement. And don't forget about that time the Nile Crocodile Coalition nearly wiped out the legendary hydrus population.

### EUROPE

A kraken, a vampire, and the Loch Ness Monster walk into an English pub. But that's just the beginning. Join Norway's prestigious penguin knighthood in the fight against the ever-present wolverine menace. Uncover the secrets behind Iceland's mysterious mosquito absence. But think very seriously before crossing the Celtic warrior queen Boudica.

### ASIA

Who's ready to brave the bandits along the Silk Road? Or start a wild food fight at the annual Monkey Buffet Festival in Thailand. Escape Cambodia's Ta Prohm temple at all costs. Smuggle the world's last remaining fugu fish into Tokyo's illegal cyborg district. And scour the Genghis Khan's Mongolian tomb in search of his only surviving portrait. Shoot 3,000 years into the future to see whether China or the New Korean Alliance won the race to colonize Barnard's Star.

### OCEANIA

One last stop on our whirlwind world tour. And in a region of 10,000 islands around Australia and New Zealand, you'll have no shortage of stories to tell. So, whether you're exploring the depths of fantastical seas or climbing the world's tallest island, be sure to give us everything Oceania has to offer. Join a Māori warrior as he faces off against the lord of darkness, Whiro. Protect the secret existence of the Otways Panther. Save an Antarctic outpost from its rogue artificial intelligence. Or hey, even challenge your over-confident BFF to befriend a Tasmanian devil.

### SKY'S THE LIMIT

Think of this as the World Tour's open mic night. Your story can be set in any previous theme from this season, or somewhere around our planet that doesn't fit one of those themes. Who really lives at the North Pole? Escape the fierce merfolk who herd seals through the Arctic ice floes. Show us what threatens the completion of humanity's first international space mall. Is the earth really hollow at the center? Let's find out! Whatever the case, your story should include something unique about our humble habitat in the vastness of the universe.

## WE NEED ALL FIVE MAJOR GENRES

The World Tour season lends itself to all our genres, but you may wonder how to combine *your* favored genre with these themes. The tips below should help. Also, we generally receive fewer submissions for the mystery, thriller, and humor categories, so your story may have a better chance at publication if it fits those genres.

Here are some genre-specific ideas to spark your imagination:

- *Mystery*: Take a famous mystery from history and give it a speculative twist. If it is unsolved, show us what *really* happened. If it was resolved, give us an alternate explanation that you find more satisfying. Find a lost traveler, or a traveler's lost valuables. Solve an archaeological mystery. Discover exactly which spices they use on that delicious roadside chicken sate or in that sublime chai tea.
- *Science Fiction*: Set a story in the theme location (the Americas, Asia, etc) but in the far future. Or use time travel to visit the distant past. Create a technological marvel that solves a current crisis or need. Fictionalize a modern news report about incidents surrounding early robot or AI implementation. What happens when we finally have hover cars or auto-driving vehicles?
- *Humor*: Traveling to different places provides endless potential for hilarious mistakes, faux pas, and translation errors. Moving to a new home can offer the same funny incidents, but with different stakes for offending the neighbors. Contrast is a great source of comedy, so try spotlighting the polar opposite reactions of two characters to the same situation.
- *Thriller*: Every continent has its dangers. Deadly storms, difficult geography, tribal unrest, crime, native predators, even poisonous vegetation. If you combine danger with a speculative twist, your story has a better chance of selection by more than one of our genre teams.
- *Fantasy*: Take any fantasy creature and imagine what would happen if it were hidden in a place and time of your choosing. It could be: the last tribe of centaurs living in a hidden canyon in America's pioneering west, sighting a unicorn in Central Park, capturing a dragon for the Emperor's zoo, dryads soothing the dying elephants and maintaining the graveyard of great bones.

**TIP #1:** Sometimes we get questions about our submission process. Here's a behind-the-scenes peek. Our submissions team routes your story to the genre team indicated on your submission form most of the time (Mystery Monday, Techno Tuesday, etc). If one genre team is low on submissions, stories that fit multiple genres may be shifted to fill that gap. Our teams coordinate together when needed to share stellar stories when one genre day is full and a story fits more than one genre. Bottom line: If your story can combine two genres, it may get an extra boost.

**TIP #2:** Sign up for our [author newsletter](#) to stay in the loop about opportunities for authors. We usually send a newsletter once a month, but there may be occasional announcements in addition to that schedule.

**TIP #3:** Follow [@havokauthornews](#) on Instagram for story prompts to spark ideas for our themes. We also post open and closed submission announcements and other author-centric news. On Facebook, follow the [Havok Publishing page](#) and join the [Flash Fiction Writers Guild](#) for the same info. Disclaimer: No guarantee of what info we'll post, or whether you'll see the posts when we do. Checking the Season Themes page on our website is the most reliable source for this info.

**TIP #4:** How to write a fantasy or science fiction story while targeting mystery, thriller, or humor: Take your fantasy (or futuristic) character and setting and center your story around a mystery, a question, an unknown. Or make the situation life-threatening and thrilling. Or give your characters a humorous personality or put them in a hilarious situation.

In an age bursting with “award winners” and “best sellers,” it’s easy to imagine all of our favorite stories being immortalized in leatherbound tomes for all future generations to enjoy. But in reality, very few tales stand the test of time. Most, no matter how impactful or relevant in the moment, eventually gather dust and fade quietly into forgotten history. But every so often, magic happens, and a certain combination of words conveys something so unforgettable that humanity has no choice but to preserve it. Maybe it’s a character so relatable that her struggles and victories span cultures and generations. Maybe it’s a place of immutable dreams—or nightmares. Maybe it’s a creature or an object that highlights a fundamental aspect of the human condition. Or maybe an event itself speaks to some aspect of our shared experience. Whatever it is, the rare stories that contain these transcendent elements deserve to be told and retold. And this season, Havok is giving *you* the chance to do just that! So, prepare to harness the most enduring elements throughout mankind’s literary tradition and create your own version of something truly LEGENDARY!

Note: This is a reference sheet for inspiration only; deadlines may change; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed. During this season, we will be acquiring stories for all six months during the five month submission period outlined below. Upon acceptance, you will be informed of the month of publication.

### LEGENDARY CREATURES

Curious beings might be the greatest example of legendary inspiration throughout the ages. Not always quite fact, and never *completely* fiction, these elusive creatures have motivated and plagued the most adventurous storytellers throughout history. And some of them have such striking impacts on our history that they refuse to be buried by skeptics. So, if you fancy yourself a cryptozoologist or a hard-hitting historian with a story to tell, this theme is for you. Send us that essay recounting your water-skiing adventure in the Loch Ness. Inspire us with your uncle’s spring break run-in with Bigfoot. Share your prophetic dream regarding the fate of Santa’s last reindeer. Or send us stolen government documents proving a secret war with kaiju. Whether you’re writing about unicorns, basilisks, phoenixes, Moby Dick, or even Dolly the sheep, be sure to capture our hearts by embodying the essence of these legendary creatures.

### LEGENDARY PEOPLE

History is a fickle mistress, and folklore often only reflects the culture in which it was created, but certain individuals seem so unique and unforgettable that nothing can knock them out of vogue. King Arthur will forever stand as a symbol of chivalry, justice, and rightful leadership. Amelia Earhart embodies the indomitable spirit of female courage and women’s equality in recent history while Valkyries fulfill that role in ancient legend. Noah is a classic symbol of unwavering piety in the face of human degeneracy, and Dorian Gray does a great job of living out that degeneracy. Wild Bill Hickok, Jack the Ripper, Cleopatra, Hercules, Genghis Khan, Sitting Bull, Frankenstein, William Wallace... the list is long and ripe with potential for your legendary retellings!

### LEGENDARY LOCATIONS

For now, we all share one rock—Earth. We fight for our native country, protect priceless habitats, search for lost cities, and burn cursed lands to the ground. And so, at the heart of every legend is an unforgettable destination, a place to find, preserve, or escape from. Imagine if Atlantis had never been lost. Contemplate the existence of a literal Fountain of Youth in a dying society. What if LIDAR discovered the Garden of Eden or El Dorado? What if aliens have been hiding Shangri-La from us all this time? Oahu’s Haiku stairs, Elisha’s tomb, Tír na nÓg, Axis mundi, Neverland, Wonderland, and maybe even Disney Land. Explore anywhere from the top of Mount Olympus to the bottom of the Marianas Trench—or beyond—and write us a story worthy of legend.

### LEGENDARY THINGS

Mine... my own... my... *things*! We all have them. We carry them around in our pockets and put them behind state-of-the-art security systems. We search our whole lives for the pot of gold at end of rainbow. We travel thousands of miles to see the Mona Lisa. We try with all our might to pull the sword from the stone or to lift Thor’s hammer. Long after we’re gone, sentient machines will still be looking for the philosopher’s stone, and until then—or at least until this month’s submission deadline— you have the opportunity to discover, use, abuse, and protect history’s most valuable objects. This is the ultimate show-and-tell. Don’t hold back!

### LEGENDARY EVENTS

People, places, things... they’re all just set pieces for stories of legend. And this month we’re celebrating those events that have shaped history and carved out our future. Recall the true details of the first moon landing to our great, great-grandchildren. Relive the Great Flood from any culture’s perspective. Dig through the burned library of Alexandria. Escape the fall of Constantinople or the destruction of Pompeii. Climb Jack’s beanstalk or the Tower of Babel. But whatever you do, don’t open Pandora’s Box. Because, well, you should have done that last month with the Legendary Things theme. So don’t miss your chance to tell us about that one time we should never forget.



## WE NEED ALL FIVE MAJOR GENRES

The Legendary season lends itself to all our genres, but you may wonder how to combine *your* favored genre with these themes. The tips below should help. Also, we generally receive fewer submissions for the mystery, thriller, and humor categories, so your story may have a better chance at publication if it fits those genres.

Here are some genre-specific ideas to spark your imagination:

- *Mystery*: Take a famous mystery from history or fiction and give it a speculative twist. If it is unsolved, show us what *really* happened. If it was resolved, give us an alternate explanation that you find more satisfying. Or base your story on a question that arises from a myth or legend: How did Loch Ness end up in that lake?
- *Science Fiction*: The scifi genre has its own legends (real or fictional). The day the earth stood still, the first moon landing, the discovery of electricity, faster than light travel, what happens when you enter a black hole, can robots be truly sentient, discovery of alien life, etc. Or you can write a science fiction take on a classic myth.
- *Humor*: Take a legendary story and mix it up in a hilarious way. Medusa hires an inventor to help her go on a date without turning everyone to stone. Robin Hood and Little John play a prank on Friar Tuck. Godzilla attacks Tokyo but turns out to be afraid of white rats. The world's strongest man is challenged to a baking competition and keeps breaking things.
- *Thriller*: Every legend has its life-threatening moments. Give us a countdown to doom, a thrilling chase, a suspenseful situation. Jack uses his latest invention to fly up the beanstalk and steal the giants' treasure, but his jetpack runs out of steam at the worst time. A pet sitter saves the five dogs she's out walking when King Kong goes on a rampage. If you combine danger with a speculative twist, your story has a better chance of selection by more than one of our genre teams.
- *Fantasy*: There are so many legendary things you can choose from, so pick your *favorite* and do it justice. What's the most dragonish dragon story you can imagine? What have all the other Beauty and the Beast tales missed? Who was the Lady of the Lake, and what was the *real* reason she chose Arthur?

**TIP #1:** Sometimes we get questions about our submission process. Here's a behind-the-scenes peek. Our submissions team routes your story to the genre team indicated on your submission form most of the time (Mystery Monday, Techno Tuesday, etc). If one genre team is low on submissions, stories that fit multiple genres may be shifted to fill that gap. Our teams coordinate together when needed to share stellar stories when one genre day is full and a story fits more than one genre. Bottom line: If your story can combine two genres, it may get an extra boost.

**TIP #2:** Sign up for our [author newsletter](#) to stay in the loop about opportunities for authors. We usually send a newsletter once a month, but there may be occasional announcements in addition to that schedule.

**TIP #3:** Follow [@havokauthornews](#) on Instagram for story prompts to spark ideas for our themes. We also post open and closed submission announcements and other author-centric news. On Facebook, follow the [Havok Publishing page](#) and join the [Flash Fiction Writers Guild](#) for the same info. Disclaimer: No guarantee of what info we'll post, or whether you'll see the posts when we do. Checking the Season Themes page on our website is the most reliable source for this info.

**TIP #4:** How to write a fantasy or science fiction story while targeting mystery, thriller, or humor: Take your fantasy (or futuristic) character and setting and center your story around a mystery, a question, an unknown. Or make the situation life-threatening and thrilling. Or give your characters a humorous personality or put them in a hilarious situation.

As writers, we spend most of our time in the background, watching and writing about everyone else's experiences and exploits. But all that is about to change. In season eleven, Havok wants to hear about you! A full year—winter, spring, summer, and fall—celebrating all of your autobiographical adventures and misadventures through all the seasons. Well... *mostly* autobiographical, that is. We are Havok, after all. So feel free to embellish the truth a little, or a lot (or flat-out make it up), as you craft your personal tales of winter wonder, spring storms, summer staycations, and fall frights. And, strictly speaking, it doesn't have to be an *auto*-biographical account, as long as you narrate the story with a strong personal voice. So, feel free to share your grandpa's claims about the time aliens abducted him from Mardi Gras. No judgment here.

**REMEMBER WHEN MONTHLY THEMES:** make your story reflect something about *that month of the year*. January winter storms and resolutions, February Valentine's day thrills (or disappointments), March sporting madness or springtime floods, April Easter celebrations or wildflower tours. You get the idea.

For reference, here's a [list of holidays on timeanddate.com](http://timeanddate.com). Just remember that we still need all five genres: mystery, science fiction, humor, thriller, and fantasy.

Note: This is a reference sheet for inspiration only; deadlines may change; check the Season Themes page on [GoHavok.com](http://GoHavok.com) to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

## WE NEED ALL FIVE MAJOR GENRES

The **Remember When** season lends itself to all our genres, but you may wonder how to combine *your* favored genre with these themes. The tips below should help. Also, we generally receive fewer submissions for the mystery, thriller, and humor categories, so your story may have a better chance at publication if it fits those genres.

Here are some genre-specific ideas to spark your imagination:

- *Mystery*: When we say "mystery", it doesn't have to be a forensic crime or classic Sherlockian one. It can be "who ate the last cookie?" It can also be *mysterious*, as in "Why is she acting that way?" or "What's in the dark forest where nobody wants to explore?"
- *Science Fiction*: It's all about setting. Put your "autobiographical" story in the future, in a time travel loop, from the perspective of an android or alien, or add technology that doesn't exist yet.
- *Humor*: Absurd situations, characters who don't get along forced into situations together, these can make great comedic stories. Read through our archives for inspiration about what we find funny.
- *Thriller*: Give us a countdown to doom, a thrilling chase, a suspenseful situation. Tell us about the time your worst story villain escaped off the page and stalked you. If you combine danger with a speculative twist, your story has a better chance of selection by more than one of our genre teams.
- *Fantasy*: Tell us about your secret fairy genetics, or about the summer when Grandma's broom closet became a portal, go for an adventure in the fantasy world you, as the author, created.



# SEASON 12: Multiversal

Our Season 12 flash fiction contest features a *character prompt*. We challenge you to take the character of the month — each designed by one of our stellar featured authors — and work it into your story in some way. And by “some way” we’re tapping into the theories of the fictional multiverse. Your interpretation of the character and how you write them to fit our five genres will be unique!

- 🌀 **Do not violate the core traits** listed in the character profile, but everything else is up for grabs. Take the character and make him/her your own.
- 🌀 **The character must *appear* in your story, but does not have to be the protagonist.** They could be a side character, an antagonist, or even just appear as a cameo. But keep in mind that your portrayal of the character does impact our selection of contest winners.
- 🌀 **We need contest submissions for all five Havok genres:** mystery, science fiction, humor, thriller, and fantasy. Ask yourself:
  - In what capacity could this character appear in a mystery story?
  - If they existed in a sci-fi or fantasy universe, what would that look like?
  - In what sort of thriller or suspense plot did they get caught up?
  - What’s the funniest scenario you can imagine for them?

Tip: Mystery, thriller, and humor categories tend to have less competition. Integrating those elements into a science fiction or fantasy story will enable your story to be considered for acceptance by more than one genre team.

Always check our [Season Themes page](#) for the latest info!



STORIES PUBLISH  
IN JAN 2025

# KERRY NIETZ'S JOE ENZA

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Middle-aged; about 5'9" tall; a little paunchy, but by no means overweight. Dark hair that is long around the sides, but bald on top. (Think the comedian Gallagher.) Typically smiles from the side of his mouth.

## PERSONALITY / TRAITS:

Neutral good. Excellent problem solver and workaholic. Gets in, gets the job done, and gets out. Honorable, structured, non-aggressive, inquisitive, and driven, but also unintrusive and sly.

## CORE VALUES:

Solve the problem, fix the thing, get it done. Here's your bill. Extra charge for stupid people. Has a surprisingly positive attitude despite countless personal setbacks.

## DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:

To be seen and appreciated. Also, could use a competent assistant. He's plagued by slackers, bumbler, and malcontents. Interesting aside: nearly half of his problems are caused by mice or birds.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS:

Self-image and random ailments. (Once got poison ivy in his lungs.)

## WORST HABIT:

Tends to add "and stuff" to the end of sentences. Can go long on storytelling, if prompted. His tales, while interesting, can stretch on for hours.



Joe Enza character copyright © 2024 Kerry Nietz. Kerry is the award-winning author of *A Star Curiously Singing* and other works of speculative fiction. Visit him at [nietz.com](http://nietz.com). This character released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12.



**NADINE  
BRANDES'**

**STORIES PUBLISH  
IN FEB 2025**

# KYTT WINDTHORN



## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

Young adult with wavy brown hair past her shoulders. Wears simple round glasses that seem too big for her face, but accentuate the fact her eyes are, subtly, two different colors (one blue and one green.) She tends to smile with lips closed because she's self-conscious about the gap in her front teeth.

## **PERSONALITY / TRAITS:**

Thief with a good heart. She likes to get what she wants and talks herself into thinking it's a need. She also steals for the sake of others—think medicine for the sick, money for the poor, food for the hungry.... She likes to think of herself as a female Robin Hood, but her own thievery for personal gain (usually books, weapons, and sturdy clothing that travels well) makes her half-villain even to the good guys. But it's okay because she doesn't kill. She has morals, thank you very much, and she's not a murderer. She just likes nice things and nice people, okay?

## **CORE VALUES:**

Honor. She may be a thief, but she has honor in how she does it. And she respects others, especially if they have manners.

## **DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:**

To earn approval. From the people, from family, from whomever is in her circles. Usually once people get to know her, they tend to back off. No matter how much she tries to please people they don't stick around. What is she doing wrong? Why can't they see that she's doing her best?

## **GREATEST WEAKNESS:**

People-pleasing. Some people refuse to see the good in her and she often goes to great—and dangerous—lengths to prove herself.

## **WORST HABIT:**

Squeamish. Can't stand the sight of blood or vomit or injuries. She also can't kill things. Not even bugs. Not even a spider. Will absolutely refuse to wade through the sewers even if doing so will help her escape from prison. This tends to incapacitate her ability to do what's necessary even in dire situations.

Kytt Windthorn character copyright ©2024 Nadine Brandes. Nadine is the Carol-award winning author of *Wishtress*, *Fawkes*, *Romanov*, and more. Website: [nadinebrandes.com](http://nadinebrandes.com). This character released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12.



STORIES PUBLISH  
IN MAR 2025

BEN WOLF'S

# SPARK SPAULDING

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Lean but muscular, average height. Light-brown hair with a little curl in the front, green eyes. Always wears clothes that make him stand out rather than blend in.

## PERSONALITY / TRAITS:

Chaotic neutral, but leaning toward good. He's a roguish fellow who thinks he's hot stuff, and he prides himself on being able to talk, weasel, schmooze, or fight (if it comes to it) his way out of anything. He's pretty selfish in the sense that he'll do just about anything to save his own skin, and he's REALLY good at doing exactly that.

## CORE VALUES:

Nothing is more important to Spark than freedom. He wants to live unhindered, without anyone telling him how to do it.

## DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:

Spark wants to earn enough of a living (however he can) so he can buy his way out of whatever oppressive system he happens to find himself within.

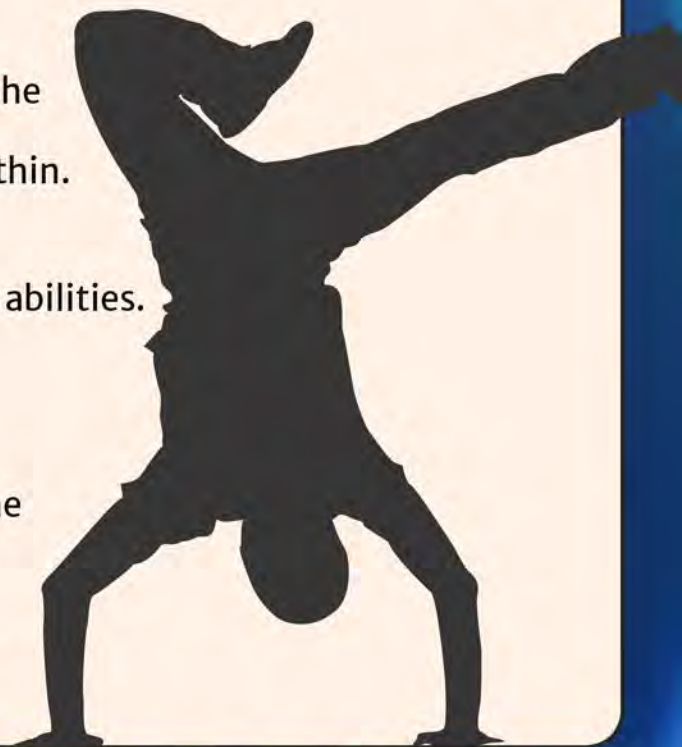
## GREATEST WEAKNESS:

Very self-absorbed and overconfident in his own abilities. Also, he hates pickles.

## WORST HABIT:

Physically, he chews his fingernails to the point where they sometimes bleed. Personality-wise, he likes to interrupt other people, and generally he thinks his voice is the most important.

**SEE NEXT PAGE FOR SPARK'S  
BACKSTORY...**



Spark Spaulding character copyright ©2024 Ben Wolf. Ben has written north of ten books, including an award-winning children's book and an award-winning novel. Website: [benwolf.com](http://benwolf.com). This character [released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12.](#)



STORIES PUBLISH  
IN MAR 2025

BEN WOLF'S

# SPARK SPAULDING

## BACKSTORY

Spark Spaulding has ventured far and wide, throughout history, time, space, and every possible dimension. It's all thanks to an ancient curse that has him trapped in a sort of karmic perpetual motion—he literally can't stay in any one place more than a little while, or the curse might catch up to him.

You might find him locked in a medieval fantasy dungeon, but he's already worked up a scheme to buy or sneak his way out.

Maybe he's found himself tangled up with steampunk pirates (again), and he's got to help them with one last heist before they cut him loose.

Or maybe he's adrift in a derelict spacecraft floating on solar winds toward an unknown destination. He thinks he's alone on the ship... until he realizes that couldn't be farther from the truth.

What tense and mischievous mayhem will Spark Spaulding get up to? Only you, the heroic HAVOK authors, can decide.

Will he be the lovable rogue we all know he can be? Or is he in scoundrel-mode, desperate and willing to do whatever it takes to survive?

**THE CHOICE IS YOURS.**

Spark Spaulding character copyright ©2024 Ben Wolf. Ben has written north of ten books, including an award-winning children's book and an award-winning novel. Website: [benwolf.com](http://benwolf.com). This character [released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12.](#)



# JILL WILLIAMSON'S ZAIVAR 'ZAI' WITZ

(sounds like "SIGHvar", like bar)

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Zaivar stands at just over 5'5", his short build compact but sturdy. His dark, slightly wavy hair falls just past his ears, framing a face that defies easy categorization. His skin is a warm, olive tone, somewhere between golden and bronze, lending him an almost sun-kissed glow regardless of the season. His brown eyes are deep, observant, with a glimmer of mischief, revealing little of his inner thoughts but much of his quick wit. He's not exactly handsome, nor is he considered ugly. He's rather plain, a look which he uses to his advantage.

What makes Zai truly unique is his chameleon-like appearance. With a rich heritage—one quarter Kinsman, one quarter Otherling, one quarter Chuman, and one quarter Poroo—his features carry a subtle amalgamation of his diverse ancestry. His dark hair and eyes along with his warm skin tone could easily be attributed to any number of ethnic backgrounds. His heritage will be hard for people to guess, no matter what world he wanders into.

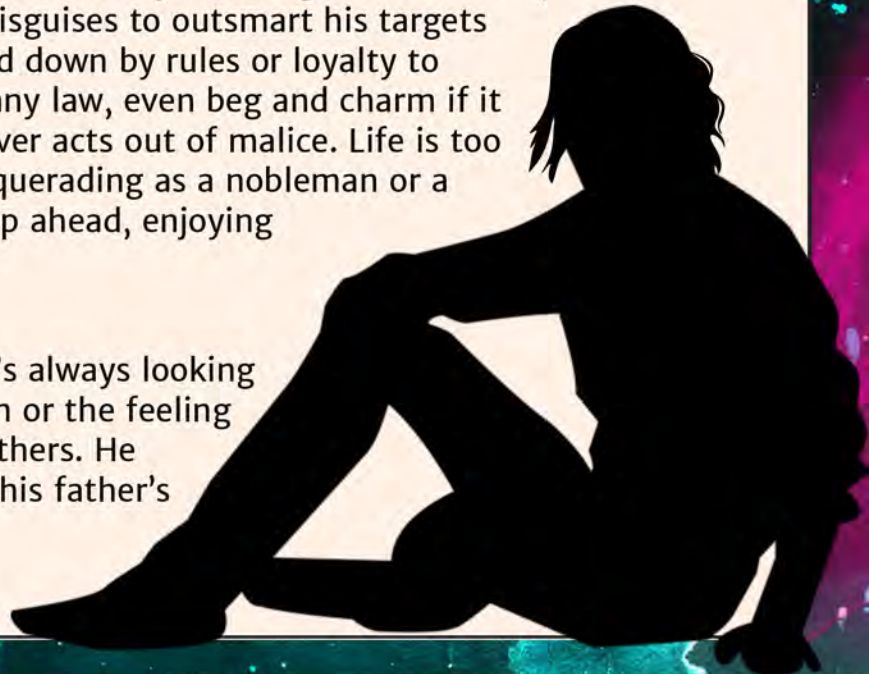
## PERSONALITY / TRAITS:

Zai is a free-spirit who thrives on unpredictability and adventure. He's a self-employed warrant chaser, which is the Er'Retian version of a bounty hunter. (Some people call them huntsmen.) Due to his diminutive stature, he takes an unorthodox approach to warrant chasing. His Enneagram 7 personality has him always chasing the next thrill, using his quick wit, charm, and flair for disguises to outsmart his targets rather than overpower them. He's not tied down by rules or loyalty to anyone but himself. He'll bend or break any law, even beg and charm if it gets him closer to his goal, though he never acts out of malice. Life is too short to hold grudges. Whether he's masquerading as a nobleman or a humble merchant, Zai is always a one step ahead, enjoying the game as much as the catch.

## CORE VALUES:

Zai's core values are freedom and joy. He's always looking for the next adventure. He hates boredom or the feeling of being trapped. He loves outsmarting others. He likes his independence and often refuses his father's gifts of money.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)





# JILL WILLIAMSON'S ZAIVAR 'ZAI' WITZ

...CONTINUED...

## DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:

To be content, satisfied, and self-sufficient. To not need to depend on others.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS:

Being trapped or imprisoned. He's also claustrophobic. And he hates pain—is kind of a baby when sick or wounded.

## WORST HABIT:

Zai hates negative emotions. He avoids conflict and commitment and has many superficial relationships. He also has an odd quirk of keeping a memento from each of his arrests, which has resulted in a bizarre collection of random objects that clutter his living space.

## MAGIC:

Zaivar possesses a minor ability to bloodvoice, which is a form of telepathy. He uses this magic to read the thoughts of those he's tracking, which helps him capture his targets more easily. Although it's frowned upon to invade others' thoughts without revealing oneself, Zai has kept his ability a secret—even from his family. His magic isn't particularly strong. He cannot bloodvoice from a distance and must be within eyesight of anyone he wishes to spy on. He allows everyone to believe that his success as a warrant chaser relies solely on his wit, but in reality, his magic is a significant asset to his achievements.

## BACKSTORY:

Zaivar is from the medieval fantasy world of Er'Rets, specifically the capital city of Armonguard. His father is a diplomat, traveling around the nation on behalf of Prince Oren Hadar. Zaivar has one brother named Rynley (Ryn), who was recently promoted to chamberlain to Prince Oren. Ryn offered to get Zai a job in the prince's household, but Zai finds the idea of such day-to-day tasks mundane.

Growing up, Zai craved adventure and excitement but also wanted to make a difference. Becoming a warrant chaser seemed like the perfect way to escape the dullness of everyday life while still doing something meaningful. For him, the constant action, problem-solving, and unpredictability of the job is an antidote to the boredom of his childhood. As a way to poke fun at his serious brother, each time he makes an arrest, he says something like, "This one's for Ryn."



STORIES PUBLISH  
IN MAY 2025

# REBECCA P. MINOR'S PHEZZNIBBET MAPLEBARK

## "PHEZZ" - PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

2' 7" tall, red-coated, fluffy-tailed creature who is just shy of middle-aged for his kind. (Picture an oversized red squirrel who operates mostly on his hind legs, unless extreme speed is called for.) He typically wears a soft leather vest of light tan buckskin and a leather and steel helmet with holes for his ears to poke through. He's never seen without a bandolier of knives carved from antler around his chest, but most of the time also carries a bow and quiver of arrows. He has large, expressive brown eyes. A dark scar runs from his right brow across his snout. His smile comes rarely, but conveys heartwarming depth, laced with sorrow, when he offers it.

## PERSONALITY / TRAITS:

Lawful good, bearing in mind the law of his kind is "Survive, first and foremost." Phezz is a protector at heart. Belonging to the diminutive race of the Xintixa, he's spent his whole life far too acquainted with the heartless side of the world's larger races. He champions the underdog, but never gives his loyalty blindly. He's seen his share of adventure and has developed a seasoned skepticism of young firebrands who want to change the world. Yet at the same time, he can't help but get sucked into their enthusiasm, having once been one of them.

## CORE VALUES:

Stability and respect. Anyone who underestimates him learns quickly a Xintixa's speed isn't to be trifled with, especially after he finds Phezz clinging to his back with a knife at his throat. He'll stand between forces bent on destruction and the common folk of his kind without hesitation.

## DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:

To set aside derring-do for a quiet life running a treetop inn, if only the threats and dangers of life would stop plaguing him all the darn time.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS:

Bullying. He gets himself into scrapes that weren't technically his problem far too often because he can't just walk away. Also cheese.

## WORST HABIT:

Making morally complicated situations difficult with his rigidity.

Phezznibbet Maplebark character copyright ©2024 Rebecca P. Minor. Becky is the co-founder of the Realm Makers writing conference and author of the Windrider Saga and Risen Age Archives books series. Website: [rebeccapminor.com](https://rebeccapminor.com). This character [released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12](#).



STORIES PUBLISH  
IN JUNE 2025

# KARA SWANSON'S ETHEL GRIEVES

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

She's just five feet tall and a little curvy, face sprinkled with freckles and long chestnut hair always braided and tossed over a shoulder. Her green eyes flicker a little gray, hidden behind large, half-inch thick glasses. She's always dressed in dark colors and business attire—a pinstripe vest, a pair of dark slacks, and a heavy coat thrown over the ensemble. She's the type you'd expect to see behind the secretary desk, or with her nose in a book. Walks with a limp, thanks to one leg being longer than the other.

## PERSONALITY / TRAITS:

Because of her limp she's easily missed, easily pitied, easily picked on—and easily underestimated. Ethel rarely makes full eye contact but is always taking in her surroundings with an instinct for uncovering a good mystery. She doesn't speak much, but when she does, there's a rasp to her voice and a very methodical way of placing her words. She may keep her head down around those larger and seemingly more important than her—but when she lifts those determined eyes to pierce you, Ethel is able to bring down even the tallest man with just a few cutting words. Because this small woman who no one sees as a threat has a way of finding just the right threads to unravel even the most hardened criminal or politician. After all, she's a Grieves.

## CORE VALUES:

She's immensely loyal to her family, particularly her parents. Her three older siblings sometimes speak down to her or ignore her—but underneath, they are also a little terrified of her, and glad that Ethel's attention is trained to aid their criminal dynasty, not to take their places. Ethel believes in logic and strategy. In the psychological rather than getting her hands dirty. Why simply cut a man down when you can make him pay by dismantling everything he's ever cared for?

She thrives on the chase, the mystery. She's become addicted to the feeling of being overlooked and underestimated, only to flip the tables on those who mistreat her. Everyone is a pawn to be maneuvered—even her family, although they are the pawns she is trying to maneuver to end out on top. Even her ragdoll cat, Fresco, can be used to further a ploy on occasion. She's lonely, if she stops to think about it, but doesn't trust others—or herself—enough to ever be that vulnerable. But she does have friends. Very specific friends. People she chose who would never have the chance to betray her. Those she's helped off the streets who owe her. Those who can at least give her a good game of chess when she wants to sit in the park and look busy while staking out her next prey.

**(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)**

Ethel Grieves character copyright ©2025 Kara Swanson. Kara writes stories about fairy tales and fiery souls. She spent her childhood a little like a Lost Girl, running barefoot through lush green jungles which inspired her award-winning Peter Pan retellings, *Dust* and *Shadow*. Website: [karaswanson.com](https://karaswanson.com). This character [released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12](#).



STORIES PUBLISH  
IN JUNE 2025

# KARA SWANSON'S ETHEL GRIEVES

...CONTINUED...

## BACKSTORY:

Ethel Grieves was born into a longstanding, wealthy crime family, practically a princess of the underbelly. But due to her limp and her bottle-thick glasses, she's often overlooked. She could have spent her life on the outside looking in — but her parents saw her when others didn't. Her mother gave her a notepad that could transcribe Ethel's thoughts with magical ink (or is it cursed? Or is it highly advanced technology?), allowing her to take in the world and file it away for future reference. Ethel's father gave her a special shoe — one that helped with her limp, but also came equipped with various gadgets she could cycle through—for example, if she tapped the toe just so, a knife would appear. The heel? A small device perfect for picking locks. And more...

And so, to the outside world, Ethel seemed like the youngest of a family of power-hungry crime lords, forgotten and left in the corner. But to that family, Ethel was far more: a super spy. An ace up their sleeve. And when the occasion called for it—Ethel could hunt down those threatening their dynasty, slinking into guarded rooms with a flip of a braid and a sad little thu-thump of her limp. Then, she would reveal the information she'd found on them—the dirt, the thread that if tugged just right, could unravel even the most bulletproof politician or dirty cop. Once she'd gotten the leverage she needed, Ethel could discard any witnesses with a quick slash of her boot knife. Because to the outside world, Ethel was the black sheep—but to the Grieves family, she was their queen, quietly crafting a reign of terror from the shadows.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS:

Ethel is afraid of being the weak link. Of being caught in an inescapable situation where her family would have to cut ties, leaving her utterly alone. But she's made some peace with that possibility. After all, she'd have no qualms with slipping some poison into a siblings' meal if it meant protecting the family's secrets. It's just a matter of time until someone slips up, and she'll stay three steps ahead to ensure that it's not her.

## DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:

To feel in control and to feel valuable. After being looked down upon her whole life, Ethel craves that feeling of power too much to ever truly let it go. She's never met someone who didn't befriend her just to use her. She may secretly wish for someone who would choose her, even if she offers them nothing in return, even if she doesn't deserve it. But that kind of sacrificial love is just a fairytale. But maybe one that could prompt her, even once, to choose something other than the feeling of power—to choose to protect someone else. Someone like her, only not as cynical. Someone who still believes in redemption. Or maybe that's just a fairytale too...

Ethel Grieves character copyright ©2025 Kara Swanson. Kara writes stories about fairy tales and fiery souls. She spent her childhood a little like a Lost Girl, running barefoot through lush green jungles which inspired her award-winning Peter Pan retellings, *Dust* and *Shadow*. Website: [karaswanson.com](https://karaswanson.com). This character [released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12](#).



# GILLIAN BRONTE ADAMS' MIRIEL TAKKENRIDGE

## BACKSTORY:

She's old enough to be your grandmother, but she was born to save the world, and she did —only, it turned out, it wasn't her world she was meant to save. Disappearing from her home in her teens, she was missing for five years. During those five years she somehow experienced twenty years away from everything and everyone she'd grown up with. Did she go through a portal? Get caught in a virtual reality simulation? Land on an alien planet while a nearby event horizon warped time? That's up to you, Havok authors. Although she's been "home" now for many years since that amazing experience, the draw to help, to fix, to save never quite goes away. After all, what's a Chosen One to do... Retire?

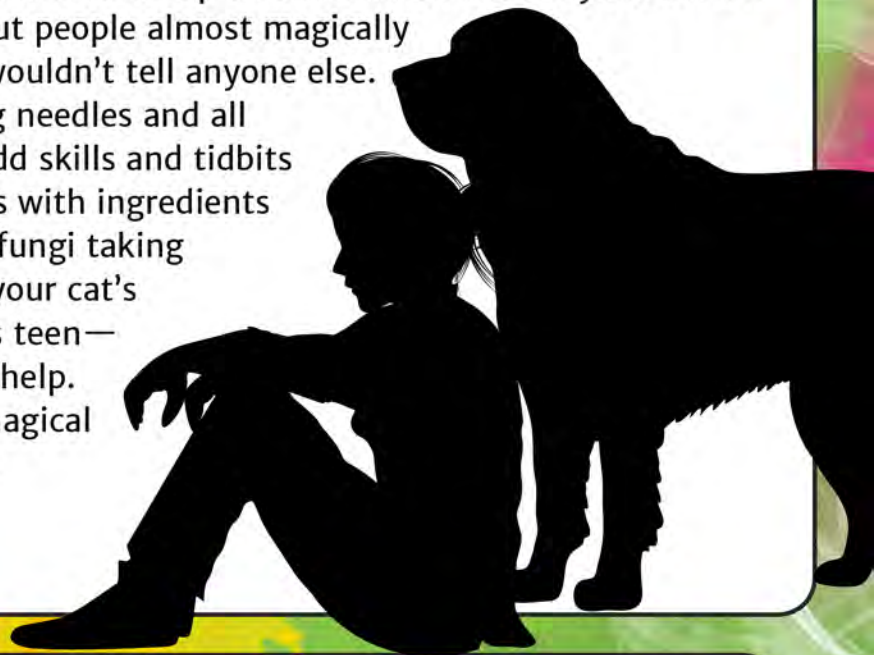
## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

She has wispy white hair that gives a sort of gauzy, almost ethereal aura. She is short, but sturdy. Used to rolling up her sleeves and getting things done. She moves with an energy that makes you wonder if she's secretly been training for marathons all her life, or possibly has some fae blood in her. Her ears do look a tad pointy, but that could just be the way her curly hair parts around them. The lines wreathing her gray eyes make her whole face light up when she smiles. She's rarely seen without her enormous Saint Bernard, Matteo.

## PERSONALITY / TRAITS:

A born helper, she's warm and friendly. She'll strike up a conversation with anyone even if they clearly don't want to talk at first. But people almost magically find themselves telling her things they wouldn't tell anyone else. She's also madly skilled with her knitting needles and all things sharp, and she's a repository of odd skills and tidbits of knowledge. Whipping up tasty goodies with ingredients you've never heard of, identifying weird fungi taking over your vegetable garden, diagnosing your cat's off appetite, helping with your rebellious teen—if you've got a problem, Mirel is sure to help. Got a bigger problem, particularly of a magical or inexplicable nature? Mirel might just show up at your door!

**(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)**



Mirel Takkenridge character copyright ©2025 Gillian Bronte Adams. Gillian writes epic fantasy novels that ring with the echoes of eternity, including the award-winning *Of Fire and Ash* and *The Songkeeper Chronicles*. Website: [gillianbronteadams.com](http://gillianbronteadams.com). This character [released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12](#).



# GILLIAN BRONTE ADAMS' MIRIEL TAKKENRIDGE

## DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:

Being needed gives her a sense of day-to-day purpose, but she secretly hopes that she might do enough to earn the opportunity to return to the world that became her second home.

## CORE VALUES:

She was born to help, and she will, no matter the cost to herself. She sees putting others first as the highest ideal, and finds herself baffled, even irritated, when others don't do the same.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS:

She cannot simply walk away from a problem. Her compulsion to help borders on obsession, and she struggles with taking no for an answer. She can get into all kinds of trouble when she sees a possible solution and insists on getting involved.

## WORST HABIT:

She never believes you if you say you're not hungry. If you go to her house, you can expect to be fed. A lot. Fortunately, her dog likes to park himself beside guests, and she's good at looking the other way when food happens to fall into his mouth. But only if she likes you. If she doesn't, you'll find yourself with five more courses to eat before leaving.

## ANIMAL COMPANION:



Matteo sulks if he's not permitted to follow Miriel everywhere. He's a giant, five-year-old, mahogany-and-white Saint Bernard with soulful eyes. Miriel adopted him as a seven months old puppy that outgrew his home. In the winter, he's always sporting some kind of knitted wear made by Miriel—a scarf, doggie sweater, etc.

He's very protective of Miriel, but he's enormous and intimidating enough that he rarely needs to be overtly aggressive. He's a giant, bounding, drooling goofball who can reduce any toy to shreds in a matter of minutes, except for stuffed animals, which he treats with exceptional care, as if they were alive.

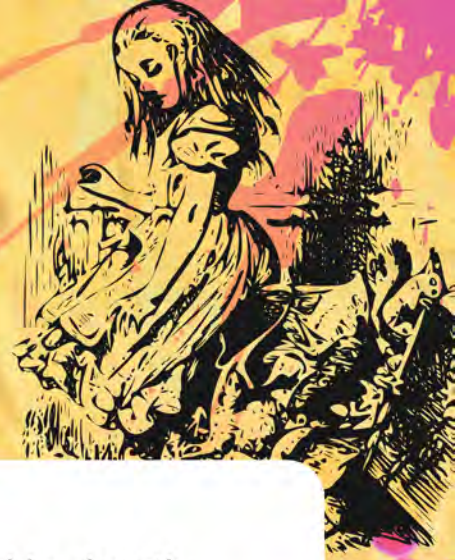
He especially loves kittens.



STORIES PUBLISH IN  
AUG 2025

# ALICE

BY LEWIS CARROLL



## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Alice is a lovely young girl with striking blue eyes, fair skin, and shoulder-length blonde hair pulled back with a black ribbon tied in a bow. She often wears a white pinafore apron over her short-sleeved blue Victorian dress, which makes for a great parachute in a pinch. She also wears a white petticoat with matching tights and knee-length pantalets, as well as black Mary Jane shoes.

## PERSONALITY / TRAITS:

First and foremost, Alice is a daydreamer. She's curious and imaginative, and she loves reading, but books with pictures are always best. Raised as a proper lady, she maintains her graceful Victorian demeanor and pedantic sensibilities in even the most chaotic and ridiculous situations. This makes her resistant to the unexplainable circumstances that her adventurous spirit gets her into, leaving her looking for the quickest way home before teatime.

## CORE VALUES:

Despite the absurdity of rigid social norms, Alice's active imagination drives her to discover the unknown, both within herself and throughout the multiverse. She's not afraid challenging experiences, but she expects reciprocal respect and level-headedness from others.

## DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:

Desire to understand the universe beyond daily expectations in order to better prepare herself for the challenges of coming adulthood.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS:

Unwavering curiosity despite her Victorian sensibilities, often recklessly leading to precarious situations.

## BACKSTORY:

Alice's adventures in Wonderland are too numerous and ridiculous to be detailed here, but they include run-ins with a tardy rabbit, a mentally unstable hat maker, an occasionally invisible cat, a hedonistic caterpillar, and a terrifying queen, to name a few.



**Remember!** When using public domain characters, be careful not to include any details or characters from later works (retellings, movies, TV shows, etc) that may have come later and still be under copyright. Use the [original source material only](#) as your inspiration.



STORIES PUBLISH  
IN SEPTEMBER

J.M. ALLISON'S

# HARMONY STAR

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Long straight blonde hair, blue eyes, age 23, tall willowy figure, wears a lot of orange, teal, and olive green. Loves nature and has a fierce desire to save all animals (no matter the kind—after all, dragons need love too).

## PERSONALITY / TRAITS:

She is compassionate and outgoing. Often trusts her instincts and feelings over logic and reason. Always up to try a new activity. Can't say no to helping those in need.

## CORE VALUES:

Will fight passionately to rescue any animal or aspect of nature. Believes sing-alongs and music will make everything better.

## DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:

She dreams of one day opening a nature preserve and animal rehabilitation center.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS:

Any creature with sad eyes, or a musical performance.

## WORST HABIT:

Suffers from short term memory loss. She will often forget what she is doing part way through the task, or forget what she just said and thus repeats herself. She is also known for randomly pulling out her ukulele and bursting into song.

Harmony Star character copyright © 2025 J.M. Allison. J.M. finds daily adventure in raising four rambunctious younglings, teaching theatre and dance, reading, writing, and choreographing lightsaber fights as a member of StarWars SaberGuild.

This character released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12.



# DORIAN GRAY

## BY OSCAR WILDE

### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Dorian is a remarkably handsome and perpetually youthful young man looking to be in his early twenties with flawless features, often compared to a statue made of ivory and rose petals. He has “finely curved scarlet lips,” “frank blue eyes,” and “crisp golden hair,” giving him a soft, angelic appearance... on the outside.

### PERSONALITY / TRAITS:

Charming and pure with a simple nature—at least at the beginning. However, these child-like traits of uninhibited openness often lead him to be volatile, selfish, deceitful, manipulative, and even cruel at times in his pursuit of hedonistic fulfilment.

### CORE VALUES:

Dorian values beauty for beauty's sake. Whether admiring a rose in a garden or himself in a painting, he is ever searching for self-gratification through the physical form.

### DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:

Dorian desires to remain forever young and forever happy. He does have a moral compass, but his quest for pleasure and beauty comes first.

### GREATEST WEAKNESS:

Vanity and self-superiority. And also his painting. If it were destroyed, all Dorian's past sins would come back on him, destroying his beauty and his immortality.

### BACKSTORY:

Dorian's story begins in Victorian England, where his friend Basil Hallward paints a portrait of him to capture his exquisite beauty. A young and wealthy libertine, after seeing the painting Dorian becomes obsessed with his own beauty to the point of selling his soul so his portrait will age instead of him. He uses his newfound immortality to explore all that London has to offer. However, he quickly notices his portrait taking on the physical manifestations of each of his sensual transgressions. Soon, the painting is so hideous that he has to hide it to avoid seeing its decay. Some say that Dorian became so desperate to hide the truth of his painting that he murdered his best friend Basil and stabbed his portrait with the same knife, putting an end to his own eternal life. However, immortality is a hard thing to give up, and there's a lot to enjoy in the farthest reaches of the multiverse.

**Remember!** When using public domain characters, be careful not to include any details or characters from later works (retellings, movies, TV shows, etc) that may have come later and still be under copyright. Use the original source material only as your inspiration.





**OLIVIA  
GRATEHOUSE'S**

**STORIES PUBLISH  
IN NOV 2025**

# **LUKE JAMES (THERRUS)**

## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

He looks like a man in his mid-twenties, who's just a little taller and more muscular than average. He's completely bald and devoid of hair on any part of his body, with bright golden eyes that are just a little larger than normal, and six fingers on each hand.

At least, that's what his human disguise looks like. Because Luke James is actually an alien in disguise, whose real name is Therrus.

Therrus is a Civaran, a green-skinned, reptilian race of humanoids. They are the only species in the galaxy who have the closest shape and build to humans, so they are frequently employed to take on human disguises in order to study Earth.

Therrus' disguise is based on holographic technology, which projects the image of human skin over his Civaran skin. For some reason, they can't get the hair right, so instead he wears a baseball cap to hide his bald head, and thick rectangular glasses to hide his eyes and lack of eyebrows.

## **PERSONALITY / TRAITS:**

A dreamer and an explorer, Therrus is a bright and eager young man who loves to learn and is VERY enthusiastic about his undercover job on earth. He's positive to the point of being unrealistic, but his optimism is infectious to those around him.

He's part of the Earthan Initiative, a Galactic Union-sanctioned group of scientists and researchers whose primary function is to study pre-space flight worlds that have not yet "joined society."

Therrus has studied earth culture for ten years, but has only been on earth for two months, so he's still pretty naive and hasn't fully learned how to blend in. But he LOVES earth culture and is obsessed with earth scifi media, particularly Star Wars and Star Trek (hence the human disguise name, Luke James).

## **CORE VALUES:**

Chaotic good, Therrus values knowledge above all else. There's only so much one can learn from a spaceship hovering above a planet, so he's excited to learn anything and everything he can about earth culture. He refuses to harm a "primitive" human, even if his life is in danger. Which it would never be, because he absolutely follows the primary rule of Do Not Engage With the Primitive Humans. Absolutely.

**SEE NEXT PAGE...**

Luke James (aka Therrus) character copyright ©2025 Olivia Gratehouse. Olivia is a homeschool art teacher with too many stories to tell. When she isn't writing, Olivia can be found gaming or creating art with too much color. This character [released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12.](#)



**OLIVIA  
GRATEHOUSE'S**

**STORIES PUBLISH  
IN NOV 2025**

# **LUKE JAMES (THERRUS)**

**...CONTINUED...**

## **DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:**

He hopes the earth people will hurry up and figure out space travel so they can join the Galactic Union, and he can live out his life on earth as a Civaran ambassador. He dreams of one day exchanging knowledge with humans and sharing more about his own culture.

## **GREATEST WEAKNESS:**

Caffeine is a deadly poison to Civarans, which is annoying since humans are so obsessed with it. He's optimistic to a fault and to the point that other people think he's naive and even disingenuous. Despite his orders to Not Engage with Primitive Humans, he LOVES humans and always goes out of his way to try to talk to and learn from them.

## **WORST HABIT:**

He's supposed to regularly check in with the Earthan Initiative and give reports, but will go weeks on end in radio silence. Extremely messy, his living area is in a constant state of disarray. Loves to try human food but forgets to take his immunity pills and ends up sick for days due to the bacteria. Regularly messes up human words or makes references to scifi movies and shows. (For example: instead of goodbye, he might say "May the force be with you" or "live long and prosper.")

## **BACKSTORY:**

While the Earthan Initiative mostly sticks to space travel, their technology is portal based and can sometimes "take a wrong turn" so to speak. Therrus mainly travels via a "portal hopper," which is a device on his wrist, made to look like a watch. As such, there's been more than one occasion where a portal hop has landed him 500 years in the past, or into an alternate reality. Fortunately, the homing signal in his portal hopper always allows him to get back to the right timeline. Well, almost always.



Luke James (aka Therrus) character copyright ©2025 Olivia Gratehouse. Olivia is a homeschool art teacher with too many stories to tell. When she isn't writing, Olivia can be found gaming or creating art with too much color. This character [released with permission to create derivative works for Havok Season 12.](#)



# EBENEZER SCROOGE

BY  
CHARLES  
DICKENS

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Hard features: a pointed nose, sharp cheekbones, wiry chin. Walks with an old man's stiffened gait. Red eyes red, thin lips often blue with cold. Grating voice. White, frosty hair rimming his head, prominent eyebrows, some facial hair about the chin (you choose the style).

## PERSONALITY / TRAITS:

Selfish. A greedy, miserly, joyless workaholic. Unmoved by external appeals. Clever strategist when it comes to making money. Cruel in his complete lack of care for the well-being of others.

## CORE VALUES:

Take care of yourself, because nobody else is going to do it.

## DEEPEST DESIRE / MOTIVATION:

To build and keep enough wealth to avoid poverty and suffering. But secretly, so secretly that he doesn't admit it even to himself, he is desperately lonely and afraid that it's too late for that to ever change.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS:

Blinded by fear of falling into poverty. Unable to see what his obsession is costing him—and others.

## BACKSTORY:

As a child, Scrooge wanted to enjoy Christmas as much as anyone. But he was neglected, left at boarding school during the holidays. After suffering from the hardships of poverty, he decided money would solve all his problems. This single-minded pursuit of wealth as protection against suffering caused all other considerations to fall aside. The obsession destroyed his relationship with his fiancée, Belle. He had no compassion on his employees when they were in need. Even his deceased business partner, Jacob Marley, warns Scrooge from beyond the dead about the ultimate end of the path he has chosen.

**Remember!** When using public domain characters, be careful not to include any details or characters from later works (retellings, movies, TV shows, etc) that may have come later and still be under copyright. Use the [original source material only](#) as your inspiration.