

ABATWA

**Rome never looks where she treads. Always her heavy hooves fall
On our stomachs, our hearts or our heads; And Rome never heeds when we bawl.
We are the Little Folk—we! Too little to love or to hate.
Leave us alone and you'll see, How we can drag down the State!**

A Pict Song – Rudyard Kipling

Quote: *"From where did you first see me?"*

The Abatwa are a fascinating study among the Emere. Originally there were folk-stories told about a Pygmy tribe that Shared their name. Or maybe there were stories told about the Abatwa and the Pygmies followed suit. The results of either were a small fae creature, no larger than an ant, with peaceful ways, a penchant for protecting pregnant mothers, and the ability to curse the arrogant and bless the humble.

It is even rumored that a woman in the seventh month of pregnancy who sees an Abatwa male knows that she will give birth to a boy. Perhaps the smallest and shyest of the African Fae, the Abatwa try their best to maintain an air of invisibility. Enough so that it said that only children under four years old, wizards, or pregnant women can truly see them.

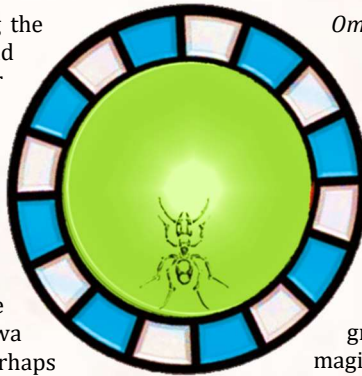
Able to change their size to roughly the size of an ant, the Abatwa often form colonies alongside the same creatures: Even going as far as to use ants and termites as mounts. This way they can traverse the African veldts and jungles, all hidden under cover of grass. With little fear of being discovered, they can go about their lives unseen, but always close-at-hand. Dozens of Abatwa can live in a small mound no bigger than an ant-hill, so it is better not to speak ill words of anyone, faerie, mortal, or otherwise.

Appearance: Abatwa are short in all Miens, rarely over a meter and a ½. In Bopha Umomo (Mortal Mien) they have warm-dark-skin, bright eyes, and small shy smiles. In The Bilongo Umomo (Fae Mien Fae mien they grow even shorter, anywhere between a few decimeters and 1/3rd of a meter. Their skin takes on a reddish cast, and their eyes get large and glow jet-black or red. Many cultivate unique hairstyles, and color their tresses with pigments to create antennae-like locks. They disdain much clothing and use it only in polite company.

Lifestyle: Abatwa do well among the Emere. There are always mortals that need some help, and the Abatwa are there, hidden in small places, to provide those services. There are also other Akuko who need to be reminded that they aren't infallible, and the Abatwa are there to keep them humble.

Ingane Abatwa are little darlings. They are painfully shy and relish their chores because they know it helps their households.

Asendle Abatwa still prefer staying close to home but understand that the world is a big place. They often take on roles as messengers to the other Emere (African Fae).



Omdala Abatwa are time-worn and worldly, and rarely leave the comfort of the Anthills or termite mounds. They are an experienced voice of reason among the whole of the African Fae community.

Glamour Ways: Abatwa garner Bilingo by aiding those mortals who feel lost and helpless. Helping them from afar, and often convincing said mortals that they aren't as helpless as they originally thought – the gratitude received is what refuels an Abatwa's magics.

Unleashing: Cantrips cast by the Abatwa are unusually hard to notice at first. There is a slight tickling across the skin, as if some very small bug may be crawling across it. There may also be a slight warm breeze, and a slightly spicy smell in the air.

Affinity: Actor

Birthrights

Ant-Sized (*Intuthwane ubukhulu*): An Abatwa is unusually short, but can go even shorter, shrinking away until no bigger than an ant. There are whole communities of Abatwa living side-by-side with Ants and termites. An Abatwa must spend a point of Bilingo to perform this outside of a free-hold, but any ant-hills act as a free-hold.

Blessings/ Curse (*Busisa /Qalekisa*) With the expenditure of one Bilingo, an Abatwa may bless a good-hearted person (usually a pregnant mother, or a good-father) with good fortune. The so blessed can ignore any botches for the next 2 hours. On the flip-side of the coin however, someone who has behaved in an ill-seeming manner (or failed to answer the greeting with the customary protocol) is at the mercy of the Abatwa's wrath. With the expenditure of one Bilingo, an Abatwa may jinx that person, and every two on a dice roll counts as a one, increasing the chances of a botch.

Frailites

Greetings (*Yokubingelela*): While not a vengeful or violent kith (see the Peaceful ways Frailty above), there are still a few things that leave a bad taste in the Abatwa's mouth. As the Abatwa are very sensitive about their size, they have developed a protocol to test newcomers. Upon meeting an Abatwa for the first time, they will ask *"From where did you first see me?"* To this you must respond *"from that mountain far off in the*

distance" or *"from miles out to sea"*, which is in effect a nice way of saying that they are large. If someone were to fail this test, then the Abatwa must roll their willpower difficulty 8 to avoid laying a curse.

Peaceful Ways (Enokuthula): The Abatwa are a peaceful Akuko and strive to live peaceably with not only the other Emere, but mortals and animals as well. They will never seek dominance over others and maintain a coinheritance with the ants that they live with. Any attempts to be greedy, or selfish is anathema to the Abatwa, and is met with strict punishment by the Omdala of the Akuko. Even the rare Unseelie among them still police their own and practice a form of generosity.

Babacar beckons you to down to his level, under some dry grass, as he shares his thoughts.

Aziza: Honorable but fleeting. Their ways aren't the same as ours, and for that I am glad.

Ekwu: There was but one party I ever attended and it was fared by an Ekwu. Despite so many people, we never ran out of food nor drink. The Ekwu are magic.

Gnolls: I remember the *Edi Amosu*, you would be wise to remember as well.

Kimbasi: Beautiful. Dangerous ... but beautiful

Ogo: No. Never again.

Nieterkob: Yes you guard the mortals, but the homes of the little things are far more important.

Negoogungogumbar: Bloody Giants who can't be bothered to look down. That is why they tumble so easily.

Nyar-Viruze: The lion Queens are our fiercest warriors, our wisest judges, and our most beautiful artists. The Emere are lucky.

Tokoloshe: Monsters, but naïve ones.

Yombi: The only party that ever I attended was held by a generous one. It was a good night.

Aithu: Filthy liars with no respect for anything.

Eshu: Descendants of Gods? Maybe, but that is no excuse for their bravado and arrogance.

Oba: Too high on their throne to look down and see us. They should be careful where they step.

