

# The NERO® Dwarven Race Package©

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## BIRTH FROM THE EARTH

Long ago when the world was new and life did not flourish on its face the force of life within the world realized for the first time that it was alone. To stop its loneliness and ease the ache within the world's heart, the earth itself brought forth life from its own spirit.

At first the life brought forth were the plants. Trees grew and flowers bloomed and the air was filled with the sweetness of honeysuckle and the perfume of nectar. But still the world was lonely; for though the plants were beautiful and smelled sweet, they took no action and once rooted stayed. So the earth brought forth animals upon its face. And the animals lived upon the world and flit about and went about all those things that animals do. But still the world was lonely; for though the animals moved and acted and truly were companions to the earth, they had no spark of intelligence within them and were poor company to the world.

The earth again reached within its spirit and brought forth life, this time with a keen mind and created to dwell with that which had already been created. So the earth brought forth the Elves who dwelt amid the plants and trees and lived with the animals which the earth had brought forth and tried to exist in harmony with all that was. But still the earth was lonely; for though the Elves lived with the rest of the world's beings and were truly sentient, they were flighty and unconcerned with the passage of time or the songs of the earth.

The earth thought on the problem and this time brought forth another race from its spirit. So the earth brought forth the Humans who did not live the life of the Elves and would need to concern themselves with the world that was their mother. But still the earth was lonely; for though the Humans were not the vacuous creatures that were the Elves, they did not try to live with their mother the earth but did try to change the world around them and take all as their dominion.

Now did the earth grieve and weep. In its desire for companionship the world had brought forth much life to its surface and still none would converse with her nor listen to her songs.

The place of birth was the problem, thought the earth. These creatures of mine were brought forth upon the surface of my form without ever knowing the mother who bore them. How can a child love its mother if he did not know that she carried him within her womb.

So the earth brought forth the Dwarves within her form, in the caverns deep, and she gave to them all that they needed to live from the substance of her body. She sang to them in the depth of the earth and they listened and they spoke back to her and did call her mother. Thus the earth was at last content for her child treated her with the love she needed.

No longer was the earth lonely.

## Commonly Asked Questions And Answers About Dwarves

### Why do all Dwarves have beards?

Well, there are many Dwarven tales to explain that. But why we have beards is not nearly as important as what the beards mean.

### What do the beards mean?

They are our symbol of honor. I would sooner go naked through the world exposing myself for all to see than go with a naked face. If I lost my beard I would hide my head in shame, unable to carry my head high and look others in the eye.

### How long do Dwarves live?

The oldest Dwarf I've ever heard of was 450, but most Dwarves get themselves killed well before they hit 300. The histories tell of Dwarves that lived into their 600's but I've never met nor even heard of one in recent memory.

### Why are Dwarven arms and armor so good?

Dwarven craftsmanship surpasses that of the other races for many reasons. First we are dedicated to creating only the best work possible, we would not be able to look our friends in the eye if our work was the slightest bit imperfect. Second, we are patient with our work, we refused to be rushed in the creation of a masterpiece. Third we are not afraid to toss out a work that is not right, profit is meaningless without the honor of perfection. And lastly our race is of the earth, she is our mother even as she spawns the metals and stones we craft. This relationship inherently makes us better craftsmen than other races could ever hope to be.

### Tell me about Dwarven ale?

Well son, all Dwarves brew, and our brews are the finest in all the lands. Making beer is a passion to our people, not just something to do to make some money or get drunk. We brew many types of ale and beer each with its own flavor and potency. However when you talk of Dwarven ale, you talk about those ales brewed with the Dorka Mushrooms. If you were to eat those mushrooms, you would no doubt begin to see some very unpleasant things, but when brewed in the ale, the effect is cut and a truly wonderful and potent drink is formed.

### Are there any Dwarven women?

Of course there are Dwarven women, where do you think Dwarven children come from? The bloody stork? The reason that you may never have seen a Dwarven woman is because in general there are fewer women among the Dwarves than among the Humans. Our women are cared for and don't often venture outside the caverns. But don't mistake them for

pampered lambs, they are every bit the equal of the men and they will take great steps to prove it to any who doubt that fact.

**There don't seem to be very many Dwarves in the world, how many are there?**

Well, that's a good question, our people are so scattered and so many Kingdoms and nations have fallen over the millennia of our existence that we're not really sure how many Dwarves live in Tyrra. Dwarvenholm is our largest city in the area though and to know how many are there, you'd have to visit there.

**Can anyone visit the great underground cities of the Dwarves?**

Many of the cities allow visitors, but none of them will allow outsiders to wander freely through the city. Most of the cities have open areas where anyone can go, trade centers are usually built there. Often Dwarven crafts are displayed there for all to see the wonders our people can create. But most of the city is off limits to those outside the race. Some have tried to enter the areas which are off limits, those who are persistent usually find their way to the nearest earth circle.

**Why do Dwarves hate Trolls so much?**

The trolls are an honor less race. We lived at peace with them once. We allied ourselves with them once. We were betrayed at the worst possible point. Had the trolls maintained the alliance, we would have defeated our enemies but the trolls chose to turn on us and join our enemies for power. This caused the death of King Roganak and this insult and betrayal we can never forgive.

**Rumor has it Dwarven politics are very confused, who rules the Dwarves?**

In Dwarvenholm, the capitol of the Dwarven Kingdom of Validor, King Kelanor IV is the titular ruler. However the guilds hold more power in Dwarvenholm than the King does. Also, Dwarvenholm is in theory subservient to Ashbury and thus to Evendarr. However our rule is still independent, they do not know of our numbers or our power. Their rule is similar to their rule over the Amani, they know better than to try and use their "power".

## Language

The Dwarves, as a mercantile race, have been dealing with other races for so long that they are accustomed to using only the common tongue. Dwarvish as a language has almost ceased to exist. There are two languages that are considered Dwarven, Tradescrawl and Tokai.

Tradescrawl is low Dwarvish, the vocabulary is identical to common but the written form uses the characters of Tokai. Most purists consider Tradescrawl a bastardization of the true Dwarvish language, Tradescrawl has no spoken form. The written language is phonetic in nature and thus almost any other language could be transcribed in Tradescrawl.

Tokai is high Dwarvish and has both a written and spoken form. The characters and phonetics of the written language are identical to the characters of Tradescrawl but the vocabulary is completely different. The spoken form is unrelated to the common tongue, the grammar is unique to Tokai.

Very few Dwarves today understand Tokai, and only some can even read Tradescrawl, though most can puzzle it out using translation notes. Unfortunately for the Dwarves there are a great number of old records and books scattered about the land which are written in Tokai, these can be anything from everyday records, stories, or contracts to lost knowledge waiting to again emerge. Tokai is only written on stone or metal and the runes are written in a spiraling pattern.

The actual runes are very rare knowledge and must be sought out if one is to learn them.

## The Beard

Perhaps the most important thing to a Dwarf is his beard. The beard begins to grow as the Dwarf hits puberty, male Dwarves always grow full beards whereas female Dwarves grow either full beards or small goatees. Once the beard begins to grow, it fills in at an astonishing rate when compared to Humans facial hair. Often adolescents of 15 will have a beard of up to six inches long. Older Dwarves can have beards that literally go past their toes. The beard can be of any color, but dwarfs are a hardy long lived race and white beards will be seen only on the very old.

The beard symbolizes many things to the Dwarven people. At its deepest meaning, the beard represents the roots of a Dwarf, their connection to the earth that nurtures them. This is a concept that goes back to some of the oldest legends of the birth of the race. The beard is also a symbol of the Dwarf's honor, it represents him as a functioning adult in society. Dwarves' beards are said to be fireproof. they are not. However, many Dwarves coat their beards with a resin made from oils found deep under the earth. This resin was first used by the smith's when at work on the forge, it protects the hair from the flame.

Often when Dwarves greet each other it is accompanied by long pulls upon the others beard. Often lovers will give each other clippings from their beards as keepsakes. This is one of the few times when cutting a beard is considered acceptable in most Dwarven societies. Another such time is when Dwarves marry, often the rings exchanged by the Dwarves will have a small braid of beard hair from both of the couple sandwiched between the layers of metal and gems. This is a symbol of the melding of the two spirits into one. Another acceptable time to cut the beard is when a particularly close friend or relative has died, many Dwarves hold with the tradition of cutting off a lock of their beard and burning it so that its ashes may be buried in the earth with their deceased companion.

Many expressions in Dwarven society are related to the beard, particularly insults:

*By Chaos' Beard* - an expression of disbelief;

*May Your Beard Grow Long* - a wish for long life;

*You Are A Beardless Boy* - you don't know what you're talking about;

*You Have Earned The White In Your Beard* - respect for a wise elder;

*Your Beard Is Like The Pelt Of A Diseased Animal* - an insult likely to lead to a fight to the death;

*I Will Pluck Out Your Beard One Hair At A Time* - a statement of challenge, often used between members of feuding clans;

*At Least You Could Use Your Beard To Sop Up The Spilled Ale* - a statement of the uselessness of an individual;

*Your Face Is Bare* - you should be ashamed or embarrassed.

The length of ones beard is considered a reflection on themselves. A long full beard indicates meticulous care over a long period of time. Where as a disheveled or short beard indicates that one does not care for themselves or their work. There are many styles which are considered acceptable among the Dwarves. Plain straight beards are of course always good. Braids in the beard indicate a certain willingness to put in the extra time for appearance, clan chief almost always wear their beard in braids. No Dwarves would consider shaving their beard off entirely and very few would even trim it short. Dwarves always have some facial hair, though many trim off the mustache leaving just the beard.

In many clans, crimes are punishable by debarment. Depending on the severity of the crime inches could be trimmed off or the entire beard shaved. For particularly bad crimes, the tribunal may elect to use scaring. The scaring is a Formal Magic Spells debarment after which the entire chin and cheek area is burned with hot irons. This causes tremendous scar tissue to develop and prevents most if not all beard growth (note: the scaring can only occur with the approval of plot, you cannot bring a PC into game having gone through this punishment without prior approval from the plot committee. It requires more intense makeup than the beard does and is not recommended.). Those who go through the scaring are covered across their face with hideous burns, which are then forced to heal naturally so as not to be restored to normal by magic. These Dwarves are hideously marked as dishonored outcasts among all the clans and nations of the Dwarves. If the scaring is particularly complete no facial hair at all will grow, often however, those who perform the scaring allow small areas to go unburned so as to allow tiny patches of hair to form on the face making the Dwarves look all the more ridiculous to their brethren.

A Dwarf whose beard has been removed will feel intense shame. Often he will cover his face or not go out in public at all. He will at all costs avoid being seen by other Dwarves until the beard grows back, at least to a significant degree. Luckily since the rate of beard growth is so fast a Dwarf can go from clean shaven to six inches of facial hair within two months. Nothing has been found that can actually do this. Often when the beard is removed, the Dwarf will experience an intense reaction, at times a berserk rage has been triggered, at other times a catatonic state. Many Dwarves claim that cutting their beard hair cause actual physical pain and that their beard has actual sensations as if it were like any other part of their body.

## Dwarven Honor

Central to the Dwarven persona is their concept of honor. "Better to die a thousand deaths than to stain my honor," is a very common Dwarven saying. Honor to a Dwarf is not simply the actions of an individual, but the actions of all those connected to an individual. The Dwarf follow the concept of the unbroken line of honor. Honor flows from one generation to the next along this unbroken line, you honor your ancestors as they honored you, their descendant. You honor your master as he honors you his student. You honor your fellow clansmen as they honor you their brother. Ones honor is not only determined by what they do, but what those who relate to them do. If you create a great work of art it not only brings you honor, but it brings your family honor, and your clan, and your master, and your students. Honor has two definitions among the Dwarves: the first is proper action, striving to accomplish your goals, the nobility of ones acts, the appropriateness of ones actions, the distinction between that which is right and that which is wrong, the adherence to actions and principles considered right; the second is the regard others hold you in, the respect granted due to the proper actions you follow.

The honor of the Dwarf is not made up of small technicalities of behavior, it is a broad sweeping concept wherein proper action is honorable and improper action is not. What is proper is defined by your superiors, your family, your clan, and your society. For example, some masters may consider it appropriate for their apprentices to refer to them by their first name whereas others may consider this inappropriate, it is obeying the wishes of one's master that is honorable by referring to him as he wishes. It would be dishonorable to refer to the second master by his first name, not because using the first name of a superior is dishonorable, but because it goes against his express wishes. If it is uncertain how to act in a given situation, the more formal action is never wrong. If someone wishes to deal in a more open manner, they will let you know. A Dwarf's entire reputation within a community will be based on their honor. All things contribute to it, and no matter how great a craftsman one is, or how mighty a warrior, or how successful a businessman, without honor a Dwarf is nothing.

Once a Dwarf gives his word, nothing can force him to break it. A Dwarf who pledges himself to a cause is unswerving in his dedication to it, one who pledges himself to a liege lord will be that lord's truest follower. The Dwarven concept of honor goes well beyond dedication and keeping one's word. The Dwarves see themselves as points in a line of honor which stretches back to the beginning of their race, and forward till its' end. The breaking of honor in Dwarven society is often referred to as breaking the line.

The honor of a Dwarf is independent of that Dwarf's place in society. All must have honor and follow the honorable path, be they the High King himself, or the lowest street sweeper, every Dwarf is expected to follow the path of honor.

When an offense against honor is committed by a Dwarf the repercussions can follow the whole family, or even the entire clan. Such is the case of Braddock Bouldersoulder and the Bouldersoulder Clan. Braddock was a Dwarf who fell asleep at his post guarding the entrance to Trollsgate. The Trolls attacked and due to his negligence Trollsgate fell. To this day the entire Bouldersoulder clan is looked down upon for that stain on their honor.

Legend has it that the Violacium, the horror creations of the Baracoor from deep in the underearth, were at one time Dwarves, doomed to spend the rest of eternity as half alive things due to their loss of honor in life.

If honor is lost, a Dwarf will do anything to get it back. The quest for restoration of honor is called the Dwarven Redemption and is an important part of Dwarven tradition. It often takes many years to recover the honor lost in the instant of a bad decision. In order to be looked upon with the respect of others, no less than full honor must be restored.

The regaining of honor always takes time. Once lost it takes great dedication to regain. Someone who has lied must tell the truth for a very long time before they will again be trusted. A verbal or non-physical breaking of the honor, such as speaking out against someone falsely, or conspiring to ruin someone's business for spite, is harder to repair than a physical wound to the honor such as striking a clan member without due cause. When one speaks out against someone, it is offending their honor as well as your own. As such you must recompense them by repairing the stain to their honor. If you falsely accused someone of making inferior weapons, by word and deed you must show those who believed you that you were wrong. This can be accomplished by telling those you spoke to that you were wrong or lied, and further by using the weapons forged by the one you wronged to show those who may have heard the rumor that it was false. In some cases a public admission of the wrongness of your statements may be required. If your good behavior continues for a long enough time, the stain to your honor will be erased.

If the offense is physical in nature, it may be a shorter time to repair the damage, but it will be just as difficult to bear. Often a physical offense requires a physical redemption. The individual may go through a public whipping, or perhaps a public fight with the one who was offended or their champion. If you were to strike out at your master in the heat of the moment, he may have you publicly whipped for an hour to show your penance, he may assign you days of backbreaking physical labor. In the end, the offended one will decide when your honor is returned.

If the one harmed is dead as a result, penance usually requires a voluntary death in recompense. If they have died the final death. Their family patriarch or clan grudgebearer will deal with the redemption.

When an offense is against a family, the individuals involved and the family patriarch will deal with the redemption.

When the offense is against a clan, the individuals involved, the clan grudgebearer, and possibly the clan chief (in extreme cases) will deal with the redemption. Often the Dwarves own clan will push for him to make the redemption in order to prevent a clan war.

When the offense is against the society, the council or ruling body of the society, be it clan based, monarch, or guild run will decide upon the redemption. Often in these cases redemption is not an option, it takes a great act to cause loss of honor to the society as a whole. These are often cataclysmic.

If the offense is against the race as a whole, such as turning traitor to the trolls or betraying the secrets of the race, redemption is almost never possible. In some rare cases if the offense was deemed accidental, redemption may be offered, however these cases usually involve the individuals final death.

If redemption is offered but refused or begun and abandoned, the Dwarf is considered dead to the race. He is considered to be an animate corpse with no true spirit and thus should be treated as any undead and destroyed. No one who does not consider his honor worth keeping is considered part of the race.

Loss of honor can have many effects. At the base, it affects how others perceive and deal with the dishonored. An honor less Dwarf is unwanted and unloved. No one will deal with them or theirs. However this does not apply to one who is undergoing the redemption, while they are still a social misfit, the other members of society will deal with them to allow them the chance to redeem their lost honor. The society can give punishments which may or may not be part of the redemption. These can include stoning, whipping, imprisonment, debeardment, fines, death, the scaring, exile, public service, and others. A more complete look at crime and punishment can be found in appendix A.

## Dwarven Dedication, Craft, and Perfection

Dwarven honor will allow no less than absolute dedication, the two traits are completely intertwined. The dedication of the Dwarven people is universal, a Dwarf will generally consider himself incomplete without something to dedicate his life. Often this takes the form of a craft, which is one of the reasons Dwarves are known for their smithing and building skills. There are however, many other things which a Dwarf may dedicate himself to besides craftsmanship. Some Dwarves dedicate themselves to a cause, such as the destruction of the trolls. The cause can be almost anything though, and Dwarves who follow a cause are often seen adventuring as a way to support and press this cause. Some Dwarves have been known to dedicate themselves to another, whether another Dwarf or a member of one of the other races. These Dwarves are bodyguard who will throw their lives in the path of danger, sworn men who will follow their leader anywhere, or occasionally knights in service to a great lord. One of the most common things to see a Dwarf in the outside world dedicate themselves toward is profit.

Dwarves are particularly skilled at crafting, especially when that crafting is using the products of the earth. No other race can match the skill of the Dwarves at crafting weapons or armor. The smith is a honored figure in Dwarven society, the Smith's guild is one of the most powerful and respected of the guilds. The Dwarves also excel at working stone and gems. The underground Dwarven cities are a sight of wonder to behold.

The source of these skills is twofold: one, Dwarves seem to have some sort of inherent connection with the earth and therefore have greater skill at using the products of the earth; two, Dwarves are perfectionists and will not sell a product with even the slightest flaw.

To the Dwarves it is a matter of honor to create the most perfect example of their craft that they can. A Dwarf will take as much time as is needed to complete a task to his satisfaction, any less would violate the Dwarves sense of honor.

A Dwarf can easily spend a decade or more working on a single masterwork if that is what he feels is needed to complete it satisfactorily. This in part explains the strength of Dwarven armor, the sharpness of Dwarven blades, and the taste of Dwarven ale. Often when a young Dwarf is apprenticing this perfectionism is passed on without them even realizing. The apprentice will see the master at work and the attention he pays to meticulous details. One of the more mundane reasons that the Dwarves want perfection in their craft is for the respect and honor it gives them. The more respected a Dwarf is, the more likely he will be able to attract a wife. Thus each Dwarf does everything they can to make themselves more attractive to potential mates. One thing that all Dwarves respect is skill at crafting. Thus most of the true master craftsmen find themselves with wives.

When crafting and passing on the craft, a Dwarf has near infinite patience, however that patience does not extend to any besides his apprentices. The patience a Dwarf feels for his craft is due to his sense of honor and his long life. To a Dwarf everyone should know their place on the line, it is their responsibility to teach their apprentices and their children of the line and their place on it, but they need not practice patience for anyone else.

## Dwarven Aggression

The Dwarves are a rough people, they are very emotional and down to earth. They tend not to talk unless they have something to say. But when a Dwarf does have something to say he can talk your ear off for days. Dwarves have strong opinions and they are difficult to sway once their mind is set. They are both aggressive and stubborn which often causes them problems. Basically the Dwarves have gotten into a fight with almost everyone at one time or another. Their history is filled with wars and clan feuds. There are three major roots to this problem.

The first is Dwarven stubbornness, the expression stubborn as a mule could easily be replaced with stubborn as a Dwarf. When a Dwarf sets his mind it is set in stone and there is very little that anyone can do to change it. To many Dwarves changing their mind is akin to breaking their given word, a violation of their honor. This is generally not so, but many do see it that way. Since the Dwarven concept of honor is based on an inherent knowledge of right and wrong, this often spills over into a dwarf's personal knowledge. Thus a Dwarf who believes that he is right will often take being told that he is wrong as a stain against his honor. The argument will quickly break down into a fist fight, only rarely and over serious topics will Dwarves draw steel against each other. Whoever wins the fist fight is generally deemed to have the superior sense of honor and the other Dwarf will back off. When the fight is over a Dwarf can change his mind without tarnishing his honor.

The second root of Dwarven aggression is the inherent love of fighting that the race has. A Dwarf enjoys a good fight, it gets his blood pumping and makes him feel alive. Often a Dwarf will fight or wrestle just for the thrill of it. This is one of the reasons Dwarves like adventuring so much, the fights are much more common along the way and you generally don't have to worry about killing someone by accident. Many speculate that the Dwarves love of fighting is linked with their drinking. While drinking may make them a little more likely to get in a fight, it is nearly as common for two completely sober Dwarves to get into a knock down drag out brawl in the middle of the street. The Dwarves simply have a love of battle that is only matched by half-orcs and half-ogres. Part of this may be the hardy constitution of the Dwarves. A Human who gets into a fight will bear the bruises from that fight for days or until they get magic healing. While the deeper wounds heal at the same rate for Dwarves and Human, the Dwarves tend to heal from the small wounds such as might occur in a fist fight overnight. Thus the painful reminders of fighting that others have to deal with are ignored by the Dwarves.

The last root of Dwarven aggression is their bluntness. A Dwarf will almost always speak his mind. He doesn't care who he is speaking to, it could be King or commoner. Since the average Dwarf is convinced that he knows right from wrong he will always state what he thinks is right. This feeds into the stubbornness and causes many fights. It does not always cause problems between a Dwarf and his superiors however. Since the line of honor requires a King to honor their subjects as the subjects honor them, this usually means that those Dwarves in higher positions will listen to all of those under them before making a decision or pronouncement. Those with higher responsibilities generally do not consider others

disagreeing with them as a stain to their honor, but part of the job. Of course when someone below them persists on disagreeing than it may come to matters of honor. Most Dwarves will listen to the decision of those above them and accept their statements, the line does after all go both ways, if those above will listen to what those below have to say before making a decision, then those below can follow those decisions without offense.

The aggression of the Dwarves have led to one of the bloodiest histories of all the known races. Perhaps only half-orcs can be said to be a more warlike race, and Dwarves have had far longer than they have to spill blood, both others and our own. Part of what makes the Dwarves so aggressive to other civilized races is what the Dwarves see as the other races lack of honor and dedication. Other than for apprentices and children, the way to teach them their place in the line of honor is to beat it into them. This goes for Dwarves and non-Dwarves. Dwarves realize that other races do not necessarily understand their concept of honor and will often try to explain it to the other races. However, the Dwarves are very abrupt about this teaching and speak harshly, violence often erupts due to the Dwarven manner.

## Dwarven Greed

Dwarves on the whole are a greedy race, something about living in a mining community makes gold and gems all the more sought after for them. A Dwarf will do anything short of violating his honor to make a profit. It is generally not money per say that they are attracted to but specifically gold and gems. A Dwarven PC should try to keep most of his money as gold or in the form of gems and jewelry found or bought in game. Why the Dwarves are so obsessed is unknown, but it seems to be a universal trait. This greed however does not mean that a Dwarf will steal to make their gold. In fact thievery is frowned upon in most (but not all) Dwarven societies. Taking treasure from kills is not considered thievery, anything won through combat is considered honorable gains to a Dwarf. Someone who makes a profit in business is considered honorable and following their calling.

## Women Among The Dwarves

Women are much rarer than men in the Dwarven community. The birth rate is such that only one in ten births results in a female child. Thus women are highly respected, sought after, and protected among the Dwarves. It is only very rarely that you will see a Dwarven women on the surface, they are encouraged to stay home, marry and have many children. This is not to say that they are prevented from leaving the home. If one chooses to go outside the community and lead the life of an adventurer, no one will tell them no.

The rarity of women among the Dwarves makes Dwarven men highly respectful of women of all races. They will generally be polite and obliging to any woman. Dwarven women on the other hand are used to a community where all men are respectful and expect it. When a Dwarven woman leaves the underground, she is usually shocked the first time she encounters a rude male. Many of the social cues they are used to are invalid outside their race. A Dwarven woman will often get into a huge fight when someone treats her without the respect she feels she is due.

Because of the scarcity of female Dwarves, Dwarven men are almost encouraged to marry outside the race. This will allow more Dwarves to be born of the mixed marriages. About half of the children born to mixed marriages are Dwarven, the ratio of male to female remains the same, even among the non-Dwarven children. Dwarven women on the other hand, are forbidden to marry outside the race so as the race can produce as many offspring as possible. They are encouraged to choose a suitor and marry early so they may begin producing offspring as quickly as possible. A Dwarven woman is encouraged to add to the population and have many offspring during their life. A Dwarven woman is fertile from

age 13 to age 300 and often is pregnant once every two years early in life, and once a decade later in life. Of course those women who go outside the society or choose another path don't tend to have children at this rate. Most Dwarven women will have between ten and twenty children throughout her life.

## Dwarven Life span

Dwarves have a relatively long life span. The average Dwarf can live about 400 years. This is of course rarely seen, the violent lifestyle of the Dwarves generally tends to cause an early death so the average Dwarf truly only lives 250 years. Age is a difficult thing to tell among the Dwarves, since they grow full beards at such a young age it tends to distort their appearance. However white beards are almost exclusively a trait seen in only the very old Dwarves. Premature white appearing in the beard is often taken as a sign that the Dwarf could be among the seers.

Legend holds that in the dim past the Dwarves lived longer than they do today. The Dwarves of yore were said to live 1,000 years or more. If this is true, it is unknown why the Dwarves lives shorter life spans now. In addition to the long life span a Dwarf has a very hearty constitution. They tend to be more thick bodied then the average Human and heal quickly from bruises and cuts. They very rarely get sick and usually recover quickly when they do. The Dwarven lifestyle and constant brawling tends to toughen them up such that they can take somewhat of a larger punishment than a Human can. In addition the Dwarven constitution allows them to ward off the effects of toxins and poisons. Much of this is due to the natural immunity of the Dwarves, but some of it has to do with their diet. A lot of the food the Dwarves consume is slightly poisonous and the constant consumption of such low doses of poison tends to make the Dwarves even more resistant.

## MOTHER TYRRA'S BLOOD

Mother Tyrra, the spirit of our world did confront Father Defile, the spirit who exists apart from her, he who is the force of chaos. Long did they battle and fight for dominion over the world. Hard were the battles they fought against one another.

It came to pass that in one confrontation Father Defile struck a fierce blow against Mother Tyrra and caused her to bleed. And her blood dripped upon the face of Tyrra, her body, and there did something wondrous happen.

Where each drop of blood hit the earth a body began to rise, the smallest part of Mother Tyrra's spirit was enough to give rise to life in the substance of the world. The bodies emerged from the earth, growing upward like a plant. The last to emerge were the heads and where they came out of the ground a long trail of hair emerged upon their faces like the roots that fastened them to the ground.

As they emerged they attacked Father Defile coming to the aid of she who gave them birth. Though they could not match his power, their numbers weighed him down so that Mother Tyrra could lay him low.

When the battle was done, the new race gathered around Mother Tyrra and she greeted them as her beloved children. Her wound closed and the Dwarven race had begun.

## The Earth as Mother

The Dwarves see the earth as their mother. This philosophy has several origins. Many of the legends of the birth of the Dwarvish race involve the birth from the earth itself. In several tales Tyrra is the actual mother of the first Dwarves, having emerged out of the rock and stone of the world. Other tales involve the legendary being Mother Tyrra as the matriarch of the Dwarven race. Some tales tell of the forging of the Dwarven race by beings of great power from the ores found in the deepest parts of Tyrra. No matter which tale is believed, all Dwarves feel a distinct bond with the earth, caused in part by the tales they are told as they are growing into manhood.

The Dwarves also see the earth as their mother from a more practical point of view, as a subterranean race, the earth itself provides much of what the Dwarves need to survive and prosper. It provides their food and water which gives them life. It provides the ores and gems they need to craft their goods and engage in trade. It provides shelter from the dangers of the outer world. In short it acts as a parent to their people.

This feeling is prevalent through all Dwarven cultures, even those that now live upon the surface remember their origins and treat the earth with the reverence that she deserves.

The earth as mother goes beyond the mere philosophical belief, in some way, unknown to even the Dwarves themselves, there is a link between the Dwarven race and the earth. This is evidenced by the Dwarven peoples ability to contact the earth upon the days of communing. Details on the days of communing can be found in Appendix B: Festivals.

## Dwarves and Alcohol

Drinking is a part of the Dwarven culture. No one is sure where the Dwarven passion for alcohol comes from or why it seems to be prevalent among all the Dwarven societies. However all Dwarves drink. They drink throughout the day varying the strength of the drink on the time of day and the responsibilities they hold. Some type of alcoholic beverage is served with every meal a Dwarf consumes. Dwarves rarely get falling down drunk. Alcohol makes them happy and even less inhibited, but it does not get them dizzy or sick. Dwarves don't get drunk to the point of passing out, and they don't wake up with hangovers. Of course, the ability to out drink another Dwarf is highly respected. It takes about three times the amount of alcohol to get a Dwarf to the beginnings of being drunk as it takes a Human. Dwarves prefer the drinks with less alcohol in them, liquors are not the typical Dwarven drink. This seems to be a matter of taste however. Similarly wines are rarely served by Dwarves, they taste like fruit punch is a common complaint heard among the Dwarves when served wine. It seems to be the taste of the drink that is the most important. Dwarves more often like the bitter, earthy, hearty beers, ales, and lagers. The so called Dwarven ale is not truly an ale but more of a bitters. It uses Dorka Mushrooms in the mash when the ale is made. These mushrooms have some light hallucinogenic properties. Dwarven ale will have about the effect on a Dwarf that a strong beer will on a Human. On a Human, Dwarven ale is like drinking 150 proof vodka laced with hallucinogens.

The Dwarven desire for alcohol is so intense that many scholars and sages have speculated an actual need for alcohol in the diet of a Dwarf. Some have gone so far as to suggest that if you were to prevent a dwarf's alcohol intake that their health or perhaps their sanity would decrease. However there is absolutely no evidence for these speculations.

For more information on Dwarves and alcohol see the section on the brewer's guild.

## Dwarves and Vengeance

Dwarves are a vengeful people, if a Dwarf is offended he will not rest until his honor is satisfied. This along with the aggressive tendencies of the Dwarves is responsible for their bloody history. More clan wars have been fought over

revenge for perceived insults than any other cause. A Dwarf is not satisfied to return an insult in vengeance. The Dwarf must return any grievance ten times over or more.

A Dwarf looks upon vengeance like any other task. They show the same absolute dedication to revenge as they show to their crafts or their liege. Just like the crafting of a perfect sword, a Dwarf seeks their vengeance with passion and dedication. The long life span of the Dwarves allows their anger to smolder as they carefully plan each step of their revenge. No matter how small the infraction the need for vengeance drives them. The Dwarven need for vengeance has led to the tradition of the book of grudges. It is often not enough to a Dwarf to seek personal vengeance, the entire family and clan of the Dwarf must be involved. Thus most clans keep a book of grudges in which all transgressions and insults against all members of the clan are recorded. It is up to future generations to make sure that any grudges not settled in the individual's lifetime are settled. The clan will appoint a grudgebearer to keep and maintain the book of grudges. Dwarven legends hold that any grudges unsettled prevent the proper rest of the Dwarves in the graveyards. It is the ultimate responsibility of the grudgebearer to see all matters settled so that the spirits of those who have passed can rest.

## The Clan and The Family

The Dwarven social groups are based on family and clan. Dwarven families are often very extended units with only minimal relationship between branches. The Dwarves will give their families total respect and dedication. It is considered the backbone of the great line of honor.

Dwarven families are often organized into larger clans. A clan can be made up of only one family, however more often many families come together to form a clan. Sometimes divergent branches of one family will belong to different clans.

A dwarf's name is based both on his family and clan. A dwarf's given name is decided upon by his parents and is followed by both family name and clan name. Sometimes the Dwarf will choose to be known by just one of the names, especially outside the race. Often a Dwarf will give his given name and family name followed by of Clan and his clan name.

For more information see the section on Clans and Families in Dwarven Society.

## Dwarves and Celestial Magic

The Dwarven opinion on celestial magic varies greatly. Many see the practice of star magic as foreign to the Dwarves. Dwarves are inherently of the earth, they say, the proof is in the difficulty Dwarves have in learning the celestial arts. Others see celestial magic as an important part of the Dwarven culture. Ulin's guild represents the power which Dwarves can hold over the stars. These Dwarves often state that it is not so much a difficulty in learning to use the powers of the stars but an ease in learning to use the powers of the earth. The debate over the nature and uses of celestial magic still rages among the Dwarven people, however they definitely make great use of it. They in no way fear it the way barbarians do, some of the Dwarves simply feel that the power is not for them.

## Dwarves and Order vs. Chaos

Among the peoples of Tyrra, many debate whether chaos is the opposite of earth or the opposite of order. To the Dwarves, it is the opposite of both. The use of chaos and necromancy is despised among the Dwarves. Often necromancy is punished by the scaring on first offense and permanent death on second offense.

Dwarves believe in order as a power and a philosophy. The great line of honor is often thought of as an expression of order. If one does not follow the law and behave in a proper manner, one loses his place on the line. The law is considered a reflection of order. Order is also considered important in Dwarven craftsmanship. Chaos to a Dwarf is the ultimate failing of the spirit. If one were to follow the path of chaos, one would sever their line and fail themselves, their ancestors, and their descendants. Chaotic action is just as wrong to a Dwarf as the invocation of chaos. Each is harmful in its own way. Chaotic action is disruptive, it prevents great crafting and destroys the line.

Necromancy, to a Dwarf, is a physical manifestation of chaos. The invocation of chaos in the casting of the spells is proof of that. Dwarves believe that the use of necromancy harms the earth, their mother. There are manifestations of chaos beneath the earth which the Dwarves feel are caused by the use of necromancy, it is considered a great wrong to use this foul power.

## Omens and Runes

The Dwarves believe very heavily in the power of omens. The seers developed as a profession to read the signs and portents found around them. Almost anything was found to have some meaning with respect to the future and the seers were those who could interpret these signs. The interpretations of the omens vary by the time and place and the individuals present, no one interpretation is standard for an event.

When the predictive power of omens were discovered, the Dwarves looked for a way to predict specific parts of the future or ask specific questions. Two things came of this. One is the communing in which Dwarves can contact mother earth to answer specific questions about the present or the past. The second is rune casting. As seen with the ability to work celestial magic, the ability to interpret the stars using astrology was limited, and of course in the caverns the stars were not available to gaze at.

Other methods were tried, tarot cards, dice, tea leaves, and palmistry, none worked particularly well for the Dwarven people. Then a seer tried the casting of the runes. Stones selected by feel and engraved with runes meaningful to the reader gave amazingly accurate reading for some. It became tradition to test for the ability to use the runes along with the other tests upon the coming of age, many with the talent of seers were found to be able to cast the runes as well. Runes vary from caster to caster, however they all involve symbols with primal concepts such as emotions and forces. Each set of runes is unique to the rune caster and no two are alike. One rune caster will not use another's runes, they will give them no reading.

## Agoraphobia:

When Dwarves emerge from the caverns in which they normally dwell, often they are hit with a dread feeling of agoraphobia, fear of open spaces. Often the Dwarf will learn to deal with the problem over time. But many times a Dwarf never completely gets over this fear. They will often be slightly jumpy when not underground, or at least surrounded by walls. Dwarves often are only truly comfortable in the caverns which they normally call home.

## Photophobia:

Similarly to the fear of open spaces, Dwarves often experience photophobia, fear of bright light, when they leave the underground. Often this begins from the pain experienced when a Dwarf who has never been in bright light is exposed to it. The stabbing intensity of the light in the eyes and the burning of the light and heat on the skin often scar the Dwarf mentally. They often can never look toward the sun keeping their eyes toward the ground which they wish to be beneath.

## DWARVEN LIFE, CUSTOMS, AND TRADITIONS

### Childhood:

In childhood the Dwarves are first exposed to many of the traditions that will influence their entire lives. Dwarves are generally raised as part of a large extended family. This makes the family an all-encompassing part of their lives. Brothers and the occasional sister as well as uncles and cousins are all a big part of the dwarf's life as he is growing.

Throughout childhood the Dwarves are taught the concepts which distinguish the Dwarves: The great line, right and wrong, and honoring of those above you as well as those below you. They are also exposed to the many crafts and trades which the Dwarven people practice. While growing up a child is often given responsibilities in the house, chores and errands which they must complete. This teaches responsibility and duty at a very early age. Punishments are quickly dispensed and appropriate to the mistakes made by the young. The concepts of wrong are strongly enforced. Rewards, in the form of appreciation and pride are given just as freely for proper behavior.

Aggressive behavior is seen in early childhood as brothers and sisters will often fight among themselves. This establishes a pecking order among the children and reinforces the Dwarvish attitudes toward violence. The children are also taught the history of their family, clan, and nation, as well as the history of their people. Thus a Dwarf will often be able to quote the tales of their family line for line and trace their lineages exactly.

Even as children Dwarves drink ale. It is generally only the lighter less alcoholic ales that they are allowed to consume.

Often in childhood the young Dwarves will hear readings from the book of names honoring the great members of their family from the past. They will also hear readings from the book of grudges, continuing the feuds and fights among the different families and clans into future generations.

When a Dwarven child first begins to have a beard upon his or her face, it is the sign that childhood is over and that they will soon go through the coming of age.

### Coming of Age:

The Dwarven coming of age ceremony is a grand tradition which goes through all Dwarven societies. A child who is about to enter adulthood will be brought by his parents and those relatives and friends who helped teach them as they were growing to the hall of the guilds. Here they will be brought before a council consisting of members from each guild. Each of the guild representatives will ask for one to step forward to state the worthiness of the child to be considered for a guild. If any of the guild members indicate that they do not feel the child has had the needed exposure to their guild, there

are two options: one, the guild member can supply the needed exposure by having the child brought to the workplaces of members of their guild to learn of their craft; two, the child can choose not to learn of their trade and go on to the testing. If the child chooses further exposure then over the next several months the child will spend part of each day among the members of the guilds who thought him lacking. The guild members will show the child their craft and teach them the rudiments of it. After the teachings are complete the child will then attend the testing.

Upon entering the testing room, the Dwarves are exposed to the tools of the many guilds and trades to which they have been exposed. Each Dwarf will use these tools to the best of their ability, creating their first works. Each guild is represented, there is steel and stone which to work with, the books of magic from which to read, the foods and drinks for growing or brewing, and the tools of war with which to practice. The child will be observed for a week or more to see what they do with each of these things. At the end of the testing the results are presented to the guild members. Each of the child's results will be judged by the appropriate guilds, if any indication of talent is shown by the child then he will be offered apprenticeship within a guild. Often a child is offered membership to multiple guilds. When this occurs the child chooses which guild he will join. If a child changes his mind in the early stages of training then there is no problem shifting to another guild. If the young adult who is already into their true apprenticeship changes his mind, he will have to petition to change guilds, both from the guild he is a member of and the guild he wishes to join.

## Apprenticeship:

The apprenticeship is a period of training that every Dwarf goes through, no matter what trade he chooses to follow. The guild to which the Dwarf has pledged will assign him a master to teach him the skills and art of his new trade. Often the master is one whom the Dwarf previously knew or worked with. The apprentice will learn the trade from his master and his master's journeymen. The exact methods of teaching vary from craft to craft. The apprentice owes his master unswerving obedience, an open mind, and a desire to learn and perfect one's craft. He should always show him the respect due a master and one willing to teach the unschooled in his art.

The apprentice owes the journeymen, of his place of learning, respect and obedience as they will teach much of the basic knowledge of the craft to the young apprentice.

With some crafts the master will only have one apprentice at a time, this is how the seers teach their craft. One learned master passes his knowledge on to one striving pupil. Other crafts such as armorsmithing will have a single master often taking on several apprentices teaching them as a group and as individuals. Still other crafts treat the apprentices as being apprenticed to the entire body of masters. The length of the apprenticeship varies as well. The apprentice will graduate and become a journeyman when the master believes that he understands each aspect of the craft and can perform them with competence.

## Journeyman:

The journeyman is the creator of everyday goods, the spellcaster who will sell protectives and ward spells. They are considered good enough to make everyday items or perform everyday tasks, but they are not skilled enough to make that which is considered art among the Dwarves.

A journeyman will often work remain working under his master for years after they graduate from their apprenticeship. The journeyman continues to owe his master great respect and obedience, the bond between a master and student never ceases, even when a student becomes a master and even if he someday surpasses the master who trained him, he owes that master respect and will always recognize him as a teacher and as one of those responsible for his place in the line of merit.

A journeyman will also have new responsibilities toward his master's apprentices. Until this point his only job was to learn, now in addition to learning he must teach. It is the journeyman's responsibility to pass on as much as he can to the apprentices of his master. He will often have apprentices help him with his tasks, not to speed up the task, but to teach the apprentice of the craft and of working together on a project. No matter how long the journeyman remains as such, or how formalized the passage to master, the journeyman period represents a time of learning to perfect one's craft. Many Dwarves remain as journeymen all their lives, it is no shame to never graduate to master. Only perhaps ten percent of those who enter the journeyman period even gain the rank of least master.

## Master:

The master is considered to be one who is an artist or acknowledged superior within his craft. To hold the title of master gives a Dwarf a great deal of honor, respect, and influence. Masters are able to hold office within the guilds and often that translates to holding political power as well. Becoming a master is a long hard road. It requires talent and a huge amount of dedication even for a Dwarf. Very rarely talent alone can carry a Dwarf to the point where he becomes a master, but these are very rare cases.

A master is not just one who makes art within his craft, he is also acknowledged as having superior knowledge of the craft and thus one to pass on the craft to the next generations of craftsmen. Almost every master will take apprentices, the number they take varies from craft to craft, smiths often take many where mages often take only one. This varies not only by the craft but by the temperament of the master.

It is a master's responsibility to teach and pass on his art. It is his true calling to continue the great line of merit within his craft. While apprentices owe him obedience, he owes them dedication, he will teach them, help them through their troubles and forge the young, talent less, and skill lacking children into craftsmen in their own right. He will hopefully have some who go on to become masters as well, thus continuing the great line of merit. It is one of the greatest achievements of a master to have an apprentice who goes on to outdo him. It is of great note and honor on the great line of merit.

A master owes the same dedication to his journeymen, however with them he often works even closer. He brings them to work with him on special projects and teaches them all his secrets of his trade. The master will try and bring out the artist trapped within the journeyman who is already a competent craftsman.

Within the rank of master there are often levels, some guilds start with least master and work through five or six levels before the individual is awarded the title of true master or grand master. Often these higher titles are reserved for officials within the guild.

## Marriage:

In Dwarven cultures marriage is a sacred custom. No one violates the sanctity of a marriage and infidelity is almost unknown. Since women are so much more rare than men they generally have their choice of many suitors. Generally it is only the highly accomplished Dwarven men that attract a Dwarven woman as a mate, and any Dwarven woman can have just about any man she chooses. The courting process of Dwarves often takes several years. When the Dwarven woman finally decides to take a particular man as her husband there is a great celebration hosted by the family of the groom. The marriage ceremony is a solemn one where the groom promises to care for the bride and their children and swears it upon his craft and his honor. Rings are exchanged which have many gems set in gold or platinum and often have braids of beard hair woven into the metal. The bride will take on the family of the groom and she will be inscribed into their book of names. Often the marriage of two Dwarves can calm down tensions which exist between two families and bring about alliances.

Dwarves always wait until marriage to have children. Having children out of wedlock is considered inappropriate and often dishonorable, since you are not taking responsibility for your progeny. Once married, the couple often have their first child right away and generally have many children.

Unmarried Dwarven men are often encouraged to marry outside the race, since there are so few Dwarven women. As with full Dwarven marriages the groom will swear to protect and care for the wife and their children by his craft and honor. They often will not have as many children, as the childbearing habits of most races do not match the Dwarves. However the children are less likely to be stillborn and about two out of five are women. Of course only half of those are Dwarven, but the chances of a Dwarven female child coming from a Dwarf/non-Dwarf couple is at least equal if not slightly higher than a Dwarf/Dwarf couple.

## Childbirth:

A time of great joy since childbirth is uncommon among the Dwarves due to the scarcity of women. They are a very slowly reproducing race and they have a high death rate due to violence. Females are also rarer in the population, only being one of ten births. Dwarves take 12 months to come to term and childbirth is very difficult. 3 out of every 10 pregnancies end in a miscarriage, of those that come to term, 2 out of every 10 are stillborn. Only one in ten surviving births are female. There has never been a case of multiple birth among the Dwarves. On top of all this, Dwarves are only able to conceive in the spring, they are in sync with the earth and its time of fertility.

Thus when a woman is married in the Dwarves she is encouraged to be pregnant often and have as many children as possible.

When a child is born, the first thing that is done is to have the runes cast and the omens read. A seer will always be present at the birth of a child and the members of the Earth Guild that act as midwives often bring a seer with them when they attend to a birth. From the readings of the seers the name of the Dwarf is often chosen. If the readings are very favorable the Dwarf may be given the name of a great hero or craftsman. If the readings are unfavorable the name chosen may be one to remind the child of the dangers of allowing oneself to fall from the line. Once the readings of the omens and the casting of the runes is complete and the name has been chosen, the child's name and the seer's interpretations are inscribed in the family's and clan's Book of Names, by either the clan patriarch or his representative.

There are always great celebrations when the child is born. Generally special crafts will be commissioned which will be held in care for the child and given to him when he reaches adulthood. The parents of the child will always have a special gift made for their offspring, the gift usually reflects the nature of the family. The parents will also have two casks of ale made by the brewers guild on the day of the child's birth. When he reaches adulthood and begins learning his craft, one cask is opened in a further celebration of the child and his achievements. When he passes on to his final death the second cask is opened and drunk by his closest friends, family, and associates.

## The Book of Names:

A Dwarven name represents his mark on the great line of merit, it is used by others not just to address the Dwarf, but to keep track of the dwarf's accomplishments and honors as well. A Dwarven name is the given name from birth, followed by their family name, followed by "of clan," and their clan name. The name is recorded in the family's and clan's Book of Names.

The Book of Names is a record kept by the Dwarven families and clans. It records the unbroken lines of the family or the clan, from its founding to the present. Each birth and death is inscribed in the book along with the omens and rune castings from each child's birth. Other events of note in the life of the family members may be recorded. Any great rune castings or omens may be added, any great accomplishments or heinous deeds. All the things that make an individual stand out from those around him will be recorded by the family scribes. It is a great honor to have ones accomplishments noted in the Book of Names. When a Dwarf is married or when he dies, the entries from the Book of Names are read and they are used to show where and how honor advanced the Dwarves and dishonor denied them.

At times a Dwarf may commit acts considered so atrocious and dishonorable that their name is struck from the Book of Names.

## Death:

In most Dwarven cultures the final death, the parting of the body and the spirit, is called "the end of the line". This is in recognition of the fact that the individual who has died will no longer be contributing to the great line of merit. The mourning of the Dwarf is intense. There is generally a great funeral where the body is laid in state and all of the dwarf's family, friends, and associates can come and pay tribute to the fallen spirit. Dwarven eulogies are long and greatly involved with the skills, accomplishments, and honors the deceased had earned in life. At times even those sworn against the deceased will come under truce and speak of what made them a noble or worthy opponent.

When the funeral ends, and it can take days, the body is buried without a coffin into the earth. It is said that the Dwarf's placement in a graveyard is dependent upon his honor accrued in life and his place on the great line of merit. If one chose to stray from the line, it cannot guide him to the correct graveyard.

The possessions of the deceased are left behind to those he chose to bequeath them to. The inheritance is based upon a will which is left with the family patriarch and the clan chief. When the individual has a hereditary title, it is passed on to a determined heir as well. It is not passed on through primogeniture. Since the Dwarven race is so long lived and tends to have many children, the bequeathments are not always to close family or even to family at all. They more often go to favored apprentices and close friends.

## DWARVEN SOCIETY AND ITS ORGANIZATION

### The nations

In the distant past the Dwarves were all ruled by a single high king. Several kings ruled the individual kingdoms which were found across the length and breadth of Tyrra. After the fall of the City of Gold, there was no longer a high king. However, the individual kings still led our people and the kingdoms prospered.

Here is what is known of the original seven kingdoms:

The Kingdom of Yarth, on Amys, fell to The Great Cataclysm of Yarth which buried it under tons of rubble.

The Kingdom of Ahlandria may still exist, no one knows. It was founded near the area of Amys now claimed by Jhivantane, that foul pit of black chaos sorcerers.

The Kingdom of Bandoraparg, on Avalon, fell beneath the heel of the Red Mountain Clans of Kitheria. The remaining clans from Bandoraparg allied themselves with the Kingdom of Validor.

These two countries, as well as the northern Dwarves in the Anymdin Mountains of Volta came together to form the Three Nations. The Three Nations fell apart when King Kelanor I fell at the end of the Hillraiser War. Bandoraparg now is in the process of rebuilding itself as a separate nation. Their leader is of the Stonesplitter family which once ruled the Three Nations.

The Kingdom of Erethane, on Ghandar, fell to the power of Orfindal the Magebreaker and his seven dreadlords of chaos. Orfindal would never have been able to conquer the Thanies if not for the betrayal of the race by Heth the Brewer. Tales are told of Dwarves that live within the Sessaur Imperium, these are most likely descended from the Dwarves of Erethane.

The Kingdom of Garm Baraq still exists, though it is reduced both in size and power from a once great nation to a small outpost in Troll Canyon on Amys.

The Kingdom of Morhedin on Minami has not been heard from since the great undersea tunnels collapsed a thousand years ago.

The Kingdom of Validor still exists today, now known to Humans as Dwarvenholm, the capitol city, it is greatly reduced from what it once was. Even in the last 400 years it has lost in standing, going from the leader of the Three Nations and all of the Dwarven people of Avalon under Kelanor I, to a small nation-state ruled more by the guilds than the King under Kelanor IV.

Power is now held mainly in the hands of the clans, the guilds, and the merchants. A society or nation is defined as a large group of Dwarves under the leadership of one ruler or ruling body. Validor with its capitol of Dwarvenholm is one such, Bandoraparg in Blackstone and Kitheria is another.

Tales of many other Dwarven nations have filtered through from the merchants who travel abroad. When the Kingdoms fell, many of the Dwarves traveled and began to build again. Rarely if ever was communication kept with the standing Kingdoms. Tales of these newer nations are just being collected, the race seems to be spread out further than was originally thought.

## The Clans

Between the kingdom and the family, sits the Dwarven clan. The clan is a collection of Dwarven families which in some way relate to each other. When a family chooses to become a member of a clan it becomes subservient to the clan and the will of its chief. It is only very rarely that a family will break away from a clan in a hostile way. Most times a family chooses to leave a clan, it is to form a new clan. When two clans split from one they are often allied to each other. However, the allegiance of clans can often change over the span of generations.

### What makes a Clan:

In general there are two types of clan, each type is a gathering of families, but for different reasons.

The first type is made up of members of the same family. When a family grows extremely large and extended, it will often decide to form a clan to keep itself together. The clan will usually take the same name as the family. These are called

familial clans. When such a clan forms the family patriarch will generally become the clan chief. Other families may join a familial clan by marriage, and some may opt to join by rite of inclusion.

The second type of clan is generally composed of many families. They come together for a common purpose. The name they take is generally indicative of their purpose. For example Clan Trollblade is a clan founded in the Tower Hills of Trelheim for the express purpose of killing the trolls of the area. These clans are called dedicated clans.

When such a clan forms the patriarchs of the families joining the clan will meet and choose a clan chief. This chief is usually the one most suited to leading the group toward the purpose they have dedicated themselves to. The family patriarchs generally remain as a council of advisors to the chief and speak for their family's needs to the clan council.

The size of a clan varies greatly, some of the larger clans number in the thousands, where as some of the smaller clans have as few as a dozen members and strive to grow and maintain the clan over time.

## Clan feuds

When two or more clans feud, the fate of many hang in the balance. Not all feuds are bloody battles, but the Dwarven temperament often brings a simple dispute toward the shedding of blood.

Like most other things in Dwarven life there are rules and Formal Magic Spells to the declaration and carrying out of a clan feud. The feud requires an offense against the clan as a whole or its leadership by another clan or one who is an official representative of the other clan. A simple offense against a member or even a family is not enough to start a clan feud, of course if the offended party is of high rank or influence in the clan they may cause a feud to be started anyway.

The only one who can declare a feud is the clan grudgebearer, the keeper of the book of grudges. He is the one who decides whether an offense warrants a feud and to what extent the feud will be pursued. If the offense was a mild one the feud may amount to a political opposition in which the offended clan will make all attempts to weaken the influence of the clan which gave offense. In cases of extreme offense, a full feud is declared and the two clans and often their allies will go to war. The extent of the war will vary with the severity of the offense. Often these battles do not start as wars of extermination. Throughout the fight more and more insults and offenses are given by both sides and the war often escalates. At time the escalation will turn the fight into one where only the destruction of one of the two clans will end it. If the escalation spreads among allying clans often the King or council will have to step in. At times the matter must be settled before the Great Moot. Usually this type of solution involves honor battle in which the two clan champions do battle and the winning clan will have its satisfaction.

What happens to a losing clan in a feud often depends on the generosity of the winner. In the worst case the losing clan is routed to the last man. If the offense was truly great the winning clan will destroy the records of the loser, level its buildings, and systematically erase all traces of its existence. More often than not, this is not what occurs. Often the losing clan will be taken in as a subservient clan to the winner, treaties of obligation will be drawn up and presented before the Great Moot for all to see. The subservient clan can in later times wean its way free from the ruling clan and again have its independence.

## The Warcall

In times of need and great danger to the people, a clan chief may issue the warcall. The warcall is a summoning of all clans to fight alongside one another against a threat to the Dwarven people. This is a seldom used power as it requires a truly dangerous situation to invoke it. Improper invocation of the warcall has led to disgrace for clan chiefs in the past and shame upon their line of honor.

The last time the warcall was invoked was by Jonish Trollblade, Chief of Clan Trollblade. It was sent when the great barrier that Oliver Songbringer erected to hold back the trolls came down in 586 E.R. This call prevented great death and destruction among the Dwarves by the trolls before they emerged onto the surface.

## Migrations

One of the great responsibilities of the clans is to maintain the expansion of the Dwarven race, its power, and its influence. One of the foremost ways the clans accomplish this is with migrations. When clans grow large they declare a migration and part of the clan will split off and journey to a new location where the Dwarves are not represented. Here they will establish a home and mines to reap the harvest of Mother Tyrra. Here they will spread both social and political influence. Often the migrations bring the Dwarves into contact with other sovereign people. Rarely do the people of a surface land object to the presence of the Dwarves and the Dwarves almost always acquire a treaty with the people above that let them live below in peace and seclusion. Even today this sort of situation exists in Evendarr and even in far away Sessaur.

## The Great Moot

The Great Moot is the ultimate body of arbitration between the clans. It meets once a decade locally, or if a moot is called by a clan chief. It meets once a century for the entire continent. The Great Moot is made up of all of the clan chief from all the clans in a Kingdom or collection of nations. The Centennial Great Moot is made up of all the clan chiefs of all the clans on a continent.

The Great Moot has the power to decide on matters between two or more clan chiefs and all member clans are expected to follow the dictates of the Great Moot. To not do so is unthinkable by the Dwarven concepts of honor and maintenance of the line.

## Clan Officials

There are many positions within a clan which hold power. In a sizable clan, a clan council consists of the following members, as well as up to six members with no title other than councilman.

### Clan Chief

The Clan Chief guides the clan and is its overall leader. His everyday decisions are what keep the clan running. For major decisions he must consult with the council and bring the matter to a vote. A Clan Chief is not a King. In the voting of the council, the clan chief serves only to break tie votes.

### Warmaster

The Warmaster is the military leader of a clan. He is in charge of defense of the clan and its holdings. The Warmaster is always a high ranked officer in the Dwarven army. Serving as a Clan Warmaster is considered an on duty posting by the Dwarven army.

## Grudgebearer

The Grudgebearer is a position with few counterparts outside the Dwarven people. The Grudgebearer is responsible for interpreting offense against the clan and its members. Grievances will be brought to the Grudgebearer for airing and he will make pronouncements on the offense and its affect on honor. He will state what is required for the redemption of honor.

The Grudgebearer maintains the clan's Book of Grudges. The Book of Grudges serves two purposes. First it is a list of the offenses committed against the clan and its members, including what the cost of redemption would be, any feuds or sanctions declared. Second the Book often serves as a history of the clan. Events of note which relate to the clan's standing or honor are recorded therein and since nearly all clan wide events relate to its standing and honor, the Book has a relatively complete history of the clan. Between the Book of Grudges and the Book of Names, the clan's history is nearly completely recorded.

## Namekeeper

The Namekeeper is the council member responsible for maintaining the Book of Names. The Book of Names holds the birth name of each and every member of the clan, in it are recorded the omens which relate to each Dwarf and their major accomplishments in life. The Namekeeper is always a seer and generally a high master within their guild.

## Mastersmith

The Mastersmith of a clan is not responsible for the smithing of the clan per say, but decides how the general direction of the clans work will go. The Mastersmith always holds at least the rank of senior master within the Smith's Guild and must have knowledge and skill in all basic types of smithing.

## Mastermason

Similar to the position of Mastersmith, the Mastermason is not responsible for the stonework of the clan, but decides how the general direction of the clans work and building will go.

The Mastermason always holds at least the rank of senior master within the Mason's Guild and must have knowledge and skill in all types of stone working as well as building, design, and mining.

## Shieldbearer

Shieldbearer is an honorary title granted to the most upstanding, representative member of the clan. They are usually those who will put the clan before themselves even to the death, serves as personal defender to the clan chief. The power of the Shieldbearer is limited to his vote on the council in all other ways the office is one whose function is purely honorary.

## Local Clans

This is a partial list of the known Dwarven clans in the area. For more information about individual clans, ask your local plot, or ask for the book: Dwarf Clans, Families, guilds and legends.

### Clan Trollblade

This clan is a dedicated clan who live in the Tower Hills of Trelheim. The Clan was founded in 402 E.R. after the end of the last Underearth War when Garth Grumberibs emerged out of the Underearth with a magic long sword he took from the Baracoor.

The current Clan Chief is Likas Grumberibs, Garth's eldest son. The clan stands proud of its fight against the trolls, they make their living on the treasure taken from the trolls and by selling troll ears which are still considered a form of currency in the Tower Hills area. There are about two hundred members of this clan and they come from many families. There are about five core families which make up the clan, including the Grumberibs, but often individuals and small groups will come to join the clan to fight against the trolls and prove their manhood.

### Clan Firesword

Clan Firesword in many ways is similar to Clan Trollblade. It too is a dedicated clan whose purpose is to defeat the trolls wherever they appear, however its methods differ greatly from Clan Trollblade. After seeing the use of powerful magic against the trolls and especially against Fangthorn himself, a group of mana forgers and theorists from Ulin's Guild split off to form Clan Firesword. Clan Firesword is a very small clan made up exclusively of celestial mages and their families and retainers. The clan has about seventy five members. The Clan Chief is Vayda Firesword, she is a true master within Ulin's Guild and holds the title of Dweomercrafter for her creation of a special flame binding Formal Magic Spells used by the clan. Clan Firesword is located in Dwarvenholm.

### Clan Deathforge

Clan Deathforge is another dedicated clan whose stated purpose is to eliminate the enemies of the Dwarven people. Clan Deathforge however does not believe in the use of magic in battle. They feel that battle is in the blood of the Dwarven people and that using magic during battle would corrupt the inherent purity of that blood. They do tolerate healers who dedicate themselves to nothing but healing the injured and not involving themselves in the dance of war.

The clan is medium sized, about four hundred, and exiles all who raise magic as a weapon. The current Clan Chief is Dorkal Earthroot Deathforge and he has ruled for two hundred years. His son Vole is current Warmaster and his heir apparent. Clan Deathforge is located in the Tower Hills.

## **Clan Tunnelmole**

Clan Tunnelmole is a migratory clan that has the dedicated purpose of aiding those clans who are beginning a migration. They have aided in the mining of the tunnels for almost every major Dwarven city.

The closest branch of Clan Tunnelmole to the Ashbury area is in the regions of Bandoraparg aiding in the rebuilding of that Kingdom. Its Clan Chief is Flarety Brightgold Tunnelmole who holds the title of Master Miner, Master Architect, Master Engineer, and is said to be one of the greatest living Geomancers as well.

## **Clan Blackwater**

Clan Blackwater is another dedicated clan, it was founded with the purpose of holding back outbreaks of chaos upon Tyrra. The clan numbers in the area of one hundred and maintains its presence in Dwarvenholm. There it serves as guardians over the Black Pools which are areas of concentrated chaos left behind after the elemental wars. A small part of Clan Blackwater hold themselves apart and study how to not only defeat the forces of chaos but heal the damage caused by its presence as many legends said our people once did.

## **Clan Crimson**

Clan Crimson is a troublesome clan which is currently under sanction from the Dwarvenholm Great Moot. In the year 452 E.R. the Dwarves from Dwarvenholm first made contact with the Humans from the Kingdom of Evendarr and a treaty was signed which nominally put Evendarr in control of the "nation" of Dwarvenholm. Though similar treaties which confer no real power had been worked out in the past with other nations there were a group of outspoken Dwarves in Dwarvenholm who argued against this practice. Clan Crimson exists as a thorn in the side of all who come near its territory but none can root them out of the Forsaken Hills.

No one is sure how many members Clan Crimson has. Bulk took over one thousand Dwarves with him when he left Dwarvenholm, and others Dwarves from other nations who had similar view followed him there. Clan Crimson is holed up in its lands and waits for the day when it can wage a war of extermination against all the other races of the world and bring the rest of the Dwarven race to its way of thinking.

Bulk Adamas, now Bulk Crimson, is still Clan Chief as far as anyone knows. He is sought as a traitor and danger to the Dwarven race and will be scarred and slain till final death if ever captured. His name has been stripped from the Book of Names of his former family and clan and now only remains in the Book of Grudges to show the danger of hatred. It is said Bulk wields a magic hammer which is only dangerous to any without Dwarven blood.

## **Clan Gemcrusher**

The Gemcrusher Clan is a familial clan which exists in Validor, Bandoraparg, and other outlying areas. The clan was founded by a very influential merchant family who deals mainly in gemstones.

Over the last fifty years it has been said that the family has made many contacts in the criminal families of Evendarr. Nothing has ever been proven and those who have made accusations have conveniently disappeared. The current Clan Chief makes his home in Old Town, Ashbury. His Clan is spread over a large area and there are family patriarchs who assist him in the leadership of the Clan so as not to need to split the clan and divide its power. The Clan Chief's name is Diamant Gemcrusher and he is said to be over three hundred and fifty years old.

## **Clan Bouldersoulder**

Clan Bouldersoulder is a clan living in disgrace. They are a familial clan originally from Trollsgate and now spread throughout the lands of Ashbury. The clan was once a powerful and influential merchant clan which was respected throughout the nations. That was when the disgrace came upon them.

One of the sons of the Clan Chief, Bradock Bouldersoulder was given the honor of being gate guard at the fortress city of Trollsgate. While performing his important duty, he fell asleep at the gate. It was then that the trolls attacked. Had he wakened he could have still sounded the alarm, but his snoring was said to be so loud as to cover the sound of the trolls coming into to that fair city. The clan now numbers less than fifty individuals of what was once a clan numbering near one thousand. Most of these individuals are adventurers, believing that if they perform a great deed for Dwarven society, or in the name of Dwarven society the stain may be erased from the clan's honor and the name of Bouldersoulder once more restored to greatness. Several of the clan members have made their home in Ashbury city, among them are Damon Bouldersoulder, Ivan Bouldersoulder, and Mar Bouldersoulder (deceased).

## **Clan Sanderz**

This is a familial clan found in Blackstone in the city of Wallichia in the Ardwyn mountains. The clan is made up of warriors, mages, healers, and smiths, as well as several powerful merchant families. They hold the hereditary title of Keepers of The Law in Bandoraparg, this is an honorary position wherein the Grudgebearer of Clan Sanderz also hold the Book of Law, which contains the couplets of law as set down by King Kale, the greatest of the Old Kings of Bandoraparg.

The clan numbers about fifteen hundred strong, they maintain a great deal of power, wealth, and influence. Though they are no longer of the Royal Clan most remember their close ties to Clan Stoneheart. The clan uses the symbol of a red scorpion on a green field, their colors are forest green and black.

Modi loki, a prominent Dwarven businessman and celestial caster in Ashbury is from Clan Sanderz.

## **Clan Earthblood**

Clan Earthblood is a dedicated Clan whose dedication is to healing and guarding the Dwarven race. Clan Earthblood is found in the remnants of Bandoraparg in Blackstone.

Most of the members of Clan Earthblood are members of the Earth Guild. The current Clan Chief is Jayce Earthblood who also holds the title of Senior Father of the Wallichia Healer's Circle. There are about four hundred members of Clan Earthblood and they are greatly involved in the rebuilding of Bandoraparg. A small fraction of the clan have dedicated themselves to studying the arts of diplomacy to prevent as many wars and disastrous encounters as possible before they begin.

## Clan Hewnstone

This is a familial clan located in Blackstone in the eastern most edge of the Ardwyn Mountains next to the Whitemane Forest. Their dedication is to once again found the crafts that made the Glittering Halls the work of wonder that they were. They wish to duplicate the works of the great smiths of Bandoraparg till they reach the level where a new Dwarf can be granted the title of Ganzidarth of The Glittering Halls, the supreme craftsman of the time.

The clan has about one hundred members and consists entirely of craftsmen of great skill. The Clan Chief is Halle Goldenscrip Hewnstone, a great worker in precious metals.

## Clan Battleaxe

Clan Battleaxe was a small dedicated clan formed by a group of Dwarven adventurers who lived in Ashbury City and were involved in recovering the Axe of King Kelanor I. The Clan no longer exists as most of its members have died in battle and the few who remain have let the clan slide away. The original members of this group were Thengor Bayor (deceased), Taur Stonecutter (deceased), and Modi loki.

## Other Important Clans of The World:

### Clan Gemseeker

Clan Gemseeker is the principle clan in the Dwarven Kingdom of Garm Baraq. They live within the mountains of Troll Canyon on the continent of Amyss. Here they fight a never ending war against the trolls of the region. The clan is known for its great crafts and particularly its skill at working gemstones. Within their mountains can be found great deposits of gems, particularly emeralds. The clan gemcutters are said to be the greatest in all of Tyrra. The clan is also known for its special type of earth magic known as the Earthcall. The differences between normal earth magic and earthcall are not completely known. The Clan Chief at last contact was Orvald Gemseeker, but that was several years ago and the region is involved in constant war, the Clan Chief may have changed.

### Clan Stoneheart

Clan Stoneheart traces its founding back to King Dhaghar himself. All members of this clan are of the blood royal. Clan Stoneheart unlike most clans is spread throughout Tyrra and its members are the only ones eligible to rule as Kings over Dwarven nations. No one has ever been adopted into the clan, the only way to become a Stoneheart is to be born into the clan.

King Kelanor IV of Validor and King Hasdor XXXII of Bandoraparg are both members of the Clan Stoneheart, though of two different lines within the clan, Holmfounder and Stonesplitter respectively. Many families exist within Clan Stoneheart as often Kings become known for their great deeds and take a family name from them.

## Families

To a Dwarf their family represents that part of their life which was chosen for them. The one thing in which they had absolutely no say, thus the family is crucial to them. They chose their profession and their master, they can only blame themselves for a bad decision. If the Dwarf cannot fit in with their family, they have no where to turn and are outcasts of society. It is the duty of every Dwarf to fit into the part of the great line which life and the fates wove them into.

The family is incredibly important for ultimately they are the keepers of the great line of honor. The family teaches the Dwarf as he grows and weaves his life into their own. Thus making him one with their great line, one which stretches back to the origins of the Dwarves as a people. It is only through the family that the future honor of the Dwarf can be insured. Each and every Dwarf eventually will reach the end of their line. It is the interweaving of the Dwarves personal line with that of his family which can continue past death. The family lines interweave above with the clan lines, the clan lines with the kingdom lines, to finally all the lines weave together to form the great line of the Dwarven race. A line that reaches back to the dawn of time and forward to the worlds end. That is the ultimate immortality of the Dwarves.

The Dwarven family is generally made up of small units linked together in a large extended family. Like the Humans a typical household consists of a married couple and their children. With the relatively low number of women among the Dwarves, there are many bachelors who live alone. Though the actual members of the family that live together may be small, the number of members that are considered family is large. Dwarves hold to a split extended family. They will trace the familial connections as far as they can. No matter how distant the relationship, family is still family to a Dwarf.

Usually one member of the family will hold sway as the patriarch or matriarch. The patriarch is usually the oldest Dwarf fit to lead in a family. Patriarchs and Matriarchs are about equally as common, while there are more men in Dwarven society, they often die at an earlier age thus leaving the position open for more women. It is the responsibility of the patriarch to watch over the families interests in the society and among the clans. The patriarch holds the ultimate decision in matters of family honor, and is the keeper of the family's Book of Names.

The patriarch is usually advised by a group of family elders. These elders are chosen by the patriarch out of family members sent to him by the branches of the family. The elders hold no real power being mostly of council of advisors. When a patriarch reaches the end of his line, the new patriarch is chosen from the family by vote of the council of elders. New families are formed by individuals who have accomplished a great deed in the eyes of their peers. Often the founder of a family takes a family name which signifies the deed. Some well known families of the area are described below, no one may be a member of the Holmfounder or Stonesplitter families without the permission of the plot committee as they are both of Clan Stoneheart, the royal family. The Stonecutter and loki families were created by PCs and permission of those PCs should be sought before playing one.

### Ironhand

The Ironhands are a family known for their skills at battle. They were first named for Cale Ironhand who killed one of Fangthorn's lieutenants during the First Fangthorn War using only his gauntleted hands. The family has continued the proud tradition as warriors. Cale Ironhand still serves as family patriarch, though at age two hundred and fifty he is getting ready to step down.

### Stoneribs

The Stoneribs are a family known for their mining skills. They were named by Lobar Stoneribs when he saved a huge group of miners in a cave-in by introducing a new type of support beam which looks like a ribcage over a tunnel. The

family was founded about one thousand years ago and is fairly large. Lobar's great great granddaughter Kayla is family matriarch now. She is only fifty years old and is said to be one of the great beauties of Dwarvenkind. She is currently unmarried.

## **Diamondbright**

The Diamondbright family was begun by Jonur Diamondbright who was said to have found and carved the largest diamond ever seen on Tyrra. That was thousands of years ago and the tale may be allegorical. Today the family is one of the largest of the Dwarven families and is spread throughout the Dwarven lands. They are not known for any skill or craft in particular but have members representing all guilds. The family is also spread through many clans. The current Warmaster of Dwarvenholm is General Marol Diamondbright, he is also a close friend to King Kelanor IV and serves on his court. The family is so large that there are several patriarchs and matriarchs who lead it. The patriarch in Dwarvenholm is Doan Diamondbright, the Grand Patriarch is Garvin Diamondbright who lives in Banek Tor.

## **Stonecutter**

The Stonecutters are a small family from Dwarvenholm who were founded just seventy years ago by Daur Stonecutter who took the name after he had completed a commission from King Kelanor III. Daur is still patriarch and the family only consists of fifty or so individuals. The adventurer Taur Stonecutter was of this family.

## **Holmfounder**

King Kelanor's family are the Holmfounders. The name was first taken by Kelanor's distant ancestor King Roscal who was the son of King Roganak, killed in the Darkling War. When Zhaduk was lost to the Dwarves of Validor, King Roscal began the construction of a new city to become our capitol. He founded Dwarvenholm as a city that could stand up to anything. That city has stood for more then fifteen millennia through war after war it has held like a rock against the wind. From this act does the family take its name. Mordin Holmfound expanded the hidden city of Dwarvenholm and King Kelanor II turned it into the open capitol of Validor after the loss of Trollsgate. King Kelanor IV in addition to being King of Validor is also the patriarch of his family.

The Holmfounder family rules over Validor and Kelanor I was the last King of the Three Nations.

## **Steeltoe**

No one is sure how the name Steeltoe was started. They are an old family with many influential members. They are among the largest of all Dwarven families and some say their lineage goes all the way back to the time before the City of Gold. The Grand Matriarch of the Steeltoe family is Olivia Steeltoe who makes her home in Kelanor.

## **Stonesplitter**

The Stonesplitter family is also of the Stoneheart Clan and thus the blood royal. It was founded by King Hasdor I of Bandoraparg during the founding of that Kingdom. Legend has it that Hasdor was mediating a dispute between two of the founding families of Bandoraparg and he got so tired of their infighting that he drew his axe and cleave the wall of stone that separated their two tunnels, declaring them to now be one family under a new patriarch. This act of force became legendary and King Hasdor I took his family name based on it.

The Stonesplitter line is known for its rule over Bandoraparg and for such influential members as King Vindraal the Unifier. The Stonesplitter family currently rules over Bandoraparg and at one time ruled the Three Nations.

## **Rediron**

The Rediron family is famous for its sages and seers. The family was founded over three thousand years ago by Hermina Rediron the runecaster. She claimed to feel herself drawn to the iron deposits in Draelonde. She worked her way into that hateful nation and emerged alive carrying a large lump of pure red iron. This lump she took back and learned to cast the metal, she made from this lump a set of runestones which remained the purest red even after the forging. It was said that she received the most accurate readings ever known using that set of runestones.

The set is always held by the current grand matriarch of the family. The grand matriarch is currently Johanna Rediron who lives in Dwarvenholm and serves on Kelanor IV's court. Her predictive powers are said to be stronger than even such legendary seers as Minifrei the Wisebearded of Morhedin, who was a member of the Rediron family. The family is relatively large and members of it have served as advisors to the Holmfounders and Stonesplitters for generations.

## **loki**

The loki family is a relatively small but influential merchant family from Clan Sanderz in Bandoraparg. They are very cosmopolitan and deal extensively outside of the race. The name loki was not taken in recognition of a specific act, but as a name which would be less ethnic for better dealings with all people.

Members of this family often trim their beards short, again as a part of the overall merchant strategy. It has been said that Dwarven merchants will do anything to make their gold. It is said that the family loki will do what the others won't.

The current patriarch of the family is Voli loki Sanderz who is a merchant specializing in import/export between Blackstone and the Mystic Wood Elves of the Whitemane Forest.

Modi loki is a son of family loki.

## **The Guilds**

Each important profession among the Dwarves is represented by a guild. These guilds often represent a political and social power equal to, or even higher than, the existing official government.

In general all of the guilds form a council which is made up of the leaders of each guild. It is this council which directly interacts with the official government and acts for the benefit of the Dwarves as they see it.

The information supplied here reflects mainly on the guilds of Validor in Dwarvenholm. Other guilds in other cities and nations are generally similar, as the guilds were founded in the time of King Dhagar Stoneheart, when we were all one people. The mundane guilds such as the Grower's Guild, the Smith's Guild, and the Brewer's Guild tend to be unconcerned with the branches elsewhere. The Earth Guild and the Mason's Guild maintain a fair amount of contact with their counterparts in other lands. Ulin's Guild maintains constant contact with all the branches of their guild, most likely through magical means. The Merchant's Guild is one guild, all of the branches are in contact with all of the others. The Army does not consider itself to be one guild with many branches, it tends to be reclusive and keep the secrets of each army within itself. No one is sure how much, or how little contact the Seer's have with each other, of all the guilds they are the most withdrawn from the rest of society.

Ranks vary somewhat among the guilds, all guilds have the ranks of apprentice, journeyman, and master, but some split these further, having ranking within journeyman or master. Often each guild will have a high title "True Master" which designates a master whose works are considered truly great, generally there will be only one or two of these within any guild at any time and quite often there will be none.

## The Testing:

The one area where all the guilds work together in complete agreement is in the testing. The testing is the traditional method of determining what profession a young Dwarf is best suited for. A description of the testing process can be found in the section on coming of age in Dwarven society.

## The Gathering

Though the guilds are independent entities, they do share common goals and have a need for regular communication and a way to arbitrate disagreements among them.

For this purpose the gathering was started. The gathering is a meeting of the most senior guildsmen from all the guilds. It is a forum of discussion and arbitration where matters affecting the guilds as a whole are discussed. In Dwarvenholm, the gathering has become a regular council since the death of King Kelanor I.

## Maintaining the Line of Honor

One of the most important duties of the guilds, ranked as important as passing on the teachings of their skills, is the maintenance of the Line of Honor.

All Dwarves seek their place on the great Line of Honor and as clans and families do, guilds keep records of their members. The guild records all actions both meritorious and banal of its members. As the records grow the members place on the Line of Honor shifts. Together with the Book of Names and the Book of Grudges, the Line of Honor is a record of a dwarf's life, accomplishments, and honor in the eyes of his fellows.

# THE SMITH'S GUILD

The Smith's Guild is the most influential guild in Dwarven society. All Dwarves have an inherent respect for those who can craft from the ores which are extracted from the earth. The Smith's Guildmaster generally chairs the council of the guilds when they meet at the gathering.

The smiths realize their importance in Dwarven society and they attach a sort of mysticism to the skill of Dwarves in metalworking. They follow a simple credo which is reproduced below.

The Smith's Credo:

Ours are the crafts that last forever.

All four elements blended together.

Earth and water, air and fire.

Ours is the art that meets all desire.

Often you may hear the Smith's Guild referred to as The Brotherhood of Fire. To the smiths this indicates their use of fire in the taming of the elements to their craft. Often a smith upon entering his period as a journeyman will place his hands in the coals of his forge to mark his intertwining with the forge fires.

The Smith's Guild is fairly independent of their brother guilds in other cities and nations, the need for combining their forces is slight.

When a young Dwarf joins the Smith's Guild as an apprentice, he must decide which of the cores within the guild he wishes to belong to. In the Smith's Guild more than any other mixing between the cores is very prevalent. Occasionally, when a smith reaches the rank of journeyman, he will choose to return as an apprentice to a second core and after that, at times, a third. This allows the smith to become more diversified in his skills. This almost never occurs in the smiths who have become masters and those who choose to diversify rarely ever become a master in any of their trades, let alone all of them. The cores with the Smith's Guild and how they function are as follows.

## Weaponsmith's Core:

The weaponsmith's core is one of the most prestigious of the cores within the Smith's Guild. Often a weaponsmith will become known for a specific type of weapon which he produces and his name may become synonymous with that weapon type. An apprentice weaponsmith will begin by learning each weapon type and how it is made. Once those are mastered, the apprentice is taught the basics of weapon forging. Once he can successfully make a long sword of sufficient quality on his own he is ready to become a journeyman and his master will test him for progression. The apprenticeship usually takes at least five years and often runs as high as twenty.

A journeyman concentrates on learning more weapon types to create, often he experiments with variations in the standard designs. He learns of how to vary alloys to create a better type of weapon. Many of the successful Dwarven weaponsmiths never go past the rank of journeyman. Usually a journeyman has the choice to strike out on their own or stay

with their master and learn more in the hopes of becoming a master. A journeyman can often make a good living and become known for his craft. A smith will usually remain a journeyman for at least a decade and often as high as five decades before attempting the test of the masters.

To become a master a smith must be able to forge any type of weapon as well as be able to alloy any weapon with mithril using a well stocked forge. When a journeyman thinks himself ready, he submits himself for testing by the guild. A council of masters will come to the forge with the journeyman and test his skill. If satisfied the council will elevate the journeyman to the status of least master.

When a smith reaches the rank of least master he is then eligible to sit on the guild council and hold guild office. To progress past the rank of least master a smith must be able to alloy weapons with mithril using only the most basic of tools and forges. At this point the smith can be tested by the full masters of the guild to join them.

The only higher rank within the guild is true master and that is reserved for those full masters who in the opinion of their fellows deserve the recognition for the creation of a truly great weapon. There is rarely more than one or two true masters in a generation.

The only skill that must be learned that the guild teaches is weaponsmith the skill which allows the forging of weaponry. Upon learning this skill the weaponsmith can create a dagger sized weapon with fair skill. Generally about the time he can make ten daggers in a day unaided, he has the skill to alloy weapons with mithril to render them resistant to shattering if he uses a well stocked forge.

There are related skills which a weaponsmith may learn in order to make more elegant weapons. These include:

Craftsman Polisher: This skill allows the proper finish to be put on a weapon, it brings out the gleam of steels, the highlights of silvers, and the patterns in folded steel weapons.

Craftsman Engraver: This allows the smith to properly carve patterns into the blade of a weapon without damaging its integrity or decreasing its usefulness.

Craftsman Gemsmith: This allows the smith to add gems and other baubles to the fittings of a weapon for decorative purposes. Most purists consider such things useless and foppish, but often other races and nobles require a blade which sets them apart from their fellows. A large ruby set in a pommel often has this effect.

## Armorsmith's Core;

The armorsmith's core is often at odds with the weaponsmith's core of the Smith's Guild. Each has their place and status within the guild and often they try to wrangle further status at the expense of each other.

An apprentice armorsmith will begin by learning each armor type and how it is made. All the general techniques any armorer need are taught here. Once those are mastered, the apprentice is taught the basics of armor crafting. Once he can successfully make a chain mail shirt of sufficient quality on his own he is ready to become a

journeyman and his master will test him for progression. The apprenticeship usually takes at least five years and often as high as twenty years.

Again like a weaponsmith, a journeyman armorsmith can remain at that level and make a good living on his skill. If he chooses to stay and study further with his master, he remains and studies all types of armor design until he can make, using just a basic forge, a full suit of platemail which is so protective that a warrior would have to train in its use. At that point the core masters will test his work and decide if he is ready to become a least master. To progress to full master a armorsmith need be able to create two such suits in the space of a day. A true master in the armorsmith's guild must create a suit of armor which is a work of art as well as a protective garb. As with the weaponsmiths core a true master occurs once or twice in a generation.

Those who hold the rank of least master or higher can hold office within the smiths guild.

There are many related skills an armorsmith may learn to make better or fancier armor, these include:

Craftsman Leatherworker: This skill allows the armorsmith to imprint, engrave, and shape the leather used in armor. With this patterns in the leather or even sculpted areas can be made.

Craftsman Polisher: This skill allows the proper finish to be put on a suit of armor, it brings out the gleam of steels and the highlights of precious metals.

Craftsman Embosser: This allows the smith to properly carves patterns into the plates of armor without damaging its integrity or decreasing its usefulness. Often an engraver will inlay a carving with another metal or with inset gems to give more contrast.

Craftsman Patterner: This allows a crafter of chain mail to vary the pattern and the rings of chain in quality and material to place a pattern within the suit. A truly competent smith can depict whole scenes on a chain mail shirt.

## Blacksmith's Core;

The Blacksmith's Core is the group within the Smith's Guild that hold all the general crafts. Within this core are the ironsmiths who make horseshoes and pots, the tinkers who repair all sorts of odds and ends, and the artisans who carve and etch steel to make artwork. In general progression is similar to the other two cores of the Smith's Guild, however within this core there are even fewer masters as most people feel that the basic crafts of iron and steelworking do not require the dedication and talents of a mastercraftsman. The few masters that do exist are mainly artisans who spend their lives perfecting their artform. The masters among the general smiths are truly skilled at their job and often work with the engineers to create new works.

Since there are so few masters in this core the core possess little political power in the guild. However it does possess a great deal of practical power based upon its wealth. Not everyone needs weapons or armor but everyone does need pots, pans, and stoves these things are made by the blacksmiths and are standard trade items in the world.

There are several skills used to represent the skills of the blacksmith's core, they include:

Craftsman Blacksmith (general): This skill allows the PC to create basic iron and steel items such as horseshoes, pots, stove parts, etc. The items do not cost production points and are not generally used in game, it allows the PC to legitimately claim ability as a blacksmith and the associated knowledge.

Craftsman Engraver: This skill allows the PC to engrave steel to create patterns and etchings or stamps for other items. This skill could be used in conjunction with forgery to counterfeit coins and stamps.

Craftsman Carver (metal): This skill allows the PC to carve metal to create statues and sculpture. A carver will generally concentrate on one type of metal and one class of carving, becoming known for his skill in that area.

Craftsman Metallurgist: This skill gives the PC general knowledge of metals, how to find them, purify them from ore, what their properties are, how to alloy them, etc.

Craftsman Metalcaster: This skill allows for the casting of iron or steel items. Similar to carving it is used to create sculpture and also drop forged items.

## THE MASON'S GUILD

The Mason's guild is also a diverse guild. It has many core groups to it and many professions within those cores.

There are three major core groups of the Mason's guild, these are: the Miner's Core, the Engineer's Core, and the Builder's Core. They overlap often in the professions and skills they represent.

### Miner's Core:

Standing in the miner's core is generally based on time within the core and experience. An apprenticeship lasts for ten years, during which time the apprentice is taught all the basics of working a mine. After the required time is spent mining and the Dwarf shows a sufficient skill as a miner he is promoted to journeyman. A journeyman will often be given more responsibilities, all mine foremen are at least journeymen. A journeyman is expected to learn more about the non-physical aspects of mining, such as where to drill and why, how to know when to close a mine, the business aspects of mining, as well as learning to work and manage different types of mines. When a journeyman has served at least twenty years and managed at least three different types of mine and shows sufficient skill to the masters he can be promoted to master miner. Masters generally deal with politics more than with hands on in the mine work, a master miner will often be in charge of up to ten mines at a time, usually making all final decisions for the mines. A master miner is generally under the employ of the merchants who own the largest mines and his skill can often make a non-profitable venture into a rich one.

There is a formal ceremony when a master is made within the guild, it is called the burial. A master is buried alive for a period of three minutes, one minute to represent each stage of his learning. This is a symbolic embrace by the earth which is given in hopes of avoiding being buried alive in a cave-in which often takes the lives of many miners.

Miner: All people are familiar with the profession of mining. However Dwarven miners have many functions that most miners never need deal with.

- Hollowing out and smoothing out large caverns suitable for the building of underground cities.
- Carving of tunnels to minimize the effects of the strange underground weather patterns.
- dealing with mining in areas where the blood of Tyrra flows.

PCs who wish to play miners should take the skill craftsman miner, they can further specialize in a type of mining, or in what they mine (i.e. strip mining, tunnel mining, riverbed mining, gold miner, silver miner, etc.). This skill is required to take any of the skills that follow within this section.

Tunnelrat: Another important job in underground dwelling is the tunnelrat. Tunnelrats are inspectors of cavern walls and ceilings, of struts and braces, and of all forms of Dwarven engineering. Each day these men crawl through miles of tunnels and caves carefully checking the constructions which hold up the ceilings around us.

Sounder: Often the truly valuable mineral deposits and the important water sources are in remote, hidden areas of the underearth. In order to find these hidden treasures a sounder will ply his trade. Sounders are trained to be able to find differing types of material underground by the vibrations and echoes within the rocks. Often sounders will have elaborate equipment which they use to ply their trade. Large hammers, carts that drop huge weights into tunnels, and small explosive devices made by the alchemists are all used to create the needed echoes in the rock. This skill should only be learned in game if taught by a Dwarf who knows it.

Spelunker: Those among the Dwarves who go into the unknown regions underground and find new caverns to expand into are called spelunkers. They are not only trained to find new caves, they are trained to recognize the dangers that can be found underground, the strange creatures that live in the underearth, thus they can tell if the caverns they find are safe for expansion or if they will need to be cleared of dangers first. A PC who wishes to play a spelunker character should take the skill craftsman spelunker.

## Engineer's Core:

In the great Dwarven nations oft times special constructions must be made to deal with situations unique to the under earth. Huge bridges which span crevasses, struts which support cavern ceilings, buildings designed to shake and not fall in earthquakes. These are designed and tested by the Dwarven engineers. Often they are trained in creating explosive devices and ones which shoot flame or acid, again in order to use these tools to solve problems. Engineers are all highly trained and they are very secretive about the knowledge they hold. Most engineers are members of the mason's guild but many are members of the army and specialize in the use of constructions and chemicals in warfare.

A PC who wishes to play an engineer character must first take the skill craftsman, engineer (general), which allows them to have an in game general knowledge of physics, math, and basic machine smithing. This skill can be further defined by specializing in one of the areas below. It is recommended that if you wish to play this type of character that you possess

a general ability to discuss matters relating to the design and construction of the devices or constructs you would specialize in.

An apprenticeship within this core is at least ten years long and teaches the basic skills of mathematics, physics, design, and drafting, required for even the simplest of engineers. A journeyman is expected to refine his knowledge and often concentrate on a single type of engineering. A journeyman is eligible to become a least master when one of his unique designs is built for use. A least master can become a full master when his unique designs are used five times and a full master can become a true master when he is acknowledged by a council of ten full masters as a leader within his field.

Civil Engineer: Civil engineers are those who design the great works which span Dwarven culture. They design the bridges and the dams, the supports and the arches without which Dwarven existence underground would cease.

Often members of this core will specialize and only work on one type of construction, such as bridges.

Explosives Engineer: An explosives engineer specializing in the design of different types of explosives, creating shaped charges to blow up structures or obstacles in a predicted pattern. An explosive engineer character should have the in game skills of alchemy to at least five levels and create traps to at least five levels.

Tunnel Engineer: A tunnel engineer designs and decides on methods of tunneling. A tunnel engineer decides how to dig a mine, what type of supports to use, and what safety precautions are needed in each tunnel.

Machine Engineer: These skilled Dwarves have found a home with the Mason's Guild by default. Though rarely is their work with stone, they sprung out of the miners and thus have not left the guild. The machine engineers apply the natural laws and the crafting skill of the Dwarves to create mundane objects that perform nearly magical feats.

They use levers and pulleys, gears, and pistons, to move things and cause work to be done. They began as a group designing pumps to keep mines free from flooding. They have expanded since then and have created new devices to handle many problems in the mines and underground in general. Most of their devices are powered by animals or hand cranks, though some Dwarves are now experimenting with using fire and steam to drive their devices.

This is a small group within the guild and it has little political power. Very few Dwarves take them seriously for anything other than their pumps.

## Builders Core:

The Builder's Core is responsible for designing and building the constructions of the Dwarves both great and small. Standing within the guild varies by profession, the designers standing is generally based on talent and creativity, whereas the builders standing is generally based on time as a guild member and ability to not only work on a project, but skill at completing it and ability to work as a foreman within a project.

An apprenticeship within the guild usually lasts for 5-10 years where the apprentice is either placed on a work gang to learn the ins and outs of construction or is apprenticed directly to a master to learn the skills of design. At this point the differences in progress within the guild vary greatly on profession.

Constructor: The constructors are the actual builders of the buildings and dams and bridges that others design. When he is considered ready to boss one aspect of a project, he is promoted to journeyman and tested on the job. When he is ready to boss an entire job, he is promoted to Least Master and made foreman of a project. Full Masters and True Masters are much rarer, a Full Master is one who controls several construction projects at once, and the True Master is the rarest of all, generally the title is only given to those who are placed in charge of large scale construction projects such as the building of a new city. The skills applicable to a Dwarven constructor are:

- Craftsman, Constructor, which is a general builder and construction worker
- Craftsman, Mason, which specializes in the laying of stone and building with brick and mortar
- Craftsman, Foreman, which is taken by those who boss others during a construction project.

Architects: The architects are those who are trained in the actual design of buildings. Once they have proved able to design a general structure with ease, they are promoted to journeyman where their training in the artistry of designing a building begins. When a building of a journeyman's design has been studied by a panel of masters and chosen as a master work, he is raised to the rank of least master. A full master is one who has produced ten such master works, and a true master is a honor bestowed on those whom the Core feels have influenced the field of design with their works. Architect characters should consider taking the skills:

- Craftsman, Architect
- Craftsman, Drafting
- Craftsman, Artistic Design

Stonecarvers: The last of the Builder's Core are the stonecarvers. These are the Dwarves who have chosen to learn the shaping of stone as an artform. Advancement as a stonecarver is based solely on talent. An apprentice is directly taught by a master in the basics of carving and working different types of stone. When he reaches a level of skill and talent which his master feels is appropriate, he is promoted to journeyman and leaves his masters direct training. When he creates a work judged to be art by his fellows he earns the rank of least master. When a series of his works is so judged, he is given the rank of full master, and the rank of true master is reserved for those who are considered by all to be great artists, often this title is conferred posthumously as artists are rarely recognized in their own lifetime. Any member of this profession should have the skill:

- Craftsman Stonecarver.

## THE BREWER'S GUILD

Given the nature of the Dwarves and their fondness for alcoholic beverages, specifically good beers, it was only natural that a brewer's guild form. The brewer's guild does not have separate cores like many other guilds, though many of the brewers specialize in a particular type of fermented beverage. Apprenticeships are served in a brewery and generally last ten years where the apprentice learns the in and outs of making different brews. The journeyman level is the general worker within a brewery, many never pass this point. Those who show ability to create successful new brews and recipes are promoted to least master and generally put in charge of making their particular brew. Those who develop five or more lines are given the rank of full master. True master is a rank reserved for those who have won the great brew fest which is held once every ten years and brewers from across the entire land come to compete.

Competition and sales are the two largest parts of a successful brewery or brewers guild. The guild often has brewing competitions among its members and each year the brews in each category are judged from best to worst. The best are given the right to label their brews to increase their sales. Appendix D has a comprehensive glossary of brews.

## THE EARTH GUILD

In any other area, this guild would be called the healer's guild, however, due to the unique tie the Dwarves have with the earth, they chose to take the name of the guild from its members ability to invoke the power of the earth for healing.

Healers hold a unique and honored place in Dwarven society. By virtue of their skill at the spells of the earth, they are thought to be even closer to "the Mother" than the rest of Dwarven kind. Thus most healers will share their abilities freely with all, not worrying about payment for their practices. The community as a whole gives money to the earth guild which is portioned out to the members based on rank and skill within the guild. A Dwarven healer would never think of holding back their skill and not sharing that which the earth has granted them.

When a Dwarf first begins to train as a healer, he is apprenticed to the earth guild. Here he is taught first aid, the diagnostic skills referred to as healing arts, the rudiments of casting earth magic, and the theories of earth magic and the inverse relationship between the earth and chaos. When they can cast their first spell from memory they are considered an apprenticed guildsman. When the apprentice learns to cast spells of the fifth circle they are tested for their knowledge, casting ability, and ethical use of earth magic. If they pass these tests they are promoted to journeyman. When a journeyman learns the ninth circle of spells and can cast life, they are again rigorously tested, with even more focus on ethics, if these tests are passed, they become a least master within the guild and are usually invested within the guilds permanent circle. When a least master has proven himself to his guild brothers and has learned Formal Magic Spells magic to the ninth ring, he is promoted to full master and serves the guild in the politics and decision making process. A full master who does an extraordinary deed in the name of life and the powers of earth is sometimes rewarded with the rank of true master, but this is a very rare happenstance that has not happened this century. Unlike the celestial mages, the earth guild members do not distinguish different types of casters, to them all the members are simply healers.

The earth guild teaches many skills, First Aid being the most basic and rudimentary of the medical training. Diagnosis is taught as the collective skill Healing Arts, and of course earth spells and Formal Magic Spells magic are taught. Potion Making is taught as well and is often combined with brewing. Sometimes this gets carried away, drinking a pint of bitters to gain the benefit of a cure light wounds potion is a little extreme. The guild also gives some training in the non-magical medical arts by training mid-wives and medics.

## ULIN'S GUILD

This guild is what other races would consider the celestial mages guild. It is named in honor of Ulin Steelfist, the first Dwarf to learn the secrets of celestial magic. He was the one responsible for allowing Dwarves to learn the secrets of the stars. In his honor the head of the guild is called Ulin. Many of the "Ulin's" of the past have kept up the fiction that they are indeed the original Ulin. Most people who deal with Ulin accept the fiction while knowing it for what it is.

The purpose of the guild is to spread the teachings of celestial magic. In the legends of the war with the Quentari, the main cause of the Dwarven defeat was the inability to use celestial magic. Once Ulin learned the secrets of the magic of the stars, he began this guild to pass on his teachings.

The guild also works very closely with the Smith's guild in the forging of the great magic weapons the Dwarves are known for. Unlike other races, the mages of the Dwarves will not enchant a weapon that is already forged. The enchanting of the weapon must be performed at the same time as the forging. It is said that this process increases the power of the magic within the matrix of the weapon. The knowledge of how this is done is a closely held secret.

The guild follows many codes, they claim that all of these emerge from a work entitled Ulin's treatise, which is comprised of interpretations of the words of Ulin Steelfist, Ulin of Ahlandria, and most likely many of the other Ulin's of the world.

## Ulin's Treatise:

*We must constantly strive to create that which is new to our art. The smiths have the easy path, they work with the tangible, steel and silver, iron and gold. We work with magic, the stuff of the stars, the energies from above. We can touch it and feel its power course through us, but this is not enough. Magic has a higher calling than simple combat. The arts of formal magic are where our goals lie. It is not enough to simply be able to perform Formal Magic Spells magic, we must constantly strive toward new uses and creations of Formal Magic Spells magic.*

*As it is when the weapon maker crafts a new blade so must it be as we forge a new making of magic. The higher creations of magic have special needs. For many of my greatest creations I needed to deal with the elementals themselves to acquire the force needed for the forging. Still later I dealt with the great dragons and The Council of Wyrms. With them I bargained for the smallest part of their power the Formal Magic Spells that they can cast as spells, yet we can only cast as formal magic. I came forth with these scrolls and gave them to our guild so that we could again expand our art and bring great works of power into being. I came forth with scrolls for the healers and I gave these onto the Earth Guild so that they could do the same. We two guilds came together and forged works of both schools of magic, works of merged power and highest crafting. This was still not enough.*

*The ultimate goal of creation is the formation of new Formal Magic Spells and crafts not based upon the works of others but upon the works of your spirit. This is the goal I strived for hundreds of years. This is the goal I attained. The ultimate goal of each of you is to do the same. This is the one lesson I cannot pass on for it is the one only you can teach yourself. Within each of us is the*

*capacity to create what is new, those of you who can are not simply mages but magesmiths, the crafters of magic and the artists of our people. This is the goal of each and every one of you. Do not be a mere copier of art, a follower of a school and a teacher. Become an artist in your own right, a creator of new magic, allow new spells to flow from your mind and spirit, then create the new Formal Magic Spells which will allow art to be born. As I withdraw from you again I give to you this goal. Learn all that you can from others and then learn all that*

*you can from yourself. Evolve your art and your spirit and shall evolve with it. This is how you can raise your line of honor, this is how you can honor not just yourself, not just your master, but your entire people.*

It should be noted that of all of the practitioners within the many branches of Ulin's Guild, only Nataal was ever granted the title of Magesmith. Even though only Nataal held this title, there are other mages who probably deserved it, many of the legendary mages both of celestial and of earth seemed to be able to create unheard of effects using Formal Magic Spells magic. The guild is found in all Dwarven societies and there is apparently a great deal of contact with the other branches of the guild in all the Dwarven kingdoms of Avalon.

When a young adult first comes to Ulin's guild as an apprentice, they are taught the basics of celestial magic, the theory and how to properly read celestial script. When they can cast their first spell from memory they are considered an apprenticed guildsman. When they learn to cast spells of the seventh circle they are eligible to take the test for journeyman status, the test consists of theories and history of celestial magic, casting ability, battle casting, and ethical use of magic. If they pass these tests, they are made a journeyman of the first rank. When a journeyman of the first rank masters spells of the ninth circle they are further tested to become a journeyman of the second rank.

Once a guildsman becomes a second rank journeyman, they are sent from the guild to acquire the knowledge only the world can teach. At times they are sent in groups or with a master to accompany them. They are often sent in search of Formal Magic Spells components to be used for formal magic. When the young journeymen return if they have successfully completed their assignments, they are tested yet again. If successful in those tests, they are then taught the first rank of formal magic and made a least master. When the least master acquires the fifth rank of formal magic they are made a lesser master. When the lesser master acquires nine ranks of formal magic, they are promoted to master and are now eligible to hold office within the guild and are invested into the guild circles. When the master can substitute one component in a Formal Magic Spells of the ninth circle he can become a high master. Only a high master can hold a seat on the guild council. When a high master can substitute all of the secondary components in a Formal Magic Spells of the ninth circle they can become a true master. Only a true master can become Ulin.

Ulin's Guild is not divided into cores like many other guilds as there are few professions represented within the guild, and those are all closely related. The professions among Ulin's Guild are:

### Battlecaster:

The battlecasters are those members of Ulin's Guild who choose to use their abilities with celestial magic for the purposes of combat. Often these mages are also members of the army, holding a joint guild membership and rank within the army. Some battlecasters are not army members but are adventurers, guards, and mercenaries. Often they will earn their way by using their powers to hunt down and kill monsters hoping to earn enough booty to survive. Battlecasters rarely learn very much Formal Magic Spells magic.

### Thaumaturge:

The thaumaturge is the generic mage among the guildsmen. They earn their living by selling their spells to others. They are the casters of wards and protective spells. They rarely learn very much Formal Magic Spells magic. Thaumaturges rarely leave the Dwarven cities, they hold little to no power within the guild as they are unconcerned with, or unable to learn, the higher magic which Ulin based his guild upon.

## Manaforger:

The man forgers are the elite of the guild. Instead of concerning themselves with the relatively low power of battle magic, they concern themselves with learning more and more Formal Magic Spells magic. These mages are the true power behind the guild as they are the ones who overtly follow Ulin's Treatise.

The manaforgers generally disdain using their battlemagic except when trying to seek more Formal Magic Spells components for new creations. Most of the guild council consist of manaforgers. If a manaforger actually creates a new spell or Formal Magic Spells he is given the title Dweomercrafter and elevated in status within the guild.

## Theorist:

The theorists are those concerned with the laws which govern the use of magic more than the use of magic itself. The theorists fall into two distinct groups, the practical theorists and the sages. The practical theorists make use of their studies in the creation of new battle magics and Formal Magic Spells. They study the practical applications of magic and are responsible for many of the unique creations of the guild. The Ulin is almost always chosen from among the practical theorists as they most clearly uphold Ulin's principles.

The sages content themselves with studying the non-applicable questions of magic; what forces does a particular spell call upon, how is the flow of mana routed from the stars to a mages body, why is there a limit to the number of spells one can cast a day. These questions are generally unanswerable, but the sages spend a great deal of time arguing their side of each question and nearly as much time writing books on the subjects they argue.

There are many skills which a member of Ulin's Guild must learn, included in these skills required by or taught by the guild are:

- Read Magic; Almost all Dwarven casters learn this skill from one of Ulin's Guilds, the mage's guilds of the other races do not have the knowledge to properly train Dwarves in the reading of celestial script.
- Celestial Spells; The spells whose power is drawn from the stars are taught to each apprentice and journeyman within the guild. Celestial Formal Magic; Celestial formal magic is very important to the Dwarven mages. The power to craft magic weapons and jewelry is considered among the highest achievements of Dwarven magic. Many Dwarven formal mages are craftsmen of significant skill in smithing or jewelry making, they follow the lead of Ulin and craft much of what they enchant.
- Craftsman, Sage; Those among the Dwarven mages who study not just the practice of magic but also it theoretical properties are considered sages. Many of the great masters within Ulin's Guild are sages of great renown and all apprentices are encouraged to pick a topic of theoretical study as well as studying the practical applications of using star magic.

# THE GROWER'S GUILD

The grower's guild contains many of the common place professions which allow everyday life in society. They deal with anything involving the preparation, handling, or distribution of foodstuffs. Since the professions within the grower's guild are relatively mundane, the title of master is relatively unused and is more of a political term than a rank based on skill. The testing rarely reveals those who are to be members of the grower's guild, more often the jobs are passed from father to son and mother to daughter. Children tend to inherit the farms and the restaurants from their parents and very few actively try to become a farmer or the like upon exposure to the profession as a child.

Many professions exist within the Grower's Guild, some of the more unique ones are:

- Farmer: The farmers of the grower's guild are those who have learned to cultivate the plants, grains, and animals which have been imported from the surface.
- Fungus Farmer: Since many crops do not grow well beneath the earth, there are those who have learned to cultivate the plants and fungi that do grow there. These folk are called fungus farmers no matter what they actually grow. The fungus farmers are a large core within the grower's guild.
- Verminecatcher: Underground in completely enclosed areas it is even more crucial to keep the rat and pest population under control. In confined areas vermin tend to breed and quickly become an insurmountable problem. Verminecatchers are people who go out and use traps and elixirs to catch and kill pests. This job may sound like an over glorified ratcatcher but it goes beyond that. In many underground areas unique vermin tend to pop-up. Giant Rats are commonly seen in many underground areas as are giant spiders. There are also many more exotic creatures to be dealt with. In Dwarvenholm a creature called a Tyrel is often found in small packs. They grow to be about three feet long and seem to be related to moles. They dig through even the hardest stone and often destroy careful engineering. They also have very large, sharp claws which can rend an undefended Dwarf in two. In addition there are many mundane jobs that belong within the grower's guild that do not vary significantly from the jobs as they exist on the surface. These include: Animal Handler, Fisherman, Butcher, Beekeeper, etc. etc.

## THE MERCHANT'S GUILD

The Dwarves are known far and wide as a merchant race, of course to further these economic interests they organized a merchants guild. The merchants guild is actually a looser organization than any of the other guilds. It is less an institution of training and tradition and more a body which creates and enforces the rules of trade, sale, and barter. All Dwarven merchants belong to a guild in their home city. Each guild has an elected board of successful merchants who meet regularly to decide on prices, set standards, and create trade pacts. Each guild communicates with the other guilds so as to reinforce their decisions. There is no formal apprenticeship within the guild, a merchant will often train a successor either a family member or one of their trusted workers. Status as journeyman and master is completely dependent on profit.

One of the guilds foremost functions is the writing, recording, and enforcing of contracts. To a Dwarven merchant a contract is a near sacred thing, it is a reflection on their honor and the honor of their guild to complete a contract and honor all its clauses. If a contract is violated the guild will impose penalties, for lateness and incompleteness the penalties are often spelled out in the contract and are usually monetary in nature. However for willful breaking of a contract, the guild will often sit in judgment on the breaker of terms and censure them. This censorship can be monetary, suspension of their right of commerce, or even in the worst cases execution. The right of the guild to sentence its members has long been recognized in the justice system of the Dwarves, only the merchants guild has formalized the process to any great extent.

Often merchants within the guild will form merchant houses, this is usually the intermingling of family and business, when a business grows to large for one merchant, he will often bring in family members. At times for one reason or another

the family does not involve itself and a group of unrelated individuals with similar economic interests will form a merchant house, sometimes this is called a trading company to distinguish the difference.

All members of the merchants guild must have the skill Craftsman Merchant and a Craftsman Skill related specifically to their area of commerce. Often Evaluate Item is also learned so barter may be freely and profitably used.

## THE SEER'S GUILD

The Dwarves believe very heavily in the power of omens. The seers developed as a profession to read the signs and portents found around them. Almost anything was found to have some meaning with respect to the future and the seers were those who could interpret these signs. When the practice of reading the omens began, most Dwarves didn't believe the signs. However after many of the Dwarves futures held true more began to believe. Some thought that the predictions were either coincidence or blatant attempts to set up a con. Some people chose to begin recording the omens as the seers spoke them and then investigate the occurrences related to them. These revelations always proved true and no foul play was ever found. This group and the seers joined together in the forming of the Seer's Guild, one speaking of the future, the other recording both the predictions and the events. Thus the Seer's Guild not only interprets omens, but records history. Other functions of the Seer's guild include guiding the communing each time the earth speaks to the Dwarves.

The basic seer is trained or naturally skilled in interpreting omens, the telling of fate that can be read in the world around. Such things may be simple such as a particular animal crossing the path of an individual, or they might be extremely complex, such as the movement of a lizard through a cavern as a tremor is felt through the earth.

**Runecasters:** Runecasters are those who have the talent for using runestones to foretell events in the future. Runestones is the most common method of augury among the Dwarves, though occasionally a Dwarven prophet will use another method, runestones is by far the most accurate.

**Historians:** Historians in the seers guild concentrate on recording the prophecies and interpreting them in the light of common history. Many of the prophecies are couched in symbolism and archaic meaning, the historians are the ones who decipher the prophecy into common meaning. The historians also record history so the prophecies of the seers guild may eventually be shown to be true.

**Geomancers:** The final major profession among the seers is the geomancer. There are those among the Dwarves who study the body of Mother Tyrra. They observe the cycles and patterns to be found within the world. These people are called geomancers and their studies give them an almost supernatural awareness of the earth around them. Often they can predict the occurrence of earthquakes before they happen or see where and when the strange underground storms and freak weathers will occur. Many think it is a magical gift like prophecy. The Geomancer's core is fairly powerful within the seer's guild. Since they are useful in everyday situations and their predictions are for time spans measured in hour to days rather than days to centuries more people pay immediate attention to what a geomancer says than what a seer does.

Rank within the seers guild is based on ability to predict events through any of the methods employed. However the running of the guild comes almost exclusively for the historians, the others tend to be less concerned with worldly things, being more caught up in their prophetic pursuits.

# THE ARMY

While not a guild per say, in general any Dwarven nation will have a standing army. It is organized along more military lines than the civilian guilds are but it shares many traits in common. The groups within the army are often referred to as cadres which generally refers to any group with a specialized function. The fighting men are organized into brigades under the command of a brigadier.

While the army has a certain amount of power and influence as a guild organization, it is ultimately responsible to the government as their fighting arm. Thus while rank within the army conveys a certain amount of responsibility within the army, the officers have less influence than masters within the other guilds do. The Warmaster and his Battle masters however have a great deal of influence over the governments interactions with other powers outside of their immediate control.

All members of the army, even its mages learn a weapon skill. Often they learn a weapon style as well.

There are many professions within the Army, these include:

**Soldier:** A soldier is the basic warrior or fighting man in the army. They train heavily for defense and have specialized in situational combat, often involving narrow caves and trenches.

Each year a competition is held among the soldiers to determine the greatest warrior among them. This soldier is named Champion and performs many ceremonial duties, stands in honor combat for the army, and is often in the forefront in any battle.

**Officer:** The officers are those who rise out of the ranks of soldier and display the ability to command men in battle, keep a cool head, and see the larger picture than just one on one combat. An officer receives further specialized training covering a great deal of tactics, leadership techniques, and army history. An officer will always have the skill:

- Craftsman, Military Leader.

**Tactician:** Tacticians are officers who show a skill for planning the moves and countermoves of small engagements. They usually hold the rank of brigadier and lead large groups of Dwarves into a battle and often have several officers under them. The leader in an engagement is often called the Battlemaster. A tactician should have the skill;

- Craftsman Tactician or
- Craftsman Military Tactics.

**Strategist:** Unlike the tactician, the strategist is concerned with not individual engagements but the war as a whole. A strategist plans objectives and movements of large scale troops in multiple theatres. When a brigadier general is placed in charge of a war effort he is given the title Warmaster, no one holds higher rank in a war zone than the Warmaster, it would take a direct order from the King to countermand the Warmaster. Any strategist will have the skill:

- Craftsman Strategist or
- Craftsman Military Genius.

**Logistics Officer:** Those who wish to hold power within the logistics cadre of the army are responsible for supply and relief of soldiers both in training and in combat. Any member of this cadre should have the skill

- Craftsman Logistics.

**Siege Engineer:** This is an area where two guilds often intersect. A siege engineer was usually trained in the Engineer's Core of the Mason's Guild, often as a machine or explosive engineer. The job of this individual is to construct and utilize siege weaponry for the capture or destruction of enemy held fortifications. Those who want to be able to deal with the creation of siege weaponry should take the skill

- Craftsman Siege Engineer.

**Spelunker:** Similar to the mason's guild spelunkers who go into the unknown regions underground and find new caverns to expand into, the army maintains their own cadre of spelunkers for other purposes. In many ways the army's spelunkers are the underground equivalent of the Elvish rangers. They are not only trained to find new caves, they are trained to recognize the dangers that can be found underground, the strange creatures that live in the underworld, they are trackers and scouts, they can live off the land in the darkness of the caves. Spelunkers among the army do not spend their time trying to find new caves but constantly patrol the dangerous areas of the known caverns and the borders of the Dwarven lands.

Those who are trained in the arts of underground stealth warfare should take the skill

- Craftsman Spelunker (battle).

## EVERYDAY LIFE UNDERGROUND

More than ninety percent of all Dwarves dwell beneath the surface. Of the remaining ten percent they are split between mountain citadels and the cities of other races. Life beneath the ground is very different than life above the ground, there are differences in nearly every aspect of life. This section will explain some of these differences and show how Dwarves deal with them.

## Light Sources:

Beneath the ground the Dwarves are cut off from the sun and most other sources of light. Some scholars speculate that the removal from exposure to starlight is what causes Dwarves to have their difficulty in manipulating celestial magic. Despite many rumors to the contrary Dwarven vision is no different from Human vision. They see by the same type of light that Humans see by. They cannot see by the heat that a body emanates as many have claimed in the past. Dwarven vision is slightly sharper than Human and they tend to adjust to darkness faster than Humans do, but a Dwarf who has been away from the underground for a long time will have the same problems dealing with the darkness that a Human does.

To deal with the darkness Dwarves have come up with many innovations. In the larger cities, often a phosphorescent fungus is grown along the walls of the caverns or the buildings. While not giving off a great deal of light it is more than enough to see by when one's eyes are adjusted to perpetual darkness. The Dwarves also make use of a type of rock which when crushed and heated gives off a glow. The rock is called Verga and it gives off light without burning. Fires are rarely used as a light source as when underground smoke and fumes can be a great problem. Fire when used as a heat source is contained in special stoves and forges which have flue systems to take away the harmful gases.

Some Dwarves have used special rare crystals to make glasses with. These crystals either collect the little bit of light found in the dark caves and amplify it or they bend the type of light, as a prism does, such that they can see where they normally could not. These glasses are extremely rare and costly.

## Cave-ins:

One of the greatest fears of those who live beneath the ground is the possibility of cave ins. When there are minute shifts in the earth or tunneling in one region affects the stability of a nearby region the rock and earth that form the walls of the tunnels can crack and fall leading to a cave in. When this happens in the large caverns of the Dwarven cities, it usually causes some debris to fall from the ceiling, often causing injury and property damage, however when it happens in the closer confines of the tunnel networks or the cave homes, it can cause extensive loss and damage and those injured may be trapped and unable to be reached by a healer. Often this causes slow deaths in which permanent injuries may take place. If a Dwarf is buried and his leg is crushed and he then dies of starvation, when he resurrects, he will have a permanent limp. Dwarves are one of the few races who have many individuals with disabling injuries, not due to the lack of healers, but due to the dangers of underground living.

## Earthquakes:

Worse by far than a simple cave in is an earthquake. When an earthquake occurs the earth itself is shaking as if in response to an injury to it. This is extremely violent and widespread. Earthquakes have been known to destroy entire Dwarven settlements. The worst recorded earthquake was the Great Cataclysm of Yarth which not only leveled a city, but decimated an entire Dwarven nation.

## Weather:

One might think that living underground the weather would not be a problem to the Dwarves. Ordinarily that might be true, however the Dwarven cities are so large that the caverns can spawn their own forms of weather.

## The Flows;

The flows is the Dwarven name for underground rain. It is called the flows because in the caverns, other than the extremely large ones, clouds do not tend to form but condensation of moisture occurs on the roof and walls of the caves. When there is enough moisture in the air the water will bead off the caves falling in large drops or pouring in small flows down the caverns walls and from stalactites. Often it is not individual drops but streams of water that flow as if coming off the eaves of a roof.

## The Deluge;

The deluge is the Dwarven name for flooding. This generally occurs when the flows occur at the same time as great storms in the world above. If the ground has been saturated with water and it can no longer absorb any, it often travels along the path of least resistance and flows into the caverns. This alone can cause flooding and often flash floods, if it coincides with the flows, the dangers are extreme.

Many Dwarven cities are built with this in mind and have diverting tunnels which are meant to stop the flood waters from reaching the main caverns

## The Mists;

The mists is the Dwarven name for fog. Beneath the ground the fog that can form is at times spectacular. The thickness of the mists is intense and often it causes problems in navigating the caves.

## The Freeze;

In the winter month that bury the surface in piles of snow, the underground caverns are often affected by the drop in temperature as well. The caverns are often already colder than the outside world, due to the lack of sunlight to warm the air, some caverns are heated by volcanic activity but these are rare and dangerous to inhabit.

Underground when the cold begins to become extreme, at times ice sheets form along the walls of the caverns. These sheets are very slippery and very fragile. At times the sheets can crack and fall leading to a rain of sharp edged ice fragments. These have been known to be large enough to cut a Dwarf in half. In areas that the freeze is a particular problem the buildings are often built with covered walkways alongside them and there are often smaller tunnels connecting large groups of buildings.

To compensate for the patches of ice on the ground many Dwarves wear boots that have roughened surfaces attached to the soles which allow them to dig in to the ice they walk on.

## The Howling;

The howling is the noise caused by extreme wind conditions that are known to occur in some Dwarven caverns. Many times these are caused by rock formations and deep crevasses and pits within the area. Often the Dwarven engineers can remove or alter the formations that cause the howling. However just as often the formations cannot be altered for reasons of structural safety.

In extreme cases the winds can be fast enough and strong enough to hurl a Dwarf to the ground. These winds can be extremely dangerous and the areas where the howling occurs are usually mined to remove any irregularities in the tunnels which could cause severe injuries if hurled against. The areas are also kept free of debris because the winds can easily be strong enough to pick up rocks and hurl them with killing force.

## The Booming;

In areas where the howling occurs the residents must often deal with the booming as well. The booming is again caused by certain formations below the earth which cause a cyclic nature to the winds of the howling and give them areas to resonate in. The resonance will cause loud booming sounds to echo through the cavern. If a Dwarf gets caught in an area of intense booming often their hearing is destroyed. The booming has been compared to loud thunder and it often causes loose areas of rock and shale to fall, possibly causing further injuries

## Freestanding buildings vs. tunnels

A long standing debate held by those who live underground is whether or not buildings are truly needed in the Dwarven cities. While constructions and artificial dwellings are needed in the large caverns, in the areas off the large caverns and the smaller tunnels, tunnel dwellings are just as appropriate.

Tunnel dwellings are not built of slabs of stone or designed by architects and engineers. They are formed already within the earth and simply molded slightly by the Dwarves who live there to section off areas and form furnishings of the walls and floors. This way the least interference is generated within the body of the earth.

While the level of comfort may be slightly lower and the functionality definitely lower, many Dwarves like the tunnel homes and consider them to be the proper way for a Dwarf to live.

## The Earth's Blood

The earth's blood is the Dwarven name for the lava and magma flows which are found deep beneath the earth or in areas subject to high volcanic activity. The Dwarves consider these areas to be both dangerous and taboo as they are the "lifeblood" of their mother, the earth. It is highly unlikely to find Dwarves in areas where the earth's blood flows. However areas which had once been active and are now quiescent are encouraged for settling. The Dwarves see these as areas given to them by their mother, the earth. These areas are often rich in gem and mineral deposits. Garm Baraq exists in a dormant volcanic region and rests on a large deposit of gemstones, most notably emeralds.

## Food Sources:

Many of the normal foods considered staples in the diets of surface dwelling races are not available below the ground. While the Dwarves enjoy these foods, they try to avoid importing too much surface foods to their caverns. They do

import many fruits and vegetables that simply do not grow underground, whose lack would cause ill health. They also import many grains that make particularly fine brews.

Being below the ground and cut off from the sun the Dwarves cannot farm the way the races above ground do. The farmers grow mushrooms and other fungi which are nourishing to the Dwarves. Many are similar to the type of mushrooms grown above ground, some are huge in size, needing to be cut into steaks, the way a butcher would cut up a side of beef, in order to be sold and served. The Dwarves also grow lichen, a sort of leafy fungus which grows in the moist cracks of rocks, there are again many varieties which are served as foods. Truffles are another popular Dwarven food, these are very similar to the truffles harvested by the surface dwellers, however in the Dwarven lands they are less of a delicacy and more of a staple. Many of these fungi are somewhat poisonous, several sages have suggested that the constant intake of slightly poisonous foods in part accounts for the Dwarven ability to resist the effects of poisons and other noxious substances.

Despite the low light there are several types of plants which flourish, one of these is the Kaer Leaf. The Kaer Leaf is a dark green plant, almost black in color, the darkness of the leaf helps it to grow with lower light. The leaves are long, broad, and thick, to give as much surface to collect what little light there is. The leaves grow off a thin hard central stalk. The stalk takes up minerals from the ground and becomes very rock like. The Kaer Leaf appears as wide leaves growing off a rock spike. The leaves are thick and spongy being more like meat than vegetable in consistency. The flavor varies depending on the variety of plant and the type of nourishment it receives while growing. The Dwarves also raise a variety of grains that while similar to the grains of the surface such as oats, rye, wheat, and barley; have adapted to the low light and the varying minerals of the soil. Many of the normal animals raised for food do not do well underground or in the darkness. Cows for example do not do well without the day and night cycle, it throws their milk production off completely and they do not tend to grow as well. In addition, cows cannot eat the grains that grow below the surface, they simply cannot digest them properly. They instead raise pigs, or more properly boars, as they do well underground and pork is a staple in the Dwarven diet. There are many other animals which live beneath the ground that supplement the Dwarven diet. There are domesticated lizards, called Karn Lizard, which take the place of most types of poultry. There are gigantic versions of the slug which live beneath the ground, they are often called Slug Cows, and they replace beef in the diet of Dwarves.

Fish also play an important role in the diet of the Dwarves. In the underground bodies of water many unusual fish are to be found. These fish are excellent food sources and the Dwarven cities which are built near underground lakes are famous for their fish and shellfish.

Many of these foods are exported as delicacies by the Dwarves.

## Water Sources:

Depending on the location of the cavern, water may be a problem underground. Oft times Dwarves will build their cities near to underground water sources. In the depths the most common source of water are small pools or springs that exist in the cavern systems, however larger bodies of water exist as well.

Underground rivers are also commonly found near Dwarven cities, the Ardynn River has a branch that runs beneath the ground near to Dwarvenholm. The river supplies some of the food stuffs that Dwarvenholm eats and exports. It is said that the Ardane, as the people of Dwarvenholm call the river, has rich deposits of gold, silver, and mithril within it.

In Bandoraparg, the Glittering Halls were built on the shores of the River of Emeralds, an underground fork of the Endarr River which is strewn with emeralds and other gemstones. The River of Emeralds was a great source of wealth to Bandoraparg.

## Resources underground:

The Dwarves enjoy the benefits of living underground, among these benefits is access to rare materials which most surface dwellers cannot easily acquire.

In the underearth, the Dwarf can mine rare metals such as gold, silver, and copper with relative ease. Thus the Dwarves overall are a very wealthy race in the terms of the surface dwellers. Due to the higher prevalence of these metals, Dwarves will often use them in the construction of the buildings in the restricted areas of their cities. They do not use them in the areas open to surface dwellers. The Dwarven palaces are truly a sight to behold as they are often sheathed in large amounts of valuable metals.

One metal that is almost exclusively in the ownership of the Dwarves is mithril. Mithril is an incredible tough metal which is resistant to destruction by nearly any force, including shatter and destroy spells. One theory of why mithril is so resistant to destruction is that it is formed in areas which have a high concentration of water which has never seen the light of day and the magical properties of that water, which is the primary component to the Formal Magic Spells render indestructible, is somehow taken into the metal. The secret to forging pure mithril items has been lost, but it is possible to alloy mithril to other metals rendering them somewhat resistant to destruction. Mithril is a source of great power and wealth to the Dwarven people. The largest known deposits of mithril were in lost Erethane, but small deposits exist throughout the Dwarven nations.

Crystal is another resource which the Dwarves make heavy use of. Crystal is used by the Dwarves in many of the places where glass serves the other races. Since the Dwarves have access to large quantities of crystal they make great use of it. Carved crystal figurines are a valuable export from many Dwarven cities. Some say that the large veins of crystal found under the Dwarven cities can be used to shape golems never seen in the outside world.

Dwarven alchemists and smiths also make a great deal of use of the coal and oil deposits found underground. The coal and the oil serve both as a fuels source and as sources of many of the strange substances used by the alchemists.

Gemstones are mined by the Dwarves in nearly every Dwarven city. These are exported to the surface in raw form, cut and polished form, and in carved forms. The price of these gemstones is high as the Dwarves are in general reluctant to part with them.

The unique foods and brews that the Dwarves raise and create are also exported to the surface in great quantities and earn much money for the Dwarves.

The Dwarves also have access to many odd substances which serve as Formal Magic Spells components to mages and alchemical ingredients to alchemists. Most of these are reserved for the Dwarves themselves however.

## DEALING WITH OTHER RACES:

As told by Bared Stoneshield: Grudgebearer of clan Rediron

## Humans

The Dwarves aren't sure exactly what to make of Humans. They are the most variable of all the races. There are many Humans whom the Dwarves would be happy to call friend and seem to follow the great line. However there are at least as many, if not more, who are amongst the slime of the earth and haven't the slightest iota of honor.

The Humans are an impatient race, perhaps due to their short life span. They want everything right away and can't understand when you tell them that it takes time to forge a proper blade or to fit a proper suit of armor. That is why their weapons are inferior. For example, They are so proud that their Kingdom of Evendarr has maintained for almost 600 years. Most don't realize that our Kingdom of Validor has stood for nearly 20,000 years and that even those Kingdoms that have slipped away into our past survived for millennia. The Humans don't have a concept of what has come before them. They don't even know what nations stood here in Evendarr before they came in. They would benefit by a careful reckoning of where they stand and why they stand there.

While never having been at war with the Humans as a race, there have been skirmishes with some of their nations and the Dwarves have often fought the Humans when they were allies of the dwarves' enemies. Their skill at fighting is noteworthy, yet it is their numbers which make them a truly deadly foe. When dealing with Humans you must always consider that they are like animals in a pack, fight one and fight the whole pack.

## Amani Elves and Quentari Elves

Dwarves don't truly distinguish between these two subdivisions of the Elvish race. There is a long standing animosity between the Elvish and Dwarvish people. A great deal of this is historical in nature. The Quentari gave the Dwarves their greatest single defeat in the dim recesses of their history. The legends of the Elf-Dwarf war still persist to this day. Secondly, Dwarves think of the Elves as having no place on the line.

We look at Elves, and we see a race with an even longer life span than us. What do they do with this gift, do they dedicate themselves to great works or great deeds. No, most of the race do nothing with their long lives. They are flighty and unconcerned with the great line of merit. The animosity for the Elves is not so much a hatred but a disappointment. The Dwarves feel that the Elves could be so much more than they are if they only didn't waste ninety percent of their lives. There is an inherent lack of understanding between the two races. The Dwarves have a deep desire to educate the Elves and bring them to their own line of honor, yet at the same time they have an almost irresistible urge to strangle them for not seeing the obvious. It is the Dwarven nature that often causes outbreaks of violence as the Elves do not enjoy being yelled at to change their ways.

## Wild Elves

The Dwarves have had little experience with the wild Elves, they having only recently emerged from the Ash Forest. At first the Dwarves thought them to be like the Amani or Quentari, however after some exposure to them it was seen that they have at least a rudimentary grasp of the great line. The wild Elves seem to have some pride in their work and tend to dedicate themselves to goals. They are still extremely flighty by the standards of the Dwarves.

## Stone Elves

Stone Elves, while definitely understanding dedication and honor, are the most stuck up prig race on all of Tyrra. You can't get one to smile, and try to get one to enjoy a drink or a bar fight. They are a race that does not know how to

enjoy the good things in life. They do have some skill at crafting but think that their products are superior to all others. Someday they'll have to fight against Dwarven arms and armor and then they'll learn what proper forged steel can do.

## Mystic Wood Elves

The Mystic Wood Elves as a race are both one of our favorites to deal with and one of our least favorites.

On one hand, they are superb craftsmen, though they usually don't work in steel, they put their hand toward crafting in just about any type of material. Anything they produce is of superior quality and incredible detail. They also enjoy a good drink and the fun that follows it. If one gives you their sworn word they stick to it.

On the other hand, they are completely flighty. They seem to follow the path of nothing but pleasure and considering that they have an abundance of women, they seem to turn to other men all too frequently. They definitely don't understand honor, they seem to make light of the fact that they are individuals and while they talk of clans, they certainly don't seem to be a part of a clan as we are. In addition many of them seem to turn to thievery, having almost no concept of personal possessions.

As a race they are confusing to us. They don't tend to be aggressive and they practice their crafts so much that they never become truly great warriors, yet they tend not to dedicate themselves to one craft, thus becoming a jack of all trades.

## Drae

Of all the races considered sentient and civilized, the Drae are the most hated. These black skinned cretins talk of honor and know nothing of it. They worry over face and propriety without knowing anything of right and wrong or the great line. They are a foul race devoted to dark practices and we have warred with them before.

They think to lay claim to the iron rich areas in the north that are rightfully ours. One day we will conquer them and take the lands that they now hold. There will never be anything but deep hatred between our races.

## Barbarians

The barbarians are just that, barbaric. They live only to survive and they could care less for matters which make life worth living. The great line means absolutely nothing to them and they will violate honor and their word without a moment's hesitation. Though they appreciate our crafts, they could never hope to even attempt such noble pursuits as smithing or masonry. This old race still live in rude huts and use wooden and stone weapons. To call them intelligent is an insult to most other races.

## Half Orcs

To the Dwarves, although the half orcs are a people who enjoy a good fight they are too barbaric for close relations to exist. The fact that there are some Orcish clans who claim to follow the path of honor is pure mockery to the Dwarves.

The half orcs also claim that they are the same murderous race who destroyed the Glittering Halls of Bandoraparg. If the two races are indeed the same then the half orcs can never be more than a slaving race of honor less killers. If the half orcs are a separate race then they deserve even less respect for wanting to be considered the same as the foul Orc creatures.

Overall the half orcs are a despised race among the Dwarves and we will never get along with them.

## Half Ogres

Dwarves get along quite well with half ogres. The two races share many similarities. Both races love a good fight and both races agree that a good fight does not need to be deadly. The Dwarves admire the half ogre dueling system, they feel it is just a bit too organized. It's a generally good time when you go drinking with a half ogre, just watch the sweet drinks, you'll never see such a bar fight as you will when a half ogre gets too much sugar.

The half ogres seem to have at least a rudimentary concept of honor, they use their dueling system to establish their place in the line. They are a race more dedicated to the arts of war rather than the art of war and the crafts of life.

The link that the half ogres have with the earth is impressive, perhaps they too are the children of Tyrra. Their link with the land brings them closer to us as a people.

## Gypsies

The Gypsies are a bizarre race, they do not hold to the principles of dedication or craft. They tend to think of life as one large party. They do not see the seriousness of life, they tend to appreciate our race for its ale and ability to drink, but they do not realize that the drinking is for after the day's work is done, not before.

They have their own concept of honor and it does not match up very well with ours. They seem to be less interested in doing what is right and more interested in not being seen doing what is wrong. Many gypsies are known to steal and they have often been overheard saying that stealing doesn't count as long as you don't steal from the gypsies. They are not a race to be trusted, however their ability to use the curse makes them a race to be careful around.

### Scavengers

There is little to be said of the race of scavengers. Often they appear to be more like well trained animals than intelligent beings. They do not seem to have much of a society so they are more often judged completely as individuals. We have seen that they tend to exhibit traits of the animal that they look like. When dealing with them it is good to keep that in mind. A rat is a rat whether it walks on four legs or two.

## Sarr

The Dwarves and Sarr have had very few dealings. When we have met the dealings have been fair and equitable. The race seems to have a good grasp of honor and are known to be fine crafters of both stone and steel. The greatest problem that the Dwarves have with the Sarr is the fact that they use necromancy as their battle magic. They claim to use only the part of necromancy that is combat related, not animate the dead and such. They don't realize that it makes no

difference which part is used, it is the use itself that harms the earth mother. When our race faced the need to use the black arts or find another way, we found another way. There is no excuse to turning to chaos, this will always be a wall between our two races.

## Hoblings

This race is most likely the most infuriating of them all. As another merchant race we deal with them all the time. They are shrewd bargainers and clever salesmen. They are also quite often insane. The Hobblings seem to vary greatly among the race. Some are quiet consistent types while others seems to flit from thought to thought faster than even the Elves do. Often these changing thoughts have no basis in reality. The members of the Hobbling race also tend to be a little too free with others possessions, a trait which always infuriates us. They don't seem to follow any code of honor and they do not tend to be crafters. They often brew wines but most of their products are inferior and unacceptable as a craftsman's product. We deal carefully with Hobblings as we know that to do otherwise would be to show them our unexposed back and let them go for the kill.

One trait of the Hobblings that we truly appreciate is their ability to tell a story. They can bring each character to life and make each place seem real. It is a true skill and talent that these people have and one which is worthy of being called art.

## Biata

I'm not sure if anyone truly likes dealing with the Biata. They talk of honor, but what they mean is honor for themselves alone. People talk of the bigotry of the Dwarves toward the Elves, well Biata are the first and last words on bigotry. They are a race which believes in their own superiority and are not easy to deal with. They have little-to-no skill at crafting, half of their great cities were built by our people. There were many problems that came about when we decided to aid the Biata, many Dwarves died or disappeared, or lost their sanity. Wars started due to their pride and hatred. Now we avoid this race, to often confrontations with the Biata and their strange mind powers disrupt our line. One day the Biata will pay for their arrogance and mistreatment of our race.

## OTHER SUBTERRANEAN RACES

### The Baracoor:

The baracoor are a race of Humanoids who live underground, even deeper than the Dwarves. Since the two races met the baracoor have been fighting the Dwarves with only brief intermissions of peace.

There exists an incredible animosity between the two races. There has never even been an attempt made to foster peace between the Dwarves and the baracoor. All of the wars between the Dwarves and the baracoor have ended in victory or defeat, never peace. There can never be peace for the baracoor are the symbol of the broken line. They show no honor, they attack killing all to the last woman and child. They revel in the use of chaos, even using the very elemental chaos, as well as the lesser powers of necromancy.

The baracoor are a black skinned race similar to Drae in appearance, they do not have pointed ears and are obviously not of Elven stock, they also have red streaks across their faces further differentiating them from the Drae. As

deep dwellers the baracoor can't stand the light, they are hurt by a light spell which affects them as a flamebolt affects normal creatures and is beyond their ability to resist.

The baracoor view magic differently than the other races do. Instead of splitting it into two distinct groups, earth and celestial, they see magic as a unified whole and many of their mages study both sides of magic concurrently. Oft times this makes their mages weaker in combat but more versatile. The baracoor make heavy use of undead minions, that alone is reason enough for the hatred of the Dwarven race. However they will often capture foes in battle and turn them into undead through Formal Magic Spells magic, thus depleting the strength of their enemies and adding to theirs at the same time. In addition the horror of facing your former companions across the field of battle is a potent force as well.

The baracoor also have many unique creations, some of these are powerful magic items, others are enhancements to their warriors such as the strange powers exhibited by their warlord Ahrkrag. Still others are unique creatures which they loose upon unsuspecting foes. Perhaps the most evil of these creations are the violacium.

The violacium are not just a few warped creatures, but an entire race that breeds and reproduces. They are vicious and powerful and seem to be devoted to the destruction of Dwarves. Often after battles in which the violacium were unleashed, the field would be littered with half-eaten Dwarven bodies. The violacium have powers and abilities which make the Dwarves fear them. They can walk through rock as if it were air, phasing into the walls of the tunnels to attack. Thankfully they seem to need to keep moving once they are within the walls of the tunnels so they cannot be used as spies. They secrete powerful acid in their spittle and can even destroy objects made of mithril. The largest ones can swallow a Dwarf whole and often do in battle.

## The Ardenites:

The Ardenites are a strange race that generally live deeper than the Dwarves do. The Dwarves have an uneasy peace with the Ardenites as they are convinced that Dwarven mining causes their caverns to collapse. At times in the past Dwarves have fought the Ardenites. They are not a warrior race, but have Humans among them which serve as their fighters. The Ardenites themselves are often powerful mages.

The Ardenites have many strange properties, first is their appearance. They appear Humanoid but have grayish skin and a ridged nose. The next odd thing is their mode of speech. No matter what language they speak in, their thoughts seems to run backwards and their speech comes out the same way. They seem to have trouble distinguishing certain concepts such as differences among the races, for instance they often refer to other races leaders as the high kobold. The truly strange thing about the race is that it appears that they only have one sex. It is not known how they reproduce, if they have children, lay eggs, or split in half. The race does reproduce but they apparently do it without the normal procedures.

## The Trolls

Once in the past the trolls were a peaceful race. When the Darkling War began they were threatened even as we were. The Great Alliance came together and fought back against the Darklings. We fought alongside the trolls and they were our allies. But their King led them to betray us and they did so willingly, for power offered to them by the Darkling Lords. For this betrayal we will forever hate the trolls. They are a coarse warlike race who have no honor and no hope of redemption. May they rot in the four winds for eternity.

## DWARVEN CITIES AND TOWNS, GREAT AND SMALL

### Dwarvenholm:

Dwarvenholm is called a fortress city, this is perhaps one of the greatest understatement of all time. The city is built with nothing but defensibility in mind. The greatest Dwarven architects and engineers combined to make what is perhaps the single strongest fortress on, or rather in, Tyrra.

When Validor's capitol Trollsgate fell to the attacking trolls during the last underground war, King Kelanor II thought that it would be good to move the open city to Dwarvenholm. Dwarvenholm according to the Humans who live above us was founded then, some 200 years ago. The true city of Dwarvenholm was founded after the Darkling War by King Roscal Holmfounder first patriarch of the Holmfounder family of the Stoneheart Clan. It was founded to be a hidden refuge, away from all other races. However in the last Underground War, the Gates Below were discovered when the Baracoor and the Violacium flooded through. Thus when Trollsgate fell, Kelanor II felt that building onto the surface and opening an escape route was preferable than having a city with no easy way out. Building of the open city began in 396 E.R. and was completed in 432 E.R. It was less than 150 years ago, in 452 E.R., that Kelanor III chose to reveal its existence to the Humans who were allies against the Trolls.

The Humans think that there are perhaps 300 to 500 Dwarves here. There have been rumors that there are 8,000. Even that understates the truth, there are in fact over 10,000 Dwarves living in Dwarvenholm, many of which have never been to the surface. This is perhaps one quarter of the entire population of Validor which is spread throughout the area the Humans call Evendarr. The other major cities are outside of Ashbury, they are Huervalt, Dumas, which is an underground trading center. Huervalt and Dumas each hold about 3,000 citizens. The remainder of the population is divided among smaller settlements which hold less than 200 Dwarves each and surface dwellers. This is a closely guarded secret, in the past when people have revealed the truth behind the population, they have been discovered through contact earth Formal Magic Spells and hunted to their final death.

### Huervalt and Dumas

Huervalt and Dumas are hidden Dwarven cities deep underground in Immervale and Battlewoods. These cities are modeled after Dwarvenholm but are closer to the original concept of Dwarvenholm, isolated Dwarven cities where no outsider goes or even knows of its existence. All goods made in these cities are funneled out to Dwarvenholm or by the few merchants who travel from the city pretending to come from outside Ashbury's borders.

Since these two cities are so isolated the general tendency is for an overall tone of racial superiority, other than the merchants guild. The populations of these cities stand ready to come to the aid of the open cities and settlements should the need occur. The Dwarves are ever ready for the outbreak of war.

### Tower Hills Citadel

There is a large population of Dwarves in Tower Hills Citadel. Most are weaponsmiths, armorsmiths, engineers, masons, or healers as until recently this estate was always under constant attack from the Trolls. The economy is changing over now and more of the Dwarves are building homes rather than fortifications and forging plows rather than weapons. With the Barbarian settlement came an influx of gemstones and so many Dwarves are plying the trades of gemcutter and jewelry maker within the Tower Hills Citadel nowadays. Dwarves here are becoming more settled in, but they always keep a wary eye toward the underground where the Trolls disappeared, never trusting to their good fortunes.

## **Trollsgate**

This estate contains the ruins of the former capitol of Validor. Of late the Deep Trolls have taken the area. All Dwarves who have ventured in to this territory have either vanished or returned by way of the earth circle. A state of war exists between the Deep Trolls and the Dwarves and open hostility is not far away.

## **Stony Brook**

A large number of families make their homes in Stony Brook. The marble and granite quarries of the area attracted masons from Dwarvenholm by the score. The best stonecutters and stone carvers of this area hail from the Dwarvenholm Mason's guild. Probably at least one hundred Dwarves make their homes in this area.

## **Crystal Falls**

In Crystal Falls, Dwarves run tours of the wondrous caverns found here. Many have accused them of looking for hidden gem deposits, not realizing that all the gem deposits were mined out of these caves over a thousand years ago.

## **Medicia's Bridge**

Several families of Dwarves live in Medicia's Bridge, having settled there when they were hired by Baron Justin Medicia to build the famous bridge. They have made their living since as architects and builders to the people of this community as well as merchants selling the Dwarven goods brought in from the hidden city of Dumas.

## **The Forsaken Hills**

The Forsaken Hills is a land within the estate of Dwarvenholm. It is the home to Clan Crimson which is a clan in opposition to the rightful government of Dwarvenholm. Very little is known about the inside of the Forsaken Hills as no one is allowed within and few travel outward. The Clan Crimson is in a state of preparation for war and what little is known of the area supports that. It is built in a highly defensible series of valleys and has many engineering works to increase the defense. The economy of the area is self supporting and no known trade with the outside occurs. They are waiting for the day when they are ready for war and will destroy the oppressors of Ashbury and Evendarr.

## **Greenstone**

Several major families of Dwarves live in Greenstone. They were attracted to the estate by the gemstones that could easily be bought there. The families mainly consist of artisans, stonecarvers, gemcutters, and jewelers. Of course the merchant's guild does a good deal of business here, as the "gateway to the east" Greenstone is a major hold for the Dwarven merchants.

## Oliver

The royal estate of Oliver in Trelheim has always had a relatively large Dwarven population due to the silver mining that is so prevalent in the area. However of late the Dwarven population has been shrinking due largely to the fact that the mines are running dry. The Dwarves of the area have tried tunneling deeper but they find little to make it worth their while. The largest problem is that the existing veins of silver seem to run under the Mishrak Fens, the neighboring estate. There are many problems with mining in the fens, the water level and the lizard men being the two primary ones.

Oliver represents a Dwarven community on its last legs. Many of the Dwarves there are speaking of migrating or finding new mines in another area of Trelheim.

## MYTHS OF CREATION

These are some of the tales told of our race, passed down from father to son and mother to daughter from time immemorial.

There are many legends as to where our race came from, some trace back to our earliest days, others from the days of our contact with other races. No one is sure where or when our race began, but we are certainly among the oldest of the races, if not the oldest. Each of these stories tells of the birth of our race. It may be that our origins are to be found within or they may just be stories, we may never know the truth.

## THE PARABLE OF THE BROTHERS

The Dwarves were of course the first race to appear on the world of Tyrra. For many years we ruled the world as the only sentient beings that lived. Diversity came from within our race as the four brothers diverged to form the races of the world.

It was in the dim recesses of time immemorial when the four brothers began to explore the land. They came upon a crater blasted into the body of the world and began to descend into it to explore its depths. When they reached its center they stood face to face with four beings the like of which had not been seen before.

The first was clad in gray and stood tall and strong, he bore the mark of infinity upon his brow marking him as a servant of order. The second was dark and black of skin, large horns curled outward from his brow. The third was clad all in white, he bore a staff upon which the symbols of life were engraved. The last was foul and hideous, his form shifted under the gaze of the brothers, never appearing to be the same twice.

They spoke as one, "we have been waiting for the coming of mortal man," they said. "Now must each of you choose the path your people will take. A great war has been fought and our people have chosen to allow the mortal races of this world to carry on the fights." The four brothers all looked at them in wonder, not fully comprehending their words. They continued, "Each of us represents a force, a power, and a philosophy. It falls to you four to choose among us."

The first spoke alone, his voice strong and unwavering, "I represent stability and order, those who choose to follow me will be granted stability, patience, and skill at all things worldly."

The second then spoke, his voice a whisper giving hints of the inky depth of night, "I represent endings and death, those who choose to follow me will be granted power and strength, they will be warriors fearsome and devastating."

The third spoke, his voice vibrant and full, "I represent hope and life, those who choose to follow me will be granted continuance and be made one with those things natural."

The last one spoke, his voice oily and dripping with honey, "I represent variability, change, and chaos, those who follow me will be granted variety, numbers, and the strength which comes from multitudes..."

Each brother felt a calling in his spirit, each was called to one of the four beings of power standing before them.

The first brother, whose name was Stoneheart, approached the being of order. "I choose you," he said, "for I am a true follower of order and I wish for my people to be stable and skilled". Thus did Stoneheart gain for his people all the benefits of order and the Dwarves were solidified as a race. Stoneheart returned to our people his form altering to reflect order's touch, his face was now marked with a beard which symbolized the connection to order and the stability of his line. He gathered those who would follow to him and returned to the caves beneath the world, there to teach the new knowledge gained from order and to raise a mighty nation of which he became the first King.

The second brother, whose name was Trol, approached the being of death, "I choose you," he said, "for I am a true warrior and it is my destiny to rule over all that I see". Thus did Trol gain for his people the strength in arms, the power and might offered by death. Thus did he and those he took with him change, they became a vicious and conquering people, their form changed as well, their skin darkened to a deep brown, their hides thickened until it was like armor, their muscles grew in strength until they could move huge boulders alone. All these changes had negatives as well, they lost their thoughts, all that went through their minds now was the thoughts of conquering, they now shunned fire which had been one of our strongest tools. Thus were born the trolls, never again will our two races live at peace.

The third brother, whose name was Aelfin, approached the being of life, "I choose you," he said, "for I wish to live at peace with the world, and I wish to live for a long time in this world's embrace". Thus Aelfin gained for him and his followers the long life promised to them, they went and lived in the forest away from the caves that gave us our life. Amongst the trees their bodies changed, they grew taller and their ears began to point. They lived for millennia but their lives were empty without the dedication that they once had and the craft that at one time gave their existence meaning. Thus were born the Elves, they live long but meaningless lives.

The last brother, whose name was CHuman, approached the final being, he of chaos, "I choose you," he said, "for though each of my brothers choose the power in specific realms, I choose power in all and any realm". Thus CHuman gained variability for he and his followers, in nothing did they excel as a race, but in nothing were they hindered. Their forms were a blend of all the forms of the others, and their lives were shortened as well. Their numbers grew beyond imagining however and they quickly populated much of the world. Thus were born the Humans, they live but a short time, but they seem to know no boundaries.

## THE GIANT'S KIN

The Dwarves are known in some part of Tyrra as friends of the Giants. Some ancient legends tell that the relationship between our two races is much closer.

The giants were once a mighty race that stood tall and strong across Tyrra. Over time their power and knowledge caused many races to grow jealous and war upon them. The wisest of the giants decided that part of the problem was their inability to negotiate with the small races of Tyrra on their level.

Thus did the giants weave a mighty dweomer which caused some of their number to shrink in size and conform to the size of the other races. As this was their first attempt at such a manaforming, the results were not completely expected. The size of the giants had indeed shrunk, but at the time they became smaller than intended, almost as small as most Hobblings stand today. The shrinkage in size was somehow accompanied by a growth in facial hair as if their bodies confined by the magic released the tensions inside them through their beards.

These altered giants when they appeared with their kin appeared so small as to be called Dwarves, a name which remains to this day.

The giants are not seen any longer on Tyrra, some say they have left the world, others say they died out, still others say they perfected these magic and now appear to be the size of the other races of Tyrra.

## THE FORGING

Of the earliest legends of the birth of our race is the tale of the Forging and of the Makers who performed it. They speak of an age before the Age of Innocence, the Age of The Makers

The Makers were said to be the first race upon our fair world who had the spark of thought within them. They were a powerful and ancient race of great craftsmen, artists, and healers. They easily surpassed the great works of smithing and magic performed today. Their weapons were legendary and their magic created artifacts. Though great and powerful, the Makers had an enemy. These were the Dragons.

The Dragons were huge creature, incredibly powerful in the ways of magic, but they were jealous as well. Jealous of the creative side of the Makers, jealous of their abilities to fashion that which was new and beautiful. The Makers and the Dragons fought, a long and devastating war. The Makers won, casting a mighty spell of warding which hurled the Dragons from the face of our world. This great work of magic was not without cost. The Makers saw that their numbers were decreasing, that their lives were getting shorter and less children were being born.

To aid them in their lives or perhaps to continue their ways after they faded from time, the Makers created the Dwarves. They took the stone and iron from the earth and forged them into life. They shaped our race upon their smithies and built a great nation of fellow craftsmen. In the earliest years we lived with the Makers learning from them and sharing in the joy of creation. But as the Makers weakened and their power waned the barriers holding away the Dragons began to crumble. The Dragons returned and began a new offensive against the Makers and against our race as the Makers children. Thus began the Age of The Dragon Wars.

By the will of the Makers and our love for them, we fought to defend our parent race. By the will of the Makers we also built great underground shelters which the Dragons could not reach due to their enormous size. As the war continued and refugees began to fill these shelters, the Makers power began to wane further. The Makers retreated with us into the depths, so to follow and harry us, the Dragons created the goblins, and the orcs, and the trolls to be our enemies for all time. The servants of the Dragons were fearsome and bred quickly, they soon began to win the war.

The Makers decided at last to attempt to cast the great warding once more and again banish the Dragons from the face of Tyrra. In preparation for the great magic, the Makers scattered the Dwarves throughout the caverns of Tyrra and sealed us away in the deepest caves so that the servants of the Dragons could not find us and destroy us. We retreated below as the Makers demanded and the great magic were again cast.

To this day the Dragons upon Tyrra's face are fewer then they were in the dim recesses of history, but the Makers were never seen again.

## THE CREATION OF THE DWARVES BY THE DRAGONS

There are many legends that speak of the Makers as the creators of the Dwarven race. These legends often speak of the war between the Makers and the Dragons. The truth of the tale is that the Makers were Dragons themselves and that the war was a civil war amongst the draconian peoples, and a war of vengeance for the greed our people showed.

It was the Dragons who first took the stuff of the world and shaped it into the form of the Dwarves, they took this shape and breathed life into it and thus was born the Dwarven race. The Dragons created the Dwarves as servants, the shapers of stone, the forgers of metal, and the miners of the deep.

It was also the Dragons who first whispered to the Dwarves of the splendor of gold and instilled a greed deep within our people. Some of the Dragons were not content to have their just share of the Dwarves mining, some wanted more, they came to the Dwarves and told them of the beauty of gold, they transfixed us with its hypnotic charm, we wanted more and more of it. These Dragons dealt with us, we would mine the gold and give part to them and keep part for ourselves, the other Dragons would be told that the mines went dry and would get none.

Dragons are not stupid beings and though the ruse seemed to work in the beginning, the Dragons quickly realized our lie and began to give out punishments. The greedy Dragons did war upon those who merely wished their share and a great battle ensued. To punish the Dwarves the trolls and orcs and goblins were created to fight us. We retreated into our caves and hid from the Dragons who gave us life. When we emerged again the Dragons were now rare having apparently slain each other in the war. Those who remained did not care about our race who were once their servants. All they now cared for was not the concern of the mortal races. And so, the Dwarves now go their own way, outside the influence of our creators though still dealing with the races that were created to teach us our place.

## THE EMERGENCE

When the eight forces of creation warred upon each other, they used Tyrra for their battleground. When the war ended the elemental lords of earth looked about the face of Tyrra which had been a vibrant world of earth and they were dismayed at the destruction that had been heaped upon her.

Rather than retreat back to the elemental plane of earth where their home lay, a large group of the lords of earth chose to remain on Tyrra and restore the world to what it had been, repair the damage to the earth that they in their war had inflicted.

The task before the lords of earth was not a simple one and they had problems due to their nature. Since the lords of earth were not native to Tyrra's plane of existence, they would not remain here to resurrect if killed. Their spirits would return to the elemental plane of earth to reform and would be trapped there until enough time had passed for them to make the trip again. Though they were mighty and strong in both form and magic, their numbers slowly dwindled. Many powerful creatures and forces had been let loose during the war and some of these could even kill a lord of the earth. In addition since the lords of earth were not on their home plane, there was no way to increase their numbers.

Some of the most dedicated among the lords decided that in order to truly aid Tyrra they must truly become of Tyrra. They merged their essences with the earth of Tyrra and from this merging came the Dwarves. Though the Dwarves were mortal and had less power than the lords, their unity with Tyrra meant a great deal. They were able to use the magic

that flowed from Tyrra's bounty. They could resurrect on this world as they were now of it. They could increase their numbers and grow as a race and made this world their home as they healed it.

The lords of the earth who did not become one with this world remained and aided them. The alliance between the two proved a powerful one and it served to heal Tyrra and allow the race of Dwarves to grow and prosper. When the healing of the world was complete the lords of the earth departed. No one is sure where they went. Some say they chose to merge with Tyrra and join the Dwarves as members of the race. Others say that when their job was finished they returned to the elemental plane of earth to live out their normal existence. Still others say that they remain on Tyrra waiting for the need of their aid once more.

One part of our heritage that is explained by this legend is our aggressiveness. Our birth from the ravages of war has forever given us the nature of the warrior and it served us in the battle to heal Tyrra and make it our home.

## THE KNOWN HISTORIES OF THE DWARVEN PEOPLE:

The history of the Dwarven people is incomplete and quite possibly inaccurate. Over the years many of our histories were lost in the collapse of our nations. In addition much of what survived was written in Tokai, High Dwarvish, a language which was abandoned by the populace as a whole when we became a merchant people. Tokai is no longer understood except by the rarest of scholars so much of the histories are based on tentative translations or oral traditions. How much of the histories presented here is legend and how much is truth cannot be determined.

Dwarven history is split into ages, of which there are six. The earliest histories fall into the period called the Age of Innocence. The time between the Dwarven emergence into the outside world and the founding of the City of Gold is called the Age of Loss. The time between the founding of the City of Gold and the Darkling War is called the Age of Prosperity. The time from the Darkling War to the fall of the City of Gold is known as the Age of Legend. The time from the fall of the City of Gold till the fall of the Three Nations is known as the Age of Kings. The current time is being called the Age of Renewal as the Dwarven people begin to reorganize and rebuild their once great nation to fit with the ravages of time.

As the Dwarven race is an old race with a long history much of what is presented herein involves the active points in history, the wars, the struggles, as well as some of the great achievements. To present a detailed history would be impossible in one text, even to simply present a complete list of the Kings of The Seven Kingdoms would be next to impossible. So herein we skip over much of the peaceful times. Do not interpret this to mean the Dwarves are a violent or war like race, they are perhaps more aggressive than many races but it is not the main aspect of the race. History, it is often said, is a tale of conflicts, so it is herein.

In addition the history presented here is what is known of the seven kingdoms and their related lands, this by no means covers the entirety of the Dwarven race.

## The Tale Of The First And Second Age:

by Sage Arvol Rediron,

as translated from the Stones of Yarth.

In the dimmest remembrances of our people we dwelt both above and below. We dwelt in harmony with the land and practiced our craft and the magic that came from our world. As children of Mother Tyrra our powers were such that we could call forth the elementals of the earth and beseech them to do our bidding. We lived a simple life in villages and towns. We had yet to build any of the great works which our people are now famous for. We lived spread throughout Tyrra, mainly in the mountains and the caverns below. In the largest cavern of this bountiful world Tyrra, The Cavern of Tokai, was our largest gathering of people. We dwelt at peace not exploring the world around us, but content to go about life in a manner befitting a race of crafters and farmers. The first race from outside we encountered were the Giants. They of course had their own name for their race, but this is how we referred to them, a full twenty feet tall they stood, and their powers were beyond measure. We formed a long, lasting friendship with the Giants and our two races dwelt in peace, aiding each other as needed.

We dwelt this way for long turnings of the years, this is the period we call the Age of Innocence. Thus did we live until our first war was thrust upon us. We decided to emerge from our seclusion and explore the world around us. We ventured out of our mountains and went into the lowlands and the forests and here for the first time we met the Quentari. They looked upon our race and our friends the Giants with scorn and hatred. They called us being of the unnatural and they did war upon us, and so began the Age of Loss. We fought long and hard against these Elves who would exterminate us. Their claim was that we did not belong on this world, we the children of this green and bountiful world were called outsiders by these Elves. No matter how hard we tried to negotiate and plead for peace and a chance to live in harmony, they would not listen. Our pleas fell upon deaf ears. Having no recourse, we fought back. We used our skills to craft weapons such as the world had never before seen. The Elves use wooden blades and bows and arrows, clubs taken from fallen branches. We went to our caves and took forth what the earth our mother would give us as weapons. For the first time we forged steel. We took the iron that lay free for our taking and beat it within fires and turned it into a most fearsome weapon. We made long blades, the sword saw light for the first time, we made hammers to smite our foes, and axes to cut down the trees which sheltered them. The world gave us our defenses as well, steel was made into clothing which would turn away weapon blows, thus was armor born. To stop the arrows which would strike from above sheets of steel were hammered out and handles attached, thus did our race create the shield.

We quickly forged ourselves as well, we became a race of warriors. Our people fought back with a fury such as these Elves had never seen. The steel weapons carving a huge swath through them. Our mages used the power of the earthcall to bring forth earthen brethren to fight with us. Though we had the strength of arms and the power of the earth on our side, the Elves still held the advantage. For the Elves had a power which we could not master, that of the magic of the stars. Celestial magic was our undoing for we as a people could not use this magic which had the power to harm. Our mages would not turn to the evils and chaos of necromancy, for even should we win the war we would have lost ourselves to its dark seductive power.

The war continued for years uncounated. Generations were born and died who had never known peace. Our once peaceful race was now one which had war in its blood. Never again would we be able to simply live at one with the world around us, now we would always need to be prepared to fight.

We fought on and much blood was spilled, each passing decade saw more loss and more devastation. Finally there was a change in the pattern of the war. To our race came one who could wield the power of the star magic. His name was Ulin Steelfist, and he was one of our greatest forefathers whose name shall ever be honored along the great line.

Ulin helped us fight and taught others to use this magic as well. The magic were strange and not natural to our people, thus it took longer to learn the basics of this power and many were not capable of the training needed. After a time Ulin came to believe that what was needed was seclusion in which to train. Teaching the basics of the power to his apprentices only to have them go out and die quickly in battle was useless. He withdrew from the war with many of his apprentices and learned more of the powers which he wielded.

Two decades past before we saw him again and the bloody war raged on pushing us further and further back. When he returned he brought with him a huge golden sphere which took two Giants to lift and move. He wished the war to end and had made his sphere to further this goal. He had the sphere placed within the roof of the great Caverns of Tokai and there activated its powers. The sphere began to shine as the sun and give light and heat. Since this occurred before the days when formal magic were commonly used, to create this sphere he had journeyed into the very heart of the elemental plane of fire and requested a boon from its overlord. What sacrifices Ulin had to make is unknown, but he acquired the power he sought. This he said would let all dwell below with the advantages of the world above. He urged a withdrawal into the Caverns of Tokai where our people could rebuild and return to the peaceful ways they once knew. The elders, perhaps tired of the war as any agreed to this. Thus ended the First war, or the Elf-Dwarf War if you prefer. Not with a final battle, but with a quiet retreat. Though the war ended, the animosity for the Elves still exists to this day.

## The Tale Of Our People, From The Building Of The City Of Gold To The Darkling War; The Age Of Prosperity:

by Seer Gorman Rockland,

as translated from the Golden Tome.

Uncounted years ago the Dwarves were one united people. We lived in our homeland in the great Cavern of Tokai, deep within our mother near onto the center of the world. We came here as a simple people, despite the ravages of war. The war with the Elves had changed us but we were still dedicated to our craft and strong in the magic of the earth. We pledged to begin again and find the peaceful ways of our people away from the surface and the treacherous Elves of Quentari. We used these magic unique to our people and the skill we had in working of metal and stone and within those caverns we founded a great city. Here rose the majestic splendor of the City of Gold.

Never before and never since has there been such a marvel of architecture and engineering. Each building was unique and sheathed in gold and silver, platinum and mithril, gems studded each door way and sheets of purest crystal formed each window. Above the city at the apex of the cavern was Ulin's sphere. This was the first great work of star magic that was created by our people, Ulin the teacher of celestial magic created it a sphere of solid gold which would channel the light of the stars to the lands below the earth so that we needed the surface world not at all.

We lived alone in the City of Gold, untroubled by the outside world for nearly a millennia. Our only visitors were the giants who aided us throughout the war and stood as our allies. During this time Ulin taught us much of the ways of the stars and our art grew both in crafting and the ways of the earth. As our population expanded we needed to form a ruling body. The people had basically been divided into families and larger grouping of families called clans. Now we needed to form a coherent government for all of our people and set down laws to maintain us throughout the years. A gathering of all of the family patriarchs and clan chiefs was called. This was the first Great Moot, which later became a tradition of our people. Here they met and argued over who would rule our people. After a time everyone began to listen more and more to the ideas of one young Dwarf. He spoke of honor and of the difference between living with laws which tell us the difference between right and wrong and living the difference between right and wrong. He gave us his concept of the great line of honor in which every Dwarf gave to the whole of our people. This great philosopher was named Daghar Redstone and when the vote was called his name was the only one proposed as our leader. He took the title King and agreed that he would lead his people along his line of honor. He set the traditions of the King giving honor to his people as his people give honor to him. In recognition of his ascension, he took a new family name, Stoneheart. He said that the name symbolized

the union of his line and the earth which was our mother. Over the years his family grew until Stoneheart enlarged into a clan. This clan now forms the hereditary rulers of our people.

King Daghar formed a council of advisors and sought their aid when decisions affecting all the people were required. He made this council up of the elder patriarchs and the greatest of the crafters, whatever craft they followed. These craftsmen saw the wisdom in a group which could meet to share knowledge and decided that each of them would found such a group. They began what they called the guilds. Each guild was dedicated to passing on the secrets of their craft to the next generation of artisans. They would stand as judge of the quality of one's work to make sure that their craft would not suffer. They would look out for the needs of those who practiced their craft, and they would maintain the line of merit which showed the honors of each generation to those who followed them. In all, nine guilds were formed: The Smith's Guild, which dealt with any who worked in metal; The Mason's guild, which dealt with any who worked in stone or gems; The Earth Guild, which dealt with any who worked with the powers which flowed from Tyrra; Ulin's Guild, which dealt with any who worked with the powers which came from the stars; The Brewer's Guild, which dealt with any who fermented drinks for the people; The Grower's Guild, which dealt with any who supplied the people's basic needs; The Seer's Guild, which kept the histories and read the portents for the future; The Merchant's Guild, which dealt with any who bought and sold the products of others; and the Battle Guild, or the Army, which dealt with those who trained for fighting and the protection of our people.

King Daghar lived a long life of five hundred and fifty years. During his rule he set down many principles which still guide our people to this day. After his death he was entombed beneath the city, directly under Ulin's sphere where a beacon of light would always shine down upon him. He was succeeded by his seventeenth son Valek. While King Daghar passed on, reaching what he called the end of his line, Ulin left our people in sadness. He was old and nearing the end of his line as well, but when his end came he was not with us. Even though we were unable to mourn his death when it occurred, we still honor him and his great position on the line.

Generations passed and our population had grown much too large for the Caverns of Tokai to hold. Several migrations would be needed to bring the population back to acceptable numbers. These trips could only be made in part beneath the surface. So the giants accompanied the groups of explorers to find new areas to settle. King Valek decided against once more going to the land mass of Avalon where the Quentari made their home, instead going to the land mass now called Amys. It was on this first trip that we encountered Humans for the very first time. They were the people of a nation called Eveth and when they saw us with the giants named us Dwarves in relation to them. This name still remains with our race to this day. The people of Eveth eager to trade with us after seeing our crafts directed us to the large caverns which were in the area. There we settled and founded Yarth, the first of the Seven Kingdoms. Yarth prospered. We traded our goods to the Humans of Eveth and remained there in peace. It was decided that Yarth needed a ruler and King Valek's third son Rolham was chosen for the position. He took the title King, and his father King Valek of the City of Gold became the High King who ruled over all. Over the next three hundred years we further expanded and formed the Seven Kingdoms.

Beneath the same land mass as Yarth we spread out, next forming the Kingdom of Garm Baraq in the area called Troll Canyon, the trolls were a violent race but not overly so and they were a race we could deal with. Some of our greatest workers of the magic of our world went to Garm Baraq and founded the Gemseeker Clan there. Large gem deposits made trade from this kingdom very profitable. Garm Baraq was ruled by Valek's cousin Gemin.

Not even ten years after the founding of Garm Baraq, High King Valek reached the end of his line. As his successor he chose his youngest son Valek II a young Dwarf of only four decades. He was crowned High King and proved to be as able a leader as his father was.

After Garm Baraq we formed the nation of Ahlandria, just outside a swampy area where a Human nation was also beginning to form. In the caverns below the swamps we found the giant Ayher Bats. We trained them as beasts of burden and riding animals. The Dwarves of Ahlandria were successful and trade grew based on rare materials and plants found in their caverns. The smiths and miners of Ahlandria found a metal that they called high steel, it was similar in appearance and forging to steel, but once forged was completely indestructible, even stronger it was said than mithril. High steel

unfortunately proved to be found in extremely small quantities. The leadership of Ahlandria fell to the first great-grandson of Valek I, Boris.

The next excursion was to the land mass of Ghandar where we founded the Kingdom of Erehane and built its capitol, the great city of Valorn. A large part of the royal clan accompanied the settlers to Erehane. Their King was Doron, Valek I's grandson, but with so many of the royal clan present, Doron chose a ruling body unlike the other Kingdoms. Below himself he placed a council of leaders called Thaners. These Thaners ruled in everyday matters and left only the gravest of decisions to Doron. In Erehane mining operations were started which proved very profitable as the area contained much in the way of precious metals, including the rarest of them all, mithril.

After Erehane was settled King Valek II sent settlers to the land mass known as Minami. Minami was very sparsely settled in those days, well before the founding of Skara or Houppelande. Here they raised the great Kingdom of Morehedin, and raised King Alen. They raised a great city and dug immense tunnels connecting it to all the Kingdoms across the seas. The greatest masons of our people were said to be found in Morhedin. These masons found a vein of the material known as heartstone, said to be the stone that anchors the world together. They began careful studies and extraction of this wondrous material and began to plan its uses. After nearly five decades the proper way of manipulating this stone was found. Since it formed the basis of Tyrra's strength, it connected all parts of the world. When used properly it could move people and objects through the world. Thus the great workers of the earthcall shaped the Archstones of the King, gateways connecting the City of Gold and the Kingdoms. Each Kin was made an archstone such that they would never be removed from their fellow rulers.

Soon after Morhedin's founding King Boris of Ahlandria came to the end of his line. He was succeeded by a cousin named Nevis.

When the next excursion began, King Valek II decided to once again try to go to the land mass of Avalon and brave the Quentari. Our people had grown in number and strength. We now practiced the star magic nearly as well as we used the magic of the earth. Still even though our power and numbers had increased, we did not wish another war with the Quentari so soon, so we settled the caverns far to the south of Quentari and there founded the Kingdom of Bandoraparg where King Hasdor ruled. There they built the Glittering Halls alongside the underground River of Emeralds and mined the extensive deposits of gold and silver and gemstones found in their mountains. After only a short time the Dwarves were ready to again settle new caverns and their decision was made to go north toward the Quentari.

As the next excursion was preparing to leave, news came from Garm Baraq that King Gemin had died and his grandson King Vorta now ruled the Emerald Hill.

When the people went north from Bandoraparg, led by Roganak Stoneheart, we chose the deepest caverns we could find in which to build our city so we could further avoid the Elves of Quentari. The nation of Validor was founded, Roganak was crowned its King, and the great city of Zhaduk was built. We avoided the Elves as much as possible and only minor skirmishes occurred. Beneath the surface we encountered other races on Avalon, the trolls whom we had already encountered in Garm Baraq, and the Ardenites a strange race who were difficult to communicate with and we basically left alone. We began trade with the trolls who, though crude, were incredibly strong and were able to barter their aid for our crafts. We also met and chose to avoid the barbarians who lived on the surface above Validor.

## The History of The Darkling War:

As told by Barak Ironmonger, who serves his honor eternally guarding the Halls of Zhaduk.

And as taken from The Ledger of Shadow, written by Prince Luthien Dramorgland of Quentari.

As the Seven Kingdoms were growing and the next excursion, to found the eighth kingdom, was about to begin we were once again rocked by war. To this day none know where they came from and none know why they attacked, but all remember the horrors of the Darkling War. The Darkling war was fought primarily on Avalon in the new Kingdom of Validor, however the foul creatures spread throughout the tunnels and all of our people faced them. These creatures came out of the darkness and attacked all of the races, their eyes glowing in red and green. Many of them were seemingly unaffected by magic and others while affected by magic had skin that could turn all but the mightiest of blows. At first they attacked our race and the trolls, seeming to fear the daylight above, but soon they began to attack the surface at night, then with their strange magic they brought down a concealing fog which protected them as they fought in the sunlight. All of the races were hurt, pushed back in a seemingly mindless, brutal assault. With the threat of such a deadly enemy to unite us, we allied ourselves with the Quentari and the trolls. We forged great weapons and gave them to the troll warriors to use. Elvish archers and mages joined our warriors and healers as well as the troll brigades to push back the forces of the Darklings. This was the great alliance, and its united power forced back the Darkling horde, killing them by the hundreds. Just as it seemed that the war would be won, we were betrayed from within. The final battle was being led by King Roganak and the Elven Prince Luvian, as well as Chargo, the King of the Trolls. Just as the final push began, Chargo pulled his troops back and began to attack his allies. The evil Darkling Lord S'set had tempted him with dark power and he had turned traitor. Prince Luvian died this day, beset on all sides by Darklings, King Roganak died his final death as well, but not before he had taken the head of Chargo and caused his spirit to flee to the Four Winds.

The battle was lost and the alliance severed on that day. S'set stood triumphant over masses of dead Dwarves and Elves. He called to his allies the trolls now led by Bonebiter, Chargo's son and granted them the power they wanted. He called forth a great shadow and all the trolls who stood with him that day were immersed in it. Their skin darkened and the blackness became one with them, thus were born the fearsome shadow trolls.

When the alliance fell and our leaders were killed, all seemed lost as the great Darkling horde roamed the land and the caverns unopposed, destroying all they encountered. Entire cities were evacuated and others were made into strong sealed fortresses to protect our remaining people. Reinforcements were sent from all of the Dwarvish cities but they were of little help. The Darkling horde ravaged our people. To survive the great Elven and Dwarven mages came together with the great Dwarven smiths and met in secret council. The leader of Ulin's guild came forth, called as the tradition had it, Ulin, he and the great Elven mage Luthien, brother to Prince Luvian, together planned the working of a great enchantment which would stop the horde in its tracks. Together with Barak ironmonger, the greatest smith of their day, they built the Chronos Flux, a magical machine that would stop the flow of time in an area the size of a city. Like the original Ulin did when he created his sphere, Ulin journeyed to other planes and dealt with the elementals who are guardians over time. Again the sacrifice he made to them is unknown, but he returned with the needed power. A force was sent into Zhaduk, which had been abandoned earlier in the war, to lure the Darkling horde to them. S'set, assuming that they had returned to Zhaduk to reclaim the city, brought the horde to destroy them. They confronted each other at the gates of the Great Hall of Zhaduk and here the Chronos Flux was used. Time ceased flowing within that cavern and the great gates of Zhaduk were sealed for all time.

Though some of the Darklings and Shadow Trolls managed to escape, without their leaders they were ineffective against the might of the Dwarven and Elven armies, they were all destroyed. The trolls themselves fled from us fearing our wrath. To this day the trolls are despised as a race completely devoid of honor, they have no place at all on the great line and we will wipe them out to a man. Since this time of alliance, the Elves and Dwarves have ceased open hostility, though our two races still only tolerate each other.

With much of the populace dead due to the war, further expansion was needless. And thus were formed the Seven Kingdoms of Tokai, ruled from below in the City of Gold in the Caverns of Tokai.

# The Tale Of Our People, From The Darkling War To The Fall Of The City Of Gold; The Age Of Legend:

by Seer Gorman Rockland, as translated from the Golden Tome.

During the Darkling War two of the Kingdoms other than Validor had a change in rulership. King Rolham of Yarth had died in an earthquake that shook the caverns and destroyed many buildings killing thousands. His son Rolham II took over and immediately set the engineers to work on structures that could withstand the great shakings of Tyrra. In Erethane King Doron passed on, his honor was transferred to the High Thane, his cousin Murol.

After the Darkling War our people spent much time recovering, our population which had swelled to immensity over the last millennia was now a fraction of what it was. We still had great Kingdoms and cities but not the people to fill them. The next generations were simply spent licking our wounds and growing once more. During this time High King Valek II reached the end of his line and his grandson Jorsh ascended to the throne of the world.

In Validor, which had suffered the greatest in the Darkling War, lost its capitol of Zhaduk, which had to be rebuilt. The new capitol they named Trollsgate, for it stood athwart the caverns now claimed by the Trolls. It was a bastion against the foul honor less race which betrayed them to the Lords of the Darklings.

With a new and inexperienced High King on the Throne of the World, the race suffered its first major internal conflict. Just over a century from the end of the Darkling War did we have our first civil war, the Thane Wars. The Thane Wars lasted only ten years, but they were among the bloodiest ten years the race of Dwarves have ever seen. They began when High Thane Murol the King of Erethane died without appointing a successor. His son Murol II was a Thane serving under him and seized power as his heir. Murol II was an incompetent leader and the other Thanes rebelled each vying for the power of the throne.

In Erethane, despite the attempts of High King Jorsh to settle the issue, there was a rapid series of Thanes declaring themselves King as their forces took ascendance and they killed the previous King. Murol II was murdered by Vondor after less than two years on the throne, Vondor was killed by Moge three years after that. One year later Moge was killed by Rentin and within the same year Rentin was killed by Gabe, who was killed by Landor, who was killed by Gabe's son Gabe II. Finally a Thane stepped forward who was not concerned with personal power but with order and stability for his people, he reorganized the Moot and was duly appointed High Thane after which he led his unified people to recapture the palace from Gabe II. This Thane was Yaral the Unifier.

Shortly after the end of the Thane Wars the Kingdom of Yarth was struck by one of the earthquakes that periodically affected the area. The only outstanding thing about this quake was that the current King of Yarth was killed in it. Rolham II was laid to rest as his son Rolham III is crowned King of Yarth. Sixty years into Rolham III's rule of Yarth a large earthquake struck the Kingdom and a large number of Dwarves were killed or injured. Rolham III began public engineering works to control the damage the quakes could cause. Many areas of the city were rebuilt under his rule and huge braces which had been reinforced by the power of elemental earth were placed to support the cavern.

Three centuries after his rule began High King Jorsh reached the end of his line and was laid in the tombs of the High Kings in the City of Gold. His rule was considered unremarkable and he neither added nor detracted from the line of merit. He was succeeded by his great-grandson Gorvin.

Less than a century after the rise of High King Gorvin, King Yaral the Unifier of Erethane was approaching the end of his line. However, before death could take him in her steely grasp, members of the Judgeratt came forth in the caverns of Erethane and raised him up as an Order Elemental for his works in life. In the cave in which his ascension occurred the walls all turned to quartz and rutilations ran all throughout it. This was named a sacred place by the Dwarves of Erethane, and the first act of the new King, Usok, was to declare them a protected site called the Caverns of Yaral.

For the next two centuries the Dwarves expanded in relative peace until extensive mining deep beneath the City of Gold found a new level to the Underearth, a level inhabited by the evil Baracoor. From the moment the two races met there was hostility between them. The Baracoor attacked the miners entering their domain and soon spread through the mines to encroach upon Dwarven territory. Battles continued for twenty-five years until High King Gorvin decided to attempt to foster peace and met with a delegation of the Baracoor nobles. The treacherous Baracoor attacked at the table of peace and Obliterated High King Gorvin. This act of pure treacherous evil began the first of the bloody Underearth Wars which have plagued Dwarven settlements since. This war would last through the reign of three High Kings and killed uncounted numbers of Dwarves. Fighting around the City of Gold continued for years under the banner of the new High King, Gorvin II. All of the Dwarven nations sent aid to the home city using the Archstones to transport troops to the City of Gold. Yarth in particular was fierce in its support of the war, having been naming Warrior Kings as their leaders. King Rolham IV died fighting the Baracoor and his heir Ketrich died alongside High King Gorvin II during the next two centuries of fighting. Ketrich being followed by Ketrich II and Gorvin II being followed by High King Tarhel.

The power of the Baracoor was fierce. They controlled magic which the Dwarves knew nothing about, which nearly cost the Dwarves the war and their homeland. Aid came when from within Ulin's Guildhall. A Dwarf calling himself Ulin, after the founder of the guild, brought forth a series of magical writings. He brought them before the King and his champion, Sovan Cragbrow, accompanied by the seven members of the Council of the Earth Guild. These, he said, are scrolls of power which I have recovered from the Dragon's themselves. With these we can forge weapons to battle the Baracoor. However, we need to find materials to forge the magic with, and for that I need heroes to go forth and collect these materials while our mages and healers learn to cast these new magic. So was formed the Company of the Winged Heart, who left the war so that they might win it. This group was led by the King's Champion himself and they sought after all the strange items Ulin asked them for. Seven years later the group came together with all the needed ingredients for Ulin's great forging.

Ulin himself forged a new long sword for Sovan to wield and into this sword he cast the first Formal Magic Spells ever cast by man or Dwarf and created the first sword enchanted with damage aura. He bound the Formal Magic Spells so that it would last till the next celestial change and then he and the members of the Earth Guild set out to create an item of defense so strong that the Baracoor could not defeat it. Thus they forged a shield to be wielded by Sovan as he led the Dwarves to victory in this war. Upon it was emblazoned a winged heart as a symbol of the noble warriors who quested for so long in the defense of the Dwarven people.

Now the Dwarves wielded items of power such as the Baracoor did. The tide of battle began to shift as the Dwarves, under Sovan, pushed the Baracoor back into the hidden depths they came from.

King Ketrich II of Yarth died in the next decade of fighting, saving Sovan from a hoard of Baracoor warriors. He was succeeded by his grandson King Lodrau.

Battle raged back and forth for another century without either side being able to defeat the other. Finally the day came when Sovan Cragbrow was able to stand across the field of battle from the Baracoor's dread champion. This champion wielded an enchanted pole arm called Earthsmite. These two saw each other and charged, disregarding all others on the field, to kill each other. The battle between these two lasted a full hour and when it was over Sovan walked away the victor with the Baracoor's head carried on Earthsmite.

Though disheartened by the loss, the Baracoor did not retreat from the field of battle and the bloody war continued for two and a half more centuries. During this time High King Tarhel died in battle and was succeeded by his nephew Jorsh II.

Unable to defeat the Dwarves through battle, the Baracoor decided to turn to treachery and met secretly with Krogart, the son of High King Tarhel, who was expected to be named as his father's heir. They convinced Krogart that if he were to rule that they could reach a peaceful settlement and would end the centuries of war. Naive and young Krogart believed these words and attempted a coup against his cousin Jorsh II to seize the Throne of the World as his own. The insurrection was put down, but it greatly damaged the war effort. Krogart the Usurper was judged, and scarred in punishment. He was being escorted to his execution by King Lodrau of Yarth when his allies in the Baracoor attacked and freed him, killing King Lodrau in the process. Lodrau was succeeded by his son Lodrau II who swore vengeance upon the usurper and traitor Krogart entering his name in the Royal Book of Grudges.

This was not the last seen of Krogart for his allies experimented upon him with their black arts of necromancy and when he was next seen he walked within the body of our mother as an undead monstrosity. Krogart was transformed into a dread Liche, perhaps the first Liche ever created. He fought alongside the Baracoor wearing a golden crown as the self proclaimed High King of the Dwarves for the next fifty years. Finally Ulin emerged from the Guildhall once more, and this time he was accompanied by a great Order Elemental. Many of the Dwarves fell to their knees as they recognized it as Yaral the Unifier of Erethane. Yaral spoke and told the Dwarves that the Baracoor were a force of chaos and at Ulin's pleading the Judgeratt has decided to end the bloody war that had consumed his former people for a millennium. With this he raised his hands and the entirety of the Caverns of Tokai and the City of Gold was sealed beneath a wall of pure force. All entrance and egress from the caverns was now via the Archstones. And so ended the First Underearth War, one of the bloodiest chapters of Dwarven history.

When the war ended Ulin came forth and said, "Since Krogart proved to be a great problem by his claim of being the true High King, the Guild of Earth and I have devised a means to prevent that from ever occurring again." With that four Dwarves came forth bearing a shelf of stone on which was laid a hammer of such proportions that a Dwarf could scarcely lift it let alone wield it. This is Faethal Ulin said, if it is even touched by any who is not the true High King it will obliterate their presence from Tyrra. With that pronouncement many of the court members who had gathered near to glimpse what was occurring withdrew and much plotting for the throne ceased. High King Jorsh II looked upon this hammer and straight away picked it up, his continued life proving to all that he was indeed the true High King of the Dwarves. When Ulin saw this he once again withdrew into his guildhall and was not seen again.

Now that the Underearth War had ended peace came upon most of the Kingdoms of the Dwarves, however Krogart the Liche continued to be a problem attacking Garm Baraq incessantly with a mercenary force of mixed races called the Reavers. The leader of the Reavers wore upon his face a desiccated mask which was said to kill those who viewed its horrid visage.

In addition to the attacks on Garm Baraq from Krogart, Garm Baraq and Yarth had a great deal of diplomatic tension as King Lodrau II of Yarth insisted that King Naryon of Garm Baraq allow him to march troops through his Kingdom to avenge the murder of his King, Lodrau I. Garm Baraq was one of the most remote of the Kingdoms and King Naryon was reluctant to give such power to one of the other Kingdoms and refused.

Krogart's attacks continued for over two decades when suddenly they ceased. When Krogart was seen again it was not attacking one of the outer Kingdoms but the City of Gold itself. Krogart, it seems, managed to find his own supply of Heartstone and build an Archstone of his own from which to mount attacks upon the City of Gold. Since Krogart knew how to find the City of Gold he could freely attack the High King's seat of power while the Dwarves not knowing where Krogart made his home was unable to attack him in turn.

High King Jorsh II, having seen too much blood during his reign, chose to step down rather than fight a war again. His grandson took the Throne of the World as High King Valek III. High King Valek III led the fight against Krogart, never quite beating him, but always keeping him at bay. For the next century the City of Gold's forces together with the forces of Yarth fought on against Krogart. King Lodrau II of Yarth came face to face against Krogart to avenge his father, only to fall in battle against the Liche and suffer his final death. He was succeeded by his son Ketrich III who continued the Grudge against Krogart the Usurper.

Krogart fought against the Dwarves on and off for the next seven centuries, becoming an ever present thorn in the side of all the Dwarven Kingdoms, but especially against the High King's seat of power in the City of Gold. He slew High King Valek III's successor High King Narwin. High King Narwin was followed by High King Tarhel II and then by High King Tarhel III. High King Tarhel III was assassinated by unknown killers and was succeeded by High King Valek IV who was followed by High King Valek V.

High King Valek V was a King among Kings and was known for his explorations into the upper world. During one of these royal expeditions the Dwarves again met the Giants. The Giants had become a race who wanted nothing to deal with the outside world and were hiding by shrinking their massive forms to the size of most Tyrran races, but they remembered their ancient friendship with the Dwarves. A small group of Giants came to live in the City of Gold at the bequest of High King Valek V. When they chose to leave years later they gave High King Valek V a gift in repayment of his hospitality and protection. They brought into the Royal Palace an Anvil fully fifteen feet across and ten high. It was called the Anvil of Endings and upon this legendary anvil some of the mightiest works of the Dwarven race were forged. They taught the High King and his mastersmiths how to use the Anvil. Upon it they placed the Baracoor weapon Earthsmite, which had hung upon the wall of the High King's Hall since its capture by Sovan Cragbrow. They destroyed that mighty polearm upon the Anvil and forged its power anew into Faethal, the High King's hammer. It was this act that led to the final destruction of the Liche Krogart. When High King Valek V picked up Faethal once more he could sense the concentrations of Heartstone throughout the body of our mother and immediately could find the Archstone Krogart had built.

Thanking the Giants, he gathered his forces and the forces of King Rolham VII of Yarth, the current bearer of the Grudge against Krogart and they swept through Krogart's castle, this time surprising the Liche in the heart of his domain. Krogart having nowhere to flee to was finally killed and the High King and his forces were shocked to see him reform from the golden crown he had worn since his first appearance as a Liche, the crown proving to be his bottle. They then captured Krogart rather than killing him and having to fight the Liche each time it reformed. They took it back to the City of Gold and placed Krogart's crown upon the Anvil. They made the Liche watch the final ending of the Grudge against him, as King Rolham VII of Yarth hammered the crown till it and its evil power was no more. Krogart was forced to the end of his line. The line of Kings from Lodrau to Rolham was now finally free of the unsettled Grudge and its honor complete. Without the Liche to lead them, the Reavers, which had enlarged over the centuries to become a military nation, simply ceased attacking and went about their own business away from the Dwarves.

Within the next century High King Valek V died of old age, his death was mourned throughout the Seven Kingdoms and all their colonies. His great-grandson Cahar took his place as High King of the Dwarves. High King pledged to bring a new era of prosperity to the Dwarves now that their enemies are all laid low before them. He begins to use the Anvil of Endings often to reforge captured magic items to create new and more powerful weapons for his followers. Indeed High King Cahar led the Dwarves to unprecedented heights of craft and power. The Dwarves were an ascendant race and expanded settling many colonies all across Tyrra.

Two centuries into his rule High King Cahar felt the cold grasp of mortality reaching out toward him as his age was becoming evident. Frightened of dying, his works incomplete, he sought to use the Anvil to extend his life. He took a small group of trusted friends, mighty adventurers all, and sought out Varitova, a powerful Dragon Mage who he had dealt with in the past. He did not seek him to meet in peace this time, he sought him to capture him and steal his immortality. High King Cahar was successful in his capture of the Dragon Mage and his group armed with the weapons forged over centuries of use of the Anvil captured Varitova and brought him back to the High King's Hall where High King Cahar placed his body upon the great Anvil and began to beat it with the hammers of forging, destroying this mighty sorcerer as he stole his power. When he was done Varitova was no more. All his power was now held by High King Cahar who was now truly immortal, and was to be called High King Cahar the Everliving.

As generations came and went, High King Cahar ruled and truly brought a golden rule to the Dwarves. It was a time of peace and enlightenment during which some of the greatest Dwarven works were crafted, the mightiest of Dwarven magic cast. High King Cahar used the Anvil time and again to craft mighty works for his people. Hundreds of years after he became immortal the Giants returned to the City of Gold to warn him of his overuse of the Anvil. Any such channel of magic power, they said, can only hold so much energy. If the Anvil was used at the current rate it would eventually destroy

itself and everything around it. High King Cahar, secure in his immortality and his rule, commanded them away from his presence, sure in his use of the Anvil. He continued to forge upon the Anvil of Endings and great works were crafted time and again with no negative results seen.

Finally after more than a century from the visit of the Giants their dire prediction proved true. As High King Cahar the Everliving raised his mallet to begin a new forging upon the Anvil he felt a strange parting and as he began the blow he knew he had made a grave error as Faethal, the Hammer of The High King, flew from his side to sit upon the Throne of The World, rejecting him as High King. Seeing this, his Mastersmith jumped through the Archstone to Ahlandria to tell the tale just as a huge wave of energy surged through the Arch behind him. No one was ever sure of what happened, but following the energy surge the entirety of Tyrra began to shake, as the force was released through the Heartstone that binds the world. This was the fall of the City of Gold and the Great Convulsion of Tyrra. After Hammon, the Mastersmith was healed from the burns that nearly incinerated his body, he told the tale of High King Cahar's last forging. When the six Dwarven Kingdoms that still possessed an Archstone tried to travel to the City of Gold, they found it impossible. In fact the Archstones had become completely unusable with the passing of the energy surge, which erupted from each Archstone, not just the Ahlandrian stone.

So fell the greatest of the Dwarven cities, and the City of Gold passed into legend.

## The Tale Of Our People, From The Fall Of The City of Gold To The Fall Of The Three Nations; The Age of Kings:

by Seer Horgan Glyptar, as translated from The Tome Of Seven.

With the fall of the Dwarven homeland and the loss of the Archstones which let the Seven Kingdoms stay in contact with each other easily, the Dwarves fell into a deep despair. However in Morehedin, the most remote of the Dwarven Kingdoms it was decided to reunite the separated Kingdoms. King Hadar IV of Morhedin, the Builder King, conceived of a great project that would be a millennia in the making. He began the engineering of great tunnels which would run under the seas of Tyrra to connect each of the Seven Kingdoms. Many were sent overland and by sea to the other Kingdoms to coordinate the digging of these tunnels. The Dwarven race emerged again to the upper world and made contact with the other races of the world, the Elves and Humans.

The Dwarves found their crafts desired by all other races as superior examples of weapon and armor as well as stone and metalwork. This brought the Dwarves out of their despair and started their emergence as a mercantile race.

Without the Archstones, communication was slow and much of the histories of the Kingdoms were lost. In addition with the Kingdoms being cutoff from each other they could not help with the problems each one now faced.

The first major problem struck at three of the Kingdoms simultaneously; Ahlandria, Garm Baraq, and Yarth. The three nations upon Amyss were all attacked by the forces of the Baracoor. This foul race had migrated when the City of Gold fell and struck out to the Amyss landmass seeking their enemies. The power of the Baracoor had been curtailed as well. Away from the caverns, where they originated, the war was fought more among the warriors and less among the mages. This was the start of the Second Underearth War. The war lasted three centuries with fighting throughout the underworld of Amyss. The Dwarves were aided in the war by the emergence of Ulin of Ahlandria, a great mage. He took many to his training and emerged with a core of highly competent mages to aid the war effort. He also trained the only other Dwarf to hold the title of Magesmith, Nataal. Ulin, Nataal, and the leader of the Ahlandrian Earth Guild, a dwarf known only as 'Healer' together laid the foundations for one of the greatest weapons ever forged, The Black Sword of Power. This sword was forged to spearhead the assault on the Baracoor and was given to King Jemin of Ahlandria to use in battle

against the Baracoor. He died before the war ended and instead of passing the sword on to his son and heir King Jemin II, he gave it to his daughter Hessa who was the Warmaster of Ahlandria. She now led the forces of Ahlandria, Yarth, and Garm Baraq together to push the Baracoor deep underground and ended the war at the Battle of Druim Depths. When the war ended, Ulin of Ahlandria withdrew, giving his famous speech from which Ulin's Treatise is derived.

Though this war did not affect the other four Kingdoms, not all was peaceful during this time. On Avalon, the Kingdoms of Bandoraparg and Validor were trading with each other as well as the Humans and Elves, but they constantly fought wars with the Trolls in an area they called Trelheim or Trollhome. Fighting with the Trolls continued throughout millennia and still continues to this day.

In Morhedin, things were peaceful and the engineers and builders worked on the construction of the 'Way Below', as they began to call the undersea tunnels they were building.

In Erethane things were not well at all. An evil and powerful Elven mage calling himself Orfindal, the Magebreaker, was attacking the Dwarven settlements. Besides mortal minions which were easy to battle for the Dwarves, he brought with him seven beings of chaos incarnate which he called the Dreadlords of Chaos. His attacks were always short but fierce, injuring or killing many and destroying much. No one knew what he wanted or why he attacked Erethane, all his actions were seemingly random.

Only fifty years after the end of the Second Underearth war the Baracoor attacked again starting the Third Underearth War in Ahlandria. This time they released a new creature of their creation, the dreaded Violacium. It appeared as a mockery of a Dwarf and could spit acid and travel through solid stone. Though these creatures were powerful there were few of them and their impact on the war was less than one might expect. One thing they did do however is bring about the demise of Nataal the Magesmith when they came up through the stone and attacked his workshop as well as the rest of Ulin's Guild. In the final battles of this war, which lasted only a century or so, Warmaster Hessa, bearer of the Black Sword of Power, was killed and disappeared for resurrection but did not resurrect at any known circle in Dwarven lands. She and the sword were never seen again.

Several hundred years then passed in which no major events occurred. Trade prospered, the building of the Way Below continued, and in Erethane they fought Orfindal and his minions. All was peaceful and nothing unusual occurred until a startling discovery was made in Yarth.

Miners from the Mason's Guild found a large vein of Heartstone deep beneath the City of Yarth. Though a great find, the guild decided that the area in which the Heartstone had been found was too unstable to risk removing the Heartstone. King Korly of Yarth, who came to the throne as an old Dwarf and was thought by many to be slightly senile, insisted on its being mined so that new Archstones could be made. In his mind with new Archstones, the Way Below would not be needed, the City of Gold could be reclaimed, and Yarth would reign supreme with himself as the new High King, High King Korly I. The miners refused to risk such a mining operation so the King moved in members of the army to do so. As the miners warned, the unstable area around Yarth which had experienced earthquakes in the past was rendered completely unstable with the removal of the Heartstone. Since the mining was not done by experienced miners, the situation was even worse than it would have been if mined correctly.

The mining of the Heartstone triggered what would come to be known as the First Cataclysm of Yarth. A great earthquake surged through the area. Only the engineering of the great King Rolham III saved any part of the city. Many lives were lost in Yarth that day, including King Korly himself, who was entered in the Royal Book of Names as Korly the Foolish. After the Cataclysm, King Rolham VIII was crowned King of Yarth and the first thing he had to deal with, in addition to the rebuilding, Yarth found itself under attack once more, this time from the Human Kingdom of Eveth which existed above Yarth and blamed the Dwarves for the destruction of their cities by the earthquake. Though he tried to find peaceful settlements with the Evetites war was the only solution the Humans would listen to. The war lasted only twenty years, the Humans being hopelessly outmatched by the Dwarves who warred with the Baracoor for centuries at a time. Eveth fell and the few survivors banded together and left swearing eternal vengeance upon the Dwarves saying that they would hunt their race to extinction.

Over one hundred years passed in Yarth. Rebuilding had been completed with more reinforcement of the area. A great Formal Magic Spell was performed to create a new brace work for the city so that it could survive a great quake. Still, when the Second Cataclysm came, the city was struck hard. While the devastation was more limited, it still claimed many lives, including King Rolham VIII. His son King Rolham IX was crowned King after him.

A century after the Second Cataclysm of Yarth things came to a head in Erethane with Orfindel the Magebreaker. He led his Dreadlords to face the combined might of all the Thanes of Erethane under High Thane Yaral VI. With the Thanes stood the head of the Earth Guild of Erethane, Elan. He fought and killed the greatest of the Seven Dreadlords but was himself engulfed by a chaos being as he struck the final blow. Orfindel was defeated and was thought to be destroyed. However this was not the case as Elan's engulfment changed him to the point where he became a menace to the safety of Erethane and when he had to be put down, Orfindel reappeared laughing at the loss of one of Erethane's greatest champions before vanishing once more.

Years of peace passed among the Dwarves and then the Third Cataclysm of Yarth struck, laying waste to a large portion of the city, the engineering of the Dwarves and the mighty magic wrought into the city being all that saved it. While still digging itself out from the rubble Yarth was attacked by the forces of the Evetites. A large number of Dwarves including King Rolham IX were killed in this surprise attack. Rolham IX's grandson Lodrau V took the crown and drove out the backstabbing Evetites and rebuilt his city once more.

While Yarth was rebuilding, Erethane was falling in its final battle with Orfindel. He again returned, this time attacking with treachery as well as force. He killed a significant number of the powerful Dwarves of Erethane and raised them up as undead before his final assault on the Kingdom of Erethane. With the defenders fighting on Orfindel's side as undead and the Dreadlords and Orfindel himself attacking, Erethane fell, the first of the Seven Kingdoms to fall. Its ruins were inhabited by undead and beings of chaos. Many survivors fled, but with no direct route to the other Dwarven Nations, most vanished. It is thought that the Dwarves who now live within the Sessaur Imperium are descended from the Dwarves of Erethane.

The Fourth Underearth War was begun many years after the fall of Erethane. The war again being mainly on the continent of Amyss, involving Yarth, Ahlandria, and Garm Baraq. This time the forces of the Baracoor were led by a mighty warrior named Arkhrag who wielded an enchanted club made from the thighbone of a Dwarf. This dread weapon was called Beardreaver for those it slew resurrected totally bereft of beard upon their face. The Fourth Underearth War proved to be a long and bloody one and less than two centuries into the war Yarth was hit with the Fourth Cataclysm and was damaged greatly by this earthquake. Again the Evetites seized upon this opportunity to attack Yarth and allied themselves with the Baracoor to do so. Yarth was greatly damaged and was only saved when the Morhedin Dwarves finished the Way Below and forces from the other three Dwarven Kingdoms attacked the Baracoor and the Evetites.

Yarth had no time to rebuild as the fierce war raged around them and after another century of fighting Yarth was hit with the fifth and final cataclysm called The Great Cataclysm. The entire Kingdom was leveled. The Way Below leading to Yarth collapsed and the survivors fled overground to Ahlandria and Garm Baraq. Rescue of the trapped could not even be attempted due to the marauding bands of Baracoor and Evetites. And so fell Yarth, second of the Lost Kingdoms.

Even after the fall of Yarth the bloody war dragged on. The Baracoor seizing upon the idea of connecting tunnels to the other land masses as the Dwarves did to attack the other Dwarven Nations. The Baracoor used deeper, smaller tunnels so that they could complete them quicker and attack the other Kingdoms. This was their undoing as they spread themselves too thin and were destroyed by the forces of the five remaining Dwarven Kingdoms.

After the war ended and time passed to heal and rebuild, the survivors of the fall of Yarth as well as Dwarves from Ahlandria, Garm Baraq, and a few who crossed the sea from Erethane set out to the mountains far north of Garm Baraq and there founded a new Dwarven Nation, that of Direwall. Within these mountains there were many gem and mineral deposits as well as iron and high steel. Thus Direwall quickly prospered and dedicated itself to growth and recovery.

Hundreds of years after the founding of Direwall the Fifth Underearth War began. This time the Baracoor used small groups and hit and run tactics. This war lasted through years of small guerilla battles and was never a great war of the armies that the previous four wars had been.

Not long after the start of the attacks the new nation Direwall began mining deeper and uncovered a cairn buried deep beneath the mountains. When the cairn was opened a large being with blue glowing eyes began to emerge before the whole area collapsed on itself and nothing more was found.

After all the years of fighting, the Dwarven nations tired of allowing the Baracoor to attack and run. They formed a special force of powerful members of the army as well as specialists who made their way adventuring both in the tunnels of the Dwarven lands and the light of the upper world. This force used stealth and fought their way deep into the caves of the Baracoor and came unto their central palace where the nobles and the foul guild of wizards resided. Here the Formal Magic Spells casters they brought with them began to destroy the work of magic the Baracoor had wrought. One mage, Dogart Banebeard, spirit walked back to Ulin's guild in Ahlandria and he reported that the rest of the force was about to destroy a magical barrier which held back the earth's blood from the domains of the Baracoor and they were all sacrificing themselves to destroy their enemy. Though none resurrected from their suicide mission the success was undoubted for all attacks by the Baracoor ceased immediately and they were thought destroyed forever.

In Validor the population, free of all war other than the battles with the Trolls, had swelled to the point where a migration was needed. A large migration was led toward the Anymdim Mountains in modern day Volta and a colony was established there. Other Dwarves lived in these mountains as it turned out, a group from earlier migrations that had been lost and forgotten. With this nation already in place, the Dwarves from Validor could only found a small colony which they called Arvain. Most of the colonists returned to Validor and Validor again expanded its tunnels and considered where to expand next.

Not having to worry over the constant threat of war, Validor expanded north and explored, also settling the area beneath the Falconcrest forest. Here they found difficulties for unbeknownst to them because beneath their caverns lived another subterranean race called the Ardenites. This was a relatively peaceful race who were simplistic and could not even learn to speak properly. They blamed the Dwarven settlers for underground disturbances which caused collapses and cave-ins in their tunnels. So a war began though not a very enthusiastic war, as the Dwarves weren't interested in fighting and the Ardenites had no taste for battle. The war ended quickly and the Dwarves promised to cease their deep mining.

Some time after this, Validor was ready to form a new migration to the northern spur of the Frostpeak Mountain. In the lands which have just recently been settled by Evendarrians and named Avendale. Here migrants founded a Nation they called Banek Tor and it grew and was successful.

In Bandoraparg however, all was not well. They had been facing small attacks from many uncivilized races especially, Orcs and Gnolls. These were not the normal disorganized attacks however, they were run with military precision. Each of the monsters bore a tattoo of a red triangle upon their forehead, symbolizing their fellowship of clans called the Red Mountain. After many years of smaller attacks, the hordes of the Red Mountain fell upon Bandoraparg in a series of larger and larger attacks, destroying the capitol of Glittering Halls, killing the entire royal family, and causing much of the population to flee north to Validor.

Validor organized the survivors and sent in their army to retake Bandoraparg. The battles with the Red Mountain horde lasted a long time with the Dwarves slowly taking back the lands lost. During this war all contact with Banek Tor to the far north was lost. Validor found itself spread to thin to aid all of its colonies and Bandoraparg.

When the war with the Red Mountain ended, King Norak I of Validor proposed that he take direct rulership of Validor, Bandoraparg, and Arvain and the three nations unify for protection and profit of their people. Though there were some objections, most notably from the Stonesplitter family who should have inherited the throne of Bandoraparg, the people saw the benefit, having faced the war with the Red Mountain and the mysterious disappearance of Banek Tor. So rose the Three Nations lead by the ruling family of Validor. The Three Nations prospered and grew over the next centuries

and when the forces of the Evetites attacked all of the Dwarven Kingdoms at once, the Three Nations was the first to put them down and Morhedin the only Kingdom to suffer any damage in the attacks.

Hundreds of years after founding the Three Nations, the Sabretooth and Sand Tiger Barbarian Tribes decided that Dwarf forged weapons would aid them in their fights and attacked the Three Nations to take their weapons and armor. This was a stupid mistake on the part of the Barbarians for the very weapons they wanted were used against them in the war which lasted only a decade and only that long because the Dwarves never bothered to come out of their caverns to attack the Barbarian holdings.

When the war ended the Dwarves began trading with the Barbarians for things they could provide from the upper world and the Three Nations became a mercantile empire stretching halfway across the length of Avalon.

The rise of the Three Nations as a mercantile force was not one hundred percent beneficial. When they expanded northward again they found the rich iron deposits in the area of Draelonde and felt it their due as owners of the bounty of their mother Tyrra. The Drae of course felt completely differently about this insisting on leaving the iron deposits just as they were, not even considering mining most of them. The Dwarves, shocked by what they considered a claim on their property began the Drae/Dwarf war which was fought back and forth underground for the next two hundred years.

It was while this war was raging in the Three Nations that in Ahlandria the evil force known as the Undoer first appeared. This foul creature fought its way across Ahladria and vanished only after causing a great deal of damage to the city and its people.

In Morhedin a great seer known as Minefrei Wisebeard rose to preeminence in her craft. She predicted dire things and that at least one more nation would fall before the Dwarves would begin their climb back toward the greatness they once knew. She crafted an ornate mirror which it was said to show all who gazed upon it their future. Minefrei disappeared when the Undoer came to Morhedin and crushed the mirror beneath his Mallet, apparently displeased with what he saw within.

The Undoer continued to menace all the Dwarven Nations throughout this time and it was his presence which caused King Norak VIII to end the Drae/Dwarf War and sue for peace with the Dark Elves. At the end of this battle the Warmaster of the armies of the Three Nations was Saxon Stonesplitter. He chose this point to attempt a coup and retake the power his family once held as the Kings of Bandoraparg. The army holding their loyalty to him followed his lead and he was soon crowned King Saxon I of the Three Nations.

Again peace grew throughout the Dwarven Nations. However, the Trolls continued to be a constant source of tension in the Three Nations and Garm Baraq but they were considered a minor annoyance. The Undoer was a random worry, it was never clear where or when this dread thing would attack or who it would be when it did, for its form seemed to change often when it attacked but it always wielded the fearsome Mallet.

The Dwarven Nations grew and prospered and many migrations to distant areas occurred. From this expansion it is doubtful that there is a large area in all of Tyrra that does not have a Dwarven settlement within it.

About this time the Dwarves and the Ardenites worked together to build underground cities all over the area of Validor. Normally the Dwarven people would not build for others, but the ones who they worked for were very persuasive and promised a great deal of gold. However after the cities were built the designers and craftsmen began to disappear. When the dwarves tried to meet this challenge with force, battles began between all of the races. The enemy it seemed, could change its shape and trick the people into fighting each other. These were the Changeling Wars. They lasted for many years and ended when the Dwarves and others simply chose to stop fighting. The Dwarves withdrew from the areas around these cities and let those who lived there go their own way. But the Dwarves stood ever vigilant for such a trick again.

Soon after the Changeling Wars ended, the Nation of Direwall built a great city after the memory of the City of Gold. They called it the Golden City and it was an attempt to reforge some of the greatness lost when the City of Gold fell. The Golden City of Direwall was a masterpiece of engineering and art. Building sheathed in precious metals and gems, windows made from planes of crystal. The entire city was an expression of the skill and artistry of the Dwarven people and artisans from all of the remaining Kingdoms aided Direwall in this great project and return to glory.

While the Golden City was being built, the Trolls finally decided that they owned the area of Garm Baraq and moved in to seize it, taking much of the area above ground including the major entrance to the city. This Troll War lasts to present day and the area where the Trolls made their initial seizure is known as Troll Canyon, though possession of the land has moved back and forth between the Dwarves and Trolls over the years.

About this time the Dwarves of Morhedin first made contact with the race of Hobblings. The two races got along extremely well as both were races proud of their skills and their art, as well as their ability as merchants. Upon Minami trade flourished between the two races and Morhedin rose in status among the Dwarven Nations. However all contact was lost with Morhedin and the entirety of the Way Below collapsed leaving the Dwarven Nations cut off from each other once again. This may or may not have been the dread prediction of Minefrei but never have any Dwarves from Morhedin made themselves known to the other Dwarven Nations since. Contact between the Three Nations, Ahlandria, Garm Baraq, and Direwall have been slow since it is a great distance to travel between the continents of Avalon and Amys and the forces of Jhivantane restrict above ground contact with Ahlandria.

After the loss of the Way Below, Mordin, the direct descendant of King Norak VIII, led an expedition and began expanding the city of Dwarvenholm in Validor. He reaffirmed the family name of Holmfounder in remembrance of this expansion.

Soon after the founding of Dwarvenholm, Direwall reported that they had finally destroyed the Undoer. He had emerged from a crypt in their lands taking the form of one of their own, a young Dwarf named Sandoval. After this all reports of the Undoer had ceased until most recently in Validor he has resurfaced.

Direwall faced a great danger fifty years after they reported killing the Undoer. A group called the Onyx Ones, who were apparently mighty workers of magic, assaulted the Nation of Direwall. Their magic was such that they could capture the spirits of those they faced and turn them against their true companions and allies. In five years the Onyx Ones leveled the Golden City and pressed their attack on Direwall. They were stopped by the actions of a great hero, Techin Gloryblade, Champion of High Prince Medrake Hornhall of Direwall. As the High Prince led his forces to smash the fortress of the Onyx Ones. The High Prince chose not to rebuild the Golden City taking its fall as a sign of their hubris in thinking to return the City of Gold from its burial. Though Direwall continued, the Golden City would lie in ruins forever more to serve as a reminder to the Dwarves.

War broke out again in Validor. The Baracoor returned once more bursting through a series of crevasses, deep within the unsettled Dwarven mines, called the Gates Below. They immediately attacked and began the Sixth Underearth War. The forces of the Dwarves were commanded by the mighty King Vindraal Stonesplitter, thought by many to be one of the wisest Kings since the High Kings ruled. He led the Dwarves to defeat the Baracoor in a mere century of fighting. Under King Vindraal's rule the Gates Below were sealed and guarded evermore in vigil against the Baracoor.

King Vindraal was killed when hostilities with the Trolls began anew. The Troll wars of Validor soon spread and the Trolls fought all races above ground as well including Elves, Humans, Barbarians, and Hobblings. The Troll Wars were ongoing until recent times when the war seemed to end.

A few hundred years ago hostilities erupted with the Drae but they were settled quickly by a young diplomat named Kelanor of Dwarvenholm, who was a direct descendant of King Norak VIII. Four hundred and fifty years ago Kelanor acted to take the throne from King Horvald Stonesplitter, a foul and greedy king who ruled from his seat at Trollsgate for his own benefit and pleasure. Kelanor ascended the throne as King Kelanor Holmfounder I, the last King of The Three Nations. Kelanor I was a great King and he used diplomacy to the benefit of the Dwarves, not just war. He greatly expanded his

home and family's city of Dwarvenholm which lay in what the Humans now called the Nordenn Vale, and built it in hopes of it becoming a home to all Dwarves not just those of Validor or even The Three Nations.

Sixty years after his rule began the Trolls allied with the Hellraiser Goblin Tribe and led a huge tribe of Goblins to attack the Dwarves.

Fifty years after that Kelanor led the forces of Validor to destroy the Hellraisers and fell in the final battle. His axe, Trollbane, which had become the symbol of the King of The Three Nations was lost at the end of this battle. Without the axe as a symbol of unity his young son Kelanor II could not wield the power of the Three Nations and they once again returned to three separate rules and Arvain and Bandoraparg were once again independent Nations.

## The Tale Of Modern Times, Evendarr's Rule, The Age of Renewal.

by Sage Jantar Rediron of Validor

This is less a tale as a timeline of recent history. These stories are within the recollections of the oldest Dwarves in the community. Most of these tales come from the area of Validor as we are all but out of contact with the other Dwarven Nations and just now starting to reforge diplomatic ties with Bandoraparg. Dates given herein are in Evendarr reckoning as that is the calendar we now use.

**254** - Kelanor II takes the throne of Validor as Saditar Stonesplitter takes the throne of Bandoraparg. The Nation of Arvain withdraws into isolation.

King Kelanor II was a competent King but no genius in any field. His rule was unspectacular and the King's power gradually decreased over his rule.

**394** - The Trolls led a massive assault on Trollsgate in which the foul traitor Braddock Bouldersoulder let them in the gates to attack. Trollsgate fell and since King Kelanor II was not a military leader the decision was made to withdraw and recoup, letting the Trolls hold Trollsgate as we withdrew and gained strength setting up a new capitol far from the Trolls power base. The Humans took to calling the Validor Troll wars the Underearth Wars not knowing anything of the history of the Dwarves and the six true Underearth Wars against the Baracoor.

**396** - King Kelanor II decided that his fathers city of Dwarvenholm would be ideal for the new capitol. He set about building the open city of Dwarvenholm above ground. A decision which has often been questioned tactically in terms of defense.

**432** - In Dwarvenholm construction of the above ground city is completed.

**433** - King Kelanor II dies in an accident as a building collapses around him. Foul play is suspected but never proved. His son Kelanor III is crowned King as his only heir, but King Kelanor III is only a beardless boy of eight. A regent is appointed but the guilds take over much of the power the King would normally hold.

**452** - Representatives of the Human Kingdom of Evendarr are met at Dwarvenholm in the Grey Hills. The Humans claim to own the lands we have possessed for millennia, but rather than go to war with a mighty nation, Regent Vashta decides to take advantage of the Humans and the fact that they do not inhabit the underground areas. The Treaty of Dwarvenholm is signed, giving the Humans titular rule. They believe that there are about three hundred Dwarves in the City of Dwarvenholm which they take to be a small town due to the above ground parts of it.

**460** - The Dwarves from Dwarvenholm aid the Evendarrians in building a wall around their city of Ashbury, it is a small place, not very well built and definitely not defendable. Our engineers warned them that monsters would most likely march across their fields all the time, requiring people to go out and fight them constantly, but they had already built there and wouldn't consider moving.

**470** - The attacks by the Trolls in the area called Trelheim grow fiercer. The Trolls have a new leader named Fangthorn, he is supposed to be a great mage, some say he is Half-giant. If that were true, he probably wouldn't be fighting the Dwarves though, as the Dwarves were always allied to the Giants.

**474** - The fighting has grown out of control. Fangthorn's power has proved to go beyond most mages, he has learned Dragon Magic. The forces of Dwarvenholm learned this when he obliterated Halak Trollsblade, Clan Trollsblade's champion. Before he did that though he destroyed his magic mace just to scare the warriors he faced. If the surface dwellers do not involve themselves here all who live in these lands will fall to the Trolls.

**477** - The surface dwellers finally declared war on the trolls and now fight alongside the Dwarves and the Elves of the Ash Forest.

**478** - The forces of the Dwarves pretty much pushed the Trolls out of the tunnels. The combined armies of the Humans and Elves fight them on the surface as the Dwarves fight them in the tunnels. The Dwarven campaign is so successful that they can send troops to aid the surface dwellers now.

**479** - This year proved to be the turning point in the war, the battle the surface dwellers are calling the capture of the Ash Ford. The Dwarven role in that battle will probably be left out by their "historians." During the

battle the Dwarven troops stalked through the caverns below the area and attacked with surprise on their side. That as much as anything helped save the day for the Evendarrians.

**480** - The Trolls were finally pushed into their caverns in Trelheim forever. It was accomplished by a great Human bard named Oliver Songbringer. He defeated Fangthorn in a mage duel and then imprisoned the trolls in their caves. Again the Human books left out the fact that the Dwarves held the Trolls in their caves while Oliver worked his magic. Of course the Humans and the Elves helped, particularly one named Connor Arawyn. He led the final push that trapped the Trolls below. He is a hero to the Dwarven people and will be the first Human included in the Hero's Walk.

After the war was over, to honor Oliver Songbringer, the Dwarves joined with the Humans, Elves, and Hobblings who fought alongside Oliver and named him Lord of The Four People, its just an honorary title and doesn't really mean anything.

Connor Arawyn was given rule over the surface areas of Trelheim where Trollsgate used to be. The Dwarves act to help him build a group of fortresses in the area, the first being called the Tower Hills Citadel.

**512** - Connor Arawyn was killed by some of the Trolls who remain free of Oliver's imprisonment, the entire Nation of Validor mourned his passing.

**514** - Duke Oliver died, his son was appointed Duke and named Lord of the Four People in his place. The Dwarven stance was that the title wasn't hereditary, it being a symbol of respect to one man. The decision was made that since it is a powerless title it is not of great concern and that the Dwarven merchants should simply use caution when they are on the surface.

**557** - The Dwarves begin mining in the area the Humans call Trelheim the Human estate of Oliver proves particularly rich in copper deposits.

**560** - Bretton Darkwood, the Baron of Trelheim, had his titles removed by his liege Duchess Gwendolyn. All treaties that have been signed by the Dwarven people in regards to mining and exploitation of the underground were with him. The Duchess had no honor and the Dwarves refused to deal with her. For all appearances, the mines seem to have petered out.

**569** - Duchess Gwendolyn died this year and her son Powell now rules the surface. Baron Darkwood's titles were restored by Powell and strangely the mines began producing again.

**577** - King Kelanor III dies, Kelanor IV takes over at age fifty, he tries to reunite the separated parts of the Three Nations and rule as an actual King instead of a puppet to the guilds.

**585** - The Omens this year all pointed toward foul happenings underground. The seers believed that the Trolls would soon escape. The Dwarves tried to warn the Humans but they were assured that the containment will last another four hundred and seventy years or so.

**586** - The Trolls were loosed in the underground, the Humans have yet to see that they were wrong. The Troll wars began again this year.

**587** - The Trolls brokeout on the surface again, the Humans began their scrambling to defend themselves.

**594** - The seers predicted great danger the coming year, the runes said that the greatest evil of the Trolls returns. The rumors of prophecy in the other races whispered of Fangthorn's impending rebirth. Many symbols appeared to the seers, primary among them were a bat, a hammer, and a dove, none knew what this meant.

Trollbane, the axe of King Kelanor I returned. A group of Dwarves claimed that it was given to them by King Kelanor I himself in the past, where they went to help fight the Goblin Wars. It was then wielded by a Dwarf from Garm Baraq named Thengor Beyor.

The spirit of Braddock Bouldersoulder supposedly returned to Tyrra and possessed a Human mage named Morlox Nightshade, this possessed individual went around apologizing to all Dwarves for his crimes and fought alongside the forces of Ashbury when Fangthorn spirit first returned. These actions still did not begin to restore his lost honor if it was truly Braddock.

King Kelanor IV went to reclaim the axe of his forefathers, while he did not meet with this Thengor in Ashbury, he heard many tales of his great honor and chose to let him keep the axe for the time being.

**595** - Thengor lost Trollbane to a group of bandits, all Dwarves began a search for the lost axe.

Fangthorn returned fully due to the Humans and Deep Trolls meddling with his skull. He was defeated by the forces of Ashbury and the prophesized Bat, Hammer, and Dove.

At this years communing a Dwarf named Modi Ioki asked to be told the location of Trollbane and was granted the vision. So was King Kelanor IV. The axe had found its way to the Underearth and into the hands of our enemies the Baracoor. Both Modi and King Kelanor IV fought their way to the axe, Modi retrieving it just before King Kelanor IV.

Modi claimed Trollbane as his, stating that he was Thengor's heir. King Kelanor IV claimed the axe by familial ownership. Modi went so far as to claim that now that he owned the axe, he was the true Dwarven King, his claim was spurious and he is obviously ignorant of Dwarven history. The matter was put before

Duchess Mara of Ashbury, she decided that while Modi could hold the axe, it would revert to King Kelanor IV when he died. Modi was not allowed to spirit link the axe to him.

The King offered him the ability to transfer the magic of the axe to another weapon if the king could have the physical weapon. Modi agreed, but the transfer did not occur this year.

**596-** A foolish Human named Shackleford created a Key of Shadow and opened the gates of Zhaduk. The Darkling Horde reemerged with their Lord S'set. Barak Ironmonger also reemerged and aided in the fight against the Darklings. Barak retold the histories of the Darkling War clarifying many points that had been lost to the ages. The forces of Ashbury fought back and apparently killed S'set and resealed the Gates of Zhaduk, however Darklings were still seen in the area on occasion so not all of them were destroyed. Barak Ironmonger again sacrificed himself to stand guard over Zhaduk, the Dwarves honor him for his dedication to preserving Tyrra.

In July of 596, a being wielding the Mallet of the Undoer appeared in Ashbury as a member of an evil group calling itself the Millenium Club. The Undoer inhabited the body of one called Eldric who was apparently Human. He had many powerful undead at his command and threatened the Dwarven populace killing many who were present. He seemed to be more concerned with an adventuring group called the Shield Of Vendamor than he was with the

Dwarves. Apparently the Shield Of Vendamor had offended him in some manner in recent times and that insult took precedence over his war on the Dwarves. The Undoer has apparently allied himself with the Dragon Mage Morganna who is known as the Father of the Vampires, and a group of Lords of Jhivantane known as the Sorcerers Six.

Late this year the Deep Trolls began capturing surface Trolls and taking them to their underground empire. However the Deep Trolls moved into the ruins of Trollsgate. This was deemed unacceptable as they began killing Dwarves in the area. A state of war was pending at the turn of the year.

## Appendix A: Crime and punishment

### Offense

### Recompense

Producing inferior goods

Recompense the individual. Five years of making proper goods without a problem.

Breaking your word

Recompense the individual. If possible carry out your original promise. Never again break your word. This requires a period of about 10 years of truth.

Dishonoring your master verbally	Penance assigned by the master. Six inches trimmed from the beard.
Dishonoring a family member verbally	Recompense the individual. Penance assigned by the family patriarch. Three inches trimmed from beard.
Dishonoring a clan member verbally	Recompense the individual. Public apology in front of the assembled clan. Penance assigned by the individual and the Grudgebearer. Two inches trimmed from beard.
Dishonoring your master physically	Extreme penance assigned by the master. Usually involves a severe beating. Debeardment
Dishonoring a family member physically	Public apology to the family member and the family at a family gather. Must fight either the family member or his champion for satisfaction. Three inches trimmed from beard.
Dishonoring a clan member physically	Public apology to the clan member and the clan at a clan gather. Must fight the clan member or the clan champion for satisfaction. Two inches trimmed from beard.
Dishonoring a patriarch	Public beating followed by servitude to the patriarch for a period of not less than ten years in the most menial of tasks. During the time of servitude, the Dwarf is debearded.
Dishonoring a clan official	Public beating followed by servitude to the clan for a period of not less than ten years. During the time of servitude, the Dwarf is debearded.
Dishonoring a clan chief	Public beating followed by battle to the death against the clan champion. If the offender wins the combat his servitude is over. If not, once he resurrects, he must serve the clan in the most menial of tasks for the rest of his life. The Dwarf is debearded but not scared during the servitude.
Failing your master	First, all attempts must be made to undo or repair the failure. This is usually followed by a period of penance which extends the apprenticeship by 5-10 years.
Failing your family	First, all attempts must be made to undo or repair the Failure. This is usually followed by servitude to the family for a period of 5-10 years. The Dwarf is not allowed to grow his beard longer than four inches signifying that he is still a child.

Failing your clan

First, all attempts must be made to undo or repair the failure. This is usually followed by servitude to the clan for a period of 5-10 years. The Dwarf is not allowed to grow his beard longer than four inches signifying that he is still a child.

Failing your society

First, all attempts must be made to undo or repair the failure. This is followed by the scaring followed then by three voluntary deaths. This is followed by the rest of the individual's life being dedicated toward recompensing the society. The decision is made by clan moot and based on premeditation.

Failing your race

The scaring, followed by a decade of serving the race as an outcast, and a living example of the shame of breaking the line. This is followed by voluntary suicide till permanent death. This will allow the individual's name to remain in the book of names. This is only with permission of the clan moot, it is based on whether or not it was a premeditated act.

Betraying your family

No redemption allowed. The name will be struck from the family book of names and the individual exiled. The scaring and/or deaths may also be imposed. It may be possible to begin life again in another family.

Betraying your clan

No redemption allowed. The name will be struck from the clan book of names and the individual exiled. The scaring and/or deaths may also be imposed. It may be possible to begin life again in another clan.

Betraying your society or race

No redemption allowed. The individual is struck from all books of names, all of the dwarf's works are destroyed. He has the scaring performed and is sentenced to permanent death. If the individual flees justice, all Dwarves will hunt him down.

## Appendix B: DWARVEN FESTIVALS

### The Communing

Twice a year on the last Saturday of May and the first Saturday of September the Dwarves hold The Communing. The Communing is the name for the rite wherein the Dwarves can perform a limited contact earth without the need of the formal Formal Magic Spells. In general the rite is run by a full seer and is held with the largest number of Dwarves in an area. The Dwarves will all gather in a circle and they will all perform the rite of communing. The following is one of the traditional Formal Magic Spells of communing. The exact Formal Magic Spells can vary and the being known as Mother Tyrra has never been shown to be responsible for the communing. The method by which the communing work is unknown. It is thought that the deep connection the Dwarves have with the earth allows a duplication of the Formal Magic Spells contact earth. Each Dwarf in the Formal Magic Spells gets to ask a question, however not all questions are answered. It

seems that the more relevant the question is to the Dwarven race as a whole the greater the chance of an answer. Also the more Dwarves who ask the same question, the greater the chance of an answer. The smallest group needed to perform the rite of communing is three Dwarves. If the question is answered, the answer will be revealed in a dream the first time the Dwarf sleeps after the Formal Magic Spells is performed.

*Mother Tyrra we call upon you, you are our Mother, our life, our strength. Mother Tyrra we beseech thee to answer our questions.*

*Mother Tyrra we call upon you, you are our life, our strength, our hope. Mother Tyrra we kindly ask you to answer our questions.*

*At this point the circle will move around clockwise and reach down and grasp a handful of earth.*

*Mother Tyrra we call upon you, teach us as mother to child, Mother Tyrra we call upon you, we your children, your race, your blood.*

*Mother Tyrra we call upon you, you are our Mother, we are your children, your heart, your spirit, your flesh and blood, Mother Tyrra we beseech thee to answer our questions.*

At this point the seer will go around the circle and ask each participant to kiss the hand full of earth they hold and ask their question to Mother Tyrra. After the question is stated the seer will take the handful of earth from the Dwarf and sprinkle it over his head. When each Dwarf has asked their question the seer will continue.

*Mother Tyrra we thank you for listening to our call. Mother Tyrra we thank you for considering our needs. Mother Tyrra we thank you for the answers you will give to us, your children. Mother Tyrra we live but to heed your call.*

## The Festivals of the Brew

There are two brew festivals a year, the first is the tasting of the new brews, now to be put away to properly age. The second is the tasting of those brews deemed ready to consume after proper aging. These festivals are large celebrations where all Dwarves will attend the communal parties, drink ale, tell stories, and hold large brawls. It is similar in many ways to an October fest celebration such as they hold in Blackstone. The Festival of New Beer is held on January 27th and the Festival of True Beer is held on July 6th.

## The Festival of the Womb

The Festival of the Womb is a deeply emotional holiday in Dwarven culture. During this three day long celebration the earth is honored as the mother of the Dwarven race. The holiday is filled with special meals during which entire clans celebrate together. Feasts are supported from clan and government treasuries and all Dwarves attend no matter how rich or poor, skilled or unskilled, honored or without honors. Even those serving out a redemption are allowed to attend the great feast which is held the second night of the festival. The festival is held on September 15-17.

## Kelanor's Day

A holiday in the Kingdom of Validor, Kelanor's Day celebrates the last of the Unifiers, King Kelanor who once ruled over all the Dwarves of Avalon. It commemorates his victory over the Hillraiser Clan of goblins and mourns his death during the final battle of that war. The celebration is held on November 3rd which is the day Kelanor reached the end of his line.

## Day of Peace

The Day of Peace is a day where the Dwarves cease fighting among themselves and try to cease all outside fights. The day is set aside for thoughtful contemplation and the ending of disputes. It is considered a betrayal of the race to raise arms on the Day of Peace. One of the greatest villains in recent history is Irval the Betrayer who tried to use the Day of Peace to launch a coup against King Vindraal Stonesplitter of the Three Nations. Even under attack the Dwarves of the Three Nations took up only defensive positions and held out behind wards, wizard locks, and circles of power, till the days end when they emerged and defeated Irval's forces. In punishment, each of Irval's minions was scarred and then put to death. Many of them committed suicide to the permanent death in shame for their actions. Irval himself was not allowed that luxury. He was bottled then scarred and put to work in the mines till the end of his natural life. The Day of Peace is held on January 5th

## Day of Regret

The Day of Regret is a day of intense mourning for the loss of the Dwarven homeland and the City of Gold. On this day many Dwarves fast, all businesses are closed, and all simply remember the loss of the greatest city to ever exist on Tyrra and the folly of our pride for not abiding by the words of warning the giants tried to pass on to us. The Day of Regret is April 7th.

## Appendix C: The Glossary of Brews

**Ale** - A drink made from fermenting a grain mash very quickly at high temperatures. This quick fermentation brings out more of the grain taste to the drink.

**Beer** - A drink made from fermenting a grain mash slowly at low temperatures. The slow fermentation smooths out some of the grain flavor. Beers are generally slightly bitter in taste but overall fairly simple in character. Beer is also used as the general term for grain based alcoholic beverages by the Humans. When a Dwarven brewer speaks of beer he is specific.

**Bitters** - Any of the various styles of alcoholic grain beverages made by adding bitter herbs to the fermentation mash. Dwarven ale is a type of bitters which adds Vorquai Mushrooms to the mash.

**Lager** - A drink made from fermenting a grain mash similarly to beer. When the fermentation is complete the brew is specially aged to clarify the beer. This gives a cleaner crisper taste. The way the beer is aged can also give added color or flavor.

Lambic - Lambics are special brews made using a different type of yeast. This special yeast adds fruity flavors to the drink without taking away the earthy taste that is so well loved by the Dwarves.

Malt Liquor - A drink made from fermenting a grain mash in which the grains have sprouted. The sprouting of the grain gives an earthier flavor to the brew. It tends to have a higher alcoholic content than beer or lager.

Pilsner - Pilsners are lagers that have been clarified to an extreme, they are very light in color and have a mellow taste.

Porter - A drink made from fermenting a grain mash which has been browned or charred. The charring decreases the sugar content of the drink giving a somewhat more bitter flavor, the char itself adds a smoky flavor to the brew. Very popular among the Dwarves.

Stout - Stouts are brewed to be extremely dark full flavored beers. They are rarely clarified and appear dark and thick. In general more hops are added to the mash in order to bring out a deeper flavor. This is among the most popular of the Dwarven brews.

Of course simply adding grains, hops, and yeast together does not give a good brew, there are many secrets to both the recipes and the methods which are used to make the best brews. Often brewers will try and ferret out each others secrets in order to give them a competitive edge. Any brewer should of course have the skill Craftsman Brewer if they wish to create wines as well they should learn Craftsman Vintner.

## Appendix D: DWARVEN LEGENDS AND MAGIC

### The Legends of Elemental Magic

It is said that in ages past the magic of the world was quite different and the great celestial changes prove this to be true. For with each great turning cycle of the stars magic changes, some becoming more powerful and some becoming less so, some even disappearing completely.

When Tyrra was young, shortly after the war between the forces of the elements, magic as we know it did not exist. Magic was a raw expression of power, a direct harnessing of the elemental forces of nature. It is said that what is now considered magic of the earth was then the ability to tap into the forces of those elements of a metaphysical nature; Life, Death, Order, and Chaos: whereas star magic was once the ability to tap into those elements of a physical nature; Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. These direct expressions of elemental force were very powerful but were also limited. For in this type of magic there were no Formal Magic Spells as we know them today and the creation of items of power was not known.

This changed when Ulin Steelfist came forth. He was the first among us to use the power of the star magic and not the earth magic. He also was the first Dwarf to create a permanent item of power. It was he who discovered the secrets of enchanting physical objects. What was required was direct communion with the elemental forces that ruled the planes of each individual element. Ulin dealt with the King of Earth and the King of Fire to craft his Golden Sphere. This sphere was of the earth yet it glowed and radiated the heat of the

plane of fire. It was with this sphere that the Caverns of Tokai were transformed and under this sphere that the City of Gold was built.

The lesson of Ulin Steelfist was even though each child of Tyrra may learn to use magic and harness some of the power available in the cosmic balance of the elements, the power learned by mortals was only a small fraction of that held by the forces which make up all existence.

## The Legend of The Dragon's Scrolls

Over time the nature of magic changed. It became harder to deal with the elementals to create lasting items of power. Magic spells changed from invoking elemental force to learned spells with gestures and incants each using only a small piece of the power they called upon.

It became necessary to learn more of magic and again learn the crafting items of arcane power. It was during the first of the bloody Underearth Wars when Ulin of Ahlandria took up the mantle of his predecessor and chose to learn that which was veiled from the Dwarven workers of magic. Ulin of Ahlandria went to the only power he knew whose magic was mightier than the Dwarves, Elves, and Giants. Ulin went deep below the earth and sought out a Dragon.

Now all sane beings avoided Dragons for they are mighty creatures, often quick to anger and even quicker to act upon that anger. Ulin went down into the mighty Dragon's lair and wisely brought with him gold and crafted gems, many of the splendid treasures of the Dwarves. He offered these and even greater wishes to the Dragon if he would teach him the secrets of creating arcane items of power. The Dragon was impressed both by the beauty of the items Ulin offered and his gall and bravery to come face him in his lair. Though the Dragon refused to teach him the secrets of his own form of magic, he did teach him the secrets of Formal Magic Spells magic and gave him many scrolls in exchange for a horde of treasure on which to bed himself.

Ulin took these scrolls and quested for the components needed to power them. When he had gathered all he required, he spent a great deal of time studying the scrolls the Dragon had given him and learning their secrets. He then became the first mortal being to cast a Formal Magic Spell on Tyrra. He took a simple blade of his own forging and enchanted it with a damage aura and then bound the aura to the blade with a permanence Formal Magic Spell.

Thus did Ulin of Ahlandria aid his people in winning the Underearth War and for all time in knowledge of great Formal Magic Spells magic's.

## The Works of Nataal The Magesmith

When Ulin gave his famous treatise he urged, almost commanding, the Dwarves to take up the practice of magic and to go beyond the simple parroting of spells or even the creation of arcane items of power. He urged them to learn that which was new and create from whole cloth new spells and types of magic.

It was decided that those who proved they could create magic in the way Ulin suggested would be honored with the title of Magesmith, a forger of new magic. In the eons that have passed since Ulin gave his treatise only one has ever earned that exalted title. That one was Nataal of Ahlandria, the Magesmith.

Nataal studied under Ulin himself during the Second Underearth War and he aided in the making of the Black Sword of Power for King Jemin I. However it was Nataal's creation of golems that earned him the title he bore. Nataal studied the way a body would move and thought that if a body could indeed be duplicated with the strength of stone and metal behind it a truly new and mighty addition to magic would exist.

Nataal spent many years researching before he created his first golem. After three decades of work Nataal emerged from his workshop followed by a Dwarf made wholly of iron. The other mages were astonished as none before had ever animated that which never had possessed a spirit. After his creation of the Iron Dwarf he went on and made golems of other substances found in the earth: stone and obsidian even mud and diamond were used and Nataal's golems became a thing of wonder and power. This is how Nataal first earned his title of Magesmith though all of his accomplishments continued to prove him worthy of that exalted title.

## The Legend of The Undoer's First Appearance

Of all the foes to ever face the Dwarven people, none was more feared than the Undoer. As our people exist to create great works, the Undoer exists to destroy everything.

No one is sure where the Undoer came from, what he is, or from where his power stems. What is known is the danger he represents. Many times in our history has the Undoer come forth. He has destroyed much that was good in our existence. The Undoer first appeared in Ahlandria many millennia ago and there he carved a great swath through the armies of King Jemin X until the King himself fought the Undoer to a standstill using his magic sword. The Undoer was pushed back and fell beneath the might of Ahlandria's heroes.

The King chose to allow his champion, Fedric Brightsteel, to take the Undoer's dread mallet. No sooner had Fedric picked it up however than the light in his eyes went out, his body seemed to fade somewhat and he became possessed by the force of the Undoer himself. Unable to believe what he had just seen, King Jemin X stood in shock as his former friend struck him down. After he had killed the King, he did not even stop to take his mighty sword, the new Undoer simply began to smash his way through all those around him, eventually reaching the Crown Levee which held back one of the areas of swamp above, he smashed through the solid stone that held back the murky waters and then disappeared in the flood that ensued. King Jemin X resurrected and swore to free his friend from the curse that had bound him, but his oath went unfulfilled. Although he fought the Undoer again in the future he was never able to free his friend from his grasp.

## The Tales of The Earthcall Magic

The Barfindr of Garm Baraq are a mysterious clan among the Dwarves. They use a form of magic called Earthcall. It is said that this magic harkens unto the olden times when the Dwarven magic controlled the very body of our mother itself.

Using the Earthcall the Barfindr are able to achieve affects thought to be limited to the power of star magic. They can animate those substances within the earth as golems possibly duplicating the original works of Nataal. They can create weapons of an enchanted nature without tapping the power of the stars. Many are the effects of the Earthcall.

The Earthcall is also spectacular to watch for unlike normal Formal Magic Spells which are often plain and unadorned by spectacle, the Earthcall is responded to by the world itself and always do spectacular effects come into being around the circle where the Earthcall is performed.

## The Legend of The Forging of Trollsbane

When King Kelanor I came to his throne he used diplomacy to achieve his ends. However, soon after his rule began the Trolls again fought the Dwarves with hordes of Goblins under their thumb.

King Kelanor I came to see that he needed a weapon to fight against the Trolls, one which would become a symbol for all Dwarves to rally around.

He thought long and hard and discarded ideas of a weapon which would throw spells of fire or channel them as not enough of a danger to the Trolls to strike fear into their heart. So King Kelanor I thought long and hard and turned his mind back to the way magic used to be performed where the mage would take power from the very elements themselves. And so Kelanor I, King of the Trolls turned to his mages to summon before him a noble elemental of the plane of death so he could bargain for a weapon which would kill Trolls.

King Kelanor gained audience with a Knight of Death by the name of Aravir. Aravir bargained with him and for an appropriate sacrifice to death he would grant him such a weapon. So King Kelanor I gathered his warriors to him and went deep beneath the Tower Hills into the very heart of the Troll Lands and captured the King of the Trolls as a gift to the forces of death. In Aravir's presence King Kelanor I slew the Troll King with his axe giving up his dark heart to the Knight of Death. After that did Kelanor's weapon begin to glow as if enchanted. And though it was a magic weapon against any who faced it, against the Trolls it would do damage as if many damage auras had been cast upon it. And so King Kelanor I created an object of great elemental power as a symbol of the Dwarves fight against the Trolls.

## The Legends of The Returning

Of late many seers have foretold of the expansion of the Dwarven race and the return of the High King to the Throne of The World. These prophecies began with Minefrei, the Seer of Morhedin and have continued since.

Many agree that someday soon a Dwarf shall arise and unify those many scattered sons of Mother Tyrra and go deep below the earth to once again find our ancestral home, the lost City of Gold in the Caverns of Tokai. Each seer has predicted different signs and portents along the path to the City of Gold and many interpret these differently. King Vindraal Stonesplitter believed himself to be the true High King returned and thought it was his destiny to rule all the Dwarves of Tyrra from the Throne of The World. He believed this until the very day he reached the end of his line.

No one is sure what the signs are but several have come true, Minefrei predicted the fall of the City of Pride and the loss of the Way Below, both of which came to pass. She also predicted the rise and fall of the Rose's Tooth and his rising and falling once more. These mysterious words are thought to be a prediction of Fangthorn's coming and the wars with him and his Trolls.

## The Tale of Drivandor The Mad

In Dwarvenholm smiths often frighten their young apprentices with the tales of Drivador the Mad and his cursed Anvil and Hammer. Drivador was a smith in Dwarvenholm some centuries ago. He was always considered strange by the other craftsmen. Never did Drivador craft anything that was useful. All of his creations were strange statues and useless trinkets made of metals better for forging of weapons. His crafts did not sell to the Dwarves or any of the races from the outside. He insisted upon using a strange anvil which appeared to have melted as if under a great heat.

When the Merchant Lord of his clan stepped in and insisted on him generating a profit or at least becoming self sufficient, he was found dead the next morning, his body cut as if by small razors and his neck snapped by a being of such strength that its fingers were imprinted around the merchant's broken neck.

Drivador's questionable sanity snapped after this and he spent all his time at his forge often seen sleeping draped upon his warped anvil. When some young children came by his forge and laughed at him his eyes became wild and he began to shout at them, "you know nothing of my talent, and nothing of my power he said." And as he spoke the statues about his forge began to move and they chased the children and tore them limb from limb. The strange trinkets he made flew through the air and tore at the skin of the children, nearly flaying them to the bone.

When the forces from the guard moved in they found nothing left in his forge but a spot where an anvil had once rested, Drivador and all of his creations had disappeared.

No one ever found Drivador or his cursed anvil but now and again when a young child begins to think himself better than his fellows or his craft superior to all others that young child is found with his skin cut and his neck snapped by a creature of incredible strength and all wonder just how far Drivador went when he disappeared.