Afe

The Afe people are direct descendants of the nomadic humans that scrounged for scraps in the shadow of the Ancient Dwarven Empire. With the fall of the Dwarves, most spread out and mixed bloodlines. The Afe consider their lineage pure due to the traditions they follow. Unfortunatly these traditions have whittled down the Afe over time and currently there is only one tribe left wandering the land of Ovenica.

Naming Traditions

Feminine names

Ablã, Ackon, Akosua, Akua, Akuba, Así, Ataá, Ayawa, Ekua, Kande, Kumi, Kwasiba, Máanu, Mansah, Nsĩã, Nyankómàgó.

Masculine names

Afúom, Anan, Ansong, Dúkũ, Dúnu, Esson, Kaakyire, Kwakú, Komlã, Kwámè, Kwamina, Kwasí, Nkróma, Píèsíe,

Unisex names

Ackoon, Akosah, Akosísua, Asantãntewaa, Ayensu, Be, Crententsil, Dedáei, Ekuba, Gyimumah, Ko, Kaakyikyire, Karikakari, Obuoorgyamfi, Ogyamúampah, Ohi, Opambémbuor, Siw, Yuo,

Family names

Arkorful, Omenah, Agyei, Twasam, Ankomah, Brempong, Kwayie, Boamah, Oyiakwan, Aborah, Manso, Amissah, Agyemang, Quainoo, Afreh, Afrifa, Twum, Enninful, Dapaah.

Culture

Major language groups and dialects

The Afe speak Common, as well as an ancient human language that is no longer used outside of their people. It is refered to by outsiders as "Afe" or "The Afe Language."

Shared customary codes and values

The Afe's primary purpose is to continue the bloodlines of their ancestors as well as follow the traditions tied to those bloodlines. This means that childbearing and rearing is the most important part of Afe culture. If a couple in a relationship are unable to bear a child both will find sexual partners outside the relationship until someone is pregnant, then all parties involved work together to raise the child. This often results in large families and it is the responsibility of The Speaker to keep track of genetics. In recent times it has become nearly impossible to keep the bloodline within the Afe people and The Speaker has begun to allow members to seek partners outside of the tribe.

Afe believe that the your eyes are literally the gateway to your soul and if you do not cover your face, it makes it easier for others to take your soul from you.

Common Dress code

The Afe people wear tight cloth wrappings layered with furs and finally a cloak if the weather is cold enough for it. However, the most important aspect of Afe clothing is their masks. An Afe has their mask given to them as a child. It is usually made of animal skin with a frame made of Yew (for long life) and Beech (for wisdom). As the person grows they are taught how to care for the mask. They keep the skins well oiled and replace brittle supports with new ones. Overtime they add to the mask. More skins, a larger frame. An Afe's mask grows with them. Often masks will be decorated for celebrations or personal achievements.

Common Customs, traditions and rituals

When it is time for a new Speaker, the current Speaker engages in a mock battle of wits with a small group of people. Each person faces off against the speaker telling stories and solving puzzles until only one remains. The final person has actually been training for the role of Speaker their entire life and the battle in which they defeat the current Speaker has been practiced ad naseum. When performing all of the people attempting to beat The Speaker wear identical clothing and masks so that the audience has no idea which person is the new Speaker. In the end the ordeal has become an event for the entire town to watch and brings some much needed levity to their harsh lifestyle.

The Afe people are nomads and go where The Speaker tells them to go. The will of the gods is of utmost importance to the Afe and so they have little in the way of possessions.

Coming of Age Rites

When an Afe comes of age (around thirteen years of age) their mask is painted a solid colour to represent that their childhood is behind them and adult hood is a blank canvas, but the lessons they learned as children remain within them.

Funerary and Memorial customs

When an Afe dies their mask is removed prior to cremation. The mask is hung on the wall in The Speaker's tent and family members are encouraged to come visit the mask. It is believed that the person walks with the tribe as a spirit and can be spoken to. At this point the mask is no longer allowed any repairs and when it finally breaks down it is burned by the surviving family members. If there are no surviving family members it is the job of The Speaker to gather a few members from the tribe and burn the mask. This is considered the second death, when a person's time as a spirit is over and they move on past the veil into the halls of the ancestors.

Common Taboos

Removing your mask in front of another person is considered dangerous and is generally something that is only done with a life partner who is well trusted. Those who do remove their masks in front of others are called Vervloek, meaning cursed, and can sometimes be shunned to the point of having to leave the tribe.

Common Myths and Legends

The Afe believe and follow an ancient creature (Afe the Demigod) from whom they take their name, as well as the Pilgrim. Afe is a deity of wisdom and intelligence. He appears in stories as a man, a spider, or a mixture of the two. His stories always involve him using his words and wits to out maneuver his enemies until they become their own downfall. As respect to him, the leader of an Afe tribe is called The Speaker. They are a teller of stories, a keeper of culture, and a direct line to the gods. The Afe believe that The Speaker can talk to and hear from the gods at any time. Because The Speaker has their soul laid bare before the gods, they forsake their mask when they take on the role. A Speaker cannot have their soul stolen as it belongs only to the gods.

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