Dwarves

Beauty Ideals

The Dwarves are incredibly proud of their hair. Both male and female Dwarves grow hair on their head and face, but the beard of a Male Dwarf is something to behold. Bows, braids, metal bands, beads, bones, and all manner of other accoutrements are woven into both hair and beard. In Dwarven culture "Ugly" is exclusively used to describe someone who is hairless, though it is not always used as an insult.

Common Etiquette Rules

Touching a Dwarf's hair is an incredibly intimate action and, if done so without permission, is liable to get the toucher badly beaten or even killed.

Common Customs, Traditions and Rituals

Cutting of hair only happens in three situations in Dwarven culture: Weddings, Funerals, and Declarations of War.

In a Dwarven wedding the couple seal their marriage by braiding some of their hair together and then cutting it off. This hair is then sealed in clear crystal which is set in a place of honor somewhere within the newlywed's home.

At a Dwarven funeral those who knew the deceased often cut a lock of hair to place in the casket. Sometimes an especially bereaved significant other will cut all their hair and make themselves "Ugly" to show the loss.

When the Ancient Dwarven kings wished to declare war on one another they would shave their head (not their beard) and send the hair to their opponent. Dwarves still do this, but it's usually little more than a gesture of enmity between families and individuals.

History

The history of the Dwarves started thousands of years ago, before the gods war. In their effort to hold back an increasing number of giants, Dwarven society grew until it formed an empire that stretched from one end of Ovenica to the other. Humans were little more than barbarians hiding in the woods at this point and went mostly unnoticed by the Dwarves who built cities on mountainsides and dug tunnels below the ground. In these prosperous years Dwarven traders sailed across the ocean in great stone ships and brought back all kinds of treasure; much of which

can still be found if one knows where to look.

It was during this time (only a few years after The Betrayer

began his quiet conquest of the nine hells) that The Enemy emerged from the southern shores. Little is known about The Enemy. Scholars believe the ancient Dwarves have very few descriptions of them because they were initially a valued trading partner and lived so close, no one saw the need to make much note of them. They are generally considered to be some form of humanoid, possibly an extinct species, or possibly another Dwarven empire. Whoever they were, they stormed Ovenica (then called Yonend in Dwarvish) suddenly and without warning. The Dwarves were unprepared and despite their spread across the continent were nearly wiped out as The Enemy made their way from one hold to the next until only Kurleigh Castle was left standing. The brave last stand of the denizens of the castle is one that is well known to most Dwarves and is a reminder of their accomplishments. It's account can be found in the history of Kurleigh Castle .

The Enemy defeated, Dwarves found themselves in a vast empty world filled with the husks of their empire. Unsure of how to move forward the Dwarves sealed themselves inside the mountain to deliberate. None could decided what to do. Some wanted to enter the world again and take back what was theirs, others wished to stay in the castle and make tunnels to their other fortresses to see if anything was worth salvaging. Still others wished to tunnel down deeper and escape The Enemy and the outside world. Days turned to Weeks, which turned into Months and then finally Years until generations had lived and died beneath the mountain. The beginnings of the gods war came and went with the Dwarves still sealed in their castle. Finally a settlement was reached. The gates were opened and the Dwarves emerged only to find that in their absence humans had flourished. Small human settlements had started cropping up all over Ovenica. Initially there were skirmishes but it soon became obvious that the Dwarves no longer ruled this land. They came to agreements and joined with the humans in an attempt to build something nearing the prosperity of their forefathers. Together they created a society of safety and opened their borders to other races escaping the worst of the war. They renamed their continent Ovenica, meaning Land of Safe Harbor.

When the world shattered and The Mother used her body to heal the material plane, Ovenica was spared the worst of the collapse. Now the Dwarves of Ovenica carve out their own lives in the dirt and rock, pushing forward to make their Land of Safe Harbor safe once more.

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