

Elves

Elves come from the Faewild and are very different creatures than humans or dwarves, or other races born on the material plane. Their minds think differently due to their Fae influence and long lifespans, and it is for this reason that there is often conflict between the races. Simple misunderstanding.

Civilization and Culture

Beauty Ideals

Traditionally, Elves never cut their hair. Through mundane or magical means they keep it well groomed and tidy but an Elf who has followed the traditions of their ancestors has had the same hair since birth, though the hair of an Elf grows somewhat more slowly than that of some other races. Even so, by the time an Elf reaches adulthood around their first century they will often have hair down past their knees.

Common Customs, Traditions and Rituals

The importance placed on hair runs deep in Elven society. An Elf who has been banished, or punished for a serious crime may have some or all of their hair shorn off in a public ceremony. Additionally an Elf who believes they have caused some dishonour or wish to separate themselves from their family will often cut their own hair. Elves who remain in their society after having lost their hair are generally seen as brave and willing to make a change and as such are usually cared for by friends and family. Even this practice however is often not enough to keep some Elves from abandoning their home. Elves live long lives, and memories of past mistakes live even longer.

When Elves decide to spend their lives together they share in a symbolic ceremony where both parties cut a length of their own hair as long as their partner's index finger. The custom originated by Elven partners cutting their hair to the same length but over time it became a symbolic gesture, though some will still follow the original tradition.

Common Taboos

Purposefully harming the hair of an elf, yanking on it, or touching it in any way that the owner of the hair did not give consent to can be considered as severe a crime as murder depending on the circumstance.

History

Elves find their origins in the Faewild. Though not true Faeries themselves, Elves today are direct descendants of a small group created tens of thousands of years ago by an Archfae named Tanathil. Under the guidance of the Archfae, the Elves flourished and spread across the Faewild. Some took to the forests, others to the sea, and still others followed their curiosity underground. It took no more than a few generations before the Faewild had twisted these elves the way it saw fit. The elves who went into the forests found their skin and hair, over time, becoming dark browns and greens blending in with the shadows and colors of the trees. The elves who went to the sea discovered their skin and hair taking the colors of the water and ocean plant life. They found swimming was becoming easier and eventually discovered they could breathe the water. The elves who went underground discovered their skin and hair getting pale white, and soon their eyes were changed so that they no longer needed light to function below ground.

A group of the originals decided to remain with their creator and learn his ways. They built a great city around him and he taught them to harness magic and knowledge to their advantage. They named the city Thilath Edhil, or Birthplace of Knowledge.

Years passed and Tanathil fell into a deep slumber. Worry spread throughout the elves for some time until they realized he was not waking up anytime soon. Without his guidance the elves began to seek it elsewhere. This is when tragedy began to strike. The elves from underground emerged only to find the light burned their eyes and skin. They fled once again beneath the earth, so deep this time that they were not heard from again until they emerged in the Underdark worshipping Lolth and calling themselves Drow. The history of how that came to be is known only to them. The elves of the forests joined with the elves who stayed in the city and many fled the Faewild in search of new lands. These are the Woodelves and Highelves respectively. The elves by the sea, finding themselves mostly alone in the Faewild made their way to the plane of water, where began their endless war with the Sahuagin.

The elves that remained in Thilath Edhil were witness to a strange event many years after their brethren had left them. Vines, trees, grass, shrubs, flowers, and all other manner of plant life began to spread from the sleeping form of Tanathil. The foliage crept across the city, covering buildings and streets until everything was hidden beneath a layer of green. The elves in the city changed as well. The new plant growth granted them a deeper connection to Tanathil and many of them embraced it (though it caused others to flee). The descendants of those who embraced the new magics from Tanathil are known today as the Eladrin, tied more deeply than all other elves to their creator and the Faewild as a whole.

When the world shattered and the gods were at war, most elves fled back to the Faewild seeking protection. The Eladrin welcomed them with open arms and assisted with the building of new cities. Soon the lands ruled by Tanathil were filled with the elven refugees of the shattering and to this day most elves (save for the Drow who quietly sided with The Betrayer) live still in the Faewild.

When the war was finished, some elves began travelling again. Though elven settlements are rare on other planes it is not uncommon to find one or two who have settled down in a quiet spot in Ovenica, or run into the ever growing population of Half-Elves. The largest population of Elves outside of the Faewilde reside in Loss, the plane of shadow. Called the Shadar-Kai, these elves were once twisted servants of a long dead, corrupted Archfey. Now, the descendants of those who slew their enslaver are still tainted by his corruption. The Shadar-Kai are pallid, and lack hair of any kind. Their grim history has placed a dour mood of unhappiness over most and many believe (perhaps not incorrectly) that they would not be accepted among other elf kind. Most Shadar-Kai remain in Loss, a place they know and fit in well, however there are always those with adventurous spirit who manage to make their way out looking for a better life.

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