

SECTION 1.1: RACES

Selecting a race is one of the most important steps in character creation.

When recording race on your character sheet, make note of your race's size. This factor determines what equipment your character can carry and utilize, and the weight of items that your character can pick up. See Chapter 4 for more information on weight and carrying.

It's important to remember that the races and factions described here are the most common examples of the denizens of the world. There are many dissenters and members of the races who do not follow their society's normal rules. Do not feel limited just because all Faresh are emotionless perfectionists, for example. Perhaps your character rebels against this notion, and does everything possible to inspire passion in their fellows.

Racial Comparison Chart

Race	Size	Attribute Bonuses	Special Abilities
Rakoom	Short	+2 AGI, +1 CHA, -2 STR	Drae Companion, Prehensile Tail
Gordoni	Average	+2 INT, +1 CON, -2 CHA	Goddess Advantage
Faresh	Average	+2 WIT, +1 AGI, -2 CON	Natural Swimmer
Morg	Giant	+2 STR, +1 CON, -2 INT	Rock Strike

Rakoom

The Rakoom, or Woodland Folk, are energetic and playful spirits of the forest. They originate from the Darknut Forest, but can be found in wooded areas the world over. They have a special bond with the trees, and every Rakoom is part of a three-way bond between a tree, a Drae (a faery-like tree spirit), and the Rakoom itself.

Appearance: Rakoom are short, lithe humanoids. They average around 3 feet tall, and rarely weigh more than 50 pounds. They have large, alert eyes that can be brown, green, hazel, or black. They are very proud of their hair, which is usually dark in color, although lighter reds and browns have appeared. Their skin varies from pale to a deep brown. Aside from their height, their most distinguishing feature is their prehensile monkey-like tails, which the tree people use as another limb. They favor colorful tattoos and body paint, although they usually wear little clothes.

Society: The Darknut forest in the west, is the primary home of the Rakoom, and that is where 80% of the population live. The major city is Arbore Mere, built in the branches of the trees just a few miles south of the Great Mother Tree. The second largest city, Etraire, is situated on the eastern border of the Darknut forest, and is a major trading post with the other species of the world. Each city is ruled by a council of elders, as well as a council of druids. This dichotomy is important to the Rakoom, who are strong believers in the ultimate balance.

Religion: The major religion of the Rakoom revolves around the worship and respect of trees. All trees, say the

Rakoom, can trace their lineage back to the Great Mother Tree. This tree is to them a god, and her branches extend so far into the heavens that the top has never been seen. The High Druid of the Rakoom lives in a temple at the base of the Great Mother Tree, along with 7 other druids. This temple is the only place that is truly off limits to *mienal*, which is the Rakoom word for anyone who is not a Rakoom.

Next come the Drae, the tiny spirits of the trees. Each Drae is, in essence, the soul of a particular tree. They are tiny, winged balls of light, who speak in squeaky little voices. When a Rakoom is born, the Great Mother Tree assigns to him a tree that will be bound to that Rakoom's life force. When the Rakoom comes of age, a Drae appears to him. He then goes on a vision quest to find his brother tree. Upon finding that tree, the Drae bonds with the Rakoom, and follows him as a loyal friend until the death. When this happens, the Drae returns to the forest, and may never be assigned another Rakoom.

Mechanics: The Rakoom gain a +2 bonus to Agility, as they are athletic and nimble. They also gain a +1 bonus to Charisma, due to their friendly, open, and playful nature. Although their small stature grants them a -2 penalty to Strength. Also, due to their unique racial merits, all Rakoom begin play with the Prehensile Tail advantage, as well as the Drae Companion advantage. Their natural language is Raak, but they almost all know Common as well. Many Rakoom are mischievous, and become Thieves or rogues. Otherwise, male Rakoom tend toward the Warrior class, while females tend towards Mage (calling themselves Druids), although sometimes these roles are reversed.

Gordoni

The inhabitants of Icedoom Spire are known as the Gordoni. They are a mysterious, alienated race of beings that remain in their crystal caverns and snow-driven roads, high in the Glacier Wall Mountains on the northern edge of the world. The women of this race are the guardians of the last portal.

Appearance: The Gordoni are tall, thin humanoids. The women average at about 6 feet tall, and the men are usually closer to 7. They have sharp features and angular bodies. Their hair is feathery, and usually white, blonde, or light blue. Their narrow, pupil-less eyes are almost exclusively coal black, although a few cases of dark blue exist. Their skin is usually gold or bronze, though pale skin is not uncommon. They dress in furs to protect them from the extreme temperatures.

Society: Many years ago, the Gordoni were a great race, ruled by male mages and scholars. But during an event that has been lost time, the Gordoni made a terrible mistake, striking a deal with demonic forces. The Gordoni were able to destroy all the portals but one, which is located at the peak of Icedoom Spire. As self-inflicted punishment, they relocated the whole race into the mountains, to guard the portal. Because of their mistakes, and potential for corruption, the males were stripped of all power. Now only the female Gordoni hold any true power. The males are considered slaves and property in this society. Whenever a male is born, the Oracle (the high priestess of Tarin) is consulted to determine whether the male will be allowed to live.

The major city of the Gordoni is Berek D'Thor, the town nearest the top of the mountain. The small township of Walltown is down the mountain, near the valley, for dealing with outsiders and trading goods.

Religion: The Gordoni are powerful priestesses, and follow very strongly their triple goddess. The goddesses are Sky, the goddess of wisdom, Thunder, the goddess of power, and Storm, the goddess of courage. A trio of priestesses rules each village, each one dedicated to a single goddess. The Gordoni have dozens of little quirks and practices that they have developed over the years, and tend to be a bit paranoid or superstitious. They have good reason, however. Years ago, a priestess of Sky laid out a series of prophecies, extending for hundreds of years. So far, they have all come true. They are difficult to decipher, however, so they still live in fear of the next betrayal or cataclysm.

Mechanics: The Gordoni gain a +2 bonus to Intelligence, as they are bred for insightfulness and magical skill. They also gain a +1 bonus to Constitution from their years of enduring the elements. However, they lose a -2 bonus to Charisma, for being untrustworthy of outsiders, and their own paranoid beliefs. They also gain a racial advantage, based on which goddess they revere. The Gordoni who revere Sky usually become magical priestesses. Thunder's followers often become strong warriors, specializing in the spear and sword. Finally, the worshippers of Storm usually take the Thief class, become trackers and hunters in the dangerous wilds of the mountains.

Morg

There are beings of rock and fire that live in elaborate caves tunneled underneath the Ashridge, a range of mountains in the east, known as the Morg. Their society is based around Gora, the great volcano, and Morg rarely leave her shadow. This is because Gora is not only the volcano that gives the Morg their home and their strength, but she is also their god and mother.

Appearance: The Morg are giant, stocky, humanoids who range from 9 to 12 feet tall, and regularly weigh well over 500 pounds. Their bodies are halfway between rock and flesh, appearing as some form of rock (like granite or sandstone). They have wide frames, and are completely hairless. Moss tends to grow, however, on their bodies, and many males fashion it into facial hair. Their eyes are usually gray, red, or brown, and glow with a hint of fire behind them. Due to the heat, they rarely dress in more than loincloths and jewelry.

Society: With rare exception, Morgs never move outside of the mountain range that houses their society. That is because of the serious religious beliefs of these proud people. Their main city, Ramblog, is a sprawling metropolis made up of tunnels and is spread throughout the mountain just south of Gora. There are many more cities than one can mention, but it is important to note Minesberg, the trading post just west of the mountain range. Morg society itself is a very harsh one. Living inside a volcano makes life hard for the Morgs, but they toil endlessly to harvest the Monarch Vines, plants that grow in the heat of the volcano. These

plants, when used in the forging of weapons and items, produce unbreakable products. This is necessary, because of the dangerous monsters that live here, too. The Morg are ruled by the King or Queen (never both), who is assisted by the Council of the Wise.

Religion: The Morg worship Gora, a great god of fire and strength, who has chosen as her avatar the greatest volcano in the land. She encourages strength and combat, and so the Morgs are a hearty lot. When a Morg couple decides to have a child, they travel to one of the many pumice caves on Gora's slopes, and consummate in the cave at night. When they awake, if Gora blesses the union, they will find at least one stone burning, although there are usually 2 or more. They must take these burning stones home, and within a few days they will unfold into a baby Morg, and the cycle of life begins. When a Morg dies, his body must be dropped into the lava at the center of the volcano. If not, his soul will never find rest, and it is believed that he will never be reincarnated. Morg believe that there is only a limited number of Morg souls, so when one is lost forever, it is a terrible tragedy for the whole species.

Mechanics: Morg gain a +2 to Strength, due to their size, and a +1 Constitution for their rocky hides. They suffer a -2 Intelligence, however, as they are not overly bright. All Morg gain the Rock Strike advantage, representing their ability to deal lethal damage with their fists. Morg adventurers almost always train as Warriors, although there are occasional occurrences of Morg Mages or Thieves. Morg do distinguish between male and female, although they never judge or limit one another.

Faresh

The sea-faring Faresh are noble and aloof. They have a well-documented history, and take great pride in their skill above and below the waves. Whether they are practicing magic, combat, sculpture, politics, or athletics, they consider all of their activity to be an art form. They recognize beauty and patterns in all of nature, though they view themselves as the pinnacle of that beauty. They believe that emotion, however, is a flaw, and work to minimize its impact on their lives.

Appearance: The Faresh are generally slender and well muscled, and wear very little clothing to better show off their perfect physiques. Their skin is hairless and shiny, usually blue or green in color. The eyes of a Faresh are wondrous pools of color, and usually sparkle internally like glitter. They can be any color, although they are prone to change as the mood changes. Their hair, likewise, can be any color, but does not change naturally, although most females change their hairstyle on a near daily basis. Males are usually bald, although some wear their hair in more feminine styles.

Society: The Faresh have a number of underwater cities under the Farsea. Their capital city is Loubar, where the King and Queen reside. There are a few island cities above the water, as well as one coastal city, Sigarn, that is primarily a major trading port, although it has become a rather scummy place, despite the Faresh's best efforts to keep it beautiful. One group of the Faresh, the Zrepan, have actually broken off to form a major pirate group, and are a scourge to the Faresh monarchy. Because everything is an art form to them, they

are extreme perfectionists. They are also not fans of blunt, overt action, preferring subtlety.

Religion: The Faresh are a deeply spiritual people. They worship the divine pairing. The god, Jabu, is a quiet, meditative male deity of knowledge and logic, who is revered by monks and scholars the world over. His wife, Puta, is a goddess of passion and emotion, and all of the positive and negative connotations that go with it. The Faresh are a primarily calm and peaceful people, who have mostly suppressed emotion. But on certain religious holidays, dedicated to Puta, certain emotions are allowed out, to make it easier to continually stay calm the rest of the year. For example, the Feast of Barros is a two-day event where every Faresh is encouraged to fulfill all their carnal desires and pleasures. It is a small price to pay for year-round peace, they say.

Mechanics: The Faresh, as graceful, clever beings, gain a +2 bonus to Wits, and a +1 bonus to Agility. They suffer a -2 penalty to Constitution, since they are generally frail creatures. All Faresh gain the Natural Swimmer advantage, as well as any other aquatic advantage for free. Their own language, Frasheaea, is unpronounceable when out of water, and so they have adopted Common as a second tongue. The Faresh are not inclined towards any one class or path, but rather towards the perfection of whichever path they choose. They believe in an equality between all beings, and as such do not officially repress or praise any one gender or group, although they generally view themselves in the highest light possible.