

Travel Guide To The Many Races (Short Version)

Humans: Nature's Wrecking Ball

Ever since the beginning, it has been a fact that nature is in constant movement. Creatures that manage to carve out a niche for themselves often thrive and rise to their own peak in nature, some more generalists fail and struggle to find a place in an ever-changing world. Humans are the exception. Well known for being hunter-gatherers and inventors, humanity has always strived to conquer nature, carving it to their collective will; a quality that is both their greatest strength and worst weakness.

Because of their naturally individualistic drive, humans tend to spread out in large groups to overtake areas that appeal to their abilities. Thus, depending on where humans are found, they might have entirely different values, personalities and ways of looking at the world. From the pirates of the savage seas, to the architects of The Midlands and Ceonead, humanity's policy has always been to adapt and become rulers of their environment.

Humans vary in size, lacking hair on most of their bodies, except for their heads. They are a very diverse race, with varying sizes, skin colors, hair colors and eye-colors, something that is also exemplified by their culture.

When dealing with humans, it is best considered to maintain an open mind, as most members of their species are very receptive to foreigners but have a relatively hard time understanding the cultural norms of other races. Nevertheless, humans are resourceful, gregarious and hardworking people (if a little kooky at times), who hold rites of passage in very high regard, those of which vary depending on the family and immediate culture that surrounds them.

Dizwin: Delvers Of The Unknown

The Dizwin are a curious people, though often reviled for their appearance and disregard for homogeneous aesthetic beauty, they are first and foremost, explorers and defenders of the sciences. Previously bred for sabotage in times of war by long gone masters, The Dizwin have reinvented themselves into an easy going but fierce and heroic people.

Dziwins are known most for their curiosity, always being captivated by new experiences and enamored with the idea of discovering things previously thought unknown or impossible. Their ways of war are not far behind them however, as they still retain some of their more warrior-like qualities in how they approach life. They all believe that every person has a “Struggle” or “War” though the latter term has fallen out of use. A “Struggle” is essentially a goal or profession that is approached by a Dizwin the same way a martial warrior might approach combat; being a doctor is seen as “waging a war on unwellness,” being a librarian/teacher is seen as “fighting a war against ignorance and stupidity” and so on.

Known for their wide variety of skills and expertise in their society, Dizwin are often thought of as the multi-purpose tools of nature, as if any profession exists, a Dizwin has probably made it their life’s mission to master it. This can be detrimental however, due to this attitude towards life, it breeds an environment of elitism as it pertains to certain professions.

Dizwins are proud of their independence to the point that sometimes their stubbornness keeps them from accepting help from others, and families of Dizwin take extreme care to train their children to be as independent as possible. This sometimes makes them feel isolated from their family members and communities, though it heightens their chances to succeed in their goals.

The Dizwin however, hold a high regard for festivals and parties and are a hearty people known for their hard work ethic and desire to prove and improve themselves. As said by many who have encountered them, you can always trust a Dizwin to finish the job.

Yvish: Sickles Of Gaia

Known as the “Sickles Of Gaia” the Yvish are known for their deep love of strength, art and craft, while still harboring a grand respect for nature and all it encompasses. The Yvish are most well known for their diet, quite infamously so, as due to their respect for nature, particularly plant life, they are often seen eating raw meat with a varying degree of spices.

Insects, rodents, felines, canines, bovines, any meat is good meat to eat for the Yvish, though there have been some rumors of cannibalistic cults among their ranks. As worshippers of nature, they hold the belief that all natural things are beautiful and therefore perfect in their own respective way. Because of this, they do not feel a desire to shape the environment to fit their needs, only practicing basic herbalism and agriculture for medicinal purposes, with their main industry being hunting increasingly more dangerous animals.

The corpses, pelts and skeletons of animals are often used for their clothing. The more exotic the animal, the more status it gives them in their tribal societies, often being used to mark houses of certain families. They are a cruel meritocracy, with those most suited to rule and lead being chosen by acknowledgement of their accomplishments, be they in creating weapons, hunting, wrestling, both men and women are seen as equals under Gaia, with women being seen as those more attuned to wisdom and knowledge due to Gaia also being female much like them and their tolerance for pain during childbirth.

Glorifying strength and personal achievement, the Yvish are a headstrong, loyal and fierce people, with a penchant for heroism and producing warrior poets. Body art is also very important for them, done to commemorate significant events in their lives. Unfortunately, they see those with physical disabilities as inferior and their glorification of being dominant makes it so that most of their relationships contain some element of abuse. Thankfully, more counter-cultural movements have been appearing within their ranks in recent times.

Roktu: People Of The Seven Winds

The people of the seven winds, lovers of the mountains, explorers of the clouds, those are some of the names given to the wonderful people known as the Roktu. They are a people proud of their traditions and very secretive about their ways, not out of a sense of distrust towards outsiders, but because most traditions are very intimate affairs meant for immediate family or friends, should they have any.

Roktu are known for being very pensive thinkers, more so preoccupied with ruminating on life and the nature of the universe rather than amassing wealth and glory, though this does not mean that they are harmless, mind you. They are best known for their animistic adoration of the winds, their habitats being high peaks and mountains giving them a view of the wide expanse of nature. Roktu are best known for their worship of the Seven Winds, philosophical/religious constructs they use to lead righteous lives; honor, loyalty, reason, kindness, heroism and patience.

Often sought out for their wisdom, the Roktu are nonetheless a people that are hardly understood by other cultural standards; they see gender as an ever-changing thing for instance, they see death as a mere transcendence ceremony to become pure wind, they see flight as a rite of passage and don't truly see a need for a money, following a more simple bartering simple and governmental structure.

All of these are related to their worship of the wind. Despite this seeming individualism, the Roktu are more collectivist in nature, prioritizing the whole, rather than the individual, especially by supporting their weaker, more vulnerable members in order to strengthen the whole.

Arkin: The Boar-barians

A nomadic people, they are much like their human brethren, but with very obvious differences. They were born from a large group of humans that was cursed by a very powerful wizard, from then on they were on the run; allegations of demonic allegiance, human sacrifice, cannibalism, all harsh and cruel accusations that could be levied against them, were.

Still, despite their unfortunate origin as victims of a curse, a common trait among the Arkin is their optimism towards life and refusal to accept defeat, no matter how big or small..

The Arkin are more often than not, victims of a very wild reputation. Because of their hybrid nature as both boars and humans, they take on traits often associated with the animal, such as stubbornness, irritability, ferociousness and incredible strength. They develop stocky, powerful bodies with a double layer of gray-brown fur over certain areas. Arkin are a nomadic people, never truly settling down in one place, more so moving across the continent in large caravans, usually composed of family and friends rather than organized tribes.

Due to their nature as wanderers, they have developed a culture revolving around the idea of a “Holy Land,” a place that an Arkin will not want to move on from as it is in that place that the Arkin in question has found their purpose, love, stability or some other grand revelation about their lives. The discovery of a “Holy Land” is cause for celebration and as the news travels fast, other nearby caravans shall join in on the festivities.

The Arkin enjoy a diet of fruits, acorns and nuts, with fallen roots being quite a delicacy among them, mostly reserved for dessert. Most Arkin families are quite large and complex, with mothers giving birth to at least 6 to 12 children. This unfortunately makes it so that certain children will not receive proper care and attention, forcing them to fend for themselves; though more often than not this toughens them up and makes them self-sufficient, the child mortality rate of the Arkin cannot be understated or ignored.

Ebstal: The Alchemical Storms

Vapor is often seen as the most important part of the Alchemical process, as vapor is needed for the purification of impure materials to occur. The Ebstal are storms of alchemical vapor, writhing visibly with power and untold potential for transmutation. It is a mystery how they really came to be, but it has been confirmed their existence is completely artificial.

Many theories exist regarding their origin, the most widely accepted one being that an Alchemist treaded the fine line of ethics in one experiment, producing the species.

Nevertheless, the Ebstal are a people mainly concerned with the idea of self-discovery. As a relatively new species in the world, they do not have the years of history and cultural development that most species do, which has essentially caused them to live in a perpetual crisis of meaning, constantly looking for an identity. They are passive, somewhat capricious and uninterested in social and political affairs.

Regarded with distrust due to their malleable nature, Ebstals might seem alien to other people, but their seeming confusion is nothing but a desire to learn and understand. Due to their vaporous forms, they can oftentimes change shape to become taller, smaller and even form their appendages into tools; one particularly off-putting fact about them, at least to other races, is that they reproduce asexually.

Finally, Ebstals might not be a united people, but they do hold very close bonds with one another and will not hesitate to help one of their own. They hold a total of five different philosophies, some of them are “Currents” which is an Ebstal that seeks to be seen as *normal* and may assimilate into an already existing culture, “Reactors” who believe that their people were made for a great purpose that they must explore the world to find, “Servers” who think their people were made for hard labor and finally the “Drifters” who see their life’s purpose to simply live it, to live life for its own sake without bothering to find a “grand purpose” but to simply enjoy life. Each philosophy is interpreted by each Ebstal differently.

Summary

Humans

Humanity are the wrecking balls of nature, carving it to their collective will, all to forge their own path in an ever-changing world full of magic, monsters and that which can't even be explained. As varied and vast as the lands they inhabit, follow humanity from pirate-infested seas, to the majestic Midlands and navigate the intricacies of their adventurous spirit and where it might take them next. Hunters, Gatherers, Inventors, Artists; humans are an ever-evolving people with boundless potential and a great respect for culture.

Dizwin

Dizwin might seem strange at first, what with their disregard for traditional aesthetic beauty and past as people bred for sabotage in times of war by long gone masters. A curious people, they travel the world in search of discovery. Their ways of war are not yet fully behind them, with all their members exhibiting warrior-like qualities and approaching life much like a warrior does. The Dizwin love to master a craft, and adventuring through the ever-changing world is just another challenge for these independent and gregarious folks.

Yvish

The Yvish are a wild and ferocious people. Due to their connection to nature or "Gaia" as they call it, they do not cut down trees or perform basic agriculture. They glorify strength and are apex predators of their environment. Primarily hunters, out of respect for nature they only eat meat and fallen fruits. They love a good challenge and have an intense way of viewing the world as an eternal struggle to stay at the top of the food chain, with no weakness allowed. Glorious, fierce and loyal, with many warrior poets among their ranks, when one of them gets it in their heads to do something, there is very little that can stop them.

Roktu

Inhabiting the highest peaks and the mighties mountains, the Roktu love to explore the glorious skies above them and the great clouds that surround them. A secretive people, they are not as open to sharing their customs with outsiders. Philosophers by nature, they engage in constant reflection regarding the nature of life and what it means to live it. They have an animistic adoration of the winds, best known for their worship of the mythical Seven Winds. They are often seen helping hikers and performing rites of passage for their young..

Arkin

Cursed to assume a form unlike that of their brothers and sisters, hunted for reasons they could not understand, the Arkin are a people made strong by harsh circumstance and an even harder strength of will. With their stocky and powerful bodies granted by their boar-like form, they wander the world in nomadic tribes, huge families traveling in caravans all over the continent, from mountains to shores, all in desire for a “Holy Land.” Ferocious, stubborn and mighty, follow the Arkin as they wander the land with adventure at every turn!

Ebstal

Born from an alchemical process lost to the annals of time, the Ebstals are the most recent species to grace the world of Aether. They are made of storms of alchemical power, but are more concerned with self-discovery rather than political conflict or societal struggle. Due to their vaporous forms, they can change shape to become taller, smaller or form their appendages into tools. Passive and capricious, the Ebstal struggle to fit into traditional society, but always vow to help another one of their own species if they are in need.