

High Orcs

Disdaining the monstrosity and destruction practiced by their distant Orc cousins, the High Orcs of Terna have developed a strong sense of justice, equality, and honor which gives them the gravitas to be considered a citizen race. Within the newly forged country of Wayside, the primary nation of High Orcs hails from the Sandorian Mountains in central Terna. Forged by the lava and snow-whipped peaks, the Sandorian Nations are a proud and strong people. The Nation holds many clans and families, but the two strongest are the Stonebiter and Rockfist clans, each with its own philosophy on life and outsiders. With an oral history extending back many hundreds of years, the Rockfist and Stonebiters clans pride themselves on being some of the most tenacious and successful of the High Orc people. Though they tolerate other clans, such groups are often placed on the lowest rung of the social order, but other clans are on their heels always.

Clans:

While there are many nations throughout the lands of Terna, none are quite as prevalent or geographically near as the Sandorian Mountains Nation. High Orcs do not tend to be as mobile as some other races but some exceptions could happen, especially for an adventuring High Orc. <If another idea exists we encourage players to help us include more information to this living document.>

Rockfists-

In most recent history, the Rockfist clan has held supremacy within the Nation. Ruling through strength, knowledge, and diplomacy, they have practiced an open policy of negotiation with the races of surrounding lands. Though they aren't the largest clan in the Nation, the Rockfists have produced an inordinate number of powerful magicians and healers over the years and their leadership most often falls to a powerful earth shaman. Often picked as shamans, Rockfist children are expected to excel not only in the martial arts but in the supernatural as well. Rockfists are often considered the most approachable to outsiders out of the Sandorian Nation's clans, if such a word can be applied to High Orcs. Though hardly warm, Rockfist leaders do pride themselves on granting outsiders the opportunity to prove their worth; and once proven, those outsiders are considered family to the High Orcs of the clan. It is this willingness to ally with other races in Wayside which has led to a "golden age" in the Nation's history— this is the first time the Nation can boast more allies than enemies.

Stonebiters-

In almost direct opposition to the Rockfist stand the Stonebiters. Stonebiters prize ruthlessness and guile in their clan, often to the point of recklessness. Closer in philosophy to their monstrous cousins, Stonebiters feel there is nothing wrong with being underhanded at times, and value brutality - a bit of dishonor is allowed so long as one isn't caught, or can fight oneself free. Fiercely territorial and proud, Stonebiters often renounce alliances with other races and feel such treaties are beneath their dignity. "Kill or be killed" is the undying maxim of the Stonebiters. While this philosophy has lead many a Stonebiter down dark paths to destruction, it has also paved the way for many powerful leaders. Though many within the Nation find the Stonebiter ideals to be distasteful, few argue with their results. It was a Stonebiter leader who originally carved out the

Nation's territory in the Sandorian Nations from the Dark Dwarves, and the Crosspick Dwarves and a Stonebiter General who first brought together the Nation under a single chief.

Kagans-

A third clan, the "Kagan" clan formed only a short few years ago is a quickly growing clan based on the ideas of change and growth. The clan first formed as an honor guard for a fallen Rockfist hero, "Stoneskull Kagan Rockfist," who gave his life honorably after succumbing to a master vampire's seductions. He faced death with bravery, and in death struck a powerful blow to save the clan's hall of heroes. It was Stoneskull's actions which first gave the adventurers of Briar Pass a chance to fell the Vampire Targus. The clan's ideals center on the beliefs of redemption and the supremacy of honor above all. The clan is fiercely hateful of both undead (especially vampires) and any mind controlling magics, considering them to be the highest of dishonors. The clan prizes magics which restore clarity of mind. The clan has "borrowed" many Dark Elven traditions including that of "seppuku" which provides redemption for mistakes.

Spear-Foots

A fourth notable clan is that of the "Spear-Foots." Although seldom spoken of and granted few open honors, the Spear-Foots act as messengers to the Rockfists. Spear-Foots, while still brutally imposing by other races standards, are often less so than the typical members of the Nation. Spear-Foots believe in honor but also prize what they consider cleverness. It is thus that many of the nation's rogues and scouts are of this clan. The results of honorable battle are what matters - the fact that a foe was brought low through exploiting a weakness, such as an old injury, is not considered to the Spear Foots. Though some might consider this a dishonor, the clan still believes fiercely in holding their honor and thus protects other aspects of their clan's honor more fiercely. They hold their word in the highest esteem and will lash out at any who speak ill of them or appear to be casting aspersions on their clan. These Orcs often are considered to have a "chip on their shoulders" by the few other races they associate with; whether it is because of their diminished status relative to the Rockfists, or because they seek to better it, is unknown.

Customs:

Ritual of Becoming: It is not unheard of for a member of a clan to switch tribes either through marriage or through a ritual of becoming, if they do not fit in. This ritual is not taken lightly and rarely bestowed upon a non-High Orc. It varies from clan to clan and family to family, but almost always involves trials and tests of honor and a large celebration. The only non-Orc in memory bestowed this honor is Lady Knight Sera Liddia Fallingstar, for her role in the ending of the "Rockfist War."

Blood Ball: A game played by both High Orc children to teach honor, team play, and combat, Blood Ball is a very physical game resembling the human game "soccer" but with the addition of weapons to make things more interesting. Cheating at this game is a very high dishonor, as is ensuring an opponent's death. Tournaments are often held for this game to be played and can become quite involved, almost looking more like a battle over a ball than a game.

Ritual of Remembrance: A ritual which takes many forms and is often performed by a clan's

leaders. Generally, the clan's leader, its war champion, and a shaman preside over the ceremony which is designed to commit the body of a slain honorable High Orc to the Halls of Heroes.

Recent History:

7 yrs ago,

A few years ago, the Sandorian Nation High Orcs suffered a major sundering. The infighting between the Stonebiters and Rockfists had escalated to civil war and spilled beyond the Nation into the surrounding countryside. General Stonebiter renounced ties with Chief Efram Rockfist and split the Nation into those who wished peace with Wayside and those who wished to conquer her. After three years of war which spanned over half of Wayside, the General was eventually captured and executed. Though the Nation has found a new peace under Rockfist diplomacy and honor, there are still some who grumble High Orcs shouldn't stand shoulder to shoulder with other races, and certainly shouldn't bend knee to the non-High Orc King in Arbor. Though General Angrum Stonebiter is dead, his legacy lives on and always threatens to resurface.

Notables:

Efram Rockfist-The most notable leader of the High Orc nation. Efram was an astoundingly powerful earth scholar and warrior in his day. His time having already passed when the Briar Pass war began, he gave control to Angrum of the Nation during the war. He knew war needed to be fought because of an illness in the human's lands, and was the initiator of peace.

Angrum Stonebiter- A powerful warrior who helped to forge the Nation through strength of arms, General Stonebiter was the War Chieftain of the Nations when the Sandorians went to war against Briar Pass. Under his leadership, Duke Buckland's forces were easily avoided and the Regencies of Tympany, Briar Pass, and the capital city were besieged within days of Efram's declaration. Stonebiter, and his followers, believed in the Nation's ability to crush Wayside and rule over the weaker races or exterminate them. He thus disagreed with and ultimately betrayed Efram when the Rockfist declared peace and murdered his daughter, thus splitting the clan. Rockfist and humans fought side by side to eventually capture Angrum, who fell further and further into his own madness before eventually losing even his clan's support when he became an Undead to overcome his foes.

Stoneskull Kagan Rockfist- A notable hero of the Vampire war and the progenitor of the Kagan clan.

Roska Rockfist- The war chieftain of the Nations and the Rockfist Tribe. Roska is often seen around Briar Pass. He has refused the offers of Knighthood from the Duke, as it would stain his honor as War Chief.

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