

Stone Elves

Often seen as the most unified race in Terna, the Stone Elves live in small communities throughout the whole continent, each enclave bearing its own unique ideals and morals. While the majority of these groups maintain independence in their day-to-day affairs, almost all owe fealty in one form or another to the Great Mage Collective. The Collective holds a series of unified Towers arrayed across the ley lines of the Northlunds. The Great Mage Collective's primary role is to act as advisors, researchers, and sages to the Northlunds Kingdom, yet they hold significant autonomy and can almost be seen as a kingdom unto themselves. Their strength and independence can be credited both to their exceptional reason and to the labor forces they control.

A tightly controlled race, both vocally and emotionally, it is difficult at the best of times to read a Stone Elf's expression, doubly so when she's decided to be stoic or professional. Vaunted for their superior training in rhetoric, logic, polemics, and the science of thought, Stone Elves occupy the top positions in most universities, advisory councils, and guild finance departments. While some Stone Elves may be more ambitious than others, most prefer to exert their influence as advisors or mentors rather than taking direct control.

Stone Elves make a careful study of themselves and their hygiene. Choosing to keep a clean and often chaste life, some become irrationally obsessed with dangers of disease and dirt and are known to bathe several times per week or even daily. Culturally, most castes and studies disdain gaudy displays of color and prefer wearing simply-cut outfits of grey, black, brown, and white, or otherwise neutral coloring. The exception to this is the use of brightly colored sashes to denote rank or station. Mages typically do not bother as the manifestation of aura is their right and the sign of their rulership.

Of the Nine

The Stone Elves of the Great Mage Collective are ostensibly ruled by a council of powerful magi known as the Nine: the three who were, the three who are, and the three who are to come. The reality is that they are ruled by a Dragon Mage, Iago Pax, and his apprentices Sagittarius and Leviticus, who exemplify all that is best in the path of intellect and magic. They are the three who are. The three who were are the honorary seats reserved for the true mages that they are descended from, while the three who are to come are the honorary seats reserved for the first Stone Elves to regain the true magic.

Social Structure

Stone Elf society is largely divided into different philosophical groups by the Nine - while Stone Elves are generally well-rounded and trained in multiple skills, they are often assigned to a specific set of study and expected to master that field. Breaking from one's

assigned philosophy to pursue personal goals or desires is considered both poor form and illogical, as the assigned structure is intended to benefit the whole of the society. These breaks are considered disappointments in many cases, but breaches are sometimes declared to have been in sound judgement after proper review. This structure has served the Stone Elves well over the years, but in practice the majority of Stone Elves have sufficient freedom to consider their own needs and wants while working within their thought groups.

In addition to the various philosophies, most Stone Elves fall into one of four castes: Mages, Intellectuals, Craftsmen, and Taskmasters. The first group is the ruling class of magic users, from the lowliest student of magic right up to the Dragon Mages. The next group is made of researchers, librarians, detectives, scientists, and various other intellectuals. Among the Craftsmen sit merchants, counselors, advisors, liaisons, actual craftsmen, and other artisans. The final group, the Taskmasters, make up the foremen, guards, and conveyors for the massive network of slaves held by the Stone Elves.

The Stone Elf citizenry would much prefer to develop their minds than exert their efforts on such menial tasks as farming or construction; by employing slaves to do this work, they are free to focus on the perfection of the path of life that they have chosen. Thus, the Nine have established the Stone Elves as the greatest slave dealers on the continent and created an infrastructure based almost entirely on the work of slaves - most of the Towers' soldiers, farmers, and builders are among these slaves. The Nine have fostered this structure through a careful program of Euphoria addiction, mental indoctrination, and even physical brutality to subdue the "lesser races" under them. The Ternian Empire and Northlunds both practice slavery on a wide scale and are great sources of income for the Stone Elves as a whole, but it is specifically the Collective which spearheads the enterprise of subjugation.

True Magic

It is rumored that in ancient times Stone Elves were Golden skinned and wielded devastating magics. The True Magic of their race was not dependant on dragons, elementals, fae, or any other greater creature. The celestial and earthen magics they practice in modern times are but a shadow of this True Magic and is often seen as a reminder of how perfect the Stone Elf race can and will be. This True Magic, along with their mental acuity, free from the emotional distractions of the other races, is how the leaders of the Stone Elves can justify their claims of superiority over and subjugation of the other races. However, little to nothing is known of what the True Magic actually was, let alone any real clue as to how to regain it.