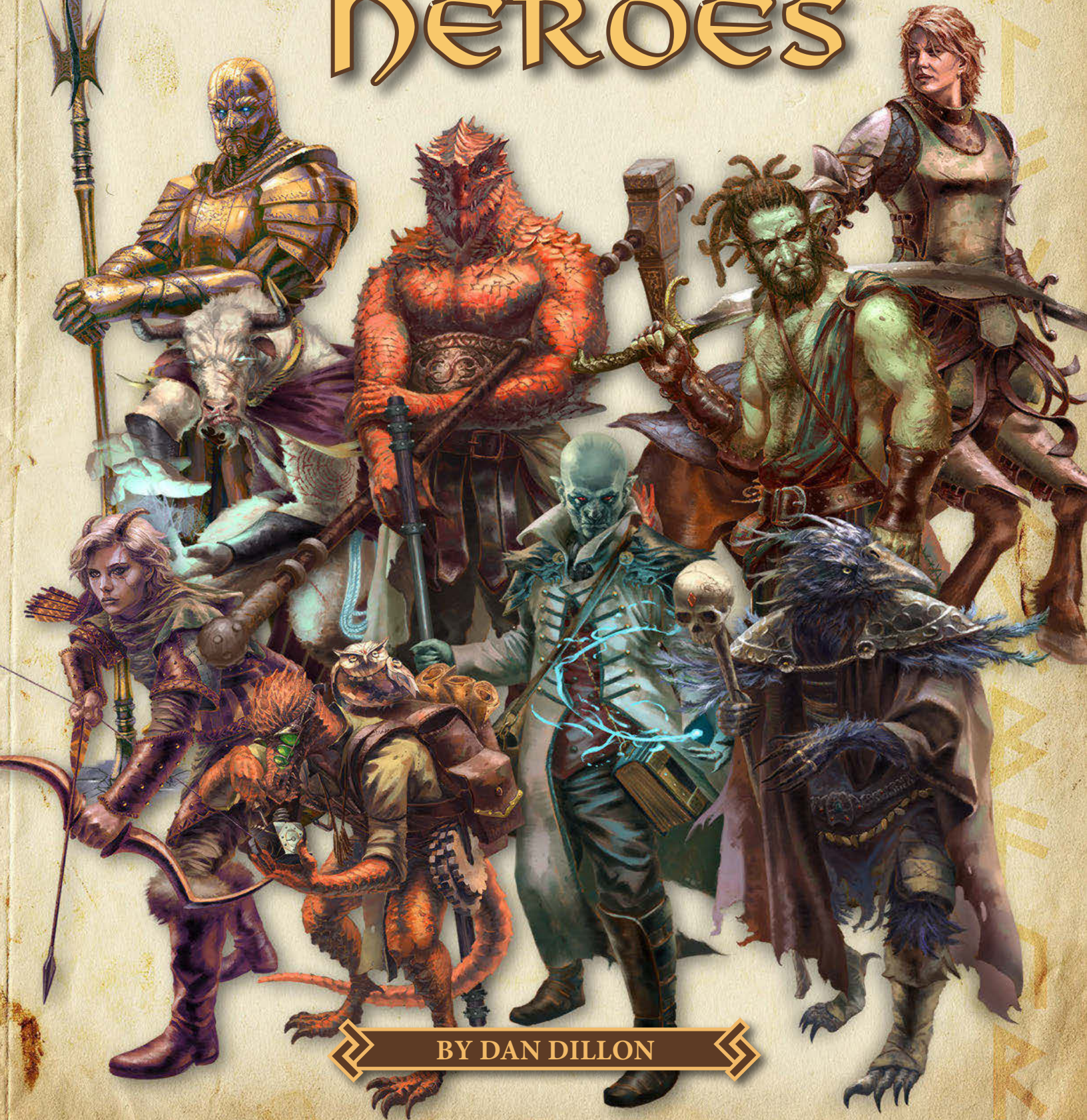


# MIDGARD<sup>TM</sup> heroes

5E



BY DAN DILLON

# MIDGARD HEROES

## RACES AND BACKGROUNDS FOR 5TH EDITION

BY DAN DILLON

### CREDITS

DESIGN: Dan Dillon

EDITING: Steve Winter

COVER ART: Josh Hass

INTERIOR ARTISTS: Josh Hass, Guido Kuip,  
Marcel Mercado, Borja Pindado, Addison Rankin,  
Kathryn Steele, Bryan Syme

ART DIRECTOR: Marc Radle

LAYOUT AND GRAPHIC DESIGN: Marc Radle

ACCOUNTANT: Shelly Baur

PUBLISHER: Wolfgang Baur

Kobold Press, Midgard, the Midgard logo, Southlands, Open Design, and their associated logos are trademarks of Open Design.

**Product Identity:** The following items are hereby identified as Product Identity, as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e), and are not Open Content: All trademarks, registered trademarks, proper names (characters, place names, new deities, etc.), dialogue, plots, story elements, locations, characters, artwork, sidebars, and trade dress. (Elements that have previously been designated as Open Game Content are not included in this declaration.)

**Open Game Content:** The Open content in this book includes the racial traits, racial variants, and archetypes. No other portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission.

Copyright © 2015 Open Design.

[www.koboldpress.com](http://www.koboldpress.com)

ISBN 978-1-936781-50-8

**KOBOLD**  
Press

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Midgard Heroes</b> .....	2
Alseid.....	2
Centaur, Midgard .....	3
Dragonkin .....	5
Elves and the Elfmarked .....	7
Gearforged.....	7
Ghoul, Darakhul .....	9
Kobold, Midgard .....	12
Minotaur .....	13
Ravenfolk.....	14
Shadow Fey.....	15
Trollkin.....	16
<b>Backgrounds</b> .....	18
Corsair.....	18
Darkling .....	19
Fey-Touched .....	20
Guild Merchant .....	22
Master Craftsman .....	22
Nomad .....	24
Raider.....	25
OGL .....	28



**MIDGARD**



# MIDGARD HEROES

The age of heroes is dead and the bridge to glory is broken—Bifrost fell long ago. The world is lost in an age of war, of dark wilderness and lost empires sunk beneath the waves. Only magic and the warmth of hope keeps

lights aglow when dread things prowl and the priestly wardings shake, bent by hideous demonic rage. In this dark time, new heroes must arise to claim the crowns of Midgard and restore the jewels to her scattered thrones. New heroes must lead a return to glory!

The world of Midgard is home to a host of races from which heroes are born, chosen, and forged. Contained here are both lore and traits to help bring your Midgard heroes to life in the 5th edition of the world's most popular roleplaying game. The races presented are in addition to the standard fantasy denizens. Humans, dwarves, gnomes, and many of the rest are present in Midgard and follow the standard rules for racial traits.



## WHERE ARE THE OTHER RACES?

A few playable races in 5th edition are absent from the *Midgard Campaign Setting*. Dragonborn and half-orcs don't exist in the world of Midgard, but their place in this rich tapestry of people and locations is not empty. Dragonkin and trollkin stand in with their unique traits and setting-specific lore to fill those roles.

Between these custom additions and the inclusion of several races usually reserved for monsters and antagonists, Midgard is thick with the threads to weave your own tale of adventure, betrayal, glory, and greatness. The gods watch with impatience, and your foes are on the move. The time has come to take up the mantle and make your mark on the world of Midgard!

## ALSEID

Alseid are graceful woodland cousins to centaurs, blending the torsos of elves with the lower bodies of nimble deer. Because they rarely venture far from their wooded glades, some call them “grove nymphs,” although they're more closely related to elves than nymphs.

Alseid see the forest as an individual and a friend. They are suspicious of outsiders who do not share this view.

Lost travelers who demonstrate deep respect for the forest may spot a distant alseid's white tail and chase after it as it bounces toward a road that leads out of the forest. Disrespectful strangers may follow the same tail to their doom.

## BRANCHING CROWNS

Alseid have antlers growing from their foreheads. Antlers grow very slowly, branching every 10 years for the first century of life (so an alseid with six points per antler should be between 60 and 70 years old). Further points only develop with the blessing of the forest. No 14-point imperial alseid are known to exist, but many tribes are governed by princes with 13 points, indicating that they've done a great service to the forest on at least three occasions. Because antlers signify status, alseid don't fight with them the way deer do. Cutting an alseid's antlers is one of the direst punishments an alseid can receive. Elf rangers sometimes report seeing lone alseid exiles, wandering the Margreve, their antlers sawn off near the scalp.

## ANCIENT MAGIC AND NATURE'S CHAMPIONS

Alseid have a deep connection with the Old World magic of the Margreve. Their leaders favor the druid and ranger classes, and wild magic sorcerers arise from deep forest glades infused with energy from the fey realms.

### *Alseid Traits*

Your alseid character has certain characteristics in common with all other alseid.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 2, and your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Age.** Alseid reach maturity by the age of 20. They can live well beyond 100 years, but it is unknown just how old they can become.

**Size.** Alseid stand over 6 feet tall and weigh around 300 pounds. Your size is Medium.

**Alignment.** Alseid are generally chaotic neutral, though variations are common, particularly among those rare few who leave their people.

**Speed.** Alseid are fast for their size, with a base speed of 40 feet.

**Type.** You are of the monstrosity type.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Alseid Weapon Training.** You have proficiency with spears and shortbows.

**Light Hooves.** You have proficiency in the Stealth skill.

**Quadruped.** The mundane details of the structures of humanoids can present considerable obstacles for you, such as ladders and manholes.

**Woodfriend.** When in a forest, you leave no tracks and can automatically discern true north.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Elvish and Trade Tongue.

## CENTAUR, MIDGARD

On the plains, in the forests, and across the steppes live creatures who blend humanoid and equine aspects. Centaurs are neither man nor beast, but occupy a strange niche in both the civilized and natural worlds. They are born with grace befitting a human king, but are possessed of the fierce savagery of a wild stallion. Centaurs are a scattered race, roaming in small clan groups from the





## CENTAUR SIZE AND DAMAGE

Large creatures are challenging to balance as playable races, because they have innate advantages that let them outshine smaller races in combat. The centaur is interesting in this regard because, despite their Large size, their upper bodies and arms are human-sized, so they use standard weapons. This creates an opportunity to design in the Large creature space without risking a catastrophic balance shift from creatures swinging enormous weapons, or requiring a list of drawbacks to make them “balanced” (read: unplayable and no fun).

Rothenian Plains (where their numbers are great) to the court of the young Valeran Emperor, whom several serve as personal guards. But they also have a reputation for banditry and bullying, and most cultures consider them dangerous.

Centaur are largely a nomadic people. Their archery is excellent and their healing arts are well advanced. Because they have little interest in magic or in writing, other cultures sometimes disregard centaurs, but they do so at their peril. Large centaur hordes have smashed baronies and even small nations flat.

## RAIDING AND BANDITRY

Upon reaching the age of majority, all young adult centaurs embark on their “bandit years,” a practice designed to siphon off those who are particularly troublesome and give some experience to more agreeable colts and fillies. These young centaurs run free, away from the clan groups, to exorcise their aggression and immaturity. At the end of this period, they can choose to remain outside their clan or horde, or they can return with the understanding that they have tamed their wild ways—at least to the degree that’s acceptable to centaur society.

Most young adults choose to return after their bandit years, though the occasional centaur leaves the horde permanently out of curiosity, romance with another race, or any number of other factors. Young centaurs of the same age go on their bandit years together, with instructions from the clan chief about when they’ll be allowed to return.

Centaur believe in personal property, but they also believe that a person who claims to own something should be strong enough to defend it. They never steal from their clan, but anyone else is fair game. Shipments or supplies of grain and alcohol are their favorite targets.

During a raid, centaurs take advantage of their speed, maneuverability, and skill in archery. They use diversions to draw defenders away from targets, or use heavy volumes of arrows to keep them pinned down.

The bandit years are the time when centaurs drink most heavily. Within the clan, celebrations can be shockingly raucous, but everyday life is not. But during the bandit years, young centaurs are drunk more often than not. This constant inebriation fuels more raids, fights, and reckless behavior.

The bandit years are also the time when centaurs are most likely to take up a life of adventuring, even if only for a little while. Many centaurs spend their bandit years not strictly as bandits but as wanderers and adventurers, eventually returning to their clans with loot and stories.

## Centaur Traits

Your centaur character has certain characteristics in common with all other centaurs.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 2, and your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Age.** Centaurs reach maturity at 15 years of age. Their lifespans vary because of the harsh conditions and martial nature of their culture, but the upper limits are similar to those of humans.

**Alignment.** Centaur alignments are mainly chaotic and neutral.

**Size.** Centaurs stand between 8 and 9 feet tall and weigh in excess of 2,000 pounds. Your size is Large.



**Speed.** Centaurs have a base speed of 40 feet.

**Type.** You are of the monstrosity type.

**Natural Attacks.** You have proficiency with your hooves.

You make one attack with your hooves, which deal 2d6 bludgeoning damage.

**Centaur Weapon Training.** You have proficiency with the pike and the longbow.

**Pike Charge.** If you move at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hit it with a pike attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 3 (1d6) piercing damage. The number of extra damage dice you gain increases by one at 6th level (2d6) and again at 11th level (3d6). You can apply this extra damage only once per turn. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to your Constitution modifier (minimum 1), and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

**Humanoid Torso.** Although you are Large, you wield weapons and wear armor sized for a Medium creature, thanks to the proportions of your humanoid torso.

**Quadruped.** You have disadvantage on Stealth checks because of your size and indelicate hooves. The mundane details of the structures of humanoids can present considerable obstacles for you, such as ladders and manholes.

**Self-sufficient.** You have proficiency with the Medicine skill.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Centaur and one other language of your choice.

## DRAGONKIN

Although they're the youngest race in Midgard, the dragonkin have expanded at a startling—some might say alarming—rate across the southern reaches of the world. It's known that the race arose in the Mharoti Empire, but beyond that, its origin is shrouded in mystery.

At first glance, dragonkin appear to be a hybrid of humanoid and dragon, but dragonkin react with near-violence to any such suggestion. They are fiercely proud of their draconic blood, and they reject the notion that it's diluted by anything less pure. They look down with disdain on other humanoids, including kobolds. Dragonkin are a race of great presence and ability, but they are driven by arrogance and greed. Despite the youth of the race overall, they have won so many battles and wield so much power that few can begrudge their arrogance.

### DRACONIC BEARING

The dragonkin are humanoid in form, but their connection to dragons is unmistakable thanks to the colored scales that cover their bodies. They have three-fingered hands and three-toed feet, and each digit is tipped with a sharp talon. Many dragonkin have frills or crests on the crowns of their heads; sometimes these extend down the backs of their necks. They have short but distinctly dragonlike snouts, and their teeth are suited to tearing meat. Males and females are visibly

distinct, though all dragonkin are solidly built. Males are slightly taller with shorter tails, are horned or crested, and are considerably thicker and heavier. Female dragonkin are more wiry than males, and they have longer, lashing tails. Instead of horns or crests, females tend to have frills.

Despite an individual dragonkin's appearance, they all project a sense of great destiny that other races, even nonscaly, find compelling.

### DIVERGENT HERITAGE

Dragonkin divide themselves into the "Four Elemental Kinds," or (supposedly) purebred lineages. In reality, a great deal of intermixing has occurred between the kinds and hybrids are common. The amount of snobbery about this "purity" among dragonkin is no more or less prevalent than the discrimination found among other races, but among dragonkin, even the lowliest hybrid dragonkin is viewed as superior to any other sort of creature. The kinds correspond to varieties of Midgard dragons that are said to have been involved in the origin of the dragonkin: flame or fire, wind or storm, stone or cave, and wave or tide. Interbred dragonkin aren't separated by type but are collectively called the edjet, or soldier dragonkin.

#### Dragonkin Traits

Your dragonkin character has certain characteristics in common with all other dragonkin.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Charisma score increases by 2.

**Age.** Dragonkin reach maturity by the age of 20. They can live beyond 100 years, but it's unknown just how old they can become.

**Size.** Dragonkin stand over 6 feet tall and weigh around 300 pounds. Your size is Medium.

**Alignment.** Dragonkin run the gamut of possible alignments, with tendencies depending on their subrace.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 feet. Your speed is not reduced by wearing heavy armor.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Commanding Presence.** You have proficiency in the Persuasion skill.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Draconic and Trade Tongue.

**Subrace.** There are five subraces of dragonkin, determined by the type of dragon they descend from: the Four Elemental Kinds and mixed heritage. Choose one of these subraces.

#### Flame or Fire Dragonkin

The most common of the Four Elemental Kinds are the proud, boisterous flame dragonkin. They can be insufferable braggarts, inspiring leaders, and sometimes both. They bear yellow, golden, or orange scales, and



red crests. Flame dragonkin are strong, and they enjoy proving their superior strength.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 1.

**Inner Flame.** You know the *produce flame* cantrip.

Charisma is your spellcasting ability for it.

**Resilient Scales.** You have resistance to fire damage.

### Wind or Storm Dragonkin

Wind dragonkin are only slightly less common than flame. They are driven by a desire to know the world. They urge their kind toward expansion and conquest, but less from a desire to rule than from a desire to understand and

experience. The wind dragonkin have blue, white, silver, or gray scales, with black crests. Wind dragonkin are studious and knowledgeable but far from passive.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

**Storm Strike.** You know the *shocking grasp* cantrip.

Charisma is your spellcasting ability for it.

**Resilient Scales.** You have resistance to lightning damage.

### Stone or Cave Dragonkin

The stone dragonkin are the most stoic and hardy of the Elemental Kinds. What seems to outsiders like reserve is really patience; stone dragonkin don't reach conclusions without evidence and don't jump into action without considering the consequences. When they do act, it's with the same intense ferocity as any of their kin. Stone dragonkin grow scales of gray, black, or rarely, white. Their crests or frills are purple or white. Like the stolid dragons that are their forebears, stone dragonkin are the most resilient of their ilk.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 1.

**Stone Resolve.** You know the *blade ward* cantrip. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for it.

**Resilient Scales.** You have resistance to acid damage.

### Wave or Tide Dragonkin

The least numerous of the Elemental Kinds, the wave dragonkin have gold, blue, or green scales with bright green or yellow crests. This breed of dragonkin find success as spies and tacticians. Some take up the priest's mantle, most often in service to Seggotan, the sea god of the Dragon Empire. Wave dragonkin are perceptive and strong-willed.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Tide's Grasp.** You know the *poison spray* cantrip. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for it.

**Resilient Scales.** You have resistance to cold damage.

### Edjet or Soldier Dragonkin

Despite the dragonkins' love of their own racial purity, interbreeding between the subraces does happen. The result is usually an edjet. They're recognizable by their brassy or tan scales with black or rust-colored crests. Edjet make up a large segment of dragonkin presence in the Mharoti armies, serving as heavy infantry and shock troops. Despite the dragonkin's usual slow speed, edjet have fast reflexes and keen aim.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

**Soldier's Eye.** You know the *shillelagh* cantrip. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for it.

**Resilient Scales.** You have resistance to poison damage.

# ELVES AND THE ELFMARKED

The elves once ruled over much of Midgard. Their mighty empire stretched from Thorn and the Arbonesse toward the east and south along a network of slender spires and magical roads. A few centuries ago that glory crumbled, and today the elves have splintered into three remote, waning nations.

## Windrunner Elves

The windrunner elves are nomads and herders, weavers, masters of archery and the hunt, and quick to speak with the sky spirits. They are a fallen people who have largely abandoned civilization. They wander the Rothenian Plains, owing no allegiance to the remaining elven rulers, neither the Imperatrix of Dornig nor the River King at Arbonesse.

Windrunner elves use wood elf traits.

## River Elves

River elves are what remains of the elves of Thorn, with the River King barely keeping contact with the Imperatrix. The Arbonesse forest beyond the western wasteland is their homeland and the river their highway. Their borders include all the land where the leaves' shadow falls. Sometimes a river elf is exiled to wander the outside world for a few decades, but otherwise, other races rarely see the elves who built so many castles, roads, and cities throughout Midgard.

River elves use high elf traits.

## Elfmarked

Although the elven race is in decline and its members are scattered, the elves created a lasting legacy. In addition to the obvious reminders of their past greatness—ruined cities and straight, level roads—they left an invisible mark in the elven blood that courses throughout Midgard's people. The so-called elfmarked are the result of unions between elves and humans. Elvish blood running through their veins ties the elfmarked to the realms of the fey; some trace their lineage back to the great elves of ages long ago. The elfmarked are spread throughout the kingdoms of Midgard. They mingle with humans and other races in cosmopolitan cities and rustic villages, the latent power in their blood always whispering in their subtly pointed ears.

Elfmarked use half-elf traits.



## LIVING CONSTRUCTS AND "LIVING" UNDEAD

The gearforged and darakhul present interesting design challenges. At first glance it might seem easiest to make them constructs and undead respectively, but that creates a number of problems. Changing the creature from humanoid not only creates a slew of spell and effect immunities, but it also makes those characters impossible to heal with magic. Cure wounds and other healing spells have no effect on constructs and undead, so it would be necessary to create new spells for healing those creature types.

Using humanoid (gearforged) and humanoid (darakhul) as the creature type allows the basic assumptions of the system to work, and specific traits then handle individual mechanical concerns such as necrotic or poison damage, and certain conditions.



## DARK ELVES

Technically a fourth race of true elves dwells on, or more appropriately under, Midgard: the dark elves. Though they were once a force of great and terrible power in the lightless depths, the rising Empire of the Ghouls spelled doom for the dark elves of Midgard. The darakhul spread like a plague, devouring and corrupting the dark elves until now only a scattered handful remain. These miserable survivors huddle in remote caverns, terrified of the day when their tunnels will echo with the hungry war cries of the darakhul.

## Shadow Fey

The shadow fey no longer draw power from Midgard. Their court resides in the Shadow Realm, another plane that darkly reflects material Midgard. The glory of the shadow fey is faded and twisted into a legacy of deceit and illusion.

Shadow fey are a special elven subrace. See page 15 for traits and information on the Shadow Fey.

## GEARFORGED

Originally created as powerful soldiers, gearforged must now find their own paths to navigate the second life they've been given. Many devote themselves to civil service, others to their gods. Some dedicate their extraordinarily long lives to the pursuit of knowledge. A few, naturally, seek out lives of adventure.

The gearforged are an artificial race. More importantly, its members are created one at a time and come from a vast array of backgrounds. Nevertheless, they maintain rich traditions of history, culture, and spirituality all their own, largely because of the influence of the race's patron, the gear goddess Rava.

## FORM AND FUNCTION

All gearforged were once other creatures with flesh-and-blood bodies, but their conscious minds were



transplanted into articulated bodies of iron, steel, brass, and wood, driven by pistons and springs. Each is as distinctive in appearance as other people are. Some entities spend a fortune on these new bodies, while others scrape together anything that will work—especially if the subject is aging or ill.

All gearforged are made in humanoid shape. The vast majority fall into one of two styles: those that are roughly human-sized, with articulated joints, hands, feet, and crystal lens eyes; and a version made by dwarves that mirrors their shorter, stouter body shape. Dwarflike gearforged are more common in the cantons of the Ironcrag than in the Free City of Zobeck, but they're universally accepted as receptacles for dwarf souls.

Gearforged mechanisms are more than mechanical, because gearforged are machines with souls. Their arms and legs are driven by everwound springs. Their minds are actuated by memory gears, transverse cognition gearing, and the marvel of a soul gem connected directly to a maze of silver and mithral steam, spark, and magical conduits. These elements reside in a shell of iron, brass, and steel.

## GEARFORGED COMPONENTS

The range of gearforged anatomy in all its variants is remarkable, but all gearforged share some common parts.

**Everwound Springs.** These magical springs provide energy over long periods, effectively acting as the power sources for most of the gearforged's moving parts. A broken everwound spring results in the loss of function in that digit or limb.

**Soul Gem.** The mind of a gearforged creature is as sharp as that of any flesh-and-blood soul, but it is more portable. The animating, vital principle of a gearforged—its will, its personality, its mind—are retained in a soul gem. Its destruction means the death of that gearforged.

**Memory Gears.** These delicate constructions are scroll-like ribbons pierced with thousands of pin holes and wound about with tiny enchantments of

great complexity. The memory of a gearforged for all the days after its creation lives in the memory gears. Older gearforged have many such gears, and the material component for the magic to create them requires one new gear for every 10 years of life. Installing one requires one day's work and 2,000 gp.

Other gearforged can read memory gears salvaged from a dead gearforged, but it's a complex, time-consuming process. It's also viewed with some alarm by most gearforged, since it is akin to peering into the most private details of a creature's life. Installing a used memory gear into a new or existing gearforged requires a new *soulforging* and at least one week before the recipient can interpret and understand the memories.

## Gearforged Traits

Your gearforged character has certain characteristics in common with all other gearforged.

**Ability Score Increase.** Two different ability scores of your choice increase by 1.

**Age.** The soul inhabiting a gearforged can be any age. As long as its new body is kept in good repair, there is no known limit to how long it can function.



## MACHINE SPEECH

Machine Speech is a whistling, clicking language that's incomprehensible to non-gearforged ears. Speakers of Machine Speech claim that the Clockwork Oracle of the Free City of Zobeck speaks in this form, and that their speech is faster and purer than any language of flesh-and-blood races.



## THE RITUAL OF SOULFORGING

The ultimate act in creating a gearforged is casting the *soulforging* ritual. The spell is available to wizards and clerics. *Soulforging* can't be added to a wizard's spellbook as one of the two spells learned for gaining a level. It must be found in written form and copied into the spellbook. Clerics can prepare the spell only if they worship a god of smithing, crafting, or a similar portfolio.

### *Soulforging*

5th-level necromancy (ritual)

**CASTING TIME:** 1 hour (see below)

**RANGE:** Touch

**COMPONENTS:** V, S, M (a complete mechanical body worth 10,000 gp)

**DURATION:** Instantaneous

You and a willing humanoid subject must chant an incantation in unison during the entire casting time. At the end of this period the subject's soul and consciousness leave its body. The subject must make a DC 14 Charisma saving throw. If it fails, you take 2d10 psychic damage and 2d10 radiant damage from waves of

uncontrolled energy ripping out from the disembodied spirit. You can maintain the spell, allowing the subject to repeat the saving throw at the end of each of your turns, with the same consequence to you for each failure. If you choose not to maintain the spell or are unable to do so, the subject's soul is traumatically drawn back to its body; the subject immediately drops to 0 hit points and is dying.

If the save succeeds, the subject's soul is transferred into the waiting soul gem and immediately animates the constructed body. The subject is now a gearforged. It loses all of its previous racial traits and gains gearforged traits. The subject's original body dies and cannot be returned to life by any means unless its soul is freed from the soul gem.

If the spellcaster dies during a *soulforging*, the subject also dies and its soul becomes a wraith.

Up to four other spellcasters of at least 5th level can assist you in casting *soulforging*. Each assistant reduces the DC of the subject's Charisma saving throw by 1. In the event of a failed saving throw, the spellcaster and each assistant take damage. An assistant who drops out of the casting can't rejoin.

**Alignment.** No single alignment typifies gearforged.

**Size.** Gearforged are as tall as either dwarves or humans, but they weigh between 250 and 300 pounds. Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Type.** You are of the humanoid (gearforged) type.

**Constructed Body.** Your consciousness and soul reside within a soul gem to animate your mechanical body. As such, you are a living creature with some of the benefits and drawbacks of a construct.

- You cannot eat, drink, or breathe. You can't drink potions or gain benefits that come from drinking, eating, or inhaling vapors.
- You do not naturally sleep.
- During a rest, you must perform maintenance on your gears, springs, and joints, following the normal rules governing rest and activity. While performing this maintenance, you are aware of your surroundings but you have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks. If you go longer than 24 hours without performing maintenance (you don't take a long rest), you gain one level of exhaustion. All exhaustion gained this way disappears after your next long rest.
- You can't be stabilized when dying with a Wisdom (Medicine) check or *spare the dying*. Instead, a successful DC 10 Intelligence check or a *mending* cantrip is needed.
- You regain only one-half the usual number of hit points from spells or magical effects with the words cure, heal, or healing in their titles.

**Flesh of Steel.** You are immune to disease, poison damage, and the poisoned condition.

**Solid Construction.** If you are killed but your soul gem and memory gears are still intact, you can be restored to life if your body is repaired and *soulforging* is cast on it again. Because the body already exists, the cost of the ritual is just 500 gp, plus the cost of repairing the body (DM's discretion, typically 1d4 x 50 gp). If your body was destroyed but your soul gem and memory tapes are intact, they can be implanted into a new body at the standard cost (10,000 gp). The only other magic capable of bringing you back from the dead is a wish spell, which restores you fully.

## GHoul, DARAKHUL

In the lightless depths beneath the ground, an empire of devouring ambition grows and plots and dreams. Its citizens call themselves the People, but the rest of Midgard calls them the Lords Subterranean, the Ghoul Imperium, or simply the Empire of the Ghouls. Their cities lie out of sight, their agents infiltrate the underworlds of a score of surface cities, and their goals know no limits.

To them, if you are not a member of the People, you are food. Their empire maintains complex social structures and forges serious alliances, particularly among the undead princes of Morgau and Doresh. Unofficial embassies exist in Zobeck, the Ironcrag Cantons, Krakova, and Magdar. Other hidden outposts may lurk below the Seven Cities, Illyria, or beyond.



## PLAYING A DARAKHUL

Life as the ravenous undead comes with challenges for an adventurer. People revile the darakhul universally as scavengers at best, and as loathsome, murdering abominations at worst. For such a being, participating as a member of an adventuring party is complicated. To survive on the daylit surface of the world, a darakhul must be clever and thorough.

They scheme and plot. They hunger for the flesh of the living. They are the darakhul.

## INTO THE BIG, WIDE WORLD

Some darakhul venture into the wider world on the business of the Empire. Maintaining their state requires envoys and ambassadors, messengers and scouts, traders and commerce, as well as knowledge of events in the surface world. These undead diplomats engage with races they might otherwise consider food out of duty to the Empire and with a specific purpose.

Other members of their kind, however, have no such obligations. For adventuring darakhul, those in self-imposed exile, or those who never belonged to the Imperium, the quest to master their own hunger, to transcend their role as predators of sentient beings, is as much a part of their journey as the current quest. These characters typically want to grow beyond their ghoulish appetites and regain some part of their former lives in the cultures and societies of the world's surface. No one knows better than them that they can't overcome their nature unless they confront it.

But no matter how urbane or well-controlled the rare diplomat or merchant might seem to be, the prejudice of the living against the undead is powerful and visceral. Humanity views the darakhul with suspicion if not outright hostility, and it is difficult—but not impossible—for a darakhul to allay those fears.

## THE CUT OF YOUR CLOAK

A quality disguise is one of the best tools for a darakhul trying to make its way among the breathing. Almost all ghouls traveling on the surface maintain a disguise kit and a concealing outfit to match their cover identity. With a good costume, a ghoul might pass unchallenged among humans for a long time. Possibilities include the wrappings of a leper, the enshrouding robes that are common within the Magocracy of Allain, the veils of Siwali ladies, or the head-to-toe garb of the desert raiders of the Tamasheq. Each of these disguises requires appropriate details to help the deception withstand scrutiny: the right language skills along with knowledge of the region and its customs.

Even a convincing disguise doesn't explain a darakhul's need to eat alone and behind closed doors. Darakhul can use cultural or religious requirements to justify such behavior in most situations.

In cases where a costume and a cover identity are impractical, a skillful application of cosmetics and a few gold coins slipped into the right hands are often enough to make a request for privacy seem more reasonable. Ensuring a sufficient supply of raw meat is a challenge left to the imagination of the player.

## DARAKHUL CHARACTERS

Both ordinary ghouls and darakhul arise from the infected corpses of other races. Most traits of the previous race are gone (see the Humanoid Heritage table). Even their cosmetic features—pointed ears, long beards—fade over time into the skull-like faces, fanged mouths, and taut, gray skin of the ghouls.

### *Darakhul Traits*

Your darakhul character has certain characteristics in common with all other darakhul.

**Ability Score Improvement.** Your Constitution score improves by 2.

**Age.** An upper limit of darakhul age has never been discovered; most darakhul die violently.



**Alignment.** Your alignment does not change automatically, but you have a strong draw toward evil.

**Size.** Your size is determined by your Humanoid Heritage (see below).

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is determined by your Humanoid Heritage (see below).

**Type.** You are of the humanoid (darakhul) type.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet as though it were bright light and in darkness or bright light as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness or bright light, only shades of gray.

**Natural Weapons.** Your heavy jaw is powerful enough to crush bones to powder. You gain a bite attack that deals 1d6 piercing damage.

**Humanoid Heritage.** Darakhul arise from humanoid stock, and that determines some of their traits. Choose one humanoid heritage from the table and apply the listed traits.

**Hunger for Flesh.** You must consume a meal of raw meat each day or suffer the effects of starvation. If you go 24 hours without such a meal, you gain one level of exhaustion (this is an exception to the darakhul's immunity). You cannot stave this off with half rations. While you have any levels of exhaustion, you cannot regain hit points or remove levels of exhaustion until you spend 1 hour consuming an amount of raw meat equal to a Small creature (about 30 pounds).

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** When you, the target of your attack, or anything you try to perceive is in direct sunlight, you have disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Undead Vitality.** You are infused with the dark energy of undeath, which frees you from some frailties that plague living creatures. You have resistance to necrotic damage and immunity to poison damage. You are immune to exhaustion and to the charmed and poisoned conditions. If you die, you cannot be returned to life by *revivify*, *raise dead*, or *reincarnate*; *resurrection*



## LOOKING ALIVE

To pass for a living creature, a darakhul needs a convincing costume, matching language and speech patterns, and appropriate mannerisms and behavior. The best tactic for most darakhul is to mimic the culture it lived in while it was alive, because it has a lifetime (if a short one) of knowledge to draw on. Whether it's better to try to blend into the local culture is an open question. Someone who looks just like everyone else on the street draws less attention than someone who looks like an exotic foreigner—but a person who looks like everyone else yet acts oddly can rouse even more suspicion than the exotic stranger, especially in a crossroads of cultures where foreign travelers are common.

Under normal circumstances, a darakhul with a careful disguise can move among the living without rousing suspicion. As with any ability check, dice should be brought in only when the character faces an unusual situation or a challenge. If, for example, a darakhul gets involved in a chase or a battle in a crowded city market, there's a chance a bystander might notice the pallor of undead flesh beneath a flapping cloak or the rictus grin inside a deep hood that's momentarily pushed back. Palace guards inspect supplicants to the Queen more carefully than an innkeeper or a merchant inspects customers. If rumors get around that there are murderers, monsters, or darakhul loose in the city, everyone is more alert.

In those situations, the GM can call for a Charisma (Deception) check and either compare it to the NPC's passive Perception score or make an active Wisdom (Perception) check for the NPC. Opposed checks should be reserved for those times when an NPC intently scrutinizes the character or is already suspicious. If a group of NPCs is involved, it's best to make one check with advantage for the group instead of one check per NPC.

HUMANOID HERITAGE	ABILITY SCORE INCREASE	SIZE	BASE WALKING SPEED	EXTRA LANGUAGE
Dragonkin	Strength +1	Medium	25 feet (not slowed by heavy armor)	Draconic
Dwarf	Wisdom +1	Medium	25 feet (not slowed by heavy armor)	Dwarvish
Elf	Dexterity +1	Medium	30 feet	Elvish
Gnome	Intelligence +1	Small	25 feet	Gnomish
Halfling	Charisma +1	Small	25 feet	Halfling
Human or Elfmarked	Any (not Constitution) +1	Medium	30 feet	Choose one
Kobold	Intelligence +1	Small	30 feet	Kobold
Ravenfolk	Dexterity +1	Medium	30 feet	Huginn's Speech
Tiefling	Charisma +1	Medium	30 feet	Infernal
Trollkin	Strength +1	Medium	30 feet	Northern

and *true resurrection* return you to life as your original race. A *create undead* spell cast so that it targets only your corpse affects you as a *raise dead* spell affects the corpse of a once-living creature. You don't need to drink or breathe. You don't sleep the way living creatures do, but during long rests, you enter a dormant state resembling death; during that time, you have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Darakhul and Trade Tongue.

## KOBOLD, MIDGARD

Of the smaller races, the kobolds have adapted best to the changing world. Enslaved long ago by reaver dwarves, kobolds quickly carved a niche for themselves as miners, scouts, and tinkerers: small enough to be useful, and also small enough to be dismissed as a threat. At first they were tolerated, then largely ignored. As a result, the shadows of dwarven society are rife with kobold rogues and entrepreneurs (many of them secret worshipers of Loki), seemingly subservient but busily trading dwarven goods for resources extracted from the dwarves' own mines and storehouses, right under the noses of their "masters."

Free kobolds defend their mines viciously but otherwise maintain the ruse of a harmless and subservient little folk—at least until the opportunity to sheathe a knife in someone's kidneys presents itself.

Many other small races have adopted the kobold's strategy, including the worship of Loki, embracing his cunning ways and the advantages of guile and cunning over brawn and bravado.

### SUBTERRANEAN SURVIVORS

More than anything, kobolds are survivors. Their scaly skin and keen night vision as well as their dextrous claws and sensitive snouts make them quick to sense danger, and their clawed feet move them out of danger with cowardly speed. They are small but fierce when fighting on their own terms, and their weight of numbers helps them survive in places where larger but less numerous races can't sustain a settlement. They are great miners, good gearsmiths, and modest alchemists, and they have a curiosity about the world that frequently gets them into trouble. They are merchants to both the surface world and the world beneath it, with their greatest cities hidden deep below the earth. Their enemies are the diabolical gnomes, the dwarves, and any other mining races that seek dominance of dark, rich territories.

The kobold King of Kings rules from Harkesh, the capital of the Dragon Empire, where kobolds form a large middle class known as the kobaldi. Some even own human and dwarven slaves. Here, kobolds carry themselves upright, see themselves as naturally superior to the hairy races, and swagger about their business. Mharoti kobolds loudly demand the respect of others and greatly disconcert those accustomed to the paranoid and sniveling kobolds found in the rest of Midgard. That same sniveling still goes on in Harkesh, but the kobaldi reserve it for their dragon masters.

### FINDING ONE'S PLACE

Kobold society is gregarious and built around the clan, matriarchal lines of descent, male kings, and the crucial importance of clutch-mates (those who hatched about the same time, the closest things kobolds have to brothers and sisters). Few kobolds become adventurers, and most of those who do have either offended a kobold king (and been exiled from the mines as punishment) or have lost many or all of their clutch-mates (so they leave home to grieve and to find new friends). In many cases, a kobold "adopts" an adventuring party as new clutch-mates.

Kobolds are deeply enamored of their tools. Some kobolds spend a great deal of effort improving them. Mining picks, a mason's hammer, jeweler's loupe, and even simple items like a kobold's spear or dagger are all named and cherished. At the same time, kobolds tend to gnaw on tool handles, forget to oil blades, or even pry out inlays or decorative gems (to polish or reshape them) without first considering how they'll repair the damage. As a result,

most kobold items are distinctive and unlikely to be mistaken for anyone else's items. Some believe this decorative urge is an instinctual defense against theft.

One category of tool deserves special note: traps.

Kobolds create simple, deadly traps and wildly impractical ones as a hobby. Few kobolds leave home without string, springs, simple latches, and



other bits and pieces that can be quickly fashioned into triggers for traps. Kobolds are the only race that recognizes “trapsmith” as a profession.

Kobolds are closely allied with and related to dragonkin, drakes, and dragons. The kobold kings (and there are oh-so-many kobold kings, since no kobold ruler is satisfied with being merely a chieftain) admire dragons as the greatest sources of wisdom, power, and proper behavior.

### *Kobold Traits*

Your kobold character has certain characteristics in common with all other kobolds.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 2 and your Intelligence score increases by 1.

**Age.** Kobolds reach maturity at age 10, and can live to nearly 80.

**Alignment.** Kobolds are organized and tend toward law, particularly those who practice a trade. Whether they lean toward good or evil depends on their draconic lineage.

**Size.** Kobolds stand between 3 and 4 feet tall, and weigh around 40 pounds. Your size is Small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You cannot discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Blindsider.** You have advantage on your attack roll against an enemy within 5 feet of you if you have an ally that’s not incapacitated also within 5 feet of the target. You can apply this bonus to one attack per round.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in bright sunlight.

**Tinkerer.** You have proficiency with artisan’s tools of your choice: alchemist’s supplies, mason’s tools, smith’s tools, or tinker’s tools.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Draconic and Trade Tongue.

## MINOTAUR

The minotaurs of Midgard are a proud people pushed to the brink. Driven from their ancestral homelands of Kadralthu and Roshgazi by the ever-expanding Dragon Empire, the bull-folk home is now the Serene Isle of Kyrprion. Kyrprion owes fealty to the Maritime Republic of Tiolo, and with the support of the Republic’s navy, the minotaurs have stability and strength. Triolo may build all its ships in its own harbor, but many of its best crews come from Kyrprion.

Minotaurs are imposing and powerful, with a reputation for ferocity that borders on monstrous. That



reputation is well-earned. They chafe under the yoke of being a vassal state, but their Queen Kitane understands that without Triolo, the Dragon Empire would swallow Kyrprion whole. The aegis of Triolo’s fleet, coupled with the fact that a minotaur has recently risen to lead the Golden Council of Triolo, saves the bull-folk pride. At least for now.

Minotaurs display their achievements proudly by decorating their horns with engraved sigils and designs. If one is versed in minotaur custom, one can tell at a glance the achievements and prowess of a minotaur by examining the decoration on her horns. A minotaur who loses part or all of a horn suffers considerable stigma and must strive to prove his worth. Sometimes a “brokehorn” (a fighting insult to any minotaur) who manages to achieve great deeds earns the gift of having the missing horn magically restored by a temple. Beware any minotaur that willingly gives up or chooses not to restore a lost horn, for this is one of Midgard’s most driven and dangerous creatures.

### TERROR ON THE HIGH SEAS

The minotaurs of Kyrprion and Triolo are a force to be reckoned with in a stand-up fight. Perhaps somewhat against type for their bulk, they are an absolute terror

on the sea. The corsairs of Kypriion have carved a tale of bloody blades and shattered hulls on the water, and even the mighty Dragon Empire has learned to respect them. The minotaur's natural sense of direction makes them ideal navigators on sea as well as land. Cover of night, fog thick enough to carve, and unfamiliar coastlines don't phase the bull-folk.

## TWISTING PATHS

Minotaur architecture and city planning always incorporate a particular design: labyrinths. Every settlement and structure of any size created by the bull-folk sports a twisting labyrinth of switchbacks and dead ends. None is more famous than the Great Labyrinth in the city of Vespras, the capital of Kypriion. In the center of this maze is the Palace of the Bull, another labyrinth in its own right. At night, the clash of arms and screams of the dying find their way out of the maze. It is said that the queen invites both friends and enemies to enjoy the hospitality of the palace, but only her friends survive the stay.

### Minotaur Traits

Your minotaur character has certain characteristics in common with all other minotaurs.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 2, and your Constitution score increases by 1.

**Age.** Minotaurs age at roughly the same rate as humans but mature 3 years earlier. Childhood ends around the age of 10 and adulthood is celebrated at 15.

**Alignment.** Minotaurs possess a wide range of alignments, just as humans do. Mixing a love for personal freedom and respect for history and tradition, the majority of minotaurs fall into neutral alignments.

**Size.** Adult males can reach a height of 7 feet, with females averaging 3 inches shorter. Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You cannot discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Attacks.** You have proficiency with your horns, which deal 1d6 piercing damage when you make a horn attack.

**Charge.** If you move at least 10 feet toward a target and hit it with a horn attack in the same turn, you deal an extra 1d6 piercing damage and you can shove the target 5 feet as a bonus action. You can apply this extra damage once per turn. At 11th level, when you shove a creature with Charge, you can push it 10 feet instead of 5. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to your Constitution modifier, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

**Labyrinth Sense.** You can retrace without error any path you have previously taken, with no ability check.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Minotaur, as well as one other language of your choice (typically the Trade Tongue or Southern languages).

## RAVENFOLK

Few races in Midgard live amid so much rumor, suspicion, and outright falsehood as the ravenfolk. They make their rookeries in every major city. Depending on whom you ask, they might condemn the ravenfolk as solitary wanderers bearing misfortune or praise them as messengers from the gods. Ravenfolk are loyal comrades and treacherous thieves, brave warriors and contemptible cowards. They are despised for their strange and secretive culture, and criticized for having no true culture of their own. The ravenfolk are a study in contradictions. These truths, half-truths, and lies conceal a greater mystery that few outsiders know.

If the ravenfolk have a homeland, it is in Beldestan to the east; or a branch of Wotan's tree to the North; or on a high cliff of Horus' hidden temple in the South. They have settlements in Trollheim, Vidim, Domovogrod, Nuria Natal, and the Dragon Empire. None of these are large, but in Nuria Natal at least, they serve honorably as temple guards and as defenders of the faithful of Horus.

Ravenfolk have no wings, but they do have tail feathers that sometimes flare out when they're angry.



## OF GODS AND MEN

The ravenfolk of Midgard (also known as the huginn) are wily scoundrels, tricksters, assassins, spies, and thieves. The oldest tales say that the god Wotan the Rune Father brought the clever ravenfolk into being when he plucked the feathers from his two pet ravens, Huginn (Thought) and Muninn (Memory), and let the feathers drift down to Midgard. The feathers became ravenfolk, and they spread across the world as Wotan's spies.

In truth, the ravenfolk are a bridge between everyday life on Midgard and the realm of the gods. They share Wotan's secret knowledge of the branches of Yggdrasil the world tree. In the far northern reaches, the huginn are both the embodiment of the gods' will and a symbol of inevitable death in battle.

## THIEVES, ONE AND ALL

No matter what trade, role, or profession a ravenfolk takes up, they are all thieves. They build their rookeries from found items, and much like normal ravens, have a great fondness for shiny baubles. Beyond physical thievery, they live to steal secrets. Ravenfolk are naturally adept at being unobtrusive, and they use that trait to feed their insatiable curiosity. The Tsar of Vidim employs a great flock of huginn as his personal spies and assassins.

Aside from their larcenous instincts, ravenfolk are scrupulous about keeping their word. That's not to say they don't lie; ravenfolk lie as much as anyone else, and maybe a bit more when the pressure's on. But if a promise or a vow can be extracted from one, it's as reliable as gold—which may be why ravenfolk seldom make promises or vows. Otherwise, their personalities are as varied as those of other races. They adapt readily to whatever environment they occupy, from remote wilderness to big cities—although their presence in cities is not always welcome. They frequently take on local customs, traditions, and beliefs to fit in with the community.

### *Ravenfolk Traits*

Your ravenfolk character has certain characteristics in common with all other ravenfolk.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 2 and your Charisma score increases by 1.

**Age.** Ravenfolk reach adulthood at 10 years old, and can live to be 110.

**Alignment.** Ravenfolk tend toward chaos thanks to their capriciousness and insatiable curiosity. Greed overwhelms some ravenfolk, drawing them toward evil.

**Size.** Ravenfolk are slighter and shorter than humans. They range from 4 feet to just shy of 6 feet tall. Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Sudden Attack.** You have advantage on attack rolls against a surprised creature.

**Mimicry.** Ravenfolk can mimic any sound they've heard. Make a Charisma (Deception) check against the passive

Wisdom (Insight) of any listeners. Success indicates they believe the sound you created was real.

**Trickster.** You have proficiency in the Deception and Stealth skills.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Huginn's Speech and Northern Tongue.

## SHADOW FEY

The enigmatic shadow fey of the Shadow Realm dwell in ebon spires and moonlit keeps, encroaching on the mortal world in places where barriers between the planes are thin. They prowl the darkest recesses of the forest, hunting mortal prey. They dance in the darkly luminous halls of their shadow palaces, the lords and ladies of twilight. Their actions brim with contradictions and their motivations are shrouded in mystery. They seek to throw their observers off-guard, for anyone and everyone is a potential enemy.

Shadow fey resemble elves physically, with some striking differences. Their skin color tends toward alabaster white, ebon black, or subtle grays. A few have scintillating, shimmering skin. Many shadow fey have horns, from subtle nubs to large and obvious protrusions, either satyr- or fiend-like depending on the chronicler.

## A MYSTERY TO MORTALS

Although a physically beautiful race, the shadow fey somehow combine the worst features of elves and goblins. They are at turns benign and cruel, purposeful and whimsical. They vanish from the world and reappear seemingly at random, then profess shock at the changes that occurred during their absence. Their actions can seem illogical or even mad, but there is always a method in them. Shadow fey advance their goals subtly, so that enemies are overtaken before they even become aware of the danger.

While the shadow fey are often antagonists and usually are described as malevolent, they are not inherently evil. Neither are they inherently good. They are fey, and mortals must always be wary in their interactions with fey or pay a steep price. Loyalty, devotion, wealth, memories, lives, souls: the shadow fey deal in all of these things. And they are stirring once more.

## ORIGINS OF THE SHADOW FEY

Even to most shadow fey, their history is unknown, and differing stories about their origin abound. The most prevalent story recounts that the shadow fey were elves who made pacts with forces of darkness millennia ago, most likely during the Black Sorceress' Revolt when a group of beleaguered elves turned to those powers out of desperation. The official history of the Shadow Courts assumes this version of events is true, and the Shadow Reckoning (SR) calendar begins at that time. Sarastra, the Queen of Night and Magic, is featured as both the divine patron and the founder of the shadow fey in this tale, a fact she is pleased to exploit when it suits her.



It is certain that there is some truth to this story. Both the records and the memories of ancient elves support this particular version of events as they are commonly recalled.

While the submission to dark magic is acknowledged, other tales deny this as the sole origin of the shadow fey. The Queen of Night and Magic existed long before the once-elven princess Sarastra came to rule the shadow fey, and stories of their exploits reach back centuries prior to the Black Sorceress's Revolt. Indeed, many shadow fey seem more closely related to other fey races than to elves, despite the relatively short span of time since their supposed separation.

Mentions of alternate planes, chaos, and time magic—particularly in the environs of Zobeck and Castle Shadowcrag—contribute to the confusion. In the end, only the gods know the true origin of the shadow fey. Speculation is rampant but not often shared. As is commonly said in the Summer Court, it is unwise to argue with a goddess. Sarastra's accounting of events suffices for most individuals.

### *Shadow Fey Traits*

Shadow fey are a subrace of elf. They enjoy the base elven racial traits, along with the following subrace traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Charisma score increases by 1.

**Alignment.** Although they have a malevolent reputation, the shadow fey are not inherently evil. They tend toward chaotic neutral, though every variation exists.

**Shadow Fey Weapon Training.** You have proficiency with the rapier, shortsword, shortbow, and longbow.

**Path of Shadows.** When in darkness, dim light, or a shadow large enough to cover your body, you can cast the *misty step* spell. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum 1), and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in bright sunlight.

**Traveler in Darkness.** You have advantage on any Intelligence (Arcana) check to learn about a particular fey road or shadow road and how it functions.

**Extra Language.** You can speak, read, and write Umbral.

## TROLLKIN

In ancient times, ogres, trolls, and fey sometimes took human mates. Their descendants are the trollkin. Tall and lanky with a brutish appearance, trollkin are seldom welcome among the civilized races of the north, even when the full extent of their inhuman ancestry is difficult to determine. As a result, most trollkin live in isolated tribal settlements and subsist on hunting and raiding.

### SKIN DEEP

With a thick hide of green or brown, trollkin are superficially similar to orcs or hobgoblins. While many trollkin share a rough and unkempt appearance, their inhuman lineage can show itself in a wide variety of forms. Some trollkin could even be considered beautiful by human standards, except for some subtle marker of their monstrosity, such as stone-grey skin or talon-tipped fingers.

Many trollkin wear tattoos to show tribal loyalty or to venerate their ancestor spirits. The bravest among them brand their flesh to show mastery over their own fear, since only acid and fire leave long-lasting scars on their skin.

### A PLACE IN THE WORLD

While the majority of trollkin live in remote communities, some thrive in civilization. But even within cities, trollkin tend to stick together in their own neighborhoods that eventually begin to resemble urban tribes. Most urban trollkin find work that exploits their nature. Mercenary work is the most common, but they sometimes join city guard forces. Thieves' guilds and other disreputable elements love to employ trollkin as arm-breakers and debt-collectors. Smiths and artisans sometimes take on a trollkin partner or apprentice to add an exotic or savage flair to their offerings.

## Trollkin Traits

Your trollkin character has certain characteristics in common with all other trollkin.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 2.

**Age.** Trollkin reach maturity by the age of 15, and live 50 to 60 years.

**Size.** Trollkin stand over 6 feet tall and are more solidly built than humans, weighing around 200 pounds. Your size is Medium.

**Alignment.** Trollkin tend toward neutrality of one kind or another.

**Speed.** Trollkin have a base speed of 30 feet.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Weapons.** Trollkin grow large fangs, and have sharp claws instead of finger- and toenails. You are proficient with your claws and fangs and can use them to make unarmed melee attacks. Claws deal 1d4 slashing damage, and bites deal 1d4 piercing damage.

**Inhuman Vigor.** You concentrate regenerative power in your blood to swiftly recover from wounds. Once per day as a bonus action, you can expend one hit die to regain hit points as if you finished a short rest. The number of hit dice you can expend increases by one when you reach 6th level (2 hit dice), 12th level (3 hit dice), and 18th level (4 hit dice). If you suffer acid or fire damage, you lose access to this ability until you finish a short or long rest.

**Legacy of Fear.** You have proficiency in the Intimidation skill.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Northern Tongue.

**Subrace.** Trollkin bear different traits depending on the type of creatures in their lineage. The two most common types of trollkin are night whispers and stonehides. Choose one of these subraces.

## Night Whisper Trollkin

Night whisper trollkin trace their ancestry to enigmatic fey creatures from the Shadow Realm. Because of their natural connection to the realm of spirits, many night whisper trollkin become shamans, seers, and priests. Night whispers tend to have darker skin tones and slighter builds than their cousins.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Spirit Whispers.** The spirits of your tribe's ancestors whisper secrets from beyond the veil of death. Before making an ability check or saving throw, you can heed the wisdom of the spirits to gain advantage on the roll. You cannot use this feature again until you finish a long rest.



## BITTER RELATIONS

Though the reasons why are lost to history, trollkin are implacable enemies of dwarves; the two races despise one another. Trollkin get along with the fey well enough, especially the shadow fey, and they tend to have good relations with gnomes.

## Stonehide Trollkin

Some trollkin are the result of unions between humans and monstrous brutes, such as ogres, trolls, or even stranger fey creatures of bloody disposition. Stonehides have larger frames and more muscle than other trollkin. Their skin is brighter in color but also has a rough, stone-like texture.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 1.

**Thick Hide.** Your skin is knobby, thick, and tough, granting you a +1 bonus to Armor Class.



EA33



# BACKGROUNDS

The standard backgrounds for 5th edition are all viable in the Midgard Campaign setting. The rich tapestry of kingdoms, free cities, warring nations, and ancient races all have citizens of every walk of life. Whether you create dragonkin soldiers in the Dragon Empire's army, kobold urchins who scamper through the scrap heaps of Zobeck, or undead nobles squeezing a tithe of blood from their peasants in the Principalities, let your imagination run wild.

In addition to the standard backgrounds, Midgard offers the opportunity to fill some specialized niches in the setting. Presented here are seven custom backgrounds that cover character origins that are either especially common in Midgard or unique to the setting, complete with examples of where such characters come from. Like any other background, these can be customized to fit the needs of a given character, region, or campaign in general.

## CORSAIR

Piracy is common across the world, but the Corsairs of Midgard are a breed apart. Part pirate, part organized military force, corsairs are a terrifying sight on the high seas. Those who fly the corsair's crimson sails are savage

to their enemies and fiercely loyal to their home nations. A large percentage of corsairs are minotaurs from Kyprion, but many different people sail for Triolo against the Dragon Empire. Any character with a strong focus on the freedom of life at sea, coupled with devotion to her homeland, has the makings of a corsair.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Acrobatics, Perception

**Tool Proficiencies:** Navigator's tools, vehicles (water)

**Equipment:** A silk scarf, sash, or band that identifies my crew, 50 feet of silk rope, a set of navigator's tools, a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing 5gp.

### *Feature: High Sea Scourge*

You are more at home on the rolling swells and storm-tossed waves than most people are on dry land. Much of your time is spent on unstable ship decks or climbing swaying rigging in the tops of your ship. You are accustomed to the frantic chaos of combat in distracting situations. You suffer no reduction in speed when climbing. The bonds you formed with your crew are strong, and you can call on their aid even if you've been away from the fleet

for some time. You can expect your former comrades to offer you passage aboard ship, reasonable aid, or shelter when you are in need. Keep in mind that this bond goes both ways, and they may come to you expecting the same.

### Suggested Characteristics

Corsairs are a rough and tumble bunch, forged in battle and quenched in roiling seas. The hardened warriors of the sea are implacable foes who often form unshakable bonds with their crewmates. The same circumstances that give these sailors their edge can also grind them down, leaving them vulnerable to greed, shame, and the scars of fear and horror left by war.

#### D8 PERSONALITY TRAITS

- 1 Battle is all I know, and I have trouble letting it go when I step off the ship.
- 2 I respect my captain and trust my crew. It may be all that saves my life one day.
- 3 The roar of a maelstrom doesn't phase me, and I'll steer my ship straight down its maw.
- 4 I live for the crack of an enemy hull and the last gurgle of her sailors.
- 5 The best way to get the lay of the land is to find a good tussle with the locals.
- 6 Whether gold comes from the split of the spoils or from a side wager, I'll get my hands on it.
- 7 My life is a riot of superstition, and I have a good luck ritual for every occasion.
- 8 When my blood gets up, my swearing could boil the very waters of a harbor.

#### D6 IDEAL

- 1 **Ambition.** One day I will be so much more than a captain. (Any)
- 2 **Victory.** Whether over the waves or on land, I am unstoppable. (Evil)
- 3 **Freedom.** We won't be broken, and we'd rather die beneath the waves than give in. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Equal Shares.** All hands who spend sweat and blood earn their share of the gold. (Lawful)
- 5 **Crew.** A ship is nothing without her crew. Protect your brothers and sisters under the sail. (Neutral)
- 6 **Greater Good.** I will lay down my life to drive back those who threaten my home. (Good)

#### D6 BOND

- 1 My ship and many of her crew were lost to treachery, and I won't rest until I discover who was behind it.
- 2 A sailor who fought for my enemy saved my life, and I don't know how to resolve that debt.
- 3 My feelings for the lover I left behind challenge my devotion to the sea.
- 4 My ship comes first, and all other loyalties simply pale in comparison.
- 5 A privateer ship destroyed my home, and I sail with the corsairs to find it and send it to the depths.
- 6 Someone has to stand in the way of our enemies, or the people will be doomed.

#### D6 FLAW

- 1 So many of my countrymen have died in war, I will never forgive my nation's enemy.
- 2 I've never seen a fight it wasn't worth finding a way to avoid.
- 3 There's a certain flag flying in the enemy fleet that turns my knees to water after what I saw its crew do.
- 4 I never back down from a fight.
- 5 I was drunk on watch when my ship was lost to an ambush. I can't set the shame aside.
- 6 I feel I'm entitled to a greater share of the spoils, no matter the circumstances.

## DARKLING

Darkness presses in from all sides, and ordinary men and women sometimes make desperate choices to survive. The gnomes of Midgard struck bargains with archdevils to save them from Baba Yaga; in the Northlands, secluded villages sacrifice to the bloody-handed Hunter to ensure good hunting so they'll survive winter; the shadow fey turned away from Midgard and embraced the powers of shadow. Forces from beyond the world make their power known, and generations later a child otherwise unremarkable for her race still bears the taint of a fiendish dalliance. You are touched by that darkness, whether from a bargain struck out of necessity or from a trace of fiendish blood in your ancestry.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Arcana, Religion

**Languages:** Infernal and one of your choice.

**Equipment:** An idol or token marking the dark power from your history, a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing 15 gp.

### Feature: Touch of Darkness

Creatures of darkness know their own, and they can sense the touch upon you. While this recognition is not enough

to save you from the foul creatures that move through the world's shadows, it can buy you time. Fiends, dark fey, and undead might be willing to talk to you instead of attacking, at least briefly. In some cases you may be able to negotiate or bribe your way out of a fight against a creature of darkness, provided it wasn't murderously hostile toward you initially.

This recognition cuts both ways; sometimes creatures of darkness may seek you out, sensing a kindred spirit even if you want nothing to do with them, and the servants of goodness and light may find you unsettling. It may be difficult to secure the trust of good creatures that sense the taint upon you.

### Suggested Characteristics

Darklings arise from all walks of life. Some embrace the seed of evil inside them, facing the world with cruelty and greed. Others are horrified at the shadow that creeps along in their wake and strive to make up for the stain on their past. These darklings can become the epitome of virtue.

#### D8 PERSONALITY TRAITS

- 1 I'm overly sensitive and tend to take innocent comments the wrong way.
- 2 I don't trust others easily. I know better than most that looks are deceiving.
- 3 I try to see the good in everyone. We all deserve the benefit of the doubt.
- 4 I don't like being outside after dark. I can hear whispers in the night air.
- 5 I'm always on the lookout for other people like me.
- 6 I feel more at home in dim, enclosed spaces.
- 7 I tend to blow up when provoked, especially if someone comments on my heritage.
- 8 I have no use for people who put blind faith in gods. The meddling of outer beings does more harm than good.

#### D6 IDEAL

- 1 **Ambition.** I want to rise above my beginnings and be a person of consequence. (Any)
- 2 **Free Will.** I won't be defined by anything but myself. (Chaotic)
- 3 **Greed.** I deserve more than I have, and I'll use any means to ensure that I get it. (Evil)
- 4 **Solidarity.** I always stick by those who've proved themselves. No one should have to endure alone. (Lawful)
- 5 **Perseverance.** I won't let the shadow on my nature steer my fate. I am more than the darkness of my past. (Good)
- 6 **Survival.** If the evil that follows me can help me endure, I'll use it to my advantage. (Neutral)

#### D6 BOND

- 1 I'm searching for lost lore to purge the darkness from my soul.
- 2 A powerful creature of darkness gave me a command, and I will work to fulfill it to secure my reward.
- 3 I put strong faith in a good deity in the hope of finding the light.
- 4 I've done horrible deeds, but I'm trying to redeem myself.
- 5 I fled from my family because of their dark worship, and they're still searching for me.
- 6 I am currently the last of my corrupt line, but I hope to change that.

#### D6 FLAW

- 1 I'm nervous around holy places and do my best to avoid them.
- 2 I feel a strong draw toward some manner of dark creature (choose one such as fiends or undead), and I'm worried that others will find out.
- 3 I embraced my dark nature once, and someone close to me died because of it.
- 4 I'll do anything to avoid the darkness stalking me, even if I must sacrifice friends or loved ones to do it.
- 5 I let my desire to achieve good ends blind me to any harm caused by my methods.
- 6 A powerful warrior of light believes I will bring great darkness into the world, and has vowed to stop me.

### FEY-TOUCHED

The fey are enigmatic creatures whose motivations are a mystery, but one well-known truth about them is that they meddle in the affairs of mortals. Certain places in Midgard swell with the strange energy of the fey, such as ancient groves in the heart of the Margreve forest. Ley lines carry magical fey roads across the landscape. The shadow realm lurks behind every deep shadow. These places sometimes bleed through the boundary between worlds, and a mortal becomes marked with their magic. Sometimes the fey actively lure mortals into their realm for a short time; bards say that if a hapless mortal accepts a bite of fey food, he or she is forever bonded to the fey. Other times the fey fall in love with a mortal (for a time at least; the fey are fickle) and create a child with inborn fey magic.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Deception, Persuasion

**Tool Proficiencies:** One musical instrument of your choice

**Languages:** Sylvan or Umbral

**Equipment:** A lucky token such as a tin coin that spins far longer than it should or a small violet blossom that never wilts, a musical instrument (one of your choice), a set of traveler's clothes, and a belt pouch containing 10 gp.

### Feature: Gleam of Glamour

The mark of the fey upon you has opened your eyes to the world that lurks beneath what most people see and hear. When you are near a ley line, a shadow or fey road, or an active portal, you feel its presence: your hair stands on end, ethereal music plays for you alone, odors waft on an unfelt breeze, or some other vague sensation alerts you that you're in the vicinity of such a phenomenon.

The pulse of fey magic within you can sometimes reach out, usually when your emotions are strongest. If you revel and enjoy yourself, others are likely to want to join in and have their spirits lifted. When you are angry, those around you feel it like a wave of heat pricking their skin.

### Suggested Characteristics

The mark upon the fey-touched takes many forms, but it always makes itself known. A fey-touched might be volatile and prone to wild mood swings.

She may have a fondness for a particular type of music and infect others with an echo of her passion. Other fey-touched are nearly incapable of telling the truth, despite their best efforts.

### D8 PERSONALITY TRAITS

- 1 I don't like to enter someone's home uninvited.
- 2 Sometimes I'm too brave for my own good.
- 3 I always act in the moment, regardless of any planning.
- 4 I love to express myself with music and song.
- 5 I see meaning and pattern in things other people dismiss as random.
- 6 I always offer a blessing when someone sneezes, and I get upset when no one returns the favor.
- 7 I'm mistrustful of strangers, doubly so if they're trying to give me anything.
- 8 I don't like the touch of iron or steel, so I avoid it if possible.



BRYAN  
SYME

## D6 IDEAL

- 1 **Whim.** Inspiration is not to be ignored. I always go with my instincts. (Chaotic)
- 2 **Sincerity.** I try to present who I truly am in everything I do. (Any)
- 3 **Lordship.** I deserve to be obeyed, and I shall be. (Evil)
- 4 **Honor.** I give my word rarely, but when I do, it's ironclad. (Lawful)
- 5 **People.** I love how different people can be, and I want to collect their stories. (Neutral)
- 6 **Compassion.** I was shown mercy when I needed it most, and I will spread that boon across the world. (Good)

## D6 BOND

- 1 My grandmother told me stories of my grandfather, and I just know he's the key to the hidden truth of my life. I must find him.
- 2 I look for other people like me so I can help them understand the truth.
- 3 My instrument is the only clear reminder of that night in the forest, and it brings me comfort.
- 4 One day I want to have a place in the fey courts.
- 5 The fey who marked me hinted at a dire destiny.
- 6 I want to travel the vast fey roads to every corner of the world.

## D6 FLAW

- 1 If someone uses my full name, I feel compelled to do what they ask.
- 2 I'm overly fond of good food, strong drink, and pleasurable company.
- 3 For some reason, the sound of church bells causes me intense headaches.
- 4 I made a deal once. It was the worst bargain I've ever made, and I know one day the silver-eyed creature will return to collect what I owe.
- 5 Someone knows about my past, and they're hunting me.
- 6 I explosively lose my temper if someone breaks their word to me.

## GUILD MERCHANT (GUILD ARTISAN VARIANT)

Between the myriad kingdoms and free cities of Midgard, trade caravans wend their way across the land. With the prevalence of raiders, political unrest between so many nations, and the ire of rival merchants, the mercantile princes of Midgard must sharpen their wits to a razor's edge to succeed. When you select the guild merchant variant of the guild artisan background, you can opt to take the following variant feature instead.

### *Savvy Trader*

You have spent your life on the roads, carrying the things people want through war zones, storms, and raider attacks. Empty wagons earn no profit, so you are adept at finding buyers for whatever goods you carry and securing new cargo for the return trip. You start with a wagon and mule instead of artisan's tools. You can always find a buyer for any sort of item, even contraband, as long as you are in a settlement.

Likewise, you have a network of contacts who can locate fantastic treasures for the right price. Magical items, maps to lost ruins, or rare special materials are all available to you given enough time. Speak with the DM to determine how long it takes to work your contacts and what they require in return for their information and help.

## MASTER CRAFTSMAN

You devote yourself to a particular form of craftsmanship. Skilled craftsmen are held in high esteem all over Midgard, and a master smith can earn a reputation on par with the mightiest adventurers. While craftsmen exist in every corner of the world, you are something special among the multitudes. Perhaps a touch of ancient magic graces your family, an otherworldly being such as an angel or fiend blesses your work, or you are the chosen of a forge deity such as Azuran's guise of the Southern Wind, Rava, or Volund. River elf woodworkers, Ironcrag dwarf armorers, engineers and tinkers from Zobeck, and even the blade smiths of the trollkin are examples of potential master craftsmen.

### *Craft*

From apothecaries to woodcarvers, craftsmen supply the world with most of the things that drive day to day life in Midgard. Choose one craft associated with a set of artisan's tools. This craft becomes your signature medium and the means by which your gifts shape the world.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Investigation, Perception

**Tool Proficiencies:** One set of artisan's tools

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Equipment:** A set of artisan's tools (one of your choice), a writ recommending your services, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 10gp.

### Feature: Masterwork

Whether from natural aptitude, divine inspiration, or a lifetime spent honing your skill, your devotion to your chosen craft approaches the stuff of legend. When using the crafting downtime activity rules with your chosen craft, you generate double the normal progress toward the item's completion (anyone assisting you provides the normal bonus). You must create at least one item at the normal rate before this feature can be used to create another item at the accelerated rate.

### Suggested Characteristics

Master craftsmen can be patient creators or boisterous brutes who hammer both metal and the sensibilities of others with equal ferocity. Their signature trade often shapes their personalities as much as their skilled hands shape the world. Some work for little more than the love of creating, and others seek riches and fame.



### D8 PERSONALITY TRAITS

- 1 I finish anything I set my hand to. Half measures never produce quality results.
- 2 I have no use for anyone who doesn't contribute.
- 3 I strive to share my talents with as many people as I can.
- 4 I love to talk shop, and I assume everyone else loves to hear about it.
- 5 I never buy anything I can make. Why waste money and skill?
- 6 I enjoy the praise my finished products bring me. Maybe a little too much.
- 7 My craft is the most valuable, and other craftsmen are wasting their time.
- 8 There's always a correct tool for any job in life. It's just a matter of finding it.

### D6 IDEAL

- 1 **Tradition.** Our ancestors laid down the correct way to build and create. (Lawful)
- 2 **Generosity.** I am always willing to use my skill to help the needy, even at cost to myself. (Good)
- 3 **Change.** The gods created us to shape the world, and we repay them poorly if we don't put those gifts to good use. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Comrades.** The people in whom I put my trust come before everyone else. (Neutral)
- 5 **Pride.** I have the greatest hands in the trade, and everyone is going to recognize that. (Evil)
- 6 **Practicality.** There's a right way to do everything, and I take care to find it. (Any)

### D6 BOND

- 1 I created something that is the ultimate expression of my craft, then lost it. I must retrieve it.
- 2 The mentor who taught me is the most important person in my life.
- 3 I work to support my family.
- 4 I am searching for the perfect tool to match my great skill.
- 5 There is something great behind my skill, and I won't rest until I learn the truth of its origin.
- 6 I hope to earn the favor of my lord, so he will accept my marriage proposal to his child.

## D6 FLAW

- 1 I hate the trade I was born into, but I'm not as good at anything else.
- 2 I put too much trust in my own skill, especially in areas other than my craft.
- 3 I am inclined to think the best of a fellow craftsman, even in the face of clear evidence to the contrary.
- 4 I'm instantly jealous and suspicious of anyone else who excels at my trade.
- 5 I dismiss the skill of any craftsman who doesn't share my trade.
- 6 I'm so desperate to find a wealthy patron that I rush into contract agreements without thinking.

## NOMAD

Home is where your tribe is. You hail from a people that do not settle in one place but instead travel the land. The Rothenian Plains are home to the Khazzaki riders and the Kariv wanderers with their cities of wagons. Great hordes of centaurs thunder across the plains, worshiping their gods through wine and banditry. The drifting windrunner elves follow their namesake as it blows over the grass, heedless of rulers and settlements who would hedge them in. Midgard's nomads are hardy and self-sufficient.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Medicine, Survival

**Tool Proficiencies:** Herbalism kit, vehicles (land)

**Equipment:** An herbalism kit, a mule and cart, a set of traveler's clothes, and a belt pouch containing 5 gp.

### Feature: Thundering Hooves

Travel is in your blood, and you are adept at ensuring the health and quality of your mounts. You have contacts with herders who can provide fine quality steeds or beasts of burden, and you are welcome to join the herders as they move across the land. You understand your limits and those of your mount, and you are able to safely push those limits a little harder than others can; you can travel for 9 hours in a day before you and any mount you ride risk exhaustion from force marching.

### Suggested Characteristics

Nomads relish the freedom of their transient lifestyles. Some prefer to keep to themselves, such as the windrunner elves. The centaurs revile the thought of settling in one place and swear that they will never stop their wandering. The warriors of the Khazzaki Khanate are known for their ferocity but also for their hospitality to any, even outsiders, who swear fealty to the Khans. The Khariv are contradictory, at once clever and friendly, and prone to deep vice and deception against any who are not of their tribe.

## D8 PERSONALITY TRAITS

- 1 I love the wind in my hair and the grass racing by beneath my horse's hooves.
- 2 Outsiders aren't to be trusted. Take their coin and give them the oldest horses while cursing their bartering skills.
- 3 Settlements make me uncomfortable, and I don't like staying in one place any longer than I must.
- 4 I delight in meeting others and learning about cultures far removed from my own.
- 5 I am certain of my ability to survive in any situation, because I have always had to do just that.
- 6 I am put off by people who assume I'm simple or who talk down to me due to my rough appearance.
- 7 Fairness is one of the most important traits when traveling the range.
- 8 I collect the stories of all the places I visit and look for lessons that others have learned.



D6 IDEAL	
1	<b>Freedom.</b> Constraints are the worst sort of punishment. I long for the open plains. (Chaotic)
2	<b>Community.</b> Keep your people close, and always strive to give back to them. (Good)
3	<b>Pride.</b> My tribe is the strongest, and all others must give us respect. (Evil)
4	<b>Honor.</b> I follow the dictates of my elders, and I say only what I mean. (Lawful)
5	<b>Independence.</b> My people need no help to survive, neither do we exploit others. (Neutral)
6	<b>Greatness.</b> I work to prove myself worthy of my elders' respect and to prove my tribe's greatness to others. (Any)

D6 BOND	
1	Nothing is more important than my people, and I will defend them with my life.
2	I owe my survival to the people who found me stranded in the wilds and took me in.
3	I was once a city dweller, but I have found peace under the open sky. I'll never go back.
4	No one should have to endure the dangerous wilderness alone.
5	I protect a terrible secret, and I joined my wandering tribe to keep the secret safe.
6	Anyone who harms my tribe's territory will face my wrath.

D6 FLAW	
1	I show no mercy to anyone who harms the herds under my care.
2	Outsiders aren't to be trusted. They can never understand the life we lead.
3	Anyone who can't survive out here in the wild doesn't want to live badly enough, and doesn't deserve your sympathy.
4	I betrayed my tribe, and I will take that secret to my grave.
5	No matter how hard I try, I can't help but take advantage of outsiders, given the chance.
6	If my elders bid me to act, I must follow their direction, even if I disagree.

## RAIDER

Banditry and raiding are common in the world of Midgard. Numerous cultures attach no negative stigma to raiding or even hold raiders in high regard as bold warriors. In these societies, people are expected to protect what is theirs. Those who can't, deserve to be treated like sheep. Raiders come in many forms. Some are riders or centaurs on the Rothenian plains, undead raiders from Morgau and Doresh who plunder blood and gold in equal amounts, dwarven bandits from the Ironcrag Cantons, or Viking reavers from the harsh Northlands.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Intimidation, Stealth

**Vehicle Proficiencies:** vehicles (land)

**Languages:** Trade Tongue

**Equipment:** 50 feet of silk rope, a tent, a set of traveler's clothes, and a belt pouch containing 5gp.

### Feature: Backways

In your time scouring trade routes and settlements, you have learned the secret of finding quick, unobtrusive ways in and out. When determining your overland travel speed, you ignore difficult terrain if you are within 2 miles of a road or settlement. You have a knack for following hidden paths and covering your approach or retreat. When making use of this feature, you and up to five companions can utilize Stealth while traveling at a normal pace.

### Suggested Characteristics

Despite the cutthroat nature of the business, raiders come in all shapes and personalities. Some are bloodthirsty brigands who leave no survivors, others are free spirits who believe in strength over weakness. In the Northlands and Trollheim, even the most brutal and deadly reavers can still be viewed as honorable within the norms of their culture.

D8 PERSONALITY TRAITS	
1	I bow to neither lord nor god.
2	I never let witnesses escape from a raid.
3	I take what I need, but I don't kill without reason.
4	I always have an exit planned.
5	I am uncomfortable indoors and much prefer the open air.
6	I enjoy spreading the tales of my exploits, no matter who hears.
7	I so enjoy taking what I want that I have trouble dealing fairly with others.
8	I assume everyone else wants to take what I have.



#### D6 IDEAL

- 1 **Honor.** The world is cruel, but it must be faced with courage and fairness. Let none say otherwise. (Lawful)
- 2 **Greater Good.** I raid to weaken the tyrants who threaten my home, but I don't steal from the people. (Good)
- 3 **Freedom.** The wind in my hair is all the justification I need. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Strength.** The weak exist to feed the strong, and I am strong. (Evil)
- 5 **Loyalty.** My people are the only thing that matters. The World-Serpent can have all the rest. (Neutral)
- 6 **Aspiration.** I aspire to become the leader of my band. (Any)

#### D6 BOND

- 1 My band and I will be known across the world, and we'll never be forgotten.
- 2 I steal to punish the nobles who crush the life from those beneath them.
- 3 Everything I do is for the good of my people.
- 4 A cruel nobleman once beat me savagely, so I will take everything he has.
- 5 Something priceless was taken from me. I will not stop searching and raiding until I find it.
- 6 I have fallen in love with someone from a settlement my people raid.

#### D6 FLAW

- 1 I won't let myself be captured. If a raid goes sour, I'm the first to run for cover.
- 2 When I see a settlement or caravan heavy with valuables, all other concerns fade.
- 3 I killed someone important during a raid, and I live in fear that this will return to haunt me.
- 4 I don't heed the word of anyone other than the members of my band. Everyone else is a target.
- 5 I always assume outsiders know who I am and intend to imprison me.
- 6 I get lost in the thrill of the raid and can't focus on the details of a plan.





# WHEN EVIL STIRS IN THE SOUTHLANDS, MIGHTY HEROES WILL ARISE!

**D**emonic voices mutter and howl in the desert. Strange lights appear among the trees in the jungle's depths; and packs of twisted creatures emerge at night to hunt the grasslands.

But you do not fear these things. You are a hero of the Southlands—and by your skill, strength, luck, or the favor of the gods, you will become a legend.

**Southland Heroes** gives you everything you need to play in a 5th Edition campaign set in the Southlands.

**Southlands Heroes** includes:

- Rules for playing Southlands aasimar, gnolls, lizardfolk, minotaurs, tosculi waspfolk, and werelions
- New Ambush Predator rogue archetype, Hivemaster variant ranger, and Circle of the Hive and Circle of the Swarm variant druids
- New backgrounds: Child of the Divine, Temple Slave, Desert Runner, and more!

Match wits with djinn, pit your strength against mighty white apes, and plunder the lost temples of demon gods.

**The Southlands await!**



## SOUTHLANDS HEROES



**KOBOLD  
Press**



**ALSO  
AVAILABLE  
FROM**

**KOBOLD™  
Press**

## OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/ or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly

licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity.

The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

### 15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

**System Reference Document** Copyright 2000. Wizards of the Coast, Inc; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

**Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook** Copyright 2009, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.

**The Book of Experimental Might** Copyright 2008, Monte J. Cook. All rights reserved.

**Advanced Races: Centaurs.** © 2014 Open Design; Author: Karen McDonald. KoboldPress.com

**Advanced Races: Dragonkin** © 2013 Open Design; Authors: Amanda Hamon Kunz.

**Advanced Races: Gearforged.** © 2013 Open Design; Authors: Thomas Benton.

**Advanced Races: Kobolds** © 2013 Open Design; Authors: Nicholas Milasich, Matt Blackie.

**Advanced Races: Ravenfolk** © 2014 Open Design; Authors: Wade Rockett.

**Advanced Races: Shadow Fey.** © 2014 Open Design; Authors: Carlos and Holly Ovalle.

**Advanced Races: Trollkin.** © 2015 Open Design; Authors: Steven T.Helt, Stephen Rowe, and Dan Dillon.

**Midgard Heroes** © 2015 Open Design; Author: Dan Dillon.

# HEROES, ARISE!

Deep voices of the giants chant in the hills and forests. Red-cloaked cultists gather to perform their unholy rites, and howling tribes of dust goblins ride out of the Western Wastes to sack villages and towns.

But you do not fear these things. You are a hero of Midgard—and by your skill, strength, luck, or the favor of the gods, you will become a legend. *Midgard Heroes* gives you everything you need to play in a 5th edition campaign set in the *Midgard Campaign Setting*.

*Midgard Heroes* includes:

- Rules for playing PC centaurs, dragonkin, gearforged, kobolds, ravenfolk, shadow fey, trollkin, and more!
- New backgrounds: Corsair, Darkling, Fey-Touched, Nomad, Raider, and more!

Only magic and the warmth of hope keeps lights aglow when dread things prowl and the priestly wardings shake, bent by hideous demonic rage. In this dark time, new heroes must arise to claim the crowns of Midgard and restore the jewels to her scattered thrones. New heroes must lead a return to glory. Midgard awaits!



**KOBOLD**  
Press



\$19.99

