



Barbarians

The steady rain falling upon his fur lined hood suddenly slackened for a moment, causing the shaman to break from his thoughts. Glancing down the thin mountain path that served as the only path up to this place of solitude, he saw the young one still climbing, a bit past three fourths of the way up the mountain. The wind's reaction to the young one's determination told him all he needed to know. This one had potential for great things, but like many who would be seek him out, was already overly impressed by his own self-importance. The soft rain falling on the ground around him brought him back to his senses. The droplets drew the sky down uncomfortably, but once they impacted the earth, they splashed, drawing the earth even higher before it was drawn back down. Fortannis would not allow itself to be drawn into the sky and away from itself.

The young warrior finally crested the top of the climb and stood in the pouring rain for a few minutes before sitting down on a nearby rock. The shaman let the wind and rain tear at the tribesman for a few minutes, his furs flapping, and his cloak serving merely as a channel to collect the falling water having been saturated long ago. After waiting for a time to judge if the young one was respectful the shaman finally turned and looked at him. His tribal markings suggested that he was a Lavarin one of the weather tribe, no doubt he would make much of his climb happening in the rain.

Breathing in deeply, the shaman began a tale he had told many times before, while its truth was likely not complete, it would still serve as a valuable guide.

"The great Tribe was fractured, with clans and families of tribesman following the snows and winds to every edge of the land to seek out holdings and natural hunting grounds. The memory of the great Tribe stood fast in their blood, and slowly they formed bands of clans and families. These grew from year to year, and eventually formed into tribes. The four largest tribes known throughout the lands were the Levarin, the Lambentous, the Petara, and the Irrigu. It was these tribes that made the great crossing."

"Unlike the realms of our lost home the magic in these lands was split, sundered, with much of the Magic of Fortannis stolen by the sky. Unlike the magic of the Earth which is a boon given by the land to sustain the tribes, sky magic is not granted, but taken from the sky with no agreement between the caster and the sky. Out of the four great tribes rose four great shamans masters of the magic of earth. These four would learn the great magicks of the sky each focusing on one of the four facets."

"The four sought to control the sky and wove great enchantments to contain the elements and bring them forever down to the Earth so that sky magic would be as Earth magic. Despite all their wisdom the shamans were in error, and the sky magic rebelled against their control. This was expected, but they did not foresee was that the magicks of the Earth also rebelled. The shamans saw their magic turned against them and Fortannis rejected them for their arrogance."

"And so did the four great shamans become forsaken from the tribes, moving apart from them to live in the wilderness, in their wake were the elements contained. This was at first seen as a great boon to the tribesmen of the lands, no longer would alien sky magic make us feel as trespassers in this world. In time it was learned however that this was not a good thing, we were still not welcomed on this world and the nature of the elements had changed, we could no longer become a part of this world. While the separation prevented some pain from us it has forever prevented us from truly joining with this land."

The stories continued long into the night as the shaman instructed the young tribesman Keyan, the last to hear this shaman's words as age and weariness took their final toll at the end of his tales.

Barbarians are a proud savage people, often living in nomadic tribes or small settlements. Seeking a oneness with nature, and their surroundings, Barbarians are drawn to earth magic and martial practices. Omens, visions, and instincts are the driving forces behind almost all Barbarian tribes. Wars and tribal skirmishes are not started without a favorable omen of victory, or a dire omen of impending attack. These hide clad people are known throughout The Sheltered Lands as being proud warriors, formidable spell casters, and fierce allies.

Proud of their battle drenched heritage, Barbarian's will often clad themselves in trophies and charms for great luck. These adorn their armor and clothing made from hides and chitins of animals that nature has provided for them. Barbarians do not simply wear leathers and bone because of convenience. They believe that it is a right to wear these natural armors and clothes, and that all who are of the tribe should embrace this right openly. It is rash to assume that they look down upon those not of Barbarian descent wearing leathers and animal hides, for it is widely known that other races are ignorant of this right given by nature to the people of the Tribe.

Magic runs deep within the Barbarian culture, because they tie themselves close to nature, so to do they find a strong affinity for Earth Magic. Many tribes of Barbarians are led by not only strong, ferocious chieftains of battle, but also by wise, experienced shaman. There are always exceptions, as some tribes view weakness in all magic, or arrogance in simple martial prowess.

Their rough endurance grants all Barbarians two extra body points, their rugged weathered bodies allow them to purchase Resist Elements, and their ferocious nature allows them to purchase Resist Fear. However, the uncivilized nature of all Barbarians requires them to pay twice as much for Read Magic, and Read and Write.

The Barbarian tribes are scattered across the lands now known as Gaden and Pratorak, with the edges of the Grasslands holding the largest settlements. Built of dirt and stone, these settlements are sprawling clusters of longhouses and tents. Originally a winter home, these areas became fixed as the tribes returned year after year. These settlements are often used as trading and gathering places through the winter, and in times of great omens as a place for councils to be held and the fate of many tribes decide.

Most tribes are based around a singular leader, in most cases this is either a shaman, or the strongest warrior in the tribe. Whoever leads a tribe, the best warrior, or most experienced shaman serves as second or challenger, this tends to give most tribes a well-rounded view of the world as well as the ability to meet with different outsiders with the best matched representative.

The death rate among tribesmen is surprisingly low considering their harsh life style, but the death rate of future shamans and tribe leaders tends to be much higher as they often try to prove themselves by undertaking dangerous tasks to prove themselves. That said, once a tribesmen becomes a leader or shaman, it becomes very uncommon for them to die as the tribe as a whole acts to protect them.

Finally, all barbarians are known for their superstitions, each tribe has a particular flavor that is the most common among them, but each tribesmen develops their own flavor of signs often becoming unique and those that befriend them would be wise to learn to understand how these signs affect their friend.

Costuming

Costuming for a Barbarian can have a lot of flavor, you should take care to avoid overly precise clothing. Barbarians favor furs, less tailored outfits. Tribal and family markings are also very common, these can be basic symbols, often animal in nature such as bear paws, crow's feet or similar. Finer fabrics can be used but should have a more wild style, often with the cloth serving as an accent to the core outfit.

Speech

All barbarians must talk 'wildly' this is often hard to understand. The key concept is that grammar and dictation are not seen as important in barbarian society. If the person you are talking to understands what you are saying, why dress it up and waste everyone's time? Barbarians are fully able to understand complex topics, but they do so in a simplistic style. Overall barbarians avoid large words and don't worry about grammar when speaking. Try to avoid the temptation to overplay this in the dream realm, a little bit goes a very long way.

Roleplaying

Confidence is key when playing a barbarian, there is no room for doubt in their personality. This should not be mistaken for overconfidence, a tribesman is perfectly able to recognize when a situation is hopeless or needs to be avoided. Even in these cases the tribesman will be confident in his assessment of the situation and what needs to be done. Whenever a tribesman cannot come to a resolution, force will often be considered, either by an honor duel or via force. Most barbarians that spend their time among other races quickly learn to restrain their impulses around the more civilized races. Celestial magic is viewed with distrust and should cause discomfort when encountered, the nature of this discomfort is different, but can often appear as an itching, or electric sensation.

The Forsaken

A group of four shamans, each from a different tribe who locked away the Chimeric Spirits for a time. During these years the four shamans were corrupted and turned into a unique form of undead. During this time, the alien field of the world was abated somewhat as the elements were contained. In September of 1511 the four shamans were destroyed in the Giants Walk. With their destruction the spirits were once again released, causing all tribesmen to once again feel alienated from the world. This is a source of both great sadness and joy, as the death of the Forsaken means that the shamans have been released from their curse, but their work was also undone which has heightened the discomfort as the elements are once again agitated.

The story of the Forsaken serves as a warning to the pitfalls of undependable sky magic, but many shamans still dabble, or even study celestial magic, following in the Forsaken's footsteps. This is seen as extremely dangerous but understandable as the knowledge of the Forsaken was renowned and is respected by all tribesmen.

The Tribes

The Lambentous

The Lambentous are one of the most well-travelled of the tribes, ranging throughout the territories. Most of their tribes tend to wander the western parts of Gaden and into the grasslands. The Lambentous tribespeople have an odd affinity for lightning, of all the elements it is the one they find least objectionable. Perhaps because of this, most Lambentous find signs and omens in the weather and will see a light breeze, or a heavy rain as an omen that bears either good or ill tidings for whatever activities they are participating in.

The Petara

More hotheaded and stubborn than any other tribe, it should come as no surprise that the Petara have an affinity for Flame, finding it less distasteful than the other elements. The Petaran barbarians rarely move or migrate far, being clustered heavily in the southeast areas of Gaden and a large group serving as guardians of the Giant's Walk. The majority of their signs and omens come from everyday things, often seemingly at random, such as the sun glinting off of a blade, or grass that has grown to encircle a rock.

The Petara are also the most critical of non-tribesmen and their interference with their life style. The incursion of adventures into the Giants walk of 1511 is still remembered and has not been forgiven. Most Petaran tribesmen are keeping a careful watch to prevent a recurrence of such an overstep from happening again.

The Irrigu

The Irrigu have the hardest time working with the other races, having a habit of ignoring them as if they are unimportant. This standoffishness is reflected in the tribe's favoring of Stone over the other elements. Because of this other races often find it more difficult working with the barbarians to this tribe the main roam in the grasslands. The Irrigu could care less, at best they tend to remember people and objections after the fact and acknowledge that others are right or wrong, but it's very rare that they will actually consider such things before making decisions. Irrigu see signs in everyday speech, in the order, choice of words, or even intonation of how things are said.

The Levarin

The Levarin are the most likely to practice celestial magic, following its draw more intently than the other tribes and favoring Ice over any other element. Of all the tribes, the Levarin tribes are the smallest in number, both in number of tribes and size of tribes. Unlike the other tribes, the Levarin have no common source of their superstitions, tending instead to follow one of the other tribe's patterns. More than any other tribe the Shamans of the Levarin tend to be the teachers and students of history.