



Mystic Wood Elves: A Race of Freedom

Splashing against the back wall of a tavern located in northern Roskaria, the spray of dark brown ale declared the resolution of a bet. The well-heeled human merchant from Gaden stood for a second, his mouth agape at losing the bet with the Mystic Wood Elf. A potter by trade, he would have never expected that the Mystic Wood Elf could have made such a shot. Waiting patiently for the ringing of the pot in the kitchen, the metal shield on the wall, and the chandelier to subside, the youthful-looking potter waved aside the handful of gold coins he had just won. "Give them to the bartender, and tell him a round for the house!"

Grumbling a bit, the merchant paid off his wager to the barkeep, gathering from the number of knowing smiles around the tavern that this was not the first time this potter had won them all a round of drinks.

"I don't get it. How did you ever learn to do trick shots that complex?"

"I did a few tours in the Valley of Solace back in the 1300s, learning a number of things back then about hunting and being able to bounce a blade around a corner or to come at a critter from behind proved useful," the Mystic Wood Elf replied. "Eventually I got bored of that, so when the Anvil fell, I moved back here to try my hand at something new."

"Pottery, huh? Seems like a big jump." the merchant replied.

"Don't be silly! I tried my hand as a fisher, then a farmer, then a cook. At any rate, one of my jars broke while I was refilling from a well one time and I figured that I might as well learn pottery so I could fix it. That was twenty-some years ago."

Shaking his head and laughing, the merchant took another swig from his mug. Leaning back, the merchant could not help but wonder what it must be like to live in a land where even the simplest jobs were done by people with decades or even centuries of experience in a variety of roles. Even this tavern had carvings, rugs, and a number of other items that could fetch a fortune in other lands.

Wishing once more he could convince any of them to allow him to sell their wares, the merchant sighed as he recalled his previous attempts. Coin could not sway these artists, for they seemed to generate coin without effort or any real interest, almost as if it was an unfortunate byproduct of their art. It was almost like the Mystic Wood Elves dealt with coin more to avoid insulting the other races than using it out of any real interest in its value.

Taking another swig of the dark brown ale, the merchant suddenly detected a hint of flavor belonging to some fruit or mixture of herbs he was not familiar with. It was some of the best drink he had ever enjoyed, with subtle changes in flavor as it warmed up, and he was sure that such a mix would likely sell for a fortune back in Gaden.

Perhaps these folks had the right idea after all.

The Mystic Wood Elf race, commonly referred to simply as “MeeWees”, is one that holds the greatest number of members in the Sheltered Lands that have been around to witness a great deal of the land’s history, with this peculiar longevity giving them a somewhat unique outlook on life. Having seen both trouble and good times, most Mystic Wood Elves tend to focus on the good things, taking the time to enjoy life in the midst of whatever else might be happening. The long lifespan of the race also has an effect on affects its members’ patience, which often is more significant compared to other races when it comes to achieving their goals.

Similarly, the race also has a more long-term view on money, often finding the vigor at which some of the shorter-lived races strive for wealth to be downright amusing at times. This being said, all Mystic Wood Elves seem to have an innate talent for finding work they enjoy that always seems to generate money. While there are certainly times where a bit more effort must be put in due to a problem or need, the average Mystic Wood Elf will be freer with his money than some other races, knowing that more will always come his or her way in life and there is no reason to be overly attached to such things.

While Mystic Wood Elves take the long view on a great many things, there is one universal belief that they will not sway from: Each creature should to have its own free will to live as it will. This does not necessarily mean that they feel that people should be always protected from the results of their actions; in fact, very often the Mystic Wood Elves might lead the charge to punish a wrongdoer after they have seen poorer results of over-tolerance in their past. They as a race simple recognize even an evil-doer’s right to his or her life choices, and for that reason, Mystic Wood Elves find most Command effects to be utterly intolerable if such an effect replaces the will of its target.

To many other races of the Sheltered Lands, one of the principle defining characteristics of Mystic Wood Elves is their hatred for anything that takes away the free will of people to make their own choices. This is often misunderstood to be a blanket hatred of all Command effects, but some Command effects are tolerable and valued by Mystic Wood Elves to restore the free will of others. Awaken spells, which always have a cleansing effect rather than a controlling effect upon the target, are always regarded as appropriate, and on very rare occasion, other spells are distastefully tolerated in times of need (such as Charm, when it is exclusively used upon an already-commanded target to return the victim to normal, rather than when it is used to control someone). While there is some leeway in how aggressive different Mystic Wood Elves will react to Command effects, such a reaction will always be negative, regardless of any “greater good” arguments other races may try to justify. To their race, the theft of free will is seen as worse than death, destruction, or almost any of physical danger, and members of this race have even been seen Awakening a Charmed enemy before beating the same enemy to death in combat.

Generally speaking, it is very rare for a Mystic Wood Elf to have anything to do with politics. In the kingdom of Roskaria, the king is decided by an election held once ever ten years, with the current King having been reelected consistently since the country’s creation, and the people of Roskaria seem content under his capable leadership so far. Even within Roskaria, most Mystic Wood Elves will shy away from either noble or political leadership roles, such as knighthood or lordships, preferring to assist existing leaders over performing the acts themselves. There are times when a Mystic Wood Elf is recognized for his or her abilities and has the role of leadership thrust upon them, and in such cases such Mystic Wood Elves will often do their best, but find their ability to order others lacking due to their nature.

Naming

The only general consistency for naming in the Mystic Wood Elf culture is that regardless of their name, all Mystic Wood Elves tend to have a shorter version of their name they will answer to just as comfortably as their full given name. This "Road Name" is extensively used, with the Mystic Wood Elf's full and possibly even considerably long name rarely, if ever, being spoken in full. It is frequently seen as an honor for someone else to be given the knowledge of this full name, and most are gracious and comforted when a Mystic Wood Elf friend grants them that honor.

Costuming

Most clothing worn by Mystic Wood Elves could best be described as sturdy and practical, choosing to dress comfortably regardless of their station. An example of this could be a favored shirt that has gradually gotten darker with the passage of time as dirt and sweat have stained it over the years, or another might wear finer clothes fit for nobility, having easier access to money and plenty of time to acquire his or her clothing. Regardless of their chosen style, most Mystic Wood Elves maintain a very limited wardrobe and rarely bother to dress for a specific occasion, preferring to stick to one to three outfits.

Mystic Wood Elves in the Sheltered Lands

The most significant group of Mystic Wood Elves in the Sheltered Lands is that which rules and lives within the country of Roskaria. Originally a sheltered valley full of artisans that wanted a quiet place to build their crafts, the kingdom of Roskaria has since become a booming economic backbone in the war against the Corrupt. Providing weapons, food, shelter, and support, the Mystic Wood Elves of Roskaria cheerfully support Gaden with supplies, though most of this support is supplied by artisans that are just beginning to learn their crafts, leaving the masters to create finely-wrought works of art not intended to be shipped away or used on the field of battle.

Roskaria is not the first time a kingdom of Mystic Wood Elves has existed in history, however. Old stories tell of a large kingdom full of members of their race living peacefully within in a great forest that were known as the Children of the Autumn Woods. Where the kingdom once existed has been lost to time, but it is generally accepted knowledge that the Autumn Woods was overwhelmed by the Corrupt a long time ago. Little is known about Mystic Wood Elf life in the Autumn Woods, for there are apparently no known survivors from that kingdom, and most historians have grudgingly accepted that any answers may have permanently become shrouded by the mists of time.

Traveling Mystic Wood Elves are a very common sight in all parts of the Sheltered Lands and are generally welcomed by the different populations. It is uncommon for a Mystic Wood Elf to openly lead, typically opting to support a group or even a single individual that promotes what they believe is favorable, and with their extensive lifespan, a Mystic Wood Elf can easily spend the equivalent of a lifetime of another race supporting a new royal family or helping establish a new community.

Playing a Mystic Wood Elf

All Mystic Wood Elves have pointed ears and must wear some form of pointed ear prosthetic. These can be found at many costume shops and on the internet, and are affixed to your ears using adhesives like spirit gum or liquid latex. In addition, all Mystic Wood Elves possess small horns. These can be made of

a variety of materials and are typically attached with a cord, spirit gum, or liquid latex. Note that both the ear prosthetics and the horns must be worn even when they cannot be seen; you cannot wear a hat over your ears and horns as an excuse for not wearing them.

Mystic Wood Elves age at a similar rate as humans until their late teens, at which point they begin to age significantly slower. Mystic Wood Elves can live very long natural lifespans, but when creating a Mystic Wood Elves character, you should be no more than 100 years old at the most. Remember that people grow in skill and wisdom the older they are, so having a very old Mystic Wood Elves character come in for the first time that has few abilities or knowledge of the world is not something we are going for. One of the most important things to remember is how a long life span affects your view on current events and things that need to be done. For instance, being recognized is often not an important goal since most of the people that might be impressed will likely not live anywhere near as long as you might.

Beyond anything else, Mystic Wood Elves like to enjoy life, regardless of the circumstances. It is often a great idea to have a favorite game, or treat that your character always has at the ready to play and enjoy even in the direst of situations. Sometimes this desire to always enjoy life has been misread to suggest that all Mystic Wood Elves enjoy sleeping around with little in the way of standards. This is definitely not the case, as Mystic Wood Elves have no different desires for companionship than any other race, although some members of their race may be a bit more boisterous and open about such things than others.

It is a requirement when playing a Mystic Wood Elf that you must have a strong hatred for Command effects, and there should never be a point that you become fully accepting of them. This, like anything else, can be played in a number of different ways, but if in a group that is using Commands, a Mystic Wood Elf will be constantly trying to find alternatives and attempting to convince his or her fellows to give up their use of Commands.

When selecting your Craftsman skills, it is suggested that you make sure to put in some thought as to what they are, for this is a great time to decide what your Mystic Wood Elf has already tried his or her hand at doing. Remember that even a low-level Mystic Wood Elf has likely already lived the equivalent of a full human lifetime and they have had a chance to hone or learn about a number of crafts. Regardless of whether you decide that your Craftsman skills are in line with your current efforts or reflect things that you have done in the past, these skills can offer up great inspiration for roleplaying.