

Stone Elf



Zitus Moonsight had stopped wandering years ago.

In his efforts to gather information of any sort, he had originally roamed far and wide. Some of the lands he had reached, he could no longer find; it was as if their access had magically closed. It was not an unlikely premise, he thought. He had seen enough strange magics and planar rifts to account for such apparent anomalies; however, it was always preferable to learn exactly how they worked. It was unfortunate that many times, the opportunity did not exist.

Now, Zitus had settled down in a pleasant town. Not too close to the regions where the monsters roamed, and not so far away from them that life for the locals had become static. He had learned – in a single epiphany – that knowledge could be gained in many ways. Wandering the world gave one an overview, but planting roots allowed one to look deeper. Even in the space of a single dwelling, observations of importance could be carried out for centuries.

He had been here only a few years, a breath of time to him; but he was treated as if he was a local fixture now by the humans and other races of the town. Most of them had shorter life-spans, therefore it was reasonable to assume that one year in a life of sixty such years was momentous. One year was a sixtieth of all time and existence, to a human's perspective. To Zitus, one year had worn away to one two-hundredths of his personal experience of time.

While he was contemplating this changeable perspective, a group of humans caught his attention. They were arguing amongst themselves, and had completely stopped their wheat-threshing. The focus of their argument seemed to be the local idiot boy, Green. He was named 'Green', Zitus recalled, because that was the only word he knew. An odd choice; surely there was a reason for it...

The crowd finally turned their attention onto Zitus, which redirected his focus to them once more. In particular, it seemed as if Corina was about to address him. That was not surprising, since she often instigated any social encounter she was involved in.

"We've had enough with this idiot boy," she began. When some of the people she had been arguing with muttered dissent, she glared at them, and they silenced. Folding her arms, she faced Zitus again.

"You fixed old Benny's mind last year. He was thinking he was a bird, now he's home taking care of his family like nothing ever happened. You could fix Green, couldn't you?" The crowd was silent now, and the only sound to be heard was the slow, repetitive Whack, Whack of Green's threshing flail on the grain. Green was oblivious to the trouble he had apparently caused.



"It is quite possible that I could." Zitus responded. When nothing further was forthcoming, Corina finally broke the silence again.

"Well, *would* you?"

"Ah, that is a different question. No, I would not." Zitus tilted his head slightly, observing Corina's reaction closely. It was interesting to watch her splutter with frustration. Surely, she wore herself out with her own unnecessary emotional flailings.

"Why?" She finally got out, her face red with irritation.

"Because, he is a contributing member of our little society. In fact, he seems to be the only one among you who is contributing at all at the moment, rather than sowing discontent and unnecessary argument. I see no reason to alter his thinking in

the slightest."

Corina's mouth gaped, then closed, then gaped, and finally stayed closed. The others in the crowd glanced at their feet, shuffled a bit, then sheepishly returned to work.

As for Zitus, he had set himself the task of carrying water to the field workers, and to this task he quietly returned.

HISTORY

Many thousands of years ago, there were a beautiful race known as the Golden Elves, who numbered in the thousands. They were easily identifiable by their golden hair and bronze skin, and other races easily acknowledged their beauty.

The Golden Elves were very reckless and vain, primarily driven by their emotions and desires.

They spent most of their time trying to make profit in any way they could. They were so concerned with their personal adornment and possessions that thousands of Elves died at their selfish hands. They made deals with the fae, chaos elementals, and fire elementals for trinkets of magic and other material things. These deals helped cause rifts to open from which undead and other strange beings poured out to attack the other Elves. Many thousands of Elves died while their fellow Golden Elves did not bother to lift a finger.

When the time came to rebuild the Elven society, the Golden Elves turned their back on their Elven cousins, and left the area completely, scattering to the four winds.

One group of approximately a hundred Golden Elves set off on their own. A scouting party of seven was sent out to search for a place to settle. The group came across a dense grove of some of the oldest trees they had ever seen. They found a brook that lead

to an area of many small waterfalls, and they felt that this land was worth investigating further.

After several days of exploring, the seven scouts found a grove of birch trees in which there was some activity. There were two creatures in this area that were considered hideous by the standards of the Golden Elves, but the scouting party were intrigued by the possibility that they were magical constructs. One being was formed of dirt, rock, and moss with worms and flying ants emerging from it, while the other appeared much like a larva with wings, but those wings were very beautiful. The group grew envious of those wings and wished to possess them and their magic for themselves.

With the two magical creatures in the clearing were several small glowing orbs of color, which danced and sparkled around the couple who giggled in amusement. Such powerful magic was very valuable to the Golden Elves, and with little discussion, they made ready to attack the two ugly creatures.

Because the creatures were so engrossed in their own amusement, the Golden Elves were able to tear through the larva-creature and rip the wings from its body until it lay still. No noise came from the creature as it died.

The rock creature turned to his attackers and started stammering in languages that were unrecognizable to the Elves. The orbs gathered around and started firing colored lightning. The Elves could not fight the orbs off and were soon held helpless. A deafening noise came from the remaining creature as he looked upon his dead mate, but was immediately replaced with sudden calm. The Elves found themselves alone except for the injured scouting party and the angered creature.

The Golden Elves watched as the rock creature changed from one form to another. With a simmering rage, he transformed into a human and then to an Elf before finally settling on the same golden image of his attackers. Staring deep into their eyes one by one, he spoke in a deep booming voice and in their own native tongue.

"I am Stonemoss," it said. "You have entered my home and destroyed my bride, Luna. This has pained me more than you could have done to me with your swords. Though I shall kill you as you killed Luna, I will not do so without price. You have been indulgent in your desires. You have neglected the feelings of others.

"You will do that no longer."

Without looking away from the Elves, Stonemoss changed his form again. His golden hue was replaced with a ghostly white. His shining hair became black, and he began to resemble the birch trees that surrounded him. A Circle of Power was raised around the area as Stonemoss faded into his surroundings. Soon, he seemed to vanish from view completely. The Golden Elves, still held in their places, looked towards each other warily.

The attack came strong and soon. The scouting party was forced to watch each other be torn apart by Stonemoss in his original form, one by one.

When the seven Elves resurrected, they found that they had not traveled more than a hundred yards from the circle of birch trees. There was no trace of who could have performed the resurrections.

At first, they laughed and joked about their adventure, but within an hour, they found themselves changing. The seven Elves went wild with rage as they saw their golden hair darkening and their blonde skin bleaching white. As their anger and self pity grew, so did a pain that slowly crept from inside their bones. The seven continued in the self-absorbed state until they were on the ground howling with pain.

They made their way into the grove of birch trees, and found to their surprise that the pain was relieved. Their emotions calmed. They knew no fear and no pain. The calm that surrounded



them appeared to emanate from the trees themselves, and they sat and rested.

Much time passed as they considered their predicament. They discovered that they grew neither hungry nor tired while in the Grove. Even more strange, this fact did not result in an emotional reaction.

They named the clearing the Kelay, and began to discuss what had logically happened.

Meanwhile, unknown to the seven, days had passed and the Golden Elves they had left behind were worried. Three search parties were sent out but one never returned and to this day no one is certain what became of them. Eventually, the Golden Elves left together in the direction that their scouting party had gone, and eventually came upon the Grove.

They were shocked to see what had become of their companions, and entered the Grove to speak with them. Immediately, they began to change as well. Other Golden Elves outside of the Grove howled in pain as the change also overtook them, and soon, all of the Elves found themselves looking like the seven.

There was much confusion but eventually emotions were stilled and the Elves discussed their predicament. The original seven vowed to learn more about their fate, and took it on themselves to seek the answer. They left the Kelay the next day, never to be seen again.

In an ever widening circle, Golden Elves throughout the lands underwent this change. The pain of the change was immense, but all discovered that suppressing their emotions would keep the pain at a tolerable level. Many of the Elves worked together to begin the long process of removing the emotions that would certainly kill them. Forced into this situation, they made the best of it and began to use logic to overcome the painful emotions.

RACIAL BASICS

Stone Elves show no emotion, and have the appearance of being eternally calm. Their discipline and their mental strength have made it possible to suppress or rid a Stone Elf of such a burden.

On average, Stone Elves live to be approximately 1200 years old, and as such they have a different view on matters than humans and other short-lived races. Patience is easier to learn for them, and it is a common belief that most conflicts resolve themselves with time.

Few Stone Elves experience the desire to leave their home community, but often the quest for knowledge takes one all over the lands. These quests can take several hundred years.

Most Stone Elves follow the career path of one parent, with the goal of contributing to the community as a whole.

The specifics of a Stone Elf society will differ, however it must be based upon a logical format. Typically, the culture will arrange itself into Houses and Elders, which can manage parts of the community rather than every issue requiring the attention of every adult; this particularly happens in any Stone Elf community that reaches any real size.

Marriages are carefully considered, and require compatible traits and logical reasons for the pairing that can work to the couple's advantage their entire lives. This is essential, because during the marriage, the two bond mentally in a way that can never be broken.

COSTUME REQUIREMENTS

Stone Elves have white skin accented with darker features, such as black lips and eyebrows. They most often have black hair, but red and dark brown are not uncommon. They have pointed ears like all other Elves. They have a preference for plain colors, and they rarely, if ever, wear bright, flamboyant clothes or jewelry.

Stone Elves are a PC race which requires the use of makeup. All have white skin, black lips, and black upturned eyes. All flesh exposed should be white. Gloves are advised so that you do not have to paint your hands.

There are three different categories of makeup people use. Like anything else you put on your skin, it is important that you test these products before using them at an event. Even if a product is labeled as hypo-allergenic, you may have a reaction to it.

Place a test sample on your forearm, and leave it on for about half an hour. If you don't have any reaction to it, the makeup should be safe to use. It has been known to happen that people will develop an allergy to a particular makeup after continuous use; just because you have been using a particular makeup for a year does not mean it can't cause skin irritation.

The three types of makeup are: cream, grease, and pancake. Cream is the easiest to wash off, but is too easy to sweat off. It may be a good bet for module days when you only need a two-hour makeup job, but it won't last an entire day. Grease will cause most people problems. It does not sweat through (you will get very hot under it), it smears clothing, and it is very difficult to wash off unless you use cold cream and scrub a lot. It also is the most likely to cause skin irritation, and can be dangerous near the eyes. It does, however, give the thickest color, and is the longest lasting. Pancake is the least likely to cause skin irritation. It sweats through, but not off (you are actually cooler with this stuff on!), doesn't rub off easily, can be washed out of clothes, and gives the best color. Just use some open cell foam as a sponge, dampen it, and apply.

Use oil-based black or black lipstick for your lips, as it stays on better than water (based on tests run during a full day of hacking and slashing). Use water-based black or black eyeliner pencil to

make either upturned eyebrows or eyebrows pointed up in the middle of each brow. This will help you look less undead, and less of a fair target for some money-hungry adventurer. Black fingernail polish is also a nice touch.

With any kind of makeup, it is recommended to carry a dry cloth with you when playing in the event that makeup runs into your eyes (you can then soak up excess makeup while getting water to flush your eyes). Cloth is also helpful to pat down sweat before it drips into your eyes. You should check your makeup every few hours (depending on if you sweat a lot or not) and reapply perhaps as often as every three hours (just touching up bad spots). Ideally you want a full even coat on the face, neck, back of head, arms, legs, tops of hands, and any other exposed parts of skin. *Never sleep in makeup!* Your skin needs to breathe, and any kind of makeup hinders that process to some extent. Therefore, you should wash *all* the makeup off your body each night and reapply it in the morning. Your skin will thank you.

ROLEPLAYING

Roleplaying a Stone Elf is no easy task; in fact, it is probably the hardest race to play. It can be mentally draining to watch yourself for any sign of emotion and repress it. Frequent breaks are recommended, ones where you can talk OOG with your friends and laugh and cry and keep yourself sane.

It might also be useful to have a secondary character to play when you aren't entirely in the mood to play your Stone Elf. If you just don't think you have the concentration to pull it off one event, be your secondary character and play the Stone Elf when you are completely prepared.

Be warned! This is likely the most difficult mindset to carry off for long periods of time, no matter how logical and unemotional you think you already are.

Stone Elves have limited roleplaying-only mental skills. If another player agrees to roleplay along voluntarily, a Stone Elf who has been taught the appropriate mind skill can fix various mental problems. Note: this is a **Roleplaying-only** skill. Both parties must agree to go along with it. Further, you cannot use this ability to get rid of any in-game things like curses, enslavement, disease, charm, or anything else that needs in-game fixes. Remember, you didn't pay any build for this "ability," so you can't get any huge in-game advantage for it. These role-playing only skills are described in more detail in the Alliance Rule Book on page 72.)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I have to wear the makeup?

Absolutely. And the better the makeup looks, the more distinguishable as a Stone Elf you will be. If you can't deal with full face makeup for days, then play a different race.

Do I have to wear the ears?

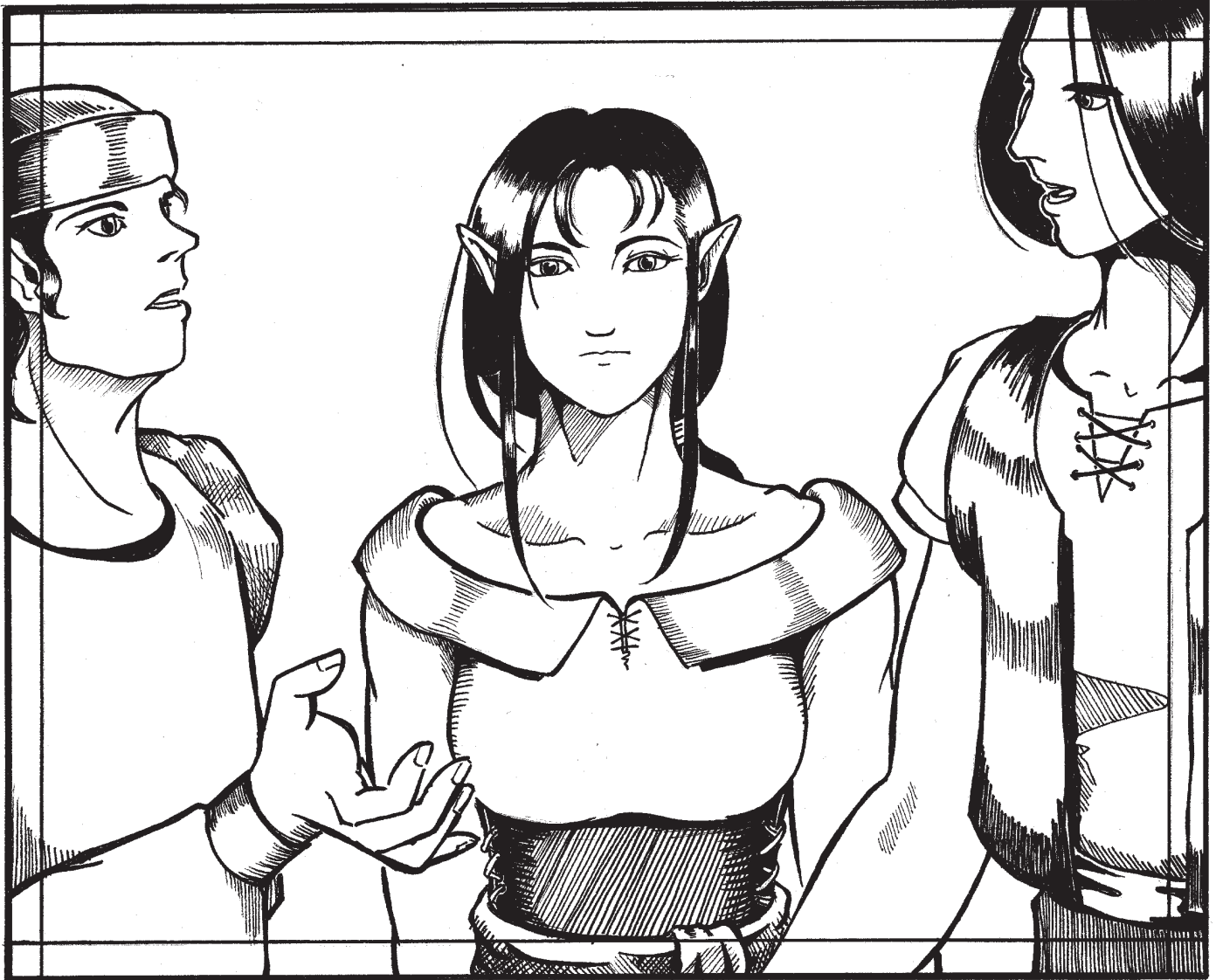
Absolutely. Always. Wearing a piece of cloth around your head to cover up where your ears would be if you were wearing them is *not* acceptable. It looks foolish, and makes you look like you haven't prepared.

Do Stone Elves really have no emotions?

Stone Elves have emotion, but they do an excellent job of suppressing them, so that any onlookers should see someone who never expresses emotion of any kind.

Is there no way I can ever show emotion?

Battle rage exists in some Stone Elves, thought it is frowned upon by other Stone Elves and seen as a sign of poor mental



discipline. On occasion even the best Stone Elves have lost control, but these instances should be extremely rare.

Why do Stone Elves dislike emotion?

They believe it is the fertile ground from which war, murder, and greed spring. Nothing good can come of them, and they obscure the logic that is necessary to lead effective and productive lives.

Why are Stone Elves white?

Their skin has become white because of a curse placed upon the Golden Elves over eight thousand years ago. Their coloring was changed to match that of the birch trees around them, but because Stonewood trees are black with white leaves, the features of a Stone Elf allow them to blend in well with their surroundings.

How old should my character be?

Stone Elves age at the same rate as humans but slow down by the time they reach their 20s. You should probably be at least 50, but less than 300. This allows you to be young enough to justify you being so low level, and explain why you don't know everything

about everything. Culturally, your desire to be an adventurer will only be tolerated by other Stone Elves if you are young or if you have another very good reason to be straying so far from your community.

Do I need to turn in a character history?

You are never required to do so, but you will be missing a large part of the gaming experience if you do not. It will help you and plot define your character, and maybe something from your past will be relevant in game. If you want to have fun, then you should turn in a character history.

Would a Stone Elf ever allow a Biata into their minds?

Probably not. Only if the Stone Elf completely trusted the Biata with every inch of their being.

How do Stone Elves feel about non-Stone Elves asking about their history and mental abilities? They have no problems in educating others about their race. They are secure in the knowledge that no other race can use the mental powers and have nothing to hide. Hiding, after all, implies guilt, suspicion, and emotions that the Stone Elves want no part of.