

Humans

Excerpt from rulebook

Humans are the most common race in the world. They have round ears, soft skin, and are the least unique in terms of their appearance compared to other races, however they are also the most versatile. Because of the lack of racial pre dispositions they are capable of accomplishing great things that some are not.

Quirks

Humans don't particularly excel at any one thing, but they are flexible enough to do just about anything.

They are very adaptable and are capable of picking up and learning new things easier than any other race.

Due to being surrounded by so many fantastic creatures and races, while being relatively normal themselves, they have developed a very strong mental fortitude.

Origins and culture

Humans are the most common race in the world and they have no single origin point, seeming to pop up on every continent. There are numerous beliefs on human origins, depending on where the particular group of humans is from. Some believe they are descended from other races that some intermingled and eventually lost the distinguishing features of any of them, others believe their race literally sprung from nothing, and there are countless other stories. All of these origin stories may be true, and perhaps none of them are, but humans have existed for far too long to know for sure.

Since humans are so common, they are seen in all walks of life ranging from political and military leaders, to shopkeepers and common farmers. Not surprisingly, humans can also be found among the many adventurers

of the world. Human's ability to learn just about any skill has served them well as they have mingled with other races, learning new things that those races may specialize in. Humans can form relationships and have children with any other race and it's usually a toss-up whether the child will be a human or whatever race they are mixed with.

On the continent of Elizadale human history is very closely tied to the history of the Kingdom, as Candrea Bay was founded and has been ruled by humans.

Human Cultures of Elizadale

Candreans

The original Candrean culture was deeply tied to the water. Originally, Candrea Bay had multiple fishing villages, and even before coming together under the first Pendragon, they didn't quarrel. Each village gave the rest their space, sharing the sea and its bounty. Candreans have always seen themselves as a reflection of the waters of the bay: clear, calm, and peaceful.

Though the people spread inland -- some becoming hunters or farmers, and others taking to river fishing -- the bay always maintained its importance, as it's viewed as making all these things possible. This has led many to believe that the people of Candrea Bay worship water itself.

It should be noted that the Candreans have always been careful never to take too much from the water. Those limits allowed those early villagers to develop a respectful relationship with local Aquatic Elves, and this custom is still kept to this day.

In current times, the culture of Candrea Bay is a combination of the many cultures of Elizadale, as people across the continent have travelled to and settled there.

Scythians

The Scythians live far to the East, across the continent, along the easternmost coast of Elizadale. Caught between the heat of the desert to the south, and the relentless, desperate expansion of the nomadic Karites to the north, the Scythians have nonetheless carved out a thriving culture centered on their central city of Askuzai.

The rains that cut north of the desert leave the Scythian lands not just hot, but brutally humid. Scythian clothing is, as a result, loose, flowing, and light. It's also almost shockingly colorful, a reflection of the raucous culture of the people who live there. It can be difficult to live in their homeland, but the Scythians never seen beaten down by it.

At the center of the culture is the horse. It is a sacred animal, and not just because no human could survive long enough to travel without it. The religion of the Scythians centers on the horse, the form of one of the twin brothers whose rivalry stretched into the stars themselves. Orza, first to be born, swift and sure-footed, one day challenged his brother to a contest. He took the form of a horse, certain that his skill could win the day. But Sella, as powerful as he was deliberate, became a mighty elephant. The two brothers clashed in the sky, one swift and impossible to catch, the other immovable and unrelenting. Their battle can still be seen, the Scythians say, written across the stars in their constellations, two equally matched forces who may never end their fight.

The Scythians support themselves by trading their own goods – as well as the goods of the poorer Karite nomads – across the Kingdom. They work

closely with Trecenti merchants who send them dyes and pearls in return for silks and bows.

A learned people, the Scythians are widely regarded for their artisans. Wanderers are common visitors to Scythian lands, who find a welcome home in the raucous towns strewn across their territory. The heat and humidity also suits the Scythian's longtime friends, the Asterions.

Karites

The Karites are a nomadic people. They are herders and hunters surviving where the land is willing to support them. Despite their humble lifestyle, the Karites are unparalleled leatherworkers, whose furs and skins are sold across the Kingdom for premium prices. Unfortunately, because their trade is done through middlemen, most buyers don't know the source of this exquisite work.

The same can be said of Karite archery. The stirrup originated in their lands, an invention that revolutionized warfare, and allowed the horse archer to become one of the cornerstones of Kingdom warfare.

Karite society is tribal, organized around familial ties and loyalty to those who have proven themselves clever and strong enough to survive in the often hostile lands in which they roam. The Karites themselves rule no cities, and rarely visit those of their neighboring races and cultures.

Like their neighbors the Wild Elves and Barbarians, the Karites are a shamanistic people and worship spirits of the natural world that surrounds them.

Mercians

There was a time when Mercian culture stretched from the north shore of Elizadale to its central plains, and nearly as far west as that far shore.

Time changes much, though, and as Candrean culture moved north and west, the Mercians shrunk back until all that remained was a stony stretch of seashore pressed against the North Sea.

Though they long ago accepted Candrean control, Mercian culture has changed little in the years since. At their peak, Mercians were a fierce warrior culture. Much of the population were farmers and fisherman, and the food they grew and caught flowed upward to support the elite soldiers of their lords' warbands. Above them all, the king (or kings, as control of Mercia was fractured and fluid) served as gift-giver and overlord, leading both his own fierce warband as well as those of his subjects. Mercia has not had a king in some time, but the local lords and nobles are still protected by elite warbands and supported by the peasants who farm and fish where they can.

Despite living in what is often considered an impoverished backwater, the smiths of Mercia are renowned across the Kingdom. The telltale mottled, banded patterns of the forged steel of their blades is prized by those with the coin to afford them. They are also accomplished brewers of mead. Their people are largely illiterate, but not unlearned. A strong tradition of oral storytelling keeps their religious and historical tales alive, and their poets are amongst the best the Kingdom has to offer.

The Mercian people worship a small pantheon of gods, all of whom serve Hadria, Lady of Crows, Mistress of Battle, and Steward of the Golden Fields where the souls of the valorous departed may prove their strength until the end of all times.

Wicingr

Not all Mercians accepted the overlordship of Candrea. Though the transfer of power was peaceful, some saw it as the end of independence and freedom and refused to submit. These Mercians fled north, to the

scattered isles in the northern sea. There, they created a new home in lands too remote to be troubled by a Kingdom still struggling for its own peace.

Survival in those barren isles was not simple. The now-isolated Mercian exiles had to find a way to support themselves without rich farmlands, seas full of fish, and warbands ready to protect them. They built upon the early -- if now lost -- shipbuilding tradition of the Mercians and began to trade goods from city to city faster than land caravans could manage. Goods began to flow from Karite ports to the docks of Candrea Bay at rates no one thought possible.

This, unfortunately, was not enough to support all who had fled. And so, the naval traditions of the former Mercians became a source of power to those willing to use it. Independent ships of the northern isles, crewed by those desperate or brave enough to take the risk, began looting the coastal towns of their former home. This earned them the name they are now known by: Wicingr. Raider.

Culturally, the Wicingrs are not so different from the Mercians. They worship similar gods and share many cultural values, but unlike their former neighbors, the Wicingrs have cast off their interest in serving a lord or ruler. Wicingrs follow those who have proven themselves capable of leading, and are loyal only to those who are loyal to them in return.

Trecenti

Along the southeastern coast of Elizadale lies a peaceful bay full of riches unknown elsewhere on the continent. Shellfish that produce purple and red dyes, delicate and delicious fish, and the largest, most lustrous pearls can all be found there. These coveted resources, and the safety of the cove that protects them, gave rise to multiple cities along its coast.

There was never a single, unified government around Trecenti Bay, not even in the days before Candrea came. These were always free and chaotic lands, lands ruled with just enough power to support the merchants and traders and no more. In the days since the kingdom took control, little has changed in the cities of the cove. The people of this region are known by the name of that body of water. The Trecenti.

Trecenti cities are known as the most beautiful in Elizadale. The wealth of the merchant houses that control the power draws artisans from far and wide, and those same merchants are happy to hire them as means to display their affluence. The same is true of mercenaries, who can always find a caravan or merchant vessel in need of protection.

The Trecenti have always been unconcerned with who rules them, so long as their overlords did nothing to interrupt the trade that keeps their cities alive. When the Moritani hoards attacked, the Trecenti paid to deflect their attack and continued paying until Candrea pushed the invaders back. They then simply redirected that money into the kingdom to demonstrate their willingness to support their new protectors.