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THE QUINTESSENTIAL DWARF

While not as pretty as an elf or as quick as a gnome, the dwarf is the heartiest of all races. His health is legendary and his resistance to poisons and spells keeps him standing when others fall. Combined with the dwarven work ethic, the natural abilities to dig, and the fact that simply will not die when the going gets tough, a dwarf in the dark finds his way below the surface. The dwarves prosper because they live underground with great warriors among their number, but also a growing population of wizards, magics, and even druids rising to positions of power in dwarven culture. Within the pages of this book you'll find the information you need as a player to make the most of your dwarf or as a GM to allow your players to grow and prosper in new and exciting ways.

Index You Will Find:

Character Classes	Dwarven Magic
The Prestige Dwarf	Religion
Tricks of the Dwarves	Mines, Smelters, and Forges
Dwarven Feats	Beasts Below
Tools of the Dwarves	Dwarven Holds
Dwarven Subraces	

FOR GAMES MASTERS AND PLAYERS Alike
Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook,
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The Quintessential Dwarf

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INTRODUCTION

With a heavy pick slung over his shoulder, the bearded miner heads deep into the earth in search of precious metals and gemstones. The smith swings his hammer again and again, beating half-molten metal into cleaving axes and crushing hammers. Crouched in the stygian depths of the underland, a lone scout watches as his enemies prowl past and waits for his chance to strike. Burrowing through the underland, a merchant guides his caravan toward the Silverbore and the riches beyond.

Each of these is an example of a dwarf, a race with a rich history in fantasy and mythology. *The Quintessential Dwarf* is a sourcebook designed to expand the options available to characters of this race, opening new vistas for a character type that has long been pigeonholed as nothing more than the dour counterpoint to the more elegant elf.

While not as pretty as an elf or as quick as a gnome, the dwarf is the heartiest of all races. His health is legendary and his resistance to poisons and spells keeps him standing when others fall. Combined with the dwarven work ethic, these natural abilities make this race one that simply will not quit when the going gets tough. Forged in the dark fires far below the surface, dwarves are much more than they first appear, with great warriors among their number and also a growing population of wizards, rogues and even druids rising to positions of power in dwarven culture. Within the pages of this book you'll find the information you need as a player to make the most of your dwarven character, allowing him to grow and develop in new and exciting ways.

THE COLLECTORS' SERIES

The Collectors' Series is a range of class and racial sourcebooks from Mongoose Publishing, all designed to widen a player's options for characters within the d20 games system. Slotting seamlessly into any fantasy-based campaign, each will give a comprehensive overview of one class or race within the game, allowing both players and Games Masters the chance to present old character types in new ways without overpowering or unbalancing the game as a whole. The Collectors' Series will not necessarily allow a player to create a better character, but that character will be able to do a lot more than thought possible before.

THE QUINTESSENTIAL DWARF

Armed with this sourcebook, players of dwarf characters will find their options for character development greatly expanded. Character concepts, presented in the following chapter, allow players to quickly attach a capsule history and reason for adventuring to any dwarf character, getting new characters into the action right away. This sourcebook also contains prestige classes specific to dwarven culture, giving players new ways to expand their characters. Tricks and tools commonly used by dwarves are found herein as well, giving dwarven characters new options while adventuring and recovering from their more dangerous exploits. At last, dwarven characters can create and manage mines of their own, craft items using ancient dwarven secrets, and find new uses for old skills.

This book also explores many dwarven subraces. From the crazed rage dwarves howling their madness below the earth to the enigmatic silverbore dwarves who burrow from one plane to the next, many different types of dwarf are detailed. Along with discussions on these new subraces, this book also delves into the lives of the beasts the dwarves employ to make their lives easier. While surface races make heavy use of horses and other beasts of burden, dwarves find that giant lizards and enormous insects are easier to control in the strange environment of the underlands.

You'll also find the secrets of dwarven magic, both divine and arcane, in this sourcebook. From arcanomech prosthetics to runecannons, the dwarves have plenty of unusual magical surprises for surface-dwellers. As with so many things in the underlands, what you expect of a dwarf may be very different from what you find.

The howl rebounded from the walls of the tunnel, its echoes mingling to form a hellish ululation of bestial rage. Razuk's fingers fumbled with the horn around his neck, and it took him precious seconds to get it pressed to his lips. He ran from his isolated post with all the speed he could muster, emptying his lungs into the horn as he frantically raced to warn his companions.

Though the howls were close, Razuk felt his panic ease a bit when he realized that other horns were sounding, much closer than the beasts swarming through the tunnels behind him. With a final blast on his horn, Razuk lowered his head and forced himself into a closing sprint. A few hundred feet further and he'd be safe behind the battle gate erected by the engineers of his clan. Just a few hundred feet further

The blow knocked him sprawling and sent the horn flying from his sweaty grasp. He collided with the wall of the tunnel and the air deserted his lungs in a rush. The demon gnoll, no longer hidden by the cloak of shadows draped from its shoulders, let loose a short, yipping bark of victory and stalked toward Razuk. Its black tongue lolled between yellow, scimitar-curved teeth and its hands curled around a spear with a barbed head and jagged cross blades.

Razuk forced himself up with a grunt; using the wall to support himself, he could almost stand upright. Grim determination kept the dwarf on his feet and his hands were dry as they closed around the haft of his war axe. He sucked in a deep breath of air and winced with pain. He could feel his ribs grinding together where the thing had hit him, but his armour had saved him from being impaled on its spear.

The gnoll dropped the tip of its weapon and charged, throwing its massive weight behind the attack. Razuk braced himself and kept his gaze locked on the burning red eyes of the demon spawn as it rushed him. The point of the spear just nicked the dwarf's cheek as he rolled low, sweeping his own axe in a wide arc in the hope of smashing a knee or at least tripping the gnoll. The gnoll grunted in pain as its weapon bounced sharply off the wall and it whirled to face Razuk, who had slipped behind it.

The two circled each other warily, Razuk doing his best to keep his breathing even and shallow to avoid aggravating the shattered ribs on his left side. The longer the fight lasted, he knew, the greater the chance that one of the shards of bone would worm its way in and puncture a lung. With a roar, he hurled himself forward in an attempt to catch the fiendish gnoll off guard.

His plan nearly worked. The heavy blade of his war axe swept in a vicious arc that just missed the evil beast as its infernal reflexes sent it stumbling to one side in a desperate attempt to save its own life. With a shrill howl, the thing hurled its own weapon at Razuk.

The dwarf fell to his knees, one hand locked around his axe while the other slapped feebly at the spear jutting from his gut. He could feel the point of the weapon tenting the armour on his back and the length of it was a bar of ice in his belly. The gnoll grinned and licked its chops so vigorously a foamy spray of spittle burst from its mouth.

'Come on, then,' Razuk grunted through the pain, 'let's see if you can finish it.'

The gnoll bounded forward on its canine legs and seized the end of its spear, hoisting the injured dwarf to his feet as it lifted the weapon. With a howl of his own, Razuk hurled himself down the shaft of the spear, his arms whirling the axe around his head and down in a frenzied, last-ditch assault.

His axe buried itself in the gnoll's skull, splattering the creature's face and spraying most of its brains onto the stone floor of the tunnel. A second stroke sent the remnants of the thing's head sailing away into the darkness, blood trailing behind like a spray of black beads. Wrenching the spear away from the gnoll's death grip, Razuk gritted his teeth and forced the weapon through the hole in his back, collapsing next to his fallen foe.

'Ain't nothin', he grunted as he struggled to his feet, shaking from the strain, 'nothin' tough as a dwarf.'

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

Dwarves, unlike most other adventurer races, spend the majority of their life deep below the ground. While they are able to operate effectively in darkness or light, their culture (for the most part) has adapted to subterranean life. The harsh environment that surrounds young dwarves does much to shape their lives, providing them with the skills and instincts to survive and thrive in the underlands. In this chapter you'll find ideas to help give dwarf characters backgrounds and reasons for taking up the adventuring life.

Character Concepts are a core idea of the Quintessential series of sourcebooks from Mongoose Publishing and provide a range of templates for each character class that will allow a player to quickly and easily create a ready background for every new character he generates. As well as providing both a small bonus and penalty to his character's capabilities, each Character Concept gives a ready base for role-playing, thus greatly decreasing the time taken during character creation, as well as granting that oft-needed inspiration so important for a player to feel 'at home' with his new character.



Any one Character Concept may be applied to a character as it is being created. The listed bonuses and penalties are applied, any role-playing description modified and adjusted to take into account the template, and then the character is ready to play! From this point forth, both the player and the Games Master should be aware of the Character Concept chosen and take steps to ensure the character is played accordingly. It must be stressed that Character Concepts are a role-playing tool, not simply a method to gain lots of new abilities!

BLIGHTED

Blighted dwarves are a direct result of life in a small, isolated community. Cut off from other dwarves, the people of a blighted clan grow thin of blood and twisted of body. Within a blighted clan, dwarves are born with visible deformities such as hunched backs, limbs of mismatched sizes, protuberant eyes, and other physical oddities. These blight marks are unsightly but are rarely an impediment to health or physical capabilities. Still, the deformities mark blighted dwarves as different from other dwarves, hindering their attempts to blend in with communities outside of their own, stunted clans.

Adventuring: Blighted dwarves often leave home to find a better life for themselves or their families. With their own community so clearly on the decline, the more adventurous dwarves set out to find a more hospitable location to which they can relocate their clan or another clan of dwarves they can appeal to for help. Sadly, many of these adventuring dwarves abandon their clans entirely once they are out in the world and do their best to disguise their own deformities in an effort to appear 'normal'. A blighted dwarf may eventually join up with a band of adventurers, hoping his strength and skills will help his new colleagues overlook his physical deformities.

Role-playing: The blighted dwarf is often ashamed of his origins and appearance. Experience has taught him that his deformities can be frightening or disgusting to others and he takes precautions to hide them whenever possible. Most blighted dwarves long for their homeland and are somewhat frightened and confused by the world outside. After so many generations of living in isolation, blighted dwarves have difficulty understanding cultures outside their own, leaving them at a disadvantage in social situations.

Bonuses: Dwarves with this character concept receive a +2 competence bonus to any Disguise skill checks due to their experience

hiding their deformities. A successful Disguise check (DC 15) can be used to hide the blighted deformity for 24 hours.

Penalties: Blighted dwarves are socially inept when dealing with anyone outside of their clan. They receive a -2 competence penalty to the following skills: Diplomacy, Gather Information, Innuendo and Sense Motive.



EXILE

In the underlands life is short and harsh. Members of any subterranean society must pull together and obey the laws of the community or they endanger the lives of everyone they live near. In some dwarven cultures the only fitting penalty for aberrant behaviour is the banishment of the offending party. These exiles often perish, cut down by one of the myriad monsters roaming the caverns and tunnels in the deep darkness. A few, however, learn to survive in the lightless places far from civilization. Most of these become bandits, preying on any creatures unfortunate enough to cross their paths, but a few take up the adventuring life in an effort to escape their past and make better names for themselves.

Adventuring: To the exile, the life of an adventurer can be an exciting alternative to an otherwise dreary fate. Isolated from their community for a crime they may or may not have committed, the exiles must learn to survive in the harsh wilderness that is the underlands. If offered the chance to join an adventuring group, exiles leap at the opportunity, if only to prey on their new companions. Many discover that adventurers are a little tough to take on, even with surprise, and choose instead to throw in their lot with their new companions. After all, the chance for a dangerous life with the potential for riches and legendary fame is certainly better than a dangerous life likely to end savagely in some darkened corner of the deepest caverns.

Role-playing: Exiles are touchy about their past and will do their best to avoid speaking about what led to their distance from their clans. Those who are truly innocent of any crime often accept their fate grudgingly but still only explain their troubles to those they regard as true friends. Dwarves who were exiled for crimes they *did* commit, on the other hand, attempt to hide any crimes from their new companions. In either case, the exile can become fanatically loyal to his new friends, replacing the traditional connection between a dwarf and his clan with ties to the band of adventurers.

Bonuses: The only exiles who survive are those who are naturally adept at surviving in difficult environments. They receive a +2 natural bonus to all Wilderness Lore skill checks.

Penalties: A combination of guilt and shame taints the exile's view of the world, which makes it hard for him to believe others and just as hard for others to believe him. The exile suffers a -2 competence penalty to any Bluff or Sense Motive skill checks.

GUILD SERF

Dwarven communities of all types believe strongly that all members should pull their own weight and pay their own way. In those rare occurrences when a family is unable or unwilling to meet its obligations to the community for a long period of time, the children of the family become guild serfs. Whichever guilds agree to pay off the family's debts are given custodianship of the children, who are entered into an enforced apprenticeship program. The children, now known as guild serfs, are expected to work for the guild for a period of no less than one year following at least three years of apprenticeship in order to repay the kindness shown by the guild.