

The following is information gathered from the archives of the Stonewood Woodcutter's Guild.

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History of the Stonewood Dwarves

The Stonewood Dwarves are a subgroup of Dwarves that trace their descent from the line of King Ringold Oakenstone and the Dryad Nephtali Nirealis who together ruled in the forest Kingdom of Shandolar from the year -559 of our calendar until the death of King Ringold 450 years later. Their Kingdom was established in the lands that we now call the Stonewood Forest. These lands were originally part of the Horningwood Forest which surrounded King Ringold's Lodestone Mountain Kingdom. This Kingdom was destroyed in a backlash of powerful Dragon Magic upon which King Ringold was working. The backlash produced an effect upon the trees of the Horningwood forest that rendered them unshatterable and unable to be affected by a blade. In time, the forest became known by the name Stonewood as is the name of the only town now left in the region. The attached story would be known by all Stonewood Dwarves as it is the basis of their existence.

It is believed that King Ringold and his descendants are the founders of the Dwarven Woodcutter's Guild. Stonewood forms the basis of the economy of the Dwarven families and their town of Stonewood. Members of the Woodcutters Guild protect the trade secret of how Stonewood is cut and processed for use in the Kingdom. The Stonewood with its magically hardened wood (likened to stone) cannot be cut with any edged weapon or tool wielded by any known being. Yet, when properly treated, the wood can be harvested and is used to produce a variety of strategically important unshatterable commodities. This treatment is particularly suited to produce construction materials from the wood. This makes it highly valuable and as a consequence, the Stonewood Dwarves are very wealthy. Commerce in the Stonewood is extremely important to the Duchy of Elysia. Enough so that the Duke sends people to this region during the warmer months to protect the Stonewood Dwarves and help keep the region safe for this important economic work to be performed.

Not all Stonewood Dwarves are members of the Woodcutter's Guild, but it is fair to say that all would want to be due to the economic incentives such membership bestows. There are nine principal families represented in the Dwarven Woodcutter's Guild at this time. In the past, a Dwarf would have to show a blood connection to one of these lines to be eligible for membership and

then must apprentice in one of the three trades to prove their ability before full induction in to the Guild. However, some of these customs have been challenged over the past six years. This was due to the severe reduction in the population of these families during the Orc Wars (The United Nations of the Bloody Fist) that took place during the summer of 592 across their lands. Other key members were lost to torture and assassination when the minions of Lord Dirkin were seeking the secret of the Stonewood through 593-595. For example, during this time, the first female Dwarf, Blindor Silverlode became the head of the Stonewood Woodcutter's Guild as the last living Silverlode. And she married an Elysian dwarf, Bishop Silverlode, who took her name, to ensure the continuity of the Silverlode line.

Trade Specialties

The Stonewood Woodcutters Guild has three trade specialties.

Ranger

Dwarves who select the trees to be harvested and apply the magic required to prepare them. Prospective Rangers must have skills in the magical arts and be able to make potions.

Cutter

Dwarves who cut the trees selected for harvesting. Prospective Wood Cutters should be proficient with an axe as well as other small weapons.

Scout

Dwarves who select the regions, in which the Rangers will work, and handle the business of selling Stonewood and any arrangements for delivery or pick up of the associated products. Prospective Scouts must be politically and economically astute as the merchant arm of the Guild.



Family Specialization

The nine principal families of the Stonewood guilds tend to have skills that fall under the three trade specialties. Members of the Silverlode, Fair oak and Ironleaf families are frequently Rangers. The Bowerbane, Barkborer and Strongbow families favor being Cutters and members of the Oakrider, Treehawk and Leafdancer families tend to be Scouts.

Principal Families of the Stonewood Dwarves

Clan	Colors	Favored Trade Specialty	Noted Family Members
Silverlode	Green/White	Ranger	Blindor Brandor Grimbor
Fairoak	Green/Brown	Ranger	Talis Felis
Ironleaf	Green/Orange	Ranger	Davel Pavel
Bowerbane	White/Brown	Cutter	Turgon Hurgon
Barkborer	White/Blue	Cutter	Dorag Morag Borag
Strongbow	White/Black	Cutter	Palin, Falin
Oakrider	Yellow/Blue	Scout	Derak Cerak
Treehawk	Yellow/Purple	Scout	Hardow Lardow
Leafdancer	Brown/Red	Scout	Lingold Findgold Rakanel Rakella Darel Tekumel

Family Colors

Each of these families have family colors, as shown in the table above, that their members tend to display. Typically, a Stonewood Dwarf will wear a necklace with beads in their family colors.

Stonewood Dwarf Customs

The Stonewood Dwarves observe a number of customs and behaviors that are significant.

General Attitude

All members are clannish both within their Guild and within their specialty and family group. They are competitive and avaricious. Because they are generally well-to-do, they are not as stingy or crabby as other Dwarves can be. They tend to be more jolly and are outwardly more friendly towards other races. This is because the commerce in Stonewood is what sustains their livelihood and they recognize that other races are their customers.

Books of Grudges and Debts

Stonewood Dwarves are fiercely loyal. They will never forget a debt owed to another and indeed each of them actively keeps a 'list of debts' that records significant kindness or generosity shown by another to them or a family member. By the same token, they will also record 'grudges' and also keep an active list of such offenses in their personal records. This is a small version of the official Book of Grudges kept by the Dwarven race for outrageous offense that all Dwarves must recall. Note that the importance of the Stonewood to our Duchy is so high, that the Duke himself will punish anyone unfortunate enough to have earned a place in one of their Book of Grudges. So, if you should end up in one, don't publicize your misfortune.

Beards

Like other Dwarves, Stonewood Dwarves prize their beard and if it is lost for any reason would be humiliated beyond endurance. They would never appear publicly in a beardless state by choice. There is much folklore associated with the growing of beards and most Dwarves maintain a variety of concoctions, recipes and rituals that are purported to improve the speed of growth and the luxuriance of a beard. Family recipes and tonics for improved beards are jealously guarded. Ancient recipes, which do turn up occasionally, command high prices at Dwarven auctions. Every Dwarf is an expert on what makes beards grow well (at least they all think they are).

Family Trees

Stonewood Dwarves have certain family customs that are important to learn. Each family has selected a 'Family Tree' in the region and has their Family Colors displayed upon it. These trees are not necessarily pointed out to strangers but are not generally secret. Each family prides themselves on their Family Tree and they tend and nurture it as a symbol of the status and condition of their line. Each individual Dwarf, keeps a hidden treasure in a place referenced by their family tree as the starting point. This treasure is not the bulk of their wealth which is typically shares in the Stonewood profits and drawn on Dwarven banks. Rather, this treasure is a stash of prized personal trinkets, interesting and unusual items, memorabilia or weird magical things.

This personal treasure is an important thing to a Dwarf because each item in it is something he or she can associate with themselves. In the event of their permanent death, they want this stash of goods to be distributed to individuals who in taking one of the items, will learn the name of the Dwarf who owned it and honor them accordingly. Dwarves believe their immortality is linked to the memory of them and their name by others. Gifts and personal possessions are traded about with this expectation and it is not unusual to see people lift a cup and say something such as "I drink from this cup in memory of Lagar Fair oak" or to fiddle with a ring on their finger and say "I wear this ring in memory of Duval Barkborer". The Stonewood dwarves in particular, have ritualized this aspect with respect to permanent death in a highly organized fashion and these customs must be learned.

Family Recipes

There is a great rivalry among the nine Stonewood families when it comes to personal recipes. It begins with tonics and recipes for improving beard growth and continues on through every possible type of cooking, both healthful concoctions and tonics, to prized tasties and award winning beers. Every Dwarf has at least a few recipes for things they alone have created. These are prized personal treasures and are worth real money (5-50 Silvers) to his or her family. If the recipe is well-known and others have a fondness for it, then it may be worth the same amount to non-family members.

The Death Bequest Auction

When a Stonewood Dwarf dies permanently, the Earth Circle where this occurs must locate an executor for their personal treasures. By custom, this falls to the one who has taken responsibility for their remains. This is often a family member if they die at home of natural causes, but, is frequently not if it happens due to accident or malice. Each Dwarf hides upon their person clues to their personal treasure as referenced from their family tree. The one in possession of their remains and who delivers them intact to the Earth Circle earns the right to search for and possess this treasure. They are required by custom to select some portion of it for themselves and then to place the rest up for public auction. The Executor, who must run the auction, may keep the proceeds or donate them as they see fit. The proceeds of such an auction are called a Death Bequest.

A recent auction held in April, 599, and run by the Chilox clan, netted over 30 gold for a single pair of dice and a few hundred gold overall. The items that were auctioned are listed at the end of this work.

Honoring the Memory of a Stonewood Dwarf

Recall that Stonewood Dwarves are wealthy and are for the most part, more concerned with their immortality then bequeathing minor treasure to their family. Each person who purchases a part of the treasure from a Death Bequest Auction, must actively honor the Dwarf to whom it belongs. This honor usually takes the form of a public utterance while examining or using the item of the sort, "I wear this bracelet in honor of Leah Leafdancer". This honor is to be given at least once a day for as long as the item is in their possession. It cannot be sold or traded without this information accompanying it for the buyer to continue the custom. Note that it is considered a dreadful affront and offense to any Stonewood Dwarf should someone disdain this custom or fail in their observance of it. Such failure is easily cause for listing in the grudge record of a number of Dwarves.

Artifacts and Everyday Items

Stone of Beard Growing

This item is purported to enhance the growth of a beard when rubbed against the face. Dwarves covet these stones (and collect them in large quantities) and will pay anywhere from 2 silver to a number of gold for one.

Dwarven Bonding Rings

These rings create a bond between the wearers. When worn, the wearers will be more receptive to one another and more interested in one another. The Dwarves use them for a variety of purposes. They are often employed during the making of Treaties or in Councils where mutual understanding and respect are required. They are offered to those who are in disagreement with one another or trying to draw up a reasonable agreement for commerce. They are often used during courtship to encourage a prospective couple to learn more about one another. The magical effect of these rings is small but noticeable. For example, they cannot make sworn enemies immediately become friends but can make them moderate their behavior towards each other a bit. The effect lasts while the rings are worn. This is ancient magic and may wear off over time. The Dwarves no longer know how to make these and thus they are quite valuable and worth at least 30 gold.

Ring of Dreams

This ring when worn will give the Wearer a single dream, at which point it must be passed on to another. Once you place this ring upon your finger you will be unable to remove the ring until it provides you with a dream. This may be hours, days or months. The Dwarves pass these rings around because they believe the dreams they weave are very significant and they enjoy the fun of trying to interpret them. To Dwarves, such rings are worth only a few coppers but non-dwarves will frequently pay from many gold for them. They are fashioned from the moss and mud taken from the root of a Stonewood tree.

Stone of Clumsiness

A Dwarven practical joke. Surprisingly, Dwarves do have a sense of humor and it tends to run to practical jokes. This stone when carried on someone's person, will cause them to be rather clumsy. Dwarves like to see if they can sneak it into another Dwarf's pocket or pouch when they are about to do something that requires some coordination. This takes particular prowess since the one trying to sneak it into the other's possession is going to be affected by the clumsiness while attempting the act. They would never use these when chopping Stonewood or when engaged in anything physically dangerous. But they will not necessarily be considerate and many a prized family goblet or fragile heirloom has been dropped by an unsuspecting Dwarf carrying a stone of clumsiness.

Stone of Sorrows

These stones are used by Dwarves to hold their sorrows. The owner of a stone holds it in the left hand and thinks on the thing which has saddened them and the stone will help to ease the pain of it. If held in the right hand it will bring the sorrows it holds to mind. The Stone is invoked by a conscious act of will whereby the owner holds the Stone tightly in the proper hand and concentrates. You may let another hold this Stone in their right hand and they will feel a sense of great sadness but will not know why. A person holding the stone will only be able to recall the sorrows they have placed in the stone. So, one holding it who has not placed any Sorrows in it, will only feel the sadness. Traditionally, a Dwarf allows another to hold their 'stone' when they wish to talk about their sorrows to them. Thus, it provides a medium for two Dwarves (who are normally not very open about their personal feelings) to share personal information about themselves. Such stones are not made - but can be found in the moss under Stonewood trees. Some believe the odd magics about the Stonewood trees are responsible.

List of Grudges

This is a personal list of Grudges kept by the specific Dwarf who wrote it. Typical offenses include verbal insults, failure to keep one's word, stealing from a dwarf or their family or friends, clan or Guild members, failure to honor the name of another Dwarf when custom dictates it, physically assaulting a Dwarf, befriending an enemy of a Dwarf, treating a Dwarf with disrespect. Once on the Grudge list for a particular Dwarf, that Dwarf will not speak to the offending party, will not engage in commerce with them, will not aid them when they need help nor prevent harm from coming to them. They will NEVER say the name of a person on their grudge list and will turn their back on them when ever possible if in their company.

A person will occasionally be removed from the Grudge list if they perform a service to the Dwarf of great enough import to have made them worthy of being put on the List of Debts.

List of Debts

This is a personal list of Debts that a Dwarf feels towards persons who have shown kindness to the Dwarf. We leave it to each individual Dwarf to define what represents kindness or Debts worthy of listing.

Lock of a Grandsire's Beard

The lock of a Grandsire's beard is considered a potent charm. It has particular value to the descendants of the owner and this value increases if it is particularly ancient (more than two generations). A dwarf will pay up to many gold pieces for an ancient beard lock. A more modern one might be only worth a few silvers in value. This is for beardlocks that are not from Dwarves anyone knew personally. Beardlocks are tied with colored cloth in the family colors or with white cloth and a family name. Names that are currently worth many gold include, Ironheart (Grey and Black), Goldvein (Gold and White), Fornhelm (Purple and Red), Rockwielder (White and Turquoise) and Bloodbonder (Red and Green). These are older families whose lines were greatly honored. It should be noted that the Silverlode family will pay a great deal for any memento of their line.

Lock of a Beard Passed on to a Descendant

A beardlock given while one is still alive has no monetary value but is considered a proper gift from an older Dwarf to a younger descendant. A beardlock received after the donor has permanently died is of greater value to those who actually knew the deceased. At auction, they will pay a high price to prevent it from being sold out of the family or to non-dwarves. A smart executor will gift the family with this item, as it is a certain method to obtain an entry in their List of Debts.

Wedding Cup

The Wedding Cup of a Dwarf is typically made of materials worth about 10 coppers. However, one who purchases such a Cup as part of the auctioning of a dead Dwarf's personal treasures should NEVER consider rendering it into scrap. They must use it and the owner must say 'I drink in memory of, for example, Blagor Silverlode and Calinda Treehawk' at least once a day to honor those for whom the cup was made. Failure to appreciate its worth despite its low monetary value will almost certainly lead to an entry in the offended family's Book of Grudges.

Tokens of Admiration

The Dwarves like to give one another small tokens as reminders of the giver. This is again due to their belief that they obtain immortality through the remembrance of others. As long as their name is remembered and their face is in the mind of others, they will live on. Thus, a custom has evolved of giving these 'tokens' to ones with whom a Dwarf is particularly close. The tokens used by Stonewood Dwarves are typically colored wooden beads in the family colors of the giver, and the arrangement of them signifies the specific family position, hence the specific individual, to the wearer.

Bark of the Tree that Fell on Grimbor

An interesting aspect of Dwarven culture is the collection of items associated with significant events in their everyday lives. Particularly tragic or comic events seem to lend themselves to this type of collection and the average Dwarf will have many mementos that recall to mind such occurrences. For example, Grimbor Silverlode, a Dwarven Ranger of the Woodcutter's Guild was still serving in his 523 year. He tottered out one night with several other Rangers to mark the trees for the next day's cuttings. His vision being rather poor at his advanced years, the trees he selected were often not of an acceptable quality. This night, he began to work his magic on a tree that was not made of Stonewood. As he worked through the incantation, his fellow Rangers looked up when they heard a mighty 'Craack!' They hurried to the source only to see a mighty oak tree on the ground and Grimbor's feet sticking out. The tree had fallen on top of him, its base completely destroyed by the powerful magic he had wrought upon it.

The story, though somewhat grim, is actually considered comical by the Dwarves who are not overly upset over death when it claims one so near the end of his true life span. 'Better to die on one's feet than on one's back'. Or, 'Better to die out of one's house than out of one's mind' are sayings particularly representative of Dwarven points of view. Needless to say, pieces of the bark from this tree are pretty rare at this time and are prized by Dwarves as mementos of a stout hearted Dwarf who worked till he dropped. They respect that. A piece of the actual Bark of the Tree That Fell On Grimbor, which happens to be a true story, not an example, will command up to a silver piece if it is a good size (3-5 square inches) and relatively interesting in shape.

Ribbon from a Guild Potion Bottle

No value except the knowledge of what it is. The potion bottles used in the magic to cut Stonewood bears these Makers' ribbon as a Seal of Authenticity. Occasionally the ribbons are lost and any smart dwarf who runs across one will grab it so it does not fall into the wrong hands- Any Stonewood dwarf would instantly recognize it as it is blue and has magical rune writing on it in a distinctive pattern.

Orc Warfare

Stonewood Dwarves really despise Orcs. Thus, they have a variety of products that they use to control the local Orc population that reflect the dislike they have for them. They will also kill them with no mercy when not in the public eye.

Orc Repellent

Guaranteed to drive away even the most inquisitive Orc. It remains potent for fifteen minutes during which most Orcs will not come within 20 feet of the wearer. Note that an attacking Orc will still attack but will not loot the body or get close to it if it is wearing this. Thus, this is not protection against attacks, but is great for keeping unwanted Orcs from getting close.

Orc Bait

This item attracts Orcs. Its strength is about on par with the smell of chocolate chip cookies baking in the late afternoon when you are very hungry. Stonewood Dwarves are known to hunt Orcs occasionally and will use this bait to attract them in for the kill. They will not speak of this nor admit it to others but it is done. In more public places, it is often used to control local Orcs by getting them to gather in places not frequented by Dwarves. Sometimes it is used to play practical jokes on the Orcs or some hapless individual that appears on a number of Dwarven Grudge lists.

Orc Nose

Yes, Dwarves do keep Orc trophies. Some display them openly but not often. The treaties currently held with the local Orc Tribes with those sent by the Duchy to Guard the Stonewood Dwarves are seen as a necessary evil and most of the Stonewood Dwarves are politically smart enough not to openly insult such Orcs.

Orc Call

This little item mimics the mating call of a female Orc and will bring any able-bodied male Orcs running to it unless they are engaged in battle or currently with a female

The Dwarf and the Dryad

The following is a tale of the making of the Stonewood forest, as unearthed from the Stonewood archives by Bertold Fair Oak of the Stonewood Woodcutters Guild and told to Lady Willissa Entemoor of the Stonewood Healer's Guild in June 593.

It was the springtime of dragonkind, the time when mountains were young and the Dwarven fathers had only recently awakened that this tale begins. Ringold Oakenstone, son of the mighty King Barinold, rose to power during the dark battles with the Gorgons over proprietorship of the inner earth. The Dwarves were victorious and Ringold was one of the mightiest. He excelled in the art of magic and wove intricate and cunning spells that deceived and ultimately defeated their enemy. His aging father left the throne of the Dwarven Kingdom in favor of his son who he deemed would be wise to assume power during this time of recognition and good will.

As the years passed, King Ringold carved a mighty hall of splendor beneath the mountains that once passed west of this land. His people happily explored his realm, opening hall after hall of spectacular treasures and reaping wealth in jewels and minerals to glorify his kingdom. King Ringold spent much of his time perfecting his magic and often traveled to other regions for the marriages and doings of his people. It was in his 125th year on returning from the funeral of his great-great grandfather that King Ringold passed through the Horningwood forest in his lands.

Following an evening meal, the King strolled a distance from his encampment and fellow dwarves (these were simpler times) and sat beneath a beautiful oak tree. As he sat there listening to the chirrup of insects and watching the lengthening shadows as the sun slowly sank beneath the earth, it seemed as if he were caught up in a waking dream. At first, he thought he imagined the faint tinkling he heard and the ripples of light that passed out from the tree. It was as if he were adrift on an ocean of light where each tiny motion of the wind in the branches created turbulent shadows that fluttered and sparkled in his eyes. As the light faded more, he caught a small movement ahead in the woods, another sound of tinkling and the motion seemed closer. Breaking loose from the spell, he jumped to his feet and called out, "Who's there?" Silence. He waited, scarcely breathing. Nothing. Then another small movement to his left. He willed himself to stay perfectly still. A figure emerged from the woods and slowly, as

if against its will, approached him.

And thus, King Ringold Oakenstone first beheld the dryad Nephtali Nirealis as he stood between her and the tree of her bondage, the home she must return to each evening at the time of the setting sun. Her skin was as flawless as the petal of a rose in the first blush of its opening. Her hair was a silken mass that reflected the color of her native oak and was shot through with strange green lights that danced and shimmered as she moved. She approached with the grace of a young sapling swaying in the light breeze of a warm spring day. Ringold, overcome by her beauty and afraid she would disappear, stepped forward to intercept her and she stopped, just short of the oak. Her need for the tree overcame her fear of him and she started to leap for a low branch. Ringold sprang into the gap and caught her in his arms. She cried out with fear and he loosened his grip, smiling to ease her terror. He placed her gently on a low hanging branch, then, still holding her by the arms, spoke for the first time...

It is not known what passed between them there, or what words he found to explain the love he felt. It is said that his power was so great that an aura surrounded him, visible to those who were part of the magic of the earthen plane. It is said that this power attracted Nephtali, Queen of her people, to Ringold, and that she returned his love as fiercely as he gave it.

King Ringold tarried in the forest for a time, but knew that he must soon return to his duties and his hall. He was both saddened and angered by the cruel whimsy of fate that bound him to such a one as Nephtali. For you see, Nephtali was forever a creature of nature, bound to the oak forest and with a life as fleeting as the breath of spring. He was a dwarf, with a life span easily six times her own, and able to move the lengths of the earth freely.

Eventually he and Nephtali separated and he returned to his mountain kingdom. There, he applied himself to the study of earth magic with an intensity that bordered on obsession. He struggled with arcane arts and terrible elemental forces, seeking to tame the tides which flow between the elements of earth and water, fire and air, to blend the organic and the inorganic and find a way to create a small island in this turmoil, where he and his love could meet.

Finally, in the dark of his mountain stronghold he invoked a terrible magic that shook his kingdom. The mountains cleft asunder

about him and spewed forth in a monstrous roaring. The Earthen plane was skewed and teetered in an unstable equilibrium, gobbling small pockets of other elements until it collapsed edgewise into the region known as the Horningwood. King Ringold, stumbling from the ruins of his mountain, wandered as one lost, his mind enfeebled and broken by the powerful energies with which he had wrestled. It was thus that Nephtali found him, lying near a brook in the forest and slowly nursed him to health. As he regained his senses he awoke to a world far stranger than he might ever imagine. The Forest of Horningwood had undergone a subtle metamorphosis. The blending of planes had caused the trees to take on an aspect of stone, so very hard that they defied even the sharpest of blades. Moreover, the dryads joined to such trees were no longer mortal. The passage of their lives became to them as a living dream. The river of time was bent in upon itself at the vortex of this curvature of planes and they became a sequence of images fashioned upon its surface, forever caught in its sphere. Yet, viewed from the present, at any particular moment, they appear no different to you or I and Nephtali appeared so to Ringold. Thus was his love bought at a dear price. His Kingdom was in ruins, his people destroyed or scattered and the forest irreparably changed.

Ringold and Nephtali vowed to rebuild a kingdom in the Stone Halls of the Horningwood Forest and such a kingdom the like of which this world may never see again. Many tales are told of this joining of Dwarf and Dryad and the magic they wove during the dawn of man. Although the line of Ringold and Nephtali has slowly dwindled it is still said that it cannot fail as long as the Stonewood forest stands and Nephtali's tree is untouched. Thus, no dwarf to this day will take down a tree belonging to a dryad.

As to the chopping of Stonewood, many legends claim to explain this. Most learned people believe it was Ringold himself who developed the technique and that the resulting commerce in the Stonewood, as it came to be called, was what renewed the Dwarven Kingdom and replenished their wealth.

Death Bequest of Rakanel Leafdancer

Last updated by: *Bartolemy Barkborer*, Scribe, 21 May 595

Dice that Paupered Palgor - Palgor Leafdancer was one of the wealthiest and luckiest Dwarves in the Leafdancer clan. He was known for holding large shares of the Stonewood Woodcutter's Guild, many of which he had won over a games of dice, a favorite of his people. If the Leafdancer clan has one weakness, it is gaming and dice as they are the most funloving of all the Dwarves in Stonewood. And Palgor loved to drink and dance almost as well as he liked to play dice. You would think this a poor combination but Palgor's luck was infamous. So much so that over time, no thinking Dwarf would take a wager against him because the odds were so good that he would lose to Palgor. Fortunately, Palgor was as generous as he was funloving and shared his good fortune freely. His parties were infamous and people would talk about them for months afterwards. One night, at a party that had lasted well into the early morning of the next day, Palgor accepted a bet from a quiet gentleman in black. This gentleman had mystified many throughout the evening with his mysterious manner of speaking and his significant ability to predict the throw of the dice. Needless to say, Palgor could not stand the attraction of such a challenge to his luck and asked the man for a wager. The gentleman refused and said it would not be fair. Perhaps Palgor came to depend too much on his luck rather than his good sense for this started Palgor arguing and it is said that the arguing went on for two entire days. Eventually, Palgor prevailed, the gentleman conceded, the wager was set and the dice were thrown. To the amazement of all, Palgor lost and the gentleman in black won. To the astonishment of all, Palgor turned over a signed paper deeding his entire fortune to this stranger and announced that he was now a pauper. Although Palgor refused to speak of the indicent after that night, he never seemed particularly disturbed by it. The happy part of this tale is that Palgor did not change at all but instead, remained, every bit the same generous, fun loving Dwarf that he had always been. He gave me, his grandson, the dice to keep as a momento for my death bequest. And because this story has been told so often among our family, he gave me something new to add to it. On this death bed, he told me that he had lost the toss on purpose. The real deal he had made with the gentleman in black was his fortune for the secret of how the

gentleman was able to predict the toss of the dice.

Beardlock of Bremmin Ironleaf - Great, Great, Great Grandsire of Rakanel mother, Crysola Ironleaf.

Nephtali's Embraces - A set of gold earrings with many dangling emeralds made by Queen Nephtali Nirealis's craftsman by Royal commission for the Leafdancer family. These earrings contained two life spells each and thus were a gift of practical beauty. They were given to Leanora Leafdancer, Elven wife of Lingold III, in the year 223 to help guard over his safety as he went about his duties as scout and merchant for the Woodcutter's guild. Only one life spell remains between them. One would have to speak with the Leafdancer family to learn how these life spells were expended. Wear these and remember Leanora and Rakanel Leafdancer

Stone of Clumsiness - Rakanel's own variety of this particular Dwarven practical joke. He had it enchanted with an actual disarm spell. He said this was to disarm his enemy as he was knocking him down with the rock.

Rod Of Lightning - Dwarves love magic wands and have always been particular about collecting various types. This particular wand dates back to the last festival held by King Ringold Oakenstone before he destroyed his Lodestone Mountain Kingdom and created the Stonewood forest. It has been enchanted many times over the intervening centuries. Rakanel particularly loved electical magics and recently had it enchanted with a Lightning Storm.

Twin Stones of Beard Growing - Rakanel Leafdancer's father, Fingold, swore that these particular stones, in tandem, were more potent than any other beard growing stone he had used. Given the very fine beard that Fingold grew, the dwarven community was deeply disappointed when he left them to Rakanel rather than putting them in his Death Bequest. Always the diplomat, Rakanel made sure that they were included as part of his own Death Bequest. Please take time to remember by Fingold and Rakanel Leafdancer when you use these stones.

Nephtali's Tears - When King Ringold Oakenstone finally passed on from the Plane of Tyrra, his immortal Queen, Nephtali Nirealis, wept for him. Those watching saw that her tears, as they rolled down her cheeks, hardened and fell to the earth as tiny pearls. When she had expended her grief and left his chambers, the servants collected these precious pearls and placed them in a box which they gave to the Queen. She declared that the tears she shed for Ringold were the tears of all his people mourning the passing of their King and cousin and ordered them divided among the Clans of Shandolar. So these pearls came to be in the Leafdancer clan and part of the Death Bequest of Rakanel Leafdancer.

BattleBell - This is the Bell which Rakanel rang in the battles with the United Nations of the Bloody Fist in 592. These Orcan wars decimated the population of Stonewood Dwarves and was the reason the Elysian Duke was petitioned to send protection to the region. Up until this time, the town of Stonewood was populated almost exclusively by Dwarves, elves and Dryads.

Orctoath - Rakanel's first Orc, which, for diplomatic purposes, we will not elaborate upon.

Dwarven bonding bracelets - It is said that these bracelets, crafted from ores mined from the grounds beneath the Stonewood trees, have an almost sentient affinity. A pair of them are always crafted from the same vein and are not intended to be separated. If two people wear one of such a pair, it is believed that they will feel this affinity also and be more aware of one another. Rakanel never married because the Dwarven woman of the Treedancer clan with whom his family had arranged a union was slain by wolves in the Shimmerglen forest. It is rumored, however, that a certain Dryad wore his bonding bracelet for 225 years.

Tokens of Admiration - Given to Rakanel Leafdancer by Lavella Amberwood. This is particularly valuable because the line of this clan has failed. Rakanel asks that Lavella Amberwood be remembered with this token.

Dwarven Dreamstone of Rakanel Leafdancer - This is not for auction. It is to be given to the Dryad, Aurora Illeandra. She will know what this means.

Toasting cups and Bottle of Cordial from the wedding of Angelica Treelock and Erin Leafdancer - The cups are small because the liquor used for these toasts is distilled from the sap of a living Stonewood trees. This union, in Evandarr year 13, produced most of the current line of the Leafdancer clan. It should be taken in memory of Angelica and Erin Leafdancer. The Cordial is officially named "Crystalina" but is rightly nicknamed "liquid enchantment". Those who drink it claim to see visions of the ancient forest Kingdom of Shandolar. This is the name given to the Kingdom ruled by King Ringold Oakenstone and Queen Nephtali Nirealis at the height of their power and is still the name used by the Stonewood Dwarves when they refer to the lands ruled by Queen Nephtali.

Doll in the likeness of Oriana Nephiri Oakenstone - first born daughter of King Ringold Oakenstone and Queen Nephtali Nirealis. The female Dwarves of their line tend to be in her likeness - small, with only a thin lock of beard growth low on the chin. This doll belonged to Rakanel's sister, Raniera, who died very young. Rakanel would like Raniera Leafdancer to be remembered with this doll.

Heart Of Fire Necklace from the Lodestone Forge - Rakanel mined and finished this necklace himself. The Heart Of Fire is a rare jewel that is a milky white in its natural state. In this state it is very difficult to distinguish from many other very common minerals and ores found underground. However, this particular substance changes to a fiery red when exposed to intense heat. Only pure Heart Of Fire has this property and it takes a great deal of patience and time to locate and forge it to gem quality. This is worth many gold.

Of the Harvesting and Processing of the Stonewood

King Ringold was the first to study the properties of the crystalline trees that fill the Stonewood Forest. He was a powerful scholar (in fact it was his study of Dragon Magic that changed much of the Horningwood Forest into stonewood), and his wife, the dryad Queen Nephtali, possessed her own magic. Together, they learned the necessary ingredients and processes required to harvest and cut the trees. That secret has been carefully guarded and passed only to prominent masters of the Woodcutter's Guild. Most members of the Guild only know enough to fulfill their duties. Dwarves who have not been invited to join the Guild know little of the process and rumors and theories of the materials used run rampant through the community.

The forest has always been filled with dryads, who once fiercely defended the trees and still monitor the Cutters to keep the Guild's actions within certain limits. Many of the dwarves of Stonewood proudly trace their ancestry to a union of dwarf and dryad, as in the case of their famed rulers of yore. All nine principal families of the Woodcutter's Guild can boast that King Ringold's blood runs in their veins. If a dryad wishes to remain unseen, they will never be found, but evidence of their passage may be seen in the presence of small gems of polished stonewood known to the dwarves as Dryads' Tears (in reference to the original Nephtali's Tears that fell from Queen Nephtali's eyes at King Ringold's funeral and became pearls upon striking the ground).

The first step in stonewood harvesting is the investigation, appraisal, and selection of a stand of trees by a Scout. The Scout walks the area several times, and contacts any dryads in the vicinity. They will map the chosen area and carefully mark any dryad's tree as protected. Then, a Ranger is sent to the patch, where they mark the trees to be cut and apply the alchemical substances they have painstakingly mixed to the chosen trees. A magic ritual unknown outside the Guild's membership activates the applied chemicals and softens the impenetrable trunks to the density of ordinary wood. Finally, a Cutter fells the trees and brings the logs to the lumber mill for further processing. It is said that the dryads dance around the stumps and invigorate the land, encouraging the growth of new trees to take the place of the old.

Stonewood is primarily used as a building material, though small objects may be crafted from it as well. Its hardness is equal to the granite beneath the mountain, it is impervious to fire, and its arcane properties prevent its destruction by magical and explosive means. No ordinary weapon or tool can cut or break untreated stonewood. Most of the prominent buildings in Stonewood (and all of those owned by the Woodcutters) are built of stonewood, and the material is exported throughout Elysia to any willing to pay the high price that the Scouts demand. Every dwarf in Stonewood will own some trinket or bauble made from the wood, perhaps the colored beads that they wear to show their clan affiliation.

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If you know anyone that wants a copy of this send an email to the POLAR staff at johnethompson1@yahoo.com.org and we will ship one out for you!

The contents of this document are available to characters in the game world of Tyrra and can be known by your NERO character if it would make sense for them to have read this document.

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