

KORROSIAN DWARVES (HEARTSTONE DWARVES)

Long ago, the dwarves of Korros lived deep within the Gethan Mountain, in a keep deep below the earth. The dwarves had a strict caste system, organizing each by their heartstone, but it was the only world they knew. Their civilization thrived beneath the earth, until the Selenians came. The Selenian Magocracy came to the mountain following a conflux of ley lines beneath it, but instead found an even grander prize: The hearts of the dwarves. Dwarves are creatures of living rock and crystal, born of a Heartstone that bears their soul, with flesh made of sediment and a symbiotic lichen that takes the characteristics of skin. A Heartstone can appear as any type of crystal or gemstone, but Rubies, Emeralds, and Topaz are the most common. Dwarves take on layers of sediment as they age, becoming stronger as the crystal network within them spreads through the stone. Unfortunately for the dwarves, their heartstones make for perfect conductors of magical energy. The greatest magic items, potions, and casting foci are all made with a dwarf's heart as its core. The mages discovered this, and enslaved the dwarves, destroying their culture and breeding them as mining slaves to be harvested for their hearts. In the old times, dwarves stored the heartstones of their dead in grand mausoleums, their souls guiding those who came for guidance through meditative visions. After the mages took over, these mausoleums were ransacked, and only the most hidden ones remain, hidden within the mountain or spread through forgotten tunnels that crisscross under the continent. Dwarves will go out of their way to recover a heartstone, risking even their own death to ensure the return of a heart to its family. It is only recently that dwarves have received a more equal standing in the Selenian Magocracy, with the ascension of Archmage Temara Ironskin to the position of High Archmage. Dwarves were long thought to be incapable of magic, but the relatively recent discovery of Dwarven Mages has thrown the magocracy into a strange cultural cold war. While it wasn't recognized by the mages, dwarves were capable of geomantic druidism, and many held a position of Shaman. The mages viewed the shamans as mere superstition, but they merely utilized a poorly understood form of sorcerous magic. Once the dwarves got their hands on Selenian magic, they took to it like water, with many able to use their own Heartstones as arcane casting foci. Dwarves do not have a concept of gender in the same way many species do. A dwarf's 'sex' is completely irrelevant to their gender, and they view it in the same way a human would perceive having an 'innie' or an 'outie' belly button. A dwarf's gender is determined by the type of sediment they are made of, and can change over time as new sediments are layered atop. Dwarves have as many genders as there are types of rock, and even then they

have classifications for different quantities in certain areas. When speaking to non-dwarves, many simply resort to "Male" or "Female" based on what they perceive as close enough to their gender, if they give an answer at all. Referring to a dwarf with "They/Them" is generally considered good practice, until told otherwise by that specific dwarf. To create a new dwarf, two dwarves will 'couple', connecting their Heart Networks and crafting a new soul that is carried by one of the dwarves. Dwarves of any gender can couple successfully, and which dwarf carries the new soul is practically a coinflip. Once the new soul is ready, the carrying dwarf will expel a new Heartstone of the same type as theirs. The couple will then bury the heartstone in a birthing cave, where the stone will take on the sediments that surround it to build a body. The parents will often visit this cave, burying their favourite stones and minerals near the growing dwarf, telling it their dreams and hopes. Once the growing dwarf has reached the size of a four year old human, it will dig itself out of the ground, where its parents are normally waiting for it. When two dwarves marry, they puncture the backs of their hands and press the wounds together while exchanging their vows. Dwarven blood, while a liquid, swiftly crystalizes into gemstone upon exposure to air. Once punctured and pressed together, their blood crystalizes and fills the wounds, leaving a mixed gemstone embedded in each dwarf's hand. If a dwarf marries a non-dwarf, they will often bleed themselves to create a 'Bloodgem', a small gemstone formed of their blood that is set on a ring or other piece of jewelry and gifted to their partner. This wound remains on the back of the dwarf's hand, forming a similar wound to that a dwarven pairing would bear.

Living Stone Korrosian Dwarves are a gemstone surrounded by a sedimentary exoskeleton. While their skin-like Lichen Layer is soft to the touch, merely inches below is a hard stone interior. The lichen covering a dwarf's exterior protects the stone from erosion, and lets them fit in with the fleshy races. This lichen cover extends from head to toe, including their eyes.

Gemstone Blood While liquid within the dwarf, a dwarf's blood quickly crystalizes into the same gemstone as their heartstone upon exposure to air, making dying of blood loss very difficult for dwarf. In addition, this makes thier blood intolerable to blood-drinking creatures..

Ageless Stone Dwarves, being wholly inorganic, have no upper limit on how old they can get. They simply add more layers of sediment for each year they are alive.

KORROSIAN DWARF

TRAITS

Ability Score Increase Your constitution score increases by 2, and you may increase your casting attribute by 1

Age Heartstone Dwarves are considered adults by the age of 18, and have no upper limit on age, simply gaining more layers of sediment as they grow older. The oldest dwarves on record have been over 2,000 years old, and died from unnatural causes.

Size Heartstone Dwarves on average are around 4-5 feet tall, but older dwarves who haven't shaved down their sediment through erosion may reach over 6 feet in height.

Speed You have a movement speed of 25ft, and a burrow speed of 25ft while both of your hands are free.

Stone Sight Dwarves developed underground, and their gemstone eyes are a relatively new development in their evolution. All dwarves have the ability to detect the smallest vibrations in the earth. You have tremorsense out to 60ft.

Living Focus Your Heartstone is a perfect natural casting focus. You may cast spells using your own heart as a casting focus, and can replace any material component. If the material component is consumed by the spell, take damage equal to the gold cost dictated by the spell. If this reduces you to 0 hitpoints, your heartstone is consumed after the spell is complete, and you are dead.

Natural Caster At level 1, you gain access to one cantrip from the Wizard, Bard, Warlock, or Sorcerer spell lists. Your casting modifier is decided at level 1, and can be either Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma. In addition, at third level you gain the Earth Tremor spell once per day. At 5th level you gain the Maximilian's Earthen Grasp spell once per day. These spells all use your chosen Casting Modifier.

Heartstone Resilience As your blood is made of crystal, and you have no real organs to speak of, you have advantage on saves against bleeding, bleeding effects last half as long, and you cannot have your blood drained by a blood-drinking creature, or your organs removed by an attack that relies on that effect.

False Body If your heartstone is removed, you are considered dead until your heartstone is placed back into your body or a similar receptacle. If your heartstone is destroyed, you are dead and your soul is destroyed.

Gift of the Ground You have proficiency with Mason's tools, Warhammers, Simple Weapons, and War Picks.

Defiance of Stone As a bonus action, you can retract your skin layer beneath your stony body and reinforce yourself with geomantic magic. Until the start of your next turn, you have resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from weapon attacks. You can do this a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and uses reset on a long rest.

Sink Like a Stone Being sentient gemstones, dwarves do not need to breathe, but also cannot swim. A dwarf that enters water will immediately sink to the bottom. You are incapable of obtaining a swimming speed.

Gemstone Heart Choose a gemstone, this gemstone will be your heart, and the centre of your being. Your blood will be the colour of this gemstone, and harden into crystal shards of this gemstone when you bleed. These shards are too small and jagged to be worth selling, and losing your heart will leave in you in a dead state. Common heartstones are Rubies, Emeralds, and Topaz, though gems of other types are not unheard of.