

TRIUMPH LARP

**Dark Elf's**

**Handbook**

**4.0**

## **The Dark Elves of Lantai**

A dark elf is a humanoid being in Lantai, and is recognizable by his/her pointed ears and either pure black or very pale skin. The dark elves reside in their homeland far in the south, Pataoco...a land of dark jungle, of perpetual night. Dark Elves have a long life span, and can reach 500-600 years, if the jungle does not claim them first. Dark elves have a reverence for death and the cycle of all living and dying things. They are often expert archers, have excellent night vision, and produce quite a few necromancers. A dark elf is typically a graceful being, and has some suppressed artistic skill, and a method of surviving one of the harshest lands on Lantai: the Dark Jungles of Pataoco. It is important to note that the dark elves of Lantai are not inherently evil, do not live underground, do not worship or even really like spiders, are not necessarily evil, and under no circumstances are they ever called drow.

This handbook, along with the class handbook of your choice, will help you to portray a character that will help drive an epic story which we call Triumph. This game is story-driven, and the more thought given to your character, the better your game experience will be. Welcome to Lantai, welcome to Fairhame, and may you Triumph.

This handbook is not meant to replace reading the manual...in fact, if you've not read the rulebook, you should put this handbook down and go do so now. OK...so you're back. Hope you enjoyed the rulebook. Now, let's talk about dark elves.

### **Physical Representation**

So, what exactly makes a dark elf look like a dark elf? The answer is pointed ears and either black or very pale skin. If you're going to play an elf in Triumph, you are required to wear pointy ears over your own, and to represent dark flesh via makeup. Alternately, a dark elf can be very pale (this means almost whitish, again using makeup...think Goth). There are no round-eared or flesh toned dark elves. If after your 3<sup>rd</sup> event you do not wear your minimal physrep and costume, you can still play, but will receive no Triumph Points. Note that this is a minimum physical representation...you can go further! You can always improve your look via wigs and makeup, to include blending in your ears and even making your features look thinner and more elven.

### **Racial Modifiers**

By choosing to play an elf, you receive some advantages and some disadvantages compared to others in the game. These racial modifiers exist to help characterize the race.

Dark Elves are renowned archers. As such, they may purchase the Bow skill at half the normal Triumph point cost.

Dark Elves are strong willed and in tune with the Flow of magic. Twice per day, a Dark Elf may resist a magical effect cast upon them.

Dark Elves have lived for millennia in darkness. A dark elf is weak and vulnerable in the sunlight. To represent this, a dark elf suffers a 1-health point penalty per "level" of health purchased in the daylight, but has full health at night. (I.E. a Dark Elf Warrior who had purchased health twice in their lifetime would have 22 health at night, but only 20 during the day.)

As dark elves are not very strong, their ability to wield heavy weaponry effectively is quite reduced. As such, a dark elf may not purchase 2 hand edged or 2 hand blunt as weapon skills.

### **Racial Traits**

Each race has its defining qualities, or traits. This includes typical costume, common attitudes, traditions and ways of life, and natural tendencies. By playing to these traits, you are portraying a fairly typical member of the race. If you choose to ignore these traits, your character is probably quite uncommon...and might even be frowned upon by members of your own race.

The dark elves live in harmony with nature, as will any elf...however, the nature they live in is harsh indeed. The dark elves live in cities that are more like fortresses than true towns, walled settlements to keep out both flora and fauna. In Pataoco, many of the plants are every bit as carnivorous as the great cats and massive spiders of the jungle. The architecture of these fortresses is a haunting blend of the necessary and the reverent. (It would resemble the ancient Mayan, Aztec, and Incan ruins, but with more elven grace.)

Dark elven society is mostly like that of other elves, though special reverence is paid to birth anniversaries and to the rites of death. There are many rituals involved in the funeral traditions of dark elves: some to protect the corpse and spirit, and in the case of some heroes or persons of import, rites that make summoning that spirit easier. The veil of death is seen as quite permeable to dark elves, and indeed many of the spellcasters of dark elven society become necromancers. This is due to the very active food chain abounding in the Jungle, with many deaths giving necromancers a ready source of power.

Trade with other kingdoms takes place through the ports of Westgate, Virgis, and Skara Innish. The mystical ships of the dark elves sail north to these ports to do trade and maintain diplomatic relations with other races, especially their elven cousins. Other than this trade, the dark elves are still isolated by their distant geography, and thus tend to be a bit distrustful of other races.

Dark elves will not reveal the method to get to Pataoco, and have only taken a few members of each race there in known history. They claim this is to protect the rest of the world, and they may well be correct. The changes of the Cataclysm were especially harsh to the dark elves, and there are more Changelings and Changebeasts in Pataoco than anywhere else in the Known Lands of Lantai.

The different cities of the dark elves rule autonomously, and the rulers of each meet in council twice each year to collectively decide the fate of their nation. In Patecaax, the ruler is a queen; in Omaticuan a king rules, and in other cities are there other sovereign rulers.

Many cities of the dark elves keep a standing "army", controlled by their necromancers. These are forces of undead that volunteered when they were alive to become the protectors of the community after their passing. The undead are used to react to any threats to the city, from wild beast encroachments to bands of Changelings or even to the notorious Bloodmage Exiles. Thus are the living further protected from the harsh realities of the jungle.

The dark elves have no true concept of good and evil, viewing all as a cycle of birth, life, and death. In the hearts of many dark elves, all options are available, and a balance must be maintained between good and evil, lest all fall apart.

*Tips for roleplaying a dark elf: Dark elves have not been in the world long, and are more used to the jungles of Pataoco. A dark elf might look around with wonder, will scoff at most danger as trivial compared to home, and will likely be distrustful of other races at first until they get used to them. Will likely treat necromancers with respect. Will likely have a necromancer in the family. Will not treat undead as immediately evil or spooky, but rather as a fact of existence. Dark elven costume tends to be dark of color, favoring black, red, purple, and blue. Incan/Mayan motifs are encouraged. Gear and costume does tend to be pretty, with designs and artwork, and blades tend to have artistic and/or jagged shapes.*

### **Key Points in Dark Elven History**

Many millennia ago, the Dream reshaped the world of Lantai. It created the Gods, who lived upon and discovered Lantai's secrets. The Gods, in turn, Ascended, seeking a further enlightenment. Some of the Gods gave birth to Children of their own. In these long ago times, Mystiarra, who had become proficient in magic, reached out into the night and plucked one thousand of the brightest and most beautiful stars, causing them to fall upon Lantai. They landed in four distinct areas, and the power of their burning fall was the catalyst that Mystiarra used to shape them into her Children, the Elves.

Civilization was slow to take root in those days, and Lantai was a much more dangerous place. The elves learned to survive, and then to thrive. Mystiarra in those days was an attentive mother, and saw to it her children could prosper. In time, she chose some of her children to carry a bit of her knowledge, and the first clerics came to be. Over the course of centuries, and then millennia, the elves (and indeed the dwarves as well) began to grow away from their parent and continue in their own direction, only the clerics keeping the Gods close to them. The nations grew, and the three nations of the northern lands began to forget their southern brothers the dark elves, their existence becoming story, then legend, then myth.

In the southern lands of Pataoco, life was harsh even then. The dark elves had to carve out an existence in the jungles, and Mystiarra herself intervened on their behalf, shaping their evolution to fit the perpetual night under the gloomy skies and thick jungle canopy. Their night vision improved, their skin darkened, and they learned the secrets of many herbs and magics.

In time, the dark elves began to thrive, their fortress city proving a bastion of strength in the dangerous surroundings. It was not long before the dark elves received a second gift, as some of their more magical citizens began to learn of necromancy. With so much death all around, from the tiniest insects feeding the active food chain on up to the mightiest predators, the necromancers had a very ready supply of power.

Necromancers began to become more useful to the community as a whole, and clerics of Yael became as numerous as clerics of Mystiarra. Oddly, in the dark elven

nation, the clerics of Yael were not a cult of evil, as has happened historically in other communities.

As the dark elves gained more and more ability and power, their survival rate and longevity began to increase. Over a short time, the elders recognized a growth spurt on the horizon, and a program of colonization was begun. Other fortress cities were begun, usually started around a simple wood stockade. The towns grew, the dark elves continued to prosper.

As the fortresses became true cities, a council was formed to collectively rule the nation: the Council of Pataoco. The rulers of the different cities would meet twice annually to discuss matters of import and share discoveries. Thus was a tradition began thousands of years ago that persists today.

The younger races came to the world then, and though most came to be in the known lands, some few came to existence elsewhere. The goblinoids became a new threat to the dark elves, and a mighty one at that. Though their population was kept down by the jungle itself, over the next thousand years enough orcs and goblins banded together to make war on the dark elves. It was in this time that the dark elves faced great peril, and their salvation came from the necromancers.

Each fortress city raised a quick and simple army, as the necromancers banded together to raise undead minions with which to battle the coming green horde. The battles were quick, and the goblinoids found, to their dismay, that the undead were a mighty force indeed. From this point forward in time, the dark elves have kept undead minions as army and labor pool. They give no disrespect to the dead, and indeed hold those who volunteer to leave their mortal body to necromancy in high regard.

The dark elves continued to prosper and develop, their fortress cities becoming beacons of hope amongst the dark land. Their enemies were legion...the savage jungle itself, monsters, predators, goblins, orcs, tasloi, and more. But none were as bad as the humans that had developed in Pataoco's southern reaches: the Calax, and their deadly Bloodmages.

Where the dark elves had learned the power that lay in death and decay, the Bloodmages had learned the power that came from pain and suffering. When the dark elves discovered the Calax, the evil Bloodmages had already decimated the barbarian tribes that had been birthed in Pataoco's dark jungle. Even goblinoids were captured to be sucked dry by the Bloodmages.

A long and bloody war was fought between the Calax and the dark elves. Over the course of 50 years, the dark elves sought out and exterminated every Bloodmage that could be found. The toll in life was high, but truly a benefit to the entire world. There are very few Bloodmages left in the world, and they must remain hidden, lest they be slain by the dark elves.

Then came the Cataclysm. The jungles of Pataoco, though far from the Known Lands, were stricken hard by the wild changes of magic. Beasts, plants, even goblinoids and dark elves were changed by the terrifying waves of destruction. At least one entire fortress city was laid low, its citizens and undead minions becoming hopelessly altered and combined somehow with the insects of the region. The dark elves weathered the Dark Times better than most races, even though their beloved jungle had seemingly turned on them. They met the challenges and dangers with their typical determination and ferocity, and with relatively little change to their lives.

After the Dark Times, the Council decided it was time to reach out into the world, and expeditions were sent north into the Known Lands. As the dark elves reached out after the Cataclysm, the leaders of the three elven nations were quick to establish diplomatic ties in their joy. Over time, however, attitudes have changed. The High Elves have all but withdrawn from contact with the Dark Elves, being distrustful of their fascination with death. The Forest Elves continue contact with the Dark Elves, understanding better than their cousins that the ways of the Dark Elves are resultant of their savage homeland. The Mystic Elves are most accepting of the Dark Elves, and even have trade ties with them, as the Mystic Elves are always accepting of a goodly race.

Now, in the present, dark elves strive as we all do. The Savage Lands have become more dangerous, if that were possible. Orcs, goblins, trolls, and worse have become more and more common. Monsters long thought to be extinct, or mere fairy tales, have been sighted. The Oracles speak of dark days ahead. May we all triumph.

## **DARK ELVEN TALES**

*An ancient tome found in Micuchtitlan's library...*

### **A record of Xiluc Yucuphil, servant of Micuchtitlan**

~Dawn, such as it is, breaks yet again. The sky brightens only slightly, the clouded gloom visible through the rare break in the canopy of the jungle. We never see the stars that I am told are our heritage, though we feel their pull through the perpetual gloom.

We are few, forming a new colony, spreading our people so that we may grow and prosper. Construction has finally finished on our fortress stockade, and we may start improving the structures and bringing settlers to it. We shall call this city Micuchtitlan. It will be wondrous, though for now it is still a struggle to exist here. This jungle is untamed, not like Pataoco's first city, where there are fields of crops between the jungle and the city.

I have cast my auguries, and feel the movements of death around us. Yael's domain is but a step away, and I have spent my life in study of it. The warriors work hard each day, breaking from the construction only long enough to repel the occasional harakka, those eight legged beasts larger than 3 lords linking hands. My assistants and I have been researching and working closely with a priest of Yael. I am on the verge of a breakthrough.

~Several days have passed since my last record. The jungle spews its worst at us. This day we repulsed several vinecrawlers, the vile predator plants that stalk living prey. The battle was not easy, and our dead now number 43, nearly a tenth of our expedition. The time has come for the priest and I to truly work together, lest we all perish. His vision has led us to believe a permanence can be lent to my enchantments. If so, this could change the way we live and die in these jungles. I imagine a force of zombies and skeletons that last longer than a single day, that can be ready to act without needing to be summoned.

I long for the stonework of our beloved city, its marbled pyramids, the columns and pillars of the temples. I long for the taste of fresh corncakes, the spice of a good tarras. I miss the view from the high altar, where one can see over the jungle tops, to the smoking mountain in the distance. And I dream of my return there, to share my new hope with my kin.

~It has been a week since my last record. Today is the day. We will perform our ritual, a combined working that, if I am correct, will give us a troupe of nearly 40 zombies. We will then perform a more powerful working, bringing Ixmalotl back to his form. With Yael and Mystiarra's blessings, perhaps Ixmalotl can take his place as the leader of our guard yet again, this time as a mighty Wraith. I pray that we are successful, as it is difficult for me to keep up with the demands placed upon my magic in this place.

This place...this future city. One of several we shall create, one of rough lumber and little stone now...but in time it will grow, and have its own great pyramids, and gardens, and fountains in the center square of the city. We sculpt beauty out of the harshness, ever paying attention to the jungle's lessons, paying it reverence in our buildings and arts.

~Success! After animating many zombies, using our fallen warriors, Yacaatl and I have performed our rituals. We see the zombies remain, long after my spell had expired. We have discovered a new gift from Yael and Mystiarra, the gift of an unliving army to guard our living...our children, our crops. If we are correct, over the next few days we will have a force of 40 or so zombies that should persist, the magic should linger for a year, unless the zombies are damaged beyond repair. If this can be taught to other necromancers and priests, we can hold an army of the dead, and thus add less of our living to their numbers!

I imagine a barracks being built now, in conjunction with the cemetery...only volunteers should be used in this way, of course, but surely many of us will volunteer to continue service even in death! I cannot wait to see my beloved Ixucue and share the news with her, but alas, it is still 4 cycles of the hidden moon before I shall return.

Tomorrow, we will attempt the summoning and bind of the wraith, and see if heroic Ixmalotl is pleased with his new station.

~Yet another achievement! Ixmalotl is come, and more fully than any summoning I have ever attempted. Rather than a mindless ball of hate, such as I am accustomed to with wraiths, Ixmalotl appears to be comfortable in his shadowy form. He speaks with me, and he can plan strategies and communicate as before. I am overjoyed, as is Yacaatl. I can feel the limits of this magic more keenly, however, and I feel that only a moon shall pass before the rites must be renewed with Ixmalotl. Never again must we lose a hero to Yael's domain.

Ixmalotl tells me that he will take his zombie regiment on a patrol on the morrow, and help secure our borders more fully than we could before. After all, death can hold no fear for him anymore.

~ Yacaatl and I will return early. The discovery we have made is far too important to be risked, and we will fly with all due speed for home. I cannot wait to see

my beloved Ixucue, though I know we must report to our King first, which should take a day or two. I am blessed, to have been able to see this light in the darkness before any others. Now it is a matter of sharing this light, this hope.