

On Non-Human Player Characters

In the *Adventures in Mythic Europe* guidebook, there is a small paragraph about using the non-human races for characters in the setting. There are a number of different ways that these sorts of characters can be represented in the game world.

FAERIE-BLOODED HUMANS OR HIGHLY COGNIZANT FAERIES?

As mentioned there, a human character could be faerie-blooded and this would have the effect of allowing the player to use the statistics and traits of a non-human race for their own, human, character. This option could be used for magus and companion characters. Another option is to consider the PC to be an actual faerie (in the *Ars Magica* style) with this option being limited to companion characters only.

But these two choices rule out using races of non-humans in the campaign setting. A faerie-blooded human is a member of the human race, not the race that became infused into their heritage somehow. Faeries themselves aren't really part of distinct races, given the nature of the Faerie Realm in Mythic Europe. If the group wishes to use the non-human races from the D&D rules in the Mythic Europe setting and have these PC choices exist as races, then another approach is required.

PC RACES AS MAGIC KIN

The non-human races in D&D really don't represent denizens of the Faerie Realm. They would, in fact, be more like the Magic Kin as described in *Realms of Power - Magic*. If the D&D races are imagined as Magic Kin, then the DM must introduce a few non-canonical

conceits into their own Mythic Europe campaign.

The best example of a Magic Kin type that would be similar to a D&D PC race would be the Atlanteans (RoP-M, page 90). The Atlanteans, as portrayed, are an actual race aligned to the Magic Realm. They are born as Atlanteans, live as Atlanteans, and die as Atlanteans. This sort of example illustrates how non-human races can be introduced into Mythic Europe.

First, almost all D&D PC races are aligned to the Magic Realm. Dwarves, elves, halflings, dragon-born, and gnomes are aligned to the Magic Realm. Half-elves and half-orcs may not be automatically aligned to a Realm if they are a true hybrid, but if the half-elf or half-orc traits are being used to detail a new type of Magic Kin, then the PC should be aligned to the Magic Realm.

Tieflings, as described, should be aligned to the Infernal Realm. However, if a tiefling is used as a PC, they should be treated as having some sort of backstory akin to the Diabolic Past Story Flaw in the *Ars Magica Core Rulebook*. If a race of "tieflings" are aligned to the Magic Realm, then all questions of Infernal lineage can be discarded (but this goes against the whole concept of the tiefling race).

NPC RACES FROM THE DMG

By expanding our view and taking a look at the race descriptions for NPCs in the *DMG* (page 282), we can define even more races as being Magic Kin. Orcs, however, are a different story.

If orcs are to be included in the Mythic Europe setting, it is recommended that they be aligned to the Infernal Realm and a special origin be assigned to them. Orcs have souls, but they are the souls of the unborn that sided with the Adversary during the Rebellion. As such, they are damned with no hope of redemption and seek to lessen their torment in Hell by serving Infernal leaders with unquestioning obedience after being born into the world. It is important to note that actual half-orcs (meaning a character that has one human parent and one orc parent) is not automatically damned (cf., “The Children of Demons” in **Realms of Power – The Infernal**). True half-orcs have free will and can choose their fate.

EACH RACE IS AN ARCHETYPE

You can use the PC races in D&D more flexibly in Mythic Europe by considering each race to be an archetype that can define a whole class of non-human races rather than just one single race. For example, a “half-orc” could be an actual half-orc (one human parent, one orc parent) or an “ogre” or a “troll” or a “beast man” or any number of Magic Kin types. In all cases, for the purposes of the game, the half-orc statistics from the PHB would be used.

Likewise, a “dwarf” could be an actual Norse-style dwarf or a “troll” while a halfling could be a “brownie” or some other sort of diminutive Magic Kin. The three subraces of elves can be used to represent many different magical races. Racial appearances as described in the **Player’s Handbook** can be altered as needed to describe whatever Magic Kin the group wishes to introduce into the campaign world.

MAGIC KIN AND FAERIES

Just as faeries can appear more or less “human” they also manifest as dwarves, elves, gnomes, and as other Magic Kin. Just as there are Infernal dragons, Magical dragons, and Faerie dragons, so too are there Magic Dwarves and Faerie Dwarves, Magic Elves and Faerie Elves, and so on. However, Magic Kin are actual races of beings. They have an objective existence independent of perception. Faeries are, well, faeries and exist according to the tropes detailed in **Realms of Power – Faerie**. Thus a Magic Kin PC is “real” in the normal sense of the word. When your PC elf dies, he leaves behind an actual corpse, not a pile of twigs and leaves (like perhaps a faerie elf would leave behind).

MAGIC KIN HOMELANDS

Okay, if we are to have a Mythic Europe where you can find elves drinking in taverns and dwarves shooting arrows from behind trees, then where do these races live?

The easy answer is that they live in *regiones*. Maybe The Halls of the Mountain King is a *regio* where a race of Magic Kin dwarves live. Or perhaps The Court of Eternal Summer is where Magic Kin high elves live in the Stonehenge Tribunal. This is the easy answer that doesn’t require human populations to be displaced. All of these *regiones* would be aligned with the Magic Realm.

In classic D&D, demi-humans were supposed to be scarce. In keeping with this, Mythic Europe should not be crawling with all sorts of non-humans. They would be drawn to covenants, though, since almost all exist within an area with a Magic aura. Thus, non-humans could exist alongside the Hermetic community, perhaps sharing the same goals of isolation from the mundane world and protecting their own interests.

MAGIC KIN AS COVENFOLK

Covenfolk that live in a strong Magic aura will develop an affinity to the Magic Realm. The D&D races could also represent a “race” of beings that are the residents of a particular covenant that exists in an area with a strong aura.

Alternately, a covenant could exist in an area that was already inhabited by a magical race and they have since become the covenfolk. How this situation came about will depend on the covenant’s story. Were Hermetic magi invited by the inhabitants to build a covenant there? Did the founding Hermetic magi take control of the area somehow? If so, was it by force or part of a peaceful arrangement?

NON-HUMAN CHARACTER TYPES

Faerie-blooded humans can be any sort of character: magus, companion, or grog. True faeries can only be companions, but could be used to replace a magus character (i.e., be used as a Mythic Companion). Magic Kin can be companions and grogs, but cannot be Hermetic magi as Magic Kin can never have The Gift. A Magic Kin character can replace a magus character if they are a Mythic Companion.

To review, a companion character can only advance in the seven character classes described in the Adventures in Mythic Europe guidebook. These classes are: barbarian, explorer, fighter, monk, rogue, savant, and warden. A Mythic Companion character replaces a magus character and can advance in any of the D&D classes and/or any of the new classes found in **Adventures in Mythic Europe**.

REACTIONS TO MAGIC KIN

Although the PC races are not human, they do not appear monstrous for the most part either. All Magic Humans have the Monstrous Appearance Major Magic Inferiority as described in **Realms of Power – Magic**. This flaw grants a penalty to rolls involving social situations and states that most people will attack or run away from such characters on sight, rather than engage in conversation.

It is recommended that members of the demi-human races (dwarves, elves, gnomes, halflings, and half-elves) have disadvantage on all Charisma ability checks involving interaction with mundane folk. When interacting with those inured to the supernatural (such as covenfolk, grogs, companions, etc.) this penalty is eliminated.

For those races with truly monstrous appearance (such as dragonborn, half-orcs, and tieflings), mundane individuals will attack or flee, depending on their inclinations. Once they have “gotten used to” an individual of one of these races, apply the disadvantage stated above for that individual. This can be eliminated eventually with time as well.

SUMMARY

This tractatus is intended to give the playing group a few more ideas on how to use the D&D non-human races in a Mythic Europe campaign. If D&D races are introduced into the campaign, this is a significant departure from the Ars Magica canon. However, these races can be thought of as Magic Kin, which is a canon feature of the game. As such, the use of Magic Kin simply pushes the campaign setting a little more towards the fantastic and gives Magic Kin a more prominent role in stories