

# The Mornzak League

(MOHRN-sak)

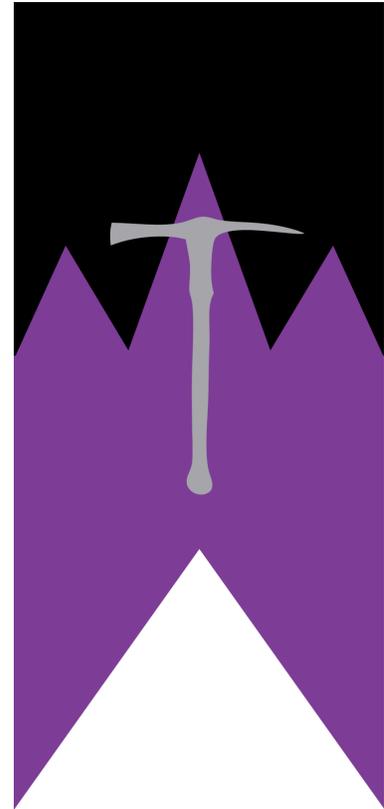
The Mornzak League is the current form of the diverse cultures that have thrived upon, below, and within the formidable peaks and valleys of the Mornzaki Mountains for nine long dwarven generations. The inhabitants of the slopes and settlements of the Mornzak League are mostly dwarven and while some settlements welcome all species and peoples, others are quite insular. Regardless, the Mornzaki are a spirited and ethical people with strong and complex loyalties to family and community organizations. They are marked by steadfastness in the face of crises and growth alike.

Alongside the widespread smithy, smelting, architectural professions, skilled farmers, enterprising culinary artists, and feast organizers hold places of respect in this tradition-oriented society. Dwarves are experts in combat and effectively using their environment, executing group tactics well. They rarely use magic in fighting, instead relying on deadfalls and trapped passages. Mornzak is a realm steeped in respect for ancestral dwarven culture and its people have long memories of foes and friends alike.

Centuries ago great dwarven city states banded together as one nationed against the storied hordes of troll spawn. During the long push to victory an alliance between Ptiad, Kthome, and Dwal-Isir took on dimensions of trade and institution building.

Slowly mutual interest gave way to brotherhood between the wondrous ziggurat Ptiad, the deep vault Kthome, and the exuberantly decorated domes of Dwal-Isir.

Recent times of darkness have united the proud people of Mornzak's cities in admiration and respect of Queen Nebbur Dweomerforge. No matter what city



state or community, she and her traveling court are honored guests. The city-states of Mornzak steeped in ancestral dwarven culture, though this does not mean they do not admire elegance and innovation.

The diverse traditions of the Nine Generations hold many dwarven clans, yet all value valor, craftsmanship and community. Most hold the near mythical founding elders in great reverence and some dwarves prize the genealogies that “prove” their descent for the explorers that settled Mornzak. Today, the Fifth through Ninth generation live together largely in harmony. Very few from the Fourth Generation remain alive today.

The youngest generation feature striking departures from the older Mornzaki ways. The so-called ‘Tenth-Born’ have taken up an ideal of exploration and experimentation, which older dwarves find eccentric at least. This leads many to seek adventure, knowledge or glory beyond the League's fortified homes to become traders, mercenaries, or adventurers.

The three great city states that make up the Mornzak League are listed below. A handful of other and many small strongholds also dot the mountain range.

### *Ptiad*

The largest of the city states it lies in the foothills and is by far the most accessible part of the dwarven realm to outsiders. It is a city of factions and physical innovation. Their architectural and engineering genius of the inhabitant is well attested by the gates, canals, and artificial waterfalls of this, tiered metropolis. Ptiad is wrought from the stone of the surrounding mountains and it mirrors their inspiring skyward grasp. It is said there are nearly a hundred martial traditions taught in the smaller holds and crofts that dot the surrounding hills, but two rival academies of war noteworthy lay within Ptiad's monolithic walls. The Sundering House focuses on mastering the varied arts of hammers, bludgeons and ranged strikes, while instruction emphasizing tactics, shields and the mental aspects of combat is the purview of the Battleforged Order.

Known as geniuses of engineering, Ptiadic crafters make and export world-class locks, traps, scrolls, and cartography of all kinds which often bear ancient

decorative cuneiform. Nominally ruled by a council, composed of the city's few dozens of Guildmasters, the last half-century has seen the meteoric rise in the power of the Watchmaker's Guild. Their secrets of clockwork have begun to bring changes to daily life in Ptiad, and the Watchmaker's Guild have kept their monopoly on this wonderment a violently guarded secret.

### *Kthome*

Kthome is the oldest city and a first among equals in the League politically and not-coincidentally militarily. In a past millennium, the vast halls of Kthome were carved and a vast undercity flourished. The titanic stoneworks that make up Kthome have stood since the time of the founding explorers whose skilled artisans and mighty sorcerers hewed undermountain roads and carved epic structures deep into the mountains.

Crowded urban centers, wayside villages, and regal manors insulated by abyss and crag alike can be found in Kthomes's many vaults. Kthome has been long inhabited and some of its distant warrens have fallen to disuse and ruin, but others yet hold lost treasures and dangerous beasts. The elite Axewall Guild does their best to patrol deeper and more distant parts of the undercity. because many natural fissures and yawning vaults exist leading to the mountain's darker secrets.

### *Dwal-Isir*

Dwal-Isir is a study in contrasts. Despite bleak weather Dwal-Isiri love color in their makeup and attire, often decorating their beards with cloth and gems and vividly painting the statues and gargoyles that adorn the many public courtyards and alleys of their home. Great towers capped by vivid domes unmistakably jut out from the peaks of this mountainside citystate. Athletic games are a popular pastime despite the thin air and required layers of clothing to spare the frigid slope winds.

Though it has the fewest guilds -exactly twelve - unlike in other cities, most of the populace belongs to one of these astrologically determined institutions. Even government is achieved in this manner by a cabal of masked celestial magic

practitioners. These ‘Moons’ lead the twelve guilds and district the city alike, while striving to embody the iconic virtues and work against vices associated with each year’s lunar periods.

- Moon of Chrysoprase - Bravery / Clumsiness
- Moon of Jacinth - Loyalty / Greed
- Moon of Amethyst - Leadership / Obsession
- Moon of Jasper - Generosity / Hatred
- Moon of Sapphire - Vitality / Secrecy
- Moon of Calcedony - Preservation / Selfishness
- Moon of Emerald - Wisdom / Misfortune
- Moon of Sardonyx - Truth / Cowardice
- Moon of Carnelain - Justice / Destruction
- Moo of Opal - Destiny / Complacency
- Moon of Beryl - Diligence / Hubris
- Moon of Topaz - Prudence / Ignorance

Brilliant dyed cloth, brewing, gemcrafting, wainwrighting and glasswork are among the greatest material achievements of Dwal-Isir, but it’s harsh poetry, bell songs, and card games are notable cultural aspects known far beyond the Mornzak.

### *Playing a character from Mornzak:*

The Dwarves of Mornzak are very proud of a job well done. This could be in their work, crafting, fighting, or even just playing a game. When playing a Dwarf from this area, consider the area you come from. Maybe you want to play a Dwarf from Dwal-Isir and have colorful makeup or gems in your beard. Maybe you want to be from Kthome and have an attire that is darker and more mysterious. Or perhaps you want to have a style more befitting of the Dwarves living in the foothills of Ptiad. Whichever area you choose, the Dwarves have a deep-rooted respect for each other and their queen and are heavily focused on cooperation, innovation, and their own ancient culture. The Mornzak League are trade partners with

Theris and are mostly friendly with the nearby nations, though Nardoven's expansion can often give them pause.

If you want to play a different species from Mornzak, you will likely be from Ptiad, where most of the non-Dwarven people live, though there are some in Dwal-Isir and few in Kthome. The most important thing to remember about playing another species in Mornzak is that the Dwarves there highly respect hard work and respect, these things will get you far in life.