

Appearance

Though generally resembling Elves due to their relatively standard features and pointed ears, Faeries are readily identified by their insect-like wings. Most Faeries find it difficult to grow hair beyond their eyebrows and the tops of their heads, making facial hair uncommon.

Naturally creatures of woodland realms, Faeries are often found outright adorning their clothes and hair with accessories crafted from flowers, twigs, leaves, and other natural objects. However, leaf and flower accents in the form of embroidery are more common among those who live among other races.



Behavior

Faeries are known to live life as it comes, and are apt to be cheerful and energetic, and rather outgoing around friends and strangers alike. Faeries are compulsively honest creatures and can virtually never tell a lie. However, being fond of mischief, they are known to tell partial truths and to deceive others in the name of fun and games.

History

Faeries have enjoyed centuries of peace, living in hidden utopias throughout the forests of the world. However, beginning in 1016, the Mages Guild of Pawic began to abduct Faeries for study. As time has passed, more Faeries have gone missing, with only a few found dead; their bodies mutilated and wings missing. Though the abductions have continued, the Marna chapter of the guild has elected to only pursue their studies by limiting their studies to those Faeries deemed unwanted criminals among Fae society.

Society

Governed by a monarchy, the Faeries' society appears normal at first glance. However, while they may be led by a king, queen, and a small noble caste, the majority of Faeries are viewed as equal to one another. To this end, typical Faerie society resembles an amalgamation of Human societies and that of traditional Halfling society.

More baffling though, is the apparent biannual court exchange. During the equinoxes of spring and autumn, the ruling monarchs abdicate their throne in favor of those who represent the court of the coming season: The Summer Court or the Winter

Court. This change is believed to be due to a waxing and waning of magical energy, which for the Fae, is tied to the changing of the seasons.



Coming of Age

Though the exact age of maturity may vary by family, most Faeries agree that a child becomes an adult between 25 and 30 years of age. When the time comes, the young Faerie is tasked with playing an elaborate joke on an elder, with the goal of the trick being successful without being caught. This near game-like ritual has come to be known as “The Blooming.”

Should the Faerie pass their ordeal, a great feast involving family and friends is held, wherein revelers enjoy dancing, music, and a wide variety of food, drinks, and intoxicating substances. These parties tend to be such great celebrations that they can last for nearly a week at a time.

Religion

Being creatures of the forest, Faeries tend to hold some degree of respect for Gaia, Alvar, Meha, and

other nature deities. However, they seldom allow religion to influence their daily lives and personal views.

Courtship

Like many others, Faeries often exchange gifts and spend time together while courting. Dancing however, appears to be a popular pastime for young Faerie couples. So much so, single Faeries seeking to attract a partner will perform an elaborate, unique dance to show off their skill and build interest.

Courtship is somewhat uncommon for younger Faeries, as they tend to enjoy polyamorous relationships as part of their otherwise free-spirited lifestyles. Though these relationships may last for a lifetime, some Faeries elect to settle down with a specific partner, with whom they start a family.

Marriage

When seeking to establish the permanence of their bond, a Faerie couple is likely to seek an audience with their court's matriarch, before whom they exchange vows of loyalty and love, and exchange tokens of their affection: usually a golden ring or jeweled amulet.

The ceremony itself is a private affair and seldom involves guests of any sort. Following the exchange though, the couple is likely to join friends and family for a celebratory banquet, featuring lavish feasts, music, dancing, and games of various sorts.

Funerals

Funerals are nearly unheard of in Faerie society. Rather than mourning the dead, Faeries prefer to celebrate their life and share stories and fond memories of the dearly departed.

After washing the body with perfumed oils and dressing it in fine clothes adorned with fragrant flowers, the body is taken to a hollowed-out tree or similar nook, where it is left to decompose and continue the natural cycle. Some traditional beliefs suggest that those Faeries whose bodies are not given to the trees are doomed to become restless spirits; forever cursed and bound to the land.

Festivals

Given that their society is so greatly entwined with the changing of the seasons, it comes as no surprise that Faeries often celebrate them with feasting, games, and the like.

To celebrate each other's company, the cooling weather, and the beauty of nature's autumn colors, the Day of Leaves is recognized with spiced wines and ciders, feasting, and dancing on the day of the Autumn Equinox. It is at this time that the Summer Court relinquishes power to the Winter Court.

The Festival of Snow is a favorite among Fae youths and features snowball fighting and similar winter fun. Naturally, it is held on or about the Winter Solstice.

In the Spring and on the day of the Vernal Equinox, mead and sweet wines join savory roasts and sweets for a grand feast. Songs and dancing are also enjoyed, along with races and similar activities enjoyed by most races. Celebrating the start of Spring and the transfer of power from the Winter Court to the Summer Court, is the Flowering Festival.

Finally, the Summer Solstice brings with it Midsummer: a week of restful lazing, basking in warm sunlight, and personal reflection prior to the Solstice. Upon the evening of the Solstice, the Faeries venture out from their homes to play pranks on whomever they may come across. Their acts are seldom malicious though--the celebration is all in good fun.

Games

Finding themselves naturally fond of games wherein players must match wits and strategy, many enjoy board games such as chess. The game of Charades is also a common pastime, though due to their nature, the actor's hints are often cryptic.

Gender and Family Roles

Gender has little to no sway in Faerie culture. Being viewed as equals, both males and females take part in child rearing, chores, and crafting activities.

Economics

As creatures of the forest, Faeries enjoy a plentiful supply of fruits, berries, and nuts, as well as honey from otherwise inaccessible beehives, and fish from secluded rivers and streams. They have also come to be known for their skills as spinners and weavers, and the textiles they are capable of producing are greatly prized by those non-Faeries who come to own them.

Though the Fae have a use for coin for trading with other cultures and groups, they are just as happy to exchange favors for goods or services.

Aging and Life Expectancy

Faeries age at half the rate of the typical human, and often live for up to 160 years.