

Trun Elves

This is a Wild Elf Culture, and follows the guidelines for this race in the latest edition of the NERO International Core Rules.

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Trun (troon) Elves make their home in the Whispering Woods of Emuria. These Wild Elves have been in their woodland for several centuries, and have lived relatively peacefully for most of that time. Recently the Trunians have returned to the peaceful existence that they have always known, but up until 601 they had been forced to take up arms against the encroachment of the Empire of Emuria and the armies of the Emperor Cornelius. Prior to the onset of the Imperial assault on their territory, these elves had been a very curious and accepting group. The Trunians have now turned against the outside world, and any strangers entering their forest are often attacked.

The name Trun comes from the traditional namesake of their homeland, The Trun Forest. Imperial mapmakers have changed this name to the Whispering Wood, but the Trunians have rejected this name, and many of them do not even know of its existence.

Society [top](#)

The Trun Forest is one of the most mysterious and unusual woods found anywhere in Dyllaria and Emuria. Given the name Whispering Woods by the Imperialists, it is rumored that the strangely luminescent, misty wood is haunted, and that travelers, especially those wishing to harm the woods, should be wary of the ghosts that supposedly claim this forest as their residence.

The Trunians view themselves as the guardians of the Trun Forest, and as such have become connected to the wood in a way many cannot begin to comprehend. In the past they would often protect travelers, and deal a swift and harsh justice to those who would wish harm upon their beloved woodland. Since taking up arms against the Imperials, this has changed, and any Non-Elf entering the Forest risks judgment.

Many mystical creatures can be found among the boughs and glens of the Trun Forest: unicorns, centaurs, and dryads are only a few of the more common creatures, although many are never seen even by the Elves themselves. The Elves view their responsibility of protection of the Forest to extend to these creatures.

Since the war with the Imperials, the Trun have been forced to radically change the way they in which they dwell. Once living in ground-based huts, which were easily found and destroyed by Imperial troops, they have since returned to a more sensible and natural approach to their dwellings. They live in Dirtras, or underground homes, which are usually quite small, with a small tunnel that connects all the Dirtras to a main underground chamber, which serves as a communal eating and gathering place. The walls are packed with hardened clay, and the furnishings found within are simple and hand crafted. Dirtras are used mostly for sleeping; daily tasks take place in the open air. They are usually near the surface, and the outside of this dwelling is always in concurrence with the environment. This form of dwelling appears to be quite unusual to other Elves, but the nature-minded Trun Elves see it as sensible and simplistic. A Dirtra is more easily defended than an above-ground dwelling, and each is also well hidden.

Gardens of basic vegetables, normally only found in the outside world have been cultivated with care in the Trun Forest. Berries, acorns, and other necessities that the Forest can provide are not cultivated, and gathered as necessary by the members of the Elistri. In addition, there are many unique varieties of edible plants that can only be found in the Trun, and all of these grow year-round and much faster than in other parts of the world. The Trunian growing season is only one month long, and plants will often bear fruit year-round. The massive amount of growth and highly regenerative property of the forest makes the subsistence of a large hunting and gathering culture possible. This situation has most to do with the magical nature of the trees of the woodland, and it is for this reason that the Trun Elves do not ever cut them.

The Elves of the Trun Forest, often called Wild Elves, live in a communal hunting and gathering based society called a Mandok. Two separate, but equally important aspects comprise a Mandok: the Elistri (El-is-tree) and the Wistri (Whis-tree). A third group of Wild Elves, the Liyari (Li-yar-ee), live separately from the Mandok..

New Mandoks, once formed regularly, have slowed in their formation since the war with the Imperials. As the hostilities with the Imperials continued, many Mandoks combined for the added protection and resources. It is not unheard of for a Mandok to part ways and form new and unique Mandoks, though it is not as commonly done as before the Imperial incursions. Most Trun Elves are fiercely loyal unto death to their particular Mandok.

War between Mandoks, a common practice before Imperial incursions due to arguments over hunting grounds and other matters, is almost unheard of today, but does rarely occur. Imperial troops forged the Trunians together as nothing in the past had.

The four largest, and most commonly known Mandoks are:

Nordana- Mandok of the Bear: Brown and Green

Lindana- Mandok of the Wolf: Purple and Blue

Taylana- Mandok of the Badger: Red and Yellow

Quelana- (Q lawn' a)- Mandok of the Willow : Orange and White

The term Elistri refers to the Trun Elves who live in the semi-permanent sites that the Wild Elves typically call home. Comprised of like-minded persons, they are like a large extended family. These are the Trunians with magical capabilities, young Trunians still completing their training with weapons that will later join the Wistri, and those Trunians that dedicate their entire existence to the daily running of the Mandok. These settlements are usually comprised of 20 to 40 Elves. Each Mandok has a patriarch and a matriarch, to oversee the everyday affairs of their settlement, and are given the title of Fuiir (Foo-ear) and Sindrir (Sin-dreer), respectively. This title is given as a sign of respect and while they make many decisions about the everyday operation of the Mandok, the ultimate power of the settlement belongs to the Colinadri. Every Elistri is responsible for gathering food that grows within the Trun Forest.

These Elves also have a difficult time learning the concepts of coin in exchange for goods, as they practice a barter system within their own society.

The Fuiir and Sindrir are usually the oldest and wisest of the Elistri, and oft times a member of the Colinadri is selected to hold this position, which is reviewed each year on the Winter Solstice. One of the main responsibilities of the Fuiir and Sindrir is the retainment of knowledge and teaching of the history of their particular Mandok and of the Trunians in general. They teach all matters of history, and they are seen as great sources of knowledge, and are regarded as respected Sages by all Trun Elves. It should be noted that this aspect of the Fuiir and Sindrir is particularly important as the Trun Elves practice an oral history instead of a written one. All legends and historic accounts are told to the Fuiir and Sindrir and passed on to the young of the Mandok.

An imperative element of every Mandok is the Colinadri, a group comprised of the most powerful mages found within each Mandok. The number can range from 3, in the smaller Mandoks, to 5, in a larger Mandok. The Colinadri is responsible for the overall direction the settlement takes year to year. This is done through a formal ritual casting called a Relitri, which is performed once a year beginning on the Winter Solstice. A Relitri lasts several days, and is a unique formal magic ritual, carried out in a Formal Circle of Power, which combines a High Horoscope and a Dream Vision. It reveals what the Elves should concentrate their efforts on in the coming year, where the best hunting grounds are, what quests should be undertaken, which enemies to watch, etc. The Colinadri it should be noted, are viewed more as guides, not rulers, although it is extremely rare for a Trunian to question what a member of the Colinadri has concluded. The Colinadri are also responsible for the ritual castings after the birth of each Elf within their Mandok, to discover the path the newborn will eventually grow to follow and whether they will be Elistri or Wistri, so the appropriate paintings and colors can be chosen.

Each Elistri has several groups within itself, brought together for the common knowledge of themselves and the betterment of the community at large. These groups are rarely referred to by a specific name, choosing to be identified through familiarity or through the colors of their face paint.

The following are the names of the groups found within all Elistri and the attributes associated with each. Colors are the face paints found on each person, decided upon during birth by the Colinadri, to more easily identify their profession. It should be noted that all work toward the betterment and health of their community and the forest at large.

Colinadri (nature)- Silver and Purple: knowledge, wisdom, prophecy, vision, protection

Katandri (harmonics)- Black and Yellow- transformation, growth, evolution, change, how to experience joy.

Nadri (also known as Shaman) (nature)- White and Purple- messenger, truth seeker, clear vision, heightened awareness

Kuvandri (celestial)- Blue and Yellow- spiritual enlightenment, clarity of vision, transcendence

Emani (earth/healers)- Gold and Silver- protection, longevity, healing, symbol of the bounty of Tyrra

Lumani (the home-keepers/care-givers)- White and Gold- service, gathering, community

The Wistri are the outward defenders of the Mandok and to the woodlands themselves. Usually several groups of Wistri will call a particular Mandok home, and defend the Elistri found there. It is rare for them to remain in any one place for more than a few days at a time, unless injured. They feel the call of the wood within their very spirits, and they hold their duty of protection above all else, even personal safety. It is rumored that when damage is done to the forest or its creatures that the Wistri can actually feel its pain, so they can better heed the cry for help. When trade with the outside world is needed, the Wistri are responsible for these dealings. They are the primary hunters of the Mandok, providing the meat and skins that help to add variety to the diet of the Elistri.

Wistri either travel alone, or in groups of 5-8. The choice is the individuals Elf's and they may change this preference at any time. They prefer the two-weapons fighting style and the bow, being the fighters and rogues of the settlements. When in battle, the Wistri are to be feared: they are savage and show no mercy to their enemies.

The following is a list of the Wistri groupings most commonly found and the colors marking their pre-destined professions and personalities. It is not uncommon for several members of each of these groups to travel the woods together, though there is no set traveling groups. The Wistri work toward the health and safety of their Mandok, the Elistri, and the Forest at large.

Scouts (includes most rogues)-

Yatron: Blue and White- cleverness, adaptability, cunning, subtlety, discretion

Twentril: Black and Purple- subtlety, silence, secretiveness, elusiveness

Warriors-

Salarin: Tan and White- aggressiveness, persistence, centeredness

Litrien: Red and Yellow- accuracy, rapid progress, restraint

Wilremig: Black and Red- association with the sun, courage, nobleness, prosperity

The last specific grouping of the Trunians are the Liyari (Lost Ones), who choose to live outside of the Mandok structure. These homeless people are called Liyari because they are not content within the ways of the Mandok, or cannot adapt to the needed cultural changes. They are lost to all that they know and either live in solitude in the deepest parts of the forest or ban together with other Liyari and form groups that raid and harass the Elistri. The Liyari are not looked upon with anger, but more pity than anything else. The death of a Liyari is mourned, as is the death of a clan member. The philosophy holds that the Liyari are lost from the world of the Trun and that it is hoped that someday they will return and be found again as a member of the clan. Being called a Liyari is not derogatory at all, and any

Trun Elf that would venture into the outside world for any reason would be considered a Liyari until his or her permanent return.

Learning a trade or a skill in a Mandok is through an apprentice system, and although the young Elf resides with his or her parents until a suitable age, the entire community is responsible for their upbringing. As soon as the child is introduced to Trunian society, they are surrounded and immersed in the culture of the Trun Elves. They learn the secrets of their people and of the other creatures that are known to reside in the forest. A large part of their education is learning how to safely interact with the forest that surrounds them; what the properties of plants are and how to manage in the forest are only two examples of an intense education for which the entire community is responsible. They also learn as much information as possible about the outside world and the races that reside in it, for the Trun Elves believe this to be important.

Trunian law is somewhat unusual. There are no written laws or punishments, as the Elves are raised with the morals of the generation before them. If a dispute arises and cannot be settled between the two parties themselves, the Colinadri comes together to perform a Ritual of Seeking, which reveals the truth of the situation. All abide by the decision of the Colinadri in these instances, which are extremely rare and almost unheard of. The Trun Elves do not practice the death penalty or the act of Obliteration, and the most feared punishment is being shunned. This is extreme, but once shunned all members (both the Elistri and the Wistri) of the offender's Mandok act like the individual does not exist in any way. Those shunned usually leave their home for solace either in the woods or in the outside world. This is true only within their own communities, and an outsider who is responsible for a wrong-doing then justice is dealt swiftly and on the spot, and a death sentence is more common than any other form of punishment in these cases, particularly if it is a transgression upon the wood itself.

Personality [TOP](#)

The Trunians are a happy, yet serious people. They find pleasure in simple things, but find no humor in the plight of others or in the wrongs of the world. They enjoy games, singing, and dancing. The arts of combat and archery intrigue and awe many of the Trunians. "Civilized" people often find the Trun Elves uncultured and crude and see this as a sign of ignorance

or stupidity, but this perception is misleading. The Trunians are intelligent and able to adapt to the world of outsiders relatively quickly, though by choice they have become more and more isolated in recent years.

Trunians feel a deep connection to the Trun Woods and will defend it at all costs, and are unmerciful in this process. Even when not within the Trun Forest, Trunians will feel the presence of their homeland deep inside, although the feeling will not be as strong when away from the Forest. When visiting other places Trunians often seek refuge in nearby woods to clear their minds and remember their homes. They do not particularly like the dwellings of other races, and tend to spend as much time outside as possible.

The only place that the Trunians fit the savage stereotype is in war. They spike their hair with mud or sap so that it will stand high on their heads, and they often give high, piercing battle cries to startle and intimidate their enemies. They are ferocious, barbaric warriors that prefer the use of two weapons to any other weapon style. The intense nature of Trunian combat is why they despise war and will only wage it if they feel that there is no other course. At times of all out war both the Elistri and the Wistri will come forth to defend their Mandok and the Forest .

The Trun Elves enjoy intoxicants and hallucinoids, and part-take of them often, though never when a task has not been completed or there is work to be done.

Dialect and Dress/Physical Appearance [TOP](#)

The Old Dialect of Trun Elves was an unusual combination of Emuri and ancient Elven. Today however they mostly speak common, although they use a somewhat crude and broken form of it. Unlike other cultures, the Trun do not place a lot of stock in the spoken or written word, preferring instead to communicate via body language and facial expression. The Trun themselves feel that silence is a more powerful force than speech, and it is for this reason that most Trunians are very soft-spoken in public.

Trun Elves also have a unique view of the body and of dress. Trun Elves, when born, have a ceremony called a Sotok performed on them by the Colinadri. This will determine whether or not they will be of the Elistri or the Wistri, and what profession they will follow. If an Elf becomes a Fuiir

or Sindrir, he or she will bear an extra marking in gray to represent their position. From then on they will use herbs, berries, and other resources to derive the colors on their faces to reflect their profession and their Mandok. The colorings can be of any shape or non-shape that the Wild Elf desires. These markings will always be visible and regarded with pride. The colors are always worn in times of battle, traveling, or when dealing with other Mandoks or those of the outside realm, but can be worn with regularity in day-to-day life. The last is the personal choice of each elf. Because of the Sotok, Spirit Forges do not occur within the Trunian society, despite the fact that they know of their existence in the outside world. If a Wild Elf feels that a different profession is their calling, they will often become Liyari and enter into the outside world in search of a Spirit Forge. This does not occur with any regularity.

Dress of the Trun Elves is simplistic. Undyed furs and tanned hides comprise typical dress, and adornments upon clothing are extremely unusual. Seldom do the Trun Elves wear shoes and armor, but when worn these will be fashioned of flexible, yet sturdy leathers. Necklaces, bracelets, and earrings are worn by both the men and the women of the Trun Elves, and are handcrafted, usually created from a great kill or plant life from the Trun forest.

Interracial Relations

The Trun are very naive when it comes to other races. They take it for granted that people are good and that they need not fear any other race. Several times this assumption has proven to be incorrect, and the Trun dislike Orcs and all of the Green-skinned races as a result of having been burned by them. They distrust these people and will be very wary of any of them, but they will not kill them on sight.

In recent years, after having dealt with the Imperial forces and frontiersmen, the Trunians have retreated into a more isolationist society. They feel that the outside world cannot understand, appreciate, or allow their ways, even though Trun Elves are quite flexible in their adaptation and interactions when dealing with other cultures. They are extremely cordial and not arrogant in the least when dealing with other races and cultures.

They view each as unique and individual and as such deserving of recognition.

Fearing extinction of their culture and beloved home, the Trunians have closed the Forest to outside travelers. They do not kill on sight, ever, but will usually follow anyone who steps into the Forest and judge their intent. Any direct harm upon the Forest is viewed as a hostile action and death is dealt swiftly. It is not impossible for outsiders to be welcomed into the very depths of the Trun Forest, although this occurs with greater scarcity as time rolls on.

Leisure [TOP](#)

The Trunians enjoy dancing, music, art, and family time. They enjoy practicing with weapons and magic for the sake of the sheer artistry and technique involved in these exercises. Formal magicians are highly respected, and during festivals many warriors and mages perform katas in their arts as a display of their skill and discipline. Fighting to resolve disputes within or between Mandoks seldom if ever occurs, and the violence against the other Mandoks is an alarmingly ugly contrast to the day-to-day life in Trunian culture.

Trunian Wild Elves enjoy the nature of the woods above all else. On most nights, clear or otherwise, it is not uncommon for any Elves within an Elistri to come together to dance and sing underneath the stars. Harmonisists lead this magical dance, and all others form circles around them. It is a time of reconnection with nature, and a cleansing and meditative time for the Elves.

Another love of the Trun Elves is storytelling. Many evenings, before dancing and singing, times of festivities, or during meals, any who choose to stand and tell a tale are allowed. Some are imagined, fantastical stories of the outside world, creative stories to imbue the morals of the Trun Elves, or historical legends that cover various aspects of Trun Society. The Fuiir and Sindrir always take a turn at storytelling in large groups. Trun Elves particularly enjoy stories from afar, and Liyari that return from the outside world to rejoin a Mandok and wish to tell tales of their outside adventures have no problems finding a captive audience.

Since the Trun Elves enjoy games, another past time, which is quite popular, is Trintok. Trintok is a game of skill, strength, and stealth, which centers around a ball of animal pelts wound tightly with leather string, and about the size of a melon. There are two teams comprised of five players each. The object of the game is to retain the ball and set it in the designated goal of the opposite team. The playing area is designated beforehand, and is quite large, but the location of the two goals is not revealed, leaving the other team to find it. They are marked with anything that is at hand, and easily recognizable by the other team (like a large unusually colored frond leaf). There are three rounds of thirty minutes each, with ten minute breaks between each round. Any strategy is allowed, as long as there is no serious damage that results in permanent afflictions. After a goal is scored, a non-partisan Elf (someone not playing) takes the ball and returns it to the center of the playing area and drops it. The game does not stop during this time. Each goal is worth one point. Teams change often and competition is good-natured, although quite fierce at times, and general injuries are not uncommon. Teams are made up of anyone who wishes to play at that time and although it does not happen regularly, Trintok games do occur between Mandoks. Although confusing, several Trintok games could be occurring at the same time in the same general vicinity. The winning team (the one that has accrued the most points) receives various prizes for the win, agreed upon before the beginning of the game: a particular necklace, first serve at the communal dinners, etc., but the true reward is knowing that one is especially fleet of foot or mind.

At the beginning of summer, all Trun Elves come together for the Hakfrin (Hack-frin) or the gathering of the Mandoks. The Hakfrin is a time for games of strength, skill, marriage, storytelling, dancing, singing, and great celebration. There is wrestling, games involving stationary targets, and games of chance. It allows for the individual Mandoks to rekindle ties, not only political, but also familial. The Hakfrin also allows for news of the past year from each Mandok to be shared with the rest. For many Mandoks it is the only time of the year that they will see each other, and it is a happy and peaceful time.

Birth [TOP](#)

Birth is seen as a time of great rejoicing amongst the Wild Elves. When a woman becomes pregnant, it is the entire Mandok's responsibility to care for and look after her. However, a pregnant woman will continue to do her duties up until she can no longer do so, normally the last week or so before birth. When the time for the birth is near, the soon to be mother is taken to a special Dirtra called the Ulink. This is a specially built house that is enchanted by both the Katandri (the Harmonicsists) and the Colinadri in a combined spell. The Ulink is in reality only a single room, which contains the 12 Lorinar- representations of the 12 elements. The Wild Elves believe that the 12 elements exist in each of us in some amounts. It is hoped that by having all 12 elements present during birth, that the child will be a balanced person who knows their purpose. After the birth of her child, the mother is lavished upon with gifts, normally hand-made crafts such as jewelry. She is celebrated as much as the newborn is. Sometime within the first day of life, the newborn will have the Sotok ceremony performed upon them. The newborn is then painted for the first time with the appropriate colors. Recently, for reasons unknown, twin births have begun to occur more often.

Death [TOP](#)

Death is also seen as part of the cycle of life. When a Wild Elf dies, the body is taken back to the Elf's Mandok. This is true even for Liyari, if there is another Wild Elf there to do so. The body is taken to a special Dirtra, called the Trecinct. This specially built house is magicked both by the Katandri (the Harmonicsists), and the Colinadri in a combined ceremony. The body will remain in the Trecinct for a period of time until all the Elistri and Wistri of a Mandok can return. The special magic of the Trecinct preserves and protects the body. Once the time has arrived, the body is then taken from the Trecinct at sunrise and into the Forest. The entire Mandok then views the body for that day. This is a day of fasting and of mourning. The Katandri (the Harmonicsists) sing throughout the day a song of mourning, which is a very haunting melody and probably helps to lend credit to the myths of the Whispering Woods and the ghosts. At sunset, all the Mandok join in the singing, which becomes more energetic, and there is dancing. This is the time of celebration of the life of the dead. This will go on all night, until sunrise. At sunrise the body is taken to a pyre and is burned. The pyre is in the center of the 12 Lorinar. The Lorinar are representations of the 12 Elemental planes. The Wild Elves believe that the

12 elements exist in each of us in some amounts. By burning the body of the dead surrounded by the 12 elements, they allow those elements to be released from the body to return to their plane of origin.

Marriage [TOP](#)

Wild Elves will marry one time, for life, as divorce does not exist. A Wild Elf can marry a member of his Mandok or another's. It is up to the newlyweds; with advice from Colinadri, as to which Mandok they join. There is no set tradition in which Mandok the couple joins. It is even possible that the 2 will leave and make their own Mandok. The wedding itself is a joyous occasion and will involve the entire Mandok. It involves lots of singing, dancing, and intoxicants. The ceremony is presided over by the Colinadri, and is symbolic of the joining of the 12 elements, using the Lorinar to symbolically meld the couple together through the intermingling of the elements in each of them.

Legends, Heroes, and Lords [TOP](#)

Daminis Greenleaf: Hero of the Shining Grove. This Mandok Fuiir led his people against Rengek in the Battle of the Shining Grove. Daminis battled Rengek himself and wounded him viciously causing the loss of one of the Karani Warlord's eyes. Daminis later led some of his fellow Trunians against the forces of Lord Cornelius, but was captured. He was enslaved and forced to work in the Corlissian Salt Mines where he died in 589.

Sivith Oakdale: This Colinadri member of the Lidana Mandok led the counter-attack that killed Rengek at The Battle of the Dead. He has since become Liyari and reportedly spends his time prowling the outskirts of the Trun Forest looking for Imperial patrols to kill.

Virrin Fernnin: This renowned Nadri created a sacred grove in the Trun Forest that may only be visited by Elves. This place is the last resort of the Trunian Elves. This place is known as the Haven Grove, and is deep within the forest. Virrin has not been among the Trunians for many years, but his ghost reportedly still haunts this place and protects it from outsiders.

Silvinis Willowsong: A Katandri of the Fretrim Mandok that was annihilated by the Imperials, this Trunian dedicated her life to finding a way to heal the woods of the damage inflicted upon it by the Imperials. Through long study and hardship, this Liyari has discovered a way in which to use songs to heal the plants and animals found within the Trun Forest. Many have offered her a home within their Mandok, but she has chosen to extend her song to the Forest at large and in times of great distress, to the forests of the outside world.

Yesperil Greydawn: A hero of all Trunians, this Salarin avenged the death of the small Wendarin Mandok, mercilessly murdered by Imperialists when they refused to surrender. Yesperil, returning several days after the slaughter, tracked and in a battle frenzy destroyed all thirty of the Imperial group responsible. When found by the Taylana Mandok she was unconscious, surrounded by the bodies of her enemies, and grievously wounded. The Taylana Mandok cared for her throughout her recovery, and after having been Liyari for a short period, she has returned to the Taylana Mandok. Many Trunians stand in awe of her and although always welcome in the Taylana Elistri, she prefers the quiet solace of the Forest .

The Legend of Virrin Fernnin as told by Sindrir Terilthil Maybrook of the Quelana Mandok in the year 600 and recorded by Scribe Relithia Dandridge of Stonegate Keep

The winter of that year was extremely cold and long lasting. The trees were covered with ice that hung as long as a man's arm and death and sickness visited many on the back of a chill wind. The winter that year was harder in

other ways as well. The men of the blue and gold (side note: Imperialists) had killed many of our brothers and sisters that year. The white snow in many places was covered with the blood spilled in the many battles, both that of Wild Elves and of our enemies. The tears shed by the Quelana Mandok froze on our faces as they flowed down our cheeks. Never had we seen such pleasure in killing as seen by our enemies. Many other Mandoks had fallen, their names and memories gone like the leaves on the wind in autumn. It was a sad time. The Colinadri did much magic in their circle to try and discover what to do to stop an enemy, which covered the fields and glens like flies on a long dead animal. They knew no answers. Hope was fading more with each setting of the sun.

One night all members of the Quelana Mandok gathered in the Dirtra where we meet for such talks. There were men and women from all the large Mandok's that were left and many from the smaller ones. It was time to choose a path for the Elves. Looking around I saw many heads bowed with the weight of sadness and of sites to evil to speak of. My heart mourned for my people. This should have been a time for gathering near the fire and speaking of tales of heroic deeds and fond memories, with children laughing and playing. Instead the children were silent, many now without parents to guide them in the trials to come. I felt a fire begin within my heart, closing off the sadness, and hatred clouded my mind for the men that had brought my people to such a state of despair.

Many questions were asked and few answers were given. Some said we should leave these lands and travel many miles to the South, away from the war. This shows the true hopelessness that my people felt, for never would they leave the Forest unprotected, for the forest is within us at all times. The pain the forest feels, we feel, and it had become a constant dull ache of the Forest in anguish and dying. Many suggestions were rejected. After several hours of speaking, nothing had been decided on what path to follow.

Then a young wild elf that had been sitting quietly in the back of the room stood up. I recognized him as Virrin Fernin, a Nadri (side note: nature caster) of remarkable powers. He had not joined the Colinadri yet, though many questioned why, despite his young age. He knew many things about the Forest that he should not know, many things that no other Elf of the forest knew. He was a quiet lad and naive in many matters, but when it came to the forest and the creatures that dwelled there, he was an old man,

both wise and full of knowledge. His bond with the woodland was strange and mystical; many believed that he could speak to the woods as I am speaking to you. Still others believed that he was a creation of the forest, sent to us to speak for it. I noticed that his eyes were still lit with the fire of youth, eager and curious. It was a large difference from the dull, lifeless eyes the surrounded me. Perhaps his connection with the forest protected him from the despairs of mortal men. Or perhaps it was simply the firelight reflected in his eyes. No one will know now.

As I saw him stand I raised my hand to silence the quiet murmurings of the room. I bade him to speak and with a nod of his head he began. Not a sound could be heard as he spoke. I will repeat to you now what I recall, but I cannot repeat the magic that filled his voice, of the lilting words that sounded as if they carried a harmonious tune. It was the sound of hope, and unless you have heard it before, it cannot be described.

He told of speaking with the mystical creatures in the Forest , creatures that would not allow Elves to glimpse them, let alone speak with them. He said that they were afraid, for their lives and their homes and that something had to be done. He said that we were their guardians, and we could not leave them to die at the hands of our enemies. He spoke of the elusive Salareen (side note: rumors have had it that there is a strange and magical race of Elves that retain the power to transform into wolves and protect the forests of Tyrra. The few reports of sightings that are mentioned in the Stonegate archives are vague and the existence of the Salareen have never been proven or disproven.). The Elves of the Forest knew the stories of their existence, but more as a legend of our people. Many looked at this young elf in disbelief. He said that he had studied magic with the Salareen and they had taught him a deep and ancient magic. A powerful one that should not be cast lightly or without thought.

He would not discuss the details behind this magic when questioned, but said that he would cast this magic for the good of the people. He explained that it would create a haven for the Trun Elves, a place where only Elves could enter. A place where arrows could not reach to find the heart of its target. A place that no magic could breach. A place that would be a last resort to the Elves should the army of the man full of hatred defeat us. I began to see the light of hope rekindled in the eyes of many, like the stoking of a dying fire.

Though many of my people did not realize this, I knew that what young Virrin offered was the continuation of the war, but one without despair. Should we fall, our children would have a place of safety in which to go. We would not have to fear for our way of life leaving the land forever. This would be a haven in which we could make a stand, if need be, or a place to regain our balance. The very idea that it would be there would be enough for many of the Elves to continue the fight. I regret to say that no one asked what it would cost of young Virrin to cast this magic. He agreed to do it and said that he would begin immediately. That was enough.

He entered into the circle of nature of our Mandok and began to cast a great spell. It was strange. He sang a haunting melody to which I cannot remember the words, but not because of my age. He sang for many days. The entire Mandok guarded the circle for these days, fearing an attack and the disruption of the spell. Toward the end of the fifth day, what happened is still difficult to believe when one remembers.

A golden light filled the circle. It shone off the snow with a radiance that caused many to turn away from the sight. The bottom of the circle of nature looked to have been turned to golden water. Virrin stood within this water that reached to his knees and calmly waited. Soon a figure began to arise out of the water. It was a woman, but only in form. It was an easy task to tell this. Her hair was straight and flowed almost to the ground and looked to be composed of gold and sunlight. She was Elven, but her skin was as white as the snow. Her eyes were the color of the leaves at full summer, that elusive green that can be seen from the corner of your eye, but when you turn to take in its beauty it is gone from sight. She was clothed in a white shift and there was two swords strapped to her back. The swords glowed silver and the casings in which they were sheathed had many magical runes flowing on them, much like water in a brook. She sat atop of the largest unicorn I had ever seen. A magnificently white creature, proud and defiant. Motes of light appeared to surround them as they rose from the water of gold. A feeling of calm swept over the Elves as we watched. A feeling of happiness and hope flowed through me and tears, not of sadness, found their way down my face. It was a feeling of coming home after a particularly long and wearying journey.

In the women's hands was a silver pitcher that had blue runes, which sparkled in the moonlight. Virrin fell to his knees, and then stood. The woman held the pitcher forward and spoke in a voice composed of

happiness. She said only a few sentences, but our hearts were filled. She said, "Virrin Fernnin of the Elves, you have called me forth. Your heart and your intentions are both noble and true. Take the Pitcher of Emerilion and help your people. You do not have much time. You understand what is required of you?" when Virrin nodded she continued, "Your sacrifice shall be remembered for all time. Your protection of the people and many creatures of this forest is known, and shall also be remembered by those not of your kind." She then looked to us and spoke, "Never doubt your path. Your hearts are true and your course is righteous. Continue on. Although I can not tell if your path shall succeed, it is one which must be followed". Turning back to Virrin she said, "With steady hand and wisdom fulfill the path which you have chosen." With that Virrin stepped forward and claimed the pitcher. The women and the Unicorn faded. Virrin then bent to the golden water and filled the pitcher. The light suddenly faded and all appeared as it had always been.

Without a word Virrin stepped from the circle and walked into the woods carrying the pitcher before him. He walked for many hours, to the very center of the forest. As we followed I saw many creatures following beside us, hidden by the trees. There were Satyrs, Deer, Pixies, Unicorns, and several others that were hidden in the shadow of the trees.

When we reached the center of the wood Virrin turned and spoke to the Elves gathered there. He said, "This place is to be known as Haven Grove. Use it carefully and only as a last resort. It is a sacred and special place that will protect you in times of great need." With that he knelt and began to pour the golden water onto the ground. It spread very far very quickly. It spread past us and into the woods beyond. The light in the Grove grew greater and greater until I could not see my hands when I held them to my face. The light then faded, and both Virrin and the pitcher were gone. All could feel the magic of Haven Grove, and although there was sadness for the loss of Virrin, many smiled with renewed vigor.

We left Haven Grove after a short while. There were many plans to be made for the continuation of the war. The men and women of the other Mandoks left to tell their people of the wonders they had witnessed and to each prepare their Mandok for the trials before them.

In the years to come, our people fought fiercely and bravely against the threat of the men of the one who wished us harm. Many fell, and they

were mourned. Haven Grove was never used, although there were times in the moons to follow that it was considered. The very existence of Haven Grove and the sacrifice of Virrin drove the Trun Elves to new heights, fighting and defending their forest and the creatures within with ferocity unmatched at any other time and with a renewed hope that held throughout the many battles and deaths of loved ones.

Many Elves fought in the war and many of them died. Other heroes and heroines arose since the creation of Haven Grove and their sacrifices were great as well: Nami Heatherfew, Galindro Weithelm, Yesperil Greydawn, the Wistri of the Relais, Sholonar Treetorn, and many, many more. Their sacrifices, along with Virrin's, were great and shall always be remembered. But I believe that these are tales for a different day. The fire burns low and I am tired and filled with a sadness from remembering these days of hardship and happiness.

History

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604 (as recorded by the Scribes of Stonegate) - The disappearance of Nature magic ripped a savage gash in the fabric of Trunian society. Many of the sacred places and items created with that power failed, and the ability of the Colinadri to guide the elves was questioned. Widespread panic was only narrowly avoided by the stoic nature of the Fuir and Sindrir who lead each Mandok, and by the Colinadri themselves. Wisely, they quickly moved to patch the holes left by Nature's leaving, focusing on what could be done instead of what was lost. Although the connection to the forest and the land seemed weaker, the Trun elves still sport a nearly supernatural understanding and rapport with their homeland. Earth and Harmonics magics have been used to create the same ritual effects, and the Colinadri have embraced a mix of the two in the breach of their lost abilities. Though, perhaps, weaker, the Trun elves are struggling valiantly to reaffirm their place. For now, the most noticeable change is the disbanding of one of the Elistri, as the Nadri are absorbed into other occupations. The Colinadri continue their role as guides and holders of wisdom, but there are rumblings of doubt that have not yet been subdued. Still unsteady and a bit unsure, they are more closed off than before and very little contact with the outside world has occurred. The increase in travelers across the plains has been ignored as the Trunians tend once more to the hurts to be healed within the forest.