

COMPANY OF THE DRACOHAR

The members of this adventuring band all wear dragon helmets, stylized hoods or cowls resembling dragon maws—this look meant to ape the appearance of the legendary Dracohar (humanoids with dragon heads) that live somewhere in the Western Heartlands. The Company of the Dracohar are comprised mainly of veteran caravan guards and mercenaries. A pair of rogues from Berdusk, a priestess of Sune from Iriaebor and a former House mage from Suzail round out their numbers. The Dracohar are currently exploring the southernmost portion of the Sword Mountains in the vicinity of Amphail, where they resupply and rest between adventures.

HARBOLD'S HELLRAISERS

A mixed band of outcast dwarves and humans, Harbold's Hellraisers are a notorious band of adventurers that make all of Faerûn north of Waterdeep and west of the Anauroch their stomping grounds.

The ranks of the Hellraisers have swelled to ten humans, while the number of dwarves has shrunk to five. Once twelve dwarves walked the trails of the Savage North under Harbold's banner, but three died in battle with giants, one was disintegrated, another disappeared and two retired. [1]

The humans are all barbarians from the various tribes that roam the North. Some are like the dwarves—outcasts no longer welcome in the places they called home—while the rest are afflicted with a mix of wanderlust and a burning desire to fight.

And fighting is what Harbold's Hellraisers do best. The long reach of the barbarians compliments the close-in fighting style of the dwarves; together they make a frighteningly effective combat team. However, when the ranks of the enemy outnumber the Hellraisers, the dwarves and humans give in to battle lust and each seeks his foes in whatever numbers the gods grant.

Second only to battle is the Hellraiser's taste for good living. For the dwarves this means an endless supply of drink, a warm fire and sturdy hardwood tables and chairs capable of carrying the weight one or more drunken dwarves, who prefer to reenact their favorite battle stories as much as tell them.

For the humans this means strong drink too, but more so food and plenty of it, as well as companionship. There are an equal number of male and female barbarians among the Hellraisers, and often as not what the dwarves require by way of ground floor furniture the barbarians require of their sleeping accommodations.

The Hellraisers reputation is such that they are required to place sizable deposits before they are allowed into most establishments in Waterdeep and Silverymoon. That they are allowed in at all has to do with the fact that the Hellraisers always pay for damages, and word has spread that they do not haggle over cost; they pay what is asked and then depart, which has allowed more than one innkeeper and festhall owner to not just rebuild but upgrade.

The dwarves get along well enough, but they count their coins greedily with one eye while watching with the other for what they regard as the thieving hands of their fellow dwarves. The barbarians have learned to never leave coins untended on any surface, and to complete all their transactions by handing coins over whenever one of their dwarf fellows is within arm's reach.

It's not unheard of for the dwarves to start bickering over imagined thefts and unfair divisions of the spoils of adventuring, and for these arguments to turn into full-fledged brawls right in the middle of the most dangerous dungeons, Underdark caverns and forgotten woodlands of the North. [2]

Harbold is a century older than any dwarf left in the ranks of the Hellraisers and has felt his age for the last fifty years. He is the only dwarf who never talks of home, and of all the dwarves he speaks the least. Yet his leadership remains unquestioned; every member of the Hellraisers is unwaveringly loyal to him.

The relationship between Harbold and the many barbarian tribes of the North goes back more than two hundred years, and the story of the bond Harbold forged with the tribes would last twice as long as any tale told by his fellows.

FOOTNOTES

[1] This last dwarf vanished while grappling a drow mage who'd just disintegrated her battle companion. Both dwarf and drow disappeared when she plunged a dagger into the drow's back, activating a contingency magic that whisked them off to an unknown location. The other two dwarves were made to leave against their will. Harbold kicked them out, claiming old age made them ineffective, but in truth he'd grown tired of seeing old friends fall, and believed that of the surviving dwarves these two were the most capable of starting families and living happy lives.

[2] Some of these arguments go back a hundred years or more. The barbarians find these disputes entertaining, as the arguments are prefaced by the dwarves telling hours-long stories of adventures from times past, and sometimes the noise is enough to lure horrible beasts in need of slaying.

