

Gold Mandragora

Those who rule.

Of all Mandragora, the Gold most closely resemble their Dragon ancestors. Their bodies are lithe and thin, with willowy limbs and they resemble bipedal Dragons rather than humanoids. They also vary from the others in that they have no wings: the Gold are the only Mandragora that rely upon magic to take to the air. They have pure golden scales that darken to a ruddy-brown colour as they grow older, with two black horns that curve upwards from their heads. The male Mandragora have beards which they often thread small gems into, or braid. The females wear elaborate head-dresses, often intricately worked with gems, and filigreed with precious metals. Their clothing tends towards subtle blends of coloured silks, or a similar lightweight cloth, always of excellent quality.

Gold Mandragora comprise the nobility within Mandragora society, and many of them are powerful magicians and scholars. Almost all Gold Mandragora are involved in politics of some kind, either directly, or in some form of power play that is the staple of life on Lonaraban. Almost every Gold is born with some skill in the Art (as the Mandragora call magic), but in recent years some have been born with none whatsoever. In most cases, these develop later at a prodigious rate, normally at the onset of puberty. There is some concern to the threat to the fabric of society that uncontrolled magical powers may pose - especially by adolescents with little or no control over their powers. Consequently, all young Gold Mandragora are required to attend the Yar'atach'haim, a vast training academy and city based deep in the UnderEarth. Here all Mandragora with any ability in the Art spend some time honing their skill and self-control, but only the Gold spend more than a few years in the Yar'atach'haim (they spend at least a decade). "Control the magic lest the magic controls you," is the most important lesson that they learn in the dark and shadowy confines of this subterranean training encampment. Those that show true skill in the Art stay on, often becoming High Magi, or even ArchMagi. Noble Houses often have a handful of High Magi, normally senior family members.

The struggles between the many Noble houses tend to draw family members into them like quicksand, and all Gold Mandragora are skilled in some form of combat: political, physical, or magical. Many find themselves embroiled in the politics of the Shirr'haim, but considerable prestige can be gained by a variety of other methods. A Noble house's son or daughter becoming a commanding officer in the Mandragora Wings of the army (a detachment of the Mandragora army) is but one of several methods of gaining status. Other darker methods such as the assassination of an opponent, or public embarrassment of a rival are far more commonplace than admitted to publicly by the Shirr'haim. After all, a reputation for ruthlessness and an open display of power guarantees that an opponent will think twice. Weaponry favoured by the majority of the Gold consists of various forms of kalacs (swords), although some are fond of other weapons - but this is more from personal preference.

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