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## Races of the Mind

# Half-Giant

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# HALF-GIANTS

*He stood ready, blade in hand, as he eyed his opponent. The golem was carved of solid stone, hard and unyielding. Despite his great strength and the leverage his long limbs could bring to bear, half a dozen blows that would have felled a creature of flesh and blood had glanced off, gouging and cracking the surface of the stony behemoth, but causing no real harm; the damage was superficial, the structure still intact. He could feel his limbs growing heavy, his motions slowing in response to a pulse of magic from the great stone warrior, though losing none of their momentum. Soon he would scarcely be able to move at all, and that would cost him everything. He could not afford to let this fight draw out any longer.*

*Pushing past the creeping lethargy weighing on his arms, he drew forth the power smoldering in his mind, and let it flow through him into his mighty curved sword. The deep purple crystal of the blade began to glow brightly and he lunged. His limbs began to move again with their customary sure swiftness as his blade sang through the air. He felt a deep sense of satisfaction at the sound of shattering stone, as his blade hit home and dug deep.*

Half-giants have little in the way of unified culture. Only two generations ago, every half-giant was a slave, forcibly bred into being by the mighty sorcerer-kings of the south. Intending them to be semi-skilled laborers and warriors, their overlords got more than they counted on, for some of their creations found more than mere intelligence burning in their brains.

Though not possessed by either the humans or the dune giants from whom they were bred, these slaves found a spark of psionic power glimmering within them. Cultivating this power in secret, eventually many scattered groups were able to throw off their chains and flee. Not all had the resolve or ability to escape, however, and they and their descendents remain in bondage. Some half-giants actively pursue the freedom of their kin, staging raids and helping those new to freedom to find a place in

the world. Most, while sympathetic, are content to simply live their own lives, grateful that they will never bear the burdens of their ancestors.

## HALF-GIANT APPEARANCE

Half-giants, as may be surmised from the moniker, stand much taller than the humans they descend from, and are normally much broader as well. A typical half-giant male stands between 7 ½ to 8 feet tall, with females only marginally shorter and just as massive; both sexes weigh between 300 to 400 pounds.

As slaves, half-giants were never allowed to grow their hair. Their masters required them to shave their heads each morning before their labors, as a sign of their servitude. Now most free half-giants, both female and male, wear their hair long and keep it clean and well-groomed; some oil their hair against the harsh, arid climate and ever present grit of their new homelands. Half-giants often keep their hair in beautiful, complex braids and many, particularly older half-giants and others who lived as slaves, are as fiercely proud of their hair as a dwarf of his beard.

A half-giant's skin is usually a coppery color, sometimes with olive undertones. Although some, particularly adventurers, sometimes wear and use psionic tattoos, very rarely will a half-giant bear any mark of a more permanent nature on their skin. Some half-giants still bear the ownership marks and brands given to them by their former masters, though many with these types of marks will go to such lengths as to find someone willing and able to manifest *psionic regeneration* on them, if they are unable to do so themselves, to rid themselves of such a marking.

Half-giants often exhibit a preference for what they call "interesting clothing", not content to simply cover themselves, but preferring instead a more impressive, awe-inspiring manner of dress. Unbeknownst to most, including some of the half-giants who indulge in this fashion, is that this is