

Adlatum Preview #1: AVANESTI ELVES

The elf, with the top of his head aimed roughly towards Jace, rolled to the left. The sheet of frost lifted up off the ground causing a cascade of snow and moisture to drift and sparkle through the air. The morning sunlight illuminated the frozen water causing Jace to gaze even more at the wonder before him. The elf pressed himself upwards onto all fours before lifting his head.

For the first time he looked at Jace, but the troupe leader was not looking at the elf's eyes. He was staring at the single angelic wing coming out of his back, partially raised up and stretching a good six feet from its owner's body. Jace's eyes trailed down the appendage towards the elf and saw that his other wing was vastly missing. The start of a wing extended from his back in a mirror image of the other, but several inches away it ended in a bloody mess. Wherever it was, it had been cut off.

Jace swallowed, dumb-founded. He had heard legends of the winged Avanessti elves but never believed they were truly real, just tales from the distant east of Adlatum.

The Forests of Bhadlum,
Early Winter of 421 AD

ELVES

The elves of Adlatum were once a powerful force for Good on the continent, seizing the Midlands from the ogres during the Age of Light and turning Tao-Shin away from Evil. However, one of their sages found a reference in their Volume of the Prophet to a great Drowning that would drown their lands in terrible floodwaters. Some fled to the sea in great arks, while others took to the lofty peaks. The Graygem claimed both, transforming them forever into coral elves and winged elves.

WINGED ELVES [AVANESTI]

Aloof and mysterious, the Avanessti are the only race to currently possess one of the Volumes of the Prophet. Living by a strict code of separatism on a floating island high in the mountains, they had passed from all history until the night the Moons vanished and their island city fell from the heavens. Now they are forced to interact with the land-bound races they have long avoided.

The Fallen: The Fallen are those rare Avanessti whose actions and crimes against their brethren made them outcasts. Fallen elves have been magically stripped of their wings and usually live among the other races in secret. Many have banded together in small enclaves, either lost in grief or burning with anger. Only the most powerful magic can be used to re-grow a fallen elf's wings.

Personality: "As arrogant as an Avanessti" is an epithet common to the Talonesti, and it is probably the most fitting. Avanessti see all the Wingless races as barbarous and uncivilized, particularly the Gildanessti, who they view as mongrels and usurpers to all that was once Lost Valenessti.

Physical Description: Just tall enough to be considered medium creatures, the Avanessti are extremely fair skinned with large almost almond-shaped eyes and light hair. Eye color is almost universally blue of some shade. The main difference between the Avanessti and other elves are the large wings that each Avanessti sprout from their back and upper shoulders. The wings of an Avanessti are their pride, and while Avanessti wings are some shade of white, it is not uncommon to see them bleached or pattern-dyed in subtle shades and patterns that mimic real birds.

There are elves of Avanessti heritage known as the Fallen, who were once Avanessti, but have been named dark elves and have had their wings magically amputated. The descendants of these dark elves who have built a community with the Gildanessti are called Talonesti. Fallen elves obviously lack the wings of their brethren but are otherwise physically identical to the Avanessti.

Relations: Avanessti relations with other elves are strained at best and outright hostile to the Talonesti, who they see as dark elves. They distrust the Gildanessti, who they see as mongrels of human descent and the children of former slaves. Avanessti considered all the other wingless races as lesser beings, ones fit only to be ruled or eliminated.

Alignment: While typically of good alignment, the Avanessti have a double standard on what is considered moral, especially in regards to what they consider "lesser creatures" (which, to them, is nearly everyone).

Winged Elven Lands: The Avanessti are on the verge of extinction, after the destruction of Avanesst, the Avanessti are struggling to rebuild a new flying city which has been named Helionost. The new city is located upon an isolated mountaintop in the Little Condor Mountains.

Religion: Avanessti exclusively worship Argento Cant (Solinari) and depend upon mysticism for the casting of divine magic.

Language: The Avanessti speak a pure form of elven that echoes back to Lost Valenessti.

Names: Avanessti follow the naming conventions of the Silvanesti and Qualinesti found in the *Dragonlance Campaign Setting*.

Adventurers: Many Avanessti become adventures to seek out rare spell components, seek out unusual spells or forms of magic, or to study other cultures in an attempt to secure the defense of their new home.





Female
Avanesti in flight

Winged Elf Racial Traits

Winged elves possess the following racial traits instead of the normal elven abilities and traits:

- ☞ +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, -2 Charisma.
- ☞ Medium. As Medium creatures, winged elves have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- ☞ Winged elf base land speed is 30 feet. A winged elf's wings give him a fly speed of 40 feet with average maneuverability. Winged elves cannot fly with a heavy load or when wearing heavy armor.
- ☞ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects and a +2 racial saving throw bonus against enchantment spells and effects.
- ☞ *Elvensight*: As listed in the *Dragonlance Campaign Setting*.
- ☞ *Weapon Familiarity*: Winged elves may treat raptor claws as martial weapons rather than exotic weapons.
- ☞ *Weapon Proficiency*: All winged elves are proficient with the javelin and receive a free Martial Weapon Proficiency with the short sword.
- ☞ +2 racial bonus on Listen and Search checks. A winged elf who passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if he were actively looking for it.
- ☞ +4 racial bonus on Spot checks.
- ☞ Automatic Languages: Elven. Bonus Languages: Auran, Common, Dwarven, Magius, Ogre, Onarian, and Sylvan.
- ☞ Favored Class: Wizard.

- ☞ *Level Adjustment*: +1. Winged elves are more powerful and gain levels more slowly than most other races of Adlatum. See Chapter 6 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

Fallen Elf Racial Traits

Fallen elves possess the winged elf racial traits except as follows:

- ☞ *Wingless*: Fallen elves cannot regain their wings by any means short of a *miracle* or *wish* spell. (Fallen elves who somehow regain their wings, and thus become winged elves again, must "buy off" their new level adjustment before they may continue advancing in class levels.)
- ☞ *Level Adjustment*: +0.

