**Nera Aquilae Backstory:**

“I was once a coward. I learned this about myself as I reflected in my grief during my self-isolation from the world. This knowledge has reshaped me into what you now behold; one who has conditioned herself to always remain undaunted. Thus, I remain serene even in the face of disaster.

You wish to know how this came about. Then listen to this tale of sorrow.

Once I knew love. He was a ranger, a human ranger, witty, bold, gentle strong, and to my eyes, beautiful. We met a generation ago as humans reckon time. By chance we were both in the Deep Woods, tracking a crazed diseased boar, to give it a merciful death. At first meeting, our heats merged, one heart, each half, one of each. blessed by the Green. I took him to my village, where we lived as one. But the happy time was short, a mere decade, an eye-blink as we elves measure time. He had a desire to return to human society. I was the only one to tie him to the Aquilae tribe and he begged me to accompany him. But I was a coward then, in many ways.

I had thought that I was still too young for parenthood and afraid that being a mother would delay my time to join the Circle. May the Green curse me! He desired a child, ‘a girl that looks like you’, he would say. But due to my cowardice and selfishness I ensured the herbs I took would not allow that. And so, there was no one else to tie him. May the Green curse me! He begged me to accompany him, but I was too much of a coward; too afraid of living in a city, too afraid to watch him grow old in a strange place. With a promise to return, his final gift to me was this precious whistle you see around my neck. He carved it from the heartwood of the rare osage orange tree, the gold-colored wood. My heart was heavy then, but still whole, half his, half mine.

I will skip to the end. In time we heard of a Great War. Humans like their wars, do they not? It was then that half my heart vanished. I knew at that instant that his soul had left this world. Oh, the agony of having only half a heart! In pain and anguish, I left my lands to wander as a hermit. I avoided any contact with any sentient being, speaking only to the animals of nature. I wandered mountains, plains, swamps, and forests, alone and lonely, berating myself but also learning and accepting the person I truly was.

Would that I had gone with him. Would that I had given him as many children as he wanted. For that, may the Green curse me. Discovering what I truly am, has brought me tranquility as I vowed to never again act the coward. I ended my isolated wanderings. Now my goal is to discover his fate, find any children he may have had so that I may once again see his features in them and to locate his final resting place so that I can beg his forgiveness.

I find that since my return, I get no enjoyment from food, drink, song, merriment or any other delight. I suppose the Green has indeed cursed me.”

**Background History:**

The wood elves of the Aquilae tribes live in the wilderness, far from the habitations of the human races and even those of the high elves. They live with the land, the beasts and the plants. They believe that Nature, called the Green ,is the primeval force that brought all into existence. The Green will provide and take care of all those who will provide and tend to the Green. Untypically, due to the loss of her lover, she became a hermit and a recluse. She wandered the wildernesses for decades. Then she returned, determined to find his descendants, if any, and locate his last remains. She thought she had found a clue which indicated the loss of her lover may not have meant his death and followed through a portal. She became unconscious and upon awakening found herself enslaved in a gnoll mine with six other prisoners.

**Personality:**

Nera has no interest in establishing close friendships and is constantly travelling seeking her goals. She knows that she is on a quest that is bigger than herself. She has also found herself at peace in her soul and so remains serene in all situations, “should the Green desire my death, then I will die. If, not, then I will live.” There is no fear in her. She has also found that she does not enjoy the pleasantries of life, as if having only half a soul has removed any pleasant experiences.

**Appearance:**

For a wood elf, Nera is taller than average standing at 5’9”. Her weight of 130 pounds and her small breast size make her appear slim and slender, all of which belie her strength and stamina. She has fine facial features with dark hazel eyes and shoulder length hair, colored the shade of striped-brown as wenge wood.

She wears a headband of a small set of deer antlers to which is attached various bird feathers. This makes her appear even taller Her upper ear lobes have a row of small green tarnished copper earrings while similar larger ones pierce her lower lobes.

Dark hunter- green-tar-black tattoos reminiscent of creeping vine leaves cover her body as if spiraling from her feet upwards around her legs, torso, arms, shoulders and neck to her forehead. Only the front of her face is tattoo free.

Adorning her is a necklace of eagle feathers which acts as her druidic focus. Attached to it is a wooden gold-colored whistle. ( Trinket )