

Tales of the Black Bard

These are the words and thoughts of Odi Silvertongue, a half-elven wandering, warrior poet who in his many years has traipsed across the known world of Shatterdawn in his own roguish bohemian style gathering, tales, songs and scars along the way. They should in no way be taken as “true fact” as the Black Bard has a tendency to “color” himself in a better light than his less than savory reputation affords him in many of the known kingdoms of this vast realm. As Odi is found of saying “Take from a tale what truths you will and leave the rest a little better than you found it.”

“Hotter than a dragon’s breath and twice as deadly! Those who feel the kiss of Balefire seldom live to tell of it.”

- The words of Quantoss Wyrmsbreath, Master of the Seventh Flame; speaking to a class of Balefire initiates prior to their entrance duel -

Of Balefire Mages: In my many travels I have encountered many a spell caster, though none possessed of such destructive power as those who call themselves Balefire Mages. These master evokers whose deadly focused spellcraft is a wonder to behold. Through their secret arts they twist the element of fire to a point that rarely even a red dragon would want to face the blue-green death that is *Balefire*.

I myself have bore witness to a small group of Balefire Mages kill Ashanax, a young red dragon when she attacked the Varnoshian town of Crow’s Cairn. The battle was so quick, it scarcely disrupted the natural street traffic, in the end the dragon was almost wholly consumed from the three mage’s combined onslaught and only half a dozen buildings saw any kind of real damage. On another occasion a single Balefire Mage laid wastes to an entire company of less than honest Bahrithian road wardens over the contents of his wagon and the hefty road toll they had decided to charge him when trying to cross the border of Varnos, leaving little besides plies of blackened bones and puddles of molten slag in his wake.

Balefire Mages are easily identified, just by plain sight. They almost all bear the scars and melted flesh from mastering the art of Balefire and most wear the blue-green and grey robes of their order. They are also quite boisterous by nature, almost to the point of sometimes being feared or hated; for the temper of the fiery hearted mages is legendary (this is usually from amongst other arcane spell caster, as they view the practitioners of the Balefire discipline, to be warmongers and bullies).