

Maenad

Bronze is the mirror of the form; wine, of the heart. — Aeschylus, 525-456 BC

Black and white and red and blue, Things that look good on you- And if I scream don't let me go, A purple stain I know
Purple Stain – Red Hot Chili Peppers

Quote: *Euon! Euon! Eu-Oi-oi-oi!*

The Maenad, also called the Bacchai, Bassarids, Thyasoi, Thyiades, or Potniades, have a long and torrid history in the annals of Greek Mythology. Followers of the Mad-God Dionysus (Bacchus to the Romans), it was this all-woman Kith that raped and murdered the poet demi-god Orpheus. This is something that the dreaming still hasn't fully forgiven, and their curse of abandon (the *Dipsa tou aimatos*) will haunt them the whole of their existence.

While a distinctively Greek Fylf (Kith), the Kith boasts family from all nations. African wild-woman and Asian dragon ladies with a penchant for strong sake call each other sister alongside the Greco-centric Maenads that still call their Wild Islands home. While not necessarily a unified kith by any means, they still gather during

certain nights (the Heliades [Seelie] during the new moon, and the Keres [Unseelie] during the full-moon) to sing, dance, drink, and perform their rite of Oreibasia. May the Gods help the mortal man that spies them during these rites.

Their penchant for divination has also enabled them to maintain a rather jet-set lifestyle. This wealth is important when considering some of their more unsavory practices may garner some unwanted attention. Yet despite their sordid history, their Dreaming laid curse and dark cravings, the Maenad get along surprisingly well. The modern world encourages strong expressions, and the Maenad are anything but weak. If anything, they are too strong. Their berserker rages and lack of restraint has gotten not a few of the numbers in dire straits over the years.

Appearance: The Maenads are gorgeous and it shows. But their Andros Metamfiesi (Human Mien) boasts less the classic beauty of the Sidhe, or the Cuteness of a kitten pooka. It is more akin to the heavy raw sensuality of the Satyrs. To a one, the Maenads boast strong well-defined muscles, a build that comes from running and dancing until exhaustion. The faces are dark and hair is worn loose, and they prefer animal prints on all clothing (leopard skin under-garments are a particular favorite).

While in Nereidias Metamfiesi (the Fae Mien) the lips and fingers turn a dark violet and red hue, as if stained with wine (or blood) and the eyes burn with a violet or amber madness. The most striking change in Fae mien are the teeth, which grow small and pointed. When in the Fae Mien, a Maenad seems to smile at all times.

Lifestyle: The modern world is only too happy to promote sensual, lusty, and provocative women. Their strong bodies, strong minds, and even stronger voices ensure that they not only survive but thrive. Women's rights activists, Out-spoken actresses, and media darlings of all stripes have a sizable number of Maenads in their ranks.

Glamour Ways: Maenads gain Megaleio whenever mortals *truly* lose themselves in reckless abandon. While dancing drunk on the table may be good enough for some (looking at you Satyrs), the Maenads need something a little darker.



Unleashing: Cantrips cast by the Maenads are accompanied by the sticky smells of sweat, old wine, and sex. There is also a creepy prickly feeling that dances across the skin, and an unbridled sense of losing oneself in a dangerous way.

Ápeiros Maenad are thankfully rare. Many don't get brought into the ranks until after their first menstruation. However, with the young women of the modern world developing at a younger and younger age, many see the numbers of *Ápeiros Maenad* growing more and more.

Epanastátis Maenads are quick to discover the joys of belonging. The full gravity of their curse hasn't yet weighed on their minds, and they give themselves freely to their passions. The most enthusiastic of their number tend to become *Keres/Unseelie* during this time.

Sofós Maenads, called *ya-yas* are content with what they have become. Either *Seelie* or *Unseelie*, they welcome every day with a smile bordering on *Manic*. Every-night is a new jubilee, and every day is another holiday, as they secretly hope to burn out in an orgy of merriment.

Affinity: Nature

Birthright:

Oreibasia: *Oreibasia* is the dance of the Maenad as they run through the mountains like the beasts they emulate. Free from the restrictions of the mortal coil, they are freedom personified. During character Creation, the Maenad gain three free dots in Physical attributes to use however they see fit, even if above 5. They also treat each level of dice penalties from damage as if it were 2 lower (Wounded is -1, and crippled as -2, etc.) During the night of the full moon, each of their physical traits is raised by 1 again, and they suffer no dice penalties from damage.

Mania: With the expenditure of a point of *Megaleío*, (and a few levels of *Chimerical* damage with it, their own and others') a Maenad can enter an ecstatic dance and see the brief flashes of the future. During these visions, however, the Maenad isn't in control of her own body, and can harm friends, allies, and even family. Even the Gods frown on this being undertaken lightly, and sometimes the visions that are seen is the destruction the Maenad is committing at the time.

Frailties:

Grape-Lust (Dipsa-Krasi): The Wine Thirst sees the Maenad a slave to her drink. Food holds no value for the Kith. She can only drink her nutrition. Yet, there are also certain drinks that seem to hold sway more than others. Milk, Honey, and Wine especially. Every Maenad must roll a willpower roll to avoid frenzy whenever these liquids present themselves. The difficulty is set by the drink. It is a difficulty 6 for milk, 8 for honey, and 10 for wine (or any other alcohol). If the Maenad fails any of these rolls, then she erupts in a berserker frenzy and gorging herself on the liquid and taking anything else that she wants (men should watch out). During the night of the full moon, these difficulties are raised by +3.

Blood-Lust (Dípsa tou áimatos): Any botches on the night of the Full-Moon mean that the Maenad not only gives into her passion, but that her thirst can only be sated with blood. Not just blood, but the destruction and chaos that comes with it. The difficulties of all rolls on the night of the full-moon is at a +3 difficulty. These frenzies are orgiastic displays of rape, murder and cannibalism. And those of the more *Heliades* persuasion will lock themselves in on the night of the full moon in order to avoid unwanted mayhem.

Thyra of Iolcus, licks her lips and speaks of the others.

Cyanocephali: Ooh, I like bad-boys. Especially bad boys who breathe fire like that. Dare I say, "They're smoking?"

Graeae: Nope, they're never going to get me... I'm going to go out in a blaze of glory before they even get close...

Kéntauros : Friday night? With no saddle? Okay, cause that would be great.

Melissae: Busy girls, who are surrounded by flowers but never stop to smell them. They're cute though, in a buggy way.

Nymphaea: Yeah, I know they're still around. They're hiding though. I hope nobody finds them.

Onocentaur: Donkeys? Why can't they be bulls or something? What ever happened to the Minotaurs anyway?

Strix: You call us creepy? The white-ladies? Now they are scary.

Teumessian: Assholes. The whole lot of them. That's why I love them.

Keteas: You need to come up sometime pretty boy, and when you do...I'm gonna getcha!

Satyrs: Brothers from another Mother. We share a past, but the present seems to have calmed them down a bit.

Dormettes: So we raped and murdered and ate your hero, big deal. Why don't you dream up another one?

CAVEAT EMPTOR

We the authors have only mentioned a trifling of the truly worst horrors of the Maenads (Rape and orgiastic cannibalism particularly). The carnal mythologies of such should only see print in a *Black Dog* book, yes? Those who would play a Maenad should look to storyteller and fellow players for a nod prior to character creation. It is the fair thing to do. We would be remiss as folklorists if we didn't offer these Dames as an option, but our conscious dictates we at least offer this caveat. Go with your Gods, oh beloved readers.

Kyoko Bleu