

INTRODUCTION

What follows is a brief summary of what your character knows about the world around them. Most of this material has been taken from “HârnPlayer: A Player’s Guide to HârnWorld” by Columbia Games. Do not share this material with other players. While most of this material is common knowledge, part of it is specific knowledge of your character and others may have a different point of view.

KHUZAN FEMALES

Males outnumber females by three to one, yet polyandry is socially unacceptable, so most males never marry. A few females are clan heads, but most confine their activities to domestic and social functions, playing a subtle role in society. This is by choice since the females are free to practice any occupation. The dwarves honor and respect their women. Unlike human females, Khuzan women have the same physical capabilities as the males and have often taken up arms alongside their brothers and fathers. Outsiders who set eyes upon a female dwarf often confuse them with young males (who also lack beards).

ECONOMICS

The Khuzdul practice at least as many crafts as do humankind, but long experience and natural affinity have granted them unrivaled superiority in the skills of masonry, all kinds of metalwork, gemcraft and the like. Only the Sindarin can approach the Khuzdul in expertise in these areas. The dwarves also practice a few crafts that are rare or unheard of among other races. Among these are growing mushrooms and truesilver (platinum or mythal) working. The dwarves are not fond of agricultural pursuits, traditionally obtaining their food by hunting and gathering. In Azadmere the Jarin humans are responsible for agricultural activities and some foodstuffs are imported.

KHUZAN TRADE

Only Azadmere does much trading with outsiders. Her artifacts, especially weapons, gold and silver products and jewelry, are in great demand throughout the Hârnic Isles and western Lythia. These are produced in small amounts but are of superb quality. The secretive dwarves will not teach their tongue to outsiders. The shrewd Khuzan equivalent of mercantylers bargain in the languages of their customers. Khuzan traders have a reputation for ruthless bargaining; they give nothing away. Most human mercantylers cringe at the thought of a trading session with the Khuzdul; most would rather not partake of the experience. Only the high demand for dwarven wares persuades them to do so.

THE ROLE OF THE CLAN

The economic role of the clan corresponds to that of the guild in human society. Khuzan clans specialize in specific occupations, masonry, weaponcrafting, trading, etc. The clan’s monopoly within its field is protected by tradition rather than law. Despite the differences, the Khuzdul respect human law and custom and acknowledge the privilege and monopolies of human guilds. Consequently, the economic rights of Khuzdul clans are even more respected by human guilds than they are by the dwarves themselves. In Azadmere, humans are accepted into many of the great Khuzan clans and human clans have themselves grown very similar in structure to the Khuzan.

THE MILITARY

The wealth of the Khuzdul enables them to maintain a standing army. They also can muster an impressive reserve force because all able-bodied dwarves, both male and female, have at least rudimentary military training. The dwarves fight mostly as heavy or medium foot, never mounted. Their strength and endurance enables them to use the unique combination of heavy armor with heavy weapons. Mail, scale or heavy leather can be combined with a battlesword or, more likely, some kind of heavy axe. The combination, rare among weaker creatures, makes possible the feared Khuzan “Superheavy Foot”. The organization of the standing army is the prerogative of the king who entrusts it to one or more large retainer clans. The Royal Guard, is usually divided into High and Low contingents and is supported by a militia of all able-bodied dwarves. In the Kingdom of Azadmere, the Khuzan clan Kuhrdin (the Low Guard) and Hurenfal (High Guard) are further supported by the king’s human subjects who are organized along feudal lines.

RELIGION

The Khuzdul tend to separate religious doctrine from their everyday lives. Most dwarves have such unquestioning faith in their basic religion that they see no need to constantly reaffirm it with complex, daily ritual. They doubt the sincerity of those who find it necessary to constantly shout their faith from on high. Khuzan religion is a personal matter. The dwarves worship in quiet, solitary meditation whose object is to regain touch with the racial spirit. They see little need to aggregate in large congregations. Their priests are a cross between teachers and philosophers. Individuals rather than members of institutions, councilors rather than clerics.

Their lack of religious formality should not be viewed as spiritual bankruptcy. Most Khuzdul revere the demigod Sereniel, the semi-autonomous servant of Siem who intercedes on their behalf at his master’s throne. However, while they thank Siem and Sereniel for their animus, they firmly believe that their essence is as old as the universe, and in many ways indistinguishable from it. They have developed this doctrine into a comprehensive racial or group spirit, most readily apparent in a dwarf’s intense loyalty to his clan and to his ancestors. Their basic worship is really a oneness with nature, particularly with the granite of the mountain’s heart. The character trait that makes a dwarf shatter but never bend, their patience and endurance over a long lifespan, are examples of their affinity with stone. Such traits may, of course, be in the eye of the beholder, but most outsiders will admit their existence in the Khuzdul. Even in death, the Khuzdul favor the rocks of the earth. They are entombed in stone (never buried in the earth) because in their view, this completes the cycle of their origin.

THE KHUZAN VIEW

It must be remembered that the Khuzdul have a different scale of history than short-lived humans. To the dwarves, the modern period is the last several centuries, Lothrim is a foe only two or three generations removed, a name that can still arouse passion. Their experience has given them little cause to love humankind, with the exception of the Jarin residing within Azadmere. Still, they have gradually developed a working relationship with the culture of nearby Kaldor, and individual Khuzdul may settle

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among the humans for reasons of trade. Relationships with the Sindarin are strained at best. The Gargun are mortal foes. Compared to their glory days during the Godominium, the Khuzdul are minor players on the Hârnic stage, but their influence far outweighs their numbers, and the last stronghold of the Khuzdul on Hârn seems secure against any foreseeable threat.

THE GODS OF HÂRN

The inhabitants of Hârn (and most of Lythia) are pantheistic; they believe in the existence of ten major (and hundreds of minor) duties, but most worship only one of these. The ten major deities are named below:

Agrik (AG-rik): *Lord of the Four Horsemen*

Halea (ha-LEE-uh): *Mistress of Hearts and Loins*

Ilvir (il-VEER): *Prince of the Fatherless Multitude*

Larani (la-RAH-nee): *The Lady of Paladins*

Morgath (MOR-gath): *Lord of Chaos*

Naveh (NAH-vay): *Lord of the Pitch Shadows*

Peoni (pee-OH-nee): *Lady of Truth and White Virtue*

Sarajin (sah-rah-YEEN): *King of the Icy Wind*

Save K'nor (SAH-vay-kuh-NOR): *Keeper of the Var-Hyvrak*

Siem (see-EMM): *Lord of the Blessed Realm*

THE CHURCH OF SIEM

Master of the Lords of Dream

Bringer of Meritorious Dreams and Blessed Forgetfulness

Lord of the Starlit and Thrice-blessed Realm

King of the Uttermost West

Master of the Sundered Ones in Exile

Spirit of the West

Never-changing Lord of the Azure Bowl

The Lord of the Starlit Realm most often appears as an elvin lord garbed in a mantle of flowing green and silver, with a wreath of stars upon his head. His face and body bear no clue of age, but his eyes project wisdom, and his aura projects confused feelings of strength and longing. Siem is surrounded by an air of sadness, of "otherworldness"

Siem is known for his sending of pleasant and oracular dreams, and for the gift of forgetfulness, the salve of unpleasant memories. His actions are subtle, effective, more apt to confuse than harm.

Siemist Belief

While there is no true church of Siem, there is a body of beliefs common to worshippers of Siem defining acts which are considered reverent and actions which are abhorrent. Most worshippers of Siem delve into Natural Mysteries, ancient secrets about the ordering of life, that extend back to the time Siem resided on Kethira. Once these mysteries are mastered, the adherent may act to protect the natural order from that which would destroy it. It is considered improper to act in ignorance. The sincere adherent is a moral entity, compassionate, trustworthy, and one who strives towards greater wisdom and patience. Siem is forgiving; those who fail are not condemned, only those who do not try.

Khuzan Belief

The Khuzdul tend to separate religion from everyday life. They pray to the demigod Sereniel, Siem's servant, but rarely ask favor of him. Khuzan religion is a personal matter. Dwarves tend to worship alone rather than meeting for mass. The basic purpose is to achieve unity with nature.

Religious Practices

There is only one important ritual gathering. It occurs at a Hly Grove or other consecrated place. Ideally, a simple cairn will be consecrated and covered with a soft cloth. Two candles are placed on the cloth and between them is a bowl (preferably blue) filled with water. After some time one silent prayer and meditation, the worshipper gazes within the waters of his bowl and may have visions. Such activities most often take place during the twilight. Families and close friends may worship together.

ASTROLOGY

ANGBERELIUS: The Flaming Sword

Larane 5th – Agrazhar 6th

The swords represent dynamic action and conflict, destruction and surprise. Angberelius is shown as two weapons crossed from which flames are issuing; while the swords are solid and real, their conflict causes fire which is intangible, but no less real. They are the symbol of maleness, light, strife and glory, of victory that arises from piercing, cutting effort.

Those born under Angberelius tend to have exciting lives in which they are always striving against their environment to promote causes. This is the sign of the action-loving warrior questing for his grail. If he finds it, he may well experience disappointment as its watery contents quell his personal fires. Angberelians are not prone to subtlety, except that of conflict. They prefer the direct approach, taking up arms and seeking to end their troubles by force rather than guile.