



## DáHN REGIONAL PACKET

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## THE DÁHN

The great desert of Jhoril, to the untrained eye, is a vast and desolate place devoid of life. It is inhospitable and uninhabitable to the eyes of most. With day time temperatures peaking around 130 degrees (100 - 120 along the coast) and plummeting to the low 40's at night. Sudden and fierce sand storms that can rend the flesh off bones or bury a person alive in a matter of minutes rage across this desert. A place where water is scarcely available even in the best of times. This is the home of the Dáhn.

Little is known of the Dáhn. Most of what is known comes from stories told by traders and merchants and the occasional far wandering Freilan. The Dáhn, for the most part, are a reclusive but proud race. Strong in their values and strict in their ways; they're quiet and not quick to trust outsiders, but once you've gained their trust you'll have a friend for life. However, do not let this fool you for they are also opportunistic and some of the shrewdest traders on Jhoril.

The origins of the Dáhn have long since been lost, and only speculated about. They've wandered the desert for as long as most other races histories can recall. But they do wander, and on the rare occasion, to other lands. They also, in small numbers, boast some of the finest sailors on Jhoril out of their coastal cities. This leaves much open for speculation as to their ancestry.

Many Dáhn are tribal nomads who refer to themselves as Bedou (Bed-o), or known as Deep Dáhn, by the city-dwelling Dáhn. Their tribes traverse the great desert along routes only they know or can find. It's ill-advised to travel into the desert without a Bedou guide. To do so means death for most. This is why banishment to the desert is the punishment for deal breakers among the Dáhn. Dáhn guides are said to be unerring in their direction sense, and are much sought after by would be explorers and caravan masters.

## CULTURE

The Dáhn, for the most part, are nomads. Herders and traders by nature, they travel the deep desert in family or tribal groups. Driving herds as they go, they breed and raise camels, goats and horses. These animals serve many purposes, some for food, beasts of burden, mounts and for trade with other tribes or races they come across. Some smaller tribes deal in the gathering of rare spices, minerals, gems, and metal ores. These tribes travel smaller routes, trading more frequently with others for supplies since they tend not to drive herds.

Any such meeting in the desert between tribes is reason for celebration. In the case of a single traveler, they would be treated as a celebrity and be given a royal welcome. The Bedou know that survival depends on this, everyone doing his or her part. Everything is shared. Food, water, materials, and news from around the region, are readily and openly shared. It's crucial to survival. Anyone is welcomed, fed, and entertained. And everyone helps and shares, for everyone knows it might well be them wandering alone or lost in the desert.

The most important part of these meetings between tribes, or an individual and his host, is the Gahwa, or coffee ritual. This is a centuries old ritual that precedes any meeting and is a matter of honor for the host, and a matter of etiquette for the guest. An outsider would do well to familiarize themselves with the ritual as many would be deals come to an abrupt end, with the host Dáhn leaving insulted. Trade between the two is not possible until the offense is remedied. It is believed that this ritual is what helps bind the tribes.

The Dáhn are a proud and honorable people. They have strong morals backed by strict rules. Outsiders see them as stern, stoic, or harsh. They do not talk openly about personal or family issues, and especially not about sources of trade items. The Dáhn value life and freedom above all other things, and their way of life reflects that. Everyone has a purpose and they all work for the good of the whole tribe. When they are not busy with the day to day chores of maintaining the camp and herds, many Dáhn spend there time crafting things using the materials they gather for trade later. The Dáhn have many great artisans crafting wondrous items out gold and silver, copper and brass, weapons of their own unique fashion. Although it is widely known that the Dáhn fashion their own weapons, amazingly light and elaborately detailed, but rarely does one find them for sale or trade. Everyone has a role or a purpose within the tribe, even criminals, of which there are few and offenses minor. Usually because major ones are punishable by exile to the desert. This is a slow and painful death. Execution is viewed as lenient. Punishment for minor offenses always serves a purpose for the good of the tribe. Usually manual labor at a task most others prefer not to do.

The Dáhn style of dress is simplistic and symbolic, representing the Dáhn's ties to the land. Designed for functionality, the predominantly loose, flowing garments reflect the practicalities of life in the desert. Traditionally, men usually wear an ankle length robe of light weight wool. Wealthier Dáhn will have them made of cotton or silk. In the Dáhn language this garment is called a thawb (Thob). They also wear a headdress called a Ghutra (Gootra). It's a large square of cloth folded in half at the corners to form a triangle, and held in place with a cord or tie called an eghal. There are a number of ways this can be worn. On the rare chill nights they'll wear a wool cloak, woven from the hair of the animals they raise, called a bisht.

These clothes are normally plain earthy colors, occasionally woven with stripes or geometric patterns. They are completely suited for life in the desert. Covering most of the body to protect against the sun and wind driven sands, they are also loose enough to allow good air flow to help keep cool. There are rumors that the colors and patterns of the clothes also allow the bedou, or deep Dáhn, to disappear into the desertscape, Giving rise to the nick name the ghosts of the desert. Women's clothing is similar in most respects. More apt to have patterns woven into the fabric, they share the same characteristics as the men's clothing. Ankle length skirts and dresses, baggy sleeved billowy shirts often decorated with tribal motifs.

During celebrations and important meetings, however, the clothing is much more impressive. Bright colors and fine materials woven with gold and silver thread. Women's clothing, additionally, if they are the wives or daughters of well to do merchants or tribal leaders, will also be adorned with more elaborate motifs, precious metals and stones, coins, and appliquéés. This is a sign of rank and status in a gathering where such may be hard to determine. This style of dress is more frequent in the city where matters of

business and politics are more frequent and the need to distinguish status more paramount.

The only exceptions to the norm of dress are the elite Dáhn warriors, who almost always wear bright colors in elaborate patterns. Usually reds, oranges, silver, and gold. They wear loose fitting or baggy pants that tie at the side or gather at the ankle instead of the traditional thawb. And often elaborate decorative vests instead of shirts. Sometimes over a shirt if the weather is cooler. No one knows why they are the exception. There are also rumors of a secret sect of Dáhn warriors who dress all in black and bear facial markings in the flowing Dáhn script. No one outside the Dáhn knows their purpose, perhaps because they are seldom seen outside the depths of the great desert.

## CITIES

There are distinct groups of Dáhn, the nomadic traders of the deep desert and their city dwelling counterparts. About a hundred years ago a few tribes of Dáhn gave up the nomadic life style to settle in more permanent locations to make trading with outsiders easier by providing permanent and more accessible locations. There are three known Dáhn cities.

### **Al Mir:**

Al Mir is the exception. No one is quite sure how long Al Mir has been established. It is speculated that the Dáhn ancestors first settled here because it's the only fertile land in the entire Dáhn region. Located on the northern coast part of the region, it was built around the river Janik delta. Al Mir is home to the only Dáhn farming community. Although not large in size Al Mir has farms, mills, and a large variety of live stock, including goats, sheep, camels, pigs, chickens, and horses. It also supplies rare fruits, fish, and salt. Al Mir is also the only source for cotton in the Dáhn region.

### **Kif Jhar:**

Kif Jhar is the largest city in the Dáhn region and the trade capital. Located centrally on the eastern most part of the coast line, Kif Jhar does trade with the rest of Jhoril.

Overseen by the trade council, Kif Jhar is where the Dáhn bring their goods to trade with the outside world. Kif Jhar is a neutral city. Anyone and everyone is welcome to stay and trade there. A vast city, home to a wide variety of peoples from around Jhoril. It's said that anything you desire can be found in Kif Jhar. That's probably because all manner of trade is accepted there. Even things the Dáhn themselves look down on, like slavery. As long as it's legitimate trade it's tolerated. They may not agree with it, but they won't stop it.

The city itself is divided into two parts. The city proper, which is the main part of the city, walled and heavily fortified. Seated on a hill overlooking the sea, its outer walls extend down to the lower port district. Here there is an expansive wharf and many warehouses to accommodate the constant flow of goods. Seated on a hill in the city proper is the trade council hall, with its solid gold dome shining like a beacon for miles. Here the trade council oversees and maintains the flow of trade in Kif Jhar.

### **Ahdra:**

Situated on the southern coastal point of the region, with its back to the Soudah Mountains is Ahdra. Ahdra is a small mining city that exports copper and brass to Kif Jhar for trade.

## **GOVERNMENT**

As far as anyone can tell, the Dáhn have no definitive government. In single family tribes the eldest family member rules. In larger, multi family tribes, the eldest member of the wealthiest family rules. Aside from that the only apparent organized government is the trade council of Kif Jhar, and no one really knows the inner works of the council.

The only real form of governance displayed by the Dáhn as a whole is the attendance at Naher meetings along the banks of the Janik River. These occur every two years, where the Dáhn gather and settle discussions about grazing rights, water rights and other matters of importance. The last Naher was held during Earth in 1024. Where the results of the realm war and its impact on the Dáhn as a whole were discussed.

## **TRADE**

The Dáhn trade in many things, some rare, some common, and some unique. From such a sparse region the Dáhn have much to offer. Grain, cotton, wool, live stock, gold, silver, brass, copper, gems, iron, salt, glass, spices, incense, oils, rare produce, and finely crafted items. However, a word to the industrious trades man, because of there life style and outlook on life in general, the Dáhn value of things is different than most. Dáhn often value water more than gold, and coins are almost never sought after. They are heavy and serve no purpose in the desert. They prefer barter, and when they can not barter, they seek easily transportable wealth such as gems and practical goods.

The Dáhn were also the first group to establish trade with the Itan Empire peacefully. For almost two thousand years Itan goods passed almost exclusively through Kif Jhar before moving overland to the rest of Jhoril. This has changed with new nautical developments and the arrival of the Fflor, but many Itan citizens reside in Kif Jhar and many Dáhn can be found living in the Itan Empire.

## **RECENT HISTORY**

The Realm war saw some action in the great desert, where the Legio IV Messor attempted to subdue the Bedou peoples living near the Tærran border. Blistering heat, freezing nights, ferocious sandstorms and the unwillingness of the local peoples to fight a stand up battle made the Legion of Imperial Reapers unsuccessful in their campaign. Legionnaires spoke of strange creatures stalking the lonely desert, and of haunted tombs inhabited by undead and worse. Legionnaires feared to set camp because it meant that the Bedou could sneak into their camps and kill sleeping soldiers.

This changed to a degree when the Legio IV Messor was recalled to the northern front and the Legio II Pango Honoratus were moved into the great desert. The legion adapted to fighting the Dáhn in their own desert, striking with lightning raids during the

night and building temporarily fortified camps during the day. The events in Tær were unknown to the Dáhn, all that they knew was one day the bronze clad Tærrans broke camp and forced marched out of the desert in good order.

What the realm war meant for the Dáhn was that they could no longer treat the outside world merely as trade partners. Even the great desert felt the impact of the war, and the Dáhn must now act. During the early days of the war the Dáhn took few casualties, some tombs were plundered in the border areas and mines were stripped in the mountains. The Tærrans reached the Janik River, but were unable to really threaten any of the Dáhn cities. The last two years of the war saw all of the Dáhn cities threatened by Tærran legionnaires although none were captured. Heavy casualties were inflicted upon the Dáhn at Ahdra, where the Tærran Legionnaires were able to assault the city for a time.

Representatives from Kif Jhar, Al Mir, and Ahdra along with Mustafa Azhar for the Bedou traveled to Giroux for the signing of the armistice. Thus securing the ancient home of the Dáhn as theirs. Since the Dáhn merchants have been traveling with young groups of Dáhn, showing them the world, that they may understand it better for the future.

## LEGENDS AND LORE

*Mustafa Azhar-* Mustafa Azhar is a bedou warrior who informally led the Bedou during the realm war. His actions prevented the sacking of Ahdra when he led a daring counterattack upon the front elements of the legion attempting to breach the city gates. He is one of the most respected Bedou despite being only in his mid twenties.

*The Halls of the Dead-* A series of tombs in the Soudah mountains ancient beyond memory that are rumored to hold great treasures for the adventurous and lucky. It is rumored that no one has returned from the tombs bearing any of its hidden secrets. In 1020 a Cohort from the Legio IV Messor attempted to raid the tombs. The only survivor of this expedition was found days later by another cohort babbling about the walking kings and strange warriors who struck from the shadows cutting the well trained Legionnaires apart.

*Those who lived under the sands-* Ancient structures are sometimes unearthed by the sandstorms that blow across the deserts. These seem to be relics of an ancient race long forgotten by history. These ruins yield strange artifacts to those willing enough to brave them and they speak of powerful men who ruled over the deserts like kings. It is considered to be unlucky for the Dáhn to enter one of these ruins and they typically leave them undisturbed

*Pharaoh Khurshid-* One legend of those who lived under the sands was that of the Pharaoh Khurshid. It is said that he ruled from mountain to sea and under him none dared challenged the might of the Dáhn. No one can say for certain when he lived, although a giant golden statue bearing his name has sat in the central market of Kif Jhar for longer than anyone could remember.

*Malak Sa'Bindi*- During the Shadow War and the War of Restoration a man from the Dáhn known as Malak was named Prince By'tor's champion. He fought for the Shadow Prince until his death when the Shadow Prince's evil was finally revealed to his eyes.

## THE DÁHN REGION

Being a region of Trade many different races are found within the great desert:

**Sidhe**- Many daonie sidhe do not like the arid temperatures of the great desert although they can be found in numbers within the cities of the Dáhn. Phouka, Pixies, Kierda and Bodach are all found living in the communities of the Dáhn, although most do stay in the cities. These Sidhe display gregarious tendencies and are found many times as merchants and professional diplomats.

**Firbolg**- Many Firbolg are found living in the mountainous regions surrounding the great deserts. These Firbolg typically spend their time mining gems and ores to trade to the wandering Bedou. The life of the Dáhn is well suited to the Firbolg who see the desert as yet another challenge to overcome.

**Freilan**- The nomadic lifestyle of the Dáhn suits the Freilan well. Many Freilan can be found traveling with the Dáhn caravans serving as negotiators and skilled businessmen. The teeming cities of the Dáhn are also home to many Freilan, as the only trade centers in the desert they are found pursuing their typical interests with an adroitness that comes with years of practice.

**Drakkon**- Drakkon have flocked to the Dáhn lands, living on their own and with the Bedou. The environment suits them well, and the continual challenge of the desert provides them with a continual test for them to face. Drakkon are often found performing mercenary service in the desert as caravan guards as well.