

## WAR Culture Package

### **The Khala**

*Last Updated 9/29/2016 (Updated: History, Appearance, Council Members)*

#### **Post-Shattering:**

Before The Shattering, the Dyllarian Khala were experiencing a time of population growth and prosperity. Having barely survived the Gizzick infestation they faced in Rage Hollow, the remaining Khala sought refuge in the County of Silvertree, in the Barony of Lumberton Shire area. While most of the Gizzicks were killed off, the leader S'lianriknok, still survives. Every Khala has sworn a blood oath to see S'lianriknok killed.

Granted significant hunting lands and privileges by the Kingdom of Stonegate, the Khala were able to rebuild what was lost. While many of the Khala moved to the Lumberton area, several small bands chose to instead take up a more nomadic life, traversing Dyllaria and Emuria after large game animals. These Khala came to be known as Outlander Khala.

Several months before The Shattering, Terh'Kahn- leader of the primary Khala Village near Lumberton Shire- sent runners to all traveling Khala to inform them that the Village elders had foreseen a great and mighty breaking. Terh'Kahn urged all Khala to join as one village near the Lumberton area because they would be "protected" by a Dragon's Magic. He informed them he did not know how this magic was to come about, or what the consequences would be. Because of this, many of the Outlander Khala refused to relocate. Furthermore, since Terh'Kahn did not know the exact time of The Shattering, many of the Outlander Khala and runners were unable to make it back to the safety of Lumberton Shire before The Shattering occurred.

When The Shattering took place, it was a heavy blow to the Khala, especially following so closely in the wake of Terh'Kahn's death. Terh'Kahn, in the months leading up to The Shattering, became infected with a strange, magical ailment caused by leaking wild magic in the Orcan Lowlands. He was, sadly, unable to be cured and took his final death. All Khala mourned for many sunsets. His wife, Mi'a, assumed his place on the Council that rules the Khala Village.

Because of The Shattering, the Khala were literally uprooted and transplanted, along with most of the County of Silvertree/Lumberton Shire. The Khala found themselves in a strange new world, filled with unfamiliar flora/fauna and terrain. Left with a broken village, no hunting grounds, and in a completely new location, the Khala settled on the Coast of Sindrial, near the Sands of the Departed. Led by F'edok, the Khala quickly set up a temporary village while a new, more permanent and suitable home could be scouted. F'edok, a great and mighty warrior of the Khala, did not sit upon the Council at the time of The Shattering. However, his actions during those initial days quickly earned him a seat at Council, despite his relatively young age. F'edok also wished to assess the damage The Shattering caused their human allies, but their exact location was unknown. Scouts and runners ranged far and wide over the new lands.

After a few days, reports came to the makeshift village that the townspeople of Lumberton Shire were discovered and remained relatively intact. They had survived The Shattering unscathed for the most part. Reports also fluttered in of attacks upon the Khala runners by Minotaurs, transplanted during The Shattering and also seeking resources to survive in the new lands. As the number and brutality of the skirmishes escalated, the Khala Council realized the Khala would have to seek a more protected, defensible area if they were to survive. The Minotaurs, stronger and possessed of greater numbers than the Khala, pressed their attacks over the next week. The Khala fled deep within The Primal Forest to escape the onslaught.

Beaten and dispirited, the Khala sought a new home only to be ravaged again, this time by the terrors of the Forest. After several days of wandering, L'sie (Spirit Speaker) Forian, led by the spirits of their Khala ancestors, brought the Khala to a beautiful, secure valley. With only one way in to the valley, and that barely detectable, the Khala rejoiced to have finally come home.

Getting to the Valley is very difficult even for the Khala due to the dangers of the forest. They seldom leave the valley, finding solace in the isolation and the protectiveness of their new home. They have become much more isolationist since The Shattering, choosing to remain apart and rebuild what is left of their culture.

Since settling in to their new home, they have discovered they are not exactly alone and they live amongst many new dangers, including the unusual flora and fauna of The Primordial Forest, some of which also lives within the Valley. Several new enemies have arisen to challenge the Khala since their move in to the Valley. A strange type of Amironian, much more feathered and feral, roams throughout The Primordial Forest. The Khala also face an unknown enemy, which the Khala refer to as The Great Hunter. No one has seen he/she/it and survived, despite the great precautions the Khala have taken. Due to this, the Khala rarely venture out in to The Primordial Forest, choosing instead to remain within the safety provided by the Valley.

## **Society:**

Post-Shattering Khala society remains a tribal one based on the community's main goals of hunting and trading. Khala are honorable and will defend against any insult. Due to this, the Khala have declared a Di'mokt against the Minotaurs who so brutally and savagely attacked them during their time of vulnerability when they first arrived. Anyone who aligns themselves with Minotaurs is also deemed Di'mokt and is viewed as aiding the enemy.

Due to the heavy losses the Khala experienced over the past decade from the Gizzicks, The Shattering and the Minotaurs, the Khala see themselves more as a united tribe rather than many separate ones seeing to their own survival. All Khala still align themselves with a specific totem or animal alignment. Those with totems and such will view one another as immediate family. However, in order for the Khala to survive, they have had to pull together as never before.

Due to the severity and dangers of the Khala's new home, many of the Khala women have become above average warriors, at times challenging and surpassing the males at rites of combat and strategy. While still technically patriarchal, the females of the tribes have garnered a great deal of responsibility and a voice in tribal affairs. One even sits upon the Elder Council – Mi'a – wife of the deceased Terh'Kahn.

The Elder Council oversees the day-to-day affairs of the Khala and makes all decisions that affect the community at large. Council members are chosen for their ability to hunt, defend, or because they excel in some other area. The Khala have no formal school system, instead they learn the fighting arts from those around them. When the Khala relocated to Lumberton, several years before The Shattering, quite a few took advantage of their proximity to the town and learned to read.

The Khala have retained as much of their cultural heritage as possible, including such customs as the eating of their dead, or "Kattai." Many hunters also tend to eat the heart of their kills. As the Old Magics have awakened fully since The Shattering, the connection between the L'sie and the spirits around them has grown significantly. L'sie are able to speak to nearly any spirit around them, not just those of the Khala. It is rumored that because of this, the L'sie know

many secrets of the new homeland and the area around it. The L'sie are greatly honored within Khala society and are believed to keep the people safe in their new land. Since the new magics have awakened, it is not unheard of for a Khala to practice Blood Magic.

**Organization:**

*Council Elders:*

Mi'a – White Lion Khala (Also L'sie)

Lesttal – Panther Khala

Cubrik – Tiger Khala

Malisain – Lion Khala

Aveda – Snow Leopard Khala (Also L'sie)

F'edok- Lion Khala

Lee – Silver Khala

Nevkini Rook – White Tiger Khala (fur dyed maroon)

**The Spirit Walkers:**

When the Old Magics were released from the anchors a deep, forgotten ability was awoken in some of the Khala. The spirit walkers/speakers, typically the white furred Khala (aka White tigers, snow leopards and white Lynxes) have gained the ability to lay to rest “lost” spirits and help them on their way to their final resting spot. How this is done is different for each Spirit Walker and their secrets are kept to themselves. Only a few spirit walkers have emerged and no one is certain what reason this has happened to the Khala or if there are more Khala like this outside of the village.

**Personality:**

Both male and female Khala take great care in their appearance, and it is not uncommon for them to tattoo themselves with symbols that are relevant to the individual or group, usually composed of small dots. Not all Khala undertake the process of tattooing, something that has become popular since The Shattering. It is viewed as a way to privately record their history – almost like a diary of sorts. To ask a Khala about the meaning of their tattoos can be viewed as an insult. For a Khala to explain the meaning of their tattoos to someone indicates a great level of trust in that person.

Since The Shattering, the Khala have become much more isolationist and even more war-like in their views. They very much view the Valley as theirs, as they were led their by the spirits of their ancestors. The Khala have little need of the outside world, fashioning whatever goods they need from the bounty of the Valley. Outsiders are never let in to the Valley itself, but meet at the “Keliak Rock,” a large, level rock just outside the Valley.

As the Khala become accustomed to their new surroundings, some of them have become experts on the flora of the Valley. They are able to brew strange and unique potions and such, some of which contain great power. They have worked hard to know and recognize the dangers and benefits of their new environment. The Khala have even begun to branch out in to studies of the flora in The Primordial Forest, though this exploration is slow and careful due to the immense dangers that lurk there.

Some personality quirks/ceremonies of the Khala include:

*Khala Blood Hunts-* Blood Hunts, usually followed by a Blood Feast, can be instigated for a variety of reasons, including: as a coming of age ceremony, to celebrate a birth, wedding, or death, etc. Most often Khala will eat the heart of

their kill and then share the kill with others. The particulars of each hunt can change with the needs of the Khala at the time. It can be performed alone (individually) or as a group hunt.

*Khala Blood Feasts-* A Khala Blood Feast is truly a sight to behold, not only because outsiders are rarely in attendance but the ones that are given the honor to attend, might end up with a sick stomach. The best hunters in the village will spend weeks hunting the biggest and greatest game they can hunt and bring it back to the village. When they get back, whoever brought back the most exotic, and magnificent game will win the hunting competition. All the game will then proceed to be processed- the Khala way of processing meat is to remove the skin, and then proceed to enjoy the spoils of their efforts. The bloodier the better, and during the feast the Khala will become savage with joy of their kills and the sight of blood. It's not uncommon to finish the feast with fur stained red.

*Khala Blood Wine-* This is a very powerful wine that is unique to the Khala culture. It is used to celebrate/prepare for hunts, battles, and other ceremonies within the Khala culture. It is extremely powerful and infused with a variety of herbs, always including Peppermint, as well as a drop of blood, most typically from a recent kill. All Khala know how to prepare Khala Blood Wine, however some brewed by certain Khala are held in higher regards than others.

*Views on Lycanthrope-* The Khala have been at odds against were-creatures since anyone can remember, whether it be were-lizards, wolves or jaguars. The Khala have grown to have a strong dislike of Lycanthropy, and most Khala will be enraged at the mention of Lycans and will want to put them down. Lycans have caused many Khala villages to fall, and other villages to completely remove themselves from a region. The spread of Khala has slowed down because of this "epidemic" in their eyes. Due to their intense dislike of Lycanthropes, some of the elite Khala smiths have discovered a way to forge silver into cuff-like apparatuses to keep Lycans immobilized.

*Peppermint-* All Khala have a deep love for Peppermint. It can have differing effects on individual Khala at different times. Sometimes it acts as an intoxicant, sometimes it acts as an hallucinogen, and sometimes it drives a Khala to become enraged.

## **Appearance:**

Khala appear as a mix between Humans and great cats, such as lions, leopards, tigers, and others. They have fur on most of their body. Some believe them to be of The Descended, but this has never been proven and the Khala themselves do not hold such views. Starting in 616, some of the Khala, especially the young ones, have been using the natural dyes of the flora and fauna to color their fur in red, blue, and green shades. While it's considered "fashionable" it also has a strategic bent to it, in that it helps provide camouflage within the forest.

## **Language:**

The Khala speak the Common tongue of Ghaia, with very few words in a different language, which is thought to be the remnants of a more primitive tongue they once used.

### **Birth:**

Khala women give birth as Humans do, with no special ceremonies or festivals.

### **Marriage:**

Since The Shattering, monogamy within Khala society has become a much more accepted practice. With so few Khala left in the area, they have begun forming much more significant and enduring relationships with their mates.

### **Death:**

When a Khala dies, the other members of the pride will hold a ceremony to remember them followed by a “kattai,” or funeral feast, during which the fallen Khala’s body is eaten. Nothing remains of the body afterwards as even the bones are consumed.

### **Interracial Relations:**

Khala generally treat all others with disdain until they have proven themselves honorable in some significant way. Otherwise, they treat all races except Halflings, whom they dislike, with equal respect, or lack thereof. Due to The Shattering, the Khala have become much more isolationist, tending to keep to themselves much more often. It is not that they dislike other cultures, it is more of a survival mechanism they believe to be necessary.

### **Family:**

Since The Shattering the basic family unit of the Khala has changed dramatically. Their numbers have dwindled so much over the years that nearly everyone keeps a watchful eye over the children of the community. There is no standard school system, Khala children learn to hunt from a young age.

### **Leisure:**

The Khala compete constantly in games of strength, skill, speed and bravery. They also enjoy hearing and telling of battles and heroes. Much of their time is consumed with exploring their new valley/homeland.

### **Heroes and Legends:**

**Ghuka Khaban-** Last Chuka of the Tiger Khala, killed in the uprising of 601.

**Chakha Kubanch-** Last Chuka of the Leopard Khala, executed in 601 after the uprising.

**Silackma Rahk-** Former Chuka of the Lion Khala, surrendered to the females of the Lion Khala in 601.

**Fhackag Rahk-** Former Chuka'na of the Khala. Younger brother of Silackma Rahk, killed in 601 during the uprising.

**Khala Cucana-** The founder of the current Khala settlement who killed the great river serpent and made the valley safe for Khala habitation. The river that the settlement is on and the people that live there are named after him.

**Tukana Latuka-** An old and wise female leopard Khala that serves as the current Chuka'na's personal Healer. She is revered as the greatest Healer in all of Khala history.

**Calyn-** One of the fiercest, bravest Khala warriors to adventure. Rumor has it a Khala village is soon to be named for him.

**Kai Vokin-** The powerful magical sword of Khala Cucana. Presumed to have been lost in the river when the great river serpent died. It was eventually reclaimed through the heroic efforts of several adventurers. It now resides with Lee of the Khala, though its true properties remain a mystery.

## **History:**

### **600-602**

After nearly being wiped out by the Gizzicks, the Khala relocate to the Galavast area, seeking refuge and sanctuary. They are warmly welcomed by the County of the Shadowlands and specifically by the nobility of the Barony of Galavast, including Viscount Vala C. Gurth, Baron Gunter Gorloch, etc...It is a struggle to rebuild and even as they do, a new menace of Undead from the Valley of Bones threatens their new home. As the Undead seize control of the Barony of Galavast, the Khala bravely fight on, with no regards for the chances their entire culture and way of life may be irrevocably destroyed.

### **603-606**

Shortly after the Reclamation of Galavast, the Khala made the decision to relocate their homes once again. Their numbers dwindled from the war, they sought a new home to start afresh where their memories would not walk with the dead. They chose Lumberton, in the County of Silvertree, as the place to begin anew. Shortly thereafter several adventurers, including Dame A'ubria'na' of Lumberton and the silver Khala known as Lee began to quest for Kai Vokin, the legendary sword of the Khala, in the hopes of returning the ancient artifact and reinvigorating their people with hope for the future and renewal. Despite many hardships, they were eventually successful and Kai Voiken was returned to the Khala, though it has not yet been fully awakened. Dame A'ubria'na' took her final death shortly after its recovery and putting the Khala Calyn's spirit to rest. The woes of the Khala people were not yet over, as they faced a new menace in Lumberton. Were-jaguars attacked, led by Queen Sandaj' (Lady) Kay-lah, once an outcast, who threatened the very existence of the Khala. The indomitable spirit and fight of the Khala could not be quelled, and although they suffered many lives lost, they were successful and defeated the Were-Jaguars with the help of Lee and Lord Akron of Lumberton. Tera'kahn, of the same bloodline as Lee, became leader of the Khala. A proud warrior, he has managed to lead his people in to a time peace and they have slowly begun to replace their lost numbers. They currently remain in Lumberton, living in solitude. Tera'kahna, in his wisdom, struck a deal with the noble houses of the County of Silvertree. The Khala willingly act as scouts with their

superior skills in stealth and tracking, in exchange for a large area that is maintained exclusively for their use as hunting ground.

### **607-611**

The Khala face numerous challenges to rebuilding in the Barony of Lumberton Shire. Granted hunting grounds in exchange for their skills in scouting and stealth, this diplomatic treaty (aided greatly by Lee of the Khala and He'o) continues throughout several years of relative peace and rebuilding on the part of the Khala. Towards the end of 611 the Khala are approached by members of the Knights of the Righteous Arm, who question them occasionally about their use of Necromantic magic. They meet with the Council for a short time before they peaceably leave.

### **612**

As word that The Shattering is coming spreads, the Khala prepare as best they can for what is coming. The Outlanders are recalled from their travels and they begin to store food. In the midst of their preparations, the Barony of Lumberton Shire declares themselves free of the tyrannical and illegal rule of Stennett Arden of the Kingdom of Stonegate. The Khala, several members whom had joined with KOTRA before the declaration, side with the Barony of Lumberton Shire, thanks to the efforts of Lee of the Khala and He'o. Even after suffering the loss of their beloved leader, Terh'Kahn, the Khala do not hesitate to aid in the protection of their homelands.

After The Shattering, the Khala find themselves in a new and strange land. After several skirmishes with Minotaurs over resources and land, they declare the Minotaur and any Minotaurian allies as Di'mokt. They eventually settle in a Valley that becomes known as The Valley of the Khala. It is an isolated Valley and the Khala, after years of fighting and without a true homeland, become more isolationist, guarding their home ferociously from the new and strange creatures that threaten their continued existence.

### **613**

The year 613 saw many changes for the Khala, whom seem to be adapting to their new surroundings in the Khala Valley extremely well. Their isolationism is working in that they have little contact with the outside world and are primarily protected from outsiders by the Primordial Forests. Focusing on learning everything they can of their new environment, some spend a great deal of time within the Forest and it is believed they know many of its secrets. Lee of the Khala returned home permanently with Kai'Vokin to the Khala Valley. Weary of adventuring, his many years of service to the Khala as liaison to the outside did not go unnoticed. Facing many feats of strength and prowess, he overcame them and joined the Council of the Khala as a full member. While still facing many foes, the Khala are believed to finally have found a home and are regaining their past strength and glory.

### **616**

The Khala remain isolationist, working their valley and having few interactions with the outside world. Very few individuals have been allowed in to the Valley that are not Khala. The dangerous passage through the Primordial Forest helps aid in their isolation. The Khala continue to focus on becoming adept with the flora and fauna throughout the valley and the properties associated with it. The Khala also have a new leader has emerged on the Council, Nevkini (Nev-

ken-ee) Rook, a white tiger Khala who died his fur maroon.

## **Appendix: The Ak'Valar Khala**

*Note: You must have prior approval of Campaign Plot to play*

In the year 611/612 another group of Khala refugees was discovered living in the Under Realm near Rage Hollow. Originally from the Khala village, these outcasts left over the dispute of helping the first settlers. Several families (all white tiger Khalas but one) settled in the Under Realm under Rage Hollow, surviving for ages without much contact from the world above. Over the years they have mastered the art of Necromancy and some of the ancients even have learned other dark powers. Undead is the primary means of their defense, though they do not create Undead out of other Khala. Through breeding, they are all white tiger Khalas. Before The Shattering occurred, Lee of the Khala managed to convince nearly 100 (nearly half their numbers) of them to relocate to Lumberton. The state of the Rage Hollow Khala remains unknown. The rest of the Ak'Valar Khala were left to their own devices. Uncertain of what would happen during The Shattering, many retreated deeper in to the Under Realm.

During The Shattering, many of the tunnels in to their city were dropped purposefully, for added protection. There remains one secret tunnel to the surface from the city and one tunnel that goes deeper in to the Under Realm. Most of the Ak'Valarian Undead still guard the Ak'valar in their absence. Hearing rumors of other great Necromancers in the Under Realm, the elders have since sent emissaries to the Miydrandan Dark Elves.

Little is known about this underground group of Khala. Below is what has been able to be garnered in the short time since they were rediscovered.

**City:** Ak'Valar (Means Dark City - double meaning)

It is an underground city in the Under Realm. What started as a massive cave system has been carved into an amazing stone city lit by magic and fluorescent fungi. Many of the younger Khala of the city have never seen the surface.

**Government:** They have more of a Senate style government. Any Elder or hero of the city has an equal voice. The most respected and trusted Elder is referred to as the Voice of the City, who acts as the speaker but who carries no more power.

**Specialties:** Skilled Necromancers make up the majority of the society, though those who use weapons are highly skilled. They also possess skilled stoneworkers and hunters of the Under Realm. These hunters are revered throughout the city and are well-versed in Under Realm survival. It is rumored they are able to create more powerful undead than the normal process permits.

**Society:** They live off the plants and creatures of the Under Realm. Those that practice the Necromantic arts to the extreme may be missing patches of fur. When they travel to the surface world, most Ak'Valarian Khala prefer to do so at night, as they are more comfortable in the dark and will attempt to stay out of the sunlight as much as possible.

They distrust Ever Dawn races and cultures, but within Ak'Valarian society family units are extremely important to them, as is the concept of loyalty.

**Leaders:** With half the city gone, the council is fragmented. Any house of reputable standing can send a Ak'Valarian Khala as their representative.

The 3 strongest houses at this time are:

**Mazadros** (Maws-a-droce)

- Meedro Mazadros - male – armsman and caster

**Shirazi** (She-rah-zee)

- Velay Shirazi - Female - caster

**Dontara** (Done-tar-ah)

- Sandrin Dontara - male – armsman and caster

**Issues:** Some tunnels have started to collapse exposing the network into their city. They are working to defend their tunnels into the city. With the amount of dead Orcs in the area, they have created a large stock-pile of Undead to assist with that effort. Now that they are reconnected (somewhat) with the world above them, they have learned of the destruction of the Khala Village in old Rage Hollow. Even while they mourn the loss, it has led to a number of issues.

Thanks to the efforts of several adventurers, these Khala were made aware The Shattering was approaching. Lee, of the Lumberton Shire Khala, attempted a number of times to relocate them to the Khala Village to Lumberton Shire. The Elders of Ak'Valar sent five emissaries to investigate, but they remained skeptical. Their use of Undead for protection is greatly ingrained and they have refused to budge on the issue.

Based on the information regarding The Shattering and the destruction of the Rage Hollow Khala Village, these Khala believe they have made the right decision in choosing to relocate and remain in the Under Realm. Furthermore, since they have been in the Under Realm for so long, living above ground would be an extreme, if not impossible transition.