

Adlatum Preview #2: FyxZharar

How can you say such things!” bellowed the dwarf. “The clans are in chaos. Finances are moving from accounts to unknown parties. Long standing alliances are falling apart as bickering sprouts up over the pettiest of reasons. Suddenly families with no monetary backing are giving orders to the wealthiest of patriarchs. The High Warden may be forced from his seat at this rate. There’s been drownin’ disappearances too. This is disaster! Kedaltol’s stability is crumbling, and you have nothing to say on it?” Anger dominated every feature of his face, from the daggers in his stare to the red flush of his cheeks. His body even shook with rage, something Dregan had never actually seen before.

“Not really,” said Dregan calmly. “All of that has nothing to do with me.”

Roarlyn flinched as if punched in the stomach. His voice went from rage to breathless horror. “Nothing to do with you? Nothing? How can you, a true-blooded Hartdar, be so indifferent? This is Kedaltol we’re talking about.”

Dregan lowered his mug and sighed. “My heritage and my blood may be from Kedaltol, *old* friend,” he said *old* in a tone to be clear he meant it as something long gone, not something long standing, “but I am a Midlander, one through and through. Kedaltol and the affairs of dwarves there are their own concerns. These people, here,” he said waving his hand out to the humans in the tavern. “These people are my fellow citizens. Your people, Roarlyn, they are the foreigners to me. We have enough problems going on. Go home and clean up your own mess.”

A tavern near the border of Vjenor,
Kedaltol, and Sakkaras.
Spring of 421 AD

A person’s race may be a major factor in determining the qualities one possesses in life on Adlatum, but equally important can be the nation or land that person calls home.

There are many nations who are predominately one race or another, and in those cases racial attitudes will likely have great sway over how one treats another. But equally important is the country two people come from. Two people, regardless of race, may come from regions with great comrodry or open hostility. The lines on a map are always as important as blood in the veins.

Local customs, philosophies, language, accent, songs, tales, all have an influence on how people are raised. Since they are local, people from other places would had grown up experiencing different things, and so their outlook changes. Some regions may not be as well-civilized, and others may act civilized and yet be quick to pull out a weapon on the slightest perceived insult. When someone from a region

ventures out to other places, their behavior becomes more noticeable and recognizable. Only by understanding their home can one begin to grasp what life might had been like for them.

FYXZHARAR

Capital: Karsuhon

Population:* 217,547 (Humans 70%, Coin Dwarf 16%, Gildanesti 6%, Gnome 4%, Corinesti 2%, Oguna >1%, Other <1%) (* Does not include Gnomorrah)

Government: Republic/Dictatorship

Religions: Tashrama (white branch)

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Elvish, Gnomish

Trade: Gems, Metal, Wool, Goat Products, Minting Coins, Weapon Smithing

Legions: Army of the White, Midland Guard

Alignment: All

Modern FyxZharar (Fihks Zhah’-rahr) is divided up into three areas: the Midland nation under the power of the Great Sovereign Lord Montegron, the mountain passes and tunnels under the control of the White Elder Dragon Heriacious, and the gnomish nation of Gnomorrah. Although most of FyxZharar viewed as under the direct control of the Sovereign Lord, it is possible to traverse the nation’s twisting passes and roadways without being noticed by loyalists of either Montegron or Heriacious. However, once one comes within proximity of the passes and roads controlled by either the Lord or the Dragon, being noticed is almost assured.

The small twenty-mile long nation of Gnomorrah officially recognizes itself as part of the Midland Sovereignties, but the complexities of gnomish society and law are so intricate that Montegron’s unified government rarely involves itself in their internal affairs.

LIFE AND SOCIETY

The style of life of those in FyxZharar varies greatly both on exactly where they are living and what type of life they are striving for. Those living in the farming communities in the flat valleys can live a fairly sheltered life away from most of the traffic that comes and goes from the cities. Those in the more developed regions exist in a very urban environment, dealing with everything from schooling and research, to governmental affairs, to military life, to that of a common merchant. Those living within the areas controlled by the White Elder Dragon Heriacious sacrifice much of the comforts of city and country life to spend time away in caverns, meditating and studying the arts gifted to them by their grand white god.

The attitudes of people within FyxZharar are just as various. In the republic’s capital of Karsuhon, loyalty to the Sovereign Lord is very strong. However many within the city and surrounding Sovereignty controlled settlements only





wear their loyalty skin-deep. Their primary concerns are in taking in the grand wealth of knowledge that can be found or discovered in FyxZharar. Many towns visited by both the Sovereignty and those loyal to the Elder Dragon make themselves hospitable in whatever manner will let them be in peace at the time. Also in other locations, dedication to one side or the other may be consistently shown.

Surprisingly, although two opposing forces have their seats of power so close to each other, most of the conflict tends to occur out away from them. Up until now, neither side has believed they were in the best position to win a direct conflict against the other without take more losses than can be considered acceptable. With the war about to begin, this situation appears to be changing.

RELIGION

FyxZharar is home to a Holy Land of the Tashrama, the lair of the White Elder Dragon Heriacious. The Great Sovereign Lord may had outed the Elder Dragons are the true powers behind the church, but Heriacious herself confirmed the fact by appearing in public and openly declaring her divinity. Since then many had left the Tashramadic faith, but a large segment of the population remains faithful and believes Heriacious' claims. With the cities of Breenaak and Karsuhon so close to each other, views of religion in FyxZharar are almost completely polarized between support for Tashrama and support for the Sovereignities. As such, most other faiths have little to no influence on events, with the exception of Montegron's own secret faith.

GOVERNMENT

There are three governments in operation within the borders of FyxZharar. One is the gnomish government in Gnomorrah that is so confusing most non-gnomes cannot make heads or tails of it. Officially that government is under the jurisdiction of the Midland Sovereignities, but due to the complexities of Mentoï bureaucracy, Montegron and other Sovereignty officials leave it alone.

The other two governments are in direct opposition to each other. One is the government of the Midland Sovereignities under the control of Great Sovereign Lord Montegron, and the other is white branch of the Tashrama under the control of the White Elder Dragon Heriacious. There is a national government, a republic under the direction of Presider Gardel Legna, which deals with FyxZharar's internal affairs, but most consider this a local extension of Montegron's power. Meanwhile, in Breenaak, the faithful of Heriacious view themselves outside of the Sovereignities' jurisdiction. Prior to the revelation of the Elder Dragons many thought Head Priestess Aynal Terals shall ran the local branch of the church and Tashramadic dominated territories. But the truth was that Terals shall had always been

working underneath the direction of the Elder White. These lands are effectively under a theocracy.

MILITARY

A small weak local army does exist for the nation of FyxZharar. They are often referred to as the General Militia although they are officially named the Army of FyxZharar. The bulk of FyxZharar's strength lies in the elite Midland Guard (a.k.a. the Midguard). Headquartered in Karsuhon, the "rare few" are rather abundant here. The army is sometimes weakened when members of the Midguard require additional hands to venture out and perform services and duties for the Midlands. Often the Midland Guardsmen will take soldiers from the army to assist them in their endeavors.

The Army of the White is the military force of Heriacious and the white branch of the Tashramadic faith. As friction was mounting, the dragon knew a confrontation with the Sovereignities was unavoidable, and being a tactical expert in warfare she set out to build her own fighting force among the faithful.

Coincidentally, both the Midland Guard and the Army of the White had new commanders put in charge of them recently: Second Protector Noragaen Veliya for the Midguard, and General Damrye for the Tashrama.

MAGIC AND MYSTICISM

Magic in almost all forms exists in FyxZharar. The mystics, "priests" of the Tashrama, are praised among supporters of the White and hated by supporters of the Sovereignities. Montegron keeps an abundance of sorcerers on staff to assist in magical needs, and Heriacious has also done the same. With the return of the moons, both sides are weighing the advantage gained by possibly including wizards in their ranks, and so a few are in attendance, but how useful they will prove themselves in comparison to the sorcerers has not been determined. The clerics of the true gods are extremely few, but they are quickly scrambling to have some impact on the coming war for better or worse. Odds are they will have little to no impact since so much build-up to conflict has occurred prior to the gods' return.

MAJOR GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES AND LOCATIONS

The nation of FyxZharar is covered in sharp high peaks, vast deep chasms, green valleys where the air is warmed by pockets of natural gas buried deep in the earth, misty hilltops, stretches of rivers rushing down from icy summits, and lakes formed by water that rushed in during the Drowning that could not recede.

The passes and roads throughout FyxZharar wind, twist, and branch off in a myriad of directions. Two towns only a few miles away might require days or even weeks of hiking in order to travel from one to the other. Although

the construction of tunnels are being done in order to make traveling through the lands more convenient, it is still heavily suggested that any newcomers to the region hire a guide in order to not get lost in their journeys. Even many of the locals do not seem to know every possible road or path through the mountains. The gnomes who used to be the original inhabitants also claim that many of the older roads were changed, reshaped, or broken apart when the Great Wave came.

A hard land to navigate, FyxZharar's scenery is still counted as one of the most pristine in Adlatum.

REGIONAL HISTORY

Prior to the Drowning, the gnomes of Gnomorrah controlled the majority of the mountains, and FyxZharar was a minor kingdom existing primarily in the hills and only a small fraction of the taller mountains. With the exception of a collection of human and dwarven settlements, and items in caverns suggesting some earlier civilization unknown to history, most other races had not settled into the immediate area.

Everything changed when the Drowning came.

Although the mountains were high enough to allow many to escape the rushing waters, much of the ocean still poured over and through the lower hills, valleys, and canyons that are scattered throughout the land. Many of the settlements within these areas were flooded as much or even worse than those on the plains. In some places, when the waters receded, deep lakes and rivers replaced valleys and gorges. Towns and villages remained covered for hundreds of years.

However, more to the center of the mountain, the land was high enough to avoid just about all of the damage. Much of the gnomish civilization survived, but much was also destroyed when water poured through caverns to the mining and farming towns in the valleys. The town of Glickanree was completely lost not by the water, but when the rushing floods struck the top of an over-mined hill. The pressure resulted in the ground heaving upward and collapsing upon everyone below. When the land calmed, a quarter of the population was verified dead while another 10% were never found. The dwarven population in the outlying areas suffered similar casualties.

Months went by, and efforts began to rebuild devastated lands the sea had given back. But they were not allowed to. Other surviving races began to seek higher ground, fearing that a second devastation could strike at any time. The influx of coin dwarves, humans, Gildanesti, and others resulted in the pressing the gnomes out of many areas where they had already settled, and in some cases, rebuilt. The gnomish nation of Gnomorrah was pressed northward and then surrounded by the growing Midland nation of FyxZharar.

In the following centuries, several relics were found within the deep maze-work of caves that network through the mountains. With the discovery of old tomes and other



artifacts, many scholars and mages from all over Adlatum came to study and expand their knowledge in their respective arts. The perils of the complex network of caves beneath the summits were quickly learned by some and ignored by many more. Many of those who risked their lives to discover the knowledge and artifacts of old were never seen again.

In 130 AD the White Elder Dragon Heriacious learned of the relics buried deep within the mountains of FyxZharar and sent many of the faithful to search the caverns for items of use. Regardless of the nearby proximity, the mountains, caverns, and canyons makes traveling between the capital and the entrance of Heriacious' primary lair a long and treacherous journey. Heriacious' primary concern is learning about the forgotten civilization buried in pieces down below, not the current one nearby. She gathers Scalebound who think that the dragon's backing and knowledge of the caves will give them an added advantage in finding the buried secrets and making use of them.

After the Starfall, the Great Sovereign Lord Montegron chose to place his seat of power in the middle of the Midlands. Although Karsuhon was within fifty miles of Heriacious' layer, he realized that the city could be easily defended by any attack by the Tashrama or her secretive Scalebound. Both Montegron and Heriacious have had groups continuously searching the deep tunnels beneath them for anything to be used to their advantage.

When Montegron exposed the Elder Dragons are the true powers behind the Tashramadic church, Heriacious revealed herself openly to her followers and declared her divinity. Several who had lost their faith tried to flee Heriacious' lands, but her military killed a large number



of them before they could escape. A large number within Breenaak remained faithful however. During the Days of Darkness, Heriacious was seen during the conflict with the chaotic forces although her identity remained a mystery to many. The older followers remembered her when she showed herself to her believers, and they bowed before the beast who had tried so hard to prevent her people's destruction.

CURRENT EVENTS

- ☞ The tunnels underneath the mountains are a maze and complex webbing of darkness and mystery. Both the Sovereignities and Tashrama have sent explorers down in hopes of finding relics from an unknown lost civilization not recorded in any history. No one seems to be certain such a civilization existed, and no one knows what may be found that could be of any worth, especially in the coming war.
- ☞ After the funeral of Second Protector Jermon Cavlin late last year, his son Evtra Cavlin vanished. No one appears to have any knowledge of how he disappeared or where he could be.
- ☞ Great Sovereign Lord Montegron has ordered a majority of the Midland Guard back to FyxZharar after years of having them out trying to strengthen the local government forces in each of the Midland nations. Also large portions of the General Militia are being put under the direction of Midland Guardsmen. This may be the first open prelude to war against Heriacious and the Tashrama.
- ☞ A small unnamed organization operating out of Unadesum is trying to find a way to dismantle the power of the Sovereignities and the church in unison, hoping to deflate the damage a war will bring without letting one side triumph over the other. The leader of this organization is attempting to find clerics of the true gods, hoping such a holy person will be able to provide a miracle the Midlands desperately needs.

MAJOR SETTLEMENTS

Breenaak (Large City, 24,090): The lair of the White Elder Dragon Heriacious resides within the mountain of Breenaak. The Scalebound live under the mountain cap with the White, while others who believe in the Elder Dragons' divinity reside within the city outside of the lair's main gate. Although Breenaak is a short distance geographically from the enemy stronghold in Karsuhon, the mountains and chasms make any land-based travel between the two settlements the equivalent of hundreds of miles longer.

Karsuhon (Megalopolis, 106,574): The capital of FyxZharar is sometimes referred to as "The Pinnacle of the Midlands." This is both because of its placement high up in the mountains and because it is the center of power for Montegron's reign. Broken up into a myriad of layers and

sections covering the edges of a complex series of canyons, chasms, and mountain sides, Karsuhon's population is the largest of any city in Adlatum, if not all of Krynn. The city is home to a large number of businesses and schools, including three universities. One of the schools is completely devoted to the study of arcane arts of several types.

Within one of the mountains, Montegron had the Palsidion, a massive underground fortress, constructed in order to insure additional protection from any possible attack the Elder Dragons' or other possible enemy. The headquarters of the Midland Guard also resides there along with many of the mages who have sworn allegiance to the Great Sovereign Lord.

Trebiars (Small City, 8783): Located on the border between FyxZharar and Tashramada, Trebiars is located on the major roadway between the two nation's capitals. It is a major trading post, home to a large fort that houses a large number of smaller stores, businesses, and even an auction house. During the Drowning, Trebiars was somehow missed by the wave of water as it submerged the rest of the lands around it. Although credit is given to a freak coincidence in how the surrounding hills are laid out, others believe another more powerful hand was involved.

Unadesum (Large City, 15,024): Before the Drowning, Unadesum was the capital of FyxZharar. After the Drowning annihilated just about everything, Unadesum was rebuilt as a lakeside city at the base of one of the largest waterfalls in Adlatum. Mining, farming, fishing, and trade with the Corinesti provide the city with most of its income. Many think there is a dragonmetal deposit located in the mines behind the waterfall, however both the city and the nation deny it.

