

# Legend of the Burning Sands

## *Campaign Sourcebook*



*for use with the Legend of the Five Rings RPG (1<sup>st</sup> edition)*

*In the heart of this wasteland, this burning land, there was a city. Ah, but not just any city, but the most beautiful city in all the world; the Jewel of the Desert. It was a city built on the only river Lady Sun allowed to survive her Day of Wrath. Within this city, thousands of merchants barter over fruits, milk, silks and Ð of course - life-giving water. It was a city where sorcerers sold their hearts for arcane power and the children of the smokeless fire that we call the jinn can be bound with a single word. It was a city where shadows breathed and legends walked with men.*

*Her name was Medinat al-Salaam, the City of Peace. But everyone called her the City of One Thousand Stories.*

*This is one of her stories*

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## BOOK ONE: *THE BOOK OF SAND*

### An Outlander's Guide to the Burning Sands

What follows is a basic outline of The Burning Sands history, culture and socio-political structure. The history is told in a narrative form to give you an idea of how the people of the Burning Sands view their past.

#### **The First Age: Creation**

In the beginning, there was only the Sun, the Moon and their children, the stars. They were alone, boundless within infinite space. This was the First Age of the World, and little of it can be comprehended by us. Eventually, they created the Jinn, who were the first to walk this place.

The Jinn were powerful, akin to gods themselves, and even after they created others to live within the world with them, they remained the most favoured children of Shilah and Kaleel, the Sun and Moon. Then, over a thousand years ago, the world was a verdant, lush place, with great seas and mountain ranges and forests as far as one could travel. The Jinn and their creations – the Ashalan and humanity – rejoiced in their newfound paradise.

#### **The Second Age: The First Jinn War**

The Second Age was to be granted to the Jinn, so that the gods would be able to retire back to their homes beyond the sky. The Jinn were offered great power, and tutored in its use. They were to be the gods of a new dawn. But something terrible occurred; many of the Jinn were not benevolent beings. Seizing the free will their creators had blessed them with, several of the most powerful Jinn, including their Champion, who had taken the name of the Moon, staged a coup against the gods. The Jinn Kaleel and his five brothers lashed out with their new strength, together toppling the Moon and casting him into an eternity of quiet slumber.

Other Jinn responded in kind. Striking without warning, a horde of them invaded the night sky, dousing thousands of stars and capturing the rest. Together, the Jinn imprisoned the evening

heavens, quickly becoming more than a match for the few who would stop them. With the dawn, Shilah arrived to behold their crimes, and was horrified by what her beloved creations had become. In an instant, the shambling hordes of a new Kaleel descended upon her, trapping the Sun within a prison built of their awful face. Cut off from all that she had envisioned, and thinking her cherished family dead or destroyed, she quickly fell into madness, loosing her own power for the eager Jinn to collect. Within one cycle, Kaleel and his Legion had captured the world. Soon, they embarked on a campaign of terror, reducing their own creations to subjects or slaves, or consuming them whole in a lustful rampage of destruction...

There were a few that opposed them, however.

Ashalan and human were forced to work together for the first time in history against a common foe – their own progenitors – with all creation at stake. Weapons were conceived and forged to fight the new menace, but few were effective, and countless lives were lost. At first, it seemed as if the Jinn were unstoppable, that the new Age really would be theirs to corrupt until nothing was left of the original vision of the Sun and Moon...

But twelve Ashalan refused to submit to the will of the Jinn. They conspired in secret, working with the most skilled humans to devise a way to fight back. Together, they discovered the secret of sandsmithing, and constructed swords made of crysteel, which could cut through the insubstantial bodies of the Jinn like flesh. Eventually, a human named Hakhim, aided by Lammassar, Katani, and others, stumbled upon a fabulous magic – a sigil made of light and smoke that formed a map of all known magic. Locked within its myriad revolving icons were the keys to understanding the nature of the Jinn and the gods that had created them. Hakhim's Seal became the focus of a new direction for the struggle.

The Seal also offered two new and startling revelations about the current war. First, it illustrated, in bold and amazing spectacle, how the efforts of the Jinn would eventually spread beyond our own lands, consuming everything until they were the only powers left, replacing



deities of a lost age. Shilah, the sleeping Kaleel, their children in the night sky – all would perish so that the Jinn could revel in their self-depriving power. Second, the Seal offered a way to contact Shilah directly, to pierce through the wall of Jinn that murmured deceitfully in her ear each day, and opened her clenched eyes to the terrible truth of her creations' design.

The humans only sought a new ally in their fight against the Jinn, a way to end the awful cataclysm approaching. They never anticipated that their actions would urge it forward. Awakened from her lunacy, Shilah witnessed the Jinn through the veracity of the Seal, and – calling upon all the power keeping her sane – lashed out across the beautiful terrain she had brought into being. In one climactic moment, the world dissolved around the Jinn, Ashalan, and humans. Magic touched by her wrath was consumed to add to the destruction, ripped away from those who would carelessly use it for their own selfish desire. Minor beings – Jinn subsisting upon the land and within the air, and Ashalan both young and weak – were obliterated in a flash of Shilah's grace. Those who thrived from magic and lived were forced out of Shilah's sight: the Ashalan fled into the earth, and the last thousand Jinn bound themselves into service with the humans or fled beyond the boundaries of our world.

Kaleel and his brothers, saved by the power stolen from the slumbering Moon, were severely weakened during the Day of Wrath. They attempted to escape but were hunted down by those whom they had tried to enslave, their citadel grounded and buried beneath the sands. With precious little strength left, they fell into a long sleep – like their father had before them – not to be seen again for hundreds of years. In time, the Young Races, who are eternally optimistic in their nature, assumed the Adversary and his brethren to be destroyed. One brother, Irak, refused to accept that Kaleel was dead and ventured into the Blighted Realms to find him.

The First Jinn War was over.

## **The Third Age: The Survivors**

The survivors of Lady Sun's wrath wandered the barren lands for many days. Groups wandered outwards seeking lands that would support them, desperately looking for water and farmable land.

Many died as they wandered the land of sand and sun.

One group wandered inland, confident that they would find salvation, that all the fertile land had not destroyed. They indeed found fertile land, on the banks of a massive deep river that flowed from east to west. On the banks of this river the tribe build their first city, calling it Senpet, in honour of their leader who had brought them here.

Yet another group wandered northwest till they came across a fertile river delta, a part of the same might river that the fledgling Senpet Empire had found. Here they built their villages and set their farmlands. They tamed the camels and horses they found there and thanked Fate for delivering them to this place of peace.

## **A Time of Growth: the Golden Age**

The Tribes of Senpet faired well, their cities growing in size and splendour. Huge pyramids began to dot the landscape of the Senpet cities, marking the tombs of their dead priest-kings. The Senpet also traded with the tribes to the west. The Senpet possessed incredible artists who created some the Burning Sands most dazzling paintings, jewellery, and pottery. They are also accredited with creating the first form of writing within the cultures of the Burning Sands. Their hieroglyphic writing was adopted by the more learned of the other cultures in order to record histories, legends, and important documents. Many tribal wise men traveled to the cities of the Senpet to learn the arts of writing.

The tribes to the west were perhaps the most prosperous of the cultures of the Burning Sands. Ruled by person know as the Sultan, the Sultanate cities grew incredible fast. The entire delta was taken under their control. Dozens of villages had grown up over the delta, with keeps protecting them. The capital itself grew in leaps and bounds. Nick-named the City of One Thousand Stories, Medinat al-Salaam became the focal point of all trade for the Burning Sands. Ships from the lands of the Senpet regularly docked on its' river port. Trade caravans routinely entered and left the massive gates of the merchant quarters, bringing horses, furs and copper, and taking back worked goods. The ruler of Medinat al-Salaam, the Sultan, declared his city the brightest gem in the Burning Sands and



that all were welcome to trade, negotiate, and live.

It was during this period of growth, that a group of peaceful soothsayers and their families were exiled from Medinat al-Salaam. The exact reason for this exile was because the leader of the group, a person known as the Grey Woman, saw the current Sultan's son kill his father and family. She cursed him with immortality and the inability to ever use a weapon again. In revenge he had her and her family exiled. He blamed the deaths on the exiles and circulated it throughout the cities of the Sultanate and Senpet empires. Thus, no one would accept them in any city, seeing them as murderers and renegades. They left in large caravans, heading south into the deep desert.

It was also at this time that ships from a land to the distant west arrived, stating that they were the ambassadors of the Ivory Kingdoms. The diplomats presented the Sultan with works of ivory and volcanic glass that appealed to the most greedy. Trade negotiations were opened immediately.

The now immortal Sultan, pleased with the apparent success of his city and its merchants, declared it a golden age.

## The Fall of the Dark God

It was but 50 years later that the immortal Sultan vanished into the miles of secret passages and rooms of the palace and city. His cousin took the throne and became ruler. Perhaps as an omen to his disappearance a star appeared in the sky, naked to the human eye even during the day when Lady Sun blazed in the heavens.

Senpet priests immediately declared it the light of Rha, their prime deity while the Sultan's priests and wise women declared the star a warning that darkness was coming.

Shortly after its appearance cults of death emerged, prophesizing doom and the coming of darkness and a new age of power.

In the sixth month of the stars' life the night was brought as bright as day as the star expanded and then vanished. A rumble was heard from the deep desert and the ground shook as if the ancient gods suddenly walked again. Hundreds died that night, some sacrificing themselves to their cults of death, others from fright and unknown causes. In the months that followed all seemed to return to normal, even though the

prophets foretold of a Darkness that now walked the sands.

## The Vengeful Sands

It began almost trivially. The Senpet were the first to notice it, as the desert seemed to move inwards on their cities and croplands. It was if the desert seemed to now be alive with a life of its own, as if what ever had fallen from the heavens had imbued it with a dark, malignant force.

Then came the prophet known as the Shadowed One. A man of unknown origin he wandered in out of the desert claiming to be the voice of the Fallen God. He proclaimed that the Fallen God was the true creator of the people of the Burning Sands, not the Jinn as legend told. He proclaimed that the reason Lady Sun seared the land and held back the soothing rays of Lord Moon was because she was jealous of the Fallen God and wanted to destroy his children.

Many cities exiled him, but support for his teachings did occur. Small pockets of followers attempted to take control of cities and towns and for a time seemed to be gaining strength. Senpet and Sultanate towns became dedicated to the word of the Shadowed One.

The respective rulers of the two kingdoms declared war on the followers of the Shadowed One and over the following months the followers were routed out and butchered. Entire villages were flattened. It was during this crusade that armies of the Senpet ran across their first dark sorcerer. A small town of followers was discovered and its populace put to the sword. When it came to the destruction of their chief priest they found that he wielded incredible magics. Sword strokes bounced off him. Fire couldn't burn him. The priest screamed of the power of the Dark God. He taunted the Senpet legions and fled into the deep desert.

The rulers of the two kingdoms were noticeable shocked and disturbed by this discovery and set about discovering all they could about this Dark God.

It was at also at this time that a group calling itself the Ujik-hai became known to the Empire of the Senpet and the Sultanate. Fierce nomads, descended from the outcast soothsayers, these people rode mighty horse and raided many of the caravans of the two empires. They quickly became a force to be contended with, earning the



enmity of the Senpet and the grudging respect of the Sultanate.

## The Fourth Age: the Journey of the Ki-Rin

They came from across the Southern Mountains fifty years after the beginning of the Fourth Age. They wore strange armour, spoke a tongue none could understand, flew a flag of a horned horse, and didn't seem to understand the way of the desert.

The Ujik-hai came down out of the steppes, led by a young woman known as Martazera, and engaged these strange people. Several battles occurred till the leader of the strangers came forth to do battle. Dozens of people died by the leader's hand alone and the Ujik-hai fell back fearful of the power of the strangers. Over the course of the next weeks, several Ujik-hai journeyed to the strangers in order to make peace and teach them the ways of the desert and steppes. They learned that the strangers called themselves the clan of the Ki-Rin and hailed from a distant land called Rokugan, far to the south beyond the Great Barrier Mountains.

## The Darkness Grows

Time passed almost uneventfully. A few assassinations within Medinat al-Salaam occurred, perpetrated by a group known simply as the Assassins. Led by a person known as the Old Man of the Mountain, who in reality was the immortal ex-sultan, the assassins would become one of the dark tales of the great city.

The Senpet cities were still slowly being devoured by the desert and its people journeying to Medinat al-Salaam to start new lives away from the ever encroaching sands.

Several scouts reported that large hostile creatures had been spotted in desert, preying on caravans, small groups of travellers and tribes of nomads. Named giants because of their immense size, these vile creatures seemed to take pleasure in pain and torture and it was rumoured that they had a dark city deep in the desert where they kept hundreds of slaves for mining silver and copper, as well as to entertain them and feed them.

Within the cities of the Sultanate another evil reared its ugly head. Deep in the sewers and ruins of sunken cisterns and ancient passageways

came a race known as Ghuls. They fed on flesh, fresh or dead, finding it wherever they could. Some crept up into the city looking for live bodies to take, especially children.

The clan of the Ki-Rin stayed with the Ujik-hai for nearly a hundred years, teaching them their ways while learning of the desert. When they decided to leave they traveled further west, taking with them the blessings and warnings of the Ujik-hai, as well as a large number of tribesmen who had joined their clan and formed a new family within it called the Moto.

The remaining Ujik-hai split into two factions. The more militant, the Moto, continued their life as raiders, striking at caravans from hidden oases. The second, peaceful faction took the name of Ra'Shari and wandered into the deep desert, becoming nomads, traders, storytellers and keepers of the amassed knowledge of history.

## The Coming of the Dark God

The Dark God finally made his presence known to the Burning Sands by sending out a vast army of evil creatures. Giants, Ghuls, skeletons, mummies and other things terrible to behold lay siege to the cities of the Burning Sands. Hundreds died and were enslaved. Even with the combined armies of the Senpet and Sultanate and the tribes of the Moto forged into a single fighting force, the minions of the Dark God were steadily reaching out to claim all.

It was as the inner cities were starting to fall that a man called Mekhem appeared out of nowhere proclaiming that he could stop the Dark God and his forces. He walked out onto the battlefield and into the army of the Dark God. He calmly declared that he would face the Dark God on his own ground and defeat him there. The general of the army laughed and took the man to the Dark God.

The people of the cities shook their heads, knowing that the man was destined for a gruesome and horrible death at the hands of the Dark God. They took hope, though, from the man's courage and in some outer areas, the man's sacrifice bred faith in the human spirit.

As the forces of the Dark God pressed their attack a new fever ran through the human armies. Bolstered by the sacrifice of one man for the greater good, they surged forward to destroy



their foe, even though the battle seemed fated to be lost.

## The Journey of the Prophet Mekhem

No one is sure what the man who became known as the Prophet experienced on his journey into the heart of the Dark God's forces. One legend tells of a journey of pain and suffering that he endured till finally he reached the Dark God's castle. Here he endured all the tortures of the Dark God till finally the Evil One let him go impressed that man had such spirit.

Another legend tells of a long journey through strange places, each with a riddle that had to be solved. As he answered each, another piece of the Dark God's power was destroyed till finally he sealed the Dark One within his own fortress deep in the desert.

What really happened has been a contention among the enlightened Priests of the Prophet for untold decades and will probably continue to be so for many more. Only two men in all the Burning Sands know the truth. The head of the Faith of the Prophet and the Prophet Mekhem himself.

The Prophet was from a distant land known as Theah. There he'd been heralded as the head of their religion, a messenger of their God, Theus. But he soon realized that his presence there was causing confusion and dissention among nobles and religious groups and so he left, journeying to a land he'd only heard of in legends, in order to bring the Word of Theus to what he believed was a goddess place. What he found were a proud people who were both civilized and fiercely independent. He brought Gods' word, but in the beginning none would listen. When the Dark God attacked he recognized it as Legion, the Dark One of his religion and took it upon himself to go forth and destroy its presence on this earth. His trip was long, stretching across the desert dunes into the heart of the Great Dune Sea. Here they came across a massive crater, surrounded by mountains and three volcanoes. Smoke drifted from the tops of these great mounts, and the future Prophet shivered as he felt the dark cold emanating from the place.

## The Darkness Revealed

Within the great crater lay a massive citadel, carved of ebony stone and black volcanic glass.

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Creatures of darkness wandered the plains of the crater and fell flying beasts nested in its walls. He passed into the citadel and soon stood in the throne room of the Dark God.

He confronted the high priest of the Dark God and brought forth the power and truth of Theus.

It is said that the light could be seen from all around and when it was gone all that remained was a ruined castle in which lay a massive stone of ebon with Mekhem standing before it.

He stepped closer and within its depths he could see something sleeping. Something dark. Something powerful.

Nodding, Mekhem knew that he'd only managed to trap the essence of Legion in the stone and it would need to be protected by the strong of heart, soul and mind. He sent word home and outwards to the lands of the Burning Sands for people to come and assist him.

Dozens paid heed to the call of Mekhem, taking the Ritual of the Ebon Stone, becoming protectors of the Ebon Stone, the most persistent of these were the men and women who once served the Dark God, held under its sway by the power they'd unleashed when they started to worship it. They proclaimed that they and their descendants would cleanse the world of evil as repayment for their crimes.

Mekhem himself wandered the lands of the Burning Sands for many years before finally returning to the Ebonite Stronghold and, according to Ebonite legend, ascending to heaven.

Among the people of the Burning Sands, especially those of the Sultanate, Moto, and Ra'Shari, Mekhem was a holy figure who spawned an entire religion. A religion followed as fiercely now as it was then.

## The Return of the Ki-Rin

Two hundreds years had passed since the day the Clan of the Ki-Rin had left the Ujik-hai.

For all that time the descendants known as the Moto have been waiting for their return. The White Guard were the first to see the darkness on the horizon, hear the sounds of screams on the wind and see the evil slowly rise from the ground. The darkness of the Shadowlands slowly made its way across the mountains to assault the Burning Sands as Fu-leng, the Dark Kami made his bid for power and control. It was the Day of

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Thunder, as seven heroes made their way into the dark lands of Fu-leng to destroy his power. The undead, demons and fell things of the Shadowlands attacked the White Guard of the Moto with ferocity matched only by the White Guard's own tenacity and combat skill. Days of cat and mouse games in the deserts and mountain passes eventually saw the retreat of the Shadowlands forces. Shinjo herself then reappeared with the Unicorn, the descendants of the Ki-Rin. They fought alongside the White Guard Moto in the final battle, a battle in which Shinjo lost her weapon and then vanished, saying that she would return.

The Khan of the Moto took up the sword and has carried it since then, passing it to his son and so forth through the ages.

## The Birth of the Tyrant

The child that would grow up to rule the city of Medinaat al-Salaam with an iron fist was initially quite benign, her worst traits a touch of the dangerously curious and a healthy fear of death. These two pre-eminent facets of her personality would dominate her actions throughout her adolescence, and would - through the malignant warping of the Senpet Book of the Dead - form the foundation for her mindset into the present day.

Soon after her discovery of the Book, her father was murdered in the Residential Quarter of the city, left to bleed to death. The girl was "adopted" by the Merchant King that had employed her father, the estate she had lived in her whole life absorbed into his holdings. Her works of art were sold off at auction, and she is said to have wept a week for each lost memory. The King was a stern guardian, protective and sheltering. He refused to allow her the time she had always enjoyed alone, forcing her to study the arts of refinement and courtship instead.

He told her that she would make a fine wife one day, and that she would fetch a handsome price at market.

She hated him. She despised him for every harsh word he said about her dead father, for every loose comment he made about her, and for the one time he ever mentioned her mother.

She was eighteen, and had been secretly learning the language of the Senpet from one of the servants that had raised her as a child. He had come to her room every night to tutor her, often

until well after dawn. Soon, they were conversing, and soon after that, she was reading from the Book, the only item she had managed to hide from the vile Merchant King's greed.

It contained many discourses on the nature of what comes after the end of life. Where you go, what you do, who you meet, and how your final fate is determined. She feverishly read every word as if it had come from the mouth of Lady Sun Herself, though she knew that statements this true could never have come from Her. No, Lady Sun did not cherish truth. She knew that now. Lady Sun valued deception, drenched in the juice of sweet olives.

More revelations followed. She found that death was not such an honourable, or even desirable, thing. Those that died passed on into a dark land of judgement and arbitrary punishment by ten thousand gods that warred with one another endlessly, needlessly. There, you were only one small soul, a tool to be used by other, terrifying beings of immense power and angry dispositions.

As she read, she found herself immersed in the world of Enala, the dark afterlife that she had been taught to believe was where evil people go after death. But it was twisted by the foreign cosmology of the Book of the Dead, recreated as an alien hell where nothing human mattered anymore.

Yet there was something she could do about it. And on a night only days before she would have been auctioned, she struck. The Merchant was berating her in her chambers after she had "impudently" referred to one of his associates as a "revolting, boil-ridden ghul".

"How dare you!" he screamed. "What role do you think you play here?" His face loomed too closely to hers, sweat gleaming from his brow and in-between the rolls of fat on his neck. "You... are property. To be sold like so much meat."

She fingered a knife her servant-friend had given her one night after the Merchant had beaten her. Hidden behind the curtain she was pressed against, she could draw it with only a single moment's regard.

"In one week," the fat Merchant continued, "you will belong to someone else. Why, I'm half inclined to \*give\* you to our mutual friend, the 'ghul'. Perhaps he would be motivated to teach you some manners..."





"...or at least derive some small pleasure before tossing you into the river."

He raised his hand and began to twirl a lock of her hair in-between his chubby fingers. "So beautiful, and yet so grandly impudent... just like your mother..."

"What would you know of my mother, cow?" She cursed at him.

"More than you would think... slave." He smiled and blinked irreverently. "Who do you think sold her to your father?"

With a maniacal scream of anguish, she lunged forward, imbedding the knife into his sternum. She could feel his ribcage collapse beneath her as they toppled over, and she jerked the knife free and stabbed him again. And again. And again, until there were no more hateful words left upon his lips, or more struggle from his corpulent body. Working quickly, she ripped open his tunic and began carving. It took longer than she would have expected to dig out the swollen organ, and when she lifted it before her, her impression was of a huge, rotten pomegranate.

Looking across the room at the location of her hidden tome, she laughed. With his heart and a little effort, she would be able to mold Enala into whatever he feared the most. And while his anguish within this personal hell would be immeasurable, he was only the first of many, many more...

It is said that the Senpet Book of the Dead is a wellspring for the human mind - that it contains not only historical and philosophical notes of the glory of the Senpet Empire (spanning back some 800 - 1500 years), and a plethora of magical and metaphysical knowledge, but also an indeterminate element that allows its contents to be "adopted" by the reader, allowing him or her to form new concepts and create new effects with every read. The concept of a "living book" has largely been disputed, however, by those not within the astrological or mathematical fields.

Yet a great many sahir and Senpet Thinkers still believe. Regardless, the future Tyrant managed to take something away from the experience of reading the Book, and forge it into the Ceremony of the Hidden Heart, which has allowed her to create many undead thralls from the remains of her enemies. She named them Khadi, which translates as "servants", or "slaves". Since that day, she has managed to create dozens of them,

with hundreds more being slaughtered along the way.

## The Shadow of the Tyrant

Ruled by a benevolent family of nobles, who lived in a grand palace carved from the earth itself, Medinaat al-Salaam had been at peace for just over 200 years. The Sultan and his family were even-handed, and kind, having realised the mistakes of the past, and how to correct them. They had bright eyes for the future.

But something changed with the arrival of the Tyrant and her corps of Khadi. The Tyrant took the title of Caliph and it was rumoured that the Prince himself courted her. But disaster struck, when the Prince murdered his own father. The Caliph had him executed as an example.

A new Sultan was appointed, recommended personally by the Caliph. He governed as best he could, but many claimed he was nothing more than a figurehead and that the Caliph was the one true voice of law in the city. The loudest of these soon followed the Prince, however, and those that remained came to think twice before speaking against the Caliph when their words could be repeated, or remembered.

Not very long after that, the Khadi began policing the streets as enforcers of the Sultan's law. Again, those that complained mysteriously disappeared, leaving no one with the will to oppose them.

## Legends, Alliances, and Plots

For three hundred years did the Caliph rule from behind the scenes, making sure that she remained in power. She sired several children who became prominent businessmen and nobles of the smaller cities that surrounded Medinaat al-Salaam.

It was early in her reign when the Ashalan were spotted once again. An ancient race from the 1st Age, it became rumoured that the Ashalan had a massive city deep in the depths of the earth under the City of One Thousand Stories itself. A rumour led credence by the number of Ashalan spotted in the following years. All of them seemed to be hunting for something or someone. Those who talked with the strange creatures tended to walk away confused and not all together the same anymore.

This was also the period that the Qabal was formed as a rebellious order of sahir who opposed the Caliph and her slave-sorcerers, the khadi. These Qabal took aide from the various merchant princes, know collectively as the House of Dahab, in order to further their cause of taking down the Caliph. The Houses of Dahab, followed a rather different line of thought though. The Houses had long been the home of an ancient society known as the Qolat. Bent on the destruction of all sorcerous powers and such so that mortal man could live and decide upon his own destiny instead of having various deific powers make the choice for him, the Houses plotted against all beings of such power, and nothing delighted them more than putting one sorcerous group against another.

To combat this new rebellious faction of sahir and merchants, the Caliph made a bittersweet alliance with the Senpet Empire. In return for the right to move massive parts of their population to the city, they would provide guards for the Caliph. Guards to patrol the city and deal with the unwelcome elements.

## Today

And so it has been for three hundred more years. The Caliph and her heartless mages never get any older, and no one is bold enough to question why. Sultans have come and gone, yet always they seem amenable to the Caliph's wishes. Trade and alliances with those outside the city has, until recently, dwindled, leaving no new blood to challenge the old.

Raiders, pirates, and other outsiders have always plagued the city, and little has ever been done to stop them. But recently, it would seem that the Caliph has taken an interest in foreign affairs. Last year, a large army of well trained men and women entered the burning sands from the north. Known as the Yodatai, they are perhaps the strongest military faction to enter the Burning Sands since the time of the Ki-Rin. These Yodatai have conquered small towns here and there and even sent two of their legions to camp outside the City of Stories itself, trading foreign steel and silver for water and food. The Caliph has made negotiations with these foreigners, but the extent of the agreements is unknown.

Open trade agreements with the various Ivory Kingdoms has finally begun to bring wealth back to the city, in the form of both water and material treasure such as gold, and silver.

Meanwhile, the Caliph, perhaps afraid that others would learn enough to challenge her necromantic army, has made several curious (and oddly open) orders. All of the libraries in the city have been shut down, and most burned to the ground. No practitioners of magic outside her own Khadi are legally allowed within city limits. And tithes are rising at an unprecedented rate, including not only copper dinari but water, a far more valuable resource in these perilous days.

All this has done little to prevent visitors from bringing books and sahir into the city. Senpet Astrologers and Moto Traders smuggle information and items from beyond city limits every day, much of which falls into the hands of a growing number of people unhappy with the Caliph's totalitarian rule. The renegade sahir of the Qabal hide in corners and back rooms, summoning Jinn and casting spells to aid the cause, but many wonder if they are instead ushering in magical annihilation and not revolution.

The resistance to the Caliph and her inhuman soldiers is growing. The city is tiring of the yoke. Soon, it will rise up in force to stand against her oppressive control. Every day, new heroes are being born - in the stables of persecution, under the wing of abusive guidance, and in the hollow halls of autocracy. Their lives will decide the fate of the world, for a growing feeling of change is happening, and all can feel it.

## Kingdoms of the Burning Sands

### Ashalan

For a thousand years they have remained hidden from the other cultures of the Burning Sands. Only in the last few decades have the enigmatic race know as the Ashalan come back into the public eye.

The average Ashalan is a tall man or woman with pale skin though which show luminescent veins of blue. As they use their magical powers, the veins glow.

Ashalan are said to live in a city deep in the depths of the earth under Medinat al-Salaam. This fabled city, known as the City of the Seven Stars houses the last of the Ashalan, as the rest have been killed and lost to time.



Ashalan are said to be searching the lands of Burning Sand for four artifacts of great power, holdovers from the 1st Age. It is said that these artifacts will help guide them to a noble future where they no longer have to hide from the wrath of Lady

## Ivory Kingdoms

Far to the west lie a ridge of tall mountains, and beyond them is a lush land of jungles, savannahs, and grasslands. This is the home of the Ivory Kingdoms, a loose collection of lands each ruled by a Maharajah, the equivalent of a king or prince. The Ivory Kingdoms frequently bicker with each other over territory, resources and people. While over all they are a peaceful land, the occasional war has flowed across their lands in the past.

Within the Ivory Kingdoms exists a secret cult of death know as the Thuggee. Worshipers of the Goddess Kali, they seek to bring about her emergence through what they term holy work. This holy work is simply the strangulation of a victim. In their homelands they are persecuted and have almost been wiped out. In response to this they summoned an avatar of their Goddess, called Kali-ma, and with it at their head, left the Ivory Kingdoms and came to the Burning Sands. Many village oases have felt the power of the Kali-ma and its followers, and many of the cult are within the City of One Thousand Stories, practicing their art and waiting for the arrival of their Goddess.

The Sultanate hosts dozens of trade ships from the Ivory Kingdoms each day, as they bring in ivory, volcanic glass, exotic foods and slaves, and taking back copper and silver. The various kingdoms see the Burning Sands as a useful ally.

## Moto, Ra'Shari, and Ujik-hai

Across the arid wastes of the Burning Sands lie dozens of oases. Each of these can sustain life for years and years. Stories and legends abound of several massive hidden oasis fed valleys. It is in these valleys that the lands are windswept plains with rocky outcroppings and winding shallow rivers. Flora and fauna flourishes across these temperate valley floors. It was here the people known as the Ujik-hai first came and flourished.

The Ujik-hai were a simple people, content with life in their hidden oasis. When the clan of the Ki-Rin arrived they adopted many of their ways. After the Ki-Rin left, two factions rose to content with each other. The militant Moto and the benign Ra'Shari. A man known as a Khan, a powerful warrior who commanded absolute loyalty of his followers, ruled the Moto. He decided that the Moto would raid the deserts for what was needed. That the oasis would provide them with a home hidden from the others and that they would repay the "kindness" shown to them in the past with their lightning raids and attacks. The Ra'Shari are perhaps one of the most benign cultures of the Burning Sands. They found the idea abhorrent and so left their brethren and journeyed out into the deep desert. Since then the tales of Ra'Shari trade caravans and their leader, an enigmatic old woman know always as the Grey Woman, have stretched across the lands of sun and sand.

For the Moto, life became drastically similar to that of the Rokugani clan that molded them. As time passed they split into two factions themselves, each dedicated to a different duty. The Moto themselves raided the caravans of any who would travel the sands, even their once brothers the Ra'Shari. Operating out of hidden oases, the Moto strike fast and hard, vanishing into the sands as quickly as they appear. They take no prisoners and leave no survivors.

Each Moto oasis is governed by man called a tar-Khan, a powerful warrior of the ruling family who are descended from the original Ki-Rin. The Khan listens to his tar-Khans intently, knowing that they are his ears and eyes to the people and the land.

Unlike Rokugan, there is no separate warrior caste among the Moto. Anyone who owns a weapon can join the warrior caste and fight.

The second group are know as the White Guard, and it is they who stand the borders between Rokugan and the Ivory Kingdoms, watching for travelers from either empire entering the Burning Sands. The White Guard and the Moto have sporadic contact at best and the White Guard are closer to being like their Rokugani cousins than the Moto are.

The Ra'Shari are a nomadic people, wandering the deserts with their caravans. They are said to know the location of all the oases in the Burning Sands, as well as all the ruins of the First and Second Age. It is also said that they are the



chroniclers of the history of the Burning Sands, remembering and writing down everything that has, is and will transpire. Ra'Shari soothsayers are eagerly sought after by many in the cultures of the Burning Sands.

The Ra'Shari travel in large extended family caravans. Trading with small towns as they trek from location to location. Each caravan is ruled over by the eldest woman and all the Ra'Shari are ruled by the enigmatic Grey Woman, eldest of the eldest.

## Senpet

Where the red flag with black scarab flies, one finds the Senpet. One of the ancient human cultures, the Senpet are a hardy people with a culture that seems similar to that of Rokugan's from the exterior.

The Senpet are broken into a caste structure that is very similar to that of Rokugan. Above all is the Pharaoh. He in turn has a royal family. Various noble families also exist, ruling the small cities, towns and villages. Next in the pecking order are the Sun Priests and Death Priests. Considered second to the nobles gives them great power over the people. Then comes of warrior caste, which is comprised of two lots. The cavalry and charioteers, who are the sons of the nobles, and the common foot soldiers, who are peasants who have joined to better their lives and that of their families. The peasants are on the bottom of the ladder and as such do all the labour needed.

This is where the similarities end though.

In the Senpet lands a peasant is actually beneath notice and can be killed just to amuse a lord or lady. Unlike Rokugan, where such acts would be deemed un-samurai like and could offend certain lord, in the Senpet lands this is not so. Entire villages have been wiped out just in order to better the training of a noble's personal army. The only saving grace of this practice is that the Senpet seem to have an abundance of commoners within their cities.

Typical commoner families can easily have eight to twelve children and parents frequently sell their youngest children to nobles for slave labour.

Slavery exists in the Senpet civilization. Slaves tend to be criminals, captured nomads as well as anyone else that is deemed unneeded in the greater scheme of things. Slaves are treated

worse than the Rokugani era, often dying of exposure, lack of food and over exertion while working.

## Sultanate

Medinat al-Salaam, the City of One Thousand Stories, the Jewel of the Desert. This is the home of the Sultanate. Though the city is the largest of Sultanate's holdings, it is not the only one, as the river delta to the east and west of the city is under the rule of the Sultan and the Caliph as well. The largest of all the cities in the Burning Sands, easily three times the size of the Senpet capitol and twice that of Ootosan-uchi, capitol of the Empire of Rokugan, Medinat al-Salaam sits astride a massive river that connects it to the other cultures of the Burning Sands.

The people of the Sultanate are ruled by a figure known as a Sultan. This is only position of power that can be held by a woman within the Sultanate culture. Though rare, Sultanas have ruled the lands on occasion. Beneath the Sultan is Caliph, but most know that the Caliph is the real power behind the throne. After her are the Khadi, the nobility, and clergy, then the merchants and landowners and finally the peasants on the bottom. Slaves also exists, but are considered good only for manual labour, arena fighting and, in the case of young women, toys.

Of interest is the group known as the Assassins. They have been cursed, and the curse affects every male member of the family. A curse that prevents them from being able to hold a blade. As such, the inconceivable has occurred. The women have taken the role of assassin, and learned the arts of death, donning the black robes and taking up the ancient knives of vengeance, following the schemes of generations to return their tribe once more to their rightful place in the sun. This is of course inconceivable to the men of the Sultanate, as their society really doesn't have a place for women except in the place of child bearers and keepers of the homes.

## Yodatai

They arrived barely a decade ago, a vast army on the northern edge of the Sands. Well equipped and heavily armed, they marched across the sands, conquering town after town. Each one was given a simple choice. Live as citizens of the Yodatai Empire, or flee into the desert. Those towns that fled found their towns turning into encampments and used as staging points for the

armies of the Yodatai. Those villages that acquiesced were left largely to themselves.

The Yodatai hail from a continent to the North known as Theah. They are the remnants of an ancient faction who split from the rest of their original empire in order to strike out on their own.

While their cousins have evolved in the regards of culture, learning and magic, the Yodatai stayed stagnant, keeping what worked as their status quo. Today they would be seen as barbarians at best in the civilized nations of Theah.

While envoys of the Yodatai have reached the Sultanate and Senpet, most are simply requests for surrender. The various cultures of the Sands, while recognizing the might of the Yodatai army, ignore these requests.

Of note, though is that members of the Yodatai army have been spotted in Medinat al-Salaam of late. Evidently the Caliph and Sultan have allowed the General of the Yodatai and a legion of his army into the city as "guests".

## Factions of the Burning Sands

There are other factions operating within the Burning Sands, each worth being mentioned. While not actual cultures, they none the less have incredible impact on the society of the Burning Sands.

### Assassins

Deep in the walls of the City of One Thousand Stories lie many different secrets. The most dire and dark of all of them are the Assassins.

Descendants of the cursed Sultan of so many hundreds of years ago and lead by that very man himself, immortal due to the curse, the Assassins are some of the most skilled killers in the Burning Sands.

The one thing that marks the Assassins is the number of women who wield blades within their ranks. This is seen as almost a heresy in the rather anti-feminist culture of the Sultanate.

The Assassins use this to the very effective ends of their profession. Many men have died from the blade held by a young attractive woman who was supposed to be a toy for the night.

### Celestial Alliance - Jinn

When the first free Jinn decided to flee the tyranny and slavery of man after the Day of Wrath they took service as equals with hermit magicians. They whispered power into their lords' ears and when their lords died, they took on the guise of the mortal in order to remain hidden until the time is right.

As time passed they sought out and freed a number of their brethren. Soon they realised that a place to live away from the humans was needed. So a city was created to house them. Floating some distance of the ground, the Jinn city remains hidden at this point, its location known only to a select few in order to protect it from the dark Jinn and humans.

### Ebonites

When the Prophet Mekhem ascended from this plane to the next, he left behind a legacy. The Ebon Stone. Within this stone sleeps the Dark God, or at least a part of its essence.

Mekhem knew this and brought together the stragglers of the Dark Gods army as well as members of his own people from far off lands and created the Ritual of the Ebon Stone.

When a prospective Ebonite, someone who desires to protect the Burning Sands from evil and darkness, wish to become a member of the sacred brotherhood, he must undergo the Ritual. No one talks of what the ritual actually is, but it is known that it is a test of the soul to withstand the dark and evil that waits hungrily for all.

Some fail and flee into the night, either dying of exposure or joining the group known as the Jackals. Those that pass become full-fledged members of the Ebonites.

In its initial time of creation the Ebonites were a thing of good, protecting the innocent, but as time passed, they started to adopt more strong armed tactics.

Today the Ebonites are seen to be almost as bad as the things that they hunt and kill.

### Ghuls

Undead. It conjures forth gruesome images from the reaches of anyone's mind. Shambling hordes of evil things moving towards you at an ungainly gait, moaning and dropping bits of themselves as they come closer.



Ghuls are the worst of the undead. Intelligent ones and not the mindless horrors left by the Jackals and other necromancers that haunt the undercity of Medinat al-Salaam.

The Ghuls are largely an mystery to all learned men. It is impossible to infiltrate them, as they are all dead so any information is gathered from tales, legends, hearsay and rumour. Most contradicts themselves, citing cities, hovels, cults and similar such things as the organisation of the Ghuls.

What is known is that the Ghuls eat flesh, alive or dead. They will attack small animals and children as well as the helpless, wounded and sick or infirm.

## Houses of Dahab - Qolat

When the Jinn were finally beaten back at the end of the 1st Age, many decided that man should not be ruled by the deific powers that be. They decided that man should rule his own destiny and future. Man should not be dictated to by the immortal ancients and should be able to decide its own fate.

To this end, they formed a secret group known as the Qolat. The meaning of the name has been lost in the centuries since the founding of the organisation, but the intent and purpose is still there.

Qolat are staunch supporters of anything that will free man from the chains of in-equality and the might of the celestial powers, such as Jinn, sahir and even the Ashalan.

As time passed, the Qolat soon realised that money and water controlled man, thus if they controlled that, what better way to steer man away from the celestial and back to the mortal. Sadly this thinking created one of the most powerful factions of the Burning Sands. The Houses of Dahab.

Each house is run by a merchant prince, all of which can trace their lineage back to the original founders.

It is rumoured that the Houses support Moto and Ra'Shari efforts in the Burning Sands, sending them water, food and equipment.

## Jackals

They are perhaps the direst thing to arise in the depths of the great city since the arrival of the Caliph and her Khadi.

No one is sure when the first of these strange people first arrived in Medinat al-Salaam, all they do know is that the Jackals feed on the souls of the living, sucking them out of their victims like a man would sip on a glass of water.

Jackals are the men and women who fail the Ritual of the Black Stone, the Ebonite ritual of purification and dedication. For some reason they are found wanting and the Dark God takes a part of their very soul as his own. The creature becomes dependent on the essence of the soul, needing it to live. Most also become servants of the Dark God, carrying out its orders.

## Rakshasa

Fleeing persecution and possibly extinction in their homelands of the Ivory Kingdoms, these beings have taken up residence in a small section of the city.

There are few of the Rakshasa left today, perhaps ten in all. They are solitary unless mating and tend to like to manipulate things to their advantage whenever possible.

Rakshasa are evil and highly intelligent beings, part demon, part angel and part fate all rolled into one.

In the Ivory Kingdoms they were worshipped as gods and hunted to almost extinction as demons.

## Qabal

When the Caliph took over and began her dynasty of power and tyranny, she unfortunately also created her worst nemesis. The Qabal.

Comprised of renegade men and women of learned quality as well as a great amount of sahirs, the Qabal seeks to destroy the Caliph's hold over the people of the Sultanate.

The Qabal are secretly funded by the Houses of Dahab, who seek to have the two groups destroy each other by playing them off against each other.

The Qabal's goals are rather simple. To have the shelves of the libraries restocked with the scrolls, and books of knowledge taken from them. To

allow the people once more the ability to learn to read and write.

Also to see the evil that is the Caliph removed from power and the khadi put down into their graves.

## Cultural Elements

### Women

Within the cultures of the Burning Sands women are a controversial thing. While in the lands of the Sultanate they are treated as little better than chattel, often used as pawns in games of power, in the cultures of the Senpet, Ashalan, Moto, and Ra'Shari they are treated as equals.

Such diversity between the Sands most prosperous center of life and the various cultures that support it and use it to support themselves is a matter of much contrition, as noble ladies and swordmistresses are often insulted, ignored and even attacked because they are women pretending to be men. The following gives a better look at each cultures' view.

#### *Ashalan*

Ashalan women are treated the same as Ashalan males. Once they were revered, because the Ashalan reproduction rate was so small, with single children being born every hundred or so years at a time.

There has not been a new Ashalan child in close to a thousand years.

#### *Ivory Kingdoms*

No one is sure how the various nations that make up the Ivory Kingdoms treat their women. Women have come across with trade caravans and ships participating in the same activities as males, but only in very small numbers. It is assumed that the Ivory Kingdoms treat their women with much the same respect as that of the Moto.

#### *Moto & Ra'Shari*

The Moto women are free to pursue anything they choose in their life. Indeed, a woman can aspire to be leader of her town, head of her town's guard, even a member of the Khan's council. Among the Khan's family it is possible for the daughters to assume leadership of the

entire Moto culture, a fact that has been realized several times in the past.

The Ra'Shari hold their elder women in reverence, as they see them as depositories of knowledge. Ra'Shari women always seem to outlive the men.

#### *Senpet*

Within the Senpet nation women are treated as mere child bearers and home keepers, much like those of the lands of the Sultanate. The only exception is within the nobility. The second and third daughters of noble families are always sent to the guard to learn how to defend their cities along side the second and third sons.

If the woman decides to marry after her tenure within the guard she may do so with impunity. If she decides to continue her career in the military she is also allowed to do so.

#### *Sultanate*

The Sultanate has the most restrictive laws governing women in the entire Burning Sands. Among the Sultanate a woman has no rights and is merely the keeper of the family and house. The bearer of the children and the hostess for guests. Older women are sometimes regarded as founts of wisdom, assuming a position known as a Hakima. A Hakima is treated with reverence and respect, sought out for the knowledge that they have accumulated over the years.

The daughters of nobles are perhaps the saddest of all. Among the upper classes the women are pampered and looked after like fine china dolls. Each is groomed to be the ultimate vision of beauty, poise, and purity. The perfect wife for a nobleman. Of all noblewomen only those who are the first born of a Sultan can hope of possessing any power. They alone can hope to attain the position of Sultana.

Despite all this, many women turn to a life of adventure in strict disobedience of their parents wishes. The child is often disowned in public, but privately still accepted by the family. Such women are regarded as an anomaly in the way of life and many men often regard them as merely other males, ignoring their feminine looks. The life of such a woman can be exasperating as in public most frown upon their life style while in secret it is the stuff of stories and legends.

## *Yodatai*

The Yodatai are an military camp that is slowly moving forward, capturing territory as it goes. The few women of note in the Yodatai army are warriors and commanders of legions. Any other females are used for cooking, treating wounded, clothes making, etc, and of course keeping the soldiers happy at night.

Women in the Yodatai homeland are evidently treated like the men, but this is hard to prove as no has been to the Yodatai homeland and returned.

## **Nobility**

### *Ashalan*

It is not known if the Ashalan have a noble class of citizens among themselves. They are certainly all of regal bearing and look. Perhaps only the nobles come to the surface and deal with the people of the Burning Sands.

### *Ivory Kingdoms*

Like the Sultanate, the Ivory Kingdoms possess a rather obvious noble class of people. These nobles rule their peasants with a mixture of iron fist tactics and velvet gloves depending on the area and noble. Most are of the former rather than the latter.

### *Moto & Ra'Shari*

The Moto have but one noble family, that of the Khan. This family operates much like the noble families of the Greater Clans in Rokugan.

The Ra'Shari are not concerned with such things and so have no 'noble' families.

### *Senpet*

Within the Senpet society a noble is the pinnacle of breeding. He or she is given an education, taught to use a weapon, deal with outsiders and the proper ways of etiquette. Senpet nobles can often be found lazing in large cool stone chambers, quietly watching slaves entertain them.

Young nobles are all required to learn the arts of war as well as the arts of the court. Trained almost from birth in these noble arts, the youngsters grow up well trained and knowing of the world around them. Senpet nobles favour the

first-born sons and daughters of their families, concentrating their education on more courtly matters than warrior matters. These sons and daughters are married off to each other in order to produce more noble children.

Nobles control all of the Senpet higher court functions. Scribes, priests, researchers, generals, and officers are all nobles.

## *Sultanate*

The Sultanate has many nobles, all within various levels of society. From the common town lord to the Sultan himself, the nobles of the Sultanate are perhaps the richest and most decadent of their caste in the Burning Sands.

The Sultan's direct family is pampered from birth, groomed to be in command. The nobles beneath him similarly raise their children the same way. When born, the parents decide what the child shall become and thus have him education to meet that purpose.

Many male children are raised to be warriors as well as perform some other function of noble society. Daughters can only be one thing, though. Gifts to cement alliances. Child bearers and home keepers. The lucky few manage to learn a few warrior skills, such as swordplay, but in the end they rarely need it.

Nobles stand above the commoners and are able to dish out punishment as they see fit to the commoners. Though not as harsh as Rokugan, nobles of the Sultanate can have people publicly flogged, hands cut off and similar humiliation bestowed upon someone they believe has slighted them.

## *Yodatai*

The nobles of the Yodatai are all presumed to be the generals and commanders of the invading legions. It is known that the nobles can buy their commission and that they also frequently buy their legions.

## **Commoners**

### *Ashalan*

Because it is not know if the Ashalan actually divide their people in a noble and commoner class, it is hard to tell what a commoners life would be like in the City of Seven Stars.



## *Ivory Kingdoms*

The Ivory Kingdom commoners live lives that are very similar to the Sultanate.

## *Moto & Ra'Shari*

All task of life are done by the Moto and Ra'Shari on mass. All such tasks are considered vital and as such they are done and shared by all.

## *Senpet*

The Senpet commoner can be likened to those of Rokugan. They work long hard hours in order to provide for their lords and nobles. Unlike Rokugan commoners, Senpet commoners actually own property. They own their houses, livestock, and all within.

A commoner's life revolves around basic skills. Farming, fishing, papermaking, building, painting, etc. Nobles delegate the tasks to them.

## *Sultanate*

Commoners are the staple of life and backbone of the city. They perform all tasks that the nobles would never touch. They clean the streets, check the cisterns, farm, hunt, trade, and a plethora of other tasks.

## *Yodatai*

As with the Ivory Kingdoms and Sultanate, commoners of the Yodatai Empire are the backbone of their existence. Like the Sultanate slavery exists in the Yodatai Empire.

## **Language**

A variety of languages are spoken among those of the Burning Sands. The most commonly accepted language is s'Kirt, the spoken tongue of the Sultanate. This language serves as a trade tongue for entire land.

As written languages go, all three cultures have their own, though the Senpet language is considered the written tongue of the learned. The written form of s'Kirt is often used by many commoners as the way to document sales and do deals with merchants. The Moto language on the other hand is hardly used outside the Moto lands.

## *Ashalan*

The Ashalan speak a ancient tongue that was thought lost after the Day of Wrath. It is believed that they are the only ones still able to speak, read and write it.

The Ashalan can also converse in almost all the languages found in the Burning Sands.

## *Ivory Kingdoms*

The Language of the Ivory Kingdoms is broken down into several different dialects, each specific to the region and kingdom in which the language evolved.

A common polyglot is often used by the traders and sailors who ply the caravan trains and ships to the Burning Sands.

## *Moto & Ra'Shari*

In their beginning days the Moto spoke a tongue that was similar to that of the Ra'Shari. Due to the influence of the Ki-Rin, the Moto tongue was infused with terminology based on Rokuganese. The Moto language of today is a bastard son of these two languages. The written form is that of Rokuganese, as the Moto did not have a written language of their own at the time of the Ki-Rin's visit. The Moto adopted the written form of Rokuganese.

The Ra'Shari tongue and written form on the other hand has stayed very close to the original, having had no need to be changed in the hundreds of years that have passed.

## *Senpet*

Accredited with the creation of the first written language, the tongue of the Senpet is rather verbose. Long conversations are often had that would take less time in other languages. The Senpet tongue is often accredited as the tongue of the learned and the wise. The written form of the language uses a complex form of hieroglyphics to represent word groupings and meanings and as such is a difficult language to learn.

## *Sultanate*

The Sultanate developed a fluid and quick speaking tongue over the centuries. Direct and to the point, the language known as "s'Kirt" in their own tongue is considered the trade tongue

of the Burning Sands, and is the most recognized language in the lands.

The written form of s'Kirt is long and flowing, with entire sentences linked together like one giant stroke of the pen.

### *Yodatai*

The Yodatai speak a strange language that is hard to understand. It seems to have a word for everything and a way to make it mean one thing then the other.

According to the Yodatai it has been unchanged for at least 500 years.

The Yodatai tongue has a written form that is supposedly very easy to master.

### **Economy**

While all of the cultures of the Burning Sands are dependent on the trade of goods and items, water is the be all and end all of valued items. Water brings life to the barren soil. Water sustains the body in the deep desert.

Among all cultures, water is considered the pinnacle of trade items. Tokens that represent a man's accumulated water holdings are kept safe at ones side, each worth its owners weight in gold. All cultures accept water tokens as coinage. Water Tokens are made of burnished copper, stamped with the symbol of the city in which the water is held.

Barter also comprises a large section of the trade in the Burning Sands. Trade of one item for another is seen as a way to spread ones wealth amongst others.

Coins of copper, silver and gold, plus water tokens are the most common currency and are broken down as follows.

1 Gold coin = 10 Silver coins

1 Silver coin = 10 Copper coins

1 Water Token = 1-10 gold coins (depending on the time of year)

### *Ashalan*

The Ashalan seem not to trade for anything nor need anything, at least nothing that is known.

### *Ivory Kingdoms*

The Ivory Kingdoms most wanted substance is of course ivory from elephants as well as a couple of other animals. Exotic wines, silks, and slaves make up the rest of the material sent to the Burning Sands from the Ivory Kingdoms.

### *Moto & Ra'Shari*

The Moto do not trade their own goods. Instead they raid and trade the stolen goods to one of the other cultures. Sometimes they even sell them back to the group they stole them from.

The Ra'Shari trade knowledge of the desert for whatever supplies they need.

### *Senpet*

The majority of the Senpet economy is based off their immense building capabilities. A legion of Senpet slaves can build a fortification, house or building in a matter of days or even hours, depending on its size. Senpet taskmasters often hire out their work gangs for cash and tokens.

Senpet art is also highly sought after, seen as a symbol of culture and status, especially if the item of question is from the early days of the Senpet Empire.

### *Sultanate*

They are the heart of the trade that occurs. Not just the trade of the Senpet and Moto, but of the Ra'Shari, Yodatai, Ivory Kingdoms and even the occasional Ashalan. Every trade is taxed, the coinage delivered to the treasury of the Caliph and Sultan.

Medinat al-Salaam also prospers because of the number of traders and their followers who come to the city, constantly seeking places to stay, food to eat and water to drink.

### *Yodatai*

The Yodatai do not trade with many of the cultures, instead raiding and conquering the territories they wish or item needed.

Yodatai "merchants" will sell steel if needed items can not be found.

### **Travel**

In the desert there are only three ways to travel. By foot, by horse or by camel. They first is a

death sentence, as it is impossible to travel on foot from one city to the next, much less one oasis to the next. When on camel or horseback travel becomes much easier. The distances are less and the travel time is easily cut in half. Horses though are not ideally suited for the desert. They are used sparingly in the open sands, usually for quick raids and by messengers.

The camel is truly the best animal to use to travel the desert. Capable of going for many days without water, the camel can carry a heavy load and rider for a good distance, easily from one oasis to the next.

One other animal is occasionally seen being used as a beast of burden in the desert, the elephant, though it is usually seen more in settled areas than the open sands. Easily capable of carrying several times its own weight, the only downfall is that they are a slow steed, and unless one is prepared to take a large amount of water with them on a long trip into the open sands, they are not a wise choice for long distance travel. Most often, they can be found along the banks of the river, pulling barges or toting howdahs and boxes.

## Food

The food of the Burning Sands can best be described as a combination of spicy and sweet. Coffee and tea are drunk at almost every meal. Dates (an easily grow fruit) are seen every where, as are various grains and easily grown tubers. Rice (a staple of the Rokugani diet) is almost unknown among the Sultanate and Senpet cultures, though the Moto harvest a decent crop of it, which they trade to the others on a regular basis.

A common meal within Medinat al-Salaam would consist of a bitter coffee or tea to drink, a platter of breads, dates and cheeses, a small plate of mixed peppers and tubers.

## Clothing

Perhaps one of the most unusual of subjects for the Burning Sands. Some garb is quite common. In the open sands one wears light coloured clothing that reflects the sun and always a headdress to protect one from the heat. At night, a heavy cloak is over put on to protect one from the cold.

## Ashalan

The Ashalan wear cloaks and robes that cover almost 90% of their body, leaving the face free if anything.

## Ivory Kingdoms

The people of the Ivory Kingdoms wear clothing similar to that of the Sultanate, with turbans and loose clothing.

## Moto & Ra'Shari

Moto garb differs from most Burning Sands cultures in two ways. The first is that it is not flowing, allowing them to ride with ease. The second is that it has a distinct Rokugani look to it because of the time that the Ki-Rin spent with the culture. Moto clothing is not really designed for prolonged desert wear and as such, most Moto will adopt the standard desert garb when travelling the open sands.

Ra'Shari wear clothes suited for desert travel. Hooded cloaks, warm boots and well worn leathers.

## Senpet

Among the Senpet, city garb can vary from person to person. Most males wear a short kilt of some type, and sometimes a tunic with it in the evenings. Women wear a long dress that covers the torso and legs, but leaves the arms bare.

Among the nobles, certain women have adopted the style of leaving their midriff bare, criss-crossing the material over their breasts as protection and for modesty.

Senpet nobles often sport elaborate semi-permanent tattoos and make-up designs on their faces.

## Sultanate

In Medinat al-Salaam, men's clothing is often long and flowing, with colors varying from blacks and whites to reds and golds. The women of the city tend to wear long dresses, which cover much of their bodies, as it is considered against the teachings of the Prophet to show such flesh. Noble women often wear dresses of gossamer material that cover them quite completely, but still almost show what is underneath, flaunting the rule. Fallen women, those that work by pleasuring men, dress in

provocative low cut halter-tops, with loose pants of silk or similar material. The practice of women wearing veils is commonplace across the entire Sultanate.

### *Yodatai*

The Yodatai tend to wear tunics and leggings, mixed with long flowing cloaks or robes. Women tend to wear similar fashions but cut for the female body.

## **Dwellings**

### *Ashalan*

The City of the Seven Stars is the only dwelling of Ashalan style known to exist in entirety today. Its towering peaks touch the cavern's roof, each tipped with a spear of burning white light.

The walls are tall and no-one has seen within them in a thousand years.

### *Ivory Kingdoms*

The Ivory Kingdoms homes are a mixture of poorly built mud/clay dwellings with thatched roofs of the common class and the high walled, minaret topped towers of the nobles' homes and castles.

### *Moto & Ra'Shari*

Among the Moto houses tend to be made of stone, most with a distinct Rokugani feel to them. The Khans castle is actually a massive long house of stone and thatched roof, surrounded by a massive stone wall. Moto are not in the business of making their abodes beautiful or architecturally pleasing, they are there to make them functional and usable.

Ra'Shari have few permanent abodes, tending to travel in their caravans for long periods of time. Most Ra'Shari homes of a permanent nature resemble those of their Moto cousins.

### *Senpet*

Many of the Senpet dwellings that stand today are several hundred, if not thousands of years old. Their great pyramids are tributes to the building capabilities of the Senpet architects. The average Senpet house is a three or four room affair made of clay with a thatched or tiled roof.

### *Sultanate*

The great city seems to a mixing pot of various cultures' buildings. Senpet houses stand next to Moto taverns that neighbour Raksashan warehouses. The actual building style of the Sultanate tends to be a square-ish looking edifice with multiple rooms and floors. An open-air courtyard is usually present in the middle of most houses.

### *Yodatai*

It is not known what the Yodatai homes look like. They have merely taken over the towns and cities they have captured and not built anything new.

## **Castles**

### *Ashalan*

The City of Seven Stars is the only Ashalan castle still standing. It is said to be unassailable, a rumour proven since no one has even entered its walls.

### *Ivory Kingdoms*

The castles of the various Ivory Kingdoms resemble the castles of the Sultanate. Massive many walled structures with minaret topped towers.

### *Moto & Ra'Shari*

The Moto fortifications are simple affairs. Large stone castles with sturdy walls and a single large gate to allow troops and horsemen through.

Ra'Shari have no castles of note.

### *Senpet*

The fortresses of the Senpet are massive pyramidal structures, walled with huge towers that house hundreds of warriors. Filled with secret passageways and hidden rooms, many armies' fear having to invade such a structure.

### *Sultanate*

Medinat al-Salaam is a fortress unto itself. Massive walls surround the city with towers placed at strategic points. It is said that the day the walls of Medinat al-Salaam fall the desert will swallow all there is. The Sultanate has several smaller fortresses some distance from



Medinat al-Salaam, acting as forward posts. These walled fortresses are large stone towers with several walls around them.

## *Yodatai*

The castles of the Yodatai are merely captured Sultanate and Senpet fortifications.

## **Cities**

Within the Burning Sands there are now few cities. Medinat al-Salaam is the mightiest of the those left. Within the open sands only ruins can now be found, half-buried in sand and long forgotten memories. One sees most of the remaining cities of the Senpet on the riverbanks, and of course those small outlying communities of the Sultanate are also upon the river.

The cities of the Ivory Kingdoms dot their lands near the coastal areas and river ways, leaving much of the land untamed.

## **Etiquette**

Like the distant land of Rokugan, the people of the Burning Sands value etiquette highly. Men are cordial to other men and extremely polite to all women, regardless of their station. The only time a man is not cordial is if the person has slighted them in some form or another and vendetta has been enacted.

## **Vendetta**

If a man causes a slight to another man then Vendetta can be called. Vendetta was once merely a name given to the act of killing one who insulted you or something you owned. Over the years the tenants of the custom has blossomed into a whole code of conduct.

It is perhaps the most bizarre yet gentlemanly code of conduct ever created by any culture. Within the Burning Sands it is perfectly legal for a man to enact the Code of Vendetta upon another man who has insulted him in some way. This can vary from killing members of his family, to stealing, to looking at his wife the wrong way. Vendetta can only be called upon by a man of noble birth against another of noble caste. Calling it upon one of lower caste is considered to be an act of a coward and barbarian. The peasants of the Burning Sands are said to have their own version of the Code of Vendetta but it in no way compares with the noble one.

When Vendetta is called for, the slighted man must approach a neutral party and tell him his case. The neutral party then calls upon the offender and discusses it with him. He then has the two meet with him for coffee and dates at his house. He tries to settle the matter with words, for to call upon Vendetta will surely result in the death of one of the two men. Once it has been decided that Vendetta must be enacted the neutral party acts as judge for the coming events. The slighted party has the right to call upon assassins, warriors, traders and other people to either financially and/or physically kill his offender. The offender has the right to defend himself in the same manner. Some Vendetta last mere hours, while some have lasted decades, the respective houses feuding against each other in a never ending war over long forgotten insults.

It should be noted that Vendetta used to be unique among the Sultanate. In today's times, the Code of Vendetta is used by any who live within the Jewel of the Desert, be they of the Sultanate, Senpet or even outsiders such as the Ra'Shari, Moto or Ivory Kingdom.

The Vendetta is not actively practised in any other of the cultures of the Burning Sands and it is considered bad form to take ones Vendetta outside Medinat al-Salaam and to other cities and kingdoms. As such, the offending party in a case of Vendetta can flee the city for another land and be safe till he decides to return.

This is often done in order for an offender to prepare for the coming hostilities by the slighted party.

## **Politics**

Within the society of the Burning Sands, politics do play a great part of life. From the negotiations between the Caliph and the Senpet to the Moto dealings with the Ra'shari about trade routes, the cultures of the Burning Sands constantly deal with their counterparts in an attempt to better their own lives. The Senpet seek to find a new home for their people, knowing that the desert will soon devour their cities forever. The Moto raid all that come within their sight. As for the Caliphs political agenda, no one can tell, but it will serve her purposes in the end.

## Religion

### *Senpet*

The Senpet worship a variety of gods, the most prominent which is their ruler, the Pharaoh. Though not actually a god, the Pharaoh is still treated as one. The chief deity of the Senpet pantheon is Rha Annu, Lord of Light, and the God of the Sun. The Pharaoh is considered to be the son of Rha.

The Faith of the Prophet has a rather small following within the Senpet lands, as the Pharaohs saw it as counter to their power. Still it is allowable for one to worship the Prophet, as long as one also acknowledges the Pharaoh as the Son of Heaven.

Senpet gather on regular occasions in large temples dedicated to their gods.

### *Moto & Ra'Shari*

The Ujik-hai had many gods. Indeed, their religion bears an uncanny resemblance to that of Rokugan. The Moto hold Lady Sun and Lord Moon in great reverence, knowing that through appeasing Lady Sun the days will grow cooler and through the worship of Lord Moon the nights will grow a bit warmer. The Moto adopted some of the Rokugan beliefs in spirits, as they had their own to deal with. Jinn, as the spirits are known, are easily summoned within the Burning Sands, and the Moto pay them every respect they deserve.

Most Moto families worship in private shrines inside their own homes, there is no public place of worship.

The Ra'Shari, on the other hand, worship Lady Sun and Lord Moon and none else.

### *Sultanate*

Religion is a rather difficult subject when talking about the Jewel of the Desert. There are several cultures within the massive city, all worshipping their variety of gods, goddesses and deities. Suffice it to say, that Temple Row is the grandest feature in the entire city as each religion attempts to draw new worshippers.

The Sultanate themselves follow one of two religions. That of the Prophet and that of Fate. The Faith of the Prophet is centered around the teachings of the Prophet, which call for the

destruction of darkness through light. The followers of the Prophet are purists, drinking no alcohol, copulating only to have children, and following a strict code of conduct. The Priests of Fate on the other hand seem only concerned that their followers understand that Fate is a fickle mistress. Followers of the Fate religion tend to make sacrifices of something of value before embarking on journeys or ventures. Surprisingly, many people of other religions pay lip service to Lady Fate almost unconsciously.

Incredible temples dedicated to the Faith of the Prophet dot Medinat al-Salaam, only rivalled by the majestic temples of the Senpet. Temples and shrines to Lady Fate are small affairs, hidden away in places that you find only when Fate seems to draw you there.

### *Ashalan*

The Ashalan worship the Lord Moon, Kaleel, as well as the Four Unnamed Goddesses. The Ashalan respect Lady Sun, but do not worship her, seeing her as a deity of chaos and fire.

### *Ivory Kingdoms*

The people of the Ivory Kingdoms worship many gods, goddesses, demons and such. One such creature was a thing known as the Rakshasa, tiger headed demons of smoke and mist. They delighted in playing with man and his plans, destroying hope and free will. These Rakshasa were nearly wiped out some decades ago and many fled to the Burning Sands to hide and begin their work again.

Of particular note is the Goddess Kali and her death cult, the Thuggee. Stranglers without peer, the Thuggee cult grew in size and power till it nearly split the kingdoms in half and ushered in a bloody civil war. The cults were finally put down and many of their kind destroyed. Finally they cult, almost extinct, summoned its goddesses' avatar, the Kali-ma and journeyed into the Burning Sands to begin their holy work anew.

### *Yodatai*

The Yodatai worship a variety of gods and goddesses. The primary of these is Theus, the lord of all gods. Following him were gods and goddesses of war, death, love, spring, summer, etc, etc.

## BOOK TWO: *THE BOOK OF SEA*

### Character Creation

Within the Burning Sands there are many types of characters to be. From desert scout to raider to sahir to merchant. Each is an adventure unto its own. Most players will be tempted to play warrior types, seeking fame and fortune in the open sands. This is not to say that that is wrong, but it limits the campaigns a lot if that is the only type of PC taken. Merchants, scouts and sahir are equally playable concepts and it should be encourage for people to try them.

### Character Concept

#### The Game of Questions

1. What Culture does your character belong to?
2. How would you describe your character?
3. What school is your character?
4. From what caste is your character?
5. What is your character's own opinion of his culture?
6. What is your character's own opinion of the other cultures?
7. Does your character have any prejudices?
8. Is your character married?
9. To whom does your character owe the most loyalty?
10. What are your character's favourite (and least favourite) things?
11. Does your character have any recurring mannerisms?
12. What about your characters psychology?
13. How would your character's parents describe him?
14. What are your character's highest ambitions?
15. How religious is your character?

16. If you could, what advice would you give your character?

### Character Types

#### *Brash*

The brash last longer within the cities than in the open sands. Many a brash youth in the open sands finds himself left in an endless sea of sand with no oasis in sight and his water canteens empty.

#### *Noble*

The noble is only at home in the city. He leads others by example and shows mercy to his lessers. The noble always treads a thin line between being a benefactor and seen as a good man of the people, and being a Tyrant.

#### *Merchant*

The life of a merchant is a tough one. Long trips, dealing with officials from several cultures, bandits, and strange cargoes. Of course the benefits are great. Money, power and water.

#### *Reluctant*

Sometimes Lady Fate chooses her servants even though they do not want to be chosen. They find themselves thrust into a life of turmoil and great danger whose rewards are often just as great.

#### *Rogue*

The rogue wanders the open sands and cities, lord of his own oasis and master of his own destiny. The life of such a man or woman can sometimes seem treacherous, for the desert is a harsh master, but to those who survive it, it holds great promise.

#### *Scholar*

A scholar learns all he can about the world, other cultures, and the creatures and people who live there. A scholar can learn all this from simply being in a city or from wandering the world.

#### *Vengeful*

Some people take a path of vengeance when they journey out into the world. For them, there is



nothing but a life of death, blood and destruction ahead. Many are born into this life, the result of age-old vendettas; others merely find themselves a part of it.

## *Priestly*

The way of the priest is a path of peace and learning. Following the Gods of one culture or the fickle Mistress of Fate or even the Way of the Prophet is a tough life but full of spiritual reward as one learns more of the faith.

# Character Sheet

## One: Rings and Traits

### *Sand*

This is the characters resistance and fortitude. The sand is seen as never ending and always there, a sign of good health is to be told that you're a fit as the desert sands.

### *Stamina*

This is the measure of a man's 'wind'. Can he run for long distances, survive under the hot sun, etc. A low score might indicate that you are hurt or ill, or possibly a weakling. The lower the score, the less you can carry.

### *Willpower*

This represents the PCs strength of mind. It is mental stamina. A low score means you are weak minded and easily convinced of things, a high score means you are one of more steadfast of people.

### *Sea*

The sea is viewed by many as the strength of the body due to its relentless assault upon the rocky shores of the northern coast.

### *Strength*

This is the PCs physical might.

### *Perception*

This is the PCs ability to perceive things around him.

### *Wind*

The wind is everywhere, felt by all. It drives the sandstorm that kills and yet can cool one on a hot

day. Many whisper that Lady Fate speaks to her followers through the wind.

### *Awareness*

This is the PCs intuition and empathy.

### *Reflexes*

How quickly the PC can react to stimuli.

### *Flame*

The flame is active, always flickering with grace and beauty. A deadly beauty.

### *Agility*

The ability to move with style and grace.

### *Intelligence*

The ability to acquire and applied knowledge.

### *Ka*

This is the linking aspect of the entire world. The life force of all creation. To have no Ka is to be dead, or worse, undead.

### *Ka Points*

Ka points are used like the Void points in L5R, granted extra unkept dice to rolls or reducing damage.

### *Fate Points*

2x Ka is the fate points available to a person. He may call upon fate as many times as he has fate. See the rules on fate usage in part seven.

## Two: Skills

Skills are what the character uses to accomplish his feats of daring and courage. A full listing of the skills will be found at the end of this chapter.

## Three: Culture, Upbringing and School

### *First: Choose an Upbringing*

Choose the upbringing you want to try to play.

### *Second: Choose a Culture and or Faction*

Find the culture that appeals to you the most.



### *Third: Choose a Culture, Generic or Faction School.*

Choose an appropriate school for your PC

### *Fourth: Character Points*

25 points to be spent. Cannot raise a trait or skill by more than 2 ranks. No traits above 4 to start. Skills cost 1 to raise 1 rank. Traits cost 8 per rank. Ka costs 12 per rank. Raising ones honour costs 3 per rank, though lowering it gets back 2 per rank. You may only raise or lower your honour by 1 rank. It costs 3 points to raise your faith a rank, and you gain 3 points if you lower it. You may only raise or lower your faith by 2 ranks. Advantages and Disadvantages vary in cost, see the section on them for exact costs.

## **Four: Advantages and Disadvantages**

A way to customize your character and give him a rather unique look on things.

## **Five: Wounds**

All characters are going to get bashed. Either by other characters or by critters. The Wounds score is a rating of how much damage a person can take.

## **Six: Honour**

In the Burning Sands honour is as important as it is in Rokugan. Each person is expected to hold to his word of honour and to act in accordance of the codes of honour laid down centuries ago.

Treat the honour ranks like those in the Main L5R Rulebook on pages 58 to 59.

## **Seven: Fate**

Fate points are a way for a character to escape certain death and make impossible feats of heroism possible. By spending such a point the PC may re-roll his last roll in an attempt to see if Fate is in a good mood. Of course this can be as good as it is bad. Fate is a fickle mistress and as such will allow one to do this once in a while, but not consistently. The first time one calls upon Fate he may re-roll his last action, ignoring all number equal or lower than his Ka Ring or he may use it to reduce the damage received to 1 Rank by rolling his Sand Ring at a TN of 15.

Every time one calls upon Fate again, he angers Fate a little bit. To represent this each subsequent time one spends a Fate point he loses 1 off his ignore ability. E.g. A Senpet sahir with a Ka of 3 calls upon Fate to help him survive a rather nasty fall. He rolls his Sand Ring (3 dice), ignore all 1s, 2s and 3s (his Ka is 3) and succeeds. All the damage is reduced to 1 Rank. A bit later he attempts to jump over a rather large alleyway while running from a pack of Ghuls. He fails and decides to evoke fate again. He re-rolls, but this time he may only ignore 1s and 2s. If he were to call again, he may only ignore 1s. If he were actually try again he would not be able to ignore any numbers.

You can only try to call upon Fate a number of times equal to the number of fate points you have.

## **Eight: Faith**

All people within the Burning Sands have faith to a degree. Most run the middle ground and find that at some points the Gods help them while at others they find that the Gods will ignore them.

To represent this Faith is rated from 1 to 10. At the lower levels one finds that they are not bothered by the Gods and are generally unaffected by deific situations. Those with particularly high Faiths find that they are able to bend said deific powers to aid them, almost as if they are blessed by their gods.

Those who tread the middle ground find that they are actually at the whim of the Gods one way or the other.

Faith Rank 1 - The Gods ignore this person to the such a degree that they do not know he exists. This is useful because it means that the power of the Gods cannot readily affect the man. All priestly magics are at +10 TN to affect the person. This includes beneficial magics as well.

Faith Rank 2 to 3 - The Gods know you exist, but only just barely, like an infant might exist to a passer-by. All priestly magics are at +5 TN to affect the person. This includes beneficial magics as well.

Faith Rank 4 to 6 - The Gods see you and muddle with your life every once in a while, be it good or ill. This is the normal levels of pretty much every one in the Three Kingdoms.

Faith Rank 7 to 9 - The Gods sometimes listen to you when you speak. They are more inclined to

help you in times of peril. All beneficial priestly magics are at -5 TN, all harmful priestly magics are at +5 TN.

Faith Rank 10 - You speak with Gods on a regular basis. All beneficial priestly magics are at -10 TN, all harmful priestly magics are at +15 TN. Only the Prophet, The Pharaoh, and the heads of the Three Kingdoms Religions have this level of Faith.

## Nine: Insight and School Rank

This is handled exactly like it is in the Legend of the Five Rings Main Rules. Add up your Rings. Multiply it by ten. Add all you skill ranks to the number and check the chart to see what rank you are.

## Ten: Caste

All people in the Burning Sands belong to a caste. Each caste has its own rules and laws and outlooks on how the other castes live and should be treated. Caste can limit a man's ability to learn certain skills and techniques. It is possible to ascend from one caste to another, either through the accumulation of wealth and/or water or by marrying into a higher caste, and even by being elevated by a noble deed.

The castes are:-

**Low** - Men and women of peasant and lower birth

**Middle** - Men and women born of rich merchants, landowners, captains of the guard, etc

**High** - Those of royal birth.

## Outfit

Because of the diverse nature of the cultures in the Three Kingdoms, it is best to look at the schools for the Outfits that one gets. A Generic outfit is noted below for an average commoner.

(All items of average quality) Knife, clothes, travelling pack, possibly a camel if a traveler, 3 gold coins, 20 dinari (copper coins), 2 water tokens.

## Example of Character Creation

### Go through the following steps:

1. Choose upbringing
2. Choose culture of origin
3. Record Beginning Faith
4. Record Caste
5. Choose school of teaching
6. Record Beginning Honour
7. Record skills, benefits, and techniques if any are allowed.
8. Spend Character Points to increase rings and skills, buy Advantages and Disadvantages.

## Customize your Character

Your character's Traits and Rings all begin at a 2; His Faith is 5 and his Fate is D5. You may now spend 25 Character Points to customize your character. You may spend points on Traits, Skills, or Advantages. You may gain additional Character Points by purchasing Disadvantages.

## Character Point Cost

Raise a Trait: 8 CP

Raise Ka Ring: 12 CP

Raise a Skill: 1 CP

Lowering and Raising Faith: It costs 3 CPS to raise your character's Faith. Lowering your character's Faith gains you 3 CP. Faith can only be raised or lowered by two ranks.

Lowering and Raising Honour: It costs 3 CPs to raise your character's Honour. Lowering your character's Honour gains you 2 Character Points. Honour can only be raised or lowered one Rank.

## Determine Wounds

Multiply your Character's Sand by 2 and fill in each Wound box with that number. These are your character's Wounds.

## Outfit

Your outfit (beginning equipment) is listed on the school. The Equipment List is on pg. ?? List your possessions and money on the back of your character sheet. Choose your Primary Weapon and how many dice you'll roll and keep when using it, your Armour and it's protection, and your TN to be hit.

## Determining Insight

Find the sum of all your Rings. Multiply that total by 10.

Then, add the sum of all you Skills.

Finally add the totals together. This is your Starting Insight.

## Equipment

The people of the Burning Sands have many items to purchase at local markets. All three kingdoms possess similar items that the trade with one another.

## Currency

1 Dinari (gold) = 5 dirham(copper) = 50 bits (tin)

1 Water Token = 10 Dinari

## Miscellaneous Equipment

Item	Cost
Backpack, cloth	3 copper
Books and scrolls	3-10 copper
Candle	1 copper
Chest, metal	1 gold
Chest, wooden	3 copper
Cloth, silk	2-5 gold
Cloth, cotton	1-5 copper
Flint and steel	1 copper
Lantern	2 copper
Lantern oil	1 copper/pint

Item	Cost
Mirror, small	2 gold
Mirror, large	5 gold
Paper, writing	2 copper/sheet
Rope, hemp	2 copper/10 feet

## Clothing

Item	Cost
Aba	7 copper
Agal	4 copper
Belt	1 copper
Boots, riding	1 gold
Boots, soft	6 copper
Caftan	1 gold
Chador	6 copper
Cloak, hooded	3 copper
Cloak, plain	1 copper
Cloak, fur	4 copper
Dishdashah	8 copper
Dolman	6 copper
Fez	1 copper
Girdle	3 gold
Keffiyeh	2-8 copper
Petticoat	2 gold
Robe	9 copper
Sandals	5 tin
Shirt, linen	4 copper



Item	Cost
Skirt	2-5 gold
Trousers	2 gold
Veil	5-8 copper
Vest	6 copper

### Notes on clothing

The Burning Sands share many types of clothing but all three have overall separate and distinct looks to their clothing styles. The Sultanate favours simple monochromatic clothing except by the rich and powerful, usually a good way to spot them in a crowd so as to give them plenty of respects and a wide berth. Sultanate men like billowing robes while with women tend to wear either all covering robes or pants and halter top with a gauzy cloak. The Senpet men of class tend to dress in simple kilts, while labourers and slaves often wore a loincloth or nothing at all. Senpet women wore elaborate loose skirts, girdles, petticoats and shirts, usually of silk if they were of noble birth. Often these clothes had a gauzy look to them and were skin-tight. Moto men and women wear various clothes similar to those of the Unicorn clan of Rokugan. Split skirt/pants, tunics, soft boots and cloaks are common among the Moto of the Steppes.

Clothing is either made of simple cloth or silk. All items here are made of cloth. Simply multiply the amount by 10 to find the price for a silk item.

### What is some of this stuff?

**Aba** - traditional desert robe, simple and flowing.

**Agal** - a cord or group of cords designed to hold a keffiyeh (headcloth) in place.

**Caftan** - a flowing ankle length over garment cinched at the waist

**Chador** - a full-body robe for women, complete with a hood and face covering.

**Dishdashah** - a simple tunic worn by the lower castes.

**Dolman** - a loose, floor length robe that is similar to the Aba but tends to be worn in more civilized urban areas.

**Keffiyeh** - a headcloth worn by most men and women.

### Transport and Animals

Item	Cost
Dog	3 copper
Dog, Hunting	10 gold
Donkey	8 gold
Camel	50 gold
Elephant	150 gold
Falcon, trained	300 gold
Horse, riding	75 gold
Horse, pack	30 gold
Horse, war	150 gold
Horse, Moto	300+ gold
Monkey, trained	80 gold

### Skills

Most skills are similar to those of L5R, though with a slight modification. Anyone may take a skill from the Main, Warrior or Merchant categories. High and Middle caste are allowed skills from the High category. Forbidden skills are generally ignored by most and unfortunately possessed by many. Anyone may take a Forbidden skill, though they must pay 2x the regular amount to raise it. People caught using such skills are often shunned, arrested and sometimes even attacked. Certain skills can not be raised above 2 or 3 based on ones upbringing as well. Check upbringing packages to determine which there are. Many of the skills are the same as those from Legend of the Five Rings.

### Main Skills

(Open to all)

- **Animal Husbandry (Spl)**
- **Athletics (Spl)**
- **Acrobatics (Agl)**
- **Acting (Per)**

- **Bard (Awa)**
- **Dancing (Ref)**
- **Debate (Int)** - The ability to hold your own during heated discussions, remaining quick-witted and cool tempered.
- **Disguise (Int)**
- **Fast-talk (Per)**
- **Gambling (Awa)**
- **Haggling (Awa)** - The ability to bicker over a price till it meets what you want to pay for it.
- **Hunting (Per)**
- **Language (Int)** - The ability to speak another language.
- **Lore (Int)**
- **Medicine, Basic (Int)**
- **Meditation (Ka)**
- **Music (Int)**
- **Painting (Int)**
- **Poetry (Int)**
- **Riding, Camel (Awa/Per)** - The ability to ride a camel properly
- **Seduction (Awa)**
- **Storytelling**
- **Stealth (Agl)**
- **Singing (Awa)**
- **Smithing (Per/Agl)**
- **Survival (Int/Will)** - The skill of survival in harsh conditions, especially the desert.

## Commoner Skills

(Low Social Caste Only)

- **Armourer (Sand)**
- **Boating (Awa/Per)**
- **Begging (Per)** - A skill possessed by many poor, and can be used to procure spare change, food and scraps of clothing.
- **Craft (Spl)**
- **Engineering (Int)**
- **Herbalism (Int)**
- **History, Oral (Int)** - The skill of telling the history of the Burning Sands effectively. Differs from the Bard skill in that the history is proper facts and details, not embellished legends.
- **Locksmith (Agl)**
- **Picklock (Agl)**
- **Pickpocket (Agl)**
- **Sleight of Hand (Agl)**

- **Weaponsmith (Sand)**

## Warrior Skills

(Open only to warrior schools or those of High Social Caste)

- **Archery (Ref)**
- **Armourer (Sand)**
- **Axe (Agl)**
- **Battle (Per)**
- **Club (Agl)**
- **Defence (Agl)**
- **Display Weapon Prowess (Ref)** - Simply the ability to show off your skills in a demonstration of moves. Can be useful to intimidate someone.
- **Fast Draw (Spl)** - Identical to Iaijitsu in Legend of the Five Rings.
- **Hand-to-Hand (Agl)**
- **Horse Archery (Agl)**
- **Intimidation (Will)**
- **Knife (Agl)**
- **Rhumal (Agl/Str)** (Ivory Kingdoms Rhumal Assassin only)
- **Riding, Horse (Awa/Per)**
- **Shield (Agl)**
- **Swordsmanship (Agl)** - The ability to use a sword.
- **Spear (Agl)**
- **Weaponsmith (Sand)**

## Merchant Skills

(Limited to Trader Upbringing or Merchant School only)

- **Appraisal (Per)**
- **Commerce (Awa)**
- **Barter (Awa)** - A more advanced version of Haggling. The merchant with a high Barter skill can easily trade off shoddy merchandise for good money.

## High Skills

(Medium or High Social Caste Only)

- **Advanced Medicine (Per)**
- **Astrology (Int)**
- **Calligraphy (Per)**
- **Courtier (Awa)**
- **Etiquette (Int)**
- **Heraldry (Per)**
- **History, Written (Int)** - Since writing is almost totally restricted to the middle

and upper classes, this the written version of Oral History.

- **Investigation (Spl)**
- **Law (Int)**
- **Manipulation (Awa)**
- **Political Maneuvering (Int)**
- **Research (Int)**
- **Sincerity (Awa)**
- **SandSmithing (Per/Agl)** (Ashalan Only)
- **Theology (Int)**

## Forbidden Skills

(2x normal cost to raise)

- **Forgery (Agl)**
- **Poison (Int)**
- **Seduction (Awa)**
- **Spellcraft (Int - Sahir/Sorcerer)**
- **Torture (Awa)**
- **Traps (Per)**
- **Explosives (Int/Agl)**
- **Garrote (Agl)**

## Advantages and Disadvantages

### Advantages

(The following are used as noted in the Legend of the Five Rings main rulebook)

Absolute Direction, Allies, Ambidextrous, Blackmail, Bland, Clear Thinker, Dangerous Beauty, Daredevil, Eidetic Memory, Forbidden Knowledge, Inheritance, Innate Ability (Sahir & Sorcerers only), Keen Eyes, Keen Hearing, Large, Luck, Magic Resistance, Patron (Merchant Only), Perfect Balance, Precise Memory, Quick, Quick Healer, Read Lips, Social Position, Swift, Tough, Voice, Wealthy

### Disadvantages

(The following are used as noted in the Legend of the Five Rings main rulebook)

Adopted Blood, Bad Fortune, Bad Health, Bad Reputation, Blackmailed, Black Sheep, Brash, Can't Lie, Chemical Dependency, Colour Blind, Compulsion, Contrary, Dark Secret, Dependent, Disfigured, Driven, Enlightened Madness, Epilepsy, Frail Mind, Fascination, Forgotten, Greed, Gullible, Hard of Hearing, Haunted,

Inbred, Insensitive, Jealousy, Lame, Lechery, Lost Love, Low Pain Threshold, Meddler, Missing Limb, Nemesis, Obligation, One Eye/Poor Vision, Overconfident, Permanent Wound, Phobia, Shy, Small, Soft-Hearted, Sworn Enemy, True Love, Unlucky, Vanity, Weakness

## Culture Sheets

### Upbringing Schools

These schools are taken as part of the PC and represent his upbringing to an extent. Can be used by anyone.

All Upbringings start with a Faith of 5, which can then be modified to suit the PC.

#### *Scout*

Your parents scouted the lands for their respective kingdom. They traveled light and quickly and you learned how to do this as well.

**Caste:** Middle

**Initial Skills:** Athletics, Riding: Camel

**Bonuses:** All tracking, hunting and survival skill tests are at -5 TN.

#### *Trader*

(No Ashalan)

Your parents were merchants and you were brought up travelling from city to city in massive trade caravans.

**Caste:** Middle

**Initial Skills:** Hagglng, Language

**Bonuses:** All Merchant skill tests are at -5 TN.

#### *Nomad*

(no Yodatai)

Your parents were members of a wandering tribe. You grew up a part of the tribe, moving from one oasis to another.

**Caste:** Middle

**Initial Skills:** Survival, Riding: Camel

**Bonuses:** All survival, riding: camel skill tests are at -5TN.

## Noble

(no Ra'shari or Ashalan)

Your parents are of noble birth and as such your were born with the silver spoon firmly in your hand.

**Caste:** High

**Initial Skills:** Swordsmanship, Etiquette

**Bonuses:** All etiquette, courtier, and sincerity skill tests at -5TN.

## Scholar

You were part of one of the minorities of the Burning Sands, the educated. Oh, many know their letters and such, but there are few scholars in the three kingdoms, especially in the lands of the Sultanate.

**Caste:** High

**Initial Skills:** Calligraphy, Language

**Bonuses:** All history, calligraphy, and research skill tests are at -5TN.

## Peasant

(No Ashalan)

Your parents were commoners, nothing more, nothing less.

**Caste:** Low

**Initial Skills:** Knife, Hagglng

**Bonuses:** All survival skill tests at -5TN.

## Slave

(No Ashalan)

Your parents were slaves, a condition that is all too frequent within the lands of the Burning Sands.

**Caste:** Low

**Initial Skills:** Knife, Athletics

**Bonuses:** All survival and knife skill tests at -5TN.

## Culture Schools

Because of the place that caste holds in the culture of the three kingdoms, those of Low caste are limited to rank 1 techniques and only initial spells. Those of the middle classes are limited to

Rank 3 techniques, and those of Noble birth may master the Rank 5 techniques. This is not to say that those of low and middle castes can't learn higher techniques, it just means that they must find someone who will teach them the techniques or spells. Some travel to Moto lands, others develop their own and teach it to others secretly.

Each culture has its own version of the Warrior and Sahir schools as well as a specific school unique to the culture.

## Generic Schools

Please also note that there are a number of Generic schools at the end of this section. This schools cover professions that are pretty much the same across all the cultures of the Burning Sands, such as thieves, explorers, merchants, etc.

## Faction Schools

The various factions of the Burning Sands also have schools of their own. They are noted after the Generic Schools for anyone who wish to belong to a faction.

## Schools

### Kingdom-Specific Schools

#### Ashalan

*"The pride of our ancestors is the burden we must carry, but there is a path to redemption, a path that lies in the dreams of a fallen god." - Maymun*

For almost a thousand years the Ashalan have hidden from the might of Shilah, the Lady Sun, fearing another Day of Wrath and preparing for a time when they would have to pass the secrets of the Fallen Star to a new age of heroes. Now, with the last fading moments of history rapidly slipping away, they scramble to ensure that all of the pieces are set and that the world is braced for a new beginning. If they fail in this, the world will share the awful price for their ancient arrogance.

**Cultural Benefit:** +1 Ka

**Cultural Advantages:** Unageing, Night Vision, Quick

**Cultural Disadvantages:** Infertile, Benten's Curse, Sun Allergy

### *Ashalan Blood Sworn School*

Holy Warriors, the Blood Sworn are the ultimate fighters of the Ashalan. They train for decades in the temples of the Four Goddesses and Lord Moon in order to be able to defend the world from the coming Awakening.

**Benefit:** +1 Strength

**Beginning Honour:** 2 + 5 boxes

#### *Skills*

Hunting, Stealth, Lore: Sewers, Swordsmanship, Knife, Archery, +1 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

##### *Rank 1: Move like the Night*

All Bloodsworn learn to walk without sound in the beginning of their training, for to make a noise when hunting prey is to become the prey itself. A Bloodsworn adds his Rank to all Stealth rolls.

##### *Rank 2: Shield of Night*

The Bloodsworn can use his knowledge of shadows, darkness and stealth to make it harder for an aggressor to attack him. For each raise on a successful Stealth roll, the Bloodsworn adds +5 to his TN to be Hit.

##### *Rank 3: The Night's Cold Touch*

The Bloodsworn can attack twice per round.

##### *Rank 4: The Night is Strength*

The Bloodsworn is capable of using his knowledge of the shadows and darkness, plus that of his stealthy movement to make it easier for him to hit his opponent. The Bloodsworn adds +10 to his Hit roll.

##### *Rank 5: As one with the Night*

The Bloodsworn has literally become like the night itself, moving effortlessly and silently in the darkness. For each success on an opposed Stealth vs. Perception test, the Bloodsworn can add 1 additional attack to his current 2 attacks. He can have up to his Rank in total attacks.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of fine quality) Ashalan desert cloak, clothes, crysteel sword, knife, crossbow, 10 quarrels, quiver, 5 dinari, 4 water tokens.

### *Ashalan HeartSeeker School*

The HeartSeekers are a special breed of warrior. They are few in number and are diametrically opposed to the evil that is the Caliph and her Khadi. HeartSeekers look for the hidden hearts of the Khadi in order to destroy them.

**Benefit:** +1 Perception

**Beginning Honour:** 0 + 5 boxes

#### *Skills*

Hunting, Stealth, Disguise, Athletics, Swordsmanship, +2 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

##### *Rank 1: The Hidden Moon*

This is exactly like the Bloodworn 1st Rank technique.

##### *Rank 2: The Crescent Moon*

The HeartSeeker has learned how to see the corruption that is the Khadi. He now learns to track and follow such corruption. This corruption is also held by Jackals, Ghuls and undead. The HeartSeeker adds his Rank to all Hunting/Tracking skill rolls, if he is following the corruption.

##### *Rank 3: The Half Moon*

The HeartSeeker learns the special technique that can kill a Khadi in one blow. This technique require a Full Attack and the user must be armed with the Ashalan Heartknife. This special dagger is designed to puncture the heart cavity of a Khadi and rupture the magical connection to its hidden heart. If successful the Khadi will keel over in shock and pain. The following round it rises and attempts to seek out its heart. The HeartSeeker then follows the Khadi to the hearts location.

The HeartSeeker must make a called shot to the heart, while wielding the dagger. If it misses he suffers all the penalties of a failed full attack. If this technique is used on a normal person, apply damage as normal.

##### *Rank 4: The Gibbous Moon*

The HeartSeeker has learn the finer arts of combat and may attack twice per round.

##### *Rank 5: The Full Moon*

The final technique of the HeartSeeker is perhaps the most feared by the Khadi. The Ashalan



Heartknife is a notoriously difficult weapon to wield, much less throw, yet it is at this point that the HeartSeeker is able to do just that, performing a ranged version of the Rank 3 technique. All Khadi instinctively fear the sound of a Ashalan Heartknife whistling through the air and as such, must make a Fear 3 roll or retreat from the area of combat.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of fine quality) Ashalan desert cloak, clothes, crysteel sword, Ashalan heartknife, knife, 5 dinari, 4 water tokens.

#### *Ashalan Sandsmith*

**Benefit:** +1 Strength

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 5 boxes

#### *Skills*

Sandsmithing, Athletics, History, Lore(Crysteel), Knife, +2 from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

The sandsmith has no techniques per se. As the Sandsmith gains in rank, he learns how to fashion different item of crysteel.

The smith learns the most basic of smithing techniques. He learns how to work the sand into the glass like material known as Crysteel. The smith learns how to fashion knives, daggers and similar small blades in his first couple of ranks of experience.

Once the Smith reaches the third rank he starts to learn how to fashion swords and spear heads. Larger items of Crysteel can be fashioned.

The smith's overall goal for reaching rank 5 is to fashion his dreams into a sword of Crysteel. These dream swords are rare and incredibly powerful artifacts, often named and inscribed with power and even intelligence.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of fine quality) Desert cloak, clothes, crysteel knife, sand containers, smithing tools, resin, 4 dinari, 4 water tokens

#### *Ashalan Priest/Sorcerer*

The sorcerers of the Ashalan practice an ancient magic from before the Day of Wrath. They wield spells of immense power, capable of both healing the almost dead and destroying the most powerful of creatures.

**Benefit:** +1 Ka

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 5 boxes

**Beginning Spells:** 10 Ashalani Sorcerer Spells

#### *Skills*

Spellcraft(Sorcery), Lore(Sorcery), History, Calligraphy, +3 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of fine quality) Ashalan desert cloak, clothes, crysteel knife, robe, 5 dinari, 4 water tokens.

#### *Generic Schools available to the Ashalan*

**Explorers** – Ashalan explorers scour the surface world at night hunting for the four artifacts of the Four Goddesses.

#### *The Ashalan Outlook on other Kingdoms*

- **Senpet** - They come like a plague, consuming all before them. They seek nothing but control. They shall learn that to gain such a thing is not easy.
- **Moto** - They are welcome in our city beneath the city.
- **Sultanate** - Within the city lies a darkness that breeds like flies on a corpse. We will deal with it in time.
- **Yodatai** - They do not understand.
- **Ra'shari** - They mistakenly believe that they control the destiny of the Sands and all within them. That what they write in their Chronicles will foretell the future and preserve the past.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - They bring within them a malignant growth. Like a surgeon, we will carve it out.

#### *The Ashalan Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - There is something to be said about those that fight for what they believe in. We aid them when we can.
- **Houses of Dahab** - Pawns of the Qolat and servants of the most dark of mistresses...greed.
- **The Qolat** - They control all that surrounds them, but not what lies beneath them.

- **The Rhumal Cult** - Death walks with them. Chaos follows them. Fear proceeds them.
- **Jackals** - Anathema! Insanity! Abominations!
- **Ebonites** - They guard the most terrible secret of all. True death.
- **Assassins** - To talk within the upper city indoors is to invite them into your home and business, a place you do not need them to be.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - She, like her Khadi, are abominations in the face of the Goddesses and Kaleel. They will feel the wrath of the Sleeping God soon enough.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - Many think that a free jinn is a wondrous thing. We remember the 1st and 2nd Ages and the War of the Jinn.

## Ivory Kingdoms

Situated far to the southeast of the Burning Sands, the Ivory Kingdoms are a vast land of plains, jungles and savannahs.

Her many kingdoms, ruled by men and women known as maharajah, seem benevolent and trusting, willing to trade their lands' ivory, gold, water, silks and spices for similar goods.

But the Ivory Kingdoms also bring a cancer to the Jewel, in the form of the Rhumal cult of stranglers. These cultists, worshippers of death, seek to bring about a dark age, and will go to any length to see it.

**Cultural Benefit:** +1 Awareness

**Cultural Advantage:** None

**Cultural Disadvantage:** Outsider

### *Ivory Kingdom Warrior School*

These men and women can be seen on the boats and near the docks and warehouses of the Ivory Kingdoms in the city. They are competent swordsmen.

**Benefit:** +1 Agility

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 0 boxes

### *Skills*

Swordsmanship, Athletics, Riding, Hunting, Defence, Battle, +1 skills from the appropriate lists.

### *Techniques*

#### *Rank 1: The Dodging Monkey*

The Warrior learns how to mimic the quick movements of the nimble monkey, making it harder for the opponent to strike him. The Warrior receives +5 to his TN to hit.

#### *Rank 2: Leap of the Monkey*

Monkeys are able to leap great distances to avoid harm. The Warrior has watched and studied this tactic and has adapted it to his own style. The Warrior makes an opposed Agility + Defence roll versus Attack roll of his opponent. If successful he gracefully dodges out of the blows way.

#### *Rank 3: Going to Ground*

Monkeys sometimes drop to the ground, attempted to snag a leg of their target. The Warrior is also able to do this, using a controlled drop and roll, the Warrior hit the ground, strikes at the opponents legs and then rolls to his feet off to one side of the opponent. This attack, even if not successful, often confuses other warriors. The Warrior adds +10 to his To Hit roll, as he goes to ground and attacks at a strange angle

#### *Rank 4: Rage of the Monkey*

Monkeys can actually become quite savage and quick when enraged. The Warrior harnesses the fury and rage of the monkey, and is able to strike twice a round.

#### *Rank 5: Strength of the Many*

Monkeys sometimes attack in massive numbers, defeating bigger opponents with sheer overwhelming numbers and strength. The Warrior has learned to place a heavy hit for extra damage into his target. He gains +2K0 to damage of all sword weapons

### *Outfit*

(All items of average to good quality) Long Sword, light armour, clothes, cloak, water skin, knife, travel bag, 4 dinari, 3 water tokens.

### *Ivory Kingdom Rakshasa Hunter School*

Among the Ivory Kingdoms, there is one creature that can strike terror into the hearts of all men. The Rakshasa. Cruel demons of smoke, they delight in playing with their prey. Rakshasa

Hunters are solitary men and women who have taken it upon themselves to hunt these fearsome being down and kill them. They are some of the bravest and deadliest warriors in the Ivory Kingdoms.

**Benefit:** +1 Strength

**Beginning Honour:** 2 + 5 boxes

#### *Skills*

Swordsmanship, Athletics, Riding, Hunting, Knife, Defence, +1 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

##### *Rank 1: The Tiger's Path*

Tiger, though large, are able to nimbly and agility move. The Hunter can make an opposed Agility + Defence roll versus Attack roll of his opponent. If successful he gracefully dodges out of the blows way.

##### *Rank 2: The Tiger's Rake*

Tigers often attack quickly, raking their targets, the Hunter has learned a way to simulate this, using his long reach and agility to place quick but deadly strikes. The Hunter may choose where his blows land instead of needing to declare them as raises.

##### *Rank 3: The Savage Tiger*

The Hunter attacks like the savage tiger. He may strike twice a round.

##### *Rank 4: The Circling Tiger*

Tigers will circle their prey before striking, often waiting for the right opening. The Hunter is able to make a whirling parry, and can attempt to parry all incoming attacks on opposed swordsmanship rolls. This technique counts as a full defence.

##### *Rank 5: Fury of the Beast*

The Hunter lashes out at his prey with all the savage fury of the wild tiger, slashing and stabbing as fast as he can. The Hunter almost seems to spin like a top and attack everything around him. Attack each target within 5 feet around you once.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Long Sword, light armour, clothes, cloak, water skin, knife, travel bag, 4 dinari, 3 water tokens.

#### *Ivory Kingdom Jakla Spiritualist*

The sahirs of the Ivory Kingdoms. These individuals are often wanderers and usually give much leeway in their native country.

**Benefit:** +1 Intelligence

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 5 boxes

**Beginning Spells:** Summon, Control, Bind, Unsummon, Contact

#### *Skills*

History, Calligraphy, Lore(Jinn), Knife, +3 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of average quality) Clothes, cloak, water skin, knife, travel bag, 4 dinari, 3 water tokens.

#### *Generic Schools available to the Ivory Kingdoms*

- **Priests** – The Ivory Kingdoms are like the Senpet, possessing many cults with many gods and goddesses, not all of them pleasant.
- **Courtesans** – The halls of many of the cities of the Ivory Kingdoms have harems of lovely young ladies. Most women of this profession are owned by a master or mistress.
- **Merchants** – The Ivory Kingdom merchants always bring Ivory to the table for sale, trade or barter.
- **Explorers** – The vast lands of both the Ivory Kingdoms and the Burning Sands attract them like moths to the flame.
- **Thieves** – The Ivory Kingdoms are plague by these wretches as well.
- **Courtiers/Advisors** – Many of the Ivory Kingdoms "genteel" have come to the city, seeing it as a place to practice their statecraft.
- **Slave** – The Ivory Kingdoms also have slave pens, using the labour for various exhausting tasks, like building, farming, etc.

#### *The Ivory Kingdom Outlook on other Kingdoms*

- **Senpet** - They are a strange people, with strange customs, but their art is unparalleled. Such works of beauty.

- **Moto** - Savages. We have no time for them.
- **Sultanate** - Esteemed partners. They have so much to offer.
- **Ashalan** - The who?
- **Yodatai** - We have dealt with them in the past and learned to stay clear of their encampments.
- **Ra'shari** - Gypsies and nomads. What harm can they be?

#### *The Ivory Kingdom Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - Rebels. They should all be put to the sword.
- **Houses of Dahab** - Our partners. The Merchant Kings and Princes are our allies.
- **The Qolat** -The what?
- **The Rhumal Cult** - Long have they plagued us in our homelands. We thought them destroyed, but now that we are here we have seen their handiwork again.
- **Jackals** - I have heard of these things. Strange soulless things that hunt in the night.
- **Ebonites** - Loud, obnoxious and a bully. That was all I got from my first encounter with them.
- **Assassins** - Assassins? Where? I think you've smoked a little too much of the water-pipe.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - She rules the Jewel and has let us trade here. Sadly she doesn't realize how little control she has. The Khadi are a pain. Such abominations.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - Free Jinn? Have you been smoking your water-pipe again?

## *Moto*

*"We protect the Jewel of the desert, as she once protected us." -Subotai*

They have wandered in the wastes for a thousand years, living on the outskirts of the Jewel of the Desert, preying on the weak and dying. But now,

the Moto have become the prey. The armies of the Senpet Pharaoh hunt down the nomads, leaving their bleeding corpses where they lie. Now, the Ki-Rin raiders fight to protect the Jewel of the Desert from the death-worshipping Senpet, the invading legions of the Yodatai and the dark cults of the Ivory Kingdoms.

The Moto are divided amongst two factions, the White Guard and the Ki-Rin.

**Ki-Rin Cultural Benefit:** +1 Agility

**White Guard Cultural Benefit:** +1 Perception

**Cultural Advantages:** Born in the Saddle

**Cultural Disadvantages:** Hunted

#### *Ki-Rin Moto Warrior*

Moto warriors are a hardy lot, taken from all walks of life and trained to help defend the lands of the people from invaders and creatures of the deep desert. Both men and women are trained as warriors within the Moto people.

**Note:** This school first appeared in Imperial Herald #13.

**Benefit:** +1 Agility

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 0 boxes

#### *Skills*

Animal Husbandry, Horse Archery, Horsemanship, Hunting, Lore (Burning Sands), Swordsmanship, Stealth.

#### *Techniques*

#### *Rank 1: Under the Cover of Night*

At the first Rank, Ki-Rin Moto are trained to use shadows and the cover of night to move about without detection. They are also shown their first chronicle, their own passage in the continuing verbal tradition that the Moto keep to give to Shinjo on her return. No matter where he walks, or upon what surface he travels upon the Ki-Rin Moto leaves no trace of his passing (all Tracking and Hunting rolls to find his trail automatically fail). Also, the Ki-Rin may choose one of his Skills as his "Chronicle" (what he is currently famous for among his clan), which is increased by one Rank. The maximum for this Skill may now be 6.

#### *Rank 2: Night's Sweet Sting*

By this stage of their development, Ki-Rin Moto are shown how to use the darkness to their advantage during combat, and how to manipulate

the lingering moonlight to confuse their enemies. They are also given their second Chronicle. When fighting outdoors at night, the Ki-Rin gains 2 Free Raises to use as he leases. These raises may be applied at any point during the combat, individually or together, to any Skill check. These Raises are not cumulative, and go away at the end of the combat if not used, At least five minutes must pass between combats for them to refresh for the new fight. Note that these Raises can be used in conjunction with the Ki-Rin's Rank 4 Technique. Also, the Ki-Rin may choose one of his Skills as his "Chronicle", which is increased by one Rank. The maximum Rank this Skill may now reach is 6. This may not be a Skill that was previously chosen as a Chronicle during a former rank.

#### *Rank 3: Ride Until Dawn*

Ki-Rin are next taught to endure the rigors often required in the desert wasters, as well as how to outlast their pursuers across the dunes. They are also provided with their third Chronicle. The Ki-Rin may operate normally with minimal sleep (three hours per day) for a number of weeks equal to half his Sand Rank. At the end of this ordeal, he will require three extra hours of sleep each night, for a number of days equal to the number of weeks spent using the ability. Also, the Ki-Rin may choose one of his Skills as his "Chronicle", which is increased by one Rank. The maximum Rank this Skill may now reach is 6. This may not be a Skill that was previously chosen as a Chronicle during a former rank.

#### *Rank 4: Night's Blind Fury*

At this, the last true stage of development for the Ki-Rin, each is shown the secret of combining all their previous knowledge into one startling (and quite vicious) attack. Though less than honourable by Rokugani standards, this ambush tactic is shockingly effective. They are also provided with their fourth "Chronicle". At night and outdoors, the Ki-Rin may choose to ambush an opponent by making a Simple Agility + Stealth roll versus the a TN of the target's Perception x5. Success indicates that the Ki-Rin automatically gains the initiative for the first round of combat; no rolls are made for initiative. Further, for every five points the Ki-Rin surpasses the TN by, he gains one raise during the first round of combat (only). These Raises may not be extended past the first round of combat, or used for anything other than an attack upon the chosen target. These is no limit to the

number of Raises that may be gained for attack through use of this Technique. Also, the Ki-Rin may choose one of his Skills as his "Chronicle", which is increased by one Rank. The maximum Rank this Skill may now reach is 6. This may not be a Skill that was previously chosen as a Chronicle during a former rank.

#### *Rank 5: The Final Chronicle*

By this stage in their life, Ki-Rin Moto have made a name for themselves among their own people (and probably beyond). They are legends among the Ki-Rin Clan, and will be remembered long after they have passed from this world. They are granted their final Chronicle, and be recorded in the Great Chronicle of the Age, a record of the greatest heroes of the Burning Sands Moto, which will pass directly into the hands of the Kami Shinjo upon her return. The Ki-Rin may choose one of his Skills as his "Chronicle", which is increased by one Rank. The maximum Rank this Skill may now reach is 7. Finally the Ki-Rin gains the Legendary Hero advantage for free.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Clothing, desert cloak, light armour, helm, long sword, spear, bow, 20 arrows, knife, 8 dinari, 4 water tokens.

#### *Moto Askaree*

Moto askaree are spies, the eyes and ears of the Moto in the other cultures cities and oases.

Askaree are trained from birth how to impersonate the culture to which they are sent. Often, a child of that culture is stolen and raised within the Moto, in order to better the deception.

**Benefit:** +1 Intelligence

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 5 boxes

#### *Skills*

Stealth, Sincerity, Disguise, Lore: (Culture in which they are), Knife, History + 2 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

With each rank the Askaree learns how to adapt to his culture even better. As he slowly gains experience he becomes better at hiding within the culture he is in. To represent this, each rank gives the Askaree a +1K1 to all rolls he does to convince someone that he is a member of that specific culture.

### *Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Clothing, knife, 8 Dinari, 8 water tokens.

### *Moto Horse Raider*

The Moto Raider are the progenitors to the Otaku Battlemaiden school, having literally been born into their saddles and taught to ride the desert dunes as easily as they can walk. It takes a lot to learn to be a Moto Raider and many do not survive the training, but those that do are considered the best cavalry on the desert sands.

**Benefit:** +1 Reflexes

**Beginning Honour:** 3 + 5 boxes

### *Skills*

Archery, Swordsmanship, Battle, Defence, Riding: Horse, + 2 skills from the appropriate lists.

### *Techniques*

#### *Rank 1: Horse and Rider as One*

The Moto Raiders are the ones who taught Otaku how to ride and fight from horseback. The Moto Raiders keep an extra die for all riding related rolls, including combat ones.

#### *Rank 2: As the Wind*

The Moto Raider has learned how to move within the saddle, taking blows and striking at the most opportune times. The rider may switch the value of his TN to be hit and initiative for the combat round.

#### *Rank 3: The Horse and his Rider*

The Moto Raider has now learned how to use his skill at arms to parry the weapons coming at him and his horse. He may subtract his School Rank from total damage done to him each round.

#### *Rank 4: Strike from Above*

The Moto has learned how to attack at a over the head angle with his sword when mounted. He gets two attacks per round, and a third attack at end of round if he kills his opponent.

#### *Rank 5: To be One with the Wind*

The Raider has learned the final aspects of his school and may now re-roll any dice that are less than the appropriate trait of the skill he used. He may only do this once per round only.

### *Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Clothing, light armour, short sword, horse bow, 20 arrows, knife, horse, 8 dinari, 3 water tokens.

### *Moto Sahir*

The sahir of the Moto are descendants of the Ra'shari sahir of the time when both groups were one. They are often looked upon for advice.

**Benefit:** +1 Ka

**Beginning Honour:** 3 + 5 boxes.

**Beginning Spells:** Summon, Control, Bind, Unsummon, Contact

### *Skills*

Calligraphy, Meditation, History, Research, +3 skills from appropriate categories.

### *Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Staff, clothes, travelling pack, water skin, writing tools, ledgers, 4 dinari, 4 water tokens.

### *Moto Shugenja*

The shungeja of the Moto are descendants of the great Ki-Rin who wandered their lands all those hundreds of years ago. They are a rare breed and only ten are thought to exist in the Moto clan. They are seen as the last link to the Ki-Rin.

**Benefit:** +1 Ka

**Beginning Honour:** 3 + 5 boxes.

**Beginning Spells:** 8 of any element.

### *Skills*

Calligraphy, Meditation, History, Research, Lore: Ki-Rin, +2 skills from appropriate categories.

### *Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Staff, clothes, travelling pack, water skin, writing tools, ledgers, 5 dinari, 4 water tokens.

### *White Guard Moto Warrior*

Moto White Guard are a hardy lot, taken from all walks of life and trained to help defend the lands of the people from invaders and creatures from beyond the borders of the Burning Sands.

**Benefit:** +1 Strength

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 0 boxes

### *Skills*

Archery, Swordsmanship, Battle, Defence, Knife, +2 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

##### *Rank 1: Under the Cover of Night*

The White Guard is able to focus himself to the task that he has set. He may add his School Rank to all skills rolls.

##### *Rank 2: The Darkness Revealed*

The White Guard Warrior is able to seemingly sense danger. After years of training and wandering, they are able when something dire is about to happen. The Warrior is unable to be surprised in any way.

##### *Rank 3: The Darkness Faltered*

The White Guard Warrior has learned how to enhance his abilities. He may attack twice per round.

##### *Rank 4: The Darkness Battled*

The White Guard has become surer of his ability and has learned to harness his body to do things that others cannot. The warrior may spend 2 Fate points a round.

##### *Rank 5: The Darkness Destroyed*

It is said that the White Guard Warrior can survive anything and anywhere. This is true to an extent. The warrior is able to ignore vast amounts of pain and continue to fight when others would normally die. To represent this the warrior ignores all wound penalties till he reaches dead. Replace dead with three -3 wound ranks, then two -4 wound ranks, then one -5 wound rank, then dead.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Clothing, desert cloak, light armour, helm, long sword, spear, bow, 20 arrows, knife, 8 dinari, 4 water tokens.

#### *Generic Schools available to the Moto*

- **Priests** – Among the Moto, priests are few and usually dedicated to the Faith of Lady Fate.
- **Courtesans** – Most women of Moto birth who are captured by the Senpet and Sultanate end up in this profession. Most are no better off than a slave is.
- **Merchants** – Though few in number, Moto merchants often bring valuable

horses and riding gear to the trade table as well as information on the desert.

- **Explorers** – They are some of the Sands best explorers, having traveled its length many times.
- **Thieves** – Even the Moto will raid for supplies and water.
- **Slave** – Since the Moto do not keep slaves, this school is taken by a member of the Moto who has been captured by another culture and put into slavery, such as the Senpet.
- **Pit Fighter** – Moto are highly dangerous and as such, many end up in the Senpet and Sultanate pit fighting rings.

#### *The Moto Outlook on other Kingdoms*

- **Senpet** - They move in quiet patterns, speaking with a forked tongue. They are not to be trusted in any way when one deals with them.
- **Sultanate** - To them we owe much, but over the recent years their city has become dark and strange to journey within. One must always be cautious within such places.
- **Ashalan** - Ancient and wise, they are our salvation in this time of the Awakening.
- **Yodatai** - Fearsome and nearly unstoppable, we will fight them till the sands are red with their blood.
- **Ra'shari** - Cousins and brethren, we still trade with them in the deep deserts away from prying eyes.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - They are too much like the Sultanate.

#### *The Moto Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - We support their crusade to free the city from the iron grip of the Caliph. Our knowledge is theirs.
- **Houses of Dahab** - They control the city with almost as much power as the Caliph does. They are greedy, power hungry and utterly ruthless. If it weren't for their ties with the Senpet, they'd be considerably allies.

- **The Qolat** - Our distant cousins have spoke of this rather strange group in the Emerald Empire, and it seems they are here as well. We do not know what ends they seek, but we will find out.
- **The Rhumal Cult** - Our scouts have been to the Ivory Kingdoms and seen the destruction that the followers of Kali and Kali-ma have wrought. We will butcher them when we find them. No mercy.
- **Jackals** - They are not stories. They live. They kill. They must be destroyed.
- **Ebonites** - In the beginning they were useful, protecting the innocent, but now they are little more than thugs.
- **Assassins** - We remember the sultan who was cursed. We know he is the Old Man of the Mountain. We also know of his descendants. Be wary of their women.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - Abominations, all of them. Servants of a dark power. The Khadi are powerful sahir, possessing magics of death and destruction, one must be careful around them.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - Our dunerunners and scouts have told of a magnificent floating city that sits deep in the open desert, beyond the boundaries of explored sand and the ability for mortal man to reach. Many died to bring us this information.

## *Ra'shari*

The Ra'shari claim to be gods, and while this may be yet another one of their stories, they do appear to have an unusual influence on the Fate of all other factions in the story. What goals are these mysterious wanderers working towards?

**Cultural Benefit:** +1 Ka

**Cultural Advantage:** Luck 1, Curses

**Cultural Disadvantage:** Benten's Curse, Social Outcasts

### *Ra'shari BoneReader*

Sahirs of skill, they are they guides of their people, often being female more than male.

**Benefit:** +1 Intelligence

**Beginning Honour:** 0 + 5 boxes

**Beginning Spells:** Summon, Control, Bind, Unsummon, Contact

### *Skills*

Lore (Jinn), Investigation, History, Calligraphy, Knife, +2 skills from the appropriate lists.

### *Outfit*

(All items of average quality) Cloak, clothes, camel, large carry bag, knife, parchment and writing tools, 5 dinari, 5 water tokens

### *Ra'shari Dancer School*

Acrobats, thieves, seductresses, they have called many names. The members of a Ra'shari dance troupe are often viewed with awe as well as fear. They come and go as they please, often giving incredible shows to their audiences, and often leaving the same audience minus a few trinkets.

**Benefit:** +1 Agility

**Beginning Honour:** 0 + 5 boxes

### *Skills*

Athletics, History, Dancing, Swordsmanship, Knife, +2 skills from the appropriate lists.

### *Techniques*

#### *Rank 1: As one Does, the Other follows*

The Dancer is able to use his or her hand to wield items simultaneously. This means that the Dancer can use two weapons at the same time, striking with both. The Dancer rolls on to-hit roll, but counts damage on each weapon if it hits.

#### *Rank 2: As One with the Wind*

The Dancer has learned how to blend his movements into his combat training, allowing him to shift out of the way of incoming blows. The Dancer has +5 to his TN to be Hit.1

#### *Rank 3: The Dance Goes On*

The Dancer is able to control his movements with great efficiency. He can strike twice per round.

#### *Rank 4: Lord of the Dance*

At this point the Dancer has learn how to literally dance his way around the opponent, always moving and twisting. It is very hard to strike such a foe. To properly use this technique,



the Dancer can-not be wearing armour. The Dancer has a +10 to his TN to be Hit

*Rank 5: As One with the Music*

The Dancer is like the legendary whirling dervish, striking outwards at all around him. He may now strike three times a round.

*Outfit*

(All items of average to fine quality) Cloak, clothes, short sword, knife, travelling pack, camel, 5 dinari, 3 water tokens.

***Ra'shari Storyteller School***

These enigmatic men and women are fully capable of inciting large crowds to a state of action through simple words alone. They hold a power they use with care.

**Benefit:** +1 Perception

**Beginning Honour:** 0 + 5 boxes

*Skills*

History, Languages (choose two), Lores (choose 2), Knife, +1 skill from the appropriate lists.

*Techniques*

*Rank 1 -- The 1st Chronicle*

The Storyteller is able to hold an audience in thrall for his Rank x 1 hour, as he spins his tales.

*Rank 2 -- The 2nd Chronicle*

The Storyteller is now able to make a number of audience members equal to his Rank, feel like they are part of the story, thus inciting people to more willing to listen to the story and lessons it passes on.

*Rank 3 -- The 3rd Chronicle*

The Storyteller can now convey the emotions of the story into 1 audience member, making that man or woman feel as if they are part of the story itself.

*Rank 4 -- The 4th Chronicle*

The Storyteller can convey the emotions of the story into 2 audience members at this point as well as swaying a number of people equal to his rank to your side of the story with subtle undertones. These people are more susceptible to suggestions and ideas that conform to your point of view.

*Rank 5 -- The 5th Chronicle*

The Storyteller can convey the emotions of the story into his Rank X2 audience members. He may also sway his Rank X2 people to his side of the story with subtle undertones as well as causing his Rank in chosen swayed audience members to act on his behalf to the best of their abilities.

*Outfit*

(All items of average quality) Cloak, clothes, camel, large carry bag, knife, parchment and writing tools, 5 dinari, 5 water tokens

***Generic Schools available to the Ra'shari***

- **Priests** – It is known that the Ra'shari follow Lady Fate's decree, as well as the auspices of Lady Sun, but not much else.
- **Merchants** – Ra'shari merchants, while rare, do grace the markets of the various cultures of the Sands. Ra'shari merchants usually have strange artifacts for sale.
- **Explorers** – It is said that the Ra'shari know every dune of the desert, every oasis, every rock and every den of darkness.
- **Thieves** – Some Ra'shari have taken to living off the kindness of strangers while other merely take when needed.

***The Ra'shari Outlook on other Kingdoms***

- **Senpet** - We tried to warn them of the coming awakening, but they spurn and hunt us instead. We stay away from their lands when possible.
- **Moto** - Our cousins are always welcome in the caravans.
- **Sultanate** - From here we began and one day it is here we shall end.
- **Ashalan** - Like us they remember an early time. Before the Day of Wrath. Brothers in soul if not in body.
- **Yodatai** - Three of our caravans have not returned from their occupied territory. Tread softly when you go there.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - They are all too much like the Caliph and her minions.

### *The Ra'shari Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal**- A noble struggle that is worth helping.
- **Houses of Dahab** - They seek our deaths.
- **The Qolat** - Secret rulers of the city, they have amassed so much power that it has corrupted them, turning them into the very thing they sought to destroy.
- **The Rhumal Cult** - Killers and murderers. Their Avatar, Kali-ma is a sign of the coming Dark Times.
- **Jackals** - Soulless minions of the Dark God, they bring about the Dark Times with every soul they destroy and consume.
- **Ebonites** - Fanatics whose cause is just, when they are capable of remembering that cause.
- **Assassins** - We created them, so shall we destroy them when it is time.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - She seeks to rule all and makes gambles that even Lady Fate would not.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - The concept of a free Jinn alliance is troubling.

### *Senpet Empire*

*"To restore the fire of the great Eye, we must capture the fire of the Jewel of the Desert." - Hensatti, Pharaoh of the Senpet*

Their civilization is as old as the world itself, but now the flame in the Great Eye has faded as the desert winds carve away at their mighty monuments and pyramids. In order to circumvent an ancient prophecy, the Pharaoh has turned to the Jewel of the Desert to make certain her mighty civilisation does not fall victim to the unforgiving desert winds and the wrath of Lady Sun.

**Cultural Benefit:** +1 Stamina

**Cultural Advantages:** None

**Cultural Disadvantages:** Prideful

#### *Senpet Priests*

Priests of the Senpet follow a massive pantheon of gods, all devoted to various aspects. Of note is

that the Senpet do not worship Lady Sun. They instead have a mad male Sun God know as Rha, who was put down by his brothers and sisters in an ancient battle in the heavens.

**Benefit:** +1 Ka

**Beginning Honour:** 2, plus 5 boxes

**Beginning Acts:** 2

#### *Skills*

Calligraphy, Meditation, Theology, Research, Astrology, +2 skills from the appropriate categories.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of fine quality) Staff, scrolls, clothes, writing material, travelling pack, knife, 8 dinari, 4 water tokens

#### *Senpet Sahir, the Astrologers*

The Sahir of the Senpet are the men and women that study the stars in an effort to divine the future and past, in order to apply it to the present.

**Benefit:** +1 Intelligence

**Beginning Honour:** 2, plus 5 boxes.

**Beginning Spells:** Summon, Control, Bind, Unsummon, Contact

#### *Skills*

Calligraphy, Meditation, History, Research, Lore (Jinn), Astrology, +1 skill from appropriate categories.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of fine quality) Staff, clothes, travelling pack, water skin, writing tools, ledgers, 20 dinari, 5 water tokens

#### *Senpet Seers*

The Seers are the prophets of the gods, holding a special place in Senpet society. While not terribly gifted in the arts of using the spells and Jinn, they can see the soul of those about them and tell of their destiny.

Most members of the nobility have a seer on their personal staff.

**Benefit:** +1 Ka

**Beginning Honour:** 2, plus 5 boxes

**Beginning Acts:** 2

#### *Skills*

Calligraphy, Meditation, Sincerity, Research, Astrology, +2 skills from the appropriate categories.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of fine quality) Staff, scrolls, clothes, writing material, travelling pack, knife, 3 dinari, 3 water tokens.

#### *Senpet Warrior*

The warriors of the Senpet come from many walks of life. Slaves, peasants and nobility all serve in the military. All are taught the basics of fighting, but only those with promise go onwards.

**Benefit:** +1 Stamina

**Beginning Honour:** 2, plus 5 boxes

#### *Skills*

Archery, Swordsmanship, Battle, Defence, Knife, Riding, + 1 skills from the appropriate list.

#### *Techniques*

##### *Rank 1: Movement of the Snake*

The Senpet Warrior learns to move in a rather disconcerting fashion, offering only one side of his body to be attacked. He may add +5 to this TN to be hit.

##### *Rank 2: The Weaving Head*

The Senpet Warrior has learned how to move his weapon in a weaving manner like that of a snake's head, causing distraction for his opponent. The warrior may strike at a -5 to his TN to hit.

##### *Rank 3: Shifting Sands*

The Senpet Warrior has mastered the art of moving like the sands of the desert, always moving and shifting position. He may now strike his opponent from oblique angles and as such may keep an additional die of damage because the strikes tend to hit unprotected areas.

##### *Rank 4: The Quick Strike*

The Senpet learns how to strike as fast as a snake. He may make two attacks per round.

##### *Rank 5: The Eyes of the Snake*

The Senpet Warrior has mastered the arts of swordsmanship to such a point that he may almost mesmerize his opponent with the weaving of his blade. His opponent must make a

Contested Willpower test every round or lose one action.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Light armour, long sword, shield, spear, bow, 20 arrows, helm, 2 other weapons, clothes, water skin, 5 dinari, 2 water tokens.

#### *Generic Schools available to the Senpet*

- **Priests** – The lands of the Senpet are full of gods, goddesses, demi-gods and such, and the priestly caste are many.
- **Courtesans** – Senpet courtesans are highly sought after, considered to be exotic and quite able to please a man in many ways.
- **Merchants** – The markets are flooded with merchants of the Senpet, buying up stalls and land.
- **Explorers** – Some Senpet still wandered the deep desert looking for artifacts from the days of the 1st and 2nd Age.
- **Thieves** – All cultures seem to have these people.
- **Courtiers/Advisors** – The lesser nobles of the Senpet who have no wish to fight seek these positions of power and status.
- **Slave** – Most of the Senpet slaves are foreigners, but their own race are there as well. Debtors, POWs, thieves, etc are all enslaved and put to work in the Jandaq Slave Caravans.
- **Pit Fighter** – The worst of the slaves end up in the slave pit fights. Brutal gladiatorial combat that is used to satisfy the bloodlust of the people.

#### *The Senpet Outlook on the other Cultures*

- **Moto** - We shall destroy the raiders and bandits, putting them where they belong. The Jandaq slave pits.
- **Sultanate** - They will be our future. Their cities and people will follow the Scarab and the Burning Sands will be ours.
- **Ashalan** - They are enigmatic and truly alien to us. The secrets they carry are

said to be able to bring a man fortune and fame or sadness and loss. Some say they are guardians of our future, but we forge our own future.

- **Yodatai** - Let them come with their legions. We shall make them eat sand.
- **Ra'shari** - They come and go like the mirages of the desert sands. The knowledge they gather is said to be a chronicle of all that has happened. To possess such knowledge would be a great and terrible thing.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - They are like the Sultanate, constantly looking to make a fortune and cheat fate. Like the Sultanate, they will follow the Sacred Scarab.

#### *The Senpet Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - Renegades that seek to overthrow their liege lords. They deserved only death.
- **Houses of Dahab** - They are greedy and sadly united in their control of the trade in Medinat al-Salaam, something we will have to change when we rule.
- **The Qolat** - The what?
- **The Rhumal Cult** - We have heard tales of these stranglers from the distant Ivory Kingdoms. Evidence of their presence has yet to reach our lands though.
- **Jackals** - A tale to scare children, that is all they are.
- **Ebonites** - Fanatics and glory hounds. It is a pity that the Caliph has let them run free in her city for so long.
- **Assassins** - Another fairy tale to scare the common man.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - The Caliph is strong, and her Khadi are loyal to her and only her. It will take time to destroy them, but we will rule the City of One Thousand Stories, either through her or over her cold corpse.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - We have heard the rumours of free Jinn gathering at a secret city deep in the desert. Such things are tales once again.

## *Sultanate*

*"As this mighty city took my innocence so long ago, so shall I take away its innocence." - The Caliph*

She is the heart of the Burning Sands, the Jewel of the Desert, the City of a Thousand Stories. Medinat al-Salaam. For over four centuries, the undying Caliph has ruled her, her heartless mages--the Khadi-- patrolling the city streets, hunting all who oppose her will. It is the center of all major trade in the Burning Sands and it is where most of the true adventures lie.

**Cultural Benefit:** +1 Awareness

**Cultural Advantages:** None

**Cultural Disadvantages:** None

### *Sultanate City Warrior*

City warriors are trained in the various noble family schools of the city how to literally dance with their blades. Also known as Dervishes, Sultanate warriors are a force to be reckoned with.

**Benefit:** +1 Stamina

**Beginning Honour:** 2 +5 boxes

#### *Skills*

Archery, Swordsmanship, Battle, Defence, Knife, + 2 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

##### *Rank 1: The Arm is one with the Blade*

The Warrior has learned the basics of combat and may add his school rank to his damage.

##### *Rank 2: The Wind's Apprentice*

The Warrior has learned how to make the blade now dance like the wind. He may make 2 attacks per round.

##### *Rank 3: The Seeking Blade*

The Warrior now is capable of placing his blade where it will deal the most damage. He may keep half his school rank in dice when attacking and doing damage.

##### *Rank 4: The Winds Brother*

The Warrior has begun to learn to move his body in the Dervish manner, and as such may now add his school rank to his TN to be hit.

##### *Rank 5: Whirling Dervish*

The Warrior spins at his opponent like the Whirling Dervish of legend. He may make 3 attacks per round.

*Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Clothes, light armour, 2 swords, bow, 20 arrows, helm, 5 dinari, 4 water tokens

**Sultanate Merchant**

Considered to be the best of the merchant class in the Burning Sands, the Sultanate merchant is a master of guile, bargaining and grifting his targets.

**Benefit:** +1 Perception

**Beginning Honour:** 3 + 5 boxes

*Skills*

Commerce, Knife, Hagglng, Gambling, Appraisal, Sincerity, +1 skill from the appropriate list.

*Techniques*

The Sultanate Merchants have no techniques per say, instead they start the game with a number of items that they take and trade.

*Rank 1*

Average blot of cloth, lantern, pots, average weapons (knives, arrows, spears), average clothing, average jewellery, 1 camel

*Rank 2*

Good quality weapons, good quality clothing, average jewellery, forged city pass, 5 water skins of water, 1 camel with packs, two rank 1 items

*Rank 3*

Average quality armour, good quality jewellery, illicit maps to locations best not thought about (brothels, gambling dens, etc), 10 water skins of water, 1 camel with packs, 1 slave, four rank 1 items, two rank 2 items

*Rank 4*

Good quality armour, 3 pack horses, good quality weapon, excellent quality jewellery, 15 water skins of water, pass into a city of the Burning Sands, partnership in a merchant house, 2 slaves, 1 camel with packs, eight rank 1 items, four rank 2 items, two rank 3 items.

*Rank 5*

Excellent quality armour, excellent quality weapons, 30 water skins of water, lifetime pass into one city of the person choice, ownership in a merchant cartel, 5 slaves, 1 camel with packs, sixteen rank 1 items, eight rank 2 items, four rank 3 items, two rank 4 items.

*Outfit*

(All of good to fine quality) Clothes, donkey, sleeping roll, knife, 20 dinari, 6 water tokens

**Sultanate Sahir**

They are few and far between, most having been exiled, killed, joined the Qabal or worse, forced to become one of the Khadi.

Still some survive though sheer wits, wandering the twisting streets as they seek enlightenment.

**Benefit:** +1 Intelligence

**Beginning Honour:** 2 + 5 boxes

**Beginning Spells:** Summon, Control, Bind, Unsummon, Contact

*Skills*

Calligraphy, Meditation, History, Spellcraft, Theology, +2 skills from appropriate categories.

*Outfit*

(All items of low to average quality) Staff, clothes, travelling pack, water skin, writing tools, ledgers, 4 dinari, 3 water tokens

**Generic Schools available to the Sultanate**

- **Priests** – On every street there are shrines and temples. Within the Jewel all are worshipped.
- **Courtesans** -- In the Sultanate many women have adopted this role as a way to gain power over men or at least to survive. In some quarters it can be a dignified profession, but sadly there are too many girls who are not in so nice a place.
- **Merchants** -- The Jewel of the desert is full of merchants. At every turn some one will try to sell you something.
- **Explorers** -- The deserts hold riches in the ruins of lost civilizations and many wander to their deaths seeking them.
- **Thieves** -- In such a large city things do go missing.

- **Courtiers/Advisors** -- The Sultanate has many of these people. They work with merchant prices, kings and nobles.
- **Slave** -- In the Sultanate many slaves toil all day and night to make the city larger.
- **Pit Fighter** -- The pits of the Jewel of the Desert are the largest and most brutal around.

#### *The Sultanate Outlook on other Kingdoms*

- **Senpet** - We welcome them into our city to trade and live. As with all that come, they too will live in peace and harmony with us.
- **Moto** - They come and they go. Like the desert sands which constantly shift, they are. Watch them carefully and keep a hand close to your wives and daughters when the riders of the Moto come.
- **Ashalan** - We have not seen their kind in nearly a thousand years, and now they have come again. What wonders do they bring.
- **Yodatai** - Invaders who seek to destroy our way of living.
- **Ra'shari** - They are perhaps Gods, on level with the Ashalan. They certainly know secrets about us that no-one else knows.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - Dinari, slaves, silks, water, exotic animals and perhaps best of all, ivory. All comes from the Ivory Kingdoms and we look forward to each shipment.

#### *The Sultanate Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - They are renegades. Rebels. Traitors.
- **Houses of Dahab** - They control the markets and bring us riches from beyond the city. Without them the water would not flow.
- **The Qolat** - The what?
- **The Rhumal Cult** - A rash of strangulations has occurred since the coming of the Ivory Kingdoms traders. We know it is linked.

- **Jackals** - Some things are best left in the night.
- **Ebonites** - They walk the streets hunting the things in the dark. It is best to stay clear of such people.
- **Assassins** - The walls have ears. They also have knives.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - She has ruled for over three hundred years. Her Khadi are as immortal as she is. Together they hold this city in an iron grip.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - Free Jinn? I think you have been under the gaze of Lady Sun for too long.

### *Yodatai*

Fresh from their Empire beyond the northern reaches, the Yodatai exploratory force has arrived in the Jewel of the Desert despite insurmountable odds and the efforts of the children of the smokeless fire. They have travelled across the barren peaks and acrid dunes for a reason only they know, fuelled by the bloody victories of their greatest warlords. They will succeed, even if it is over the broken bodies of every man, woman, and child in their path.

**Cultural Benefit:** +1 Strength

**Cultural Advantage:**

**Cultural Disadvantage:** Outsider

*Yodatai Alchemist School*

**Benefit:** +1 Intelligence

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 0 boxes

*Skills*

Lore (Metals), Lore (Alchemy), Investigation, Calligraphy, Research, + 2 skills from the appropriate lists.

*Techniques*

The Alchemist learns the magical properties of metals, potions, liquids, herbs and gems. Each skill opens up a new layer of learning and knowledge.

*Rank 1 -- Metals*

The skill of identifying the different metals of alchemical practices. Once fully understood, the alchemist can use this skill along with metal

working skills to enhance anything made of metal.

*Rank 2 -- Potions*

The skill of identifying, making and using potions properly. Common potions are healing, sleeping, and antidote. All potions require a skill roll to make at TN 20.

*Rank 3 -- Liquids*

The skill of identifying the different liquids of the alchemical practices. Once fully understood, the alchemist can use this skill along with potions, poisons and other such skills to enhance and create alchemical liquids.

*Rank 4 -- Herbs*

The skill of identifying the different Herbs of alchemical practices. Once fully understood, the alchemist can use this skill along with herbal skills to enhance anything that uses herbs in its creation.

*Rank 5 --Gems*

The skill of identifying the different gems of alchemical practices. Once fully understood, the alchemist can use this skill along with gem working skills to enhance anything made with gems as well as use gems in spell like functions.

*Outfit*

(All items of good to fine quality) Alchemical powders, 3 ready made potions, clothes, knife, parchment, writing tools, 6 dinari, 5 water tokens

*Yodatai Centurion School*

The Yodatai Centurion is the backbone of the Yodatai Empire's Legions. Each Centurion is trained to be a competent warrior, armed with sword and shield.

**Benefit:** +1 Strength

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 5 boxes

*Skills*

Swordsmanship, Shield, Athletics, Hand to hand, Archery, +2 skills from the appropriate lists.

*Techniques*

*Rank 1: Strength of the Bear*

The Centurion knows how to focus his strength into his blows. Instead of normal Strength + weapon damage, he does HeIN2x Strength + weapon damage.

*Rank 2: Eye of the Eagle*

The Centurion has learned how to spot the weaknesses of his opponents and then hit them suddenly. He is able to add his Rank to his Hit roll.

*Rank 3: Ferocity of the Wolf*

The Centurion has become more capable in his timing of his blows. He may attach twice per round.

*Rank 4: Claws of the Lion*

The Centurion has learn how to use his shield as weapon, slamming it into opponents. Instead of a second strike with his sword the Centurion may elect to do a Shield Bash. The Shield skill is rolled at TN 15. Damage is equal to the Rank 1 technique + shield damage.

*Rank 5: Armour of the Turtle*

The Centurion learns how to do a shield parry with a counter strike. If he successfully parries an attack, he may then strike at an opponent as normal. This technique can be mixed with the Rank 3 technique for up to four possible hits.

The TN for the Shield Parry is a Shield Roll versus the attack roll of the incoming attack.

*Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Yodatai long sword, shield, light armour, long bow, 20 arrows, clothes, cloak, 4 dinari, 4 water tokens

*Yodatai Inquisitor School*

**Benefit:** +1 Perception

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 0 boxes

*Skills*

Swordsmanship, Investigation, Sincerity, Meditation, Torture, +2 skills from the appropriate lists.

*Techniques*

With each rank the Inquisitor learns how to tell if someone is telling the truth and how to get such truth out of them. The Inquisitor adds his rank to all Torture and Detect Lie (Perception) rolls.

*Outfit*

(All items of good to fine quality) Yodatai long sword, knife, Light Armour, clothes, cloak, 4 dinari, 4 water tokens

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### *Yodatai Inventor School*

**Benefit:** +1 Intelligence

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 0 boxes

#### *Skills*

Lore (Technology) 2, Smithing, Investigation, Calligraphy, Research, +1 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

The Inventor uses no techniques, instead he gains bonuses to his various inventive skills. Research, Armourer, Weaponsmith, and Technology (Craft and Lore) are all influenced by this. The Inventor may re-roll any 1s at rank 1, 2s at rank 2, and 3s at rank 3, but only up to a number of times equal to his rank. E.g. A rank 3 Yodatai Inventor may re-roll three 1s, or two 2s or one 3 per session. This represents the fickleness of inventing.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of average to good quality) Clothes, light armour, writing materials, parchments, slave to carry stuff, small stash of parts, knife, 10 dinari, 4 water tokens

### *Yodatai Strategist School*

**Benefit:** +1 Perception

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 0 boxes

#### *Skills*

History, Swordsmanship, Investigation, Battle 2, Calligraphy, +1 skill from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

The Strategist is a master tactician, watching and planning the battles for his general. As a Yodatai Strategist gains rank he is able to perceive more about a battle. In game terms he adds his Rank to all his rolls for any type of Perception or Intelligence based tests that deal with a battle.

Also for each rank of skill, the Strategist can shift the result on the battle result table by one shift.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of fine quality) Yodatai short sword, clothes, cloak, light armour, knife, writing materials, parchments, slave to carry stuff, 10 dinari, 5 water tokens

### *Generic Schools available to the Yodatai*

- **Priests** – The priests of the Yodatai are all followers of the Prophet. Anything else is considered heresy.
- **Courtesans** – They are a combination of the camp women who follow the army as well as those taken in battle. In areas other than Yodatai controlled regions, women of the Yodatai homelands are considered rare and exotic because of their often light coloured hair and fair skin.
- **Merchants** – While few in number, they do voyage to the Jewel to make money selling Yodatai steel.
- **Explorers** – These men and woman act more as scouts for the army than anything else.
- **Courtiers/Advisors** – All generals and commanders need people to tell them when they are right and rarely when they are wrong.
- **Slave** – The life of a Yodatai slave is truly harsh, forced to dig, carry, fetch, clean and even please their master or mistress.
- **Pit Fighter** – Even the Yodatai like a bit of sport, and the slaves that are especially brutal and tough are used to fight against each other in rough rings.

### *The Yodatai Outlook on other Kingdoms*

- **Senpet** - Their army is to be respected as is their general, but as a people, they will do well as slaves.
- **Moto** - Fierce warriors, they never surrender, taking their own lives instead of becoming our slaves. A worthy foe.
- **Sultanate** - The Jewel of the Desert and our prize to be taken. With it we will forge a new empire.
- **Ashalan** - We have seen only a couple of these strange people. They are an enigma.
- **Ra'shari** - Like the Ashalan they are like ghosts in the night.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - We have dealt with them before and seen their strange cult



of death. Such good pit fighters they make.

### *The Yodatai Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - We have heard of this dissident faction. They would make useful allies
- **Houses of Dahab** - The merchants of the great city are its source of power. Crush them and crush the might of the Jewel of the Desert.
- **The Qolat** - The what?
- **The Rhumal Cult** - We have captured these elusive stranglers before. They make good pit slaves.
- **Jackals** - Never heard of them.
- **Ebonites** - Our distant cousins. We gladly welcome them with open arms into our ranks.
- **Assassins** - Anyone who is paid to kill is an assassin, what makes them think they are any better?
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - She rules the Khadi and in turn the Jewel itself. She thinks this makes her strong. She is wrong. Our legions are a strength she will regret ever feeling.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - Jinn?? What is this thing called jinn?

## Faction-Specific Schools

### *Assassins*

*"Veils hide more than shadows..." - Fatima*

The offspring of the Old Man of the Mountain, who exacted his revenge for his curse of eternal life (given to him by the Ra'shari Grey Woman). The Old Man's origin is tied into the origin of the Khadi.

**Faction Advantages:** Fear 1, Major Ally (Assassins), Knowledge of the City

**Faction Disadvantages:** Major Enemies (All cultures and factions, at least in public), Outcast

#### *Order of the 7 Oaths Assassin School*

The Order of the 7 Oaths is the typical assassin that is found working in the city. They are the largest order of assassins.

**Benefit:** +1 reflexes

**Beginning Honour:** 0

#### *Skills*

Stealth, Athletics, Swordsmanship, Defence, Knife, +2 skill from the appropriate lists

#### *Techniques*

##### *Rank1*

The assassin dodges out harms way with quick movements. He makes a Agility + Defence roll with a TN equal the attack roll of the Target. If successful the target misses as the assassin dodges.

##### *Rank2*

The assassin may attack twice per round.

##### *Rank3*

The assassin trains to move at strange angles and in sudden spurts of motion. He adds +5 to his TN To be Hit.

##### *Rank4*

The assassin has learned to spot the flaws in his opponent's techniques and knows where to place his hits. The assassin adds +10 to his To Hit roll.

##### *Rank5*

The assassin learns the skills of parrying an attack and then riposte. Requires a successful opposed attack roll to parry and riposte.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Clothes, knife, cloak, short sword, 4 dinari, 5 water tokens.

#### *Order of the 7<sup>th</sup> Gate Assassin School*

Assassins of the Order of the 7th Gate are the Assassin Factions defenders, often found in their bases, camps and boltholes, protecting the families of the Assassins themselves.

**Benefit:** +1 Stamina

**Beginning Honour:** 0

#### *Skills*

Stealth, Athletics, Swordsmanship, Defence, Knife, +2 skill from the appropriate lists

#### *Techniques*

##### *Rank1:*

The assassin trains to move at strange angles and in sudden spurts of motion. He adds +5 to his TN To be Hit.

*Rank2:*

The assassin learns the skills of parrying an attack and then riposte. Requires a successful opposed attack roll to parry and riposte.

*Rank3*

The assassin dodges out harms way with quick movements. He makes a Agility + Defence roll with a TN equal the attack roll of the Target. If successful the target misses as the assassin dodges.

*Rank4*

The assassin has gotten to the point in his training that he is almost able to foresee attacks coming at him. He applies his Rank x3 to his TN to be Hit.

*Rank5*

The assassin is able to attack twice per round.

*Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Cloak, clothes, sword, shield, knife, 4 dinari, 4 water tokens

**Order of the Black Star Assassin School**

Assassins of the Order of the Black Star are unrelenting hunters of their prey, skilled at tracking their prey for days across the city.

**Benefit:** +1 Agility

**Beginning Honour:** 0

*Skills*

Stealth, Athletics, Swordsmanship, Hunting, Defence, Knife, +1 skill from the appropriate list

*Techniques*

*Rank1: Moving with the Night*

The assassin adds his Rank to all Stealth Skill rolls.

*Rank2: Scent of the Prey*

The assassin adds his Rank to all Hunting Skill rolls.

*Rank3: Night's Touch*

The assassin can make a silent kill by succeeding in an opposed Perception vs. Stealth roll. If this hits the target immediately takes maximum damage from the strike. E.g. 3k2 would deal 20 points.

*Rank4: Coiling Darkness*

The assassin may attack twice this round.

*Rank5: From Shadow to Shadow*

The assassin able to become one with the shadows, moving from shadow to shadow as they pursue their prey. On a successful Ka roll the Assassin can move from one pool of shadows to another up to 100 feet away.

*Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Clothes, knife, cloak, short sword, 4 dinari, 3 water tokens.

**Order of the Blood Red Tiger Assassin School**

The Order of the Blood Red Tiger is small with few members. Blood Red Tigers are masters of combat and often fall into combat rages that cause them to loose themselves in battle.

Because of this berserker rage, Blood Red Tiger Assassins are used only when all other options are exhausted, for to let one loose into an area is to guarantee both his death and that of many, many people.

**Benefit:** +1 Strength

**Beginning Honour:** 0

*Skills*

Stealth, Athletics, Swordsmanship, Defence, Knife, +2 skill from the appropriate lists

*Techniques*

*Rank1*

The assassin summons forth his inner strength and lets loose a massive shout. The shout tears into the target, stunning him. The target must make a Willpower roll at TN 20 to resist. If he fails, he can only Full Defend.

*Rank2*

The assassin channels his fury and rage in his strikes. He get his Rank keep 0 to all To Hit rolls.

*Rank3*

The assassin can make two strikes per round.

*Rank4*

The assassin learns to channel all his strength into each shot. He may add his Rank keep 0 to all damage rolls.

*Rank5*

The assassin can make three strikes per round.

### *Outfit*

(All items of quality) Clothes, knife, cloak, long sword, 2 dinari, 2 water tokens.

### *The Assassin Outlook on other Kingdoms*

- **Senpet** - They intrude into our domain. We shall deal with them in time.
- **Moto** - They come rarely to our city and when they do, they cause little trouble. Few contracts have been taken on them.
- **Sultanate** - Once the Old Man of the Mountain ruled this city till he was betrayed and cursed. Now a usurper rules, thinking she has absolute power. How mistake she is.
- **Ashalan** - We have seen them wandering the city, beneath the streets, on top of the buildings and between the walls. They are a strange people best left alone.
- **Yodatai** - Invaders like the Senpet, they have crossed the sands to meet their deaths.
- **Ra'shari** - An ancient enemy, it is they that created us and thus sealed their own fate.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - Their merchants bring profit, water and commodities to the city, but also rivals for our services.

### *The Assassin Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - Renegades like us. Help them when possible.
- **Houses of Dahab** - They have a choke hold over the city and are ruled by the mysterious Qolat. Do not trust them.
- **The Qolat** - Dark and secretive masters of the merchants, the Qolat are an evil that needs to be purged.
- **The Rhumal Cult** - They are not only as proficient but also as silent as we. Destroy them at every opportunity.
- **Jackals** - Soulless creatures of darkness. Destroy them if you can.
- **Ebonites** - Thugs and fanatics. Nothing more, nothing less.

- **Khadi and the Caliph** - She and her dark mages think that they control the city. How wrong they are.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - I have heard of these people but have never seen one or met an actual member face to face.

## *Celestial Alliance*

There is a gentle time between the ages when the future of humankind is unset and darkness roams the world with impunity. This is that time. There are those who gather as guardians during these times of uncertainty; they surrender their lives to the void between the moments. The Celestial Alliance are those courageous few. Born of a pact made in the First War of the Stars, the Celestial Alliance has been the first and last line of defence against the legions of Kaleel since before the Day of Wrath.

**Faction Advantages:** Major Ally (Alliance)

**Faction Disadvantages:** Major Enemy (Qolat, Houses of Dahab, most sahir)

**Note:** The Celestial Alliance has no schools.

### *The Alliance Outlook on other Kingdoms*

- **Senpet** - They refuse to admit the truth. That Lady Sun created the lands and as such she can also destroy them if she wishes.
- **Moto** - They walk the sands and watch the skies for signs that the wrath of Lady Sun will soon be dispelled. Little do they know that the Awakening will shatter all their hopes.
- **Sultanate** - It is from here that we will soon have to lead. Let us hope that it will be safe when we arrive.
- **Ashalan** - An ancient race and our brothers in the fight the Awakening will bring.
- **Yodatai** - We are not sure of their place in the great plan.
- **Ra'shari** - They know the truth of the time before the Day of Wrath.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - They bring with them a dark evil that transcends the time of the Day of Wrath and that will have to be dealt with.

### *The Alliance Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - Our allies in the coming Awakening.
- **Houses of Dahab** - They wish to rule the Jewel. If they manage this the Awakening will go wrong.
- **The Qolat** - They rule the city from behind closed doors. They wish to destroy all magic, jinn and gods. They are the coming darkness.
- **The Kali Rhumal Cult** - They follow a dark god. They will follow it to their deaths.
- **Jackals** - Soulless minions of the Dark One, they will fall in the coming Awakening.
- **Ebonites** - They follow the teachings of the Prophet Mekhem. He spoke of the time of the Awakening, hoping his students would listen. Let us hope that they were attentive pupils.
- **Assassins** - They are of no concern.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - She and her khadi are the bane of the sands and will have to be dealt with once the Awakening is upon us.

### *Ebonites*

*"We fight to recover yesterday's lost innocence."  
-- Balance*

The Ebonites are worshippers of the Black Stone, which they claim perhaps is the place where the Prophet Mekhem left the world. They engage in public-spirited policing of Medinat al-Salaam's populace, although it appears their zeal in fighting crime is not particularly appreciated by the common man. They are the counterparts to the Jackals, and regularly crusade against the undead infesting the sewers of the city.

Hundreds of years ago, the prideful Ebonites unleashed a dark force into the world, and they have sworn to atone by hunting down and eradicating evil in all its myriad shapes and forms. Now, their sacred mission has brought them, unwitting, to the forefront of a race for the greatest secret the world has ever known. Ebonites share a bond of brotherhood seared into their souls during ritual rebirth, but one of them carries a link to the past that none suspect.

**Faction Advantages:** Major Ally (Ebonites), Driving Goal (Destroy the Darkness)

**Faction Disadvantages:** Fanatic, Major Enemy (Jackals)

#### *Ebonite Crusader*

**Benefit:** +1 Strength

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 5 boxes

#### *Skills*

Swordsmanship, Shield, Ride, Athletics, Battle, Defence, +1 skill from the appropriate lists

#### *Techniques*

##### *Rank 1*

All Crusaders first learn how to use their shield properly in order to parry incoming shots. The TN for the shield parry is equal to the attack roll of the opponent.

##### *Rank 2*

The Crusader now can strike after his shield parry. He deflects the blow and then quickly strikes his opponent.

##### *Rank 3*

The Crusaders can attack twice per round.

##### *Rank 4*

The Crusader can now combine his shield parry and strike with a shield bash. On a successful parry the Crusader rolls his Shield skill and on a successful To Hit roll he bashes the opponent with the shield. The can be combined with the Rank 3 technique.

##### *Rank 5*

At this point the Crusader has learned how to totally reduce the attack ability of his opponent with a properly placed shield parry. If successful the Crusader negates the remainder of the targets attacks and, as he is now left wide open, may strike with a To Hit roll of 5.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of good quality) Cloak, clothes, long sword, knife, heavy armour, shield, horse, bow, arrows, 6 dinari, 4 water tokens

#### *Ebonite Priest of the Prophet*

**Benefit:** +1 Awareness

**Beginning Honour:** 2 + 0 boxes

*Skills*

Theology, Meditate, History, Calligraphy, +3 skills from the appropriate lists.

*Techniques*

The Ebonite Priests of the Prophet differ from the regular priest of the prophet in one way. They can heal by simple laying on hands.

All priests also start the game with 2 abilities each. They gain two new abilities with each rank.

*Outfit*

Cloak, Staff, knife, horse, clothes, 4 dinari, 4 water tokens

*Ebonite Sorcerer/Sahir*

**Benefit:** +1 Intelligence

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 5 boxes

**Beginning Spells:** Summon, Control, Bind, Unsummon, Contact

*Skills*

Lore (Jinn), Spellcraft, History, Calligraphy, +3 skills from the appropriate lists.

*Outfit*

Cloak, Staff, knife, horse, clothes, 4 dinari, 4 water tokens

*Ebonite Templar*

**Benefit:** +1 Stamina

**Beginning Honour:** 2 + 5 boxes

*Skills*

Swordsmanship, Shield, Ride, Athletics, Battle, Defence, +1 skill from the appropriate lists

*Techniques*

*Rank 1*

All Templar first learn how to use their shield properly in order to parry incoming shots. The TN for the shield parry is equal to the attack roll of the opponent.

*Rank 2*

The Templar now can strike after his shield parry. He deflects the blow and then quickly strikes his opponent.

*Rank 3*

The Templar can now attack twice per round.

*Rank 4*

The Templar can now combine his shield parry and strike with a shield bash. On a successful parry the Crusader rolls his Shield skill and on a successful To Hit roll he bashes the opponent with the shield. The can be combined with the Rank 3 technique.

*Rank 5*

The Templar can now attack three times per round.

*Outfit*

Cloak, Sword, knife, full armour, horse, bow, arrows, clothes, 10 dinari, 6 water tokens

*The Ebonite Outlook on other Kingdoms*

- **Senpet** - Noble warriors.
- **Moto** - They are bandits at best, thieves at worst.
- **Sultanate** - The city is the center of the desert and all life. Protect it as it was your own body.
- **Ashalan** - They are a strange race, full of knowledge and history. Listen carefully if one should speak.
- **Yodatai** - Invaders. We shall stop their advances on the city.
- **Ra'shari** - Nomads, they remind us of the Moto in many ways. Be wary of your purse and water tokens when about them.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - They are good people. Mekhem spoke kind words of their lands.

*The Ebonite Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - Renegades and traitors, we shall put them to the sword.
- **Houses of Dahab** - They run the docks, markets, shops and anything else that wishes to sell or buy. They perhaps control the city.
- **The Qolat** - The who?
- **The Rhumal Cult** - Assassins that need to be put down. How dare they claim that what they do is holy work.
- **Jackals** - Our mortal foes. Kill them all.

- **Assassins** - They say that within the walls of the city are ruins of other cities. In these cities live a group called the assassins. I've only seen their victims, never their members.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - They bring order the chaos of the city and she stands amongst them as a sound and respectful leader.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - Free Jinn living in the deep desert. We have ways of making sure that the Jinn do no bother us.

### *Houses of Dahab – the Qolat*

The Houses of Dahab are the most powerful merchants' guild in the City of Stories. They are also the sinister Qolat from Legend of the Five Rings, who have been happily manipulating things from behind the scenes in Medinat al-Salaam just as their busybody counterparts in Rokugan have. The Qolat decry the influence of Celestial powers in human destiny (such as is represented by the Ebonites, Jackals, and Celestial Alliance), and seek to remove all gods from the world so that man can find their own destiny. Given their egotistical goals and weird philosophy, the Qolat have found their agenda best pursued by forming a conspiracy to control the world's commerce.

The Merchant Guilds of Medinaat al-Salaam have the final word in all things monetary within her walls. They barter and trade lives with callous disregard, drawing wealth from every transaction within the city.

**Faction Advantages:** Major Ally (Qolat), Major Ally (Houses of Dahab), Driving Goal (Mankind in control), Caliph's Ear (as emperor's ear)

**Faction Disadvantages:** Dark Secret (Qolat membership), Major Enemies (Celestial Alliance, Jackals, Ebonites)

#### *House of Dahab Merchant*

**Benefit:** +1 Perception

**Beginning Honour:** 2 + 5 boxes

#### *Skills*

Commerce, Knife, Merchant, Barter, +3 skills from the appropriate categories.

#### *Techniques*

The Sultanate Merchants have no techniques per se, instead they start the game with a number of items that they take and trade.

#### *Rank 1*

Average blot of cloth, lantern, pots, average weapons (knives, arrows, spears), average clothing, average jewellery, 1 camel

#### *Rank 2*

Good quality weapons, good quality clothing, average jewellery, forged city pass, 5 water skins of water, 1 camel with packs, two rank 1 items

#### *Rank 3*

Average quality armour, good quality jewellery, illicit maps to locations best not thought about (brothels, gambling dens, etc), 10 water skins of water, 1 camel with packs, 1 slave, four rank 1 items, two rank 2 items

#### *Rank 4*

Good quality armour, 3 pack horses, good quality weapon, excellent quality jewellery, 15 water skins of water, pass into a city of the Three Kingdoms, partnership in a merchant house, 2 slaves, 1 camel with packs, eight rank 1 items, four rank 2 items, two rank 3 items.

#### *Rank 5*

Excellent quality armour, excellent quality weapons, 30 water skins of water, lifetime pass into one city of the person's choice, ownership in a merchant cartel, 5 slaves, 1 camel with packs, sixteen rank 1 items, eight rank 2 items, four rank 3 items, two rank 4 items.

#### *Outfit*

Clothes, 3 camels, cloak, sword, knife, 20 dinari, 10 water tokens, 3 slaves

#### *The Dahab Outlook on other Kingdoms*

- **Senpet** - They need land and building, which we are all too happy to supply.
- **Moto** - Bandits. A bounty on all their heads.
- **Sultanate** - We control this city and everyone in it.
- **Ashalan** - They wander like ghosts of bygone age. We shall deal with them and put them in their place soon enough.

- **Yodatai** - They bring well forged steel and supplies from their distant lands. We welcome all trade.
- **Ra'shari** - Nomads and wanderers. They have no time for us and we for them.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - They bring many items of worth to the city. In several years they will be subsistent upon our trade and then we shall add them to our crown.

#### *The Dahab Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - It is funny to play these fanatics against others.
- **The Rhumal Cult** - We knew about them before the first strangler did his "holy work" in the city. For now we will let them think that they are safe.
- **Jackals** - Soul eaters from the depths of the city. Killing them is a hard, long, drawn out process.
- **Ebonites** - Fanatics, they are use pawns against the other factions.
- **Assassins** - We have used their services many times in the past and will do so many times in the coming times.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - She has the audacity to think she controls this city.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - Nothing could be more nightmarish than the idea of free Jinn. The last free Jinn brought about the Day of Wrath. Do we wish a repeat of this event?

### *Jackals*

*"Immortality is a gift few have the courage to ask for." - Enala*

The Jackals are actually made up of those who failed the Ebonite's Test of the Stone. They are the rivals of the Ebonites, and engage in numerous questionable activities throughout the City of Stories, including murder, slander, theft, and soul-sucking.

Hidden deep within the worst nightmares of the peaceful inhabitants of the City of One Thousand Stories, is where they lurk. Their practices defy morality; their purpose defies comprehension. They smother the hopes and dreams of everyone

they touch, bartering the lives of all mortal men for long-forgotten secrets none should ever learn. They are the abyss itself.

Following the mandates of their alien masters beyond the Black Stone, the Jackals strive to prevent the prophecy's coming fulfilment. Their targets are the Avatars, the beings whose blood is the key to the Awakening and whom the soul-stealers believe are harbingers of a dark age for humankind. Should the Jackals fail, they believe that the world will be plunged into a perilous period of history in which the souls of humanity will be forfeit to a terrifying lord of madness and eternal night.

**Note:** Anyone who decides to belong to the Jackal faction cannot have a cultural or generic school. He must take one of the two following schools. The only exception is if the person is a Sahir. They remain as is.

**Faction Advantages:** Fear 2, Driving Goal (Save the world), Major Allies (Jackals), Knowledge of the City

**Faction Disadvantages:** Outcast, Soulless (See below), Hunted, Marked (See Below), Major Enemies (Ebonites)

#### *Jackal Soul Hunter School*

The Soul Hunter is the most feared thing to walk the streets of the Jewel of the Desert. This vicious creatures hunt the souls of the Avatars, destroying any who come in the way, drinking their souls or worse, trapping them in bottles for future torment.

**Benefit:** +1 Ka

**Beginning Honour:** 0

#### *Skills*

Swordsmanship, Hunting, Stealth, Knife, Lore (City Sewers), +2 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

The Soul Hunter does not use techniques, instead he learns how to 'smell' the powerful souls about him. Many souls are pre-destined for greatness from birth. The Soul Hunter can sense these souls and thus track them. A Hunting + Ka opposed by a double Ka roll of the target is made (e.g. Ka 2 = 4k2 roll). If successful the Jackal has sensed the powerful soul and can now track it. Each subsequent Hunting + Ka roll brings the Jackal closer.

Like all Jackals, the Soul Hunter can literally suck the soul out of his target. To do this, the Jackal makes and opposed Ka test versus his target. Each raise bid and made sucks away a Ka point. When all the Ka is spent, the Jackal then sucks away the actual stat. Anyone who loose all their Ka points dies, their soul having been consumed by the Jackal. The Soul Hunter is also capable of storing the stolen soul in a bottle/jar for later use.

While it is possible to reunite a soul with its body, it is a rare thing and must be down within in a moonrise of the soul being taken.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of low to good quality) Clothes, cloak, sword, knife, three soul bottles, 2 dinari, 1 water token

#### *Jackal Thief School*

A rare few of the Jackals actually attempt to live above the sewers, hiding from the public eye and stealing what they need. Most of these wretches starve to death, unwilling to succumb to the dire action of eat another's soul. Some survive, hardened and twisted, they are the nightmares that the people talk of when they speak in hushed whispers of the Jackals.

**Benefit:** +1 Agility

**Beginning Honour:** 0

#### *Skills*

Lock picking, Pickpocket, Stealth, Knife, Lore (City Sewers), +2 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

Like all thieves, a Jackal thief gains his Rank in a bonus to all thieving skill rolls.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of low to average quality) Clothes, cloak, knife, 2 dinari, 1 water token

#### *Special Disadvantages*

*Soulless (Jackals only) – 6 points*

All Jackals have had 95% of their souls removed and replaced with the essence of the Dark God. This causes them to have to feed on other souls to survive. One soul a month is all that is needed, though tales tell of certain Jackals who feed every night.

Every week that a Jackal goes beyond a month without feeding gives him a wound level. These wounds are unhealable until a fresh soul is drunk. Thus a starving Jackal is easy prey.

Also, the Jackal is counted as an Undead for the purposes of spells that harm undead.

*Marked (Outcasts and Jackals Only) – 4 points*

Sometimes people are banished or outcast for crimes that they want everyone to know of. The practice of branding a sigil into the forehead or shoulder of the outcast is common across all the Burning Sands. The Jackals for example, all have a mystically grafted tattoo of a Jackals head on their arm.

#### *The Jackal Outlook on other Kingdoms*

- **Senpet** - They think they know where the dead go. Hehehee.
- **Moto** - They are beyond our grasp...most of the time.
- **Sultanate** - Ahhhhhh, such sweet souls to drink.
- **Ashalan** - They are to be destroyed when one gets the chance.
- **Yodatai** - Hmmmmmm, new souls to consume. Perhaps the Avatar is within them.
- **Ra'shari** - Kill.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - They bring death. We have been to their door, gone inside and returned. They will fall like the others.

#### *The Jackal Outlook on the Factions*

- **Qabal** - From time to time we will help them, secretly, for they wish our destruction.
- **Houses of Dahab** - They hold too much power.
- **The Qolat** - We heard whispers of this sect.
- **The Rhumal Cult** - Kali-ma is perhaps one of the Avatars we seek. His soul will be ours.
- **Ebonites** - Brothers dear. Your time is nigh.



- **Assassins** - They know the city as well as we do, but only we know how to use it properly. Still, stay away from these people.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - They have no souls to take!
- **The Celestial Alliance** - Bahhhhh!! Jinn. Leave them to the sahir.

## Khadi

The Khadi are the sorcerer warriors of the Caliph. They are evil people who have traded their very hearts for power. Using an ancient Senpet ceremony the Caliph removes the khadi's heart, placing it in a mystical ivory box. The khadi is now immortal, unkillable and almost unstoppable.

The Caliph uses these warriors to patrol the city, destroy the Qabal and serve her purpose. They have no other purpose.

**Faction Advantages:** Ceremony of the Hidden Heart (Special), Caliph's Ear, Military Rank, Loyalty

**Faction Disadvantages:** Ceremony of the Hidden Heart (Special), Major Enemy (Qabal, Ashalan)

### Khadi Sahir School

**Benefit:** +1 Stamina

**Beginning Honour:** 0

Beginning Spells: Summon, Bind, Control, Unsummon, Contact

### Skills

Added to whatever skills the person already possesses.

Swordsmanship, Sincerity, Spellcraft, Lore (Jinn)

### Techniques

Retain the ranks and abilities of whatever profession they were before the Ceremony of the Empty Heart. Thus a Rank 4 sultanate warrior keeps his four techniques as well as gaining the powers of the Khadi.

### Outfit

(All of fine quality) Cloak, clothes, badge of office, sword, knife, horse, 10 dinari.

### New Advantages

#### Ceremony of the Hidden Heart

The Khadi have been subjected to a horrific ritual that literally removes their heart and places it in an ornate ivory box. Once done, the Khadi can never die unless immolated or utterly destroyed in one go. If anything remains, he regrows and heals, getting up within half an hour of their 'death'.

### New Disadvantages

#### Ceremony of the Hidden Heart

Sadly the same ritual that creates such fearsome creatures also enslaves them to whoever owns the ivory box that contains their heart. The Khadi cannot raise a hand against the holder of the box and must obey the orders of the wielder as well.

It is said that the Caliph has a secret room only known to her where all her ivory boxes sit on shelves. It is said that the beating sound can deafen any man.

### The Khadi Outlook on other Kingdoms

- **Senpet** - Interlopers who think that they will rule.
- **Moto** - Bandits who deserve the slave pits as their reward.
- **Ashalan** - Solitary and powerful, they would represent a tangible threat if they were to ever attack en-mass.
- **Yodatai** - Invaders but possibly also our salvation. They bring fresh men and women to the conflict, new goods and strange weapons.
- **Ra'shari** - Once they were the soothsayers of the Sultan. Now they are wanderers and nomads, banished for their transgressions. Watch them closely in all dealings.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - New wealth and power from across the deep desert. They need to be watched closely.

### The Khadi Outlook on the Factions

- **Qabal** - Renegades who will fail and die.
- **Houses of Dahab** - The merchant princes of the city. Such greed for material things.

- **The Qolat** - I have heard whispers of this faction.
- **The Rhumal Cult** - Several corpses have been dug up of late, their necks broken and strangled. The similarities of the deaths is too much to dismiss.
- **Jackals** - They hunt the weak and helpless, sucking out the souls of their victims. Destroy them.
- **Ebonites** - Fanatics, but useful allies in our struggle to control the city.
- **Assassins** - Shadows and stories, nothing more.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - Free Jinn? you must be joking.

## Qabal

*"Those who oppose us are powerful, but I have always believed that the tales of great heroes demand great enemies." -- Hekau*

The Qabal were founded by a renegade Senpet sahir, Hekau, to oppose the cruel practices of the Khadi who rule Medinat al-Salaam.

For over a century, the undying Caliph has ruled the City of a Thousand Stories. Sorcerers have been declared heretics and enemies of the state, while the Caliph's own heartless mages - the Khadi - patrol the city streets, hunting all who would oppose her will. But in the dark corners of the Jewel of the Desert, the Qabal conspires to overthrow the Caliph and her minions. They study the forbidden arts in hopes of finding a way to bind the Khadi and bring down the Caliph.

**Faction Advantages:** Driving Goal (Destroy the Caliph and the Khadi), Major Ally (Qabal)

**Faction Disadvantages:** Outcast, Hunted, Major Enemy (Khadi and the Caliph)

### Qabal Sahir

**Benefit:** +1 Intelligence

**Beginning Honour:** 1 + 5 boxes

**Beginning Spells:** Summon, Bind, Control, Unsummon, Contact

### Skills

Lore(Jinn), Calligraphy, History, Meditation, Athletics, Swordsmanship, +1 skill from the appropriate list.

### Outfit

(All items of low to average quality) Cloak, clothes, sword, knife, writing materials, 6 dinari, 4 water tokens

### The Qabal Outlook on other Kingdoms

- **Senpet** - They have the nerve to think that they will control our city.
- **Moto** - Bandits that serve a purpose. They harry our foes yet seem to also harry our plans as well.
- **Sultanate** - From here we strike at the Caliph and her minions the Khadi. We shall protect it to the best of our abilities.
- **Ashalan** - They will be our saving grace, for they bring with them the magics of an early age.
- **Yodatai** - Invaders, but perhaps our salvation. They bring a new way of combat to the sands and the Caliph fears that which is new.
- **Ra'shari** - Wanderers and strangers, they prowl the outer cities telling tales of times long ago. They hold knowledge worth finding.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - They are no better than the Caliph and her minions. We must leave them to their own devices and watch carefully.

### The Qabal Outlook on the Factions

- **Houses of Dahab** - They hold the keys to the city in their greedy paws and they help us when the can, supplying weapons, armour, food and water. Trust them as far and you can throw wind.
- **The Qolat** - We have heard of this mysterious group that implies that they rule the city from behind the scenes. If they exist then they are more of a danger than the Caliph and must be dealt with.
- **The Kali Rhumal Cult** - These stranglers are evil. We will destroy them when we find them.
- **Jackals** - Foul minions of the dark gods. Destroy them when possible.

- **Ebonites** - They once served a purpose. Now they serve themselves.
- **Assassins** - Be wary of the walls, for they have knives and ears.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - She is the bane of the city and will kill us all if she is given the chance
- **The Celestial Alliance** - They are possibly the salvation for all the sands. They bring a new freedom for the jinn that we think they deserve.

## Rhumal Assassin Cult

Guided by a monstrous being that they believe is the reincarnation of their ancient goddess of death, members of the cult of Rhumal have renewed their campaign of terror. They hide among caravans, slowly growing like a cancer, until in a flurry of bloodshed all are sacrificed in the name of their angry ruler. But their exploits within the Ivory Kingdoms are legendary, and they are hunted for their faith. They have come across the desert in the guise of merchants and diplomats, hoping to find new prey to sate their goddess's vicious appetite.

**Faction Advantages:** Driving goal (Kali's resurrection), Major Ally (Rhumal Assassins)

**Faction Disadvantages:** Fanatic, death trance, outcast, hunted, marked, Major Enemy (Ivory Kingdoms, Assassins)

### Rhumal Assassin School

**Benefit:** +1 Strength

**Beginning Honour:** 0

### Skills

Athletics, Swordsmanship, knife, stealth, sincerity, Rhumal (Special skill), +1 skill from the appropriate list.

### Techniques

The strangler does not learn techniques as normal. With each rank he ascends in status among his cult. Rank 1 Stranglers are the one who carry the gear of the strangling team, and also dig the grave for the victim. Rank 4 do the actual strangling. Rank 2 and 3 tend to be the distraction and limb holders. A Rank 5 strangler is a sight to behold, for they are solitary strangler, possessed of a strength granted to them by their goddess Kali.

For each rank the assassin holds he gains one extra die (1K0) to all strength tests. This really counts when he is doing the actual strangling.

### Outfit

(All items are of low to average quality) Cloak, clothes, knife, rhumal, 4 dinari, 2 water tokens.

**Note:** All Rhumal assassins carry their holy weapon, the Rhumal (a strangling scarf) with them as a sign of status. They never leave it anywhere, much like a samurai with his swords. Unfortunately this also marks the man for what he is. Most Rhumal assassins have taken to hiding the scarf as a decorative clothing example.

### The Rhumal Outlook on other Kingdoms

- **Senpet** - Their cities are dying and so they come to the Jewel of the Desert to seek a new life. They shall go to Kali.
- **Moto** - Dangerous foes. They trust little.
- **Sultanate** - Ample prey for the work of the holy.
- **Ashalan** - The who?
- **Yodatai** - They too shall feel Kali's wrath if they seek to harm us.
- **Ra'shari** - We have seen them watching us from afar. We have never met them face to face, yet.
- **Ivory Kingdoms** - They sought to destroy us, now we are here in this new land. They chase us, but it is too little, too late.

### The Rhumal Outlook on the Factions

- **Qabal** - They think that they are fighting for a cause worth fighting for. Sad.
- **Houses of Dahab** - They are responsible for us being here. We shall repay them with Kali's blessing.
- **The Qolat** - The what?
- **Jackals** - Strange, they do not die when the holy work is preformed upon them.
- **Ebonites** - They have killed many of our number, but we persevere.

- **Assassins** - They are like the shadows at night, silent, dark and cold. Keep away from these people.
- **Khadi and the Caliph** - Like the Jackals, the Khadi are immune to our holy work. Be careful around them.
- **The Celestial Alliance** - The idea of a city of free Jinn is a thing of nightmares.

## Generic Schools

The Burning Sands have several generic schools that all cultures have in common. Rather than put each one in the culture area, they have been put here. Any culture notations have been made.

### *Courtesans*

They offer pleasures beyond what man is supposed to feel. Most female, some male, the courtesan is a class that is seen, yet not seen.

**Benefit:** +1 Awareness

**Beginning Honour:** 0

#### *Skills*

Seduction, knife, storytelling, athletics, +3 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

A courtesan adds her Rank to each seduction, sincerity or similar skill test.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of low to fine quality) Clothes, work clothes, knife, cloak, 3 dinari, 1 water token

### *Courtiers/Advisors*

Most courtiers and advisors of the Burning Sands act as go betweens for those who invoke the tradition of Vendetta. Some advise lords and ladies on the affairs of the day, and still others act as ambassadors of types to the various courts of the Burning Sands cultures.

**Benefit:** +1 Intelligence

**Beginning Honour:** 2

#### *Skills*

Courtier, Sincerity, Lore (cultural – pick two), history, 2 skills from the appropriate lists

#### *Techniques*

The Courtier adds his rank to all negotiation and diplomacy situations and skill rolls.

#### *Outfit*

(All items of good to fine quality) Clothes, cloak, knife, servant, 8 dinari, 5 water tokens.

### *Explorers*

The sands of the desert are full of ruins of the 1st and 2nd age. Ancient treasures and artifacts await those brave enough to find them.

**Benefit:** +1 Stamina

**Beginning Honour:** 1

#### *Skills*

Investigation, Athletics, Lore(Desert), History, +3 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

All explorers gain their rank added to all rolls that deal with Exploration (mapping attempts, reading maps, survival, etc.)

#### *Outfit*

(All items of low to average quality) Cloak, water skin, camel, clothes, knife, 5 dinari, 5 water tokens, some 'artifacts'

### *Merchants*

They stand in every market square, hawking their wares and goods.

**Benefit:** + 1 Perception

**Beginning Honour:** 1

#### *Skills*

Appraisal, barter, haggling, commerce, +3 skills from the appropriate lists.

#### *Techniques*

##### *Rank 1*

Average blot of cloth, lantern, pots, average weapons (knives, arrows, spears), average clothing, average jewellery, 1 camel

##### *Rank 2*

Good quality weapons, good quality clothing, average jewellery, forged city pass, 5 water skins of water, 1 camel with packs, two rank 1 items

##### *Rank 3*

Average quality armour, good quality jewellery, illicit maps to locations best not thought about

(brothels, gambling dens, etc), 10 water skins of water, 1 camel with packs, 1 slave, four rank 1 items, two rank 2 items

*Rank 4*

Good quality armour, 3 pack horses, good quality weapon, excellent quality jewellery, 15 water skins of water, pass into a city of the Burning Sands, partnership in a merchant house, 2 slaves, 1 camel with packs, eight rank 1 items, four rank 2 items, two rank 3 items.

*Rank 5*

Excellent quality armour, excellent quality weapons, 30 water skins of water, lifetime pass into one city of the person choice, ownership in a merchant cartel, 5 slaves, 1 camel with packs, sixteen rank 1 items, eight rank 2 items, four rank 3 items, two rank 4 items.

*Outfit*

(All items of average to fine quality) Cloak, clothes, knife, 10 dinari, 5 water tokens

## *Pit Fighter*

A rare few are taken to compete in the pit fights. Savage Romanesque gladiatorial combat. Winners live, are given perks and sometimes even let free. Losers die, usually rather brutally and gruesomely.

**Benefit:** +1 Strength

**Beginning Honour:** 0 + 5 boxes

*Skills*

Swordsmanship, hand to hand, knife, athletics, shield, +2 skills from the appropriate lists

*Techniques*

*Rank 1*

The Pitfighter first learns how to hit is target quickly. He adds +5 to his To-Hit roll.

*Rank 2*

The Pitfighter has learned to enhance his hitting ability. He may now add +10 to his To-Hit roll.

*Rank 3*

The Pitfighter is capable of making two attacks per round.

*Rank 4*

The Pitfighter has learned to use two weapons as one and as such treats an off handed weapon as no penalties to hit.

*Rank 5*

The Pitfighter channels all his rage into one hit, doing his Rank Keep 0 in added damage.

*Outfit*

(All items of low to good quality) Clothes, knife.

## *Priests*

The priestly classes are those who have dedicated their lives to the following of specific religious tenants. They can be found many places within the lands of the Burning Sands.

All priests start the game with 2 Acts of Faith each. They gain two new Acts of Faith with each rank.

*Priest of Fate*

Mistress of Destiny, Fate, The Weaver of the Skeins of Life. She has many names but they all mean the same thing. A priest of Fate is a perpetual wanderer, walking his way into and out of sandstorms without harm and telling prophetic stories of life. Many seek out these priests and give them alms, so that hopefully Fate will treat them with kindness.

**Benefit:** +1 Ka, +2 Faith

**Beginning Honour:** 2 + 5 boxes

**Beginning Acts:** 2

*Skills*

Survival, Meditation, Theology, Knife, +3 skills from the appropriate categories.

*Outfit*

(All items of low to average quality) Staff, clothes, travelling pack, knife, 2 dinari, 2 water tokens

*Priest of the Culture*

All cultures of the Burning Sands have their own pantheon of gods and goddesses to worship. These men and women serve those pantheons, carrying the word of their chosen deity to the ears of the unfaithful. Senpet Priests are covered in their Culture Schools section.

**Benefit:** +1 Willpower, +2 Faith

**Beginning Honour:** 2 +5 boxes

**Beginning Acts:** 2

*Skills*

Calligraphy, Meditation, Theology, Research, Astrology, +2 skills from the appropriate categories.

*Outfit*

(All items of average to good quality) Staff, scrolls, clothes, writing materials, travelling pack, 5 dinari, 4 water tokens

**Priest of the Faith**

The Faith is that of the teachings of the Prophet. The priests of the Faith wander the lands of the Three Kingdoms looking for people to help and teach the way of the prophet. Of course not everyone wants to hear what they have to say.

**Benefit:** +1 Awareness, +2 Faith

**Beginning Honour:** 2 + 5 boxes

**Beginning Acts:** 2

*Skills*

Calligraphy, Meditation, Theology, Research, History, +2 skills from the appropriate categories.

*Outfit*

(All items of average to good quality) Staff, scrolls, clothes, writing material, travelling pack, knife, 5 dinari, 4 water tokens

**Slaves**

Some are indentured servants, some are they for the pleasure of their lord or lady, some work the

caravans and mines and still others perform in the slave pits.

**Benefit:** +1 Willpower

**Beginning Honour:** 0

*Skills*

Athletics, Hand to hand, +5 skills from the appropriate lists.

*Techniques*

None (or the era techniques)

*Outfit*

(All items of low quality) Clothes, knife.

**Thieves**

They infest every city, living from job to job, pocket to pocket.

**Benefit:** +1 Agility

**Beginning Honour:** 0

*Skills*

Pick pocket, picklock, stealth, athletics, fast-talk, knife, +1 skill from the appropriate list.

*Techniques*

All thieves add their Rank at their rolls of picking pockets, picking locks, stealth, sincerity and similar skills.

*Outfit*

(All items of low quality) Clothes, cloak, some stolen goods, knife, 2 dinari, 1 water token



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## BOOK THREE: *THE BOOK OF FLAME*

### Using the System

#### Traits

These rules use the same system for traits that L5R does and as such simple use the rules in the L5R core rules on pages 98 - 103. Ka is handled just like Void.

#### Combat

Combat in LBS is once again handled very much like that in L5R with the exceptions of duels. The concept of two men facing each other for a one strike, one kill duel is not known. Instead there is a tendency for the two men to duel with each other in a rapid trading of blow till one is defeated. The L5R skill of iaijitsu is unknown in the Burning Sands. Combat is identical to that of L5R in all other regards.

#### *Combat: Battles*

Mass battles are also fought the same as in L5R, using the Battle Chart. Once again the exception is in the duels. These are one on one, one strike, one kill duels.

#### Glory

Glory is not used in the LBS game. Ignore all references to it at this point.

### Weapons

#### Swords

##### *Bastard Sword 25 gold 3K3*

A hand and a half sword, commonly used by the Moto tribes, it is a combination of the Rokugani great sword and the Ujik-hai blades.

##### *Khopesh 10 gold 3K2*

A sickle shaped sword with a long handle ending in a pommel. Commonly used by warriors of the Senpet.

##### *Long Sword 15 gold 3K2*

The most common sword found in the Yodатаi Legions, it is a straight bladed, heavy weapon that tends to bash more than cut.

##### *Crysteel Sword -- gold 4K3*

These weapons are of Ashalani manufacture and are considered to be the rarest of all swords. The art of forging such weapons is known only to the Ashalan. These swords can wound anything even those with magical armour and protection.

##### *Scimitar 15 gold 3K2*

A common sword in the Burning Sands, the scimitar has a wicked curve to it and it is often used one handed. A man who can wield two of these weapons at once is a true blade master.

##### *Short Sword 10 gold 2K2*

A short bladed weapon often used by assassins, merchants, bandits and such.

##### *Two handed sword 50 gold 4K3*

Hardly seen anywhere but in the Sultanate the two-handed sword is a clumsy but deadly weapon.

##### *Dagger 2 copper 1K2*

The standard dagger of the Burning Sands. It comes in many shapes and styles.

#### Polearms

##### *Battle axe 5 gold 3K3*

A large double bladed axe,

##### *Warhammer 2 gold 2K2*

A large hammer, weighted for combat use.

##### *Javelin 5 gold 2K2*

The standard throwing weapon of the Senpet, favoured over the spear.

##### *Spear 8 copper 4K2*

Commonly found with the Sultanate, Moto and Yodатаi.

#### Bows and Crossbows

##### *Light crossbow 10 gold As quarrel*

Common among the Sultanate and now only just making its way into the Senpet and Moto armies. It has a range of about 50 yards.

**Heavy crossbow 20 gold As quarrel**

Common among the Sultanate and now only just making its way into the Senpet and Moto armies. It has a range of about 100 yards.

**Composite bow 50 gold As arrow**

The Moto bow of choice, it is very much like the Daikyu of Rokugan. It has a range of about 200 yards.

**Long bow 25 gold As arrow**

The Senpet and Sultanate use these bows more often than the Moto. While not having the power of the Composite bow it has a greater range of about 250 yards.

**Horse bow 25 gold As arrow**

This weapon was designed and created at roughly the same time in all the kingdoms. The Moto were seeking a bow that could be used on horseback, the Senpet wanted a small, compact bow that they fire from the back of a carriage and the Sultanate wanted a bow that was easily made and used. It has a range of about 150 yards.

## Arrows/Quarrels

**Normal Arrow 1 copper 2K2**

The standard arrow of the Three Kingdoms

**Armour Cutter Arrow 2 coppers 1K2**

An arrow designed specifically to cut through the hide armour of the Three Kingdoms.

**Flesh Cutter Arrow 3 coppers 3K3**

An arrow designed to cut through flesh like a hot knife through butter. This arrow is ineffectual against an armoured target.

**Normal Quarrel 2 copper 3K3**

This is the standard ammo for a crossbow.

**Heavy Quarrel 5 copper 4K3**

A bolt specifically designed to do a lot of blunt trauma damage when it hits. This quarrel only works in the Heavy Crossbow.

## Armour

**Light 10 gold +5 to TN to be hit**

A set of light hide armour that covers the chest and upper legs. Almost all people in the Burning Sands use light armour.

**Heavy 25 gold +10 to TN to be hit**

A set of heavier armour that covers the legs, arms, and body. Very uncommon due to its weight in such a hot and arid country. The Yodatai and the most frequent users of this style of armour.

**Barding 50/100 gold +10 to TN to be hit**

A set of heavy armour designed for a beast of burden, such as a horse, camel or elephant. The lesser cost is for the horse and camel barding.

## Animals

**Horse, draft 5 gold**

Standard work horse.

**Horse, war 50-100 gold**

A well bred horse trained for warfare. Usually traded from the Moto.

**Horse, riding 10-20 gold**

A good riding animal.

**Camel, one hump 5-10 gold**

The ships of the desert. One hump camels are good for city to city travel.

**Camel, two hump 5-10 gold**

The two hump camel makes an excellent beast of burden.

**Elephant 100 gold**

The standard elephant is a great carrier of cargo, as well as dignitaries.

**Elephant, war 200 gold**

The war elephant is trained for combat. There are few of these mighty beasts.

**Hawk/Falcon 10 gold**

Trained hunting birds. Rare in the Burning Sands.

**Dog, domestic 4 copper**

The standard mutts that are found every where.

**Dog, war 5 gold**

Trained to attack and guard.

**Monkey, trained 10 gold**

An animal almost unique to the Burning Sands. Trained monkeys are excellent companions.



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## BOOK FOUR: *THE BOOK OF WIND*

### Religion

The priest is the backbone of the Burning Sands theological circles. They man the temples and tend to the faithful. They call upon the gods for aide and even receive it now and again.

Each kingdom has its own pantheon of gods, goddesses, demi-gods and the like that they follow. Only two faiths are actually observed across all lands of the Burning Sands that of Lady Fate and that of the Prophet, though many of the cultures of the Sands have their own culture specific deities, it is the major two that we look at here. The culture specific deities will be covered in later books.

### Lady Fate

The faith of Fate is a fickle thing, like tossing a coin every time you want to do something and praying that its heads. Sometimes you are lucky, sometimes you are not, but still, many follow Her, as well as pay lip service to Her, depositing a coin in the hat of one of Her priests as they embark upon a journey.

The faith of Lady Fate has existed for as long as the Jewel of Desert has stood, even longer if the Ra'shari are to be believed, for they are Her strongest supporters.

### The Prophet

The faith of the Prophet is one of the youngest and strongest religions next to that of Lady Fate. The Prophet was a man who walked out into the desert and brought the armies of the Fallen God to a halt. His dedication and courage set an example for others.

The Faith of the Prophet is a severe one, proclaiming abstinence, monogamy, sex for procreation only, as well as a host of other rules and tenements. Many who follow the faith actually break most of the tenements, making penance later in the month, though most observe the holidays without fail.

### Death Cults

An interesting development within the Senpet religious circles has been the emergence of the death cults. These groups pray to the Senpet death god, Anubis, hoping that through his

blessings they will not only live a long and eventful life, that their place in the afterlife will also be set.

Some death cults are into human sacrifices, feeling that one soul can save many.

The Ivory Kingdoms has many of these death cults, the most prolific and dangerous being the Rhumal Assassins of Kali, Goddess of Death.

### Spellcasters

#### The Sahir

The sahir are the harnessers of the Jinn, the powerful spirits of the desert. Through them they cast their spells and summon forth the energies of the elements. A sahir holds a strange place in the Burning Sands. Within the lands of the Sultanate they find themselves outlaws, hiding from the Tyrant and her Khadi. Many are part of a secret society known as the Qabal. In the lands of the Senpet the sahir enjoy a status on par with the priests. Within Moto lands the sahir are the priests, and are treated as such.

Sahir bind Jinn to their will, commanding them to cast spells for them. Most Jinn are anything but favourable to this idea. Jinn are notoriously free willed and many turn on their masters when freedom is obtained. The most common type of sahir merely summon the Jinn only for the moment needed to cast the spell and then set them free in return for the service.

#### The Shugenja

Though few in number, Rokuganese style shugenja exist within the Burning Sands. They are not seen in any culture but that of the Moto.

Shugenja are users of the elements, differing from their Burning Sands counterparts, the sahir, in that they do not actually summon Jinn and use them to create spells.

Shugenja seemingly channel the elemental energies through themselves to create spells. While considered a better form of magic, as it does not require Jinn, others see the limited use of the shugenja as a downfall. Shugenja can only cast a number of spells per day equal to the Ring of that element (Re, if the Sand Ring is 3, only 3 of the Sand/Earth spells may be cast each day).

## The Sorcerer

The Ashalan sorcerer is a true enigma to all practitioners of magic within the Burning Sands. neither a user of Jinn or elements the Sorcerer instead seems to be able to harness the very substance of creation and bend it to his will. Ashalan sorcerers are given wide berths when discovered.

## The Ra'shari

All Ra'shari inherently can cast curses upon a target. The only limitation being that they must learn these curses from other Ra'shari. These curses can be very powerful and must be used with extreme care. Many are the tales of reckless Ra'shari youths who cursed an individual in mere anger or for sport, only to find that the curse had doubled back upon them instead.

## The Qabal Elementalist

A few of the Qabal have discovered some of the older magic of the Burning Sands. Magic that predates the Day of Wrath. Know simply as elemental magic, it allows the sahir to cast spells from the elements without needing Jinn. Seen as revolutionary and dangerous by most, the Elementalist is more a story than truth it seems.

## *The Rehtu*

Rehtu is the Senpet word that is used to represent the dark magics of necromancy, death, disease, and so forth. Some unscrupulous people learn these spells, harnessing the power of the death to gain power over others. Dark sorcerers, necromancers, plague priests, are but a few of the names carried by these dark men and women.

## *The Priests*

Priests channel the power of their deity into themselves and others through a series of powers know simply as Acts of Faith.

## Jinn

The word Jinn is used as a generic term for all the spirits and forces of nature. Each Jinn can be classified as belonging to either Flame, Sea, Wind, Sand or Ka.

The Jinn are a race of free spirited, strong willed elementals. They exist within nature, apart of it, flowing with it and manipulating it. Jinn are able

to use their affinity with their element to manipulate it and cast spells.

The smaller spells are usually possessed by the Jinn while the greater and more powerful spells are hoarded by the Elder Jinn.

Smaller Jinn are usually associated with a single element, while the larger Jinns are able to command multiple elements.

Of course the stronger the Jinn, the harder it is to summon, bind and control.

All of the Jinn kind dislike being commanded by the sahir, though they are more tolerant of those who merely ask a single service than those that bind them into service. Contrary to popular belief, the Jinn do talk with others of their kind, trading stories and rumours. This means that those sahirs who become sorcerers often find it difficult to summon new Jinn to bind.

## Why Summon Jinn

One might ask why someone would summon such creatures.

The answer is quite simple. Power. When one summons a Jinn and puts it under his control, he gains the power of the Jinn. Usually this is for but a short time, and usually it consists of getting the Jinn to cast spells or perform tasks of service.

Jinn are great repositories of knowledge of the arcane and, of course, of history. Many sahir historians will confer with summoned Jinn on subjects of history, legend, myth, magic and so forth.

The overall benefit of binding a Jinn is that you gain its services indefinitely, or until it is unsummoned or destroyed. When a sahir has a Jinn bound to him he gains the ability to cast spells associated with the elements that the Jinn is part of, thus binding a Jinn with an aspect related to the element of Sand would allow the sahir to cast Sand spells.

## Problems with Summoning and Binding Jinn

### *Being a Bad Master*

If a sahir is especially cruel to the Jinn he summons, this will get out into the Jinn community and the sahir will steadily find it harder and harder to summon Jinn. For those sahir who bind their Jinn and treat them bad, it is

highly possible that once freed, the Jinn will return and attack or exact some sort of revenge on the sahir.

### *Binding Too Many Jinn*

One might wonder how many Jinn a sahir can bind. Well that's easy, up to 2x his Ka. Though after reach a number equal to your Ka you need to start checking to see if you've noticed by the Elder Jinn. Jinn do not like to be kept, even by kind old men who treat them like fine china. A cage is still a cage, no matter how gilded the bars.

For every Jinn bound over the sahir's Ka, the sahir makes a Ka roll at a TN of 5x his Ka. If he fails the elder Jinn have noticed him and as such come and pay him a visit in order to find out why he is summoning and binding so many Jinn.

### *Anyone can use a bound Jinn*

This of course is the cardinal problem with a bound Jinn. Anyone can use the Jinn within if he makes a contested Willpower Roll (Sahir have it easier as the Control Spell gives them bonuses), against the bound Jinn. Therefore a thief who steals an item with Jinn bound to it can use the item as long as he makes the roll.

## **Known Jinn of the Burning Sands**

Legend has it that there are 1000 Jinn left in the world. All Jinn have names, and all are merely aspects of a greater whole. There can be several Jinn of one aspect, such as a Jinn of Decay or Strength. This is a short listing of some of the Jinn.

**Common Abilities of the Jinn:** All Jinn can fly at the speed of a fast run. Jinn are magical creatures and as such can only be hurt by magical means, either spells or crystal swords. Crystal weapons from Rokugan will also hurt them, but Jade will not. All Jinn have a Ka from 1-5 depending on their rank within Jinn Society. Ka 1-2 Jinn are lesser Jinn. Ka 4 Jinn are elder Jinn, while the Ka 5 Jinn are the Lords of their kind.

All Jinn when bound give a benefit and a disadvantage to their owner. These benefits and disadvantages only apply as long as the sahir is using the bound Jinn.

### *Jinn of a Thousand Midnights*

**Element:** Wind

**Bound Effect:** The item can make the user invisible for as long as he wears the item and engages in no combat actions. The negative is that the owner of such Jinn will slowly be forgotten by all those around him, till he is a complete stranger to all.

**Noted Jinn:** None

### *Jinn of Decay*

**Element:** Wind, Flame

**Bound Effect:** The Jinn can immolate an area about itself, lashing all within a 20X20 foot area with searing flames that do DR5. The Jinn is able to do this only once if bound, becoming unbound and returning to the ethereal afterwards. Owners of the Jinn of Decay tend to use it quickly, for one becomes susceptible to disease when one carries this Jinn. Really susceptible.

**Noted Jinn:** None

### *Jinn of Desire*

**Element:** Flame, Wind

**Bound Effect:** The owner of a Jinn of Desire bound into an item is seen as charismatic and full of grace. He adds +2 unkept dice to all Seduction, Etiquette, Negotiation, Diplomacy and any other skill in which he talks and is seen with others. The downside to the Jinn of Desire is that if you offend someone it works at 2x the effect. So instead of being just ticked off, the offended person might call a Vendetta or hire an assassin.

**Noted Jinn:** None

### *Jinn of Destruction*

**Element:** Flame, Wind, Sand, Sea, Ka

**Bound Effect:** Considered by many to be one of the most powerful of the Jinn race, a Jinn of Destruction is a mighty thing to behold. It is capable of raining fire, sandstorms, and even rocks upon its victims. All people in a 100X100 foot area are hit by a DR7 attack by various elements. Anyone who binds a Jinn of Destruction radiates a palpable aura of dread, fear, and anger. Everyone around them must make a Fear 2 roll every time they see the bearer.

**Noted Jinn:** None

### *Jinn of Earthly Pleasure*

**Element:** Flame, Wind, Sea

**Bound Effect:** When bound, a Jinn of Earthly Pleasure can make the owner irresistible to a member of the opposite sex. The target will sacrifice all to be with the owner of the Jinn. Unfortunately the Jinn also bestows a nasty streak of greed and jealousy into its bearer as well.

**Noted Jinn:** Afshin

### *Jinn of Endless Dreams*

**Element:** Wind, Flame, Sea, Sand

**Bound Effect:** When bound the owner can enter the dreams of others, manipulating them to his or her own desires. Sadly, the owner suffers from dreamless nights and must walk others dreams if he is to sleep properly.

**Noted Jinn:** The Nightmare Devourer

### *Jinn of Eternal Solitude*

**Element:** Flame

**Effect:** These Jinn when bound have the ability to summon lesser versions of themselves to aide them in defence of the object they are protecting. This object is usually a temple or house, possibly an item even. There is no known dire effect of owning a Jinn of Eternal Solitude.

**Noted Jinn:** Keeper of the Marble Flame

### *Jinn of Gathering*

**Element:**

**Bound Effect:** The Jinn of Gathering when bound allows the owner to move instantaneously from one location to another that he knows of and has memorized. Sadly, the owner of the Jinn soon comes to rely on the Jinn for its movement ability, preferring to teleport everywhere instead of walking, riding, or running.

**Noted Jinn:** Gathriq

### *Jinn of Hungry Dreams*

**Element:** Wind, Sea

**Bound Effect:** The Jinn of Hungry Dreams almost seems to empower a user with its strength. The user gains (Jinn's Ka)K0 to all his strength related actions. The downside is that the Jinn siphons of the strength from those around him, thus a Ka 3 Jinn will siphon 3 Strength

from the users friends or enemies, whichever are closer.

**Noted Jinn:** Kai

### *Jinn of Infinite Eyes*

**Element:** Ka

**Bound Effect:** This Jinn gains +1K for every other Jinn that the caster has already bound to himself. When bound the sahir benefits from the advantages of Excellent Sight and 6th Sense. Strangely enough those that bind the Jinn of Infinite Eyes seem only to suffer from mild cases of paranoia.

**Noted Jinn:** None

### *Jinn of Lost Hopes*

**Element:** Ka

**Bound Effect:** Another rare Jinn, these Jinn are summoned when one wants to impersonate another. The Jinn has the ability, when bound to a "dummy" to become an exact duplicate of the chosen target. So good is the mimic, that it requires 3 raises on a Perception Roll to notice the difference. Some of these Jinn have taken on the whole life of their target, living for many years as a person. It's rumoured that the longer a Jinn stays the person it is mimicking, the less the person is himself, till finally the original just seemingly fades away.

**Noted Jinn:** Al Amaq

### *Jinn of Malignity*

**Element:** Sand, Wind, Sea, Flame

**Bound Effect:** Jinns of the Malignity are not seen as beneficial in any way. All things have their bad side, and these Jinn are definitely in that category.

Someone who attempts to use a bound Jinn of Malignity will fly into a berserker rage, ignoring all wound penalties and fighting until they reach 2x their wounds, at which point they drop dead.

There are rumours of unscrupulous sahir who summon and bind these Jinn to items and then use them as punishment for people they do not like.

**Noted Jinn:** Ajbar ibn Kaleel

### *Jinn of Reflection*

**Type:** Lesser Jinn

**Bound Effect:** Usually bound into a reflective surface, these Jinn when bound allow the sahir to see other locales that they ask about. The sahir can cast spells into that area if he wishes. It has been made known that possession of the Jinn of Reflection for any period of time will result in one making slight errors in judgement, as they see things that are not where they are at that point in time.

**Noted Jinn:** None

### *Jinn of Smokeless Fire*

**Element:** Flame, Wind, Sea, Sand

**Bound Effect:** These Jinn are rare and sometimes very hard to summon. All Contact, Summon and Control rolls are at +5 for a Jinn of Smokeless Fire.

The Jinn greatly increases its owners overall ability to command and lead others. All negotiation, leadership, diplomacy and similar leadership based skills and situations are at a -10 to their Base TN.

Of note is that only three of these powerful beings have ever been summoned and bound in the last 3 Ages. All three of the Sahir's who bound them were eventually found dead, their bodies mangled and twisted horribly.

**Noted Jinn:** Tahir

### *Jinn of the Brutal Harvest*

**Element:** Ka, Flame

**Bound Effect:** A Jinn of the Brutal Harvest is the last thing anyone on a battlefield wishes to see. These Jinn when bound cause their master to radiate immense waves of pain and death. All wounds taken by anyone in a 20 foot radius around the owner take 2 times the wound penalties. All wounds bleed freely and do not heal while the Jinn of Brutal Harvest is manifested.

An owner of this Jinn is considered by many to be a soulless killing machine. In truth, the Jinn slowly devours the soul of its master, till all that's left is a puppet for the Jinn to control.

**Noted Jinn:** Ayna, Jinn of Qanon

### *Jinn of the Desert Tempest*

**Element:** Sand, Wind

**Bound Effect:** Power Wind Jinn, these creatures are able to carry their master where ever they go, held aloft on a blanket of winds.

This Jinn is also capable of generating a massive desert sand storm at a moments notice at its masters whim.

Jinn of the Desert Tempest are short tempered and confer this to their owners.

**Noted Jinn:** Asifet of the Fleet

### *Jinn of the New Moon*

**Element:** Flame

**Bound Effect:** When bound the Jinn is able to produce a claming effect on all around it. The sahir smashes the object to which the Jinn is bound to create this effect. All inside a 50X50 area immediately cease any and all hostile activity for a time of 1 hour. The act of destroying the object releases the Jinn back to the ethereal. Sadly it has been noted that anyone who binds a Jinn of the New Moon becomes more and more nocturnal, till soon he is only active at night.

**Noted Jinn:** None

### *Jinn of Tricks*

**Element:** Wind, Flame, Sea, Sand, Ka

**Bound Effect:** Jinn of Tricks are known for their clever, yet annoying, fast talking ways. A bound Jinn of Tricks adds directly to a persons Agility, Reflexes and Perception, giving the person a +2K0 to all rolls for those stats. Sadly, anyone who actually binds a Jinn of Tricks becomes a nightmare for all those around him, as he begins a career of nasty, underhand dirty tricks and puns.

**Noted Jinn:** Alakrai

## Spells

Unlike the shugenja of Rokugan, the spells of the Burning Sands are somewhat different. Sahir harness the power of the Jinn and use to create a spell-like effect. Standard casting time for any spell is 3 rounds, (this can be lowered with raises) and has a base TN of 15 (this can be lowered by increasing the casting time). The effect of the spell is largely left up to the sahir. The more complicated the spell, the harder it will be to cast. This is represented by a chart of modifiers to the Base TN. Some modifiers lower the TN, other raise it.

Any spell effect can be used repeatedly, and if done so, raises the Base TN. Many spells that are of similar nature in the Burning Sands are

because of like-minded sahir wanted to create similar effects with their harness energies, such as a healing spell or a fireball spell.

#### Chart of Spell Effect Modifiers

Action	Bonus to Base TN
Every extra round spent casting	-5 (Max of -15)
Ka spell	+5
Sand spell	-5
More than one target	+5 per extra target
DR(Ring) +1	+5 for each +1 to the DR

Check spellcraft skill for more modifiers

#### Using the Jinn for Spells

To cast a spell the sahir contacts the Jinn of the desired element. He asks it to cast the spell effect he desires. Then, if the Jinn is willing, the effect is cast. The sahir can now attempt to bind the Jinn to an item or let it go.

## The Spells of the Sahir

### Bind

**Base TN:** Opposed Willpower/Ka

**Casting Time:** 3 rounds

**Duration:** Special

**Concentration:** Full

**Raises:** Casting time

**Effect:** Ritual: The sahir attempts to bind the Jinn to an object. This requires an opposed Willpower + Rank versus the Jinn's Ka + Rank.

Success determines that the sahir has bound the Jinn into an object. The Jinn may now be summoned without need of any of the nuances of contact or summon spells. Only the Control spell is used, with a successful roll indicating if the Jinn rebels and refuses the action. A sahir can increase the casting time of his ritual, thus adding +5 for each extra round, to his roll as well as gaining bonus kept dice for each extra sahir that joins in the ritual.

**Bonuses:** -5 if Ra'shari or Moto, +5 if Yodатаi or Jackal.

**Example:** Besib wishes to bind the Jinn, so an opposed Willpower + Rank versus the creature's Ka + Rank is made. Thus Besib rolls his Willpower (3) + his Rank (4) getting 7K3 dice. He rolls 26 (-5 for being a Jackal) getting 21. The Jinn rolls its Ka (5) + its rank (3) for 8k5 dice. I didn't say this was easy. Jinn do not like being kept prisoner. The Jinn get 38 and so is not bound. The Jinn smiles and vanishes.

### Contact Jinn

**Base TN:** 15

**Casting Time:** Instant

**Duration:** Instant

**Concentration:** Full

**Raises:** None

**Effect:** use rank + appropriate ring to roll. If the jinn is of multiple rings, then take the lowest ring. All Sahir count raises after the roll for the purpose of determining bonus for the Summon Jinn spell.

**Bonuses:** -5 if Ra'shari or Moto, +5 if Yodатаi or Jackal. +5 for each additional element the Jinn possesses. Thus a 4 element Jinn is +15 to the roll.

**Example:** Besib, a Jackal Sahir wishes to summon a jinn of four elements in order to bind it to a ring for a time. He casts Contact Jinn.

Besib's lowest ring is Flame at 3 so he rolls his Flame (3) + Rank (4) for 7K3 dice. His initial TN is 15, +5 (Jackal), +15 for a powerful 4 element Jinn, making a total TN of 35.

He rolls an unprecedented 43 and thus contacts the desired Jinn, with 1 raise.

### Control

**Base TN:** 5 X Jinn's Ka

**Casting Time:** Instant

**Duration:** Varies.

**Concentration:** Full

**Raises:** None

**Effect:** Command the Jinn to cast spells or perform other useful actions. Each raise bid and reached equals 1 task either a spell or an action.

**Example:** Now the Jinn forms in front of him. Besib quickly enters into a battle of wills with the Jinn, casting his Control spell. Is TN is 20,

(20 (5X the Jinn's Ka of 5) – 10(2 raises on Summon roll)).

Besib rolls a 31 gaining two tasks of the Jinn. Total time is now 5 rounds. (4 for the Summon, and a combined 1 for the Contact and Control. In the case of a lesser Jinn being summoned, say a one element Jinn, the time would be 2 rounds).

### **Summon Jinn**

**Base TN:** 15

**Casting Time:** 1 round per element of Jinn summoned.

**Duration:** Instant

**Concentration:** Full

**Raises:** Casting Time

**Effect:** Summon the Jinn to the casters location. As with Contact Jinn, raises are calculated afterwards for the purposes of determining Control Jinn bonus.

**Bonuses:** -5 if Ra'shari or Moto, +5 if Yodai or Jackal. +5 for each additional element the Jinn possesses. Thus a 4 element Jinn is +15 to the roll. -5 for every success on the contact roll.

**Example:** Besib now attempts to summon the jinn he contacted. 4 rounds of casting are required with such a powerful Jinn, and so after 4 rounds Besib rolls his 7K3 dice again (same as with contact) at a TN of 30 (15 + 5(Jackal) + 15 (4 elements) –5 (one raise on Contact Spell)).

He gets 41, another incredible roll, which gains him 2 raises.

### **Unsummon**

**Base TN:** Special

**Casting Time:** 1 round per element of Jinn

**Duration:** Instant

**Concentration:** Full

**Raises:** Casting Time

**Effect:** This is basically a reverse Bind spell, meant to break the bonds holding the creature to this world.

If a sahir successfully Unsummons a free Jinn, it is banished to the ethereal for a time of 1 day per the Ka of the sahir. The sahir rolls an opposed Willpower + Rank with the creature.

If the Jinn is a bound entity the sahir must declare which he is attempting, to merely

Unsummon it back to the caster object to free it and thus both unbind it and unsummon it. The first is done exactly like the original unsummon of a free Jinn and if successful, the Jinn is unusable for a time of 1 day per Ka of the sahir. If the later, the sahir enters a contest of wills with the opposing sahir with a TN of 5X the Ka of the Jinn in question. If successful the Jinn is unbound and sent to the ethereal for the sahir's Ka X 5 days. Of course the Jinn is then likely to attempt to hunt down its former master and exact revenge if the master was unkind.

**Example:** Besib is under attack from a rival sahir and so attempts to Unsummon his opponents summoned Jinn. Besib rolls a contested Willpower + Rank with the Jinns Rank + Ka. Thus Besib rolls his Willpower (3) + his Rank (4) getting 7K3 dice. He rolls 23. The Jinn rolls its Ka (2) + its rank (3) for 5K3 dice. The Jinn gets a 16. The Jinn abruptly stops and fades away for 3 days (Besibs Ka is 3).

## **Noted Spell Effects**

The following are actual noted effects that have been used many times by different sahir over time. They have become almost like the spells of Rokugan in that they are stable concrete effects.

All Effects have a TN, an effect and the element that are required by the Jinn in order to create the effect.

### **Ashim's Rainbow Shield**

**TN:** 15

**Element:** Sand

**Effect:** This effect absorbs damage done to the target. Every time the person is hit, the effect absorbs the Jinn's Ka in damage dice. (For example, a Jinn with a Ka of 3 will reduce a sword damage from Strength + 3K2 to Strength + 0K2. Every time the target is hit a brilliant flash of rainbow light erupts. All attackers are at +5 to their next TN to hit.

### **Blighted Fields**

**TN:** 20

**Element:** Sea

**Effect:** Considered to be the act of a true evil man, this effect will instantly wither crops in a 20X20 meter area.

### **Ceremony of the Black Heart**

**TN:** 20

**Element:** Flame, Ka

**Effect:** When cast this effect will create a duplicate heart of ebony material. Until the heart is destroyed or the effect times out, the target of the spell is immune to all damage except from magical sources. Sadly, if the heart is destroyed the target drops into a coma for a number of days equal to the Ka of the target.

***Discorporation***

**TN:** 15

**Element:** Sand and Sea

**Effect:** This particularly nasty effect literally dissolves the flesh of the target. The target takes a DR4 attack that flays the skin from the bone. Any wounds done by this spell effect that are not healed magically, leave vicious scars in the areas hit. The bearer of such wounds in a visible place takes a +5 to all social TNs.

***Dream Magic***

**TN:** 15

**Element:** Wind

**Effect:** This effect allows the sahir to traverse the dreams of a target, influencing them in subtle ways. This effect last one night's sleep.

***Forget***

**TN:** 10

**Element:** Wind

**Effect:** This effect blanks out sections of memory. The length of time forgotten is up to the Jinn's Ka in months.

***Hakhim's Seal***

**TN:** 20

**Element:** Ka

**Effect:** This powerful effect was originally created by Hakhim, first of among Sahirs and reputedly the first Sahir. When enacted it will enhance all Jinn in the area, giving +3 unkept dice to all actions.

***Heart of the Beast***

**TN:** 20

**Element:** Ka, Flame

**Effect:** This effect unlocks the inner beast with a target, give them +3 unkept dice to all combat actions.

***Lady Sun's Wrath***

**TN:** 20

**Element:** Flame

**Effect:** The skies open up and a lance of pure white fire strikes the target. This is a DR6 magical attack.

***Spirit Blade***

**TN:** 10

**Element:** Flame

**Effect:** The sahir created a blade of white flame that acts like a standard longsword. This weapon can wound Jinn and other magical creatures as a normal weapon. Against all others it a 4K3 weapon.

***Sustain Life***

**TN:** 10

**Element:** Sea

**Effect:** This is a simple healing effect that will cure a number of wound ranks equal to the Ka o the Jinn.

***The Crossroads***

**TN:** 15

**Element:** Wind.

**Effect:** The sahir and his possessions instantly travel across a short distance to another point no more that 500 meters away.

***The Seed of Qanon***

**TN:** 15

**Element:** All

**Effect:** Considered to be one of the most legendary of Jinn effects, the Seed of Qanon when cast directly ties the life energies of the sahir to a target. The target adds all the sahir's stats to his own (max of 7). If the target dies, then so will the sahir who is linked to the target.

***The Star's Blessing***

**TN:** 10

**Element:** Wind

**Effect:** This effect surrounds the target with a protective shield of air and wind. All ranged weapons (Bows, crossbows, spears, etc) not counting magical ranged attacks, cannot hit the target.



## Elemental Magic

Of recent note is the use of elemental magic, or more specifically Ice Magic (as it is the only one seen to date). Qabal sahir have been practising lost arts of magic, said to have been used centuries ago by the various cultures ancestors before the Day of Wrath. Some of the Qabal have actually learned how to summon forth the power of the Elements to their command without using Jinn in anyway or form.

The Qabal Elementalists will be covered fully in the Book of Ka's section on the Qabal.

## Ra'shari Curses

Every Ra'shari can manipulate Fate to a degree, giving someone an advantage or disadvantage. Most often the Ra'shari use this power to punish those who have slighted them in some major way. Ra'shari Curses are not to be taken lightly, and are never bestowed unless the target is truly deserving of the curse. Curses cast in revenge or in jest often find themselves being turned back upon the curser twice fold.

The Curse someone the Ra'shari needs a good reason. The death of a family member counts, but not because the target is better looking and charming with the women than the Ra'shari.

The Curser then simply rolls his Ka + Rank, keeping a number of dice equal his Ka Ring. If he beats the TN the curse is enacted.

All curses have to have the ability to be lifted. So a condition must be put upon them. Some examples are; when the sky burns red with fire, when the castle rises above the clouds, or even when the forest walks. These are all good conditions. Remember, a condition must be feasibly accomplishable. Many campaigns can be generate around the seeking of the way to lift a Ra'shari curse.

## Known Curses

### *Blinded by Fate*

**Base TN:**

**Casting Time:**

**Effect:** Fate Value: 3Curse Reaction: When one of your Heroes enter a duel, bow one of your Sahir. During the duel, the opposing Hero can only parry from his or her deck. Cards discarded this way go to their player's Saved pile.

**Flavour:** *Rawif raced through the Caliph's dungeon until there was nowhere left to go. One of the doors led to freedom, he hoped, but the other led only to certain death.*

### *Curse of Eternal Beauty*

**Base TN:**

**Casting Time:**

**Effect:** Fate Value: 3Open: Bow one of your Sahir. Target a Hero in play. Draw and discard a card. Add the card's Fate value to the Hero's Influence. The Hero's controller draws and discards a card, adding the card's Fate value to the Hero's Ka. If the Hero's total Influence now exceeds his or her total Ka, destroy the Hero.

### *Curse of Lost Youth*

**Base TN:**

**Casting Time:**

**Effect:** Fate Value: 2Night Curse: Target another Hero in play. Until the end of the game, attach a -1K Curse token to the Hero each time the Hero straightens.

**Flavour:** With every lost year, the remaining grow sharper, until a man can cut another dream in old, bitter rage.

### *Curse of the Rot Within*

**Base TN:** 10

**Casting Time:** 2 actions

**Effect:** The target suffers from intense stomach cramps. While under the curse, the target suffers from a -1 unkept die to all actions, as well as needing to use the facilities every 4 odd hours to purge himself or anything he's eaten.

### *Dust to Dust*

**Base TN:** 10

**Casting Time:** 2 actions

**Effect:** Fate Value: 1Spell. Buried Curse Day: Bow a Sahir you control and target an opposing Hero. This Sahir and targeted Hero gain a -2 Ka token.

**Flavour:** *There is no injustice in the world. Lady Sun only gives us what we so rightly deserve.*

### *Mind Control*

**Base TN:**

**Casting Time:**

**Effect:** Fate Value: 2 Curse Bow a Sahir you control and target a Hero with less than 4 Ka. Targeted Hero must attack this turn if possible.

**Flavour:** *"The Khadi are weak, my dear. Certainly no trouble for a killer such as you..." - Afshan Jarr*

## Priestly Acts of Faith

All priests of the Burning Sands possess abilities that are simply know as Acts of Faith. These abilities are all similar in nature and can be readily used by any Burning Sands priest.

These abilities are not spells and as such are not counterable with a Jinn Unsummon spell. The priest is not channelling the power of a Jinn, he is channelling the power of his God.

### *Banishment of The Dark God's Touch*

**Base TN:** 10

**Casting Time:** 2 actions

**Duration:** Permanent

**Concentration:** Casual

**Raises:** Amount of poison/disease healed

**Effect:** The Priest drains the impurities and poisons from the target in an attempt to heal him. The Priest actually draws a part of the impurities into himself and heals them himself. The Priest usually suffers from the effects of the disease of poison for about 1 hour. If the poison is a fatal type the Priest will merely drop into a coma like sleep for the time. The Priest rolls his Ka + Meditation at a TN equal to that of the poison or disease.

### *Blessings of Purity*

**Base TN:** 15

**Casting Time:** 3 actions

**Duration:** 5 rounds

**Concentration:** Casual

**Raises:** Duration

**Effect:** The Priest bestows a blessing upon a target. The blessings advantage is based upon the element that is used to bless. This is a Ka + Rank roll.

- **Sand** – Up Hits. Each raise = +1 Sand that carries into phantom points to soak up damage.

- **Sea** – Up either Strength or Perception. Each raise = +1 to the stat.
- **Wind** – Up either Reflexes or Awareness. Each raise = +1 to the stat.
- **Flame** – Up Agility. Each raise = +1 to the stat.
- **Ka** – Increase the Ka trait. Each raise = +1 to the Ring.

### *Illumination of Purity*

**Base TN:** 10

**Casting Time:** 1

**Duration:** instant

**Concentration:** none

**Raises:** none

**Effect:** This power functions identically to the Unsummon Spell cast by sahir.

### *Looking Within*

**Base TN:** 15

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Duration:** Special

**Concentration:** Total

**Raises:** none

**Effect:** The Priest enters into a trance and asks a question of the sprits. Based on which element is asked, a type of question is answered. (see below). He uses his Ka + Rank to make the roll.

- **Sand** – Detect and/or analyse magic items or spells.
- **Sea** – Analyse an object to determine its working.
- **Wind** – Detect hidden places and things.
- **Flame** – Prophecy. This works like the Luck Level 3 advantage.
- **Ka** – Learn of something you didn't know. Get a hint from the GM. The higher the raises the clearer the answer.

### *Purity's Mantle*

**Base TN:** 10

**Casting Time:** 5 actions

**Duration:** 5 rounds

**Concentration:** Casual

**Raises:** TN

**Effect:** The Priest can raise the TN of a spell targeted on him by +5 for every raise of the opposing element + rank he rolls.

### *The Arms of Purity*

**Base TN:** 15

**Casting Time:** 3 actions

**Duration:** 5 rounds

**Concentration:** Focused

**Raises:** Area of effect, TN

**Effect:** The Priest raises the TN of a spell targeted in an area by +5 for every raise of the opposing element + rank he rolls.

### *The Hands of Purity*

**Base TN:** 10

**Casting Time:** 2 actions

**Duration:** Permanent

**Concentration:** Casual

**Raises:** Amount healed

**Effect:** The Priest is capable of healing a target. The Priest accepts a part of the wounds into his body while purging them from the target. This is an exhaustive procedure for the Priest, as he is literally infusing his life force into the target while taking the damaged life-force into himself.

For each raise the Priest can increase the number of wound ranks he heals one a 1 for 1 basis. 1/3 of the wound ranks are accepted into the Priest (minimum of one). These wounds heal at the rate if one rank per 10 minutes. The Priest rolls Rank + Ka and can attempt to heal a target 2x his Rank per day.

Removal of Purity's Blessings

**Base TN:** 5

**Casting Time:** 1 Hour

**Duration:** See Below

**Concentration:** Total

**Raises:** Time Banished

**Effect:** Ritual: This power enables the Priest to drive off malign or harmful spirits. The Priest rolls his Rank + the Element of which the spirit is aligned. Jinn are considered to be associated

with Ka. The length of time the spirit remains banished is dependant on the number of raise that the Priest attempts to get.

0 raises 1 day

1 raise 1 week

2 raises 1 month

3 raises 1 year

4 raises 10 years

### *The Word of Truth*

**Base TN:** 10

**Casting Time:** 5 actions

**Duration:** 5 rounds

**Concentration:** Casual

**Raises:** None

**Effect:** The Priest is able to see through lies and illusions that muddle the mind. He rolls his Willpower + Shintao to resist.

## Rehtu

Rehtu calls forth the power of death, disease, and other insidious forces to do the bidding of the summoner. Rehtu mages are often known as necromancers, as they have many undead servants at their command.

Handle Rehtu like L5R Maho spells for now until a definite treatise is finished.

## Ashalan Sorcery

The Ashalan do not summon Jinn and harness their power. Nor do they call upon fate or the elements to do their bidding. No, the Ashalan are shapers and molders of a more pure source of power, that of Order and Chaos. Ashalan refer to themselves as sorcerers, not sahir or shugenja or fate witches. To call an Ashalan Sorcerer anything else is to lend insult to the Ashalan.

Manipulation of the fundamental forces allows an Ashalan Sorcerer access to great power, the power to destroy entire cities if they wished. Fortunately, the number of Ashalan Sorcerers is small and most are benign and peaceful people.

The full range and power of the Ashalan Sorcerer will be explained in the Book of Ka. Sorcerers are not meant to used a Player Characters unless the GM allows it.

## BOOK FIVE: *THE BOOK OF KA*

### Building your Campaign

#### Theme

##### *War*

The Burning Sands are rife with conflict. The Yodatai expansion into the territories of the native cultures. The Senpet silent invasion of the Sultanate. Even the insurgents of the Ivory Kingdoms Thuggee cults. While open warfare seems only to occur between Yodatai and Sultan/Senpet, raiders of the Moto and associated groups continually attack oasis and small towns.

##### *Quest*

The idea of the quest works well with the Burning Sands, as PCs travel on immense journeys to recover artefacts, save princesses and destroy evil. Think of the old Sinbad movies.

##### *Exploration*

The Burning Sands are full of old temples, lost cities, ancient tombs, and other lost and hidden treasures and artefacts of a bygone era.

##### *Mystery*

The everlasting sands have many secrets and not all of them are meant to be known by mortals. The Ashalan are one such secret and mystery. So are the Jinn and the Jackals.

##### *Romance*

All the old Sinbad movies had lovely young ladies falling in love with dashing young heroes. Doesn't take much to involve romance into a Burning Sands game, though imagine if the hero is an adventuring woman and the lover a homebound man.

##### *Tragedy*

The sands continue to consume all and the Senpet are greedily taking over the locales of the Sultanate. The world is full of tragedy.

#### Character Roles

##### *Solider*

Being a solider in the armies of the Burning Sands can be difficult. The armies are often ill fed and usually not well equipped. Most are consider not much more than cannon fodder for mass battles. Only officers and heroes survive and make name for themselves.

##### *Renegades/Adventurers*

This is the easiest type of PC to have. They are usually ready and willing to do anything to have fun.

##### *Courtiers*

These are the nobles that live within the structure of the various hierarchies of the cultures of the Burning Sands. From the priests and nobles of the Senpet to the merchant princes and their functionaries of the Sultanate, the courtiers are the voices of these powerful individuals.

##### *Ambassadors*

The Ambassadors are those few chosen to speak on behalf of one culture to another. PCs of this rank are often awarded great rewards if they do well, but are almost always executed when they fail. Ambassadors live a rather perilous lifestyle.

##### *Plot*

The plots of a LBS game are varied and myriad. From saving a young noble woman from the evil Dahab Merchant Princes, to hunting for the lost city of Brass to perhaps seeking the knowledge of the ancient Ashalan.

##### **Running LBS**

Running LBS is like running L5R. Keep an eye on all players and watch the story. The idea of LBS is make it a grand story like the old Sinbad movies were. Rent a few and watch them to get the idea.



## Important People

### Ashalan

#### *Althira*

Ashalan Priestess, Sahir

*"Lady Sun is not angry, she is insane. We must wake Lord Moon to restore the balance that was shattered so long ago."*

#### *Anbari Khalil*

Ashalan Champion, Council Leader

*Only three remain from the Council of Twelve, and even the Ishanti Crystal cannot foretell the fate of her dying people.*

#### *Bakira*

Ashalan Birth-Mother of Onaja, Renegade

*She cradled the precious bundle to her chest, hoping that her cowl would keep the deep blue lines pulsing within her cheeks from showing. - "They Collect Their Due," Part One*

#### *Dawn*

Ashalan Harbinger of Disaster, Sahir

*She stepped through the settling dust at the first light of day after the Awakening, carrying a message of ruin for the future.*

#### *Eyla the Protector*

Ashalan Blood-Sworn

*The Blood-Sworn. Ashalan holy warriors, have their blood spilled upon the same Ishanti crystal as every servant of the Council before them.*

#### *Hojyn*

Ashalan Explorer

*He chases the sun itself, hoping to find the doomed city of Laramun in its wake.*

#### *Katani*

Ashalan Daughter of Midnight, Sahir

*You have a choice: Leave with my water, or leave with your life.*

#### *Lamassar*

Ashalan Heart-Seeker

*He has collected three hearts in their ivory boxes, and there are three Khadi who cannot raise their hands against him.*

#### *Laqsha*

Ashalan Desert Guide, Hunter of the Qanon

*Her loyalties are not with her people, but out in the sands. She knows much about the wastes' lost ruins and oases, and though not very friendly, she asks only for water in return for her services.*

#### *Maymun*

Ashalan Sandsmith, Sahir

*"There is power in the sand left over from Lady Sun's wrath. I swear, my lady, I will find it."*

#### *Mendi-Duad*

Ashalan Priest, Sahir.

*"He stumbled across the wounded Senpet Sahir in a deserted part of the city, clutching a broken ivory case. He did not ask what had befallen the youth, or what was so precious about his burden, only carried him across the dunes, back to his people." -Keseth's Tale, Part Three*

#### *Mirali*

Ashalan Guard

*The sewers are yours, with all the filth and putrescence you have given it. But the lake below is ours, and I will bleed any man who thinks otherwise.*

#### *Samarhad*

Ashalan Sun-Rider

*He bought his horse from the Moto... two hundred years ago.*

#### *Sylmun*

Ashalan Birth-Father of Onaja, Renegade

*"Please, I can pay! My wife and I must leave the city at once! We cannot be here when the... when the sun sets!" -"They Collect Their Due," Part Two*

#### *Tarya*

Ashalan Half-Breed

*Her mother was the Council Leader of the Ashalan, and her father was a stranger from an unknown land. She's the only child born to the Ashalan in seven hundred years, and she may be the last.*

## Assassins

### **Chandra**

Assassin Bearer of the Black Star

*"When all you have is a hammer, everything starts looking like a nail." -The Forty-Seven Sayings of Mekhem*

### **Faida**

Assassin Keeper of the Seventh Gate

*Her first kill was her brother, a traitor to the Old man. She killed him in his bed, but she woke him up to savour his fear.*

### **Fatima**

Assassin First-Born.

*The Old Man trusted only his eldest daughter, to do the deed. "Strike at the heart of the serpent," he commanded, "and his fangs cannot strike you." She nodded and vanished away. -Fatima's Tale, Part One*

### **Haroun**

Assassin Master of the Blood Red Tiger.

*Not many of the Old Man's sons show the talent for The Calling, but they all bear the mark of the curse. Only Haroun seems untouched by the magic cast against his family so long ago.*

### **Marishka**

Assassin Midwife.

*"Hush, little one. They'll never miss you."*

### **Old Man of the Mountain**

Assassin Champion.

*An eternal curse deserves eternal revenge.*

### **Sabina**

Assassin Lady of the Seven Oaths.

*Her first love betrayed her to the Senpet. Although her body has healed from the wounds, her soul never will.*

### **Shala**

Assassin Second-Born.

*She looks at Fatima with a jealous eye, watching how her father favours her elder sister. She would pay any price to have that favour, even the price of blood.*

### **Takiyah**

Assassin Watcher of Omens. Sahir.

*Her name means pious, but her dark eyes could ruin a man's faith forever.*

### **Jamilah**

Assassin Silken Ghost

*"Spare me, spare me!" "Not even your weight in copper could buy my mercy." -Jamilah's Tale, Part One.*

### **Alhena**

Assassin Apprentice

*With Chandra's guidance and Fatima's support, Alhena should have been destined for greatness within the family, but her interests lay in less savoury arenas.*

### **Amber**

Rogue Assassin Confidant

*"I have known her since before we were given our Kris. There is no one I trust more." -Adira*

### **Haja the Twice-Born**

Cursed Assassin Master

*No one knows where he is or when he will strike, but his blade is felt often and never where one expects it.*

## Celestial Alliance

### **Ishrak ibn Kaleel**

Celestial Alliance, Shadow-Jinn

*He spent many centuries probing the far reaches of the Black Earth and the realms beyond the Stone for any sign that the Adversary had survived. He found little until the day he stopped looking.*

### **Lurza**

Celestial Alliance, Agent of the Quest, Champion

*Its name means "secret," and it has a thousand to share, all of them dark and deadly.*

### **Mohandis the Enchanter**

Celestial Alliance, Sahir

*"Each new creation is one less warrior upon the field of the coming war."*

### **Sedjem**

Celestial Alliance, Walking God

*The legends say that one word from him can sway an army, but he has not spoken in an age.*

### **Sehai the Healer**

Celestial Alliance, Sahir

*Within all this destruction the sight of one whose very hands can heal with but a touch is a miracle that the Sun has given us.*

## **Dahab & Qolat**

### **Al'a the Siege Master**

Dahab Tactician

*"All of his life he had been a lap-dog for the demented conspirators at Laramun, but no longer! The Erba's Alliance had given him the chance to strike back, and his first target would be their precious Merchant Quarter."*

### **Eda Ishan**

Dahab Merchant King, Qolat

*"Adopted' by the Tongue as a young child, she has never forgiven him for the deaths of her family."*

### **Hila**

Dahab Gorilla, Guardian-Pet of the Silver Tongue

*"The majesty of nature was not meant to be imprisoned. The longer it remains docile, the more ferocious it will be when release." -from The Forty-Seven Sayings of Mekhem*

### **Kasib al Atif**

Dahab Champion, Qolat Master

*"His many journeys beyond Laramun in the eastern mountains have never been questioned."*

### **Nedif Yamen**

Dahab

*"He has the ear of so many that it is said that one word from him can seal or break any negotiation."*

### **Rahmid**

Dahab Mercenary, Sahir

*"Willing to work for anyone who can pay his price, Rahmid knows who controls the flow of money and water in the City."*

### **Tareekh Farenkha**

Dahab Emissary of the Ten, Historian

*"Be still, Pretty, or you'll blur the ink." – Tareekh to a subject*

### **The Silver Tongue**

Houses of Dahab Master Manipulator, Merchant King, Sahir

*"What's your pleasure, my lady?" the fiendish merchant king invited. His words were unsettling, but the poisoned corpse between them was worse. –"Jamilah's Tale," Part Two*

### **Wagi al Musakin**

Houses of Dahab Deformed Enforcer

*"What do you want, freak?" the trader scowled.*

*"The Tongue wants his dinari, thief, or shall I collect it in flesh?"*

## **Ebonite**

### **Ashalla**

Ebonite Sorceress, Sahir

*In every man, there is a monster. Draw it out, and it may be expunged.*

### **Balance**

Ebonite Judge

*All things must be judged, be it for good or evil.*

### **Enigma**

Ebonite

*To destroy the enemy, we must understand him. To do that, we must become him.*

### **Jubal the Knife**

Ebonite

*His ferocity will make an excellent addition to our growing forces. His temper will ensure that he is never judged by the Stone.*

### **Judgement**

Ebonite Crusader, Champion

*The Ebonite Champion is said to have been in every battle the Ebonites have taken part in over the last 200 years.*

**Kabdar Fassal**

Ebonite Defender of the Faithful. Templar.

*They say they worship the Sun, but their palms are stained black as the darkest night, the gift of the Stone they guard.*

**Kalib al Asim**

Ebonite Wolf-Master

*There is always the chance that we can lose control, that the primal natures within us can consume our humanity. Kalib is one who flirts with the beast within.*

**Manala Shessim**

Ebonite Guardian of the Seven Keys

*Even his most trusted advisors cannot understand why the Sultan retains an Ebonite to guard the Nine Rooms of Golden Wonder.*

**Pashal**

Ebonite Squire

*"What is this? It is the Awakening. It is the future." -Judgement*

**Rabah al Gazi**

Ebonite Nervous Runaway ,Proselyte

*The boy will not speak of his life before joining the Order of the Ebonites, and the Council has chosen not to allow him the Test of the Stone until he does. "His fears are his impurity," they say, "and we would only lose him, this early."*

**Templar Master of Stars**

Ebonite, Sahir

*Nepherus once trained her in the cycles of Ra, but now she has found a new purpose...*

**The Twins Janan**

Ebonite

*"Beg us both for mercy and see which one gives it."*

**Truth**

Ebonite Idiot-Savant, Principal, Sahir

*The victim of a miscast spell, this blind man is without temperament devoid of emotion - the perfect candidate for the Principal of Truth.*

**Vengeance**

Ebonite Caretaker of the Shard or the Ancients, Principal

*"Vengeance is the purity of purpose with remorse." -from The Forty-Seven Sayings of Mekhem*

**Yodajin Templar**

Ebonite

*He shares his people's fury, but not their prejudice.*

## Ivory Kingdoms

**Giya**

Ivory Kingdoms Deranged Killer, Ruhmal Leader

*"Giya led us here from our homeland. He tells us that Kali-Ma demanded it, but some of us wonder." -Kacha*

**Kali-Ma**

Ivory Kingdoms Champion, Ruhmal Goddess

*"She is death incarnate, a walking vessel of corruption and destruction."*

**Kumpal**

Ivory Kingdoms Caravan Escort

*"He patrols the Ivory Market from a unique vantage point, and the stalls tremble as he passes."*

**Kyurhi the Wanderer**

Ivory Kingdoms Jakla Spiritualist, Sahir

*"The past footsteps of his fellows and their prey coursed through his arms, and his heart kept time with each in turn as he scanned the horizon. "I must get to them," his frenzied mind pressed, "before it is too late."*

**Omal**

Ivory Kingdoms, Ruhmal Cultist, Vassal to Kali-Ma

*"When they found him in the jungle, he had just killed a gorilla. Nothing much has changed."*

**Punjat**

Ivory Kingdoms Ruhmal Initiate

*"Punjat has yet to rise beyond the rank of Shumsee within the Kali-Ma cult, and therefore*



*must distract the cult's victims or hold them down when the killing starts. Even after so many victims, it never gets any easier."*

**Raniyah**

Ivory Kingdoms Hunter of Rakshasa

*"She has destroyed all but five of them, four of which reside here in the heart of the Jewel."*

**Sarna**

Ivory kingdoms progeny of the destroyer, Sahir

*"Yuna was there when Sarna was born, and only he saw for a fleeting moment the horrible visage of the being that sired her."*

**Yuna**

Ivory Kingdoms Deific Vessel

*"For every village to which he travels, another scar is drawn across his face and arms. The wounds do not heal until he embraces the locals' god."*

**Jackal**

**Afshan Jarr**

*"Trust me," the dirty little man said. "Thirty copper pieces is a fair price."*

**Asadhel Jumah**

Jackal Thief

*The only soul he cannot steal is the one he desires most.*

**Chandra**

Jackal, Assassin

*"When you cannot seduce your enemy, seduce the one he loves." from The Forty-Seven Sayings of Mekhem*

**Enala**

Jackal Champion

*He can control the dead like a sorcerer of legend, feeding off them to power his own dark desires.*

**Jangir**

Jackal, Moto, Shugenja, Sahir

*"We know of your prophecy, and now we know how to prevent it." -Monkey Man*

**Kalesha Sesh**

*She has a thousand faces for a thousand friends.*

**Monkey Man**

*I can give you the secrets you seek, but you must trade first.*

**Ramontet**

Jackal, Senpet Strategist

*"Thank you for the advice, Hekau. Soon, we shall have both hands." -Enala*

**Seff Seven-Fingers**

*Seff is very much like his old friend, Janann. They both love adventure, wine, and women. Many scandalous affairs began as a result of their competitive nature - until Seff took a liking to the Caliph. Now the Caliph has four trophies of their time together.*

**Sibirah**

*"No one pays attention to the Khesir. They are pitiless, wretched, lost souls. We have given them a home and a purpose." -Wardah the Urchin Mistress*

**The Ma'ghul**

Jackal Ally, Ambassador from Jigoku

*A spirit from beyond the southern mountains, it feeds on the strengths of others, gaining power and skill.*

**Wardah the Urchin-Mistress**

Gypsy Jackal

*"Every lost soul has a story to tell. I simply wait for them to come to me and collect them."*

**Yaminah**

*She would just as soon capture a man's heart as his soul. She is the worst kind of villain - beautiful, exotic, and completely aware of her charms.*

**Khadi**

**Ghiyath**

Khadi Sculptor of Hearts, Sahir

*It is not always easy to find someone willing to join our ranks, but once Ghiyath has properly tutored them, they are glad to do anything he wishes.*

**Indira**

Khadi Mistress of Pain, Sahir

*"The senpet who escaped us will be mine, my Caliph. I will hunt him, and I will find him, and I will break his heart in two."*

**San'a**

Khadi Mistress of Mercy, Sahir

*"She is too young to understand the consequences of her actions," Giyath protested. "So much the better," the Caliph snarled.*

**Tasir**

Khadi Silencer, Sahir

*"You cannot ignore me. You cannot defeat me. You can only pray for mercy that I will not give."*

**The Caliph**

Sahir, Khadi

*She sees the same fire in Hensatti's eyes that she once saw in the Sultan's. She captured that fire once; she can do it again.*

**Moto**

**Argoun**

Moto Clan Youth.

*The maps he sells tell the caravans how to avoid the desert's dangers, but not its predators.*

**Gaheris**

Moto Clan Khan

*"From the East comes the tiger-men. From the West, those who worship Death. I hunt tigers for my dinner, and I'll help the Senpet on the way to their god."*

**Jangir**

Moto Clan Shujenga, Sahir

*"I know nothing of jinn or demons. My way is the way of my ancestors, taught to me by father. The dance of the elements is my way."*

**Kara**

Moto Clan Huntress.

*The Senpet were returning from their victory over the scorpion when the Moto descended upon them. But a sudden sandstorm swept up around them, and the will of the Lady washed them away into the sand. -Kara's Tale, Part One*

**Khaidu**

Moto Clan Trader

*The Khan's brother knows that Gaheris must do something soon, or the whispers will turn into knives.*

**Khitai**

Moto Clan Dunerunner

*"She is the best archer in our tribe, her skill rivalled only by the lovely Senpet who guards the winter caravan." -Yesugai*

**Kiyoshi**

Moto Clan Tar-khan.

*"In his blood lies the fury of the berserker, a gift from his ancestors." -Gaheris*

**Malakai**

Moto Askaree, Royal Informant

*In his position as a Caliphate guard, he has heard many cruel words and seen many violent deaths. He is always willing to part with them for just a few dinari.*

**Moto Marik**

Moto Raid Master

*The dust clouds parted to reveal two figures. One of them was Marik. The other... -Kara's Tale, Part Five*

**Sha-gir**

Moto Clan Master Horseman, Spy

*Under cover of darkness, Sha-gir rode from post to post collecting every detail about the troops around Medinaat al Salaam. Kiyoshi would be pleased at the results.*

**Shu-kai**

Moto Scout

*His father lost his hand to one of those heartless mages. Now, he has to fend for his family any way he can.*

**Yesugai**

Moto Clan Guide

*"His eyes light up like stars whenever she arrives with the winter caravan and he looks like a weepy little girl. It's disgraceful." -Khitai*

## Qabal

### **Adil**

Qabal Earthshaker

"He knows little of sorcery, but what he does know serves us well." -Tabari

### **Amru**

Qabal Avatar & Sahir

"We must keep her safe, brothers, for the Caliph hungers for what slumbers inside her soul."

### **Badr al Din**

Qabal Renegade, Spellcrafter, Sahir \*

He waited a long moment before calling the others, relishing the sight of the Khadi's face as it contorted into a pallid mask of fear.

"No more," he murmured into the terrified sahir's face. "No more."

### **Barda the Hawk**

Qabal Sky Shepherd, Sahir

"Carpets are for the cowardly. How can you call it flying when there is fabric beneath your feet?"

### **Beda al Sin**

Qabal Enlightened One, Hunter

Not all sahir are prepared for the experience of summoning the desert spirits of smokeless fire. Some become unhinged or worse, and many even take on the most ferocious aspects of their servants.

### **Dawuud**

Qabal Librarian, Sahir

"They took our knowledge with a shining light, so we shall take it back with a shuddering darkness." -Adil

### **Hekau**

Sahir, Duelist, Qabal Champion

"He is playing a dangerous game. If his Pharaoh should discover his treachery, it will mean the end of his plots and schemes, no matter how noble or just they are."

### **Kurrat al-Ayn**

Ice Sorceress, Sahir

"The merchants think she is cursed. If she were not a master of ice magic, she would be exiled with certainty."

### **Labib al Hatim**

Sahir

"More have learned our secret. How much death will the Star demand?"

### **Nizam**

Sahir, Qabal Third Apprentice

"He has promise, but what is a man's promise worth?" -Kurrat al-Ayn

### **Qamus**

Qabal tavern-master, Sahir

"We offer the finest in wine, women, and ... discretion."

### **Raghib**

Qabal Reaver, Sahir

He scours the prisons buried deep beneath the city, seeking to destroy the hapless ghuls of those left behind.

### **Tabari**

Qabal Shadowmaster, Sahir

"Do not mistake allegiance for friendship. The only reason he stands with us is to stand beside his half-brother, Dawuud." -Zinaida

### **Zenaida**

Qabal Bane of Jinn, Sahir

"His voice is like death to the Jinn he meets and challenges."

## Ra'Shari

### **Amahla**

Ra'Shari Bone-Reader of the Fourth Chronicle

"The bones are fickle. Perhaps another throw?"

### **Baqiri**

Ra'Shari Thief of the Eighteenth Chronicle, Sahir

"Melinda did not foresee this!"

### **Fazil**

Acrobat, Steward of the Coming Age

"I have remained to watch, and listen, and perhaps help those who have been left behind."

**Ferran**

Dancer of the first chronicle of the flame

*"You may read the ashes, Melinda. I shall read the flames."*

**Melinda**

Dancer of the first chronicle of the flame

*"If one reads both the flames and the ashes, a more complete story can be told."*

**Raya**

Resurrected Caretaker, Seer of the Second Chronicle

*"Death has taught me many things, chief among them that we must all strive for greatness-though not always our own."*

**Samand the Quick**

Dancer of the Tenth Chronicle

*"No, Mistress Caliph. He was not attacked. The wounds simply appeared. It was most... impressive." -Indira*

**Shagala the Damned**

Accuser of the First Chronicle \* Sahir

*She gained all of her mother's power and none of her father's control.*

**Shalimar**

Dancer.

*"We know so little of her people, only what she has told us. And if we believe everything she says, we would believe they are gods." -In'am, Regent of the River Valley*

**The Grey Woman**

Grandmother, Sahir

*"I tell fortunes for those who are ready to hear them. It is not always wise to know your own destiny. Are you ready?"*

**The Living Memory**

Ra-Shari Champion \* Keeper of the Great Chronicle

*He remembers a time where all was right in the world. He remembers a time when all is nothing. He remembers it all as if he were there.*

**Senpet**

**Abresax**

Unique. Senpet Fist of the Pharaoh

*He does not see Hensetti as a woman. She is the Pharaoh, the child of the Ten thousand, and Light of the Senpet. He may not agree with her, but he would die at her command.*

**Asori**

Senpet Courtesan

*Abresax thinks little of his new "acquisition," but Asori looks at the glare in the woman's eyes and knows better.*

**Atep**

Senpet Sergeant

*"Get up" he shouted. "I haven't given you permission to die!"*

**Bekhten**

Senpet Shield of the Empire

*"Each drop of his blood exists to serve his Pharaoh. It will be a pity to see such loyalty spilled on dry desert sand." -Takiyah*

**Hensatti**

Senpet Pharaoh. Champion.

*Her Empire is crumbling, so she has found another to rule.*

**Jaqhabet**

Senpet Falconer, Foreign Insurgent

*The tacticians at the Senpet capital were confused by the bold Yodatai scouting mission, given their recent experience overwhelming them in the western mountains. But when Jaqhabet's latest reports arrived with his war-bird, Ani, they realized the terrible truth.*

**Kepsat**

Senpet brother of the black shield

*"I know now what happened to me when I was taken on that fateful day so many years ago. I know what the Qanon did when they took me to the City of Orphans, and I know what I must do for them in return. Farewell, my dear friend." -Hekau*

**Keseth**

Senpet Seer. Sahir. Khadi

*His skill with sorcery captured Ghiyath's attention. It was a matter of child's play to capture the youth, but keeping him was not as simple as the Master thought it would be. - Keseth's Tale, Part One*

### **Kosus of Byrnia**

Senpet Obsessed Slave Master, Tracker

*"It is said that he once recovered an escaped slave after the fool ran into a sandstorm," Atepet said. "I heard the slave was on a carpet at the time," returned Kepsat.*

### **Nekhebet**

Senpet Explorer

*Her extensive journey's have brought her many fabulous artifacts, including that strange ivory bow...*

### **Nepherus**

Senpet Astrologer. Sahir

*He fears the return of Selqet signals the beginning of dark times, and he watches the stars for an omen of the future.*

### **Nepherus**

Senpet Ambassador to Medinaat al Salaam, Sahir

*After the Tyrant's fall, Nepherus kept the accursed Book of the Dead close to him. Never again was it opened, nor the terrible secrets within misused.*

### **Qer Apet**

Senpet Brother of the Black Shield

*"Those who voluntarily put themselves under the heel of a tyrant get exactly what they deserve." - The Forty-Seven Sayings of Mekhem*

### **Ramontet**

Senpet Strategist.

*"Hensatti knows nothing of warfare and tactics, but Ramontet does. Remove Ramontet, and you remove the Pharaoh's left hand." -Hekau*

## **Unaligned**

### **Abd al-Zhayn**

Wanderer

*I have traveled the world, and I have seen more than you could ever imagine. I have seen men*

*with the heads of tigers, corpses wearing porcelain masks and women whose arms were great rainbow coloured wings. The one thing I don't know is where I'll be tomorrow.*

### **Adira**

Unaligned Adopted Daughter of the Mountain

*"She carries the weight of the Old Man's burden in her heart and fights with a prodigal skill all her own."*

### **Adnan**

Tomb Raider

*"And how many marvels have you seen in your days, my boy?" "At least a thousand, my lady." He smiled, and the Caliph laughed.*

### **al-Hazaad**

Sahir

*al-Hazaad, the Twice-Exalted, has returned from Rokugan with foreign magic, but he has not returned alone.*

### **Bayushi Tangen**

Scorpion Clan Martyr

*"These foreigners reek of disaster and sin."*

### **Bonepicker**

Undead Ghul

*"What do you do with the bodies of your dead?" asked the Scorpion of his captor. "We bury them under the city and leave them to dream of the stories they will never see."*

### **Dairya, The Eye of Night**

Ronin.

*They came across the mountains on a carpet of flame and wind. The stranger at al-Hazaad's side speaks little, and his language is strange, but he has a deadly purpose in his one good eye.*

### **Dena**

Thief

*She doesn't know what it is, but the cats certainly seem interested in it.*

### **Dharr**

Unaligned Fated Orphan

*Dharr wouldn't understand why the cats loved him so, not for many moonless nights. Yet they were in his earliest memories and with him ever*

since. They are a rare source of happiness in an insane world.

**Effendi**

Unaligned Vindictive Son of the Sultan

"Apart from his family, he will be one to take the throne if all moves right and Fate smiles."

**Emiral**

Unaligned Researcher, Sahir, Khadi

"Though his heart sits in box, he walks free."

**Eyeslicer**

Undead Ghul

Even the Assassins know better than to use the sewers.

**Felah Hassan**

Sahir

It is not certain if he was mad before he bit Tashima, but his words have grown wild and mysterious all at once.

**Gash**

Unaligned Ghul

When they are still fresh, they often try to make their way home.

**Gullet**

Undead Ghul

"Mine? Miiiiine..."

**Haythum Za'nul**

Unaligned

He hunts Janan for copper and glory. His collection of priceless treasures will be complete with the head of Janan and the hand of Julianna. -The Tale of the Last Pirate, Part One

**Hitomi Tashima**

Dragon Tattooed Man

"The inkings of his body come alive with a power beyond belief."

**Janan Barakah**

Sand Pirate Captain.

Your horses are fast, my friend, but nothing is faster than the wind.

**Julianna Barakah**

Sand Pirate Wind-Bound, Sahir

Sister of the "Sultan of the Sands," her mystical skills have aided Janan's escapades - and escapes - for years.

**Marayid**

Unaligned Undead Khadi Traitor,

"Like Abdul-Malik before me, I have the weight of dreams, but I have not the strength to follow."

**Matishiya**

Sahir

"I am a free sahir, but I am not Qabal. Summoning jinn is dangerous business, far more so than anyone yet realizes..."

**Matsu Gohei**

Lion Clan Butcher, Samurai, Tactician

Commanded by his Clan to take the Scorpions from the Emerald Empire, Gohei has to trade his skills for a single drink of water. Alone and without allies, his only goal now is to find a way home.

**Nefir**

Unaligned Swordsman

Nefir stumbles through an endless dreamscape, no longer sure what is real and what is imaginary. Armies of silver and white follow, and a laughing man tempts him ever further into madness.

**Puja the Believer**

Unaligned

His smiled faded quickly when he saw the Ruhmal gathered around him. - "Puja's Tale," Part Two

**Qashima**

Unaligned Nagah Abomination , Outcast Warlord

"Within this blasted land lies the secret to eternal redemption."

**R'adjir, the Thunderfoot**

Giant

"Me like horses. Tasty..."

**Rahjid**

Rakshasa Ambassador

*The silent figure stands in the Sultan's court, never speaking a word. But as they argue, he watches... and plans.*

**Ratib al' Ideem**

Unaligned Independent Supplier, Street Merchant

*"Desire is a dangerous quality, and more so when fulfilled, but I am prepared if you are. Shall we begin?"*

**Rohshem**

Unaligned Rakshasa

*"We have remained hidden from man for centuries. Some of us hide in plain sight; others, beyond the veil of darkness." -Rahjid*

**Ropp'Cht'Cht**

Unaligned Ratling Traveler

*"So many baubles, so little time."*

**Shosuro Hametsu**

Scorpion Clan Poison Master

*Upon his arrival he immediately started gathering new plants and herbs, knowing that here were new poison to know.*

**Shosuro Tage**

Unaligned Scorpion Clan Infiltrator

*Rescued from death at the Senpet's hands, Tage wonders why everyone in the foreign camp is so interested in her - especially the small elder shugenja with the strange mark on his neck.*

**Soraph**

Unaligned Escaped Slave, Hanif Idol

*The Senpet thought they were finally rid of the accursed slave-icon when they arranged his escape, but it seemed his influence only grew thereafter. -"The Tale of Soraph the Free Man," Part Two*

**The Ferryman**

Unaligned

*"Welcome aboard. Which district, please?"*

**The Wounded Man**

Unaligned Former Prisoner

*His former masters believe that he has achieved a state of physical purity through torture. Now he has escaped into the streets.*

**Yodatai**

**Adrianna**

Yodatai Strategist

*"The city's most significant weakness is the river. To approach from any other angle would be foolish."*

**Aurelian**

Yodatai Champion, Incarnation of Octavius

*"I walk with the gods over the broken bodies of those you fear."*

**Avitus**

Yodatai Diseased Alchemist, Spy

*He walks bent and crippled, yet his eyes are more perceptive and keen than ever.*

**Balak the Hanif**

Yodatai Prisoner

*Imprisoned, branded, beaten, and forgotten, Rawif has little love for the Jewel of the Desert, the Senpet who imprisoned him there, or any within its walls. He will follow the Eleventh Tribe on their quest, regardless of the wishes of his brother, Soraph.*

**Galerius**

Yodatai Inquisitor, Sahir

*His birth name was Phresex, but that was the first of many changes the Yodatai made.*

**Galon Trillius**

Yodatai Amateur Inventor, Scout

*He helped to build the hand-bow himself, though he is far more accurate with it than it is reliable.*

**Katarine of the Sheel**

Yodatai Centurion Lieutenant

*"Are you confident that this is the best tactic, my lord? Meeting the raiders with an army?"*

**Octavius**

Yodatai Spectral Martyr

*He was the first to set foot on this continent, and he led the Yodatai into victory against countless empires. Sometimes, when the conquest is*

worthy, he can be seen fighting alongside his descendants as well.

### **Phyrrus**

Yodatai Centurion, Siege-Master

*"The first step toward conquest is a foothold. These riders called Moto have provided us with an unexpected opportunity that we cannot neglect."*

### **Valeria**

Yodatai Daughter of Aurelian, Patrician

*Her father left a long trail of shattered lives-and broken bodies-behind them, a hundred victims of her fertile beauty.*

### **Vespa**

Yodatai Bride of Phyrrus, Patrician

*"How is it possible for such a beautiful land to be so utterly barbaric?"*

## Enchanted Items

The Burning Sands are full of strange artefacts.

### Crysteel

Crysteel is a magical near transparent metal-like material forged from the sand itself by the Ashalan. Weapons of Crysteel are unbreakable and the only weapon capable of wounding a Jinn. Crysteel weapons come in many shapes and sizes, though the most common is that of a sword.

Some known Crysteel weapons are:

- **Bedayah** - A Crysteel weapon was created to destroy undead.
- **Nehayah** - A Crysteel weapon has one purpose. Destruction of Jinn.

### First Era Artefacts

Many weapons, artefacts and strange devices were built during the Golden First Age. Lanterns which glow forever, animals made of metal that fly and walk like the real thing, swords that fight on their own and carpets that fly.

Some known artefacts are :

- **The Fallen Star** - An ancient piece of a star that fell from heaven. It is said it now heralds the death of the world.

- **The Steed of the Goddess** - A magnificent horse made of brass that can fly. It is owned by the champion of the Moto Raiders.

## Current Items

Many items have been created since the Day of Wrath. Most are imitations of the items found from that era, but some are impressive and deadly.

Some known items are:

- **Shard of the Ancients** - A piece of the actual Ebon Stone, it will destroy undead with but a touch.
- **The Tear of Heaven** - A Senpet artefact that can instantly bring a man back from the edge of death through the sacrifice of another.
- **Qalirag's Mystical Lute** - It is said that the music of this lute can seduce even the coldest heart.

## Avatars and Prophets

### The Avatars

The Avatars the earthly incarnations of the Shilah upon earth. They are there to help stop the coming darkness and end that has been prophesized.

The known Avatars are Amru, a sahir of the Qabal, The Twins Janan, twin Ebonites who are not corrupted by the Ebon Stone and Kara, a Moto Ashalan.

### The Prophets

#### *Mekhem, the 2nd Prophet*

He was ousted from his native lands and journey here. He sealed the evil of Legion and his servants within an Ebon Stone. He then sacrificed his spirit into the Stone to act as guardian.

He has sat in spiritual form within the stone for hundreds of years watching each initiate as they are tested with the stone. He tries to reach each one in order help them but too many are taken by the evil within the stone. He has saved a few, giving them purpose and a holy mission. Destroy the corrupted souls.



## Creatures

They are many strange creatures in the Burning Sands.

### *Giants*

The giants are massive solitary creatures that ply the deep desert. They kill and eat anything that they can catch. Rumour says that once the giants walked the land as brothers to man, but now they are agents of evil.

### *Gryphons*

With the head of an eagle and the hindquarters of a lion the Gryphon are hunters of excellent skill. They come from the deep deserts near the mountains and are reputed to have much treasure.

### *Roc*

Legends speak of the Roc, a massive bird that can carry off elephants in its claws. A bird that makes its nest out of pure gold and gems. The Roc is now legend and exists in small numbers. Once in a while, each year, a Roc is sighted preying upon livestock. Rumours that the great birds have riders is merely tall tales...maybe.

### *Salamanders*

Massive snake like creatures that roam the deserts in packs, they are ancient descendants of the Naga.

