

Bekah's Book of Backgrounds

For use with the Wheel of Time Roleplaying Game.
Compiled and Converted By Bekah the Sa'sara

The Westlands

Caralain Grass and Black Hills

(By Bekah the Sa'sara)

Though most of these lands are completely abandoned since nations stopped laying claim to them, some few people still live in the Caralain Grass and Black Hills.

Personality: Most of the people who inhabit these lands are farmers too stubborn and self-sufficient to give up and move on, outlaws or exiles in hiding, or woodsmen and hermits setting themselves apart from the world. They are subject to no governments and live by no laws but those they make for themselves.

Physical Description: These people are varied in appearance, perhaps unusual in appearance because some are remnants of populations absorbed by larger groups long ago. They may appear to be normal citizens of any nation, however, only different at heart. For the most part, however, they resemble Borderlanders -- most being dark haired, though certainly not all, light skinned, and having widely varied eye color.

Relations: These people have no common front and no structured relations with outsiders. Everything is up to the individual. It's every man for himself. Those from nations within the Westlands would likely feel superior to someone from one of these unclaimed lands and assume that such a person was uncultured, uneducated, and unversed in the ways of the world.

Adventurers: The people of the Caralain Grass and the Black Hills rarely become adventurers. The few that do choose the path of the adventurer often lean toward the Woodsman and Wanderer classes.

Bonus Skills: Handle Animal, Hide, Move Silently, Wilderness Lore.

Background Feats: Exiled, Luck of Heroes, Bullheaded, Survivor.

Home Language: Common (Tar Valon).

Bonus Languages: Common (Borderlands), Common (Midlands), Common (Cairhein), Common (Tinker).

Equipment:

Disguise kit, explorer's outfit, dagger x2.

Hafted axe, studded leather armor.

Heavy horse, bit and bridle, riding saddle, saddlebags.

Far Madding

(By Bekah the Sa'sara)

Far Madding is all that remains of a nation that has fallen. The city itself is a bustling center of trade and possibly the safest city in the Westlands for it. A great ter'angreal cuts off access of channelers to the True Source before they even enter the city and detects their attempts to touch it once inside the city. At the gates visitors are made to register and their swords are sealed with the "peace bond" (made of wax, wires, and lead which must be visibly broken to remove the weapon) or left there for keeping if the traveler intends to leave by the same gate they came in. The penalty for a broken peace bond as for many other things is flogging or fines.

Personality: Society is dominated by women. Men are expected to obey their wives or lovers and women carry out most trade and governing.

Physical Description: The people of Far Madding are largely tall with dark eyes. Both men and women wear their hair long. Women prefer to pull their hair up on top of their heads and decorate it with silver and gold ornaments while men prefer simply to pull it back from their faces with clips and pins.

Relations: Far Madding is a great center of trade in the Westlands. Though most nations do not find it necessary to court the favor of the city state, their merchants are welcome within its gates.

One exception to this is its relations with the White Tower. Though the Council in Far Madding treats Aes Sedai civilly they and even their common people see no reason to be courteous or helpful to Aes Sedai within the rage of the ter'angreal which (as far as they can see) protects their city and people from influence of the One Power.

Adventurers: The people of Far Madding rarely become adventurers. The few that do choose the path of

the adventurer often lean toward the Wanderer class.

Bonus Skills: Appraise, Craft (any), Diplomacy, Sense Motive.

Background Feats: Mercantile Background, Smooth Talk, Wealth, Bullheaded.

Home Language: Common (Midlands).

Bonus Languages: Common (Tear), Common (Illian), Common (Cairhein), Common (Ebou Dar).

Equipment:

Jewelry (80 mks)

Light horse, healer's kit

Masterwork Artisan's tools

Haddon Mirk

(By Bekah the Sa'sara)

This Southern land is claimed by no nation but lies North of Tear and is considered to be of ill repute.

Personality: Most of these people are hermits, rogues, or those living in exile. The woods of Haddon Mirk provide a haven for all of these sorts. They are subject to no governments and live by no laws but those they make for themselves.

Physical Description: These people are varied in appearance, but for the most part they resemble Tairens - most being dark haired and tan skinned. Eye color varies.

Relations: These people have no common front and no structured relations with outsiders. Everything is up to the individual. It's every man for himself. Those from nations within the Westlands would likely feel superior to someone from Haddon Mirk and assume that such a person was uncultured, uneducated, and unversed in the ways of the world.

Adventurers: The people of the Haddon Mirk are adventurers practically by nature and can be of any class, though they favor the Woodsman and Wanderer classes.

Bonus Skills: Hide, Move Silently, Sense Motive, Wilderness Lore.

Background Feats: Exiled, Luck of Heroes, Bullheaded, Stealthy.

Home Language: Common (Tairen).

Bonus Languages: Common (Illian), Common (Midlands), Common (Cairhein), Common (Tinker).

Equipment:

Masterwork Thieve's tools.

Short sword, trail rations (20 days), waterskin.

Longbow, 20 arrows, hooded lantern.

35 mks and dice.

Mayene

(By Bekah the Sa'sara)

Mayene lies south of the Drowned lands, a swampy jungle filled with venomous snakes, large rodents, and other unusual and dangerous beasts.

Personality: Their proud heritage as a safe haven relatively untouched by the wars that raged from time to time in the Westlands gives Mayeners great pride as a people. They are wary of Tairens and high ranking nobles (especially the First) are well trained in Daes Dae'mar and self-defense.

Physical Description: They are fair skinned, and of normal height with dark straight hair. Eye color may vary.

Relations: This city state has been claimed by Tear, though not rightfully. It controls oilfish shoals which Tairens covet and Tear has made many attempts to invade or annex Mayene, all ending unsuccessfully. Otherwise trade relations keep Mayene on good terms with most of the Westlands. Mayene is ruled by a Lord or Lady known as the First of Mayene who is always (if truly a legitimate First) a descendant of the original First of Mayene -- a man who claimed to be the grandson of Artur Hawkwing.

Adventurers: Mayeners often become adventurers. They favor the Armsman class as the Winged Guards that are the proud defenders of Mayene but often enough take the other paths presented to them and have no class restrictions.

Bonus Skills: Diplomacy, Escape Artist, Listen, Sense Motive.

Background Feats: Mercantile Background, Negotiator, Living History, Seductive.

Home Language: Common (Tear).

Bonus Languages: Common (Illian), Common (Cairhein), Common (Midlands), Common (Atha'an Miere).

Equipment:

Courtier's Outfit, dagger x2.
 Masterwork Artisan's Tools.
 Chainmail.

The Rest of The World

Amayar**(By Bekah the Sa'sara)**

These obscure and pacifistic folk inhabit the Isles of the Sea Folk as they have done since the Breaking of the World and craft the famed "seafolk" porcelain and glass (they make splendid lenses) as well as other finely crafted goods. They are also skilled farmers and herdsman who cultivate crops and raise pygmy livestock. They are observers of a philosophy called "The Water Way" which is pacifistic code of conduct and closely resembles the Way of the Leaf followed by the Tinkers of the mainland. These people have a great dislike of water and travel by sea and for this reason live overwhelmingly in the interior of the islands.

Though they long ago willingly handed over the rule of their island homes to the Atha'an Miere for reasons no one but they themselves knows, they do not resent their governors and live happily in this arrangement. The Sea Folk governors dislike going inland to the Amayar settlements and the Amayar largely do not wish to go to the sea and in this way the Amayar govern themselves most of the time.

Some few brave souls become fishermen and sail off of the coastlines, but most prefer to avoid travel by sea, the only mode available to them. If one ever wanted, they would gladly be granted free passage by any Atha'an Miere they asked and their request could not be refused.

Personality: They are an isolated people, known only to the Atha'an Miere for the most part who keep to themselves and follow The Water Way. They are notably afraid of the sea and prefer to stay far inland. They are generally a friendly people and are accepting of the Atha'an Miere even though they find their customs and culture strange and sometimes offensive.

Physical Description: They are fair skinned, with blond to light brown hair and eyes ranging from blue to green to hazel. They are of comparable height to Cairheinins.

Relations: They have good trade relations with the Seafolk who at least in name rule their islands and the Atha'an Miere cannot refuse them free passage on one of their ships, should an Amayar choose to ask. Though the Atha'an Miere claim the islands, the Amayar have special individuals called "Guides" among them who seem to see it differently and consider themselves the guardians of the Atha'an Miere.

Adventurers: Amayar rarely become adventurers. The few that do choose the path of the adventurer often lean toward the Wanderer class.

Bonus Skills: Appraise, Craft (any except weaponsmithing or bowyer), Diplomacy, Handle Animal.

Background Feats: Artist, Mercantile Background, Strong Soul, Living History. (Optional BG Feat: Exiled)

Home Language: Common (Amayar).

Bonus Languages: Common (Atha'an Miere), Old Tongue.

The Water Way: Amayar follow this pacifistic way of life, and trade with the Atha'an Miere. The Atha'an Miere honor the Amayar way of life and industry with the gift of free and unquestioning passage when asked. Amayar gain no weapon proficiencies from their class. All Amayar are proficient with nets, an exotic weapon.

Should an Amayar take up arms against another human being and do them harm they may no longer return home, the Atha'an Miere will not honor requests of passage to the Seafolk Islands from a dishonored Amayar and other passages on Atha'an Miere vessels will require not only convincing the Sailmistress of the vessel to take them on but ample payment for the service. The Water Way does not ban a character from going on the defensive (using Dodge, Two Weapon Defense, running etc.) however.

Equipment:

Hourglass, Healer's Balm x2.
 Jewelry (60MK).
 Musical instrument, Masterwork.
 Masterwork Artisan's Tools.

Kaensada

(By Bekah the Sa'sara)

These tribesmen live in the mountains and hills of the Seanchan continent, a remnant of the chaotic days before Luthair Pendrag in the otherwise structured and orderly lands. These tribes have kept their way of life unchanged since times before the Empire.

Personality: Though most Seanchan consider the Kaensada tribesmen to be "half civilized" at best, they are fierce folk who have structured codes of honor and who have adapted to a harsh way of life. Though their personalities will never win them many friends, they are loyal to those they do have.

Physical Description: They are light to mid toned in complexion, each wearing a long braid of fair hair which can be taken as a trophy at the time of death if one should die in one of the numerous feuds between tribes.

Relations: Kaensada rarely associate with people not members of their own tribe and often go to war with other Kaensada tribes. The Seanchan of the Empire look down on all Kaensada, thinking them barbaric and regarding them as an annoying remnant of a way of life before the founding of the Empire. They are considered by these as little better than animals. Occasionally, however, they do venture out of the mountains and sometimes enter the service of the Seanchan. A rare few have even been brought to the Westlands as servants by the Seanchan invasion fleets.

Adventurers: Kaensada rarely become adventurers. The few that do choose the path of the adventurer often lean toward the Woodsman Class or the Wanderer class.

Bonus Skills: Escape Artist, Intimidate, Sense Motive, Wilderness Lore.

Background Feats: Survivor, Light Sleeper, Stealthy, Blooded.

Home Language: Common (Kaensada).

Bonus Languages: Common (Seanchan), Common (Tribe Dialect), Ogier (Seanchan), Old Tongue.

Equipment:

Silver vessels (30 mks), healer's kit.

Dagger, waterskin, leather armor.

Land of Madmen

(By Bekah the Sa'sara)

The Land of Madmen perhaps never recovered from the Breaking of the World. Its inhabitants live in hovels, are far from civilized, and try to kill outsiders on sight. The Sea Folk have never been able to fully map the coastline of this body of land though they have a general idea of the size, 750 leagues in length by 500 leagues in width it lies in the southern part of the world. It has frequent and violent tectonic activity, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and earthquakes.

Personality: Those who live in the Land of Madmen, are by and large madmen in some sense of the world. Though great ruins show that their forebears were once a great civilized people, they themselves live in squalor. The male channelers here are almost always insane and the female channelers here are little better. The common folk dislike outsiders and will attack strangers in mobs intent on robbing them of their possessions and killing them.

Physical Description: Unknown. Few enough have managed to study enough of these folk to make more than the observation that they appear to be humans reduced to a state of animalism.

Relations: They attack any and all outsiders on sighting them and those who escape rarely do so unharmed.

Adventurers: Madmen almost never become adventurers. The few that do gain enough mental stability to choose the path of the adventurer would lean toward the Wanderer class.

Bonus Skills: Escape Artist, Hide, Spot, Wilderness Lore.

Background Feats: Survivor, Mental Stability, Blooded, Strong Soul.

Home Language: Madman.

Bonus Languages: None.

Equipment:

DM's choice. Most likely random stolen (from Atha'an Miere) or crudely crafted items.

Shara

(By Bekah the Sa'sara)

Shara is a mysterious land where silk is made and where secrets are closely guarded. The people are divided into different societies based on their abilities. Those who can channel - called Ayyad -- are tattooed on their faces, forbidden to have relations with non-Ayyad, carefully bred with other Ayyad, and live much of their lives in their Ayyad cities. Male Ayyad are not educated anything beyond personal

hygiene and how to feed themselves and are killed before their abilities can manifest. If an Ayyad woman has a child whose father is not Ayyad then the child is killed.

Those who cannot channel believe themselves subject to the Sh'boan or Sh'botay of Shara who rules for seven years at maximum and then dies and is succeeded by their spouse who then remarries and rules for up to seven years before the cycle is repeated. Though common Sharans believe this is the will of the wheel, a more logical explanation to non-Sharans is that the Ayyad "servant women" who surround the ruler are the real cause of the deaths and the cycle itself.

Personality: Sharans are suspicious of all outsiders and frequently lie, almost to the point where little truth can be known of the interior of Shara or even if Shara is the true name of the land beyond the waste because the only sources for this information are Sharans themselves.

Physical Description: They are dark skinned, with dark textured hair. Eye color is not limited to dark, however. They are a taller people. Ayyad men and women have tattooed faces.

Relations: These mysterious people live across the Aiel Waste and manufacture silk and other fine wares available for reasonable prices in the walled trading towns on its land and sea borders to Aiel, Atha'an Miere, and any merchant willing to cross the Aiel Waste. Other than this, no contact with the outer world is generally allowed. Those that venture beyond the walls of the markets never return with the possible exception of Jain Fairstrider.

Adventurers: Sharans rarely become adventurers. The few that do choose the path of the adventurer often lean toward the Wanderer class.

Bonus Skills: Bluff, Craft (any), Diplomacy, Sense Motive.

Background Feats: Artist, Mercantile Background, Seductive, Wealth.

Home Language: Common (Sharan).

Bonus Languages: Common (Atha'an Miere), Common (Aiel), Common (any Westlands).

Equipment:

Masterwork Artisan's tools.

Silk Cloth (60 mks).

Masterwork Musical Instrument (Sharan harp).

Longsword, waterskin, Studded leather armor.