

## Turning Wheel Clanhouse, Jakállá

**Welcome** to the Turning Wheel clan in Jakállá a Low Status (in Jakállá) clan. What follows is not only a description of the clanhouse itself but also of some of the most important recent happenings. All **bold** numbers refer to corresponding numbers located on the clan house maps.

As one walks down the broad street in the Foreigner's Quarter towards the intersection where the Turning Wheel clanhouse sits on the corner of a narrower side street (#20), the first thing one sees is the banner (#32) which hangs from a pole which is mounted just below the base of the roof railing. On it, from the top, is a Chlén beast pulling a cart, a barge being poled by its crew, and lastly a twin masted merchant ship - a tnék. This identifies the building as belonging to a transportation/merchant clan. The Turning Wheel clan, Jakállá branch, owns two score barges, six hrú merchant vessels (single masted cargo ships), and two tnék with another under construction. The newest commissioned tnék, as well as the one under construction, was a gift from a pair of clansmen who, sadly, are now thought to be no longer amongst the living (Al'zalam hiBasrim, Bhal'kor Dirlish N'jini, and Keléno Orun hiBasrim were on clan business which took them from Rū to Khúm to Fénul to Sirsúm to Hekéllu. There Al'zalam and Bhal'kor put together an expedition and headed into the Chayéngar Range, but a few weeks later part of the party returned without Al'zalam, Bhal'kor, or the Ahoggyá "man-at-arms" who was in the clan's employ on a one year contract, of which six months still remained. The story was that they and some of the expedition's hirelings went into a cave from which they never returned. Said cave is notorious in the area as the "Cave of No Return." Keléno, then finished with his personal business at the Temple of Karakán journeyed on foot to Sokátis where he took a clan owned barge back to Jakállá). During business hours the front door (#1) is always open with a green Méshequ hanging outside, but two armed clan guards are always stationed there no matter what time of day or night. The most prominent of these is Kít hiBéshene, who is well known in the Foreigner's Quarter for his skill with weapons. The only time in modern memory when guards were not to be found outside the door was when the safe room was found to have been broken into and an artifact stolen.

When one stands outside the front entrance to the clan house, one can not but notice the well made stone work which forms the construction of the first, or ground, floor of the house. This by itself causes the building to stand out from others in this section of the Foreigner's Quarter. Mounted above the narrow, stout door and the narrow but long window above it is a board a man height square upon which is the glyph of the clan in the white, gray-green, yellow, blue, and purple clan colors. There are eight other windows in the lower floor just below the level of the upper floor's floor. They are also narrow but long. There are five to the right of the door, each situated fairly close together, but only three to the left of the door with the middle one shorter than the other two. The upper floor of the building is made of a rich, dark wood which denotes the owners are far from poor. There are nine windows on the upper floor which are of equal width but about three times the height of the ones on the lower floor. These are placed near the top of the wall being somewhat shielded by the overhanging eaves.

The feeling one gets when looking at the clan house is that it is the abode of respectable clan which is not pretentious, but hints at wealth without overtly displaying it.

When one enters through the narrow, stout front door, they notice several things immediately: the hall is wider than the door, the stone flooring is well made but worn from centuries of foot traffic since they were installed after the last Ditlána (over 800 years ago); the walls of rich, dark wood are carved with geometric designs, and there are raised, stone sitting areas indented on either side [#2]. There are a number of cushions on either area, and it is here that prospective clients wait to be brought into the business office.

It was here that Al'zalam lost his testicles. He attacked a well known Livyáni "merchant" (a person who is suspected of many criminal pursuits but does engage in a number of legitimate activities, and Bhal'kor had been pursuing him) who had come to have a large amount of freight transported (rumor has it that the one year contract the Livyáni signed with the clan was worth 100,000 káitars). Al'zalam acted in an extremely ignoble fashion, but the Livyáni was willing to keep silent and not press public Shámtla (which would have caused uncountable shame to descend upon the clan) if he got what he wanted. The Livyáni wanted Al'zalam's heart and the new clanmistress had no problem with that, but Bhal'kor bargained the cost down to Al'zalam's testicles. The Livyáni agreed but only if he, the Livyáni, could cut them off. A knife was given to him by the new clanmistress and the deed was done.

Just down the hall on the left is the clan's business office [#4], and it is decorated with scenes devoted to the Aspects of the patron gods of luck, good fortune, and protection of those who travel without regard to Change or Stability as the Turning Wheel is a non-denominational clan. There are a few stools for those who

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wish to sit cross-legged upon them, but the main items are the stands upon which sit the six great books (they are large at one Dháiba top to bottom and five Hoi across [1.333m {52½"} x 66.665cm {26¼"}]). These books contain the distances and rates to places as far away as the Nyémesel Isles and Ssorvá by sea and Pechná and Ghatón City by land. There are six books because there are many rates depending upon the social station of the person bargaining for the rates, the social status of the person or non-governmental interest they represent, the government and which branch (Palace of the Realm, Palace of the Priesthoods of the Gods, etc.), and whether or not the Turning Wheel is on good, bad, or indifferent terms with said person, interest, branch, etc. If one looks closely in the left and right walls, one will see doors. These are not secret by any means but they are not identified by a stout frame like most other doors or doorways in the clanhouse. Behind the door in the left wall, is a storage room (#3) which is locked (the key hole is cunningly hidden) and contains, among other things, at least two books in which are the true rates for all routs served the clan. The key to the lock is on a ring which is always found on the clanmaster's (now mistress') belt. Behind the door in the right wall is the clan master's office (#5), but this door does not possess a lock.

The clan master's office is where much of the day-to-day business of the clan is conducted. The clanmaster sits on a dais which allows him (now her) to look those who enter the office in the eye while behind him (now her) is a giant Turning Wheel clan glyph. On either side of the glyph are Chlén carts which are heaped with the wares transported and/or sold by the clan, and from the arses of the beasts pulling the carts golden káitars drop. On the left wall, as one stands in the open doorway, barges adorn the wall and they are again heaped with wares while on the right wall a single masted hrú and a two masted tnék are sailing. When the clan master (now mistress) looks to the left side of the open doorway they see Chikúna, the eighth Aspect of Avánthe holding a pregnant female Chlén-beast, and Keréna the wind, the fourteenth Aspect of Avánthe, who is blowing a favorable wind toward the hrú and tnék. When they look to the right of the door, they see Niyunén, the first Aspect of Hriháyal, the Giver of Unlooked-For Wealth, and Diéllunak, a female Aspect of Wurú, the Bleak Goddess of Changes and Perturbations. If the clan master (now mistress) looks closely at the left wall, they can see a door which leads to the clan accountant's office (#6), and to the right of the dais he (now she) sits upon is a not very visible door which leads to his (now her) private chamber (#23).

The clan accountant's office (#6) also possesses a dais much like the one in the clan master's office, but this one is noticeably smaller and somewhat shorter. The walls in this room are covered floor to ceiling with book cases containing ledgers and scroll tubes upon which the records of the day-to-day business activities of the clan are noted.

Recently the clan accountant was elevated to the post of clan master. The old clan master had been grooming her for the post once it had been noticed that she was a business genius. The old clan master was impaled for failure to pay the taxes owned by the clan to the Imperial tax collector who oversaw the Foreigner's Quarter. The Turning Wheel's clan master was joined by several more clan masters of other low or very low status clans. They were willing to go as far as being impaled to fight the Imperial tax collector's ruinous rates (known as Pygmy Folk taxes in the Foreigner's Quarter). A couple of weeks after the clan master's impalement, the Imperial tax collector himself was impaled for failure to collect the taxes, and shortly after his last whimper before the jeering crowd, the clans which had not paid their taxes miraculously discovered the wealth to pay the real tax bill in full at the Palace of the Realm. The new tax collector has been noticeably cooperative and less greedy.

If one exists the clan accountant's office and turns left they will shortly find themselves in a four-way intersection of hallways. Turn right and stop and the first thing one notices is that the floors have changed. They are now of wood which has been worn smooth and slick from centuries of feet caressing them, and they are stout enough that one cannot tell that there is a basement beneath the floor. To the right are stairs that ascend to the upper floor. These are also of wood and worn smooth and slick. To the left is an area with shelves, and small statues of deceased clan members clutter every shelf. If one looks closely one can identify the statues of Al'zolam and Bhal'kor although they are only presumed dead. On the other side of the stairs is a hallway that leads to the married quarters (#9) on this floor and to a storage room under the stairs (#8).

At the end of the hallway is a door which is locked, the key to it hangs on a ring which is carried at all times by the clan mistress). Behind the door are stairs [#10] which descend. At the bottom of the stairs one turns left to enter the basement which is underneath this half of the clan house. It is said that no one has been in the basement for at least a score of years, but it is also said that the area is open except for the stone pillars which hold up the floors above. There are also hints that something else is down in the basement, but no one

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talks openly of it. Those who know the most say the least as the Livyáni say.

The only other entrance off this hallway leads to the refectory/meeting room [#12]. Every morning the entire clan, save those in the caravansary outside of Jakállá (where there are about one hundred Chlén-beasts at any one time), those at the docks (on both ships and barges), and those on guard duty and food preparation, gather here. They are arranged with the clan mistress seated higher than everyone else against the left wall then going downward toward the right end wall. One can easily ascertain their place in the clan hierarchy by their place in the seating order. The more toward the clan master, the higher on the “food chain.” The farther away, the lower.

It was here in the clan meeting room that Bára hiNidran (originally from the Jakállá clan operations in Chame'él) and her husband (originally from the clan branch in Butrús) consummated their wedding (it was an arranged marriage between two clan lineages who were “at war,” and the marriage arrangement was the price for peace) as everyone stood around watching and cheering. It did not take long as the groom was finished in three strokes, or, as Bára was heard to remark, “I guess he did not want it either.” The “blissful” couple now reside in one of the rooms for married couples on the ground floor [#9], though they spend as much time apart as possible. Through the double doors in the rear corner of the room one gains access to the kitchen [14].

The kitchen is of a good size with a fine stone hearth in the far corner with the pantry behind the refectory/meeting room. The double doors sometimes lead to “interesting” happenings as they both open in the same direction. It has been discussed about changing one to open the opposite way from the other, but no one has of yet gotten around to it. There are two other doors leading from the kitchen, one leads to the narrow alley (#15) which is walled off at the front of the building while the other leads to the slave quarters [#13]. It was to right of the door that opened to the alley that Naug (as best as anyone could pronounce it) the Ahoggyá stayed while “it” was in residence. The kitchen slaves are profoundly glad “it” is no longer there as “it” terrorized them. The kitchen mistress misses “it” for the extra energy her charges showed while “it” was there, but she does not miss the rank smell.

The slave quarters [#13] are evenly divided between the married slaves and the single slaves. As one leaves the kitchen the married slaves live on the left. The hallway between the two living quarters was made by the slaves from scrap wood from which they hung curtains to give themselves some privacy. At present there is only one married slave (and his free spouse with two young, free children for which they pay a few Qirgal a week in rent) and three single slaves living in these quarters. The married slave works in the stables while the single slaves primarily work in the kitchen.

Exit the slave quarters and turn right, go through the door at the end of the hall and one enters the stables. There are six stalls for Chlén-beasts, and in the center of the stable are feed and watering racks on casters which can be moved through the large double gate into the alley (#16) so they can be loaded directly from the fodder loft (#29) then rolled back into the stable to the Chlén-beasts. In the alley there are up to six Chlén carts parked, but due to the fact that the alley is too narrow to turn a cart around, all traffic in it runs from left to right as one stands in the stable doorway.

The only other door that leads from the stable goes to the tack room and black smith shop [#19]. This also has a hearth in it with has a large bronze tank mounted above it that is used to heat water for the bathing room [#18]. The tank is always kept filled and there is always a fire in the hearth so a ready supply of at least warm water is always available. Up to three hoses can be connected to the tank so the water can be sent into the bathing room.

The bathing room [#18] is tiled with a checkerboard pattern of white and black porcelain tiles on the floor and up the walls to head height. There are three large tubs, each capable of holding at least two adults on the far wall from the door, each with a bronze tap above it mounted on the wall through which heated water flows when the hoses in the black smith's shop are connected. There is also a bronze cold water tank in the right corner behind the door. In the middle of the floor there is also a drain which connects to the city sewer system, and each tub is also connected to it.

Exit the bathing room, turn right down the hall and one returns to the four way intersection of hallways. Turn right and there is a storage room on the left (#7), and a little farther down on the right is another door which accesses the clan's safe room [#21]. That door is as stout as the front door with a large bronze lock embedded in its center. The key to the lock is always on the key ring which hangs on the clan mistress' belt. When unlocked and opened, one can see that bronze rods from the lock go through the door and into the stone wall above, below, and on each side making it almost impossible to break into the room without someone

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noticing. Inside the room there are many things: steel armor and weapons, several devices of the great ancients, three large chests which contain káitars, hláshs, and qirgáls, and in the back left corner is a tall shrouded object which no one talks about. On the right hand wall by the four thick, bronze bands which are bolted to the floor is a book which is bound in aluminum with pages of gold.

The four, thick bronze bands bolted to the floor secure a secret entrance to the room from the first level of the Underworld which no one had known about but which dated from the last Ditlána. This entrance was used by thieves to enter the room and steal the book. A team of clansmen lead by Bára hiNidran recovered not only the clan's book but also several artifacts from the temples of Vimúhla and Dlamélísh, and from Ma'ása hiTlakotáni a renown collector of antiquities in Jakálla (he throws a great party once a year where he shows off part of his collection). Upon returning the artifact belonging to the Temple of Dlamélísh an orgy of debauchery (sex, eating, etc.) was held in celebration which most of the Turning Wheel team members gladly participated in.

Out of the room and further down the hall one enters the wing where the clan elders have their private chambers (#22).

Back down the hallway, across the intersection and up the stairs to the upper floor one enters the landing and hallway (#25). Here one can enter the large dorm room of the adult unmarried clan members (#26) or go down the hall to some of the married quarters (#31) on this floor. In the dorm room there is a lantern which hangs from the wall just above head height on the wall across from the dividing wall. One of the slaves is on "fire watch" duty here every night, but mostly he spends the night sleeping with everyone else; as long as nothing bad happens, no one says anything. Down the hall one comes to another hall to the left which leads to more married quarters [#31].

Continuing on one comes to the landing of the stairs which lead up to the roof [#27]. One must be careful when going up to the roof in the early morning as there are at least two large Sró which live in the Underworld and gain access to their lairs through entrances on the gulf side of the city. They have been known to pluck unfortunate people off rooftops while on their way home for the day. An evening snack as it were.

A short distance from the steps one comes to the end of the hall. There are two doors here, one in the right wall and one in the left wall. The left door leads to the dorm room for clan children of ages five to ten years old [#30] while the right hand door leads to the dorm room of children ten to fifteen years of age [#28]. In each of the rooms there is a long closet which is not deep in which bedding, toys and such are stored. In each of the rooms at night one of the clanmothers sleeps with the children. With the younger children this is done so if there is any sickness, etc. it can be taken care of promptly. With the older children this is to keep those things which come with puberty from happening. Once the children become adults and move to the unmarried dorm, they are on their own.