

Hobling Race Package

1. DESCRIPTION:

This packet is designed to provide general information about Hoblings, and some more detailed information about Hoblings that have been born and raised in the Evendarr area. The information included is from the Hobling point of view and may differ significantly from the scurrilous lies told by other races.

2. PERSONALITY:

The following is an attempt to describe a "typical" Hobling, although the race does vary widely.

First, the principal objective of most Hoblings is to enjoy life. Enjoyment is generally considered to require two things: comfort and amusement. However, Hoblings are willing to put up with considerable difficulties and problems to obtain future comfort. (Enjoyment can come from telling stories about "the old days" when life was tough.)

Second, many Hoblings have a lot of artistic talent and all Hoblings like to tell and listen to GOOD stories, songs, jokes, entertainment, etc. The entertainment value, or occasionally moral education value, is considered to be much more important than historical accuracy. Hoblings assume that other races behave in a similar manner, although they aren't as good at it, and therefore will virtually never believe that something is definitely true merely because someone told them so. It should also be noted that some Hoblings become adventurers principally because they are not good storytellers or because they want to travel to get the basis for new stories. Also note that the love for improving stories does not extend to business records.

Third, Hoblings recognize that they are not great fighters that can take infinite damage (except for a few historical figures). When Hoblings fight, either individually or in groups, they generally try to take advantage of terrain for protection and to ambush or surprise those trying to kill them. (Note that Hoblings consider humans and other races part of the terrain to duck behind.) A Hobling that acts like a heroic figure will be admired for his bravery and considered insane. He or she will not be accepted into polite society, even if made into a Knight by humans or other races. On the other hand, Hoblings that are willing to take intelligent risks are also admired for their bravery and tend to get invited to the best parties, especially if they can tell the stories well.

Fourth, Hoblings tend to be social. Hobling hermits are rare, and generally considered insane.

Fifth, Hobblings are proud of their furry hands. Hobblings never shave this off and, if someone else did it to them, would be so embarrassed that they would not show their faces, unless the hand was covered.

Sixth, Hobblings generally have, in some ways, less of a sense of personal property than many other races. This is not to say that they are thieves, in fact, the Hobbling will be offended at being called a thief. Thieves take something with the intention of depriving the owner of the rights of ownership. In contrast, a Hobbling may borrow something assuming that the owner will not object since the Hobbling intends to return it when he is finished with it and is prepared to give it back at any time, if the owner asks for it.

Seventh, Hobblings tend to be curious. Note that this can lead Hobblings into adventuring, and also to picking up things along the way with the intent to examine them, and the expectation of returning them to the owner in the future when the Hobbling gets around to it.

3. TYPICAL PROFESSIONS

Most Hobblings end up in a limited number of professions. These tend to be in three areas:

Social (innkeepers, performers, storytellers, con men, etc.)

Mechanical/Fine craftsmen (Locksmith, trap maker, clock maker, etc.)

Agricultural (orchards more than fields)

4. Social Structure

Hobblings tend to have fairly flexible social structures. In the greater Evendarr area they now live in either (a) human dominated cities and town, or (b) Hobbling villages and towns in human (or dwarf) controlled areas. Older Hobbling villages and towns, generally located in the hills of NW Blackstone or N Nordenn, are often quasi-independent and operate on the ancient system: a Rangatira (headman) is selected by consensus of the Yohunga (healers, mages, and scholars), Kaitoa (heroes), and Taura (elders and skilled people) and loosely governs the village or town with their advice and assistance. (The principal duties are dealing with nobles, organizing civic work parties, acting as the Sheriff, and presiding over festivals.) Decisions affecting multiple villages or towns tend to be made by consensus of the Rangatire. Even at their most independent, the Hobblings generally pay some taxes to the local baron, count, duke, etc. However, Hobblings do not believe that others have the right to interfere with their internal affairs, regardless of what title the person may bear, and attempts to do so can lead to resistance, such as ridiculing songs and stories or even mugging the tax collectors. Resistance is unlikely to be more open than this, except in the most extreme cases.

An old style Hobbling village or town tends to be centered around a tavern or inn. The homes are often half buried in the ground with pointed roofs and windows (of some type)

on the southern exposure. Each home is generally surrounded by a garden and some fruit trees. The entire village or town is often surrounded by a thorn hedge for protection, and both the hedge and the gates tend to be well trapped.

5. STATISTICS

Life Expectancy: 90-100 years

Child -Bearing Years: 20-50 years old

Fairly even numbers of males and females

Current population in greater Evendarr area: 20,000

Current worldwide population: 100,000

6. LEGENDS/HISTORY

The following is a description of the legends and history of Hobblings in the Evendarr area. This information is taken from The Green Book, and encyclopedia of Hobbling lore. Hobblings in other areas have very similar legends, although the names may be different, and generally fairly similar history (with the contributions made by the Hobblings woefully underappreciated by other races).

ANCIENT LEGENDS: In the earliest days, before the elves and dwarves walked the world, there was a great battle between the Hobbling Tohunga and their allies against the Tupua (evil monsters). In those days the Tupua were bumerous and mighty, much greater even then they were in the old days of what the elves foolishly call the First Dimensional War. This war lasted for generations and the Hobblings fought bravely, but they were heavily outnumbered and lacked they force at arms of their opponents. Finally, one of the greatest Hobblings, Taa Onihoo, learned that the Tupua were preparing to cast a great spell that would allow their leader total access to the world. He conceived a brilliant plan to replace the magical scroll containig the spell with one that would summon the Atua, the greatest of the Elementals, to help battle the Tupua. The spell was cast, almost as Taa Onihoko planned and all of the Tupua were killed or fled from the world. However, the force of the magic was so great that the sun itself changed color, much life on the planet was changed, most of the Hobblings were destroyed, and magic itself changed.

EVENDARR-AREA LEGENDS: Not much later, Hobblings began to have problems with strange green, half-intelligent creatures, possibly the much reduced descendents of the Tupua. To defend themselves against these creatures, the Hobblings grew large hedges of thorns around their villages and also modified many clever tricks into deadly traps. Some Hobblings also sought out the holes where these creatures lived and bred and filled these with traps. Soon, most of these creatures had died or fled, but the Hobblings stayed aleert for their return.

Years later, a party of Hobbling scouts located a party of hundreds of bearded beings, including children (and maybe women), fleeing from the mountains under constant attack by the green creatures. Taa Tumahoti, who led the Hobbling scouts, offered the bearded creatures sanctuary. The bearded ones, who called themselves dwarves, had a long history of fighting the green creatures, who they called orcs and goblins. The goblins had

driven the dwarves from their homes in the mountains. Hobblings took in the women and children and raised a force, led by Taa Tumahoti, to aid the dwarves in recovering their home. Taa Tumahoti and a few dwarves, using a combination of children's toys and magic, convinced the goblins that the caverns were haunted by the ghosts of the dwarves, and the goblins fled directly into a combined Hobbling and dwarf ambush. Hobblings and dwarves together hunted out most of the remaining orcs and goblins in the mountains and hills in what has ever since been referred to as the Great Goblin War. Hobblings and dwarves have forever after been bound as allies by this war. (Dwarf records state that this war started in VIII/435)

For many years thereafter the Hobblings lived mainly peace, with only occasional problems from goblins or orcs. During these years many Hobblings travelled, often with dwarves, to visit other dwarf strongholds. Quentari elves, or even a few human villages. These travellers were often entertainers and/or merchants, although a few were heroes looking for adventure. The greatest of these travellers was Tas Piahoko, many of whose deeds are contained in The Green Book.

His deeds include:

- Killing a War Troll barehanded by picking it up and throwing it off a cliff;
- Drugging a Greater Vampyre with kobold blood and pulling its fangs;
- Out-bargaining a dwarf so that he got something for free;
- Selling an elf a forest;
- Stealing the crown of the Goblin King (it was disgusting that he put it back);
- And inventing winemaking.

During these years Hobblings also expanded, generally to places in close proximity to dwarf strongholds. The reason for this is that the Hobblings recognized that the dwarves were much better fighters than they were, although the Hobblings were better at tricks and traps and also at learning celestial magic (which may have been originally learned from Quentari elves). [Records obtained from the Dwarves place the Hobbling expansion from what is currently Blackstone to Nordenn at around VIII/497 and their expansion to Anym at around IX/277.]

The stories indicate that sometime after the expansion to Anym significantly more humans began to live in the area currently known as Blackstone and Evendarr and formed small kingdoms. At around this time, some Hobblings moved into the larger human towns. They would generally live in an area predominantly occupied by Hobblings and work as innkeepers or fine craftsmen. In some cases, this was motivated by a desire for safety, since humans, like dwarves, are better fighters than Hobblings. Another, more common reason, is that many humans desire to be heroes and form a rich source for stories and jokes. The Hobblings, of course, had a significant civilizing effect on the humans.

Finally, it is important to recognize the role that the Hobblings played in what the Quentari refer to as the First and Second Dimensional Wars. The most important fact is that other races' histories, especially the Quentari's, tend to woefully undervalue the contributions

made by the Hobblings during these wars. The Green Book records in great detail the actions of Taa Piahoka during the First Dimensional War in appropriating a powerful weapon and a great many rare ritual components from the Elementals immediately before they were to be used in casting a ritual magic spell. Taa Piahoka and other Hobblings also acted as scouts and mages with the dwarf expeditionary force that was aiding the Quentari. However, it was during the Second Dimensional War that the Hobblings contributed in a manner that they Quentari should not have forgotten. In the climactic battle, Tomo Tian bravely and cunningly managed to trip Guxx, giving the warrior (Sir Nork of Eastwyck in Ravenholt) a chance to use The Great Weapon on him. Without the selfless actions of Tomo Tian, the Quentari warrior would undoubtedly have been killed.

7. EVENDARR AREA HOBLING'S OPINIONS OF OTHER RACES: (Note that this is not the opinion of all Hobblings or all members of the other races.)

Dwarves - There are lots of stories from ancient history about how dwarves are friends and allies of Hobblings and, in general, Hobblings will expect dwarves to be trustworthy and allies. The Hobblings do have difficulty understanding why anyone would always want to live underground and are amazed at the dwarves' complicated system of rules. But this is all OK, since it is easier to make up jokes about them.

Quentari Elves - These elves are more understanding than dwarves, since at least they like sunlight. However, they sometimes seem to have a strange tendency to like trees better than people.

Other Elves (especially Stone and Drae) - Generally snobbish and often really weird.

Humans - Interesting and at least they like sunlight and people, but extremely variable, unpredictable, and dangerous.

Sarr - Sarr are funny, hot tempered creatures. They don't even like the Hobbling story about their race's origin, which deals with an elf that was wrestling lions and tigers bare.

8. MAGIC

Most Hobbling spell casters use earth magic. Occasional casting of necromancy is bad, but it can be justified. Being a regular practitioner of necromancy is considered to be insanity. Some Hobblings use celestial magic, but this is not respectable since it tends to lead to too much of a "fight from in front" attitude.

9. LANGUAGE

Hobblings have almost completely adopted the common tongue. Retaining old words for titles, mottos, and ceremonial oaths. Some scholars also use or study what is still known as the old tongue. Some of the most common terms are:

Rangatira-headman of a group of Hobblings

Tohunga-a healer, mage, or scholar
Kaitoa-hero
Taurira-a teacher, elder, or skilled person
Rahi-a term meaning great, used rarely to prefix the above four titles
Ihi-internal power of force
Ipo-beloved one, darling
Tupua-an object of terror, s.a a gross monster, Death Elemental, etc.
Atua-extremely powerful being, s.a, a greater elemental
Rare-dull, stupid
Hoi-deaf, obstinate
Angitu-luck, success
Parakeato-a piece of dung
Haakari-feast
Kino-evil
Pai-good
Hau-search
Pia-beer, wine

The old names for some of the other races are:

Whena - Dwarf (loosely translated as firm or steady)
Raakau-Aroha - Quentari elf (loosely translated as tree-lover)
Haakokelka - Human (loosely translated as wandering fighter)

Some names of villages and people are also corrupted from the old tongue:

Whepaa from Whenapaa - dwarf stockade
Temaka from Tengimatatikainga - three spring country
Atu from Atahuaakau - beautiful coast
Raute from Rautete - lots of scrub
Tapaa from Tatangapaa - alert stockade
Tikau from Tiniraakau - very many trees

Pronunciation:

General rules: Pronounce each vowel separately, along with any preceding consonants.
The only exception is a double vowel such as "aa" which is pronounced as a long "a". for example, Tengimatatikainga is pronounced Te-nga-ma-ta-ti-ki-kaa-i-nga.

Consonants are pronounced like in common, except that r is not trilled and ng is like in singing. Vowels are pronounced as follows: a short art; e short epic; i short wee; o short orb; u short ruby.

(The language is based on Maori.)

10. PLAYING A HOBLING

This section is a few out-of-game comments on playing a Hobling. First, Hoblings are distinguished in-game by the furry backs of their hands. This fur is best if it made either out of real fur, such as from an old coat, or fake fur which can generally be obtained from the linings of some old coats or from craft or fabric stores. Note that if you are wearing gloves so that the back of the hand is not visible, there is no need to wear the fur. The best way to wear the fur is by either attaching it onto fingerless gloves or straps of elastic. It can be glued to the hand, however this tends to come off easily, especially if it is hot. The personality section above gives some guidelines for role-playing Hoblings. One of the most important characteristics is that there are no fighters in the entire race and therefore Hoblings have been forced to be more creative and subtle than some of the other races, for example, the half-orcs. The other most important factor is that Hoblings like to enjoy themselves, so have fun.