

Races of the Bronze Sky: Kaylethon

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Solidly built, four-armed giants, the Kaylethon resemble nothing so much as hoary skinned rhinoceroses. Powerful, broad, squat and strong the Kaylethon are built – in temperament as well as physique – for the life of warriors and they have a fearsome reputation as such, tempestuous, strong, and unwavering, bound up in a system of honor that can make them quick to turn in anger to defend their reputations and the status of their clans.

More surprising, given their status as 'primitive' warriors, the Kaylethon have a natural talent for crafts and technology. This is not so much a result of their intelligence, which is notoriously brutish and simplistic, but more down to an innate instinct for mechanism and device, a simple, bone-deep knowledge of how to put things together, to work stone and metal and shape it to create the forms that come to their minds, inspired by the materials they have to hand and their immediate need.

The Kaylethon have resisted hundreds of years of attempts to civilize them, largely attempted by The Monarchy, partly due to their own cultural arrogance but also due to the sheer ruggedness of their land, Kayledon, whose rocky and mountainous terrain makes controlling or converting the Kaylethon a nigh impossible task. Despite these failed attempts the Kaylethon do work for The Monarchy more than many other groups and some of the clans, normally working as mercenaries, are on permanent contract for the Monarchy's armies and can be found serving with distinction amongst colonial holdings and as marines on board the Monarchy's vessels.



Divided into fractious and competing tribes the Kaylethon have little notion of themselves as a nation, though they do see themselves as a great people. Unless they wear the same tartan the only thing that two Kaylethon can truly agree on is that they are superior to everyone else, something they're more than willing to show in competitions, bets and open battle.

Personality:

The Kaylethon are a rough, tough, warrior people, divided into clans that are in constantly in conflict with each other and this reflects how they approach almost everything in life – as a conflict. Anything that gets in their way is something to be overcome, mountains are there to be leveled or hollowed out, armies to be destroyed, ships to be 'sunk'.

The Kaylethon hate to admit defeat and will try almost every approach to a problem before declaring it insurmountable. In terms of technological development this attracts hundreds of other Kaylethon determined to prove the failure's weakness and their own strength. The same happens with battles, the defeat of one clan will bring others to test their strength against the walls of a fortress or against the tactical expertise of a general.

Individually they tend to be gruff and arrogant, short tempered and overconfident. Their first loyalty is to their family, then to their clan. Other clans are regarded in largely the same way that other nations and peoples are with only the loosest racial loyalty existing from one Kaylethon to the other.

The most important psychological characteristic of any Kaylethon is their sense of honor and pride. To the Kaylethon nothing is more important than their honor and any perceived slight to that honor must be answered immediately with an abject apology or paid in blood. For other races Kaylethon honor can be an unpredictable and difficult thing, what other people might take as a mortal insult the Kaylethon may meet with booming laughter while a small slight that another people might brush off is met with angry violence.

Physical Description:

Seven to eight feet tall and incredibly dense and heavy with solid, broadly splayed feet and four strong, powerful arms, each with three fingers and a thumb, giving them excellent grip for climbing and for wielding the heavy weapons that they prefer to use.

Their skin is covered in tough plates of solid keratin, like hoary nails or thick hair and they have wide set eyes, stemming from their herbivorous nature and evolution. Another aspect of this is the constant rumble from their three stomachs as they digest the grass, hay and other plant roughage they are all but constantly chewing.

Rarely, Kaylethon are born with woolly hair over their bodies, this is considered prestigious, even though the normal Kaylethon body is considered the pinnacle, these lucky few are thought to be touched by the Kaylethon gods for special attention and respect.

Base Seven

The Kaylethon count in base seven, using their six limbs and their horn as the basis of their counting system but, peculiarly, starting with the horn counting as zero, a concept in mathematics that comes with difficulty to other races but naturally to the Kaylethon.

0: O, 1: Ka, 2: Kay, 3: Keli, 4: Kelan, 5: Kelina, 6: Kelonan.

The Kaylethon string these numbers together to describe larger numbers. Their number 10 (13) is spoken, therefore, as Ka-Keli.

Perfect Form

The Kaylethon racial arrogance is down to their personal and religious conviction that the Kaylethon and the Kaylethon way of life are the best in the universe and that all other races and peoples should be jealous. In particular they regard their bodies, tough, strong, horned and multi-limbed as literal perfection, something to be worshiped and venerated and they literally pity anyone of any race that is not theirs.

Tartan

Each clan of Kaylethon regards itself as the best, strongest and most prestigious of them all and this pride is bound up, symbolically, into their clan tartan, different for each and every clan, every thread woven with symbolic meaning and every cross of lines representative of the battles and clashes that the clan has taken part in, won or lost. Tartan is worn with pride and kept spotlessly clean so much as possible. Dishonor to the tartan is a mortal insult to a Kaylethon which must be met with death.

Relations:

The Kaylethon regard all other races as equally inferior to their own, perfect, selves and for there to be any difference in their attitude it has to be changed at the level of a nation that can defeat a clan or an individual who can prove themselves worthy and capable on a personal level.

When it comes to the nations the Kaylethon are more than happy to work for The Monarchy or their rebellious colonies but refuse to work for the Tyeis Regime and the Empire of Artemesia on the grounds that they have 'no honor', though it has more to do with the fighting style, underhanded tactics and defeats of those empires compared to The Monarchy and its offshoots who have dealt with the Kaylethon in a manner that their culture can respect.

Individual Kaylethon and even whole clans have also gone pirate, usually after defeats foisted upon them by other clans or through being outcast from their own clan. The only options for a

Kaylethon dishonored or defeated in such a way are to do this – to turn pirate – or to join one of the Monarchy military clans.

Alignment:

Morally dubious – from the viewpoint of other peoples – but hide-bound by their own sense of honor, law and proper behaviour, the Kaylethon tend to Lawful alignments, though their interpretation of order and law may seem very different to what others might expect. They are internally consistent within their own honor code and their own law and strict in its application.

- Strength must be respected.
- The Kaylethon are the pure and chosen race.
- What we can take is ours, what you can hold is yours.
- Family and clan are our world.

Kaylethon Lands:

Kayledon is a chain of bound-together rocky islands, of towering rocky spires, deep ice-cold lakes and dark caves. It is studded with coniferous forests that cling to the mountains and in the few flatter areas, plains and rolling hills, it is thick with tough grass and heather, constantly grazed by the clans and their herd animals.

The Kaylethon live in clan strongholds, fortresses, inhabited caves and fortified towns across and within Kayledon, constantly warring and competing with each other clan territory shifts almost every month and the Kayledon, who might otherwise be a world power themselves, are kept in check by this internal fighting.

Kaylethon Ships:

The Kaylethon approach to technology is eclectic and personal. Rarely is it the case that two of the same devices or crafts – unless made by the same Kaylethon – are the same. Guns, swords, armor, these may share certain traits since they perform the same tasks but each Kaylethon craftsman puts their own spin, their own improvements and their own mark onto everything they make.

A ship is beyond a single Kaylethon craftsman, no matter how talented. Ships must be constructed by clans as a whole and many Kaylethon craftsmen – used to working alone on their visions – must work together. As a result of this Kaylethon vessels – usually

crafted around small islands of rock or floating boulders – are a patchwork mish-mash of clashing ideas which makes them unpredictable and dangerous but one thing they always are is tough and hardy.

Religion:

The Kaylethon worship a pair of gods, Kayla and Layka, each the embodiment of Kaylethon perfection and each representing Kaylethon ideals of what the role of males and females is within their society, the warrior and the protector, subtle distinctions to non-Kaylethon, especially those who have met Kaylethon males and females in combat alongside each other. Figurines of both gods are found, carved from stone, in most Kaylethon homes, idealized Olympian figures wielding the tools of the household crafts.

Language:

The Kaylethon speak their own, harsh language, drawing out their vowels and barking their consonants, emphasizing their sentences with snorts of their nostrils and flicks of their expressive ears. Most

Kaylethon also speak the common tongue of The Monarchy, their chief trading partners, but they speak it with the same intonation and accent as they speak their own language, stubbornly refusing to improve their diction no matter the incentive.

Names:

Kaylethon personal names are short and usually sharp, able to bellowed or shouted with ease and limited to one or two syllables, one for male names and two for female names. Kaylethon carry three names, their gender name, their craft name and their tribal name, forming a full name such as: Kria Stonecutter KaMakka.

Male Names: Ak, Bann, Dek, Gar, Hik, Kar, Mok, Nik, Rom, Sok, Tan, Yak.

Female Names: Arka, Cora, Dikta, Gorki, Hakka, Klor, Rotan, Stoki, Yakti.

Craft Name: Stonecutter, Carter, Mechanist, Gunsmith, Armorer, Blacksmith, Farrier.

Tribal Name: KaArla, KaDorna, KaHarlaton, KaLorna, KaNorn, KaSalort, KaTarna.



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The current state of the art in personal firearms is a smoothbore weapon with a wheellock firing mechanism. Earlier matchlocks, which required a lit match held in a "matchlock" to fire, and the even earlier hand culverins, which required manual application of a lit match, are still in circulation but no regular forces use them. Though most firearms come from the mass production gunworks of the Monarchy weapon forges, there are skilled craftsmen in other locations that can and do build firearms.

The smiths of the Monarchy weapon forges have just developed snaplocks, but have kept the innovation to themselves so far. More reliable and inexpensive flintlocks are doubtless not far behind. A couple artisans have made rifled hunting weapons but these are still unique curiosities.

Proficiency: All wheellock weapons require Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms) to use without penalty.

Chant of Golden Wasp Pirate Ship

To the mast nail our flag
it is dark as the grave,
Or the death which it bears
while it sweeps o'er the wave;
Let our deck clear for action,
our guns be prepared;
Be the boarding-axe sharpened,
the scimeter bared:
Set the canisters ready,
and then bring to me,
For the last of my duties,
the powder-room key.
It shall never be lowered,
the black flag we bear;
If the sea be denied us,
we sweep through the air.
Unshared have we left
our last victory's prey;



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