

### What you know about *Zizudo* (the world).

- When pronouncing words in Ruzina (italicized) you pronounce all letters. So your home area is pronounced *Vav-ee-ahn-eh-shuz*, Shilvirie would be *Shil-vee-ree-eh*.
- The world is made up of 15 different regions that are separated from each other by something called the Veil (*Vuna*). The Veil is difficult to traverse and is home to ghosts or demons or something (stories vary).
- Up until about 20 years ago all the other regions were ruled by a race called the Alezer who used humans as servants. About 50 years ago the humans began a war against the Alezer and defeated them after 30 years of fighting in all the other regions.
- The region you live in is called the Saltlands (*Bumanzshur*). It is the only region that was ruled by humans before the war. Since the war ended there has been a large influx of immigrants. They all seem to have different cultures but speak the Alezer language (*Hintalin*).
- Because of the Veil trade and immigration between the regions is limited. There is only one regularly used path through the Veil in the Saltlands. it is on the west central boundary. There is a prosperous city there called Veil Gate (*Vuna Bulza*). The eastern boundary abuts what is evidently a large salt-water ocean (fishermen don't get too close to the Veil so there isn't much info about this "ocean").
- The Saltlands are very hot. It is similar to Ethiopia on the western side of the central mountain range and similar to Somalia on the eastern side. The region is about 350 miles across and about 635 miles long (220,200 sq miles) [a bit smaller than Arizona and New Mexico combined].
- Your home is in the frontier area known as Vavianeshuz in the kingdom of Cedar Town (*Kidleolus [kidleolus]*). Vavianeshuz is run by a woman named Jiao Vaviane and her sons (her husband died about 10 years ago). Kidleolus is ruled by Rudabiris Shilvirie (who is rumored to be a wizard), and the Shilvirie family.
- There are five major cultures in the Saltlands.
  - The Ruzina, who are the dominant group (think a less stratified Roman culture with a thing for privacy [emotions and such are not advertised]). There are about 1.5 million in the lake basin and river valley.
  - The Eagle People dominate the central mountain range (the Eagle Mountains). They are not numerous (188,000 or so) and are loosely Tibetan. They speak U-Tsang and are divided amongst different monasteries, each of which teaches a different martial art. The monastery nearest your land is the Fangshido temple.
  - The Oamoon culture is loosely pre-Islam Arabic. They speak Luaith and have been mostly pushed to the periphery of the region. They are mostly nomadic but there are several towns and a small salt & fishing city on the eastern boundary (part of the ocean is within the Veil). There are around 130,000 on the eastern side of the Eagle Mountains.
  - There are numerous "barbarian" tribes that are scattered between the lake and the western boundary. They are made up of outlaws from the Ruzina kingdoms and immigrants from beyond the Veil (there have been many mercenary types that have known only war and have taken to banditry). There are around 500,000 in a variety of tribes and "kingdoms".
  - The Zulu are a separate tribe from the other "barbarians" and try to interact as little as possible with the other cultures that are around them. They speak isiZulu and number around 30,000 (mostly nomadic shepherds). They are somewhat feared by their neighbors for their height, black skin and skill as warriors.

### Who runs the area of Vavianeshuz?

- Jiao Vaviane (widow of Nulogos Vaviane) is the matriarch of this branch of the Vaviane family. She is assisted by her sons;
  - Blamefae (39): He acts as the family ambassador to the rest of the world and lives with his family down by the lake. He seems like a nice enough guy.
  - Kudo (34): He is his mother's second in command and it is fairly obvious that he dislikes the job.
  - Bazla (29): Doesn't seem to have any function. He is said to be in debt and is looking for ways to make some money.
  - Dlugis (24): He is a trained lawyer and acts as the family legal counselor.
  - Shibzime (19): He seems to be a mama's boy and seems to be happy and successful at helping out with administrative chores.

### Who are some other people that live here?

- Ajzolis is a big burly fellow who is the area's priest. He is the guy to go to for blessings, but bring some money. He also seems uncertain at times and delays things.
- Iatha is a Zulu warrior who is somehow friends with Jiao. She makes a living teaching various fighting skills.
- Huzalazea Nusenik is the village's only bonded physician. She is also a horrible person and an alcoholic. The only thing she seems to really like is her pet falcon (who she feeds with surgery scraps according to rumor...). People try to avoid getting ill.
- Bolom Dizikie is the barber. He is an angry and argumentative guy, but better for minor medical issues.
- Me Azie owns the only inn in the village, The Blind Maid (*Kueke Fuza*). He may be crazy and he is always adding on additions to the inn.
- Aljanzis runs the Red Dog (*Kunis Lobel*) tavern. He inherited it from his uncle and so far he seems to be an arrogant prick, and a lot of business is going elsewhere.
- Nulogosom runs the other tavern, the White Eagle (*Vorzul Gube*). Seems to be proud and pig-headed, but he is better than Aljanzis.
- Bozelnik Falal is the blacksmith. He is also an unofficial town leader. He is always level-headed and calm.
- Shugax, this old fellow is the village cobbler. He also acts as the village mediator for unofficial disputes.
- Bulgeskom Milkazol is a merchant specializing in nothing in particular. He seems to be resentful of customers.
- Shkaule Davag is also a merchant. He tends to charge too much and his property looks like a classic hoarder's abode. He does have a good selection of cosmetics (the only source out here on the frontier).
- The Five Brothers Merchant House is, as might be expected, a merchant house. It is run by five brothers, some run the shop and others are traveling around purchasing or arranging sales in quantity. They have a source of ceramics and glassware which allows them to sell for a very reasonable price.
- Rioninis Vunazol is a retired bounty hunter. He has (or had) many contacts and can sometimes be enticed to provide advice or names.

### Are there monsters?

- Yup. There are a lot of different monsters that live in the various regions. In the Saltlands the primary beasts are;
  - Lions (*Rie*). Yeah, not very scary. However they are smarter than Earth lions and the adults weigh over 400 lbs routinely with some males reaching 500 lbs. They tend to stick to the eastern foothills where there is enough prey to feed them.

- Griffons (*Anzuyuk*) are the bane of the shepherds of the region. They are primarily found in the Eagle Mountains.
- Minotaurs (*Manozule*) are occasionally found in the northern Eagle Mountains. They are very dangerous and notorious for their heavy long bows.
- Dragons (*Yuskum*) are rarely seen in the Saltlands but one will show up every once in a while. The last in your area was about 10 years ago and those that live in Vavianeshuz saw it flying above the mountains one time.
- Hydras (*Eskakuskum*) are found at the far northern edge of the region. There is a lake that they seem to live by. Not much is known about them except that they regrow their severed heads and are really dangerous.
- Giants (*Mahlu*) migrate into the area in small groups or singly. They usually stay in the mountains, as they prefer the colder temperatures.

### **Are there gods?**

- Yes, they were here when humans arrived (even before the Alezer) and they are the main (but possibly not the only) source of magic.
  - Kozawtakoye: Ruler of the Saltlands
  - Walatakoye: Giver of Wealth; Death; Harvests; Earth
  - Azukutakoyay: Strength; Severity; Awe; Fire; Punishment
  - Salatutakoyay: Adornment; Beauty; Balance; Compassion
  - Yusutratakoyay: Eternity; Victory; Endurance
  - Yuktakoyay: Cities; Cleansing Flame; Earth; Air; Magical Awareness; The Veil
  - Sutakoyay: Evaluate Situations; Lightning; Ambitions
  - Kartakoyay: Hidden Treasure (lit & fig)
  - Atakoyay: Lord of the Lake; Calming
  - Namkalame: Rivers; Intuition; Perception; Health; Food; Drink
  - Askilaltakoyay: Love; Joy; Pleasure
  - Loyumtakoyay: Communication; Music
  - Zatakoyay: Integrity; Mercy; Wisdom; Freedom
  - Askile: Plants; Fertility; Healing
  - Zatatakoyay: Beliefs; Ideals; Principles
  - Sakaytakoyay: Silence; Void; Death; Flaming Sword
  - En Lukuzay: Death of the Soul; Entropy (He allows you to summon demons... rumor has it)
  - En Namskakay: Pleasure; Pefection; Delight
  - Nin Amwe: Loss of Beauty; Impermanence