The Kel Hound Empire

*“tympana pulsu decies, decies igne tormentorum filii caede decies est humanitas.”*

The once great empire, ascendant in the galaxy, a power great enough to challenge even earth, now simply a memory of what it once was. The old glory long faded but within that desiccated husk new life springs forth. A new will and a new strength to challenge those who would relegate them to the past and leave them as a fading power in the galaxy shall soon be known.

History:

Alastair Kel was one of the most brilliant soldiers in earth’s long history of space travel. After enlisting in the ECSC navy at 16 he quickly rose to the rank of admiral by the then unprecedented age of 32. He was instrumental in leading earth forces to victory against the Edhel Empire. His strategic mind was said to be unrivaled in all of earth’s command. After leading Earth forces to victory in the war he was given command of his own large military fleet. He command was his personally and he inducted all of the officers. The unit was referred to as the Hounds as Kel used them to prowl the borders of ECSC space’s borders looking for potential threats to the security of the ECSC. In his later life he came to be disaffected with the command structure of the ECSC military and that he was also highly critical of the way in which the ECSC was governed. Saying that they had “become too used to peace.” The Herder revolution was the last straw as far as Kel was concerned. He openly, decried the decision to allow the Herders to take control of the colonies they had seized and said that the ECSC navy should have crushed the rebellion and made an example out of the Herders the same way they did with the Edhel. The ECSC chose to ignore him. It was this decision which caused Kel to finally break with his long defended home. During a training mission Kel and his Hounds simply disappeared. An entire space fleet going missing is something that the ECSC noticed. Though the ECSC sent out searcher fleets none found a trace of Kel or his forces. It wasn’t until almost ten years later that Kel and his forces returned, much increased. The fleet, calling themselves the Kel Hound Empire, returned when the colonies were all leaving and informed the ECSC that they were seceding from ECSC jurisdiction, essentially deserting. No one knew what to do, the administrative strain from the colonies leaving was proving to be a great burden and as such they couldn’t really deal with Kel or his delusions of grandeur. It was not until years later when the various colony wars had settled down that the ECSC finally sent a fleet to investigate the space which had been claimed by Kel. The absentee admiral was long dead by this point but what he had left in his place was astonishing.

After only 35 years, the Kel Hounds had established a thriving empire and were still rapidly expanding their territory. This worried the ECSC for the were worried that they might eventually try to challenge the ECSC military, in order to help prevent such an outcome the ECSC signed peace treaties with the Kel Hound Empire and recognizing their claim on their space and forming an official peace treaty with their government.

Kel Hound Expansion:

In the tradition of their founder the Kel Hound Empire continued to expand long after Adm. Kel’s demise unlike many of the other human empires, the Kel hounds never ran into any alien races as they continued to expand. There region of space seemed to be completely dead. This certainly helped as they expanded there empire to much greater proportions than any of the other human powers.

The Barrunnen War:

The Kel hound empire had stopped expanding by this point and had settled into a comfortable existence as one of the greatest powers of the galaxy. However unbeknownst to them a new race was emerging into the galaxy. The first encounter which the Kel Hound had with the Barrunnen was when they encountered large scale colony fleets which were settling on world on the outer fringe of Kel hound space. The Kel Hounds were baffled that they had not run into this race before, since their space extended almost to the edge of the galaxy and they already explored well beyond the rim. Some suggested that this new race had come from another galaxy, but that was disregarded as intergalactic travel was said to be impossible. The Kel Hounds attempted to communicate with the various fleets but were completely ignored. The Kel Hound government paid this little mind until the fleets started to enter Kel Hound space and settle previously uncolonized worlds. Again attempts were made to communicate with the fleets but they were ignored.

The Kel Hound military finally got fed up with this and decided to launch a strike against the mystery fleets. The battle went poorly for the Kel Hounds resulting in a crushing defeat. However the Kel Hounds were nothing if not persistent. They tried to engage the fleets multiple times in order to drive them out of their space. The Kel Hounds began to make some headway against the intruders but every victory cost them dearly. The mysterious forces then began to actively push back against the Kel Hound fleets and were making significant head way. The Kel Hound forces were not numerous enough to hold back the advancing race. Defeat after defeat followed and it looked as if the great empire of Adm. Kel would be conquered. The final battle would took place over the Kel Hound capital world of Girou the Kel Hounds would drive the alien forces out or fade into history as a conquered people.

Earth Intervenes:

Before the battle could even begin a massive ECSC fleet comprised of over 250 vessels entered the Kel Hound home system and interposed themselves between the two fleets. The ECSC forces contacted the alien fleet and were actually answered. The aliens identified themselves as the Barrunnen imperium and the demanded to know why Earth was intervening in the battle. The earth forces explained that they had no wish to see the Kel Hound conquered. It turned out that the Barrunnen fleets had also been severely depleted by taking on the Kel hounds and they had no desire to pursue the war further but they were worried that the Kel Hounds would simply keep trying to destroy them even if they had offered terms of surrender. After some very tense negotiations with Earth acting as intermediaries the Barrunnen and the Kel Hounds managed to come to an agreement. The Kel hounds lost much of their territory to the Barrunnen but managed to retain most of their major colonies. They had little choice but to agree to whatever terms were set out since they did not have the forces to continue the war against the Barrunnen. After the signing of the Treaty of Alcord and the departure of the earth fleets the Barrunnen left to settle in to their new home and the Kel Hounds were left to lick their wounds.

The Bethelune Encounter:

After going through a recovery period and rebuilding their fleets the Kel Hound Empire began to try and re-expand their territory after having lost large sections of their empire to the Barrunnen. They began to once again explore space and colonize new worlds. They came across a world which seemed to be ideally habitable for establishing a new major colony. However when craft began landing on the surface of the world the vegetation became hostile and attacked and ripped apart both the landing craft and the people inside. The Kel Hound Central Command made the decision to fire bomb the world in order to kill off the hostile vegetation and make the world more suitable for colonization and fleet was organized and dispatched.

Earth intervenes again:

The fire-bombing and clearance of the world was going on as planned until a large earth fleet along with a number of ships from the Drakeen empire showed up and order them to stop. The Drakeen ship placed themselves in the lower atmosphere between the Kel Hounds and the actual planetary surface. The ECSC fleet explained the situation which was that the planet hosted a vast intelligence which was manipulating the vegetation on the world. The Drakeen began communicating with the intelligence in order to placate it and explain the situation. The being called itself the Bethelune and was not happy to have been put under such great pain.

After many negotiations from which Kel hound central command was mostly excluded, the Kel Hounds were presented with a treaty and told to sign it. The Kel Hounds were not happy about this but they agreed as they owed the ECSC for saving them in their war with the Barrunnen. After the treaty was signed the Kel Hounds withdrew from the Bethelune’s newly designated territory.

New History:

The Kel hounds have essentially now been boxed in fronted on all sides by other powers they are no longer able to grow as they once did, and so they have been unable to re establish their once great prominence in the galaxy much to their chagrin. However even now they prepare themselves to try and reclaim their lost glory all the wait on is an opportunity. The creeping darkness has yet to affect their systems but with what is happening now the time for the Kel Hounds to reclaim their lost glory may soon come.

Society and culture:

The Kel hounds are based around a strong military tradition which awards boldness and directive. In a way they’re much more conservative than many other powers. They tend to value initiative and innovation when it comes to ideas of military strategy. However in many ways they can be viewed as quite culturally backward. Their attitudes are what many would consider to be a traditional earth mind – set in that women are largely lacking in many positions of power and they are mostly seen as being those who should raise and care for children. This is not to say that there are no women in in positions of power, just that the gender ratio is hardly equal. This traditional, military, mindset is pervasive in that there is strict regimen to their society which is based around ideas of leadership and common cause as well as warrior ideas of honour and dedication. This honour code mentality also means that the Kel hounds as a people are usually also very easy to offend especially if someone makes an accusation of cowardice. Keep in mind that in their society cowardice is punishable by death in a military command position.

Government:

The Kel Hound government is built around ideas of a strict meritocracy. On the outside the society seems to be run as a strict military dictatorship the idea is that those who are naturally able to lead and command should be allowed to do so while those who are substandard should not be allowed to maove forward this strict system is made as a way to eliminate familial privilege and the pandering of ineffectual politicians. As their society sees soldiers as fulfilling the highest goods they also see soldiers as the natural leaders of their society.

Military doctrine:

The Kel hound military doctrine is mostly based around the same ideas as something like the Klingon military. A strong military tradition makes them natural conquerors and they are known for the brutal way in which they deal with their enemies. The Kel Hounds believe in a strict doctrine which forbids disgraces to ones honour and acts of cowardice. This mentality is carried over to their military tactics and ideas. This does not mean a fair fight, but it does mean that they usually try to avoid civilian casualties wherever possible.

Kel Hound Technology:

Fuel Cell Reactors: these reactors are used to power Kel Hound ships; they were placed as way to counter the EM piercing weapons of the Barrunnen. They have the following properties:

1. Each section of a Kel Hound ship is independently powered from the rest of the ship. If the main reactor goes critical or is turned off by an EM weapon the remaining reactors in the various sections maintain the power to the weapon systems and they remain capable of firing albeit without sensor locks.
2. If the engines are lost or turned off the fuel cells are capable of keeping the ship moving however the ship gains the unreliable ship penalty of being “sluggish” if the reactors are used in this way.
3. The reactors can perform both of these actions simultaneously if necessary.
4. the fuel cells contain far less explosive force than other reactors and as they are not centrally networked throughout the ship the loss of a reactor, even the main one, does not necessarily mean the loss of the ship, instead the destruction of a fuel cell results in 1d10 points of damage per 2 points of structure in the reactor to the structure of whatever section the reactor happens to be located in, apply armour.
5. If a reactor is destroyed or shuts off all the weapons in that section of the ship are considered to be turned off, this does not provide an additional power benefit. If the section has two reactors half the weapons fire is lost. The player decides what shuts down.
6. Because the ship sections are independently powered turning off systems does not allow for the additional power to be used outside of the section where the related fuel cell is located.

Questions or comment:

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