

TALISLANTA



A Player's Guide to Talislanta

TALISLANTA

FIFTH EDITION



20 Years... Still No Elves!

TALISLANTA
FANTASY ROLE PLAYING GAME
Fifth Edition

A Player's Guide to Talislanta

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<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/talislanta-1>

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: A TRAVELER'S GUIDE TO TALISLANTA	7
An Historical Overview	7
The Regions of Talislanta	10
The New Age to 603N.A.	32
CHAPTER TWO: RULES OF THE GAME	36
Attributes	39
Skills	45
Combat	48
Magic	63
Modes	68
Orders	86
CHAPTER THREE: CHARACTER CREATION	139
Player Character Races	140
CHAPTER FOUR: PATHS	207
CHAPTER FIVE: SKILLS AND QUIRKS	253
Skills	253
Quirks	271
Master Skills List	285
CHAPTER SIX: EQUIPMENT	287
Weapons & Armor	290
General Equipment	307
INDEX	320

A WORD FROM “*THE CREATOR*” — STEPHAN MICHAEL SECHI

It's been 20 years since the Talislanta RPG was first published by a small company called Bard Games, way back in 1987. Unfortunately, Bard Games only lasted a few years before it went out of business. Luckily, despite a few near-death experiences, Talislanta is still around.

Looking back on things, “luck” may well be the reason for Talislanta's continuing existence. The first lucky break came when my good friend, Joel Kaye, volunteered to put up the money to publish Talislanta after Bard Games changed ownership. The second break came when we published the first Talislanta books during the the RPG boom of the mid-1980s, when even small game companies like Bard could sell

more than 5,000 copies per title (alas, those days are long gone).

After the unfortunate demise of Bard Games, it was lucky that a then-struggling named Wizards of the Coast was there to license Talislanta (thanks, Lisa), and publish even more Talislanta titles.

Following the WotC era, Talislanta had a run of bad luck (and bad licensees) that luckily came to an end thanks to Shooting Iron, which boldly took on an old RPG, published a massive blue tome for Tal's long-suffering fans, and created the first Talislanta website (thanks again, John and Jon).

When SI closed down, Talislanta was lucky that Morrigan Press came along to publish a whole new line of books and supplements—including this 20th Anniversary, 5th Edition of the game. Thanks to Scott Agnew, his people, and everyone who contributed to this version of the game.

Talislanta has always been lucky to have some of the greatest artists in the RPG biz, who together helped define the unique look and feel of the Talislanta milieu. Big thanks here to P.D. Breeding-Black, Ron Spencer, Todd C. Hamilton, Richard Thomas, Larry Dixon, Anson Maddocks, Mark Tedin, Adam Black, and Richard Wallace.

But most of all, from the start Talislanta has been lucky to have had the coolest, most loyal fans in the RPG biz. Without them, Talislanta would have gone the way of the dinosaurs long ago. This book is for all of you, with many, many thanks.

SMS



ON THE CREATION OF TALISLANTA

The Talislanta electronic mailing list currently has over 600 members and many have sent questions to Morrigan Press about the early days of Talislanta and how this incredible world came into being. Stephan Sechi attempts to address these queries here:

The Talislanta milieu evolved over the course of several years, starting with a home-grown D&D campaign that somehow veered deep into uncharted territory, evolved into the Atlantis legends, then somehow took on a life of its own.

The first adventure that ever took place in Talislanta occurred when a Druas NPC (from an Atlantis campaign) led a bunch of (converted D&D) PCs into a strange new world in order to help a wizard hunter track down the reincarnation of an old enemy. That strange new world turned out to be Talislanta, which prior to that adventure had been mentioned once in the three Atlantis books, but never explained—mainly because I had no idea of what Talislanta was at that time. [EDITOR'S NOTE: Interested Talislanta fans may want to check out *Atlantis: The Second Age*, also available from Morrigan Press Inc.]

The real work on Talislanta started after I quit my day job (don't try this at home, kids), stopped working as a musician, and started putting in 14-hour days writing, taking notes, and drawing hundreds of character and creature sketches. My main objective was to create a fantasy world that was not based on European mythology, as most other RPGs had done; hence the "No Elves" slogan, which we used in Talislanta ads that we later ran in Dragon Magazine.

I read all of Jack Vance's *Dying Earth* books, Lovecraft's *The Dreamquest of Unknown Kadath*, Marco Polo's *The Travels*, and back issues of *Heavy Metal* magazine (especially Druillette's *Salambo*, in which if you look closely enough you might find the inspiration for the Jhangarans). And I confess to partaking of one of Turkey's finest products nightly, which helped inspire most of the visual elements of Talislanta, and some remarkably lucid dreams I had of actually visiting Talislanta.

I got the idea for Tamerlin from *The Travels*, which made me think that a fantasy version of Marco Polo might make a pretty cool character; he became the

narrator for the first Talislanta book, *The Chronicles of Talislanta*, and made writing creating the milieu even more fun. It took about two months to write *The Chronicles*, then another month or so to write the rule system and *Naturalist's Guide*.

The inspiration for specific Talislantan creatures and races is almost impossible for me to pinpoint. Most started with a rough idea which then evolved into something more elaborate; most of the better ideas came to me once I began drawing design sketches, which I always did late at night (in a not-exactly-smoke-free environment). Some, such as the Tarkus and Bodor, were musical in-jokes. The rest came from years of reading comic books, fantasy and sci-fi novels, history books, *Heavy Metal*, and the hundred or more old issues of *National Geographic* that someone left in the apartment I'd moved into.

The first party of adventures created for a Talislanta campaign was comprised of a Thrall, a Cymrilian Wizard, a Jaka, a Sarista, and a Dhuna. Over

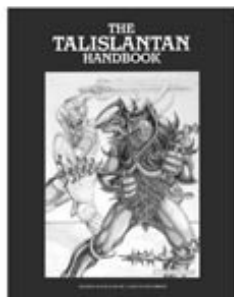
the course of a year or so they had the fortune (and occasionally, the misfortune) of meeting such luminaries as Tamerlin, Crystabal, Shadowmoon, Rune, and an assorted cast of Rajan assassins, Aamanians, Phantasian Dream Merchants, Bodor, Beastmen, Za, Orgovian traders, and just about every hostile life-form on the continent. All survived, and we all had a great time while play-testing and fleshing-out the world of Talislanta.

Lastly, some folks wanted to know if I was still keeping any parts of Talislanta secret, and if I have any plans to release those secrets. The best answer to that question would be to say that I still have some ideas that I never had a chance to explore, and that I hope to do so someday. The Midnight Realm book was one of them; other Unknown Lands would also be fun to get into, time permitting. If I do, I promise you'll be the first to know. :)

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The Chronicles of Talislanta
Bard Games 1987



First Edition
Bard Games 1987



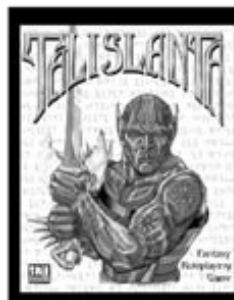
Second Edition
Bard Games 1989



Third Edition
Wizards of the Coast 1992



Fourth Edition
Shooting Iron 2001



d20 Edition
Morrigan Press 2005



Fifth Edition
Morrigan Press 2007

Twenty Years of Talislanta



CHAPTER ONE

A TRAVELER'S GUIDE TO TALISLANTA



AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In order to acquire an understanding of the modern-day Talislantan continent, the aspiring traveler should first learn something of its ancient past — a tenuous undertaking, as the history of Talislanta is unfortunately somewhat indistinct. The lack of reliable data concerning Talislanta's distant past can be directly attributed to the occurrence of an event known as The Great Disaster, a terrible cataclysm that laid waste to much of the Talislantan continent many centuries ago. What is currently known (or believed to be true) of this bygone epoch — gleaned from a smattering of ancient tomes, folk tales, and legends — may be summarized as follows:

THE FORGOTTEN AGE

The period predating The Great Disaster, appropriately referred to by scholars as the Forgotten Age, can be divided into two eras: The Time Before Time, and The Archaen Age. The former period was dominated by the fabled First Folk, humanoid peoples believed to have been of reptilian and/or amphibious origin; as records from this period are almost non-existent, very little is known of these folk. The mammalian humanoids known as the Wild Races (or “sub-men”, in the derogatory sense) appeared towards the end of this halcyon epoch, but remained subservient to the First Folk until the emergence of the Archaens.

Like the Wild Races from whom they were descended, the Archaens were a tribe of simple hunter-

gatherers. One day they stumbled upon the remains of an alien ark or vessel, within which they found the secrets of a mysterious lore called Magic. Armed with their new-found knowledge, the Archaens united the Wild Races and embarked upon a great war against the First Folk. When it was over the First Folk had all been slain or driven from the continent, and the Wild Races ruled over Talislanta. So began the Archaen Age.

THE ARCHAEN AGE

At first, relations between the Archaens and their more primitive brothers were amicable. However, as the Archaens delved deeper into the arcane arts they grew strange and aloof. Using magic they altered their physical semblances, so that they began to look less and less like their feral ancestors. They laid claim to the best hunting lands, cut down forests, and erected walled settlements for their own people. Their settlements expanded, became cities, and then citystates.

It was not long before the Wild Folk came to resent the Archaens, and to despise and fear their magics. Tensions between the two sides escalated, exacerbated by internecine struggles between rival Archaen citystates. Wars of conquest and expansion flared across the continent, some lasting for hundreds of years. After much bloodshed, a group of seven Archaen magicians known as the Archaen Cabal ar-

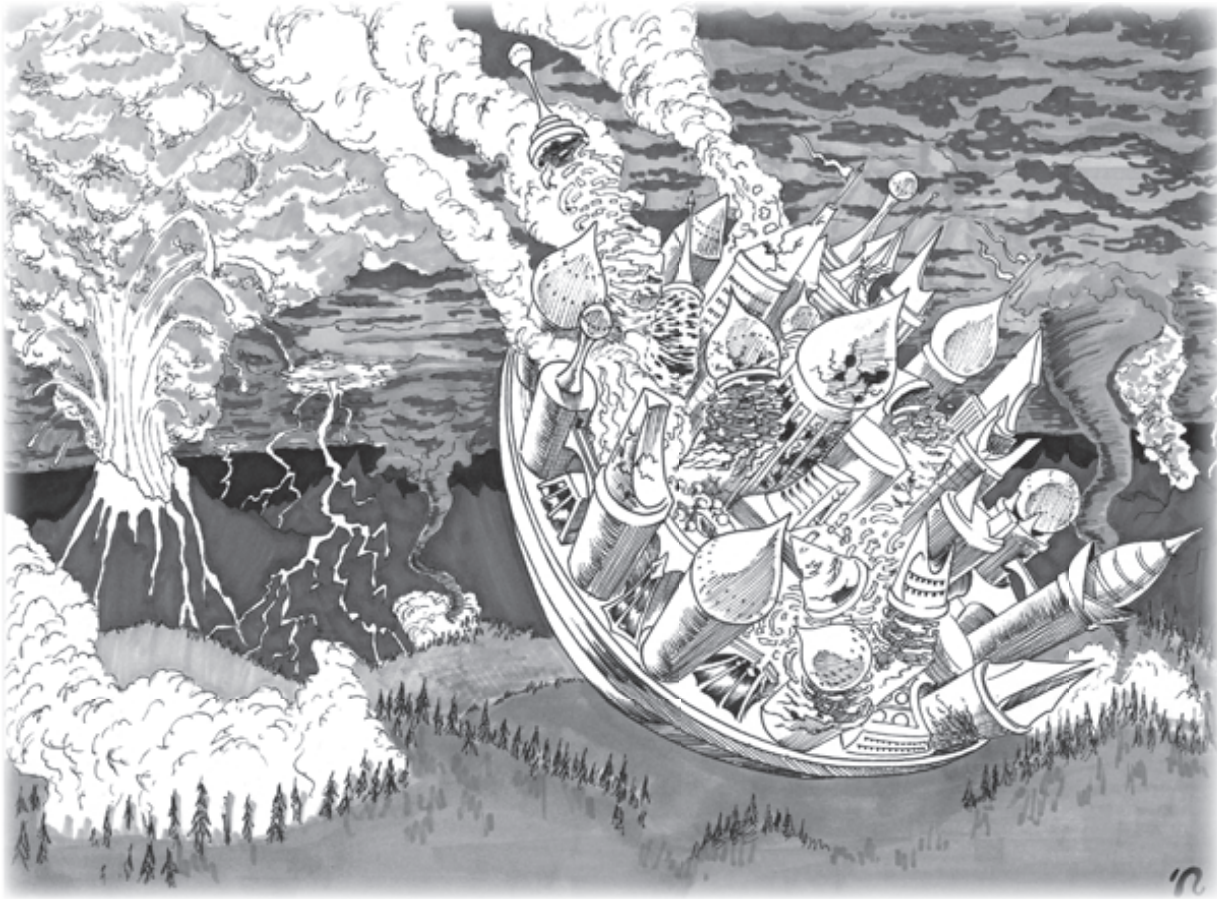


ranged a truce. Under the terms of this agreement the Archaens ceded all the lands of Talislanta to the Wild Races. Then they left the world below and went to live among the clouds, where their magicians had created a fabulous floating city.

A Golden Age of magical achievement and discovery followed, lasting for several centuries. Some of the greatest magicians ever known were extant during this time: names such as the estimable Korraq, the sorceress Sytan, and the brilliant but reckless Arkon. Unfortunately, the Archaens' prosperity soon gave way to decadence and ennui, manifesting in what is now known as the Age of Decline. Seeking new and ever more extravagant sensations, the Archaens dabbled in forbidden magics, created hybrid life forms for their amusement, and consorted with entities from other planes. A few conscientious individuals tried to intervene, warning that the balance of elemental forces had been upset, and that grievous consequences would result unless the Archaens changed their ways. None heeded their warnings, until it was too late.

THE GREAT DISASTER

To this day, the precise cause of The Great Disaster remains a source of speculation. Some blame the Archaens' excessive use of magic, which they claim damaged the dimensional fabric separating Talislanta from other, alternate realities. Others, citing ancient prophecies, attribute the Disaster to divine or diabolical origins. Still others blame the ill-advised tamperings of a wizard named Rodinn. Whatever its source, The Disaster brought a swift end to the Archaen Age. In the ensuing cataclysm the sky-cities fell from the clouds, much of the continent was razed, and the Talislantan reality was altered forever.



THE AGE OF CONFUSION

There followed a period known as The Age of Confusion, during which the survivors of The Great Disaster scattered in all directions, abandoning the ruined cities and fleeing into the wilderness. Untold years passed before Talislantans once again began to establish settlements. Those that managed to survive to the present time are but pale shadows of the once-great civilizations that came before them. Yet together they have given birth to a New Age, whose history is only now beginning to be written.

THE NEW AGE

Currently in its sixth century, the New Age remains a volatile and uncertain era. A handful of young nations, citystates, and confederations has risen from the ruins of the past: the Seven Kingdoms, Carantheum, the Quan Empire, Faradun, and a few others. At best these places constitute little more than isolated pockets of "civilization", scattered across the

vastness of the Talislantan continent. Beyond the walls of these cities lay hostile wilderlands rife with wild beasts, savage tribes, and impassable terrain.

Forged in the fires of its past, Talislanta still bears the scars of The Great Disaster. Once-fertile territories have been reduced to deserts and wastelands; storms of aberrant magical energies sweep across the continent; the remnants of ancient empires lay buried in the dust of ages. Across the continent, descendants of the Wild Races and Archaens still wage war, neither trusting the other. Magicians attempt to control forces beyond their comprehension, while prophets of doom warn of the coming of a second Great Disaster.

Yet for all its problems, Talislanta is not without wonders: enchanted vistas of heart-rending beauty, ancient forests untouched by time, glittering ice castles, the spectacular sight of a twin sunset, lost riches waiting to be found, and ancient secrets still to be unearthed. This, then, is the state of Talislanta in the New Age.

THE SEVEN KINGDOMS

The territories designated as the Seven Kingdoms represent a loosely organized confederation of seven separate city states, each ruled by its own king. Established during the New Age by the descendants of various peoples displaced by the Great Disaster, the Seven Kingdoms share a common government, known as the Council of Kings. The seven member nations of this unique confederation are: Cymril, Durne, Sindar, Astar, Taz, Vardune and Kasmir.

The Seven Kingdoms' Council of Kings meets once a month at the Royal Palace in Cymril. Though relations between the member nations are usually good, the seven kings seem to be constantly squabbling over petty laws, tariffs, boundary lines, prices for trade goods, and so forth. A majority vote decides all issues, except in the case of a four-to-three decision, known as an "impasse." Whenever a Council ends in an impasse, there is no official ruling on the subject, and each kingdom is free to establish its own laws and guidelines on the issue in question until the following Council. As might be expected, this often leads to incredible confusion. Laws may change abruptly, curfews or new tariffs may be instituted, and prices for goods or tolls may fluctuate wildly.

Keeping the confederation secure from without, bands of Thralls, mounted on rugged Mangonel Lizards, patrol the northern and eastern borderlands in force. Contingents of Blue Aeriad guard the western and southern borders, plying the river in barge-forts and armed with crescent knives and dart throwers. It is little wonder, then, that the Seven Kingdoms are considered among the safest places on the continent.

ASTAR

Astar is a land of sylvan glades, lakes and streams. Here dwell the last of an ancient and enchanting race of beings known as the Muses. Nymph-like creatures believed to be of magical origin, the Muses are the most beautiful of the humanoid races. Their bodies are slender and lithe, their features delicate and exquisitely fashioned. They dress in translucent gowns, shaded in hues complementing the colors of their butterfly-like wings, skin and hair: pastel blue, aquamarine, turquoise, violet, and rose, to name just a few.

The Muses of Astar are by nature flighty and irresponsible. Most are content to lay about, dream-



ing secret dreams, sipping the nectar of flowers, or gazing at butterflies, birds and Muses of the opposite sex. As the mood suits them, they may project a thought, an idea, or a mental picture to another Muse or some other creature. All Muses possess this unusual ability, the range and scope of which supposedly increase with practice. The Muses have no settlements, but tend to congregate in small groups scattered throughout the scenic woodlands of Astar. They possess a natural talent for all artistic pursuits, and create enchanting musical instruments, tapestries of colored gossamer and other fine goods, but only when stricken by inspiration.

The Muses of Astar have no king or queen, but draw straws once each month to determine who is to represent their people at the Council of Kings in Cymril. The holder of the short straw is crowned king or queen, as the situation dictates. Though some few of curious bent become adventurers, most Muses are quite content to spend their lives in Astar. Were it not for the occasional visitor from Thaecia (whose people greatly admire the Muses' telepathic talents) or other parts of the Seven Kingdoms, few Muses would know little of the rest of Talislanta.

CYMRIL

Cymril is the erstwhile capital of the Seven Kingdoms, this due as much to the country's central location as anything else. Here dwell the Cymrilians, the descendants of the Phandre, a race of wizards and magicians exiled long ago from the now-defunct Phaedran dynasty. Tall and slender in stature, they have pale green skin and hair, with golden eyes and placid features. There are no prerequisites regarding fashion; all types of exotic apparel are in vogue, though magicians continue to favor the high-collared cloaks worn by their ancient ancestors, the Phandre.

Sweeping hills and light forest dominate much of the Cymrilian countryside, which is largely uninhabited save for scattered villages and hamlets. The greatest part of the population lives in the enchanting capital of Cymril, a city of convoluted spires and archways constructed almost entirely of green glass. Here, the Cymrilian magicians practice their arts, creating wondrous windships (sail-powered vessels which ride the winds), potions, powders and other magical adjuncts. Cymril's artisans are unsurpassed in the Western Lands, and are the continent's lead-

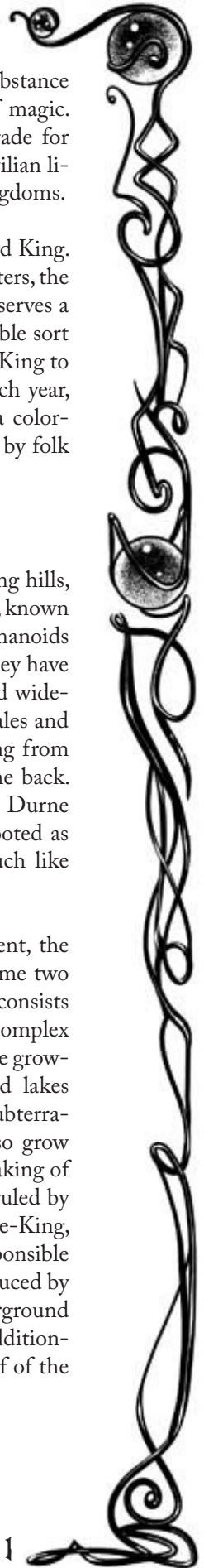
ing suppliers of amberglass, a crystalline substance with numerous practical uses in the field of magic. Caravans from many lands come here to trade for Cymrilian wares, aquavit (an expensive Cymrilian liqueur), and goods from across the Seven Kingdoms.

The ruler of Cymril is known as the Wizard King. Usually the most capable of Cymril's spell casters, the Wizard King is elected by popular vote, and serves a term of two or three years. If he is a reasonable sort of fellow, the populace will allow the Wizard King to remain in power for the full term. Once each year, the city of Cymril hosts the Magical Fair, a colorful spectacle lasting two weeks and attended by folk from all across Talislanta.

DURNE

Durne is a land of grassy knolls, gently rising hills, and sparse woodlands. The folk who live here, known as the Gnomekin, are a diminutive race of humanoids that average just over three feet in height. They have nut-brown complexions, muscular bodies and wide-eyed, almost child-like features. Both the males and females have a crest of soft, black fur running from the center of the forehead to the small of the back. Despite their small size, the Gnomekin of Durne are quite strong, and are as agile and sure-footed as mountain goats. Their language sounds much like the purring of cats.

The Gnomekin have but a single settlement, the subterranean city of Durne. Constructed some two hundred feet below ground, the settlement consists of numerous cave dwellings connected by a complex maze of tunnels. Large caverns are used for the growing of mushrooms and tubers, underground lakes serving as hatcheries for several species of subterranean fish and mollusks. The Gnomekin also grow amber crystals, raw materials useful in the making of magical orbs and scrying devices. Durne is ruled by an hereditary monarch known as the Gnome-King, a personage of some local renown. He is responsible for determining fair prices for the goods produced by his peoples, which are delivered via the Underground Highway to Cymril once each month. Additionally, the Gnome-King is commander-in-chief of the country's small but feisty army.



KASMIR

Kasmir is an arid region bordered to the south by the Jaspar Mountains and to the east by the Wilderlands of Zaran. The folk who live here, called the Kasmir, are short and lean, with odd-looking shriveled features. They dress in hooded cloaks, loose robes and sandals, and carry concealed weapons (such as spring-knives and blade staves) on their persons at all times.

The Kasmirans are a wealthy people, though how they acquired their fortune is unknown; some say they were once partners of the Djaffir. Whatever their history, the Kasmir are renowned throughout the continent as misers. Their metal smiths construct the most ingenious and elaborate locking mechanisms, traps and vaults. Kasmir money lenders and appraisers are unexcelled in their craft. They finance caravans, purchase and re-sell large quantities of goods, and lend money to fund ventures of many different sorts, typically at somewhat high rates. The Djaffir merchant tribes, who still do business with the Kasmir from time to time, commonly refer to them as "Tu-Beshal" (meaning "blood-suckers", though the term carries certain lewd connotations as well).

The capital city of Kasmir is a veritable fortress, guarded by mercenary Thralls from Taz. Here the Kasmir live in windowless stone towers, their doors barred and locked against thieves. The ruler of these people, known simply as the King of Kasmir, holds his job only as long as the wealthy Kasmir money-changers feel he is effectively representing their best interests. Should he fail to live up to their expectations, the King is beheaded and a new ruler chosen. Despite the high pay and numerous perquisites, the position of King is one which few Kasmir aspire to.

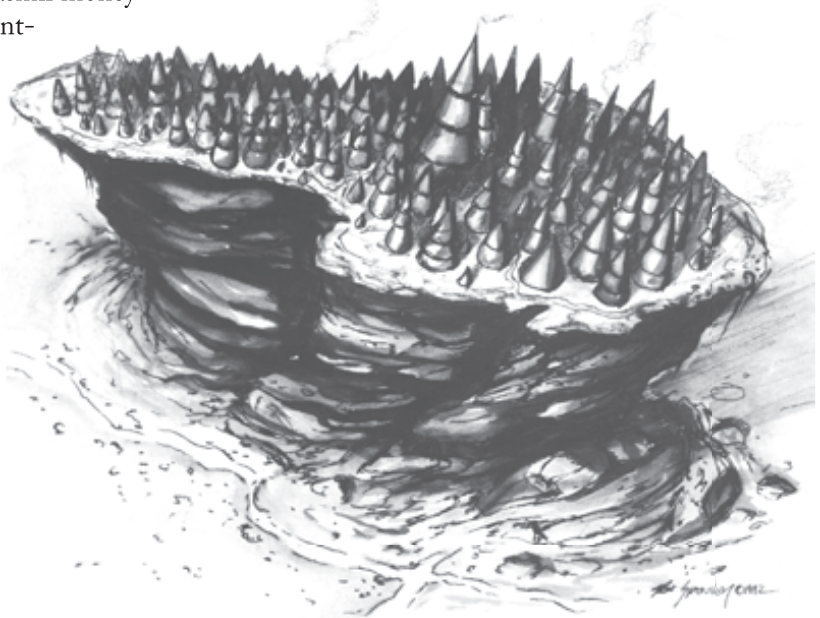
At the eastern border of Kasmir is a great stone bridge which spans the yawning chasm known as the Dead River. Built by the Sindarans, the bridge is exceptionally sturdy, but a bit narrow. It will accommodate only a single wagon, or perhaps three mounted

men riding abreast of one another, at a time. As such, large caravans can sometimes cause considerable delays when attempting to traverse the span. A toll of one gold lumen per person five gold lumens per wagon or other conveyance) is collected by mercenary Thrall guards, stationed night and day at a fortified complex adjacent to the bridge. Alternatives to this costly route are limited to the free bridges at Sindar and Danuvia, both of which are constructed along similar lines.

SINDAR

Sindar is a land of towering mesas, arches, and strange configurations of time-worn stone. Underground springs and geysers are the only sources of water in this region, which is bordered to the east by the barren canyons of the Dead River. The folk who live here are known as the Sindarans. They stand over seven feet in height, are emaciated in build, and have wrinkled, sandy-colored skin. Sindarans have a row of horn-like nodules running from the crown of the head to the back of the neck, dividing the brain into two independently operating organs. Their earlobes are long and distended, and a curved spur of bone protrudes from beneath the chin.

The Sindarans live in small communes, each situated atop a large mesa or some similarly prominent topographical feature. Their dwellings are elegant tiered structures built of carved stone blocks and hard-



woods imported from Vardune and Taz. Gossamer curtains, dyed various shades of orange and burnt umber, serve as the outer walls of the Sindarans' structures. Billowing gracefully in the warm breezes, the curtains provide a measure of privacy while retaining a feeling of wide-open spaces. Communication between Sindaran communes is possible by means of large, reflective crystals, mounted on tripod stands and used to flash messages from one outpost to the next. In this way, information may be passed rapidly throughout the country.

The Sindarans are renowned as collectors, from menageries of rare beasts to ancient scrolls, coins, curios and objects of art. To finance their private collections, they create fine wares of silver and precious stones (both common in the region), which they sell for gold in Cymril. When not preoccupied with their collections, Sindarans enjoy playing Trivarian, a complex game which other races find incomprehensible. The drinking of Skoryx, a potent liquor of rare qualities, is also a favored pastime. The national color of Sindar is orange.

TAZ

Taz is a land of thick jungle fading into the swampy mire of neighboring Mog. Here lives the strange race of humanoids known as the Thralls. Bred by the sorcerers of some ancient and forgotten kingdom as an army of slave warriors, the Thralls are tall and muscular of build. Hairless and devoid of pigmentation, they are distinguishable only by sex; otherwise, all Thralls look exactly alike. In defiance of this inbred genetic trait, the Thralls decorate their bodies from head to toe with wildly elaborate tattoos, thereby attaining some degree of individuality.

The Thralls of Taz live in great communal complexes constructed of cut stone blocks, all of which look very much alike. Bred for combat, the Thralls know no other life. Most serve as protectors of the Seven Kingdoms, guarding the various border regions or working as sentinels, caravan guards, and so on. Those of a more creative nature sometimes hire out as mercenaries. The Thralls are ruled by an individual known as the Warrior-King (or Queen, as the case may be) of Taz. The position is open to challenge by duel once every year, the winner being accorded ruling status.

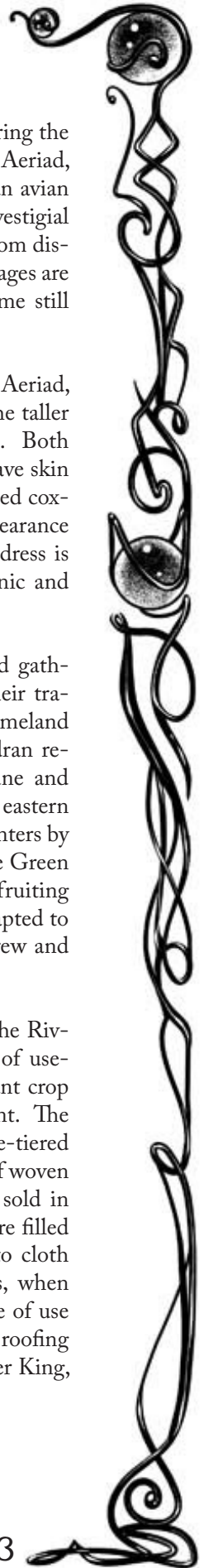
VARDUNE

Vardune is a densely forested region bordering the Axis River to the west. Its inhabitants, the Aeriad, are a race in the process of devolving from an avian to a ground-dwelling species. The Aeriad's vestigial wings, once used for flying, have atrophied from disuse. For the majority of Aeriad, these appendages are more decorative than functional, though some still use them for gliding.

There are two sub-species of Aeriad: Green Aeriad, who seldom exceed five feet in height, and the taller and somewhat more aggressive Blue Aeriad. Both species are slender and frail in stature, and have skin which glistens with a metallic sheen. A crested coxcomb of feathers adds to the distinctive appearance of these folk. By contrast, their manner of dress is simple and austere, and includes a short tunic and cape of plain viridian linen.

Formerly a race of sky-roving hunters and gatherers, the Aeriad were forced to abandon their traditional way of life when their ancestral homeland was annexed by the forces of the old Phaedran regime. They settled in the forests of Vardune and built a number of small settlements along the eastern banks of the Axis River. The Blue Aeriad, hunters by trade, became the protectors of their race; the Green Aeriad, with their knowledge of seeds and fruiting plants, became horticulturists. They soon adapted to their new existence, and their settlements grew and prospered.

The largest of the Aeriad's settlements is the River City of Vashay, renowned as a producer of useful herbs and plants. Vashay's most important crop is viridia, a giant species of pod-bearing plant. The breathtaking bridge at Vashay and the triple-tiered terrace dwellings of the Aeriad are all made of woven viridia tendrils, as are many other products sold in this region. The plant's ten-foot long pods are filled with a fibrous down which can be spun into cloth (called viridian linen); the pods themselves, when cured, cut to specifications and lacquered, are of use in the making of small skiffs, wagons and roofing materials. The ruler of the Aeriad is the River King, who may be either a Blue or Green Aeriad.



THE WESTERN LANDS

AAMAN

Aaman is a land of low hills and wooded glens, bordered to the east by the Axis River and to the west by the Sea of Sorrow. Formerly part of the old Phaedran Empire, Aaman was one of the independent nations formed following the long and bloody Cult Wars, which pitted the Orthodoxists against the Paradoxists. The people of Aaman, called the Aamanians, are governed by an intolerant theocracy under the Hierophant, high priest of the Orthodoxist Cult and absolute ruler of the realm.

The capital of Aaman is Aamahd, a city of faceless white buildings. The Hierophant lives here in a mighty tower of ivory-colored stone, attended by his most trusted advisors. These include the monitors, who keep a watchful eye on the populace, and the inquisitors, who are entrusted with the ritual "purification" of sinners. Aamahd overlooks the most bizarre and spectacular structure in the region, the Great Barrier Wall that separates Aaman from its traditional enemy Zandu.

In the last few years, the new Hierophant has solidified his position in the theocracy, employing cadres of witch hunters to liquidate his enemies. Under his direction, the Aamanians have intensified their efforts to gain converts to the Orthodoxist Cult. Sources in neighboring Zandu claim that a large number of these converts are being used to expand the Aamanian military. Of concern to the Seven Kingdoms is the rumor that the Hierophant covets the Archaen Codex, which he claims is a lost book of the Omnival, the cult's sacred scriptures.

ARIM

Arim is a land of rough and irregular hills, interspersed with grassy steppes and thickets of stunted oak and briar. The people who live in this gray and windy realm, known as the Arimites, are a dour and moody lot. They have no love of song or dance, but favor chakos, a fiery liquor brewed in black iron kegs.



There are three settlements of note in Arim: the mining and trade center of Shattrra, the citadel of Akbar, and the Forbidden City of Ahrazahd. The country is ostensibly ruled by a figure known as the Exarch, a recluse who dwells in the Forbidden City. In reality, the true power in Arim lies in the hands of the Revenants, a cult of assassins who specialize in "revenge-for-hire." Their leader is said to be a powerful assassin-mage who lives in a mountaintop sanctum. The Revenants' influence is now believed to extend across the continent, though they have tempered their methods somewhat in order to increase profitability. It is now possible to "buy back" a contract at double the original price.

SILVANUS

Silvanus is a hilly, woodland region located to the west of the Necros River and the Forests of Were-wood. These scenic woodlands serve as home base for the Sarista gypsy tribes, a nomadic folk of indistinct origin. The Sarista are renowned for their talents as folk healers, fortune tellers, and performers--or as mountebanks, charlatans, and tricksters, depending upon your point of view. They travel in loose-knit tribal groups, carrying all that they own in wagons or on the backs of burden beasts. Their caravans roam the western lands from Silvanus to the Seven Kingdoms.

WEREWOOD

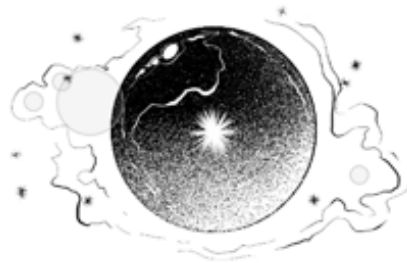
Werewood is a dark and tangled forest situated to the north of Zandu. The sunless woods of this region reverberate with strange and frightening sounds: the baleful cries of werebeasts on the hunt, the sinister laughter of banes, the rustling of mandragores as they uproot themselves and scuttle through the underbrush. Underground, the subterranean creatures known as Weirdlings hoard their wealth in garishly decorated burrows, while Gnorls gather secrets for sale. The Dhuna, a primitive people regarded as witches, make their home in the deep forests of this region.

ZANDU

Zandu is a land of gentle hills and sparse woodlands, shifting to deep forests along its northern borders and western coast. The inhabitants of this region are the Zandir, a people diametrically opposed to their neighbors, the Aamanians. Unlike their drab counterparts in Aaman, the Zandir are known for their colorful customs and liberal sensibilities. Most are Paradoxists, who profess to be mystified by their own existence. The tenets of the Zandir "religion" are perhaps best explained in the Paradoxist text *The Great Mysteries* (author unknown), a lengthy book filled with over one hundred thousand questions, and no answers.

Zanth is the capital of Zandu and a beautiful city of copper spires, minarets, and arched cause-ways. The Sultan of Zandu lives here, in a fabulous palace gilded with silver and gold leaf. Like Aamahd, the capital of Aaman, Zanth was once part of the ancient Phaedran city of Badijan, which was divided in two following the conclusion of the Cult Wars.

In response to the increasingly militaristic posturing of neighboring Aaman, the Sultan of Zandu has placed the Zandir military on full alert and fortified the Great Barrier Wall that separates the two rival states. These moves have served to increase tensions between the two rival states and have led to speculation that a second series of Cult Wars may be imminent.



THE WILDERLANDS OF ZARAN

From the borders of the Seven Kingdoms to the Volcanic Hills, the vast territories of the Wilderlands of Zaran occupy much of the central sector of Talislanta. Here lie the ruins of many long-dead civilizations of the Forgotten Age. Much of the devastation caused by The Great Disaster took place within this region, which has remained largely uncivilized since that time. While featureless wastelands comprise much of the Wilderlands of Zaran, the area is not without certain points of interest.

THE ABERRANT FOREST

The Aberrant Forest is a weird and grotesque woodland, the origins of which may be attributed to The Great Disaster. All manner of bizarre flora and fauna can be found in this place, though nothing that lives here is as nature intended it to be. The plants and trees of this region appear heedless of natural law, growing to immense proportions or becoming impossibly gnarled and twisted in form. Murky streams flow uphill, stagnant ponds move slowly across the land, and at times the very ground seems to undulate as if alive. The forest was once home to the mad wizard Rodinn, whom some believe was responsible for causing The Great Disaster.

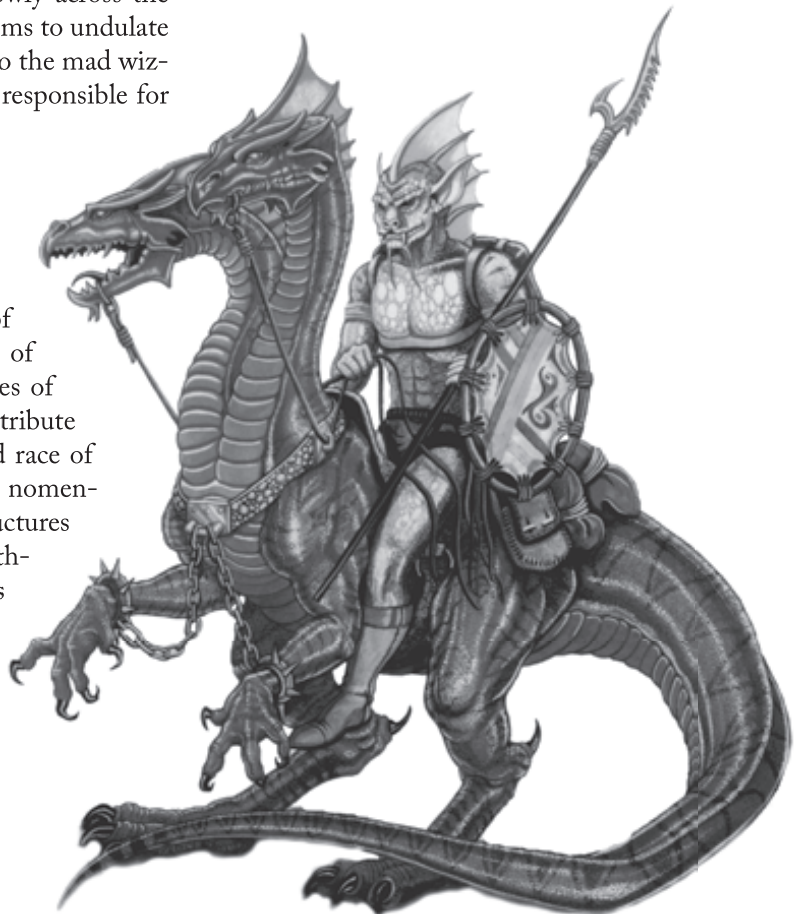
THE LABYRINTHS OF SHARNA

South of the desert kingdom of Carantheum stand the Labyrinths of Sharna, a group of mazelike structures of certifiable antiquity. Some scholars attribute these ruins to the Sharn, a long-dead race of whom little is known; others say the nomenclature is incorrect, and that these structures should be attributed to the Shan, another ancient race whose homeland was destroyed by fire during The Great Disaster. The area about the ruins is populated by Ferrans, rodent-like humanoids of short stature who live in underground tunnel complexes, coming forth in groups to scrounge for food or to rob unwary travelers of their possessions. Also found in

this region are the Wanderers of Ashann, who represent the last of the Shan. They are sometimes encountered walking among the rubble of Talislanta's ruined cities, as if searching for something lost long ago.

THE KHARAKHAN WASTES

To the northeast lie the Kharakhan Wastes, a region despoiled by firestorms and other unnatural phenomena during the time of The Great Disaster. The burned and blackened ruins of Kharakhan, a city once occupied by a race of giants, stand here like massive tombstones, dismal monuments of a bygone era. Oversized artifacts and curios litter the subterranean levels of the ruined city. This region is now home to the Araq, a hybrid of man and Sauran created during the Forgotten Age. The Araq are warlike and prejudiced in the extreme, marking all other races as hated foes.



THE BARRENS

The Barrens is a region of rocky hills, salt flats, and scrub plains. Herds of land lizards, valued throughout Talislanta as pack and burden beasts, roam this area in great numbers. Also native to the alkali plains of this sector are mangonel lizards, a combative species of reptile employed as war-steeds by the Thralls of Taz and the primitive tribes who dwell in this desolate sector, the Danelek.

THE CITY-STATE OF MARUK

The city-state of Maruk was once a prosperous center of trade until it gradually fell into ruin, the victim of a mysterious curse. The impoverished inhabitants, called the Marukans, are considered harbingers of doom in many lands, and are shunned as if they were carriers of the plague. With the Sub--Men threatening, many of the downtrodden denizens of Maruk are preparing to flee to safer locales.

THE CITY-STATE OF DANUVIA

The city-state of Danuvia is a great stone citadel established long ago by moderate factions who fled the old Phaedran Empire around the time of the Cult Wars. The city is ruled by a gynocracy, with females holding all positions of importance, including all military positions. In the face of recent developments, Danuvia has mobilized for war with the Sub-Men.

THE CITY-STATE OF HADJ

The city-state of Hadj is situated in the middle of an arid plain that stretches for miles in all directions. The folk who live here, called the Hadjin, are among the wealthiest of all Talislantan peoples. The source of their great fortune comes from the Hadjin Ruins, ancient hollow obelisks that contain the mummified remains of a race of magician-kings interred along with their most prized possessions. Over the past several years, Hadj has become renowned as a resort for wealthy Talislantans, a reputation the Hadjin are workign to cultivate.

THE DISPLACED PEOPLES

A number of displaced peoples inhabit or traverse the territories of the Wilderlands. Most are descended from those who survived The Great Disaster, their homelands long abandoned and fallen into ruin. Some are refugees from the Quan Empire; others are members of dying races. The most common of these include the Bodor, consummate musicians who possess the ability to see sound as colors; the Nagra, a primitive folk renowned as spirit trackers; the Rahastrans, a people skilled in the art of Cartomancy; the Xambrians, whose ancestors were nearly exterminated by the ancient Torquarans and who now operate as wizard hunters; the dying race of Kharakhan Giants and the Yitek, a race of nomadic tomb robbers.



THE DESERT KINGDOMS

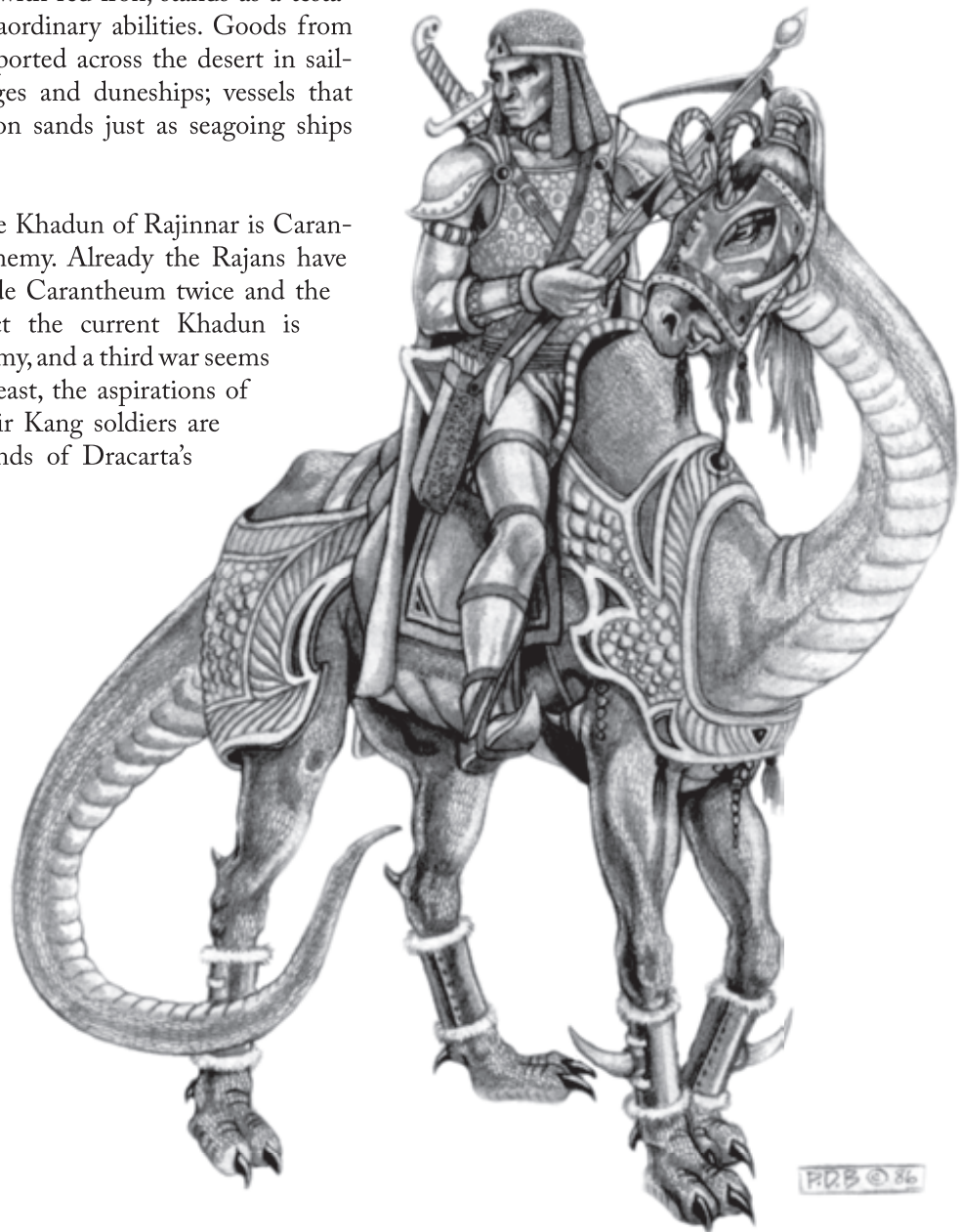
CARANTHEUM

The kingdom of Carantheum is located in the Red Desert, a great expanse of scarlet sand surrounded on all sides by the Wilderlands of Zaran. This region is home to the Dracartans, a race of former nomads who settled in the Red Desert centuries ago. Carantheum is famed for its thaumaturges, who are greatly esteemed for the wondrous products they create. The city of Dracarta, its towering obelisks and three-fold outer walls plated with red iron, stands as a testament to their extraordinary abilities. Goods from Dracarta are transported across the desert in sail-powered land barges and duneships; vessels that traverse the crimson sands just as seagoing ships ply the seas.

To the south, the Khadun of Rajinnar is Carantheum's greatest enemy. Already the Rajans have attempted to invade Carantheum twice and the Dracartans suspect the current Khadun is amassing a great army, and a third war seems inevitable. To the east, the aspirations of the Quan and their Kang soldiers are always on the minds of Dracarta's rulers.

DJAFFA

The land of Djaffa consists primarily of scrub plains and parched desert interspersed with a few scattered oases. This place is home to a nomadic folk known as the Djaffir, who are divided into two tribes: merchant traders and bandits. The caravans of the merchant tribes carry goods to and from the civilized countries of Talislanta, from as far west as Zandu to the eastern lands of the Quan Empire and even Xanadas.



The Djaffir bandit tribes, though fewer in number, are nearly as ubiquitous as their mercantile counterparts. The similarities are such that some believe the distinction between Djaffir merchants and bandits is one of semantics only. Both tribes are governed by a single ruler, who is known as the Caliph.

As in the past, the Caliph remains among Carantheum's staunchest allies. However, he is beset by troubles of his own. The Beastmen and Za tribes have inhibited the ability of the Djaffir merchant tribes to convey goods through the Wilderlands territories. In response, the Djaffir have taken up arms against their enemies, and have increased security on all caravans passing through the Wilderlands.

RAJINNAR

The nation of Rajinnar lies southeast of the scorching sands of the Red Desert. The rulers of this arid realm are the Rajans, a race of fanatics who are utterly devoted to their leader, the Khadun. The Khadun is the mystic ruler of the Death worshipping Black Mystic Cult, the state religion of Rajinnar. The Rajans have long coveted the ore-rich sands of the Red Desert, but have thus far been unable to wrest these territories away from the Dracartans, whom they envy and despise.

Rajinnar is populated by 5 different but related, ethnic groups, all thought to be descended from ancient Torquaran neomorph stock. The Rajans conquered the Aramut, Zagir, Shadinn and mongrel Vird over 200 years ago and ruled with an iron fist ever since. Rajinnar remains the primary military threat to the other kingdoms of this region.



THE EASTERN LANDS



CHANA

The jungles of Chana occupy a portion of the southeastern coast of Talislanta, from Faradun to the borders of the Quan Empire. The climate in this region is hot, wet, and unbearably humid, ideal conditions for Chana's many varieties of tropical plants and trees, which can literally spring up overnight after a drenching rain. The humanoid inhabitants of this domain are the Witchfolk, a people of dark and sinister repute whose tastes for such pastimes as headhunting and cannibalism have endeared them to few other races. The Witchfolk continue to be a thorn in the side of the Quan Empire. Fortunately for the Kang, the Witch tribes have their hands full with their traditional foes, the shapechanging Manra and the Nagra spirit trackers.

HARAK

Harak is a bleak and desolate land, hemmed in on all sides by mountains and swept by frigid winds from the north. Here, in this most inhospitable of regions, dwell the fierce warrior clans known as the Harakin, a hard-hearted people utterly devoid of mercy or compassion. The ultimate survivalists, the Harakin view all other living creatures as prey. Their clans are nomadic, traveling from place to place in search of food and water, both precious commodities in this region.



THE QUAN EMPIRE

Beyond the Volcanic Hills and the Jade Mountains lies the great Quan Empire, a land of many and diverse qualities. Its territories are vast, extending from the southern jungles bordering Chana to the northern reaches of the Opal Mountains. Once home to numerous, rival warrior clans, the region came under control of the Quan around the beginning of the New Age. By various, devious means, the Quan eliminated most of their rivals, retaining only such clans as could be coerced or bribed into serving them. In ascending order of importance to the Empire, the clans are: the Vajra, the Sunra, the Mandalans, the Kang, and the Quan ruling class.

The Vajra are a race of miners and builders, short and squat in stature, with barrel-like torsos and heavy limbs. Their bodies are covered with overlapping, orange-brown plates similar in appearance to a pangolin. For many centuries, the Vajra occupied the mountains and hills of northern Quan. They constructed great tunnel-complexes, built underground fortress-cities, and mined precious stones and metals.

The Quan invaded their territories in force, taking the normally peaceful Vajra by surprise. The Vajra fought valiantly, but were simply overwhelmed by the superior numbers of their foes. Faced with the extinction of their race, the Vajra relented, becoming the first subjects of Quan. They now serve their conquerors as miners, engineers, stone workers, and low-class infantry. The gold and gemstones received from the Vajra's mines have made the Quan among the wealthiest of Talislanta's peoples.

The Sunra are a semi-aquatic race of humanoids who live in the fabulous Coral City of Isalis, located in the Inland Sea of southern Quan. They are elegant creatures, graceful in stature, with silvery-scaled skin and deep blue eyes. Skilled navigators, the Sunra once ranged the Far Seas from the Crescent Isles to Thaecia. In their glittering dragon barques, they hunted sea dragons, and traded with the people of the Floating City of Oceanus.

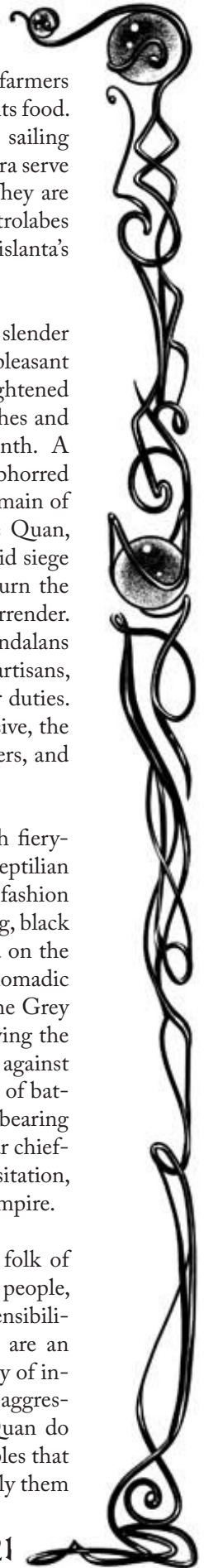
The Quan conquered the Sunra by using Vajra engineers to dam the River Shan, sole tributary of the Inland Sea. Rather than allow the Inland Sea to be reduced to a salt marsh, the Sunra accepted the ruler-

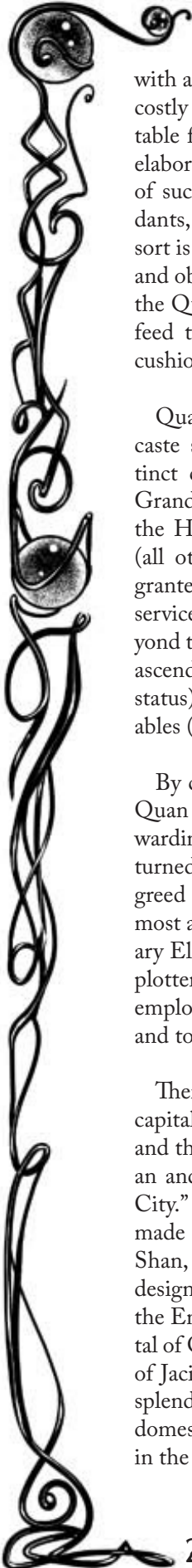
ship of the Quan. Sunra fishermen and sea farmers now provide the Quan Empire with much of its food. In their ornate dragon barques (two-masted sailing vessels built to resemble sea dragons), the Sunra serve as the naval branch of the Quan military. They are the finest sailors, using intricately designed astrolabes to navigate according to the position of Talislanta's two suns and seven moons.

The Mandalans are a golden-skinned folk, slender of build and hairless, with almond eyes and pleasant features. They created an advanced and enlightened culture, centered amidst the pastel spires, arches and promenades of the stately coastal city of Jacinth. A race of scholars and savants, the Mandalans abhorred violence, considering militarism to be the domain of unsophisticated and primitive peoples. The Quan, sailing in the dragon barques of the Sunra, laid siege to Jacinth from the sea and threatened to burn the city to the ground if the Mandalans did not surrender. Having no navy or army of their own, the Mandalans meekly complied. They serve the Quan as artisans, architects, and historians, among other, lesser duties. Finding the Mandalans to be extremely passive, the Quan also employ them as servants, gardeners, and menial laborers.

The Kang are a tall and fierce people with fiery-red skin, white, pupil-less eyes, and almost reptilian features. Iron collars and armbands are the fashion among their warriors who also wear their long, black hair pulled back in a single queue. Mounted on the large, bipedal lizards known as striders, the nomadic Kang clans dominated the dreary plains of the Grey Lands for many centuries. The Quan, surveying the black iron-clad hosts of the Kang, decided against engaging their red-skinned rivals on the field of battle. Instead, they sent Mandalan emissaries bearing gifts to the Kang war chieftains. The Kang war chieftains accepted the lucrative offer without hesitation, becoming mercenary subjects of the Quan Empire.

The Quan themselves are a pale-skinned folk of average height and build. Once a barbarian people, they now exhibit the lofty airs and delicate sensibilities normally associated with royalty. They are an unexceptional race, possessing little in the way of intelligence or creativity, but being sufficiently aggressive and cunning to rule an empire. The Quan do not work, but simply oversee the various peoples that their ancestors conquered, who together supply them





with all their needs. Even the lowliest Quan dress in costly silk garments, the elite of their kind being notable for the most extravagant and garish costumes: elaborate head dresses festooned with baubles, capes of such length that they must be carried by attendants, and so forth. Jewelry of the most ostentatious sort is considered a mark of distinction and elegance, and obesity a sign of wealth and success. From birth, the Quan are attended hand and foot by slaves, who feed them, bathe them, and carry them about on cushioned palanquins.

Quan society is governed by a rigidly enforced caste system which divides the populace into distinct classes. In descending order, these are: the Grand Elite (the Emperor of Quan and his family), the High Elite (Quan of favored status), the Elite (all other Quan), the Honorary Elite (non-Quan, granted upper class status as a reward for exceptional service; only pure-blood Quan may ever advance beyond this rank), Luminaries (seven separate orders of ascending rank by which non-Quan may advance in status), Kang, Mandalan, Sunra, Vajra, and undesirables (thieves, miscreants, and foreigners).

By careful manipulation of this system, the ruling Quan classes maintain control of the population, rewarding those most loyal to the regime. The Kang, turned into fawning, obsequious puppets by their greed for gold, serve most loyally. They will do almost anything to achieve the exalted rank of Honorary Elite, and are renowned throughout the realm as plotters and schemers of the first order. The Quan employ them in nearly all branches of the military, and to keep the lower classes in line.

There are seven major settlements in Quan: the capital city of Tian, the coastal city of Jacinthe, Isalis, and the military outposts of Karang, Vishana, Shonan and Hadran. Tian, also known as "The Golden City," is built on an island. Situated amidst a man-made lake fed by waters diverted from the River Shan, the city can only be reached by boat. Tian was designed by Mandalan architects at the command of the Emperor of Quan, who demanded that the capital of Quan surpass in beauty even the Mandalan city of Jacinth. It is considered by many to be the most splendid city on the continent. The gilded spires and domes of the Palace of a Thousand Fountains, wherein the Emperor resides, is especially notable.

THE VOLCANIC HILLS

The Volcanic Hills is one of the most desolate and forlorn sectors of Talislanta, marked by clouds of smoke and ash, sulfurous fumes, and rivers of molten lava. The dominant species in this hostile region is a race of reptilian humanoids known as the Saurans. They live in walled stone enclosures, forge crude iron weapons and armor, and employ trained land dragons as giant siege engines. Saurans know nothing of magic, but do have a religion of sorts. Their patron deity is Satha, a fire-breathing Dragon Goddess who supposedly gave birth to the Sauran race.

The Sauran tribes are in a state of perpetual war with the Quan Empire and their hated enemies with whom they share the Volcanic Hills: the Raknids, a sorcerous hybrid of demon and scorpion. The Raknids are near mindless creatures who know only survival. Their Hives are ruled by grotesquely bloated Queens who have mysterious powers of control over their subjects.

XANADAS

Xanadas is an isolated land located high amid the towering peaks of the Opal Mountains. At the summit of Mount Mandu stands an ancient edifice known as the Temple of the Seven Moons. Within, the fabled savants known as the Chroniclers of Xanadas dwell, observing all that transpires throughout the continent of Talislanta. Every event of note is recorded in massive, leather-bound tomes, which when full are stored in the temple's archives. The Chroniclers continue to carry out their duties to the present day, using enchanted seeing stones fashioned from spheres of polished blue diamond.

THE NORTHERN REACHES

L'HAAN

L'Haan is a land of vast snow fields, glittering ice peaks, and frozen lakes. The only civilized folk native to L'Haan are the blue-skinned Mirin, a people who live in crystalline ice castles and are skilled in the arts of alchemy and natural magic. Situated on opposite shores of the Sea of Ice are the twin cities of L'Lal and Rhin, the latter of which is the capital and home of the Snow Queen, ruler of L'Haan. Most people who travel between the two cities take ice schooners, majestic sail-driven vessels that glide across the Sea of Ice on runners made of gleaming adamant. A deeply religious people, the Mirin revere Borean, God of the North Wind.

Over the last twenty years, the kingdom of L'Haan has steadily declined in power. Weakened from within by the machinations of Rasmirin anarchists, those Mirin who have been declared outlaw or outcast from the general Mirin society, the Mirin now find themselves hard pressed by ever-increasing numbers of Ice Giants from the northwestern land of Narandu. Without assistance from outside forces L'Haan may soon be overrun by these invaders.

NARANDU

Narandu is a frozen wasteland that stretches across much of the far northern regions of Talislanta. Here, jagged mountains of ice pierce the bleak tundra and frigid winds howl through chasms ringed with hoar-



frost. This torturous region is home to the monstrous beings known as the Ice Giants, creatures comprised of animate ice who are ruled by a mysterious entity known only as the *tt*.

Advancing farther and farther south each year, the Ice Giants have slowly extended their territories, converting temperate lands to bleak tundra. To date, they have engulfed parts of western L'Haan, and sections of Yrmania. The prophecies of the avian Gryphs of Tamaranth, which foretold the war of the Ice Giants against the other races of Talislanta and the extension of their rule over the entire continent, were once considered preposterous by scholars from the Western Lands, but now echo ominously from the past.

YRMANIA

Yrmania is an untamed wilderness region that lies to the west of the barren ice fields of Narandu. This savage realm is home to two distinct humanoid tribes: the savage Wildmen and the Jaka, last of a race of intelligent beasts who roamed the forests of Talislanta in ancient times. The Wildmen are believed to be declining in number, due as much to the gradual depredations of invading Ice Giants as to the Wildmen's propensity for ritual drug use. Many Jaka have migrated southwards, following the wild herds from which they derive sustenance. Some have left Yrmania for the Western Lands, while others have joined the Seven Kingdoms' Borderlands Legion.

Along the eastern borders of Yrmania lies the flat wasteland known as the Lost Sea, a dried-up seabed littered with the ancient skeletons of giant sea dragons and other aquatic monsters. Some claim that half-sunken sea vessels of unknown origin can be found in isolated parts of this region, many containing fabulous artifacts and treasures from a lost age. As the Ice Giants advance southwards, scholars have begun to fear that the Lost Sea may soon be sealed under glacial ice.

KHAZAD

Khazad is a strange and largely unknown realm located at the furthest north western reaches of Talislanta. Inaccessible to all but the most determined travelers, its terrain is most forbidding. A line of precipitous cliffs runs the length of its western coast, and a ridge of mountains extends along its eastern borders. To the north lay fields of ice and snow; beyond this is the Midnight Sea, where sailors fear to go. The waters of the Gulf of Silvanus, rock-strewn and perilous, deny easy access from the southeast.

As a result of these impediments to travel, much of what is known of Khazad is based upon the accounts of the wandering Sarista tribes and the few hardy adventurers who have risked journeying to this isolated area. According to their accounts, the interior of Khazad is less than inviting. Patches of bleached and barren gall oak and deadwood stand like skeletons, silhouetted against a dreary, purple and grey sky. Broken and irregular lines of hills dot the landscape, interspersed with moors, quagmires, and stagnant ponds. The air is heavy with the smell of moldering vegetation, and exudes an unsettling, ancient quality.

Scattered throughout the country are ruins, evidently of some long-forgotten civilization. Though a few of the ruins have been plundered of their hidden secrets, many remain largely unexplored. Far to the north are vast burial grounds, denoted by row upon row of age-worn stone markers, or cenotaphs. Less frequently encountered are mausoleums of pitted stone, engraved with arcane symbols of obscure origin. Humanoid remains, entombed in massive sarcophagi of strange design, have been found in some of these crypts. Scholars of the New Age have theorized that these are the final resting places of the Thane, ancient ancestors of the Black Savants of Nefaratus.

There is a legend to the effect that a vast complex of ruins lies far to the north. Referred to as Necron on many ancient maps, the Sarista call it the "*City of the Dead*". Here, it is believed, are buried the mummified remains of an entire city's population. The Sarista claim that the city is cursed, and say that it is death to enter it. Others believe that the Sarista tell such tales to frighten away would-be grave robbers from their own private plundering grounds.

THE CENTRAL REGIONS

THE PLAINS OF GOLARIN

The Plains of Golarin is a wide expanse of savannah littered with the crumbling ruins of an unknown number of ancient civilizations. In the north central region stands the Watchstone, an immense pillar of gray basalt several miles in height. Packs of heavily armed Beastmen roam the Plains of Golarin in force, preying upon caravans from the Seven Kingdoms, Carantheum, and the Western Lands.

TAMARANTH

Tamaranth is the oldest and most impressive of Talislanta's woodland regions. Two intelligent species of humanoids live here: the avian Gryphs and the mystical Ariane. The Gryph clans live in eyries built in the tops of the tallest span-oaks, and consider them-selves the guardians of Tamaranth and the surrounding environs. Through their travels and communication with other avian species, the Gryphs are often aware of events that have transpired in even the most distant places.

The Ariane are practitioners of a mystic doctrine known as transcendancy that enables them to commune with all things in nature, including animals, plants, and even earth and stone. The majority of the Ariane spend their entire lives in the maze city of Altan, meditating on the mysteries of the natural world. For some, the search for enlightenment leads beyond the forests of Tamaranth to distant lands. Such individuals, called Seekers, may be encountered almost anywhere in Talislanta.

Following recent developments with the Sub-Men, the Gryph clans have increased the number and frequency of surveillance flights over the plains region and have fortified their eyries against possible forays by the Beastmen. From their refuge deep in Tamaranth Valley, the Ariane continue to send forth Seekers, hoping to gain greater understanding of what is occurring in the outside world.

THE SHADOW REALM

The Shadow Realm is an eerie place haunted by the ghosts of a dozen vanished civilizations. Shattered ruins, worn beyond recognition by centuries of time, are found throughout the region. Among the few intelligent beings known to inhabit this forsaken land are the Malum, spectral entities who hail from the Nightmare Dimension. They dwell within the Iron Citadel, a ruined structure of ancient and obscure origins. From within the dark confines of their sanctum, the Malum reputedly consort with creatures from the lower planes.

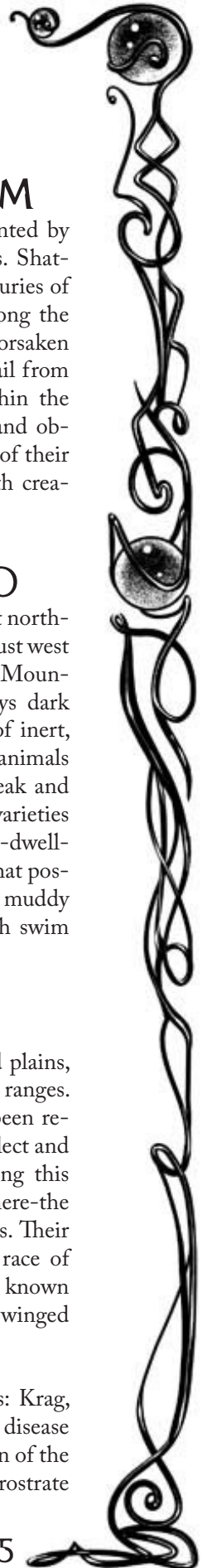
THE SINKING LAND

The Sinking Land is situated in the farthest northeastern reaches of the Wilderlands of Zaran, just west of the Volcanic Hills and south of the Opal Mountains. The skies above this region are always dark and gray, the earth below a vast quagmire of inert, brown sludge. A few species of plants and animals have somehow managed to adapt to this bleak and depressing environment, including several varieties of giant fungi, the barge tree, and the mud-dwelling Snipe, an intelligent species of mollusks that possess the ability to move swiftly through the muddy ground of the Sinking Land as easily as fish swim through water.

URAG

Urag is a harsh, wind-swept region of arid plains, winding canyons, and sprawling mountain ranges. Once a thriving forest, the area has slowly been reduced to a near wasteland by centuries of neglect and abuse. The individuals responsible for defiling this land are the bestial humanoids who dwell here—the Ur, a warlike race who rule by force of arms. Their subjects include the Darklings, a wretched race of humanoids who once controlled the region known as the Darklands, and the Stryx, a race of bat-winged scavengers who serve the Ur as aerial scouts.

The Ur clans have three large settlements: Krag, Vodruk, and Grod. These places are havens for disease and filth, and contribute much to the pollution of the local environs. The Ur have no deity, but prostrate



themselves before immense stone idols. The nature and origin of these monstrous effigies is unknown even to the Ur themselves; scholars believe they were built long before the Ur clans settled in Urag.

Unsettled by recent events, the Ur keep a watchful eye to the north, fearful of the encroaching hordes of Ice Giants who are slowly making their way southwards into Ur lands.



THE SOUTHERN RIM

THE DARK COAST

The Dark Coast region is dominated by thick, tangled jungle interspersed with sections of marsh-land and tropical forest. The Boru and Kiru rivers effectively divide the land into three separate territories: the western rain forests, home of the peaceful, symbiotic Green Men; the central swamplands, home of the amphibious Mud People; and the eastern jungles, territories inhabited by the fierce, four-armed Ahazu. Despite the danger posed by warring bands of Ahazu and Mud People, explorers from the Seven Kingdoms have come here of late, searching for signs of a great fleet of windships that went down here in ancient times during a terrible battle between the Elande and the windship pirates of Baratus.

BATRE

Batre is a small tropical island located to the south of the Dark Coast. The inhabitants, known as Batreans, are a primitive folk of peculiar habits. The males are huge, dull-witted, and remarkably ugly. Conversely, Batrean females are exceedingly intelligent and lovely beyond compare. Until the island was unexpectedly annexed by the Imrians in 602, it was the peculiar custom of Batrean males to sell their womenfolk for gold, a practice many believe the females instigated as a means of escaping their boorish mates. The Batrean males have since been relegated to the status of breeders, and the Imrian slavers now control the sale of Batrean females.

FARADUN

Faradun is acknowledged as the wealthiest mercantile state on the continent, primarily due to the widespread sale of contraband drugs and weapons.

The sprawling port of Tarun, with its ominous and impregnable defenses, is the capital and center of all trade. The inhabitants of this land are the Farad, a mercantile folk known for their singularly unscrupulous business practices; the Farad will buy or sell anything from anyone, with no questions asked. Their ruler is the Kral, a powerful monopolist who dictates the price of all goods bought or sold in Tarun. The Farad have a religion of sorts, revering the god Avar,

deity of material wealth and personal gain. Avar's followers do not erect temples in his name, but prostrate themselves before golden idols purchased in the shops of Tarun.

The Farad's unscrupulous trade policies have brought them great prosperity as well as the enmity of many Talislantans. Faradun has established trade ties with the Imrian slavers and is known to supply weapons to hostile regimes in Rajinnar and Aaman.

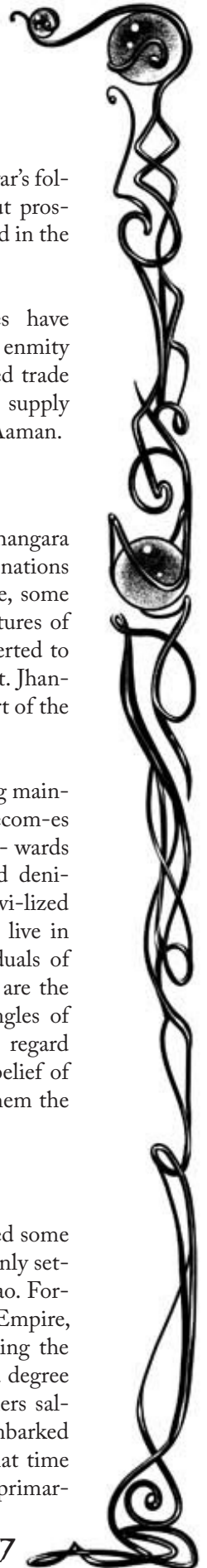
JHANGARA

A primitive and impoverished country, Jhangara has little or no influence among the other nations of Talislanta. With little hope for the future, some Jhangarans have been attracted to the overtures of Aamanian missionaries, and have been converted to the intolerant tenets of the Orthodoxist Cult. Jhangaran mercenaries now comprise a sizable part of the Aamanian military.

Jhangara is a hot and humid land consisting mainly of jungle, murky swamp, and bog that becomes progressively more dense and inhospitable towards the southern coastal regions. The humanoid denizens of this land are the Jhangarans, an uncivilized race, odd and ungainly in appearance. They live in tribal groups, typically comprised of individuals of the same occupation. The strangest of these are the Outcasts, who wander the swamps and jungles of Jhangara in ragged bands. The other tribes regard them with superstitious dread, for it is the belief of the Jhangarans that all Outcasts bear with them the "stigma of doom."

GAO-DIN

Gao-Din is a small and rocky island located some ten miles off the western coast of Mog. The only settlement on the island is the rogue city of Gao. Formerly a penal colony of the old Phaedran Empire, Gao-Din was abandoned by its makers during the Cult Wars of the early New Age. Showing a degree of ingenuity born of desperation, the prisoners salvaged an abandoned Phaedran vessel and embarked upon a career as sea-roving pirates. Since that time the Sea Rogues of Gao-Din have prospered, primar-





ily at the expense of such folk as the Imrian slavers and the Farad. Unlike the vicious Mangar corsairs, the Sea Rogues are notable for their gallantry and swash-buckling style. Their ruler is known as the King or Queen of Thieves.

IMRIA

Imria is a swamp-infested island located off the southern coast of Mog in the Azure Ocean. The primary inhabitants of this isle are the amphibious humanoids known as the Imrians. Slavers by trade, the Imrians prey upon the primitive tribes who

dwelt along the southern coasts of Talislanta and the Crescent Isles. They range far and wide in massive coracles drawn by teams of giant, sightless eels called kra. The Imrians worship no god, and indeed cannot comprehend any position bearing greater esteem than King of Imria; they mock those who do have deities as ignorant savages.

Despite many setbacks, the Imrians continue to foster dreams of conquest. They succeeded in subjugating the Isle of Batre in the year 602, and now use it as a breeding ground for slaves, who are sold to Raj and Faradun. Failing to establish a foothold on the

Talislantan continent, the Imrians are now concentrating their efforts on acquiring other island territories such as Oceanus, Gao-Din, Phantas, and certain of the smaller islands in the Far Seas.

MOG

Mog is a vast swampland cut by countless small tributaries of the Axis River and teeming with a variety of unusual plant and animal species. The primary

inhabitants of this region are the Mogroth, sloth-like humanoids who live in rude huts erected in the branches of large mung-berry trees. Normally slow moving and placid by nature, Mogroth traders sometimes travel to the Seven Kingdoms, bearing sacks of gold and amber dredged from the swamps.

THE FAR ISLES

THE CRESCENT ISLES

The Crescent Isles are a chain of small islands located in the northern reaches of the Far Seas. Many are small and relatively insignificant atolls, appearing on no known map or sea chart. Islands of note include Fahn, a veritable paradise populated by a tribe of albino humanoids known as the Sawila; Donango, a peaceful-seeming isle similar in appearance to Fahn, but infested by sea demons; the Mangar Islands, a cluster of four small isles whose hidden coves serve as bases for the murderous Mangar corsairs; and Pana-Ku, a volcanic isle wreathed in jungle and inhabited by a race of demonoids known as the Na-Ku.

NEFARATUS

Rising ominously above the waters of the Far Seas is the Isle of Nefaratus, a shadowy mound of stone rimmed with jungle. A row of onyx towers dot the isle, each a hundred feet in height and decorated with the graven images of leering devils. Within, the inhabitants of Nefaratus gaze into mirrors of polished obsidian and work their strange enchantments and divinations. These are the Black Savants, members of a secret magical order that dates back to the Forgotten Age.

The activities of the Black Savants have long been subject to speculation. Their midnight-black vessels are rumored to sail the cursed waters which lie at the edge of the world. Sailors who have encountered such vessels at sea claim that they are propelled by the efforts of demons, chained to the oars with silver shackles and driven on by giant, copper-skinned devils. Others claim to have seen the black ships pull into certain port cities on moonless nights, only to depart before the coming of dawn.

OCEANUS

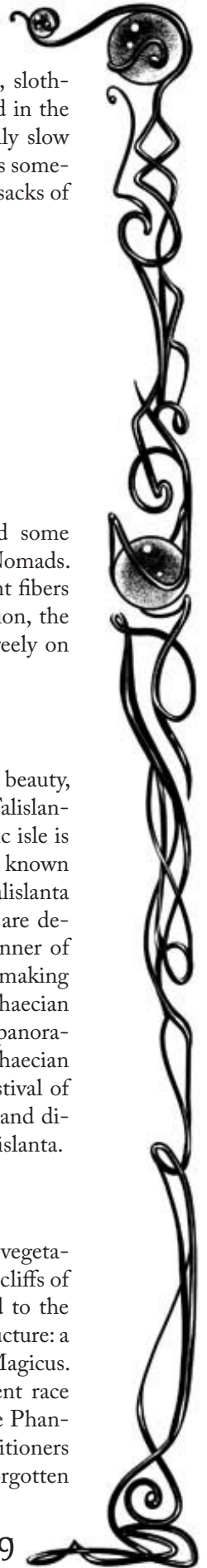
Oceanus is a waterborne city established some centuries ago by wandering tribes of Sea Nomads. Built entirely upon great barges made of plant fibers and tethered to each other in intricate fashion, the city has no permanent location, but floats freely on the waves.

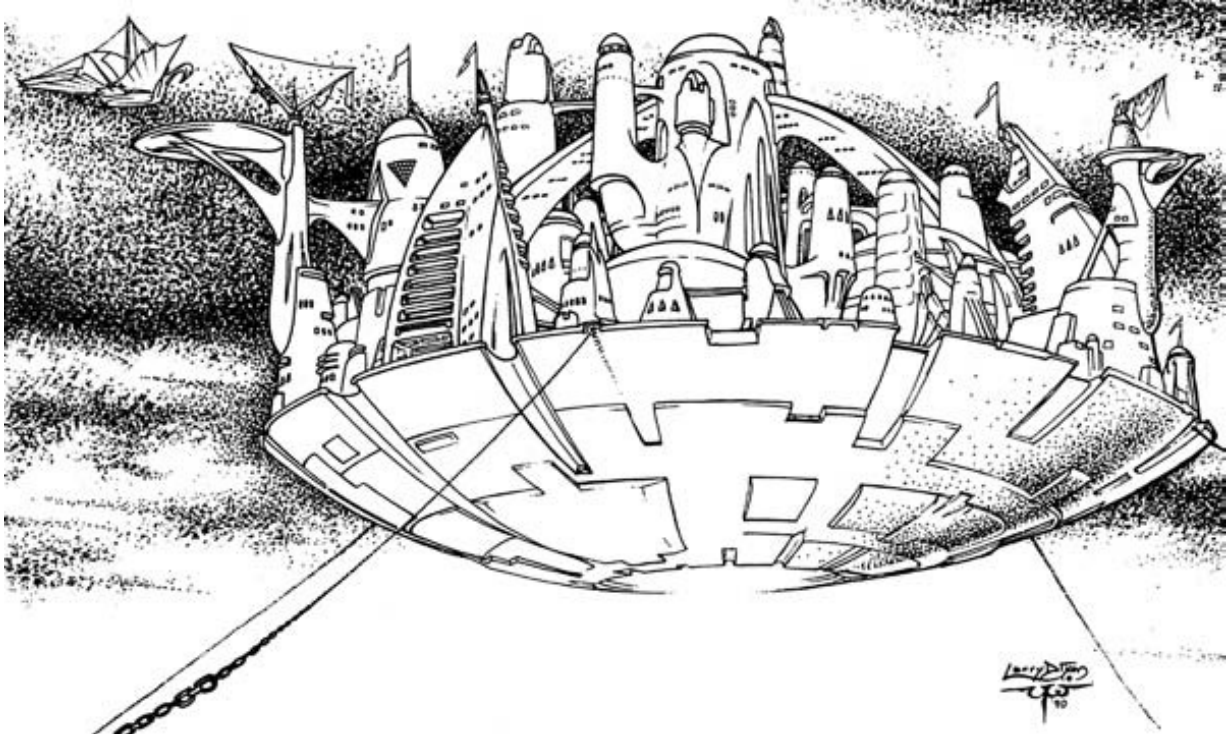
THAECIA

Thaecia is an island of rare and splendid beauty, located off the southwestern coast of the Talislantan continent in the Azure Ocean. This scenic isle is home to an advanced and prosperous people known as the Thaecians. Renowned throughout Talislanta for their hedonistic appetites, the Thaecians are devout pleasure seekers who indulge in all manner of stimulating pastimes. They are skilled in the making of scintillating spheres of amberglass called Thaecian orbs, wondrous items imbued with illusory panoramas and other enchantments. The single Thaecian settlement of note is Caprica, site of the Festival of the Bizarre, an annual exhibition of oddities and diversions attended by people from all over Talislanta.

PHANTAS

Phantas is a semi-tropical isle, covered in vegetation and surmounted on all sides by wavering cliffs of white stone. High above the island, tethered to the ground by chains of adamant, is a singular structure: a great castle built in the clouds, called Cabal Magicus. Here dwell the last descendants of an ancient race of magicians and thaumaturges known as the Phantasians. Once among the most skilled practitioners of the magical arts, the Phantasians have forgotten

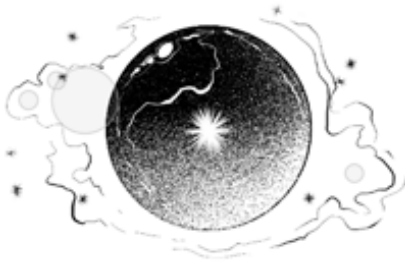




nearly all of the fabled knowledge possessed by their ancestors, who built Cabal Magicus. Among the few secrets left to them are the talents associated with the building of windships and the art of distilling dream essence.

THE THAECIAN ISLES

Islands in the Thaecian Isles chain include Peridia, a rocky isle known for its underwater grottos; Dalia, a place of scenic vistas inhabited by a species of parasites known as neurovores; Garganta, a great mound of volcanic rock that serves as home to the gigantic stone entities called Monoliths, who are believed the oldest creatures in the world; and Cella, rumored to be the retreat of a powerful magician known only as the Enchantress of the Shoals.



LOCAL CUSTOMS

For those who may be unfamiliar with the many unusual races, cultures, and creatures native to this realm, Talislanta is a dangerous place indeed. For example, in the Western Lands, discussions of religious beliefs and morality are to be avoided at all cost. The Orthodoxists of Aaman are zealots who regard nonbelievers as infidels. Unconventional behavior and dress can quickly attract the unwanted attention of the cult's monitors, who spy upon the populace through the use of All-Seeing Eyes, icons that serve as enchanted scrying devices and are found throughout the country. Conversely, the Paradoxists of Zandu do not take kindly to criticism of their liberal moral beliefs.

While in Arim, it is wise to refrain from addressing an Arimite in any way that might be construed as insulting or demeaning. The shadowy Revenant Cult operates openly here, specializing in revenge-for-hire at reasonable rates.

In the Eastern Lands, foreigners must obtain a permit before being allowed to travel across the Quan Empire. These cost upwards of one thousand gold lumens to obtain, and are issued in the form of a lead tablet stamped with the Emperor's seal. An

individual accused of breaking the law can expect to be hauled before a Quan magistrate and sentenced without trial.

The Seven Kingdoms' confederation is widely renowned as the most enlightened of Talislantan states, although prejudice towards the Sub-Men tribes is common in some regions. As for local customs, a few words of advice are in order.

First, never boast of your martial prowess while in Taz. The indigenous Thralls consider such talk a personal challenge to battle, and will be only too happy to test the braggart's mettle. Also, be sure to read the fine print before signing a contract with the moneylenders of Kasmir, or face the prospect of paying exorbitant interest rates, agent's fees, and tariffs. While in Sindar, never touch a collector's cherished wares, or you may be accused of attempted theft.

Do not throw stones in the crystal city of Cymril, or hunt winged creatures for sport in Vardune; both are regarded as criminal offenses. Similarly, the Muses of Astar do not take kindly to individuals who bathe in their lakes and rivers without asking permission, while the Gnomekin of Durne do not allow outsiders to dig holes in their land.

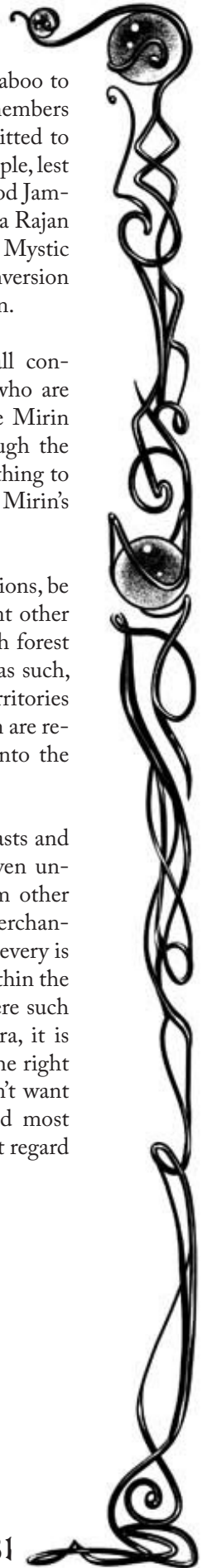
The Wilderlands of Zaran present even more daunting challenges to the neophyte traveler. The Danelek tribes consider it their right to ambush and kill outsiders who drink from their oases. Orgovian traders take offense if offered coin instead of barter for their wares, and may accuse the unwitting offender of attempting to rob them, generally with disastrous results. Among the savage Za war clans, it is customary to drink the blood of slain enemies in order to acquire their strength.

In the Desert Kingdoms, it is considered taboo to touch the fetish masks that are worn by members of the Djaffir tribes. Similarly, it is not permitted to speak or make noise while in a Dracartan temple, lest the faithful miss any pronouncement of the god Jamba. Even more importantly, never agree to let a Rajan convert you to the morbid tenets of the Black Mystic Cult. This will result in your immediate conversion by the sword, a fatal and irreversible condition.

In the Northlands, it is best to avoid all contact with the Wildmen tribes of Yrmania, who are known for their unpredictable behavior. The Mirin of L'Haan offer their hospitality freely, though the accommodations in this frigid land leave something to be desired for those who do not possess the Mirin's immunity to cold.

If you are passing through the Central Regions, be advised that the Beastmen are known to hunt other sentients for sport. The Gryphs of Tamaranth forest are exceedingly protective of their domains; as such, it is unwise to hunt or cut timber in their territories without their permission. The Ariane of Altan are reclusive by nature, and rarely allow visitors into the maze city except by invitation.

The inhabitants of Talislanta's southern coasts and Far Isles exhibit a variety of colorful and even unusual customs. In Fardun, goods stolen from other lands can legally be resold as "pre-owned" merchandise. Among the Sea Rogues of Gao-Din, thievery is considered an admirable profession except within the precincts of the rogue-city of Gao itself, where such activities are expressly forbidden. In Jhangara, it is the custom to eat with the left hand, using the right hand to wipe parts of your body you wouldn't want in contact with your food. The Imrians find most commontypes of food and drink revolting but regard slugs and giant water bugs great delicacies.



THE NEW AGE TO 603N.A.

YEAR	EVENT
1	Beginning of 'The New Age' The city-state of Phaendra is established. The Orthodoxist and Paradoxist cults vie for control of the new state, but moderates choose the wizard Soliman III to be the first ruler of Phaendra. A period of lasting prosperity follows, lasting some hundred and ten years.
13	Under the rulership of the black magician Drugalia, the Mazdaks, begin the conquest of much of the Eastern Lands.
21	The Mirin of L'Haan build the ice cities of L'Lal and Rhin. The Mazdaks drive the Kang from the Greylands. The Kang, in turn, migrate into the steppes of Kangir, displacing the Rajan, Aramut and Zagir tribes.
23	The Rajan tribes settled on the west slopes of the Jade mountains in the region now known as Rajinnar.
29	The nomadic Dracartan tribes settle in the Red Desert, a region considered inhospitable by most other peoples. In the same year they discover vast deposits of red iron. Djaffir merchants establish a trade route to Phaendra and work is begun on the city of Dracarta.
48	Mazdaks finally kill each other off, leaving the barbaric Quan tribes in control of their old territories.
67	The Darkling hordes of Urag, fleeing the Ur clans, invade the territories of the Gnomekin. The Gnomekin hide underground until daybreak, then emerge in force and drive the Darklings back to their own shadowy lands. Called the One Day War, the incident promotes considerable laughter amongst the Gnomekin for months to come.
71	Soliman III, ruler of Phaendra, succumbs to old age. A period of mourning lasting twenty years is decreed by his successor, the magician Damon.
77	The Phaendrans annex territories occupied by the Aeriad, who flee to the forests of what is now Vardune.
82	The Quan conquer the Vajra.
91	End of the twenty years mourning in Phaendra: Damon decrees a twenty-year period of celebration to follow, but is clapped in irons and branded a lunatic. Orthodoxists and Paradoxists again vie for power, but the sorcerer, Kabros is chosen to rule Phaendra. Privately, he tells friends that the city-state is on the verge of collapse, and advises against making long-term plans regarding the acquisition of property, among other things.
97	Imrian vessels raid the Dark Coast for the first time, taking many slaves.
101	Religious uprisings rock Phaendra on the city-state's hundredth anniversary. The Sorcerer Kabros resigns as ruler. In a stirring speech to his supporters, primarily magicians, wizards, and other, sorcerers, Kabros advises them to consider " <i>an exit, and a hasty one at that.</i> " By the following morning, he is sipping nectar on the Isle of Thaecia. Fearing for their lives, his advisors disguise one of their number as Kabros, successfully maintaining this ruse for over eleven years.
107	The Quan, using Vajra engineers and laborers, dam the River Shan, forcing the Sunra to surrender. Using Sunra vessels, the Quan take the Mandalan city of Jacinthe just one month later.
112	Kabros' advisors, their trickery finally uncovered, are forced to flee for their lives. The Orthodoxists seize control of the state, ordering dissidents to be incarcerated in the wilderness penal colony, Gao-Din. Beginning of the Cult Wars with the Paradoxists.

YEAR	EVENT
119	The Ur clans of Urag conquer and enslave the Darklings, then join forces with the avian Stryx.
122	The Quan bribe the Kang warchieftains, and establish the Quan Empire. The capital city of Tian is built by conquered Mandalans and Vajra, and the empire begins to prosper.
133	The penal colony of Gao-Din is abandoned by the Phaedrans, and the rogue city of Gao is established soon afterwards.
148	The Phandre, a race of magicians exiled from the city-state of Phaedra, establish the free state of Cymril. Treaties are signed with the Thralls of Taz and the Gnomekin of Durne. The Farad establish a settlement in Faradun.
158	The Arimites build the ramshackle mining installation of Shattra and declare it the capital of the nation of Arim.
161	Za bandits and Beastmen contend for the border regions of Zaran.
176	Ice Giants attack L'Haan, but are driven back by the Mirin, who have discovered the secret of making adamant.
188	Mandalan mystics escape from the Quan Empire and flee into the Opal Mountains. Most are slain by Harakin tribesmen and frostweres, but a few survive the journey and discover the Temple of the Seven Moons in Xanadas. The Farad build, the port city of Tarun.
193	Beastmen launch attacks against the settlements of the Sindarans and Kashmirans. Beginning of the Beast Wars.
207	The Dracartans of Carantheum rediscover the lost art of thaumaturgy.
222	The Kashmirans, Sindarans, and Aeriad sign treaties with the Cymrilian alliance. At the last minute, the Muses of Astar also decide to sign, and the confederation of states known as the Seven Kingdoms is established. The Beastmen beat a hasty retreat back across the Plains of Golarin.
231	Armies of the Kang drive the Nagra tribes out of the Quan Empire.
237	The Arimites, who have become wealthy by supplying black iron to the warring Phaedran cultists, build the citadel of Akbar.
245	Gryphs from the forests of Tamaranth, suffering from a plague of gange, are cured by the magics of the Ariane. The Gryphs never forget this act of kindness from the strange folk of the maze city, vowing to remain always the protectors of the Ariane race.
267	Imrian slavers attempt to sack the rogue city of Gao, but are repulsed. Hereafter, the Sea Rogues harass Imrian vessels at every opportunity.
292	Sea Nomads build the floating city of Oceanus.
300	Jhangarans build crude settlements at Karansk and Tabal.
318	The Ur clans invade Yrmania.
321	Shabul, King of Arim, is slain by Revenant Cultists.
334	The Ur, mired in a long and pointless war with the Wildmen of Yrmania, withdraw in disgust to their homeland.
350	Imrian slavers first encounter the Black Savants of Nefaratus. After losing many vessels, the Imrians strike a secret deal, and are thereafter allowed to pass through Nefaratan waters by specified routes only. Beginning of slave trade with the Quan Empire. The Mirin of L'Haan repulse an invading army of barbaric Harakin in a fierce battle that lasts for three days and nights.

YEAR	EVENT
366	Thousands die in a bloody sea battle waged by opposing cult forces for control of the Phaedran Gulf. Hereafter, the gulf is known as the Sea of Sorrow.
383	Armies of the Quan Empire plunge north into Harak, hoping to establish a safe route to L'Haan, which is rich in blue diamonds and adamant. Fierce bands of Harakin, mounted on winged dractyls, oppose them every step of the way. Finally, the Kang commanders order their forces to withdraw convinced that the prize is not worth the effort.
400	Xanadas, the great mystic founder of the Temple of Seven Moons and father of the country Xanadas, leaves his followers, vowing on his deathbed to return after visiting with the gods. Beginning of "The Long Wait."
404	The Rajans conquer the Aramut, Zagir and Shadinn tribes and are united under the necromancer Urmaan after a series of drawn-out desert campaigns. Employing slave labor, the Rajans build the fortified citadel of Irdan.
422	Kang forces turn back an army of Witch folk from Chana. Beginning of the Quan Border Wars.
432	Saurans from the Volcanic Hills invade the Quan Empire. Mounted on armored land dragons, the Saurans advance slowly but inexorably towards the capital of Tian. Only the early onset of winter stops the Saurans, the cold weather forcing them to return to their more temperate homeland. Immediately following this disastrous incident, the Emperor of Quan orders his Kang commanders to undertake the swift construction of fortified border outposts and heavy siege engines as insurance against further assaults.
433	The Sauran armies return in the spring, but are unable to penetrate the Kang's new and hastily constructed defenses. Dismayed, the Saurans return to the Volcanic Hills.
444	Sheiks of the Djaffir bandit tribes arrive in Carantheum. They report that Urmaan of Rajinnar is amassing an army of slave warriors along the southern borders of the Wilderlands, presumably in preparation for an assault on the citadel of Dracarta. Abas the Gray, a Dracartan thaumaturge noted for his quirk wit, tells the Djaffir he would appreciate Urmaan better " <i>were he to amass an army of slave girls instead.</i> " Not amused, the Djaffir hurl Abas out a window to his death. The Dracartans get the point and promise to keep a close watch on the situation.
445	Armies of the Rajans launch an attack on Anasa, the southernmost of Carantheum's outposts. The Dracartans, warned in advance by the Djaffir sheiks, annihilate the Rajan armies with relative ease. When news of the crushing defeat reaches Irdan, Urmaan has his entire staff of generals boiled in oil. Urmaan then disappears, never to be heard from again. Arjan, one of Urmaan's most gifted students, uses the incident to his advantage, claiming that Urmaan has gone to visit the entity known as Death, from whom he seeks advice and guidance on how to defeat the people of Carantheum. The idea so catches the fancy of the gullible Rajan populace that Death becomes the nation's patron "deity." A morbid cult springs up around the high priest, who becomes the first Khadun or mystic ruler of the Rajans.
451	The Seven Kingdoms build the Seven Roads, encouraging trade between each of the member nations.
476	Death of the first Khadun of Rajinnar by unknown causes. A new Khadun claims his predecessor has " <i>gone to seek Urmaan</i> ". The Rajan death cultists are thereafter known as the "Followers of Urmaan."
480	Independent city-states of Danuvia, Maruk, and Hadj are built by Phaedran exiles.

YEAR	EVENT
493	Ice Giants enter the forests of Tamaranth and find the Ariane High Masters waiting for them. Employing their potent magics, the Ariane hasten the often slow process of spiritual ascendancy, enabling the invading Ice Giants to immediately enter into their next incarnations as puddles of water.
500	The Rajans, led by the Khadun Thados himself, attack Dracarta in force. Routed by Dracartan duneships, the Rajans are torn to pieces as they flee madly across the desert sands. Thados himself is captured alive and plated with red iron by Dracartan thaumaturges. His statue-like form is displayed in the capital of Carantheum, where it decorates the Royal Palace. The battle comes to be known as the Massacre at Dracarta.
512	Exhausted after four hundred years of continuous warfare, the Orthodoxist and Paradoxist cults declare a truce. After a brief council, they agree to divide the old Phaedran territories into two separate nations. Zandu, to the west, becomes home to the Paradoxists. Aaman, to the east, is occupied by the Orthodoxists. Construction is begun on the Great Barrier Wall.
519	The Great Barrier Wall is completed; the Zandir and Aamanians work together to erect this massive structure in only seven years.
538	Fierce Mangar corsairs begin to harass the dragon barques of the Quan Empire.
553	Ur clans from the fortress city of Krag pour into the gorge at Akbar but are unable to penetrate the Arimites' strong defenses. They fall back to make new plans.
570	Imrians raid Mog for slaves, and sail upriver as far as Astar in search of Muses. They find an army of Thralls from Taz instead, and are driven down the Axis river and into the Azure Ocean. In the same year a large contingent of Imrians attempt to take the Isle of Thaecia, but are easily repulsed by the magics of the Thaecian enchanters.
600	Tamerlin writes his Chronicles of Talislanta.
601	A new Wizard King is elected by popular decree in Cymril. He is known for his liberal policies, and is viewed with great distaste by the arch-conservative Tanasian ethnic minority.
602	Imrian slavers annex the Isle of Batre.
603	A trio of Tanasians attempts to restore the old regime to power in Cymril. They fall when the Lyceum Arcanum comes out in support of the Wizard King. The Lyceum's secret archives are opened, and the Tanasian's were discredited.



CHAPTER TWO

RULES OF THE GAME



This chapter contains the complete rule system for the 5th edition of the Talislanta Fantasy Roleplaying Game. It includes:

- **Introduction:** *overview of the basics of role playing. If you're an experienced role player you can skip this part and begin with Materials.*
- **The Action Table:** *an explanation of the single rule that's used for all actions in the Talislanta game.*
- **Attributes, Skills, Combat, and Magic:** *General rules and examples for each.*

INTRODUCTION

Talislanta is a role playing game (or RPG for short) designed for two or more players. One person must play the part of the Gamemaster (called the GM), while the others take on the role of Player-Characters (called PCs).

OBJECT OF THE GAME

Role playing games are like simulations of your favorite movie or television series. The Gamemaster helps establish the setting and the basic premise of each adventure, while the Players take on the roles of the series' main characters. Together, the participants will create an ongoing series of adventures called a campaign. A Talislanta campaign is open-ended, and can last as long as the Gamemaster and Players like.

The only object of the game is to have fun.

THE ROLE OF THE GAMEMASTER

The Gamemaster plays a vital part in the Talislanta game, serving as a combination narrator, moderator, and role-player. As narrator, the GM must set the stage for each adventure the Players will undertake, helping to describe what the PCs see, hear, and sense about their surroundings. As moderator, the GM is required to judge the results of all actions undertaken by the PCs and to remain fair and objective at all times. As role-player, the GM must play the parts of all non-player characters (NPCs) and creatures that the PCs meet during the course of their game careers.

GMs have to know the rules of the game, as well as the Talislantan milieu. They have to be creative, and they should always remember that the PCs are the focal point of the campaign. If the players are enjoying the game, the GM is doing a good job.

THE ROLE OF THE PLAYER

The main role of each player is to choose and create a Player-Character that will serve as his or her game persona. Because every PC must interact with the Talislantan milieu, you should be familiar with your character's culture, homeland, and profession. Develop a personality for your PC: is he brave or cowardly, selfish or altruistic? What are his likes and dislikes? What is he afraid of, and what does he believe in? Does your PC have a goal in life? The more you know about your PC, the more interesting he or she will be to you and to the other players in the game.

Players should learn the basic rules of the game, particularly those that pertain directly to their character's Skills and Equipment. The guidelines in the Character Creation section will tell you everything you need to know about making a good PC.

MATERIALS

To play the Talislanta RPG you'll need at least one twenty-sided die (called a d20). These can be found at any hobby or game store. Pencil and paper usually come in handy, too. Everything else you'll need to play has been provided in this book.

GETTING READY TO PLAY

Like most RPGs, Talislanta is not a "pick-up and play" type of game. To get the most out of your Talislanta campaign, the Gamemaster and players should spend some time looking through the Traveler's Guide section of this book, which describes the continent of Talislanta and its diverse inhabitants. The Gamemaster's Section in Chapter 6 contains advice on planning a Talislanta campaign that will be best suited to your group. The GM should read this section and discuss it with the players before beginning play.

The ACTION TABLE	
ROLL	RESULT
0 or Less	Mishap
1 to 5	Failure
6 to 10	Partial Success
11 to 19	Full Success
20 or More	Critical Success

THE ACTION TABLE

All actions in the Talislanta game are resolved by a single, simple procedure:

1. Compare the character's Skill or Attribute Rating with the Degree of Difficulty (the relative ease or difficulty of the action).
2. Take the difference (a positive number, a negative number, or zero) and add it to a d20 roll.
3. Consult the Action Table for the result.

ACTION TABLE KEY

Mishap: not only does the attempted action fail, but it fails miserably and may have additional negative consequences (accidental damage to the character attempting the action, opposite of the intended effect, etc.). It's the GM's job to determine the actual results of any Mishap, based on the circumstances surrounding the attempted action.

Failure: the action fails to achieve the intended result.

Partial Success: the action is only moderately successful, achieving part but not all of the intended effect (such as half-damage from an attack or partial effect from a spell, for example).

Full Success: the action achieves the intended result.

Critical Success: the action is even more successful than intended, achieving the player's stated intent and also yielding additional benefits of some sort (attack causes a Critical Wound that disables the opponent, increased effect from a spell, etc.). It's the GM's job to determine the actual results and extent of any Critical Success, based on prevailing circumstances.



ACTION TABLE MODIFIERS

Action Table die rolls may be subject to bonuses or penalties for any of the following modifiers:

- ◆ **Attributes**
- ◆ **Skill ratings**
- ◆ **Intent**
- ◆ **Degree of Difficulty**
- ◆ **Opposing Attributes or Skills**
- ◆ **Multiple actions**
- ◆ **Non-proficiency penalty**

ROLLING THE DICE

All actions in the Talisanta game are accomplished by rolling dice and comparing the result to the Action Table. This includes combat, skill use, spellcasting, resisting environmental conditions, etc. Various things go into this simple dice roll including a character's stated intent for the action, how difficult the particular action might be, whether the action is opposed or not, etc.

INTENT

Intent is a player's description of what his or her Character hopes to accomplish by a particular action. This helps the Gamemaster determine the chance of success for the attempted action, as well as its actual outcome. For example, the Intent of an attack might be to injure, disarm, trip, or any of a dozen other stratagems. If the player informs the Gamemaster beforehand of the character's intentions, the GM will be better prepared to interpret the Action Table die result. Intent is also important in helping the GM establish an action's Degree of Difficulty.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Degree of Difficulty is a modifier determined by the Gamemaster. It is based on the GM's appraisal of how hard or easy it would be for an individual with an Attribute or Skill Rating of "0" to attempt a given action. The Degree of Difficulty modifier typically ranges between +10 and -10, with easy actions being given a bonus (+1, +2, etc.) on the Action Table die roll, and difficult actions being given a penalty (-1, -2, etc.). The character's Intent and any extraordinary circumstances surrounding the proposed action are also factors in determining Degree of Difficulty.

Degree of Difficulty is covered in more detail in the *Talisanta Options* including detailed examples and suggested Degrees of Difficulty for many actions and tasks.

OPPOSED ACTIONS

Whenever a character attempts an action that is directly opposed by another individual or creature, the opponent's ability rating is used as the Degree of Difficulty. In such cases, the Degree of Difficulty will either be the opponent's Skill Rating or an Attribute Rating, whichever is most appropriate.

Sherra the thief wants to use her Stealth skill to sneak past a watchman. Because this is an Opposed Action, the Degree of Difficulty is the watchman's ability to detect the thief. The watchman has the Guard skill at rating 7. Sherra's Stealth skill rating is 9. Sherra's player rolls a d20 and adds +2 (the difference between Stealth 9 and Guard 7) to the roll. If the watchman had a Guard skill of +11, Sherra's player would roll a d20 with a -2 modifier to the roll, instead.

MULTIPLE ACTIONS

As a basic rule, each character is allowed to take one action per round. Optionally, this rule can be modified to allow characters to take Multiple Actions in a single round. For each action already performed during the round, characters suffer a cumulative -5 Action Table penalty. Extra actions can be performed during a character's turn, or later in the round as responses to the actions of other characters. The GM decides what constitutes an "action" and what doesn't. Simple things like quickly looking around a room or dropping an item probably aren't actions that would add to the multiple action penalty. More complex procedures like drawing a weapon or dismounting from an equus probably would count as extra actions. In some cases, the GM may ask the player to make a skill or attribute roll to determine the success of ordinary tasks performed as part of a multiple action sequence (a DEX roll to quickly throw off a bulky cloak and still make an attack, for example).

Thena the Danuvian Virago wants to throw her empty mug at a rude male across the table, then stand up and punch him in the face. First, Thena's player makes an attack roll to hit with the mug. This is a normal attack roll since it is Thena's first action during the round. Next Thena's player rolls to see if she punches the male. This attack roll suffers a -5 penalty (in addition to any other modifiers) since Thena has already acted once during this round. If Thena wanted to then take a third action, her player would roll with a penalty of -10.

When making multiple actions in a round, the multiple action penalty can be offset by the character's relevant Primary Attribute. For example, when attacking multiple times in a round, the characters SPD rating may be used to offset the multiple action penalty.

For example, Thena has a SPD +2, therefore the penalty incurred above on her second action in the round would only be -3 instead of the normal -5.

Gamemasters should use their best judgement and discretion when allowing the multiple action penalty to be offset by a primary attribute.

For example, a character's DEX rating may offset a multiple action penalty if the character was attempting to grab the rail of a pitching windship while also attempting to cast a spell or pick a lock, etc.

Note that a result of Mishap on any Multiple Action die roll prevents any additional action from being taken in that round. For example, if Thena's first die roll results in a Mishap, she does not get to attempt the second action.



ATTRIBUTES

Attributes represent natural abilities, such as strength, intelligence, and dexterity. Each has a numerical value, referred to as its Attribute Rating. In the Talislanta game, the Attribute Rating for a humanoid of "average" ability is "0"; an attribute rating of +1 or greater is above average, while a rating of -1 or lower is below average.

Attributes can be used as modifiers to specific Skills by adding the Attribute's numerical value to the level of the Skill (the total is referred to as the Skill Rating; q.v.). Attributes can also be used to determine the result of actions for which there is no specific skill; for example, lifting a heavy object (a function of the Strength Attribute) or trying to locate a lost item (a function of the Perception attribute).

Whenever an Attribute is used by itself for an Action Table die roll, it is always doubled. Note that this applies to negative-rated Attributes as well. Zero-rated Attributes remain the same.

In the Talislanta game system, there are eight different primary attribute ratings:

<i>Intelligence Rating</i>	<i>Perception Rating</i>
<i>Will Rating</i>	<i>Charisma Rating</i>
<i>Strength Rating</i>	<i>Dexterity Rating</i>
<i>Constitution Rating</i>	<i>Speed Rating</i>

In addition to these, there are four secondary attributes :

<i>Combat Rating</i>	<i>Ranged Combat Rating</i>
<i>Magic Rating</i>	<i>Hit Points</i>

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES

INTELLIGENCE RATING (INT)

This is a measure of the individual's intellect and powers of reason. Intelligence is the deciding factor whenever an individual attempts to deduce the basic meaning of obscure or unfamiliar maps, dialects, or writings, appraise the relative value of goods, solve puzzles and mysteries, and so forth.

PERCEPTION RATING (PER)

This is a measure of the individual's sensory awareness, taking into account the abilities of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch, plus such intangibles as instinct, intuition, and psychic talents. Perception is the deciding factor whenever an individual attempts to detect unseen presences or ambushes, detect illusions, locate lost or hidden articles, notice important details or changes in surroundings, or utilize any sensory ability.

WILL RATING (WIL)

This is a measure of the individual's willpower, determination, faith and wisdom. Will Rating determines how well a character is able to resist temptation, bribery, seduction, torture, coercion, interrogation, or spells of Influence.

CHARISMA RATING (CHA)

This is a measure of the individual's powers of persuasiveness, including such intangibles as leadership and the ability to command the respect of others. Charisma Rating affects a character's ability to lead or persuade other individuals, make a favorable impression, negotiate, bargain, or haggle.

STRENGTH RATING (STR)

This is a measure of an individual's physical power. Strength Rating determines how much weight a character can carry or lift, how much damage a character does with a hand-held weapon, and so forth. It is also the deciding factor in attempts to bend or break objects, force open or hold shut a door, and restrain other characters or creatures.

DEXTERITY RATING (DEX)

This is a measure of the individual's agility, coordination and maneuverability. Dexterity Rating is an important factor in most physical skills and determines how well a character can perform acts of manual dexterity, dodge or evade an attack, keep his or her balance, or catch a thrown object.

CONSTITUTION RATING (CON)

This is a measure of the individual's endurance, stamina, and durability. Constitution Rating determines how well a character can resist the effects of disease, wounds, poisons, toxins, exposure, hunger, and thirst.

SPEED RATING (SPD)

This is a measure of how swiftly an individual is capable of moving, either on land, in the water, through the air, or by other means. Speed Rating determines Initiative in combat, as well as attempts to pursue others or escape pursuers.

SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES

COMBAT RATING (CR)

This is a measure of a character's natural ability in combat situations. It reflects a combination of physical and mental attributes, cultural and social factors, biological traits, and personal inclination. Combat Rating serves as the modifier for most melee combat-related skills (i.e. brawling, weapon, etc.).

RANGED COMBAT RATING (RC)

This is a measure of a character's natural ability in ranged combat. It reflects a combination of agility, mental acuity, perception, cultural and social factors, biological traits, and personal inclination. Ranged Combat Rating serves as the modifier for most ranged combat-related skills (i.e. bows, hurlants, throwing knives, t'sai, etc.).

MAGIC RATING (MR)

This is a measure of a character's natural affinity for Magic. Like Combat and ranged Combat Ratings, it

reflects a combination of natural, cultural, and personal factors. Magic Rating serves as the modifier for using magical Orders and Modes. Characters with low or negative magic ratings have trouble determining when magic is used on or near them and may have a subconscious distrust of magicians in general.

HIT POINTS (HP)

This is a measure of a character's ability to sustain injury before dying. The average number of hit points that an individual or creature possesses is determined by race (and may be further modified through the selection of Quirks). This total is modified, one time only for beginning characters, by adding or subtracting a number of points equal to the individual's Constitution Rating. Thereafter, the character's Hit Points do not increase unless the CON rating is changed through permanent Attribute loss or XP expenditure to increase the Attribute.. Hit Points are not used as an Attribute Modifier nor are they used to make Action Table rolls.

ATTRIBUTE BENCHMARKS

Most normal humanoids have attributes in the -5 to +5 range, with zero being the "average." Attributes greater than +5 are considered "superhuman" and attributes below -5 indicate a serious disability of some kind.



PRIMARY ATTRIBUTE ROLLS

1. STATING INTENT

Before rolling on the Action Table to use a Primary Attribute, the player needs to state his character's intent. Tell the Gamemaster which Attribute you're using, and what it is you're trying to accomplish.

2. DOUBLE THE PRIMARY ATTRIBUTE'S RATING

Whenever an Attribute is being used as the primary modifier for an action it is always doubled first. This rule applies to plus-rated (positive) and minus-rated (negative) Attributes. Zero-rated Attributes remain the same (two times zero = 0).

Kurn the Kharakhan Giant needs to make a Strength roll to attempt to lift a massive boulder. Kurn doubles his STR attribute of +8 for a total of +16 to his roll.

NOTE: The above rule applies *ONLY* to Primary Attributes. When making Action Table rolls using only Secondary Attributes as the modifier, the Attribute is *NEVER* doubled.

3. DETERMINING BONUSES AND PENALTIES

After the player indicates which Attribute is being used and describes the character's intent, the Gamemaster must determine if any bonus or penalty will be applied. This is done before the player rolls on the Action Table.

First, take the character's doubled Attribute Rating and apply it as a modifier — positive, negative, or zero. Then, you'll need to determine the Degree of Difficulty. If the character's action is being opposed by another individual or creature, decide which of the opponent's abilities will be used as the Degree of Difficulty. If it is a Skill, the opponent's Skill Rating is used for this purpose. If it is an Attribute, the opponent's Attribute Rating is doubled and used as the Degree of Difficulty.

If the action is unopposed, then the Degree of Difficulty is based on how simple or difficult it will be for the character to achieve his or her stated intent.

When Kurn tries to lift the boulder, his player rolls his doubled Strength rating (+16) versus the Degree of Difficulty for the weight of the stone. The GM decides that the stone is impossible for a normal (0 STR) man to lift, so he sets the difficulty at -15. Of course, Kurn is a Giant, not a normal man, so he still has a +1 modifier to his roll (16 - 15 = 1).

Other factors that may apply include the character's physical condition (wounded, tired, etc.), the footing (slick, unstable, etc.), and so on. Comparing applicable bonuses and penalties, the GM arrives at a single figure. This is the modifier that will be applied to the player's Action Table roll.

4. THE ATTRIBUTE ROLL

To determine whether the Attribute is used successfully or not the player rolls a d20 on the Action Table, applying the GM's modifier to the die result.

5. JUDGING THE RESULT

With all Action Table rolls, it is the GM's job to translate the results, taking into account the modified die roll total and the player's stated intent, and any other relevant factors. Review the information of Action Table results in this chapter for examples.

OVERVIEW: ATTRIBUTE ROLLS

Anytime a character uses an Attribute to determine the result of an attempted action, use the following procedure:

1. Player states Intent (which Attribute is to be used, and what is the character trying to accomplish?)
2. Double the Attribute's numerical Rating
3. GM determines bonuses or penalties (based on the Degree of Difficulty or opposing factors)
4. Player rolls to attempt the action
5. GM judges result.

ATTRIBUTES AS MODIFIERS

Attribute Ratings are used as modifiers for applicable Skills, increasing or decreasing the affected skill accordingly. The total of Skill level and its Attribute modifier is referred to as the Skill Rating.

Sherra has a level of +3 in the skill, Acrobatics, and a DEX of +2 (DEX is the modifier for this skill). Sherra's Skill Rating in Acrobatics is therefore +5.

ATTRIBUTES OFFSETTING PENALTIES (OPTIONAL)

Attributes can, at the GM's discretion, reduce or even negate certain associated penalties. Penalties can be reduced to a minimum of -0.

STR - Penalties due to being encumbered or wearing heavy armor.

DEX - Penalties from dual-wielding, or performing difficult actions while in combat.

CON - Penalties from diseases

SPD - Penalties from performing multiple actions in a round

WIL - Penalties from spellcasting

PER - Penalties from distractions

Example: Offsetting Penalties

Ozramarus, a Cymrillian Magician with +1 Will, can cast two spells per day before the daily spell penalty begins to accumulate. Hibo-Lorabio, the Gnomekin Crystalomancer with a +4 Will, can cast five spells per day before the penalties accumulate.

Hibo, the Gnomekin mentioned above, has a +6 Constitution. She has been infected with a terrible disease which would have most people virtually incapacitated (-10 modifier to all actions.) Hibo struggles along, however, her Gnomekin toughness reducing the penalty to -4 as she seeks a cure.

Kree-Caw, an Aeriad, has a Perception of +3. Attacked by a Rajan Assassin using a spell of Invisibility, Kree-Caw would normally have a -5 penalty to fight back, but the penalty is lowered to only -2 because he can detect faint sounds and notice swirling dust in the air where his opponent is moving.

REACTION ROLLS

The first impression that a character makes on any new acquaintance is determined by making a Charisma roll on the Action Table. Failure indicates an unfavorable or even hostile reaction; Success indicates acceptance (or at least ambivalence), while Critical Success will always yield the most favorable response possible under the prevailing circumstances. At the Gamemaster's discretion, reaction die rolls can be employed for encounters of almost any sort. In some situations, skills such as Fashion can be used for reaction rolls, depending on the nature of the individuals being encountered, their native culture, and other factors.

ALLEGIANCES

A character may have up to three allegiances, listed in order from most important to least important. These allegiances are indications of what the character values in life, and may encompass people, organizations, or ideals. A character may have no allegiances (being either a free spirit or a loner) or may change allegiances as he or she goes through life. Also, just because the character fits into a certain category of people doesn't mean the character has to have that category as an allegiance.

If the character acts in a way that is detrimental to his or her allegiance, the GM may choose reduce the XP normal Xp award to the character or, in sever cases, to strip the character of that allegiance (and all its benefits).

A character's allegiance can take the form of loyalty to a person, to an organization, to a belief system, to a nation, or to an ethical or moral philosophy. In general, a character can discard an allegiance at any time, but may only gain a new allegiance at the discretion of the GM.

Having an allegiance implies having sufficient intelligence and wisdom to make a moral or ethical choice. As a result, a character must have INT and WIL ratings of -3 or higher in order to select allegiances.

Allegiances include, but are not limited to, the following examples.

Person or Group: This includes a leader or superior, a family, a group of linked individuals (such as a band of adventurers or a cell of a secret society), or a discrete unit within a larger organization (such as a military unit, or individuals whose safety the character is responsible for).

Organization: This may be, a gathering of like-minded individuals, a fraternal brotherhood, a secret society, a military organization, a bandit gang or an otherwise established authority.

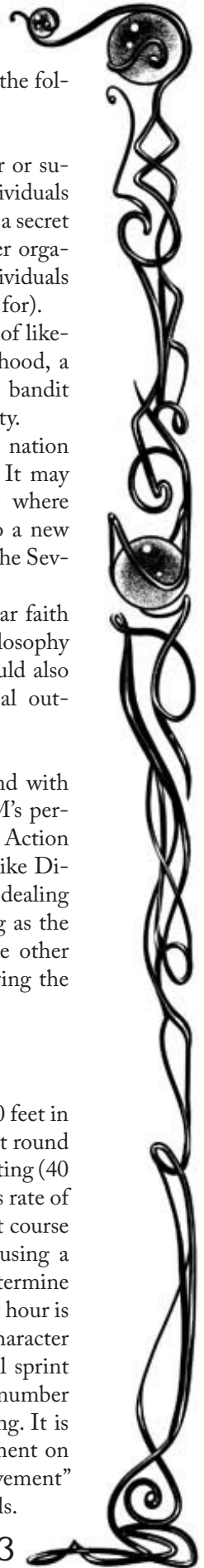
Nation: This may or may not be the nation that the character currently resides in. It may be where the individual was born, or where the character resides after emigrating to a new home. Examples would include Zandu, the Seven Kingdoms or the Quan Empire.

Belief System: This is usually a particular faith or religion, but can also be a specific philosophy or school of thought. Belief systems could also include political beliefs or philosophical outlooks.

An allegiance can create an empathic bond with others of the same allegiance. With the GM's permission, characters gain a +2 bonus to all Action Table rolls that involve CHA, such as skills like Diplomacy and Merchant and Oratory, when dealing with someone of the same allegiance, as long as the character has had some interaction with the other character to discover the connections and bring the bonus into play.

MOVEMENT

Individuals and creatures can move up to 50 feet in one round's time at SPD +0 and plus fifty feet round per +1 SPD or minus ten feet per -1 Speed Rating (40 ft/rd at SPD -1, 30 ft/rd at SPD -2, etc.). This rate of movement assumes an even surface, a straight course of travel, and limited encumbrance. When using a character's or creature's Speed Rating to determine distance traveled, remember that one mile per hour is equivalent to about nine feet per round. A character or creature may double this distance at a full sprint but this can usually only be sustained for a number of rounds equal to the character's CON rating. It is only rarely necessary to keep track of movement on a foot-by-foot basis, however. See the "Movement" section of the Combat section for more details.



ENCUMBRANCE

The maximum amount of weight that a Talisantan humanoid with average (+0 Rating) Strength can carry is their own body weight, plus 25% per each additional +1 Strength Rating or minus 10% per -1 Strength Rating. Negative encumbrance is not possible. A creature whose weight limit is negative can lift and carry less than one pound. At maximum encumbrance, individuals suffer a penalty of -5 on all Action Table die rolls related to movement of any sort (including all combat and spellcasting that requires gestures).

COMBAT DAMAGE

Damage totals for physical attacks employing natural or other weaponry are modified by adding the attacker's Strength Rating to the weapon's Damage Rating (DR). Damage totals for device-propelled missile weapons such as arrows are not modified by the user's Strength, although hand-thrown weapons such as javelins are.



HEALING

The average individual or creature heals at the rate of 5 Hit Points per day, plus one additional point of healing per +1 Constitution Rating. Individuals with negative Constitution Ratings heal at the rate of 5 HP per day, minus one point of healing per -1 CON Rating (the minimum rate of healing is one point per day). Note that specific injuries such as broken bones may take longer to heal than simply regaining the hit points lost. This is left to the GM's discretion.

LIFE AND DEATH IN THE GAME

Individuals or creatures reduced to zero or less Hit Points are rendered unconscious and on the verge of death. Should this happen the Gamemaster must roll on the Action Table, using the victims Constitution Rating and current Hit Points as modifiers. The total will yield one of the following results:

- ◆ **Mishap:** barring a miracle of some sort, the victim's career has come to an untimely end. If the victim was a PC, the player can create a new character.
- ◆ **Failure:** things are looking grim. The victim is fading fast and will need to make another CON roll every minute at a cumulative penalty of -1 per minute. A result of failure or worse on any of these subsequent CON rolls results in death. On a subsequent result of partial success, and the victim gets to live for another minute. At best, the victim will suffer a permanent injury of some kind (as per a result of Partial Success).
- ◆ **Partial Success:** the victim will recover, but will suffer some sort of permanent injury. Possibilities include disfiguring scars, a 1-point reduction of one of the victim's Attributes, amnesia, or some other disability appropriate to the circumstances surrounding the victim's "near-death experience" (GM's ruling)
- ◆ **Full or Critical Success:** the victim will recover completely, with or without medical attention, and suffer no permanent damage.

These rules should be reserved only for PCs or important NPCs. Any other individual reduced to 0 HP or less can simply be considered dead at once.

SKILLS

There are ten categories of skills in the Talislanta game, each related to a particular aspect of the character's background and training. These are: Common, Language, Combat, Performing, Scholar, Thieving, Trade, Wilderness, Magical, and Special Abilities. Specific skills are covered in detail in the Skills Chapter.

SKILL RATINGS

Skills are abilities acquired through training and practice, such as combat and magic. There are two terms used to describe Skills: Level and Rating. Skill Level indicates the character's degree of training, with "0" representing a basic level of proficiency. A Skill's Level can be improved with training and experience (see Improving Skills, in this section).

Skill Rating is the combination of a character's training (Level) and natural ability (a related Attribute). Each Skill has an Attribute that acts as its modifier; for example, the modifier for the Thieving skill, Sleight of Hand, is Dexterity. To determine the thief's overall Skill Rating, add the level of the Skill plus its Attribute modifier. Whenever a Skill is used for an Action Table die roll, always use its Skill Rating.

SKILL ROLLS

1. STATING INTENT

Before rolling on the Action Table to use a Skill, the player needs to state his character's intent. Tell the Gamemaster which Skill you're using, and what it is you're trying to accomplish. Don't forget: Skill Rating (Skill level + Attribute modifier) is always used for any type of Skill roll.

2. DETERMINING BONUSES AND PENALTIES

After the player indicates which Skill is being used and describes the character's intent, the Gamemaster determines if any bonus or penalty will be applied. This is done before the player rolls on the Action Table.

Apply the character's Skill Rating as the modifier for the attempted action. Then determine the Degree

of Difficulty. If the character's action is being opposed by another individual or creature, decide which of the opponent's abilities will be used as the Degree of Difficulty. If it is a Skill, the opponent's Skill Rating is used for this purpose. If it is an Attribute, the opponent's Attribute Rating is doubled and used as the Degree of Difficulty.

If the action is unopposed, then the Degree of Difficulty is based on how simple or difficult it will be for the character to achieve his or her stated intent. For example, if a character is trying to pick a lock, the complexity and condition of the lock determines the Degree of Difficulty.

Comparing Skill Rating and Degree of Difficulty, the GM arrives at a single figure. This is the modifier that will be applied to the player's Action Table Skill roll.

3. THE SKILL ROLL

To determine whether the Skill is used successfully or not the player rolls a d20 on the Action Table, applying the GM's modifier to the die result.

4. JUDGING THE RESULT

The GM interprets the result, taking into account the modified die roll total, the player's stated intent, and any other relevant factors.



OVERVIEW:

PROCEDURE FOR SKILL ROLLS

Anytime a character uses a Skill to determine the result of an attempted action, use the following procedure:

1. Player states Intent (which Skill is to be used, and what is the character trying to accomplish?)
2. GM determines bonuses or penalties (based on the character's Skill Rating and the Degree of Difficulty or opposing factors)
3. Player rolls to attempt the action
4. GM judges result.

USING SKILLS THAT YOUR CHARACTER DOESN'T HAVE

When a character attempts to use a skill that he or she does not know, there are two different ways the GM can handle the situation.

1. Let the character use a similar, related skill in place of the required skill. The GM will assess an additional Degree of Difficulty penalty based on how related she thinks the two skills are. This is called the Substitution Penalty.

Scratch the Ferran Thief has been cornered by two ruffians who think he stole their purses. The Ferran has no weapon but has picked up a stout stick from the ground and wants to defend himself with it. Scratch does not have the Weapon (hafted) skill, but he does have Weapon (small blades) at +5. The GM decides that this is close enough and lets Scratch's player use the Small Blades skill with only a -2 penalty.

2. Let the character attempt the action as if they had the skill at level zero. The GM may assess additional penalties if she feels that the skill requires a great deal of training or experience to even attempt.

Crush the Thrall wants to sneak aboard an Imrian slave ship while it is docked in Tarun. Crush does not have the Stealth skill. The GM lets Crush's player roll on the Action Table as if Crush had a Stealth skill of zero. Crush's player rolls with a +2 modifier (Stealth 0 + Dexterity rating of +2 = +2). Note that Crush's player does not double his Dexterity rating since this is strictly a skill roll, not an attribute roll. The GM rules that since sneaking around is a simple task only a -3 substitution penalty is necessary.

Later on, Crush encounters a locked chest that he wants to open. Crush does not have the Locks skill but he wants to try to pick it anyway. Once again, the GM lets Crush's player roll on the Action Table as if he had a Locks skill of zero. However, the GM rules that lockpicking is a very precise and sophisticated skill that requires training (not just nimble fingers) so Crush takes an additional penalty of -10.

Note that some skills like Magic, Alchemy, and Special Abilities cannot be attempted at all unless the character has trained in the Skill.

IMPROVING SKILLS

As players earn Experience Points (XP) for adventures, they can use accumulated XP to improve their character's Skills. The cost in XP to improve a Skill is equal to twice the new Skill level (not the total Skill Rating, which is the combination of Skill plus Attribute modifier).

For example, the Cymrilian magician, Etarre, has the Skill, Arcane Lore, at a Level of +5. To improve her Skill Level to +6, Etarre must spend 12 XP — twice the new Skill Level of +6.

Skills can only be improved one Level at a time. Though PCs can improve more than one Skill at a time, the same Skill can only be improved once per week of game time.

PREFERRED SKILLS & ACQUIRING NEW SKILLS

Experience Points accumulated through adventuring can also be used to acquire new skills. Additional Skills can be acquired at a cost of one XP per each week of time required to learn the new talent, for those skills on the character's preferred list, and at a cost of two XP per week of time required to learn the new skill for all those skills not on the character's Preferred list.

A character's preferred skills are all those skills acquired from Race and those available to the character from the Paths they have chosen. Even if a character did not take a rank in a particular skill at character creation, so long as the skill is found on the Preferred Skill list of one of the character's Paths, it is a preferred skill for that character.

If a new Skill is completely unrelated to the PC's Path and therefore not on his Preferred list, he or she may need to hire a qualified person to teach the new talent. For example, if a magician wanted to acquire the Skill, Tracking, he might have to hire a tracker or hunter to teach him this talent (see Hirelings, in the *Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta* for details on hiring a qualified instructor).

Once the necessary XP and time have been expended, the player can add the new Skill to the PC's Preferred Skills list. All new Skills have a beginning Level of +1. To improve the skill level, the cost in XP is equal to the twice the new level of the skill, as explained in Improving Skills.

NOTE TO PLAYERS AND GAMEMASTERS

The heart and soul of the Talislanta game system is the interaction between the players and the Gamemaster. It is the GM's job to help simulate in the game those things which make real life so unpredictable: a stroke of good fortune, a freak accident, the strange occurrences that defy all odds or lay waste to the most carefully made plans.

Players can help the Gamemaster by offering specific information on their character's Intent before rolling on the Action Table. It is also important for players to allow their GM to embellish Action Table

results without interfering in the course of the game. Gamemasters will earn the trust of their players by being fair and objective, and by maintaining a degree of moderation in their renderings. Imaginative and inventive narration is fine, as long as it's not overdone.

TIME IN THE GAME

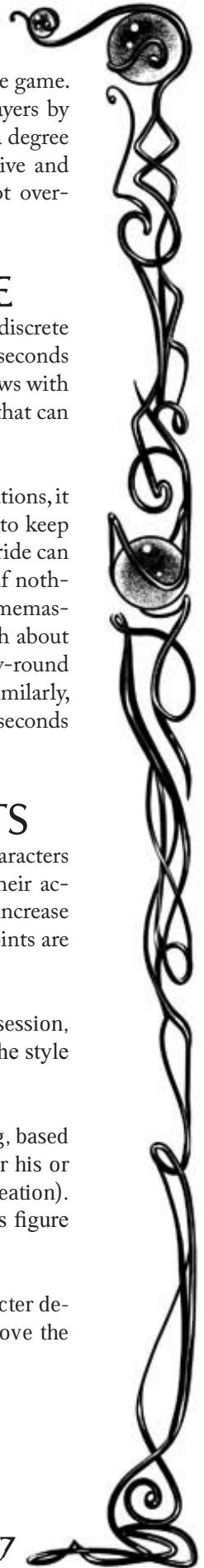
In the Talislanta game, time is measured in discrete units, called rounds. A round is roughly six seconds long, enough time for a character to trade blows with an opponent, cast a spell, or do anything else that can be accomplished in six seconds or less.

Except in combat and similarly critical situations, it is usually not necessary for the Gamemaster to keep such strict track of time. For example, a day's ride can be covered by the GM in a single sentence, if nothing special is planned for that day. The Gamemaster should feel free to take a flexible approach about time in the game and use detailed round-by-round descriptions of the action only as needed. Similarly, the Action Table can be used to cover a few seconds of action, or an entire day of warfare.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

In role playing games such as Talislanta, characters earn Experience Points (XP for short) for their accomplishments. These points can be used to increase the level of a character's Skills. Experience points are awarded by the Gamemaster, as follows:

- 1-20 XP per adventure or gaming session, based on the difficulty of the adventure and the style of campaign being used by your group.
- Bonus of 1-10XP for good role playing, based on the persona that the player has created for his or her character (see Chapter 3 Character Creation). The GM may elect to increase or reduce this figure based on the style of the group's campaign.
- 1 XP per each game week that a character devotes to training, which can be used to improve the Skill being practiced.



COMBAT

COMBAT ROUNDS AND TURNS

During combat, time is measured in rounds. A round is roughly six seconds long: enough time for combatants to draw weapons and exchange attacks, move up to the maximum allowable distance based on their Speed Rating, or cast a spell. During a combat round, each character is given a chance to take action.

A single character's action within a round is called a turn, as in "*it's Gor's turn to attack.*" Once all characters involved in the combat have taken their turn, the round is over.

DAMAGE RATING & PROTECTION RATING

Unlike many other fantasy roleplaying games, in Talislanta a single roll of a twenty-side die determines the outcome of an attack. It is not necessary to make a separate die roll to determine how much damage an attack does. Instead, weapons and other forms of attack do a set amount of damage based on their Damage Rating (DR for short), and the Action Table die roll.

Protection Rating (PR) describes the protective value of armor. In the Talislanta game, armor is rated according to the number of Hit Points it absorbs per attack.



COMBAT BASICS

Combat in Talislanta is very deadly and very quick. One or two lucky sword thrusts might end your life. This section is divided into three sections:

In Combat a character may perform any of the following actions:

- ◆ Attack a person or creature
- ◆ Actively Defend against an attack
- ◆ Move
- ◆ Cast a Spell
- ◆ Perform a Stunt

COMBAT ROLLS

1. ROLLING FOR INITIATIVE

At the beginning of any Combat situation, each combatant makes an Attribute roll using their respective Speed Ratings. This is called rolling for Initiative. The character with the highest Initiative total is allowed to act first, and may choose a Tactic based on the slower opponent's Intent (see #2). The combatant with the next highest total goes next, and so on until all the combatants have taken their turns.

If you prefer a high degree of detail in your game, combatants can roll for Initiative each round. If you prefer a simpler approach, have the combatants roll

OVERVIEW: PROCEDURE FOR COMBAT

Anytime a character engages in Combat, use the following procedure:

1. Combatants roll for Initiative (each makes an Attribute roll using Speed Rating; the opponent with the highest roll goes first)
2. Player states Intent (what kind of tactic is the character attempting, and what is its specific intent?)
3. GM determines bonuses or penalties (based on the character's and opponents Combat Skill Ratings, and other factors)
4. Player rolls to attempt the action
5. GM judges result

for Initiative only for the first round of Combat, to establish who goes first, second, and so on. Then have all opponents proceed in turn for the remainder of the fight.

2. STATING INTENT

Before rolling for Combat the character must state his character's Intent. This is done by choosing a Weapon or Combat Skill, and a Combat Tactic. There are four categories of Combat Tactics in the Talislanta game: Attack, Defend, Movement, and Stunt. Each has a number of variations, as described later in this section. For example, a character's Intent might be to throw a spear, parry with a shield, retreat, or try to trip or distract an opponent.

The winner of the Initiative roll can choose to declare Intent first or wait until other combatants have done so, in order to anticipate their opponents' moves and act accordingly. Either way, the individual who has the Initiative rolls first.

3. DETERMINING BONUSSES AND PENALTIES

After the player indicates the weapon and tactic being used and describes the character's Intent, the Gamemaster determines if any bonus or penalty will be applied before the player rolls on the Action Table.

Apply a bonus based on the Combat Skill Rating chosen by the character. To save time during the game it's a good idea to have players figure their characters' modified Combat Skill Ratings in advance and record these numbers on their Character Sheet.

Apply a modifier based on the Degree of Difficulty. If the Combat tactic is being opposed by another individual or creature, the Degree of Difficulty is always based on the defender's abilities. Decide which ability is most appropriate, based on the following considerations:

- ◆ If the defender is using a melee weapon, use the defender's Skill Rating in that weapon as the Degree of Difficulty.
- ◆ If the defender is unarmed or using a ranged weapon, use the defender's Brawling Skill Rating. If the defender has no such talent, use his or her basic Combat Rating Attribute as the Degree of Difficulty.

◆ If the attack is unopposed then the Degree of Difficulty is based on how simple or difficult it will be for the character to achieve his or her stated intent.

For example, if Dayn The Forgotten is trying to hit an unwary opponent with an arrow, the Degree of Difficulty would be based on such factors as the targets' range and degree of cover, not the opponent's combat abilities.

Compare applicable bonuses and penalties, and use the total as the modifier that will be applied to the player's Action Table Combat roll.

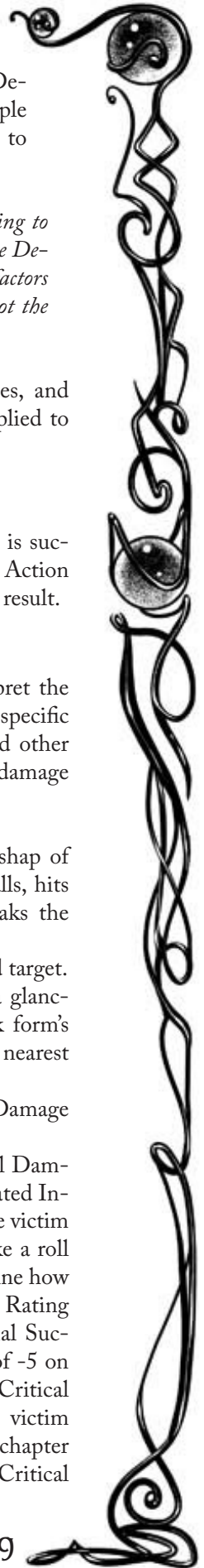
4. THE COMBAT ACTION ROLL

To determine whether the Combat action is successful or not the player rolls a d20 on the Action Table, applying the GM's modifier to the die result.

5. JUDGING THE RESULTS

After the player rolls, the GM will interpret the Action Table result, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding of the action, and other factors. Combat actions intended to cause damage will produce one of the following results:

- ◆ **Mishap:** the attack fails due to a mishap of some sort; the attacker stumbles and falls, hits himself, hits an unintended target, breaks the weapon being used, etc. (GM's ruling)
- ◆ **Failure:** the attack misses the intended target.
- ◆ **Partial Success:** the attacker scores a glancing blow that only does half the attack form's total Damage Rating (rounded-up to the nearest whole number).
- ◆ **Full Success:** the attack does its full Damage Rating.
- ◆ **Critical Success:** the attack does full Damage Rating and achieves the attacker's stated Intent. If the Intent was to injure or kill, the victim suffers a Critical Wound, and must make a roll using his Constitution Rating to determine how badly he is hurt. Subtract the Damage Rating of the attack from this CON roll. Partial Success means the victim suffers a penalty of -5 on all further actions until healed of the Critical Wound. Failure or Mishap means the victim is incapacitated until healed. See the chapter on Combat for more information of Critical Wounds.



DAMAGE RATING

A weapon's Damage Rating (DR for short) is equivalent to the maximum number of Hit Points it is capable of doing in the hands of an individual or creature of "average" (0-rated) Strength. For example, a longsword with a DR of 8 will do a maximum of eight HP damage. When using hand-held weapons, combatants add their Strength Rating (STR) to the Damage Rating total. For example, a warrior with a STR of +2 will do a maximum of 10 HP damage with that same longsword (DR 8 plus STR +2 = 10). Remember that damage totals for device-propelled missile weapons such as arrows are not modified by the user's STR, although hand-thrown weapons such as javelins are. The Action Table result indicates how much of the total DR a weapon does on a given attack, as follows:

Partial Success: Half the total DR

Full Success: Full Damage Rating

Critical Success: Full DR + Critical Wound.

A complete list of Damage Ratings for weapons can be found in the Equipment chapter.

ENCHANTED WEAPONS

A weapon can be enchanted to increase its Damage Rating or to give it a single, spell-power (such as a flaming sword); not both. For example, a longsword with an enchantment of +1 has a DR of 9 — one point better than a non-magical longsword.



PROTECTION RATING

In the Talislanta game, armor is rated according to its ability to absorb and reduce damage, which is referred to as its Protection Rating (or PR for short). The PR of any type of armor is equivalent to the amount of damage it will absorb, in Hit Points. For example, armor with a Protection Rating of +3 will reduce the damage of any attack by three HP.

Heavier types of armor usually have a higher PR, but will cause the wearer to suffer a penalty for Encumbrance unless he or she is strong enough to carry the additional weight (*see Encumbrance on page 59*). Detailed information on the Protection Rating of various types of armor can be found in the chapter on Equipment.



ENCHANTED ARMOR

Armor can be enchanted to increase its Protection Rating or to render it impervious to a single, specified form of attack (such as fire, cold, etc.); not both. For example, chain mail with an enchantment of +1 has a PR of 6 — one point better than non-magical chain mail.

SHIELDS

Hand-held shields provide additional protection by making the bearer harder to hit. When used, a shield reduces an attacker's Combat die roll by -2. The disadvantage is that while using a shield the defender suffers a penalty of -2 on all Dexterity-related die rolls. Other devices similar to shields (bucklers, parrying bracers, etc.) do not provide this defensive advantage but these devices do provide other bonuses toward Parrying (*see Parry, page 78*).

MISCELLANEOUS COMBAT MODIFIERS

On occasion, circumstances will have an effect on combat, resulting in a penalty or bonus on the combatant's Action Table die rolls. Here are some examples:

- ◆ Attacking from above: +2
- ◆ Using weapon in off-hand: -5
- ◆ Defending from below: -2
- ◆ Mounted vs unmounted opponent: +3
- ◆ Limited visibility*: -1 to -10
- ◆ Unstable footing (mud, ice, etc.): 1- to -10
- ◆ Dodging an Area Effect spell: -1/foot of spell radius

**Includes fighting in darkness (unless one has night vision), in fog or mists, or with vision partially impaired; the extent of the penalty is based on visibility.*



COMBAT TACTICS

In a game where a character's stated intent can dramatically affect the chances of success or failure, the choice of tactics plays an important role. For example, why stand toe-to-toe with a Kharakhan Giant and risk getting flattened when you can attack from a safe distance with a bow, or use your quickness to dodge the big brute until he's too worn-out to hit you?

There are four basic categories of tactics available to characters in the Talislanta game: Attack, Defend, Move, and Stunt. Each counts as a single action; using more than one Tactic in a single round of combat requires the attacker to take the standard penalty for Multiple Actions. Attacks (and any spellcasting), Movement, and Stunts can only be performed during the character's turn. Defensive tactics can be used at any time during the round.

The following section contains descriptions of each of these tactics and their most common variations.

ATTACK

An attack can be defined as any action intended to injure, restrain, stun, or otherwise hamper an opponent. There are four kinds of attacks in the Talislanta game: close attacks, ranged attacks, grappling attacks, and subdual attacks.

CLOSE ATTACKS

A Close Attack is a maneuver that attempts to cause damage to an opponent at close range. Any type of hand-to-hand combat, with or without weapons, is considered a Close Attack. Unless the intended target is unaware or incapable of defense, a Close Attack is considered an Opposed Action.

To simulate a Close Attack, the attacker rolls on the Action Table, adding the Skill Rating for the weapon or attack form being employed. The defender's Skill Rating is used as a negative modifier (see Defense, q.v.).

A Close Attack can be used vs multiple targets, at the standard penalty for Multiple Actions (cumulative -5 per extra target).

Alternately, a single target can be hit multiple times with a "rapid fire" attack, with the same penalties being applied. "Rapid fire" attacks can be dodged as if they were a single attack.

Example: Close Attack

Abdul the Arimite Knife-Fighter stabs at an Imrian Slaver who is attempting to abduct him. Abdul has a skill rating of 17 in arimite knife fighting (the appropriate attack skill in this case). The Imrian is not armed so it must defend with its Brawling skill of +9. The total attack roll modifier is +8 (17 - 9 = 8). Abdul's player rolls a 10 for a total of 18: Full Success. The GM describes how Abdul's knife cuts into the rough, scaly hide of the Imrian as the slaver roars with pain.



RANGED ATTACKS

A Ranged Attack is defined as any attempt to hit an opponent or target from a distance. Common Ranged Combat attacks include shooting with a projectile weapon such as a bow or crossbow, firing a catapult or other siege weapon, or using hand-hurled weapons such as javelins, rocks, or knives.

If the intended target is unaware of the Ranged Attack or is immobile, the Degree of Difficulty is based on the target's range and availability (size, visibility, degree of cover, etc.). If the defender is actively trying to dodge or evade a Ranged Attack, the Degree of Difficulty is based on range and availability plus the defender's modified defensive combat Skill or Attribute Rating. Depending on their rate of fire, some missile weapons can be used vs multiple targets, or for "rapid fire" Ranged Attacks. The standard penalty for Multiple Actions applies to Ranged Attacks as well.

Penalties for range and availability are as follows:

- ◆ Target is within half effective Range: no penalty¹
- ◆ Target is beyond half effective Range: -5¹
- ◆ Target is beyond effective Range: -10¹
- ◆ Target is beyond 2 times effective Range: -20¹
- ◆ Target is moving: -1 per point of SPD above -5
- ◆ Target is protected by cover: -1 per 10% cover
- ◆ Target is smaller than man-sized: -1 to -10
- ◆ Target is larger than man-sized: bonus of +1- +10

NOTES

1. The effective range for hand-thrown weapons is 50 feet plus 10 feet per +1 STR. Ranges and firing rates for all other missile weapons can be found in the chapter on Equipment. All penalties for range and availability are cumulative. For example, if a target is beyond half effective range and is moving at a SPD of +1, the total penalty is -11.

Note: Mishaps that occur from botched ranged attacks generally result only in a missed shot unless the attacker is firing into group (where they may accidentally hit an ally or other unintended target).



Example: Ranged Attack

Flynn the Jaka is firing his shortbow into a charging pack of Beastmen while the caravan he is protecting tries to make its escape. The lead Beastman is a mere 75 feet away which is less than half the effective range of Flynn's bow. The Beastman knows it is about to be shot at, so it rolls to one side as it moves in at. Flynn takes a penalty equal to the inverse of the Beastman's CR (-4), plus an additional penalty because the Beastman is moving at SPD +1 (-6 penalty). Flynn's Shortbow skill rating is +14, for a total Action Table modifier of +2. Flynn's player rolls a d20 and gets a 5 for an attack total of 7: Partial Success. Flynn's arrow does only half damage as it grazes the creature's thigh.

GRAPPLING ATTACKS

A Grappling Attack is any attempt to grab, restrain, or throw an opponent through the use of strength, leverage, or special grappling weapons. Grappling Attacks are handled as per Close Attacks. However, a defender who has been grabbed or restrained may take no further actions until he attempts to escape by making a successful Action Table roll using his Strength Rating (doubled) or Brawling. If the defender's escape attempt is unsuccessful, on the next turn the attacker can either throw or choke the defender without the need for a second attack roll. A thrown defender can be hurled up to 5 feet away (+1 foot per +1 STR), and/or body-slammed (DR 3 +STR). Choking causes 4 DR per round until the defender escapes or is rendered unconscious.

Grappling Attacks cannot be used against multiple targets. A single target can be both grabbed and choked or grabbed and thrown in the same turn, at a -5 penalty for the extra action. While engaged in a Grappling Attack, the attacker suffers a -5 penalty to defense (i.e. attackers are at +5 to hit the grappling character) and may not make any Dodge attempts.

Example: Grappling Attack

Crush the Thrall is fighting for wages in the death-pits of Akmir, and has had the misfortune of drawing one of the local gladiators: Sla-k'thor, the Sauran. Crush knows that the lizard will try to keep him at bay with its tail, so the Thrall leaps onto its back and tries to choke it. Crush has a skill rating of Brawling +19 versus Sla-k'thor's impressive Brawling +18. This leaves Crush with a scant +1 to his Action Table roll. Crush rolls a 13, for a total of 14, a full success. Crush gets the beast in a headlock and prepares to choke it next round. When it's the Sauran's turn, he tries to escape Crush's headlock. Sla-k'thor uses his Brawling rating to escape, since it is higher than his doubled STR rating. The Sauran gets a partial success on his escape roll so the GM rules that Crush fails to do any damage with his choke, but Sla-k'thor is still grappled.

Because of their unusual nature and wide variety of effects, Grappling Attacks have different Action Table results than standard Close Attacks as follows:

WHEN ATTACKING

◆ **Mishap:** The attacker has twisted himself into an awkward position and failed to effectively hold his opponent. The opponent receives a +5 bonus on their next attack vs. the grappler.

◆ **Failure:** The attacker fails to grab the defender.

◆ **Partial Success:** The attacker gets a partial hold but has little leverage. No choke or throw attacks may follow this attack. The defender gets a +5 bonus to his or her attempt to escape this hold.

◆ **Full Success:** The attacker achieves the hold they were attempting. They may throw or choke the defender with their next action, or simply continue to hold.

◆ **Critical Success:** The hold is especially well-placed and strong. The defender takes an additional -5 penalty to an escape attempts.

WHEN ESCAPING

◆ **Mishap:** The defender twists himself into an even worse position. He takes an additional -5 penalty to any further escape attempts. Note that further Mishap results do not add to this penalty. The maximum is -5.

◆ **Failure:** The defender remains in the hold.

◆ **Partial Success:** The defender slips part-way out of the hold. Add +5 to his next escape attempt.

◆ **Full Success:** The defender escapes the grapple.

◆ **Critical Success:** The defender performs a perfect reversal. The defender may make an immediate attack on his opponent at full skill, flee, or perform any other action.

SUBDUAL ATTACKS

A Subdual Attack is an attempt to knock-out an opponent by non-lethal means. This Tactic requires the use of a blunt weapon (such as a club, staff, Ariane mace or bow, punch, kick, etc.) and can be used as part of any attack. Damage from a Subdual Attack is tallied the same as for other forms of attack. However, if a subdual attack causes an opponent to be reduced to 0 HP, the victim is merely rendered unconscious for 1-20 rounds. HP lost as a result of a Subdual attack is restored shortly after the victim regains consciousness (1-10 minutes, or with a successful CON roll against Difficulty 10, per the GM's ruling).

DEFENSE

Most attempts to defend against an Attack are already factored into the Combat rules. Using a defender's Weapon skill Rating as a negative modifier to Attack rolls simulates the defender moving and parrying to avoid being hit.

Alternatively, an opponent who does not have the initiative or who willingly surrenders the initiative can elect to actively defend by Dodging or Parrying the impending Attack. To do so, the defender must declare the intent to defend before the opponent rolls for the attack.

The procedure for defense is the same as for attacks. The defender rolls on the Action Table, adding their defensive skill rating and subtracting the attacker's skill rating. Read the Action Table for the outcome of the Defensive tactic. Note that in the case of a full or critical defensive success, there is no need for the attacker to roll to hit.

DODGE

Dodging is a defensive maneuver that moves the character out of harm's way. This may be as simple a maneuver as ducking, or as complex as a backflip. Dodging is effective against close, ranged, and grappling attacks. Any of the following Skills or Attributes can be used for a Dodge attempt:

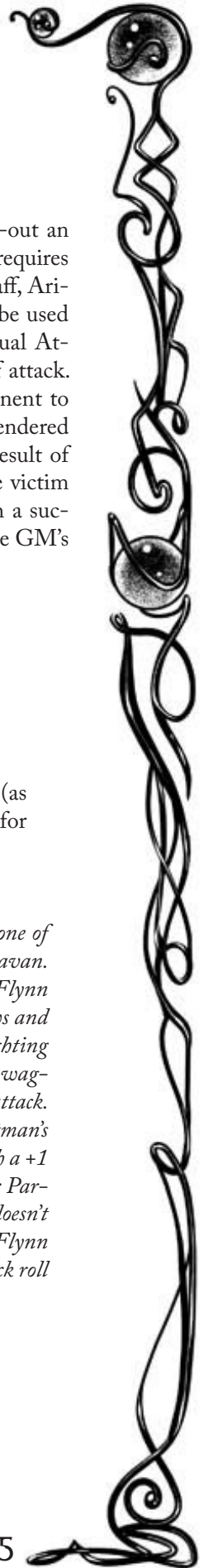
◆ Evade Skill Rating

◆ Acrobatics Skill Rating at -5

◆ Dexterity Rating or Combat Rating (as per rules for substituting Attributes for Skills)

Example: Dodge

Flynn the Jaka manages to disable all but one of the Beastmen before the pack reaches the caravan. The last Beastman leaps aboard the wagon Flynn is on, tearing at the Jaka with his bare claws and teeth. Not wanting to lower himself to fighting like an animal (or being dragged from the wagon) Flynn elects to dodge the Beastman's attack. Flynn's Evade skill rating is +10. The Beastman's Brawling skill rating is +9. Flynn rolls with a +1 bonus (10 - 9 = 1) a gets a final result of 8: Partial Success. The Jaka's evasive maneuver doesn't entirely avoid the Beastman's attack, so Flynn will take 1/2 damage if the Beastman's attack roll succeeds.



PARRY

A Parry is a defensive maneuver that interrupts an attack by putting something in the attacker's path, such as a shield or weapon.

In hand to hand combat, any of the following Skills or Attributes can be used as the modifier for a Parry attempt:

- ◆ Weapon Skill Rating
- ◆ Guard Skill Rating
- ◆ Brawling (no penalty if parrying a Brawling attack; penalty of -5 if parrying a weapon attack)
- ◆ Combat Rating
- ◆ Defender is using a shield +3
- ◆ Defender is using a buckler, garde, amysram or Danuvian bracers +2

Ranged Attacks can also be parried, but at an increased Degree of Difficulty. Most attempts to Parry a Ranged Attack suffer a -10 penalty. Use of a Shield eliminates this penalty while use of Danuvian Parrying Bracers, Garde, Amysram or a Buckler reduces

the penalty to -5. Players should note that certain Quirks may also reduce the penalty on ranged attack parry attempts.

Attacks by exceptionally large and powerful opponents that overwhelm the defender cannot be parried, such as blows from an Ice Giant's club, or a charging ogriphant.

Note that a result of Mishap when attempting to Parry means that the defender is not only hit by the attack, but whatever was being used to parry has been damaged or destroyed (GM's ruling).

EXAMPLE: PARRY

After Abdul's attacks, the Imrian Slave decides to hit back with its claws. Abdul chooses to actively defend against this attack, by parrying with his knives. Abdul's Arimate Knife Fighting skill is 17 and the Imrian's Brawling skill rating is 10. However, Abdul has already performed one previous action in the round, so he takes an addi-



tional -5 to his Parry roll for a total modifier of +2 (17 - 10 - 5 = 2). Abdul's player rolls a d20 and gets a 9 for a total of 11: Full Success. Abdul will take no damage from the Imrian's attack and there's no need to roll to see if it hits.

Both forms of Defense (Dodge & Parry) require a Full Success (or better) to succeed and count as actions when determining a Multiple Action penalty however, characters using Shields or similar devices designed specifically for parrying (garde, etc.) may Parry once per round as a free action, i.e. without incurring the normal Multiple Action penalty for the Parry attempt. Players should also note that certain Quirks (Mandaquan, Zandir Swordsmanship, etc.) may also provide bonuses to Defense.

EXAMPLE: RANGED PARRY

While tracking a group of Witchmen in the Jungles of Chana, Kudan the Kang is ambushed. An elusive Witchman attacks Kudan from a distance using his blowgun. Kudan's player announces that he will attempt to actively parry the attack. Since this is a ranged attack, Kudan has little hope of swatting the poisoned needle from the air with his Falchion (-10 penalty). Luckily he has his shield. Kudan rolls on the Action Table and only comes up with a 5 however, this roll is modified by Kudan's CR (+4) and the fact that he is using a shield (+3). The Witchman's Weapon (blowgun) rating is +6 so Kudan takes a -6 penalty to the roll as well for a total of 6 (Roll of 5 + CR +4 + Shield +3 - Attacker's Weapon +6 = 6), a Partial Success. Since Parry attempts require a Full Success at the minimum, the Witchman may roll to Attack as normal and Kudan now takes the usual Multiple Action penalty if he wants to act again in this round.

MOVEMENT

Movement is a tactic intended to increase or close the distance between attacker and defender. There are three variations: Retreat, Flee, and Advance. Note that in all three cases, rugged or difficult terrain can decrease the maximum distance that can be covered in a round, and may even require DEX or skill rolls to navigate safely.

RETREAT

A Retreat is an attempt to disengage from an attack in an orderly and measured manner. The retreating opponent can move up to half her normal Movement Rate per round while continuing to fight or defend against attack without penalty.

FLEE

Fleeing is an attempt to disengage from an attack without regard for considerations of defense or attack. Instead, the main goal is to escape as quickly as possible. A Fleeing opponent can move up to his full Movement Rate per round, but may not attack or defend while doing so. Attempting to Flee while engaged in Close Combat of any type exposes the fleeing opponent to one Unopposed Attack from each opponent within range. A successful Dodge will

allow an individual to Flee on the following round without being exposed to a Close Attack.

If a Fleeing character is being pursued, both the character and pursuer(s) must make Attribute Rolls vs their respective Speed Ratings once for each round of pursuit. Compare Action Table die rolls and Speed Ratings to see if the Fleeing individual escapes or gets caught, using the following guidelines:

- ◆ **Mishap:** stumble and fall; you're injured and cannot continue next round.
- ◆ **Failure:** stumble and fall; you can get up and continue next round
- ◆ **Partial Success:** move up to half your maximum Movement Rate
- ◆ **Full Success:** move up to your maximum Movement Rate
- ◆ **Critical Success:** maximum Movement Rate plus you gain an additional 50' on opponent

Note: for Mishaps and Failures that occur during aerial or aquatic pursuits, substitute stumbles for collisions, unfavorable wind/water currents, and/or crashes as applicable.

ADVANCE

An Advance is an attempt to close with an opponent at half maximum Movement Rate or less. This tactic allows the individual to attack or defend while moving, without penalty. It is also possible to use this tactic to Advance under cover, making it more difficult for opponents to target the advancing individual with Ranged Attacks (q.v.).

A high speed Advance is called a Charge. This tactic allows the individual to move up to his maximum Movement Rate, though at the expense of any attempts at defense. Attacking while Charging is possible, at a penalty of -3 for Close Attacks and -5 for Ranged Attacks. When making Close Attacks while Charging, add the character's Speed to the damage rating, as well as Strength. See the Skill, *Mounted Combat*, for additional modifiers.

STUNTS

A Stunt can be defined as any type of unconventional maneuver attempted during the course of Combat. This tactic includes such flamboyant maneuvers as leaping from high places, swinging from ropes or chandeliers, vaulting over opponents, and the kind of daredevil moves that are commonly seen in most action-adventure movies. It also covers "dirty tricks" like tripping, throwing dirt in an opponent's eyes, and so on.

Any applicable Skill or Attribute can be used as a modifier for a Stunt, though most actions of this sort carry a stiff penalty for Degree of Difficulty (GM's ruling applies in all cases). Characters who possess Acrobatics, certain Performing Skills or specific Martial Arts Quirks generally fare better at Stunts than those who do not have such specialized abilities.

Under certain circumstances, a Stunt can be combined with another tactic without incurring a penalty for Multiple Actions. For example, leaping over a bar counter and kicking an enemy can be accomplished in one fluid action, and need not entail any added penalty for multiple actions. However, leaping over a rail, swinging from a chandelier, and kicking an enemy who was across the room would count as an additional action, resulting in the standard -5 penalty.

Since every stunt is different, we won't provide you with an exhaustive list here. It's always up to the GM to determine what the Degree of Difficulty is for any given stunt, based on the specific circumstances and how "cinematic" she wants the game to be. It's usually a good idea for the GM to tell her players ahead of time just what sorts of stunts will be allowed.

Example Stunts:

Abdul cuts a rope with a thrown knife, bringing down a chandelier on the heads of two Cymrilian guardsmen. (Arimite Knife Fighting; Difficulty 10 to hit the small target)

Lucas the Sarista Gypsy whirls his cloak in the rushing guardsmen's faces as he jumps behind the bar. Hopefully, the cloak will momentarily stun and blind the guards, allowing Lucas to seemingly vanish. (Acrobatics; Difficulty 15 to confuse all three guards)

AIMED SHOTS

An aimed shot is an Attack intended to hit a very specific target and/or cause a very specific effect. Almost any Combat Tactic can be used in conjunction with an Aimed Shot. A Ranged Attack intended to cut a windship's sail, disable a moving conveyance, or knock a weapon from an opponent's hand, is an Aimed Shot. So is a Close Attack intended to disarm an opponent by striking his hand, or a Shield Parry used to deflect a missile in a specific direction. The ability to temporarily stun or subdue an opponent with a single blow, a staple of the action-adventure genre, can also be accomplished with an Aimed Shot.

Aimed Shots are handled much like other Combat Tactics, the main difference being that maneuvers of this sort usually carry a pretty severe penalty for Degree of Difficulty — not surprising, given the fact that an Aimed Shot is by its nature much more difficult to accomplish than a standard attack. A result of Success or Critical Success is required to achieve the intended effect; for Aimed Shots, an Action Table result of Partial Success is the same as Failure.

Aimed Shots can also be used to hit the small parts of an opponent that are not covered by their armor, and thus ignore its Protection Rating. The additional Degree of Difficulty penalty for this tactic is equal to the total PR of the armor worn. For example, to strike through a seam in Kang Battle Armor (PR 7) the attacker would take an additional -7 to his or her attack roll.

CRITICAL WOUNDS

Any attack that is made with the intent to kill or injure that yields an Action Table result of Critical Success will cause a Critical Wound. Assuming the victim has not been reduced to zero or less Hit Points, he must make a roll vs his CON Rating (minus the DR of the attack) to determine the extent of the injury, as follows:

- ◆ **Critical Success/Success:** victim can continue without penalty
- ◆ **Partial Success:** victim can continue, but suffers a penalty of -5 on all die rolls until the Critical Wound damage is healed (by magical or non-magical healing, or through rest and recuperation)
- ◆ **Failure/Mishap:** victim is incapacitated and rendered incapable of movement, regardless of actual Hit Point total. No further actions can be taken until the Critical Wound damage is healed.

In the case of minor NPCs, a critical hit can cause instant death or knockout (GM's ruling) without the need for a CON roll.

RECOVERY

As mentioned previously, healing occurs at the rate of 5 Hit Points per day, plus one additional point of healing per +1 Constitution Rating. Individuals with negative Constitution Ratings heal at the rate of 5 HP per day, minus one point of healing per -1 CON Rating (the minimum rate of healing is 1 HP per day).

Individuals who have suffered a Critical Wound, a permanent injury, or a close brush with death may require a period of convalescence. If the victim receives immediate magical or alchemical healing, he or she may be fully recovered after just a few hours of sleep. Otherwise, recovery time could range from a day or two to a week, several weeks, or even longer. The amount of time required to make a full recovery in such instances is up to the GM to decide, based on the nature and extent of the victim's injuries.



CREATIVE COMBAT

All too often, combat in the game consists of little more than “I hit him with my sword”, “I do 13 damage”, “I dodge”, “I parry”. With the dramatic opportunities combat presents in Talislanta, this monotonous approach fails to enliven the game, or fire the imagination. Role-playing need not stop when combat begins.

DESCRIPTION IS EVERYTHING

Combat is full of sensations. Describe the grunts and cries of combatants, the thud and clash of weapons, the expressions on individual faces, the moves opponents make, their actions and reactions, the smells and emotions.

No combatant is ever completely aware of everything going on around them in a fight. A good GM trick is to occasionally, secretly, tell one player that their character notices something another character doesn't, such as a pit their colleague may be about to step backwards into, a hidden sniper drawing a bead on their friend, an opponent blindsiding their unsuspecting compatriot, and so on, and give them a round or two to do something, even if only to quickly shout a warning. This trick can bolster the sense of camaraderie and teamwork among the players surprisingly well, and adds more dynamism to the conflict.

CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES

Only psychopaths and other miscreants enter combat at the drop of a hat. Use of force should be appropriate to the situation, and bear in mind the character's outlook on life. Like people in the real world, Talislantans are almost always aware of the possible consequences of their actions, and if their actions go counter to morality, local law, or common sense. Lethal force should only be used when faced with little recourse, unless the character is a deviant, or a native of a violent culture, such as Arim. For example, someone using a knife in a barroom brawl would be considered a sick thug, unless their assailants were also brandishing such lethal weapons. Characters who behave in violent fashion, or react with disproportionate force, should expect to be reviled, hunted, imprisoned, or executed, by local authorities, relatives and allies of their victims, and so on. Consequences are something every character should consider and

THINK ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

One of the most overlooked aspects of any combat, and the first that should be born in mind, is the actual location of the fight. Considering the characters' surroundings for a moment can add a whole new dimension to a conflict. Ask yourself such questions as:

*Are there potential obstacles or obstructions that can be ducked behind, jumped on, off, or over, interposed between the attack and target, or that might impede a combatant, such as boulders, tables, pillars, trees, balconies, etc.?

*Are there perils in the surroundings that might harm, kill, or otherwise inconvenience an incautious or unlucky combatant, such as a cliff-edge, open pit, lava flow, untriggered trap, or patch of ice?

*Does the environment in any way prohibit the use of certain weapons, or make their use more difficult? Some weapons, for example, require considerable space to be swung effectively, such as greatswords, so a fight in a short, narrow corridor would make their use very difficult. Similarly, fighting in close formation may make it hazardous to use some weapons, as the space needed to use them may be occupied by an ally.

*Weather conditions, such as powerful gales, thick fog, etc. can make the use of missile weapons problematic at best, and even melee combat can be effected if you can't see any opponent more than a yard away, or if a lot of flying debris, sand, etc. makes life difficult.

With a good grasp of the environment comes the ability to bring it into the conflict. Imagine how it can be used to the benefit or detriment of the combatants. Opponents can be forced towards perils, boulders can be used as cover, and so on. A Mishap on any roll during the combat may also involve the environment somehow, such as a trip or blunder into an object, suddenly finding oneself maneuvered to the brink of the lava flow, a missed attack resulting in the weapon getting stuck in a tree or pillar, etc.

Avoid getting caught up in precise details; keep the play fast and fluid. Accurate distances are not important; use vague terms such as “close”, “a stone’s throw away”, or “right next to you”, and if ranged combat or distance matters, simply make a rough judgement of how long (in rounds) it will take to cover the area, or if the attack is basically close, short, or long range. You don’t even need to consult the ranges of the weapons to make such a call. Just keep things moving. Stopping to check ranges, the amount of area someone with X SPD can cover in a single round just slows the action down.

BEWARE OF BYSTANDERS

The presence of bystanders during a fight is also often overlooked. Crowds often gather to watch fights, and may goad the opponents on, and even place wagers on the outcome. Not only can bystanders get in the way, they can easily be hit by stray shots or blows, taken hostage or used as shields by nefarious individuals, or even enter the combat themselves on either side, or against both, the classic example of which is the local military or law enforcement attempting to stop the conflict and incarcerate the combatants.

Firing into any melee, whether bystanders or involved or not, is a very dangerous proposition, due to the continual movement of the combatants. Missed shots may easily hit an unintended target, such as an ally. Aside from intelligent bystanders there are always cases of animals becoming involved somehow. Herd animals may stampede, posing a threat to everyone, while a predator may leap unexpectedly into a melee, in the hopes of taking a wounded individual on the periphery of the fight. Certain motive plants can also provide an added element to a fight, especially if they are not recognized as such from the onset.

USE YOUR SURROUNDINGS

The character should also exploit the environment of the fight. Many objects, such as chairs, rocks, ropes, nets, wall hangings, and pots of oil, may be used as impromptu clubs, missiles, entangling implements, incendiaries, and so on. Rugs may be pulled from under assailants, barrels of oil spilled to create slick patches, chandeliers shot down to fall on assailants below, and so on. Even an unskilled or unarmed combatant can be terribly effective if they make intelligent use of their surroundings.

WANTON DESTRUCTION

A battle can take a serious toll on the surrounding environment, and the effects are worth thinking about. Use of fire in any form may ignite combustibles, and create a hazard. Attacks that miss their intended target may hit something else, thereby damaging it, and the use of items as cover, fighting platforms, etc. will almost certainly result in them being ruined in some way. A fight will practically always leave signs of its occurrence, even if only in the form of splashes of blood.

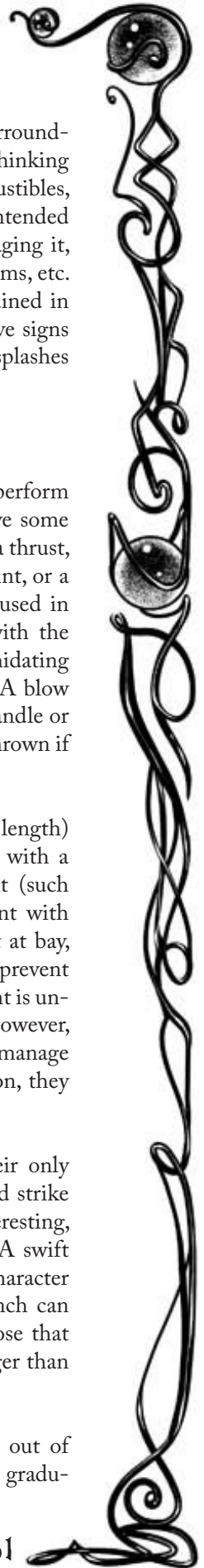
FIGHT WITH STYLE

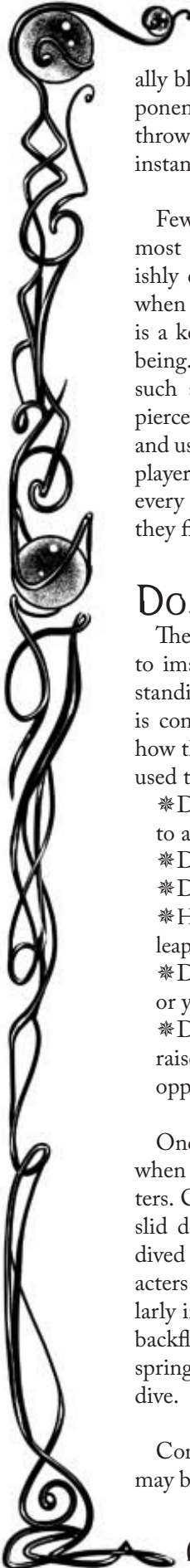
The majority of weapons can be used to perform a variety of strikes, in a variety of ways. Give some thought as to what form an attack takes. Is it a thrust, a lunge, a wild swing, an overhead blow, a feint, or a backhanded swipe? A weapon can even be used in unorthodox ways. A strike may be made with the flat of the blade, possibly subduing or intimidating an opponent. A staff may be used to thrust. A blow to knock out can be made with a weapon’s handle or pommel. Many melee weapons can even be thrown if the situation is desperate enough.

The reach of a weapon (its comparative length) is also worth bearing in mind. A character with a notably longer weapon than their opponent (such as a halberd being used against an opponent with a sword), may not only keep their opponent at bay, and strike them first, but they may effectively prevent their opponent from attacking, if the opponent is unable to get inside the reach of their weapon. However, should the opponent with a shorter weapon manage to step inside the reach of the longer weapon, they may make its use next to impossible as well.

The sword the character bears is not their only weapon. Try and add the occasional unarmed strike into a combination of blows; it is more interesting, and can surprise an unexpecting opponent. A swift kick can force an opponent back, giving the character room to maneuver or flee, while a solid punch can stun, and a headbutt can bring you in so close that your opponent cannot bring any weapon larger than a dagger to bear.

Consider how a combatant can be taken out of the fight quickly without necessarily being gradu-





ally bludgeoned or sliced in a protracted melee. Opponents can be disarmed, tripped, pinned, grappled, thrown, knocked out, entangled, or knocked over, for instance.

Few combats should ever be to the death; only the most deeply unintelligent, insane, frenzied, or foolishly courageous combatants will continue fighting when badly wounded or outclassed. A hasty retreat is a key survival strategy for practically every living being. Particularly bloodthirsty or lethal maneuvers, such as attempts to slice an opponent's head off, pierce their eyes, or eviscerate them should be rare, and used only when dramatically appropriate. Should players continually attempt such maneuvers against every opponent, they should expect all of the NPCs they fight to respond in like fashion.

DON'T JUST STAND THERE

The way some combats are conducted, it is hard to imagine the combatants doing much more than standing toe-to-toe trading blows. In truth, combat is continually in motion. Bear some thought as to how the characters move about, and how this can be used to advantage or disadvantage.

- * Do they try and outflank an opponent, or move to a better attacking position?
- * Do the combatants circle each other warily?
- * Do they attempt to close in, or move away?
- * How do they dodge: duck, sidestep, roll, or leap?
- * Do they press an opponent, forcing them back, or yield and give ground?
- * Do they charge or leap into a fight, weapon raised high, calmly walk forward, or wait for their opponent to come to them?

Once again, the environment is very important when considering the motion of the various characters. Chandeliers or ropes may be swung from, sails slid down with a dagger, pillars ran around, tables dived under, jumped on or over, and so on. Characters with the Acrobatics skill can make particularly impressive use of motion, such as cartwheeling, backflipping, somersaulting, and going into elaborate springs or rolls, although anyone can roll, leap, or dive.

Combatants who find themselves on the ground may be in peril if their opponent is still standing, and

may be forced to roll or flail wildly in an attempt to avoid being struck, and provide themselves with the moment needed to regain their feet.

Motion in certain environments can add a whole new dimension, quite literally, to a fight. Airborne combats, for example, can feature attacks from above or below, diving attacks, swoops, and so on, while underwater combats also occur in three dimensions, but slow down motion, and make non-thrusting weapons far less effective.

KEEP TALKING

Just because the action has started, doesn't mean the talking has ceased. Characters should engage in appropriate dialogue when fighting, hurling expletives, insults, and imprecations at opponents, shouting warnings and encouragement to colleagues, screaming battlecries, engaging in the cut and thrust of witty repartee with like-minded antagonists, and so on. Just as players speak the words of their characters when roleplaying any other situation, they should do so in combat sections of the game.

COMBAT IS A BLOODY AFFAIR

The damage opponents suffer can be as detailed or vague as befits the gaming group's tastes, playing style, and campaign style.

Never simply state the amount of Damage inflicted by any blow—describe it. Small amounts of damage comparative to the character's HPs might be cuts, nicks, grazes, or bruises, while heavy damage can be bone-crunching impacts, deep slices causing blood to flow, and so on. GMs of truly Grim campaigns may even inflict penalties on a character's actions if they are significantly hurt, and may interpret particularly damaging strikes as incapacitating or mutilating. Likewise, Heroic campaigns may seldom involve damage worse than bad cuts, or broken bones, all of which they recover from very quickly. At worst, a Heroic character might lose an eye or limb, giving them a dramatic reason to seek revenge.

Combat in a game can, and should, be as gripping and exciting as any fight scene in an action movie, and if given as much thought and effort as possible, will take its place alongside any other roleplaying scene for a sense of character and drama.

MAGIC

In Talislanta's New Age, there are many different types of Magic being practiced, each with its own traditions, theories, and techniques. And these are only the faded descendants of the great arcane disciplines of old, evidence of which can still be found among the many ancient ruins scattered across the continent.

Talislanta's very existence, peoples, and geography are products of magic. Magical storms still sweep the continent, leaving sorcerous mutations in their wake. Impossible and fantastic creatures inhabit all corners of the world. Magic, in some form or another, is part of every Talislantan's life.

ORDERS

An Order is a school of Magic, like Wizardry or Necromancy — think of it as a character's field of magical expertise. There are twelve Orders practiced by Talislantan magicians of the New Age, described in detail later in this chapter. Though each interprets magic in a different way, a set of common, underlying principles governs its effects. Note that Orders are not Skills, and are not used for Action Table die rolls.

Players should concentrate on learning all about the Magical Order (or Orders) their characters have studied. This information describes how magic works for members of that Order, and how such spell casters view the practice of Magic. Learning an additional Order requires 100 weeks of training (100 XP).

MODES

A Mode is a general type of spell-effect, such as Illusion, Conjunction, etc. There are nine different Modes that together describe all the powers and abilities of modern magicians, described in detail later in this chapter. Players should be familiar with the Modes that their characters know, as this tells them the kind of spells they can cast. GMs should know about how Modes work as well. Modes can be aquired like any other Skill, at a cost of 20 XP.

SPELL DEFINITIONS

Spells in the Talislanta setting are defined by their parameters. Range, duration, effect, etcetera are all set at the time the spell is researched and scribed. Only the spell level is variable. Thus all spells have a Base Difficulty rating, which includes all penalties and bonuses except the spell level itself. The exceptions are the Conjunction, Illusion and Transmutation Modes, which must also have the level specified in order to achieve the defined spell effect.

For example: the spell Sassan's Firey Motes has a Base Difficulty of -12, which includes all modifiers except the spell level, which determines the damage inflicted. The spell Glitterheal has a Base Difficulty of -4, as it is a 4th level Transutation (healing) spell.

Magicians often have several versions of a spell scribed in their spellbooks, with only minor variations, to give them added versatility. For example, a wizard might have Glitterheal, a level 4 healing spell, and Healing Radiance, a level 12 healing spell.

Another example: Kaa, an Ur Shaman, knows three variations of the "Whispering Nightmares" illusion spell. The first is low level and fills the targeted area with faint whispers from the Nightmare Dimension, which is enough to frighten Darklings and superstitious Ur who enter her cave without invitation. The next is higher level, but also causes the whispering nightmares to visibly appear. The highest level version causes them to appear and creates the sensation of phantasmal fingers clawing at the intruders, doing no real damage but making them feel as if they're being attacked.

Why not always use the most powerful spell you know, then? Why should your character learn any low level versions? Because you will not always be at full strength, and using your strongest spell can be risky if you are suffering spellcasting penalties.

SPELLCASTING

In the Talislanta game, a spell can either be cast from memory or from a written work such as a scroll or book. The following sections explain how these two methods work in the game.



CASTING SPELLS FROM MEMORY

1. STATING INTENT

Choose a spell from among those you character has mastered. Keep in mind your character's magical Order, how its members cast their spells, and whether or not they use material components or rituals of any sort.

Once you've done this you can describe the type of spell the character is casting and its intended effect. Is the spell attacking something nearby? Is the magician cooking up a diabolical curse? Is she waving her arms and chanting? Is she drawing arcane runes in the dirt? The important thing is to state your Intent clearly, so the GM and other players can picture your action in the scene.



2. CHOOSING SPELL LEVEL

Each time a spell is cast from memory, the player must decide how much energy his character will invest in it. In game terms, the quantity of energy behind a spell is known as its Spell Level. Magicians can usually cast a spell at any level desired. However, the higher the Spell Level, the more difficult the spell is to cast, and the greater the chance of a magical Mishap.

3. DETERMINING BONUSES AND PENALTIES

After the magician's player has described the spell and the desired effect, the GM must determine if any bonus or penalty will be applied. This is done before the player rolls to cast the spell.

Use the character's modified Skill Rating in the chosen Mode as the primary modifier. To determine the Spell Difficulty, add the Spell Level and the Base Difficulty. Compare the two figures to get the modifier that will be applied to the player's Action Table roll.

Cyrila the Aeromancer has a skill rating of +7 in the Move mode and wants to cast "Touch of the Wind" (a Move mode spell with a Spell Difficulty -6. Her final Action Table modifier is +1 (7 - 6 = 1).

4. THE CASTING ROLL

To determine whether the spell is successful or not the player rolls a d20 on the Action Table, applying the GM's modifier to the die result.

5. JUDGING THE RESULT

After the player rolls, the GM interprets the Action Table result, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding of the action, and other factors, as follows:

- ◆ **Mishap:** the spell fails, resulting in potentially disastrous consequences (see Magical Mishaps, in this section)
- ◆ **Failure:** the spell fails
- ◆ **Partial Success:** the spell has half the intended effect, range, duration, or potency (GM's ruling based on the type of spell cast).
- ◆ **Success:** the spell works as intended.
- ◆ **Critical Success:** the spell is cast as efficiently and effortlessly as possible. This spell does not contribute to the caster's Spell Penalty for the day (see The Spell Penalty on the following page).

CASTING SPELLS FROM WRITTEN WORKS

Magicians can also cast spells by reading them directly from magic scrolls or spellbooks. There are benefits and drawbacks to this method. When casting a spell from a written work, the magician receives a bonus to her casting roll. However, this type of spell casting requires up to 1 minute (10 rounds).

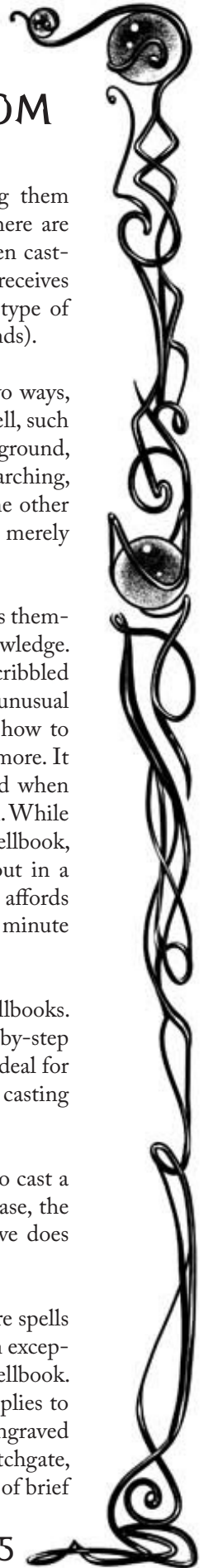
Written spells can be written in one of two ways, detailed or brief. The detailed version of a spell, such as is found in spellbooks, contains all the background, esoteric information needed for learning, researching, or enhancing a spell. The brief version, on the other hand, contains no extraneous information, merely the basic instructions for spellcasting.

Spellbooks contain more than just the spells themselves. They are repositories of magical knowledge. Each spell includes notes from the author, scribbled diagrams of arcane energies, a history of unusual events that have occurred in its use, tips on how to avoid or lessen mishaps with that spell, and more. It is for this reason that a spellbook is required when performing spell research or enhancing a spell. While it is possible to cast a spell directly from a spellbook, it is not easy because the spell is not laid out in a simple, easily-read format. Using a spellbook affords a +3 bonus to the casting roll, but requires 1 minute (10 rounds).

Scrolls are simplified, edited versions of spellbooks. Only the essence of the spell is scribed, step-by-step instructions on casting it. This makes scrolls ideal for casting a spell, affording a +5 bonus to the casting roll, and requiring 2 rounds.

A magician may use a scroll or spellbook to cast a spell he or she has not yet learned. In this case, the bonus to the spellcasting roll described above does not apply.

Note that it is possible to have a book where spells are written in brief, as on scrolls, or to have an exceptionally long scroll with all the detail of a spellbook. In any case, use the rules mechanism that applies to the format of the spell, not the medium. An engraved circle of protection, the runes on a stone witchgate, or the magic words on a map are all examples of brief





spells on non-scroll surfaces.

The standard spellbook is roughly 400 pages, and each spell takes a number of pages equal to its Base Difficulty plus enhancement levels, if any. Arcane logbooks are spellbooks with just enough pages for a single spell. A brief, scroll-like spell entry takes 1 page. Most magicians are careful to guard their books from those who might want to steal their secrets.

Scrolls are lightweight and easily carried, and can be reused any number of times. Scrolls generally contain a single spell, though additional spells can be written on longer scrolls. Each spell after the first adds an additional round to the casting time due to having to scroll through to find the desired spell.

CASTING ARCHAEN SPELLS

Archaen spells, though generally more difficult to cast, are treated the same as modern spells within the scope of these rules. The magician must know the Order and Mode of the spell in question. A pyromancer can cast Sassan's Firey Motes using his Attack mode rating. A modern magician must possibly learn extinct Orders like Erythrian Battle Magic before casting any spells of from these ancient Orders.

MAGICAL MISHAPS

There are few things a magician dreads more than a Magical Mishap. Here is a list of possible Magical Mishaps that originally appeared in the first edition of the Talislanta game, back in 1987.

- ◆ No noticeable effect
(50% chance of side-effect occurring later)
- ◆ Spell rebounds upon caster
- ◆ Spell strikes unintended target (random direction)
- ◆ Reverse spell effect (rebounds upon caster)
- ◆ Reverse spell effect (random direction)
- ◆ Static spell effect; area charged with magical energies (5-foot radius around the caster)
- ◆ Wandering spell effect, 5-foot radius charged with magical energies, moves at random
- ◆ Phase-shift: caster teleported to random location
- ◆ Black hole effect: caster and any individuals within 20 feet are drawn into another dimension
- ◆ Temporal rift: caster falls backwards (or forwards) in time
- ◆ Random spell effect (Gamemaster's choice)

COUNTERSPELLS

Any spell or magical effect can be dispelled by casting a counterspell of the same Mode. If the counterspell is of a different Order than the original spell, the magician takes an additional -5 penalty to his casting roll. Counterspells have the same range and duration as regular spells of the same Mode.

First, the magician must successfully cast the counterspell (follow the normal spellcasting procedure). Then compare the level of the counterspell to the level of the spell to be countered. Use the level of the counterspell as a positive modifier and the level of the spell or magic to be countered as the Degree of Difficulty then roll on the Action Table. Full or Critical Success means the spell has been countered, and its effects negated. Partial Success means the spell's level and its effects have been reduced by half (round up). Failure means the counterspell has no effect, while a Mishap may actually strengthen or extend the duration of the target spell (GM's ruling).

For example, Alanar casts a Level 9 spell that creates a Wall of Winds between him and his rival, Cyrila the Aeromancer. However, Cyrila is proficient in this Mode (Ward), and is of the same Order as Alanar. She successfully casts a counterspell at Level 8, hoping that this will be sufficient to dispel her opponent's magic. After her spellcasting roll, Cyrila's player rolls again at a penalty of -1 (her level 8 counterspell minus Alanar's level 9 spell = -1). She rolls a 17, for a result of Full Success. Alanar's barrier sputters and dissolves before his eyes.

THE SPELL PENALTY

Casting spells from memory is mentally exhausting. A spellcaster may cast a number of spells per day equal to their WIL (*minimum of one*) without incurring a spell penalty. Each time a spell is cast beyond this limit, the magician incurs a cumulative penalty of -1 on further spell casting die rolls for that day, with one exception: spells that result in a Critical Success do not contribute to this penalty. A minimum of seven hours of rest is required to recover normal spellcasting abilities. "Rest" includes sleep, meditation, or any other form of relaxation.

Torren the Wizard wants to cast "Arkon's Bolt of Destruction." He has already cast three spells in the last few hours, so Torren suffers a minus 3 Spell Penalty (in addition to any other Action Table modifiers). After the spell is cast, Torren's player notes on his character sheet that Torren's new Spell Penalty is -4. The next time he casts a spell, he will take an additional -4 penalty to his casting roll.

USING MAGIC IN THE GAME

Because there are literally thousands of spells, charms, powers, and principles at work in the various magical disciplines of the continent, the Talislanta game system does not try to cover them all. Rather, a solid framework is provided for the mechanics of magic, allowing players and GMs to create their own spells using the none Modes as guidelines.

In the section where Orders are described you'll find some sample spells for various Modes. Use spells similar to these when you first begin playing Talislanta. Then, once you are more familiar with the rules, you can create additional spells. As play progresses, you can record the spells that your character commonly uses, building your character's personalized "spellbook".

ABOUT ORDERS AND MODES

An Order is a field of magic or magical tradition, such as Witchcraft, Wizardry, and Mysticism. Members of the same Order derive their magical powers from the same source, and tend to observe similar rituals and practices. In present-day Talislanta there are twelve known magical Orders. Some believe that other Orders may have existed in ancient times; if so, they are now forgotten by the magicians of the New Age. Most magicians belong to a single Order, though some elect to gain proficiency in additional fields of magic; Cymrilian magicians, for example, study many different magical traditions at the Lyceum Arcanum, Talislanta's foremost school of magic. Individuals can learn a new Order at a cost of 100 weeks of training (100 XP) (see *Chapter Three: Skills & Quirks* for more information on acquiring new Orders)

A Mode is essentially a spell-effect, such as Conjuraction, Illusion, and Transmutation. Modes can be used in one of two ways. Modes are used as a basis for creating original spells. Each Order uses Modes in a different way; the differences are substantial enough that even if a magician knows the Mode, Enchantment, in one Order, she will not be proficient

in the same Mode as it is practiced by members of other Orders.

Note that Modes can be acquired and improved as explained in the rules for Skills (see Page 63). Orders can be acquired, but cannot be improved as they are never used for Action Table Die rolls.

LIMITATIONS OF TALISANTAN MAGIC

Modern Talisantan magic is not free-form or spontaneous. Rather, it is a precise discipline that involves the memorization of hundreds of formulized spells. A magician cannot “*make up*” a spell at a moment’s notice or improvise while spellcasting. It is the player’s job to come up with interesting spell names and

effects during the game, but the magician character is assumed to have known those spells all along. The spells that the player invents must fit within the style of the magician’s Order, the game-mechanics of the chosen Mode, and the practical restrictions of all modern Talisantan magic.

Modern Talisantan magic cannot:

- ◆ Return the dead to life
- ◆ Create life
- ◆ Affect time or causality
- ◆ Control two Powers at once (no spells of Fire and Earth together)
- ◆ Cast more than one spell at a time, or blend two spells together (use two Modes at once)

Note that these restrictions do not apply to the ancient magic of the Archaen Age.

MODES

Every spell that can be cast in Talisanta has one primary effect, or Mode. This idea holds true regardless of the outward form the spell takes. Does the spell heal injury? Does it move objects? Does it create illusions? Once you know the spell’s primary effect, you know its Mode, and how it works in the game. The following is a list of the nine Modes and their primary effects. Each is described in detail later in this chapter.

Modes can be acquired at a cost of 20 weeks of training (20 XP), and can be improved as per the rules for Skills.

Talisantan magicians never refer to Modes by name. Instead they discuss specific spells and their effects, such as the fiery tendrils of “*Zorian’s Flame Whip*”. Most magicians realize that modern magic is restricted to certain types of effects, but these types haven’t been researched and catalogued much since the Great Disaster.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT MODE

As stated above, choosing the right Mode to represent a spell is a process of determining what the spell’s primary effect is. The appearance and form of the spell make little difference when picking a Mode. An important point to remember is that the magician character does not *know* the Modes. Rather they know many specific spells that fall into 9 broad categories represented by the Modes. If a spell falls into a category that the magician character hasn’t studied, then it cannot be cast, regardless of its outward form. This notion can seem confusing at first, so several examples are provided below to act as guidelines for the GM.

Calabaz the Geomancer is in a tough spot. He has fled from a pack of bloodthirsty Banes while in the forests of Werewood and has come to an impassable clump of briars and thorns. Calabaz can hear the slaving cries of the Banes and knows they will be on him in moments. Calabaz’s player tells the GM that he would like to conjure a pile of dirt and rocks in mid-air so that it falls and crushes the Banes when they burst from the trees. The player calls this spell “Vengeance of Stone.” The primary effect of this spell seems to be dealing damage, so

the GM tells the player to use his Attack Mode rating to cast the spell. Unfortunately, Calabaz has no rating in Attack. The player argues, saying, "But Calabaz has the Conjuration Mode! If he can Conjure rock and dirt whenever he wants, why can't he do it so it falls on the Banes?"

The reason Calabaz can't do this is because it falls outside his realm of knowledge. He knows many little spells to create rocks and dirt from nothing (represented by his Conjuration Mode) but he does not know any spells that conjure anything in a way to effectively attack someone. Calabaz himself might very well call such a harmful spell a "conjuration", but it remains part of a body of knowledge (attack spells) that he has not studied. Of course, Calabaz can still cast a similar spell (using his Conjuration Mode) and though the Banes will not be attacked by it, they will be slowed down as they scramble over a large pile of loose dirt and jagged rocks.

Zaisho the Pyromancer also wants to cast a Move Mode spell, "Pillar of Emerald Fire". This spell makes a jet of green flame appear beneath an object, lift it, and then move across the ground as the pyromancer wills. This spell would be very poor for clearing out a dusty workspace, but the flames cast a faint light which would help the pyromancer guide the spell in the dark.

Neither of the above example spells would be good for moving a piece of fragile, old parchment. The blowing winds might rip the paper, and flames would certainly singe or even burn it. However, a Wizard casting "Magic Fingers" would have no trouble carefully manipulating the fragile document with disembodied hands of arcane force.

HOW DO ORDERS USE THE MODES DIFFERENTLY?

Even though all of the magicians in Talislanta use the same nine Modes as part of the game system, the specific effects of spells cast by each Order can be quite different. It's not as if every magician in Talislanta knows the same 9 basic spells and simply calls them by different names. A magician's Order forms the whole basis for how her spells work in practice. In addition to the game-mechanics associated with the Modes, each Order has side-effects based on the type of energy that its spells control. These should always be kept simple and obvious; fire burns, winds blows, spirits are creepy, etc. Sometimes these side-effects are beneficial and sometimes they're a limitation.

For example, Cyrila casts an Aeromancy spell that her player calls "The Touch of the Wind". This spell moves objects around by blowing them with a powerful breeze. This is obviously a Move Mode spell. This spell would be perfect for blowing leaves from Cyrila's workroom, but would not work well for moving a torch across a room since the winds would blow out the flame.



MODE DESCRIPTIONS

ATTACK

ATTACK IN BRIEF:

Damage: 1 Hit Point per Spell Level
Range: 50 feet (+1 to Difficulty per additional 10 feet)
Duration: Instant or 1 minute (+1 to Difficulty per additional minute)
Area: +1 to Difficulty per foot of radius

The Attack Mode deals with channeling destructive magical power and hurling it at an enemy. Attack Mode spells have an instant duration and do damage in Hit Points equal to the spell's level; for example, a level 6 Attack spell has a Damage Rating of 6. A magician may also cast an Attack spell meant to subdue, rather than kill. See the rules for subdual in the Combat section.

Most Attack effects are Ranged Attacks and may therefore be Dodged by rolling against the magician's Attack Mode rating. Close Combat attack spells can also be cast, such as a fiery blade or magical claws. These effects last for one minute or more depending on the duration specified. When targeting spells of this type, the magician must use the appropriate combat skill (sword, brawling, etc.) rather than her Mode rating. Area-effect attacks can also be created (a swirling wind, a circle of fire). Every foot of effect radius adds +1 to the Difficulty.

ATTACK EXAMPLES

"I call upon Borean, god of the North Wind, to blast my foes with razor-sharp shards of ice."

"I chant the secret death-chants of the ancestor spirits, and break the finger-bone of a yaksha, so I might roar forth my wrath and crush my enemy with the sound."

"I intone the Archaen phrases and trace the arcane symbol of war in the air as I cast 'Zorion's Daggers'. Three crimson blades appear shimmering in the air beside me, before spinning off toward their targets."

CONJURATION

CONJURATION IN BRIEF:

Maximum Mass: 10 lbs. (+1 to Difficulty per additional 10 lbs)
Maximum Area: 1 cubic foot (+1 to Difficulty per additional cubic ft)
Ability Level of Summoned Creature: 1 per Spell Level
Range: 50 feet (+1 to Difficulty per 10 extra feet of range)
Casting Time: 1 Round (or 1 minute per Spell Level for summoning)
Duration: *Conjured Items:* 1 minute (+1 to Difficulty per additional minute); *Summoning:* Varies (according to Pact; maximum 24 hours);

The conjuration mode covers spells that bring things into existence. There are two main category of Conjuration Mode spells: those that conjure inanimate objects and those that summon otherworldly creatures to Talislanta.

Conjuring inanimate objects creates material objects from magical energy. Up to 10 pounds of matter can be created per spell level, covering an area up to 1 cubic foot per Level. Living matter cannot be conjured in this way. The caster must be familiar with the object or material to be conjured, though simple shapes like staves, swords, rope, etc. require no special training. The creation of exact replicas or finely detailed pieces incurs a penalty based on the degree of difficulty entailed (GM's ruling).

When the duration of the spell ends, the item disappears, unless it has been consumed or mixed with other material. If a character drinks conjured water, it will quench his thirst, even after the spell duration expires.

The Conjuration Mode is also used by spellcasters wishing to interact with extra-dimensional entities, such as bringing demons to Talislanta and speaking with the dead. When used in this manner, it is no surprise to learn that Conjuration is perhaps the

most dangerous and unreliable of the Modes, involving great risk when used at high levels of power.

The type of creature that is summoned is decided by the caster, though each of the Orders has restrictions on the types of beings it can summon. The level at which a summoning spell is cast determines the level of the creature that responds to the call. For example, a demon summoned with a level 3 spell will have an overall Ability Level of +3.

If a spellcaster summons a creature for which there are no direct corresponding statistics, the GM must determine the game mechanics of the entity based on those of a similar creature. For example, the summoned ghost of a long-dead Za chieftain would have similar statistics to those he had in life: those of a normal Za warrior. Summoned creatures may have additional special abilities, such as flight or immunity to weapons, as determined by the GM. As with all summoned entities, the ability level of the summoned creature is equal to the level of the spell.

PROCEDURE FOR SUMMONING SPELLS

THE OFFERING

Prior to casting the summoning spell, the caster may wish to burn certain incenses and other substances that aid in summoning, the specifics of which depend on the magicians culture and Order. Fragrant oils and certain types of magical fumes may be used to bestow further bonuses upon the caster (*see Equipment*). For example, Aamanians Priests often offer burn offerings to Aa, Chana Witchmen burn foul incenses and Ariane Mystics often favor natural aromatic herbs.



THE RITUAL INSCRIPTIONS

In any ritual summoning of creatures which might prove dangerous or hostile to the caster, he or she must inscribe the traditional Circle of Protection and Summoning Triangle upon the floor or ground. The form of these protective sigils vary by Order. Wizards, Elementalists and Necromancers may use various inks, chalks or even blood for the the inscriptions while Natural Magicians and Shaman may simply trace the pattern in the dirt; Witches use Standing Stones, etc. The time required to complete the circle and triangle is one minute. The more time and attention spent preparing the inscriptions, the better the chances of a successful summoning. Five minutes spent crafting the inscriptions grants a +1 bonus to the Summoning roll. One hour spent in preparation grants a +2 bonus while a full day grants a +3 bonus.

Both the Magical Circle of Protection and the Summoning Triangle must be perfectly inscribed in order to have the desired effect. Even under ideal conditions, there is a chance that the caster will fail to correctly inscribe either the circle or the triangle (Mishap on the spellcasting roll). A flaw in either of these two inscriptions may bring about disaster for the summoner.

THE SUMMONING

While standing within the magical Circle of Protection, the summoner may then cast the desired spell of summoning. The summoned creature will arrive instantly, appearing within the confines of the Summoning Triangle. Anyone outside the magic circle may be attacked by any creature summoned.

SEALING A PACT

Once the summoned being has arrived, the caster may attempt to seal a pact with it. If the summoned creature is, by its nature, inclined to react with benevolence towards individuals of the caster's Calling, it will offer to perform a service for the summoner (a friendly nature spirit for an Ariane Mystic or a spirit totem animal to a shaman for example).

If the type of being summoned is one who has no such relationship towards members of the caster's Order, it will always seek to resist the summoner. In this case, the summoner is allowed three chances to seal the pact by some other means. Each attempt causes the summoned creature to roll against WIL on the

Action Table; if the creature gets a Failure on even one of these rolls, the pact is sealed. If the creature Succeeds on all 3 rolls, it is free to do as it wishes.

There are several methods which may be employed to seal a pact, ranging from offerings to threats and magical influence. The effects which any such attempt will have on a summoned creature are as follows:

Offering Riches: Devils suffer a -1 penalty per each 1000 gl worth of riches offered, per level of the devil in question; i.e., an Ability Level 8 Gargoyle, for example, receives a -1 penalty when offered at least 8000 gl, -2 when offered at least 16,000 and so forth. Offering a soulstone (see *Gamemaster's Guide to Talisanta - Enchanted Items*), or even one's own soul, is one of the most common ways to bind a Pact with an entity from the lower planes.

Offering a Service: This is most ideal method of sealing a pact. As long as the service offered is one which would appeal to the type of creature summoned (GM's discretion), a pact can be sealed without further delay.

Offering a Sacrifice: Devils and malicious spirits are extremely fond of sacrifices, and will always accept such an offering at once (as a rule, only the most evil summoners will make this sort of offer). On the other hand, many beings, like most elementals, never accept the offer of a living sacrifice.

Threat of Harm: Mere threats will never make a summoned creature agree to a pact unless the summoner possesses a weapon or magic item which the creature fears. If the summoner possesses such a device, the summoned being receives a penalty of between -1 to -10 on the Action Table roll depending on the overall danger of the device to the creature.

Threat of Imprisonment: If the summoner possesses a spell or device that can imprison or trap a summoned creature, this type of threat will always cause the creature to take a penalty of -4 on the Action Table roll.

Magical Constraint: Some spells of the Influence Mode may also be used to force a summoned creature to comply with a pact. This is the safest method of sealing a pact, as the summoned creatures resolve to resist the pact is reduced (penalty to their WIL roll) with little risk to the summoner.

Summoning by Name: If a spellcaster is able to learn the common name of any being, she is allowed an additional chance to seal any pact with that creature. Most creatures will reveal their common name (or names) in exchange for release from a pact of summoning, enabling the caster to summon the being by name the next time (+5 to casting roll on the summoning spell).

Uttering the True Name: If a spellcaster is able to learn the true name of any creature, he or she may coerce the creature into sealing any pact without delay. While knowledge of a creature's true name allows the summoner to cast spells upon it at will, the possession of such knowledge is extremely dangerous; the creature itself will not rest until it has found a way to eliminate the individual who knows its true name. Furthermore, other individuals or beings desiring to learn the creature's true name may attempt to coerce this knowledge from the summoner.

FAILURE TO SEAL A PACT

Failing to seal a pact of summoning also frees the summoned creature from restraint, allowing it to return to its home dimension. Hostile creatures may first seek to punish or slay the attacker, if they believe they can do so with comparative ease. If not, such creatures may instead seek revenge upon the caster at a later date.

SUCCESSFULLY SEALING A PACT

Once a pact has been successfully sealed, the summoned creature may be made to perform a service for the caster. The exact type of service which any summoned creature may be made to perform varies according to the creature's abilities. No summoned being can provide answers to questions it cannot possibly know; for example, no summon shadow wight could enlighten a spellcaster about the principles of the weather cycle, but would be knowledgeable on matters of the soul and the afterlife. Ghosts are likely to know much of what they knew in life, though some will have more malicious knowledge, such as the name of their murderer if they were a victim of such a crime. The GM is the final judge on what a summoned being may or may not know.

Note that should the caster command a summoned creature to undertake any service which it is not within its abilities to perform, the pact is in-

stantly broken. In such cases, the summoned creature will simply return to its home plane, though hostile beings may seek vengeance upon the caster at a later date.

A Summoning effect requires time to cast, equal to 1 minute per level of the spell. The default duration of the summoned creature's servitude depends on the terms of service agreed to in the Pact. Few entities will consent to service longer than 24 hours, unless forced or the summoner offers irresistible enticement. Once the duration of the spell ends, the being either vanishes, or remains on Talislanta of its own volition if it is able to do so for any reason (immense power, magical ability, etc....)

REVERSE:

BANISHMENT

Cast in reverse, the Conjururation Mode dispels conjured objects and returns any summoned creature to its plane of existence. Attempts to banish entities are made with a difficulty penalty equal to the creature's overall ability level. Like summoning, banishing summoned creatures takes 1 round per spell level to cast. A spellcaster can use the Banishment Mode on entities that he cannot summon, but takes a -5 penalty on the casting roll when doing so.

EXAMPLE USES OF THE CONJURATION MODE

"I bow elaborately to the crowd, weaving my arms to trace the Subtle Sigil of Zanillo before grinning broadly and producing a bouquet of sunblossoms from thin air."

"I shape the arcane energies into the form of a rod, which I jam under the closing crypt door."

"Come to me, fathers of old! Come back from the realm of Death and share with me your ancient knowledge!"

"After carefully inscribing a circle of protection upon the floor, I gaze deeply into the obsidian mirror, searching for a creature of oblivion to draw into this world."



DIVINATION

DIVINATION IN BRIEF:

Sense: +1 PER per Spell Level

Range: 50 feet (+1 to Difficulty per 10 extra feet of range)

Scrying Range: 1 mile (+1 to Difficulty per extra mile of range)

Duration: 1 minute (+1 to Difficulty per additional minute)

Divination spells are used to simulate supernatural senses, such as the ability to detect lies, divine the location of lost objects, see in darkness, or see through illusions. For purposes of Opposed actions, a Divination spell's Rating is equal to its Spell Level. For example, a Level 4 spell used to detect lies on a thief who has a Deception Skill Rating of +6 would be subject to a Degree of Difficulty penalty of -2 (4 - 6 = -2).

Divination spells can also be used to detect the presence of other spells, such as illusions, wards, or curses. In such cases the level of the magic being detected is applied as the Degree of Difficulty vs the level at which the Reveal spell is cast.

Another popular Divination effect is Scrying—the ability to see and hear what is happening in a distant locale, as if one was standing there. The range of a Scrying spell is usually limited to one mile per spell level, though certain ancient races such as the Black Savants know how to create scrying devices that have inter-planar capabilities. The caster must employ a reflective surface of some kind in which to view the images, and cannot automatically locate a particular spot within the Scrying area unless he or she has previous knowledge of the location to use as reference. Only normal sight and hearing are effective while Scrying; supernatural senses are canceled while using such a spell.

REVERSE: CONCEAL

The reverse of this Mode conceals objects, beings, or areas from normal senses and even other Divination spells. For example, an individual or specific location can be protected against scrying, a lie can be

masked with magic to make it seem more believable, or magical senses may be confused. Use the level of the Conceal spell as Degree of Difficulty modifier vs attempts to divine what is being hidden. Conceal cannot be used to make anything truly “invisible”—The Illusion Mode is used for that—however, Conceal could be employed to make it more difficult for guards to find someone who was hiding, for example.

EXAMPLE USES OF THE DIVINATION MODE

“The Eyes of Urathor will discern the truth.”

“Oh holy Aa almighty, let thy all-seeing eye reveal any unholy presences in this room!”

“Let the flickering Hands of Night conceal us from those who would do us harm.”

ENCHANTMENT

ENCHANTMENT IN BRIEF:

Specific Alteration: +1/-1 per 3 Spell Levels

Broad Alteration: +1/-1 per 5 Spell Levels

Range: Touch

Subjects: 1 subject (+1 to Difficulty per additional subject)

Duration: 1 minute (+1 to Difficulty per additional minute)

Craft Enchanted Item: See rules below

The Enchantment Mode deals with spells that modify a creature or objects physical qualities, abilities or gifts. A magician can increase or decrease a single, specific quality (like a skill rating) by one point for every 3 levels of the spell. More general alterations (like modifying an attribute, for example) require 5 spell levels for each point changed. At the end of the spell duration, the subject instantly reverts to normal. There is usually some outward sign that the subject has been altered: muscles enlarge as the subject grows stronger, or shrivel as he weakens. The exact appearance of the spell depends on the Magical Order.

Enchantment spells generally do not have any directly harmful effects. However, if an attribute rating is lowered to -7 or below, it is not possible for the target to take any action associated with that attribute.

For example a character with -7 PER cannot see or hear clearly, a character with -7 DEX is too clumsy to move without falling, and a character with -7 INT is too confused to make decisions.

Enchantment can also change the Damage Rating of weapons and the Protection Rating of armor (both of these are specific alterations). Note that this effect can increase the Damage Rating of a being's bare-handed attack, or add a Protection Rating to normal skin and clothes. Damage or Protection Rating cannot be reduced below 0.

Abstract qualities such as value, appeal, status, or authority can also be manipulated with this Mode. Abstract qualities are almost always considered broad alterations. To alter an abstract quality, the GM will simply rate the item or individual from 1 to 10 in the chosen quality, then allow the magician to manipulate the rating up or down as usual.

Enchantment spells are not cumulative in effect. One cannot gain +5 Strength by casting five consecutive +1 STR spells on oneself. If multiple Enchantment spells are cast on a single subject, only the highest level spell takes effect. Enchantment can be used on multiple subjects simultaneously, so long as all the subjects are in direct physical contact (holding hands in a circle, for example). The magician takes a -1 to her casting roll for each extra subject affected.

The GM makes the final decision on what is a specific alteration and what is a broad alteration. In general, the more applications a given quality has, the more likely it is to be a broad alteration.

For example, altering a character's Weapon (large blades) skill is a specific alteration since it has a very narrow application. However, altering a character's Combat Rating would be a broad alteration.

Not every Order can alter all possible qualities using the Enchantment Mode. See the individual Order descriptions for examples of what kinds of abilities can be altered.

CREATING ENCHANTED ITEMS

The Enchantment Mode can also be used to permanently imbue items with magical effects. Before an item can be enchanted there are three requirements a GM needs to determine. First: What Modes are required to create the effect desired from the enchanted item; Second: how much time will it take to make the item described by the player? And Third: how much will it cost the character to buy the materials needed for the procedure?

When crafting an enchanted item, the player must first determine what they enchanted item will do. Are they crafting a magic sword that deal extra damage, a magic sword that can burst into flame and cause burning damage or a magic sword that hides the user from divinatory spells?

For simple things like increasing the DR of a weapon or the PR of armor, the Enchantment Mode is the only Mode required, but to add additional effects, other Modes may also come into play. When crafting an enchanted item that uses a Mode other than Enchantment, the Magician must use the lower of the two Mode ratings as the modifier to the Enchantment roll.

For example, Thalius the Thaesian Enchanter wants to create a magic ring that grants invisibility to the wearer. Thalius' has Encantment +16 and Illusion +13. Looking at the Illusion Mode, this type of Illusion effect has a Base Difficulty of -13. Thalius' Enchantment roll will therefore have no modifier since he must use the lower of his two Modes (Illusion +13) which is cancelled out by the spell Difficulty. Were Thalius simply crafting a +1 Sword, he would have received a +13 bonus to his roll (Specific alteration -3 +Enchantment Mode +16 = +13)



THE ENCHANTMENT DIE ROLL

1. STATING INTENT FOR ENCHANTMENT

Like stating intent for spell casting, the player decides what spell-effect (Mode) the item will have, and its spell level. The player also decides whether the item will have a Limited or Continuous Enchantment. If the enchantment is Limited, the player must decide whether it must be recharged manually and, if so, by what means.

2. DETERMINING ENCHANTMENT REQUIREMENTS

Before an item can be enchanted the GM needs to determine how much time will it take to make the item described by the player and how much it will cost the character to buy the materials needed for the procedure?

The requirements for Limited and Continuous Enchantments are determined as follows:

Limited Enchantment

Time required: 3 days (24 hours) per Spell Level (1 day if the item must be recharged manually)

Cost of materials: 2 times the average price of the item that is to be enchanted.

Continuous Enchantment

Time required: 1 week (40 hours) per Spell Level

Cost of materials: 4 times the average price of the item that is to be enchanted.

Note that the Enchantment process does not require special materials or rare ingredients, such as those used in the field of Alchemy. Instead, Enchantment is accomplished by investing ordinary items with the power of magic spells. The Cost in Materials reflects the fact that most Enchanters prefer to use items of good quality, which tend to be more durable. Enchanted items can be made from sub-standard materials, though such items may function erratically or may prove to be defective in some way.



3. DETERMINING BONUSES OR PENALTIES FOR ENCHANTMENT

After reviewing the requirements for the enchanted item, the GM must determine if any bonus or penalty will be applied. This is done before the player rolls to enchant the item.

Apply a bonus equal to the character's Enchantment skill rating. Additional bonuses may be applied if the magician is using a magical device that enhances his powers, has access to superior materials, or is operating under highly beneficial conditions or surroundings.

Apply a penalty of -1 per spell level plus any additional casting roll penalties the spell might have as a result of increased range, duration, etc. Additional penalties may be applied if the magician is using sub-standard materials, or is working under poor conditions or extreme duress.

If the enchanted item requires the use of an additional Mode, apply a -1 penalty for each point the additional Mode rating is below the magician's Enchantment Rating.

Comparing applicable bonuses and penalties, the GM arrives at a single figure. This is the modifier that will be applied to the player's Action Table roll.

4. THE ENCHANTMENT ROLL

To determine whether the Enchantment is successful or not the player rolls a d20 on the Action Table, applying the GM's modifier to the die result.

5. JUDGING RESULTS

◆ **Mishap** is equal to a critical failure, and may yield disastrous consequences. Some of the worst magical mishaps have occurred as a result of failed attempts at Enchantment.

◆ **Failure** means the enchantment did not take hold and the item and all materials were ruined. If the character wants to try again he must start from scratch.

◆ **Partial Success** means that the enchantment failed to take hold, but the item and all materials survived intact and can be used again. To do so, the character must repeat the "Time Required" segment of the procedure, then roll again and check the results.

◆ **Full Success** means the item has been enchanted and works as planned.

◆ **Critical Success** means the item has been enchanted, plus it functions even better than intended. Possibilities include: the item functions at a higher level than planned, works more times per day, does not have to be re-charged, etc.

TIME & ENCHANTING ITEMS

Unlike normal Spellcasting, Enchanting and item does not need to be performed all at once. Many enchanters work on more than one item at a time, spacing out their work over many months. More than one enchanter may work on an item, to complete it more quickly. As long as all the enchanters make their Enchantment roll, the item will be a success. Regardless of how many magicians are working on an item, only 24 hours of work can be put into it in a single day.

CREATING TRIGGERED ENCHANTED ITEMS

If desired, any enchanted item can be made so that it will be activated by a specific circumstance, or "trigger" (for example, a ring of levitation might activate when the wearer falls more than ten feet). Creating an enchanted item with a trigger adds an additional week to the time required.

Players should consult the section on Enchantment in the *Talisanta Options* book for full rules on enchanting.

EXAMPLE USES OF THE ENCHANTMENT MODE

"The Strength of Aa flows through me, that I might crush the heretics in battle."

"I imbue this armor with magical energy causing it to harden and provide greater protection to the wearer."

For sample enchanted items, see the *Gamemaster's Guide to Talisanta*.

ILLUSION

ILLUSION IN BRIEF:

Basic Illusion: Level 1

Features: +3 Spell levels per each additional feature

Range: 50 feet (+1 to Difficulty per 10 extra feet of range/scrying)

Duration: 1 minute (-1 to Difficulty per extra minute of duration)

The Illusion Mode creates phantasmal images that can appear to be real but are devoid of actual substance. The spell Level determines the quality and complexity of these images. The basic level 1 illusion affects a single sense and has no motion. An example would be an illusory image of a small drac. The animal would have no real detail and would not look like a specific creature.

Each additional feature of the illusion adds an extra +3 Spell levels. Features include:

ADDITIONAL SENSES

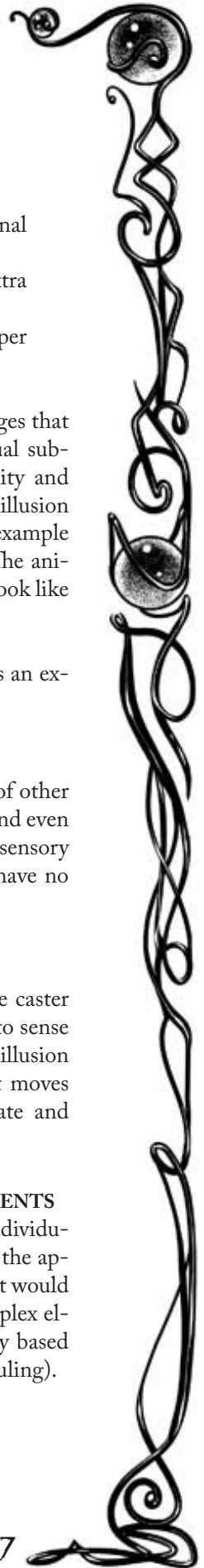
Illusions can be enhanced by the addition of other sensory elements such as sound, scent, taste, and even touch. Like all aspects of the illusion, these sensory enhancements may seem real to others but have no actual substance.

MOTION OR ANIMATION

An illusion can also be made to move. The caster must be within the spell's range and be able to sense the illusion in order to control its motion. An illusion may also be tied to an object or being so it moves with it; for example, a magician could create and "wear" an illusory cloak.

PRECISE DETAILS OR COMPLEX ELEMENTS

Reproducing a complex map, copying an individual's exact facial features, or greatly enhancing the apparent quality and value of an item or garment would each be an additional feature. Extremely complex elements or effects may be subject to a penalty based on the Degree of Difficulty entailed (GM's ruling).



MAGNITUDE

The sound volume, brightness, apparent size and/or overall impression of an illusion can be enhanced by increasing its magnitude. For example:

1 feature added:

As loud as a shout, as bright as a torch, as big as a humanoid.

2 features added:

As loud as a trumpet, as bright as a campfire, as big as an equus.

3 features added:

As loud as a cheering crowd, as bright as a bonfire, as big as a wagon.

4 features added:

As loud as thunder, as bright as the lesser sun, as big as a house.

5 features added:

As loud as a hurricane, as bright as the greater sun, as big as a ship.

Magicians can detect illusions by casting a Divination spell, with the level of the illusion being used as the Degree of Difficulty for the attempt. Non-magicians must rely on their wits and observation to determine if something is real or not. This is simulated by having the character make an Attribute roll vs her Perception Rating, using the level of the spell as the Degree of Difficulty. Success indicates that the viewer suspects the image to be unnatural in some way. Magicians can also use their powers of Perception in this way, if they choose.

Illusion spells can also be used to produce illumination. A small, stationary globe of light is a simple level 1 illusion. By adding 3 levels, the ball of light will move with the caster.

The Illusion Mode can also be used to render a target invisible. Invisibility is a very complex spell as it must exactly mimic the environment around the target. Invisibility for a single, stationary individual is a level 10 spell (1 level for the basic illusion plus 9 levels of complexity). If the character wants to stay invisible while moving, add 3 levels for a total of 13. Illusions can be produced anywhere within the range of the spell, and can also be cast while Scrying (see Divination). In this case, the range of the Illusion is unlimited.

EXAMPLE USES OF THE ILLUSION MODE

"I make the hidden gesture, pointing at my assailants and opening their eyes to the 'truth'; that they hold not swords but serpents!"

"I diffuse the Arcane Energies through the crystal in my wand, producing a lifelike display of patrons enjoying my wares. That should attract some business."

INFLUENCE

INFLUENCE IN BRIEF:

Range: 5 feet (+1 to Difficulty per extra 5 feet)

Duration: 1 minute (+1 to Difficulty per additional minute)

Area: Single Target (+1 to Difficulty per 1 foot radius)

Resistance: WIL roll modified by MR - 1/2 Spell Level

Spells that control or affect a being's thoughts and emotions are simulated with the Influence Mode. The subject of an Influence spell will obey a single simple instruction from the caster, such as "Stand still", "Attack the priest", or "Go to sleep."

The complexity of the implanted thought or emotion determines the spell level as follows:

Level 3: The spell create a general sentiment like trepidation, happiness or sadness but nothing overly traumatizing or unusual or the victim is commanded to perform a fairly mundane action like opening a door, standing still, looking in a particular direction or handing over an object.

Level 6: The spell cause a severe emotional reaction like a deep seated sense of guilt or sadness causing uncontrolled weeping or a rage that causes the target to attack another person, item or creature (but not an ally or friend).

Level 9: The target is commanded to perform an action that requires considerable time, effort or skill like picking a lock, constructing a wagon or taming a wild strider. The victim will attempt to perform the task to the best of their ability but are granted a resistance roll once per minute.

Level 12: The spell causes severe emotional trauma to the victim to the degree that they are unable perform any action, including defending themselves.

Level 15: The victim will obey almost any command given including attacking or otherwise harming a friend or family member.

The command is transmitted directly to the subject's mind; it need not be spoken aloud. The subject will attempt to carry out the instruction to the best of its ability until the duration of the spell elapses. A subject cannot perform a command that it does not comprehend or is physically incapable of doing. For example, commanding an avir to "pick the lock" would not work any better than commanding a Thrall to "fly." In addition, a subject will take no action that involves doing harm to itself directly, i.e. a subject cannot be commanded to stab itself or jump off a cliff.

The target of an Influence spell can resist being controlled by making a WIL roll which is further modified by MR. For every 2 levels of the spell, the target takes a -1 to its roll.

The subject of an Influence spell will remember everything that happens while they are under the control of the spell. If the magician gets a Critical Success when casting the spell, however, the subject will think that his actions were his own idea, no matter how bizarre they seem in hindsight.

EXAMPLE USES OF THE INFLUENCE MODE

"I whisper the secret words of Ardan and blow my target a kiss with the phrase; 'You will do all for me, my love.'"

"When our eyes meet, the thief is lost in the depths of my gaze. The force of my will compels him to speak the name of the one who hired his services."

MOVE

MOVE IN BRIEF:

STR: -9 (20 lbs) +1 Strength per spell level

SPD: -4 (10 feet per round) +1 to Difficulty per +1 Speed

Range: 50 feet (+1 to Difficulty per additional 10 feet)

Area: Single Target (+1 to Difficulty per 1 foot radius)

Duration: 1 minute (+1 to Difficulty per additional minute)

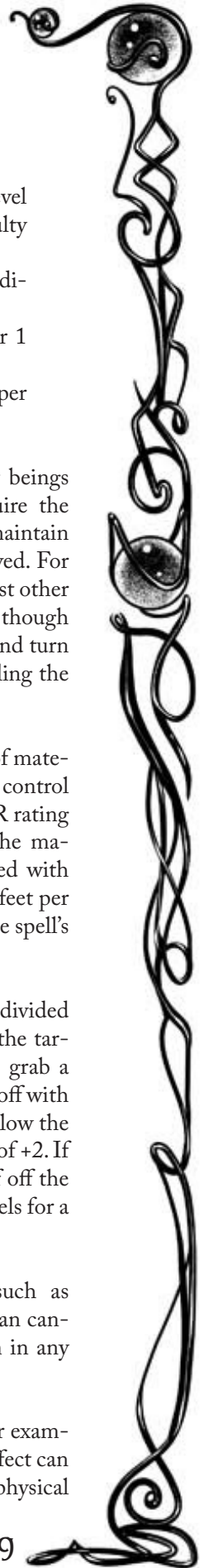
All spells that move or levitate objects or beings are based on this Mode. Move spells require the magician's full concentration in order to maintain control of the object or individual being moved. For example, it is not possible for a magician to cast other spells while moving a sword through the air, though she could leave a levitated object suspended and turn her attention to other matters without canceling the spell.

A Move spell can effect up to 200 pounds of material at STR +0, and allows the magician to control the target to a range of 100 feet. Each +1 STR rating adds 25 pounds to the amount of weight the magician can lift. Objects or beings manipulated with this Mode travel at a default Speed of -9 (10 feet per round) and can be moved anywhere within the spell's effective range.

The STR rating of a move spell must be divided between holding onto the target and lifting the target. For example, a magician might want to grab a struggling Ferran thief who was trying to run off with the magician's purse. A level 12 spell would allow the magician to hold the thief with a STR rating of +2. If the magician wanted to also levitate the thief off the ground, he would have to add 2 more spell levels for a lifting STR of -7 (enough to lift 60 pounds).

Move can perform Grappling attacks such as throwing or choking. In this case, the magician cannot hold the target in place or restrain them in any way.

Distant manipulations are also possible; for example, pulling a lever from across a room. This effect can also be used to wield a weapon or employ a physical



ability such as juggling or writing. In this case, the magician's applicable Skills or Attributes are used to determine the success or failure of the manipulation. For example, a magician using a Move spell to pick a lock from across the room must first roll on the Action Table to cast the spell, then roll again for the lock picking attempt. If the magician has the skill, Locks, his Locks Skill Rating is used as a modifier on the lock-picking attempt. If he has no such skill, the magician's attempt is subject to the standard substitution penalty (q.v.).

Depending on the effects of their Order, some magicians can fly with this mode, by simply using enough STR to lift themselves. Range doesn't apply in this case. Flight Speed Rating is -9 unless increased, as per moving inanimate objects. Tricky aerobatic maneuvers may require a Dexterity or Acrobatics roll for the magician to maintain control, and a failed roll may result in a crash or other unfortunate mishap (GM's ruling).

EXAMPLE USES OF THE MOVE MODE

"I invoke the Wings of Shadow! Wings of darkness unfurl from my shoulders, bearing me aloft."

"The Arcane Energies take the shape of my hands as they flow between the bars and take the keys from the guardpost."

"I create a vortex to scatter my enemies to the four winds."

TRANSMUTATION

TRANSMUTATION IN BRIEF:

Level Required: 3-25+ (see table below)

Healing/Harming: 1 HP or level of disease per Spell Level

Range: Touch

Duration: *Transformations:* 1 minute (+1 Difficulty per extra minute of duration); *Healing/Harming:* Instantaneous

Transmutation spells turn one type of person or thing into another by changing the subject's shape and form. They can also be used to heal a creature or character or even to harm other creatures by causing diseases and other afflictions.

The level of the spell required to achieve the desired transformation depends on how great the difference is between the subject's original form and the form into which it will be changed. For example, changing an insect into another type of insect is a lot easier than changing that insect into a giant sea dragon.

The following examples can be used to determine the required level of a Transmutation spell used to alter form. Note that these modifiers are cumulative, and should be applied to determine the minimum spell level needed to affect a transformation:

Trivial Change (same species and sex; for inanimate objects, same material and form but enhanced appearance or minor change in size): Level 3.

Minor Change (same species but different facial features; same material but different form): Level 5.

Major Change (two humanoid species, small unnatural alteration such as feathers rather than hair; two objects of similar but different material and form, such as lead sinker to iron knife): Level 10.

Radical Change (two completely different species; two completely different materials like wood to stone): Level 15.

Total Change (Animate to Inanimate, such as humanoid to stone): Level 20.

Increased ability level: +1 levels per ability rating of new form.

Transformation can only be used to affect a single subject at a time. Animate subjects changed by a Transmutation spell retain their mental faculties while acquiring such physical abilities as their new forms will allow. The Ability Level of the new form is determined by the number of extra spell levels added by the magician.

The Transmutation Mode may also be used to restore lost hit points. It can be used on living beings and inanimate objects alike. A creature or object can only be healed back to its starting Hit Point total. A healing spell can be used to cure disease, though to be effective it must be cast at a Spell Level greater than the level of the disease. Missing limbs cannot be permanently regenerated with this Mode, nor can the dead be restored to life.

Healing spells do not stack with each other. If the target suffers from a level 15 disease, then it cannot be cured by three level 5 spells.

**No individual can have the same wounds healed twice. If someone has sustained 15 hp damage, the wounds cannot be healed with three level 5 spells. If the target receives the benefit of healing magic, no more healing spells will function on that person until more damage is sustained.*

Conversely, the Transmutation Mode can also be used to cause damage by creating wounds or disease through Harm Spells. Unlike Attack spells, spells based on the Transmutation Mode can only be inflicted by touch. Wounds created by a Harm spell cause 1 Hit Point of damage per level of the spell. A disease may be inflicted by casting the spell at a level equal to the level of the desired malady.

EXAMPLE USES OF THE TRANSMUTATION MODE

"Before the necrophages break down the door, I transform into my totem animal-form and fly out the window."

"I attune to the water spirits, becoming one with my element, to let myself flow through the crack in the wall."

"I lay hands upon my injured comrade and recite a Healing incantation, closing his wounds and restoring him to health."

WARD

WARD IN BRIEF

Range: Touch

Hit Point Rating: 2 HP per Spell Level

Protection Rating (Barriers): +1 per 3 spell levels

Protection Rating (Wards): +2 per spell level

Area: Single target (aura) or 5' radius (+1 Difficulty per extra foot)

Duration: 1 minute (+1 Difficulty per extra minute)

Ward Mode spells come in three varieties: auras, barriers, and wards.

Auras cover a single individual or item with a protective energy. The composition and appearance of an aura depends on the Order being used, and may look like a glowing "second-skin", ornate armor, etc. Alternately, an aura may take the form of satellites; a number of small "shields" that hover about the subject of the spell, swiftly moving to intercept any attacks, physical or magical, directed at the subject. The satellites could look like small dancing shields, strange flying imps, etc. depending on the Order being used. Unless an Illusion effect is cast to conceal it, an aura is always visible to normal senses. Auras are air and light permeable, allowing the magician to breathe and see. For this reason, these spells do not protect against blinding lights or harmful gasses. The aura also moves with the magician. Only a single protective aura may be worn at a time. If a second aura is cast on the same target, only the aura offering greater protection remains. Auras have 2 hit points per spell level. All DR from Attacks on the wearer of an Aura is subtracted from the Aura itself. Once an Aura is reduced to zero hit points, all further DR is done to the character.

While protected by a protective aura, a character is immune to the special effects of critical hits in combat, since there is no way to "go around" an aura to hit a vulnerable spot. Non-damaging attacks such as grapples, disarms, and other stunts take their normal effect on a critical success.

Barriers create a stationary two-dimensional shield of magical energy that can take whatever simple shape the caster desires. Like personal auras, their

appearance depends on the Magical Order employed. A barrier can be a wall of ice, a shield of arcane force, or a column of swirling winds, for example. Barriers have a Protection Rating equal to one-third the spell level. Thus a level 9 barrier would have a PR of 3. Barriers are immobile once cast.

Wards, unlike barriers and auras, protect against certain specified threats or maladies instead of "all damage". Wards can be cast upon living creatures or inanimate objects such as doors, locks, shields, etc.

Ward spells can be cast to protect against the following effects and conditions:

- ◆ A type of weapon: such as hand-held weapons, missile weapons, or claws.
- ◆ An elemental or environmental effect: such as heat, cold, electricity, acid, drowning, etcetera.
- ◆ A skill: commonly used vs. lockpicking, leg-erdemain, spying, etc....
- ◆ A disease or plague.
- ◆ A single Mode (regardless of Order): choose between the Modes, though it is not possible to create a Ward effect against Ward spells. Casting a Ward spell against the Attack Mode effectively functions as protection against magical damage.
- ◆ Any single type of creature: choose a category such as Archaens, insects, avians, natural predators, Beastmen, demons etc.... A Ward effect cannot be raised against overly broad categories such as all humanoids or summoned entities; it must be more specific.

An individual or item cannot be protected by more than one ward of the same type. For example, it is not possible to be protected by a ward vs fire and a wards vs ice. There is no restriction against the simultaneous use of different types of Wards, such as a Ward vs fire and a Ward vs the Influence Mode.

Wards can be negated by counterspells, as per the rules for Counterspells and Anti-Magic (*see Counter Spells page 94*). Warded items are considered enchanted items, and count against the maximum number of seven magic items that an individual can carry on his or her person.

Spells of Warding are not absolute protection. Against non-damaging effects (a ward against pickpockets, or against Influence spells), treat the Protec-

tion Rating of the ward as a penalty to the attempt or a bonus to the resistance. Thus a level 10 ward against pickpockets would give the thief a -20 to his or her attempt, while a level 10 ward against spells of Influence would give the target a +20 to their resistance roll. Against damaging effects, a ward has a Protective Rating equal to 2 per spell level, and any damage that exceeds the Protective Rating damages the ward itself, not the protected person or object. Damage done to the ward reduces its HP, and if the HP are reduced to zero, the ward collapses.

For example: A Rasmirin suffers a magical mishap while summoning a pyrodemon. He quickly activates his amulet which is enchanted with a level 10 ward against demons, four foot radius. This provides a Protective Rating of 20 and 20 HP. If the demon cannot do more than 20 points of damage with its normal attacks, it will not be able to break the barrier that way. If, however, the Pyrodemon can inflict 25 points of damage with a single attack, then it will be able to batter down the ward in 4 rounds, since each attack will do 5 damage to it.

All spells of this Mode have 2 hit points per spell level. All damage that would otherwise be done to a target protected by an aura, barrier, or ward spell will be absorbed by the spell. For example, a level 12 barrier has a Protection Rating of 4 and 24 hit points. If an enemy hits the barrier for 10 damage, the barrier takes 6 and has 18 HP remaining. A ward, being more specific, has a much higher Protection Rating, but anything other than that to which it is attuned will pass through the ward unaffected.

REVERSE: HEX

When Ward effects are reversed and cast with malicious intent in order to render a being or item more susceptible to harm, the magic is known as a Hex. These spells are cast in an identical manner to Ward spells, though rather than protect the target against the named criteria, the spell renders the being or item vulnerable, ensuring that the target suffers extra damage (+1 per 3 spell levels) from the threat or malady. In cases of Hexes that do not inflict damage, they inflict the target with a penalty of some sort equal to -1 per spell level.

For example: A hex against sunlight, level 9, would cause the target to burn from the sun, taking 3 damage each round until covered or otherwise protected. A hex of clumsiness, level 9, would force the target to make a Dexterity check at -9 to perform even the simplest physical acts. Witches often use Hexes along with the Enchantment mode to inflict permanent curses.

EXAMPLE USES OF THE WARD MODE

"I call upon the Gods and demand that they protect their servant from the blades of all enemies."

"I concentrate arcane power into a shield of flickering blue flame that repels any attempts to harm me with magical energy."

"I hear the lock rattling as the thieves try to break into the room, and I cast a spell of warding on the door, so that Fate itself turns against the intruders."

STARTING KNOWN SPELLS

Magician characters begin the game with a number of spells for each Mode equal to that Mode's rating. In addition, characters receive one bonus spell per point of MR which they can select from among any of their known Modes. The starting spells may be chosen from the examples provided later in this chapter, or original spells may be created by the player.

Coryx, a Stryx necromancer, has 3 modes at +2 each and an MR of +1. He takes Attack, Conjuraction, and Transutation. He can choose seven spells for his starting spellbook, two attack spells, two transmutation spells, two conjuration spells and one bonus from any of the 3 Modes. Astrimar, a Cymrilian Magician, has 6 modes in Wizardry at +3 each, and 5 modes in Pyromancy at +1 each plus an MR of +5. His starting spellbook contains 28 spells, consisting of 18 wizardry spells (3 per mode), 5 Pyromancy spells (1 per mode) and 5 bonus spells from any of his known Orders and Modes.

ACQUIRING NEW SPELLS

Spells can be learned in a number of ways. In all cases the magician must know the Order and Mode of the spell to be learned.

- ◆ Studying a spellbook, a magician can learn the spells there. The base time is 1 day plus 1 day per Base Difficulty of the spell.
- ◆ Magicians can teach one another their known spells. The base time is the same time as studying from a spellbook, but in

this case the roll uses the higher skill rating of the two.

- ◆ Learning a spell from a scroll or similar device has a base time of 3 days plus 3 days per Base Difficulty of the spell.

- ◆ Researching the desired spell directly has a base time of 2 weeks plus 1 week per Base Difficulty of the spell. (See the section on Spell Research.)

- ◆ In all cases, when learning a spell that has any enhancement levels (see the section on Enhanced Spells), add the enhancement levels to the Base Difficulty for purposes of time required.

At the end of the base time, the student must make an MR+Mode rating check with a Degree of Difficulty equal to Base Difficulty of the spell. In the case where one magician is teaching another, use the higher rating of the two.

On a mishap, treat it as a spellcasting mishap. On a failure, the magician must continue studying the spell for another period before re-rolling. On a partial success, progress has been made - additional rolls are at a cumulative +5 - but the study must continue for another period. On a full success or better, the spell has been learned.

For example: Oriolus, a Zandir Charlatan, has come across the spell Glitterheal (a 4th level healing spell) on a scroll. His MR is +3 and his

Transmutation Mode is +3, so he has a total of +2 to his roll to learn it (3+3-4). After 15 days of studying the scroll and practicing it, he rolls a 4, which after adding his +2 modifier is a partial success. He has made progress, and after another 15 days he may roll again, this time with a +7 to the roll. Until he learns the spell he may still use the scroll to cast the spell (see "Casting Spells from Written Works" below.)

Note that enhanced spells (see the section below) require an expenditure of 2xp per point of enhancement to learn. Thus an enhanced spell +4 would cost 8xp in addition to the study time involved. This is considerably less time and xp than the original magician spent to perform the initial research, and this is one reason why spellbooks are so carefully guarded.

BUYING SPELLS

Certain centers of magical study, such as Cymril, Zandu, and Dracarta, offer common spells on the open market. These spells range between 100 and 400 gold lumens, depending on the spell and the demand. In other lands, spells are available on the black market if they can be purchased at all, and prices can be ten times as much or higher.

Spells are generally sold in the form of scrolls or notebooks, but with as much detail as a spellbook for purposes of studying. (Treat as a spellbook for purposes of learning the spell or casting from a written work.)

SPELL RESEARCH

To create a new spell requires time and in some cases, resources. The base time to research any spell is 2 weeks plus 1 week per Base Difficulty of the spell. At least 8 hours each day must be spent in study. While this need not be entirely uninterrupted, frequent distractions will ruin any effort made for that day. At the end of the required time, the researcher must make an MR+Mode rating check with a Degree of Difficulty equal to the Base Difficulty of the spell.

On a mishap, treat it as a spellcasting mishap. On a failure, research must continue for another similar period before re-rolling. On a partial success, progress has been made - additional rolls are at a cumulative +5 - but the research must continue for another

period. On a full success or better, the magician has the desired spell.

Each Order of magic has a different manner of researching spells. (Shaman may go on vision quests, Mystics meditate, etc.)

ENHANCED SPELLS

By spending time on research and experimentation, a magician can modify a known spell, making it smoother and easier to cast. Spells that have been modified in this way are much sought after, and can demand high prices if sold.

Treat every known spell as a skill with a +0 rating when it is learned. Enhancing a spell requires the same type of effort as performing research, plus an expenditure of xp equal to twice the new rating. This requires research time equal to 1 week per xp spent. Thus to give a spell a +1 bonus costs 2xp and requires 2 weeks. To increase it to +2 costs another 4xp and 4 weeks.

The bonuses from enhanced spells serve only to counter the Base Difficulty (not including spell level). Thus an Attack spell with an area effect of 5' radius (-5) and a range of 90' (-4) could be enhanced to a maximum of +9, enough to counter the -9 modifier.

Spells with no Base Difficulty (meaning the Difficulty is derived from the spell level alone) cannot be enhanced in this way.

Any enhancements added to a spell are recorded in the magician's spellbook. If the spellbook is lost, no further enhancement research can be done on those spells until the book is recovered or re-written. Re-writing a spellbook requires a number of days equal to the total Base Difficulty plus enhancement bonus of all the spells within, plus 1xp per level of enhancement of all spells in order to replicate the research.

When learning a spell that has already been enhanced by another magician, add the enhancement levels to the Base Difficulty for purposes of time required. Also, 2 xp per level of enhancement must be spent to master the intricacies of the enhanced spell. This is considerably less time and effort than the original researcher spent.

SIDE EFFECTS

Magic often has logical side effects not explicitly stated in the spell description. The party enters a Phaedran mausoleum. The GM asks what source of light they're using. The warrior says he'll draw his enchanted sword for light. Does it shed light? If so, how bright is it? This is an example of how side effects can come into play.

What constitutes a side effect is up to the individual GM, but in no case should it be used to add additional magical effects to a spell. Side effects are not magical in nature. They are the natural results of certain effects. A loud noise can deafen, a glowing spell sheds light, a fire spell may ignite combustibles... those effects are not magic. You cannot, for example, cast an illusion of a hypnotic effect and thereby charm a group of enemies, claiming the side-effect rules.

To determine the level of effect of any side-effect, use one-third the spell level. The side effect level of a level 9 spell would be 3. If a side effect is sense-affecting (such as shedding light), treat the side effect as

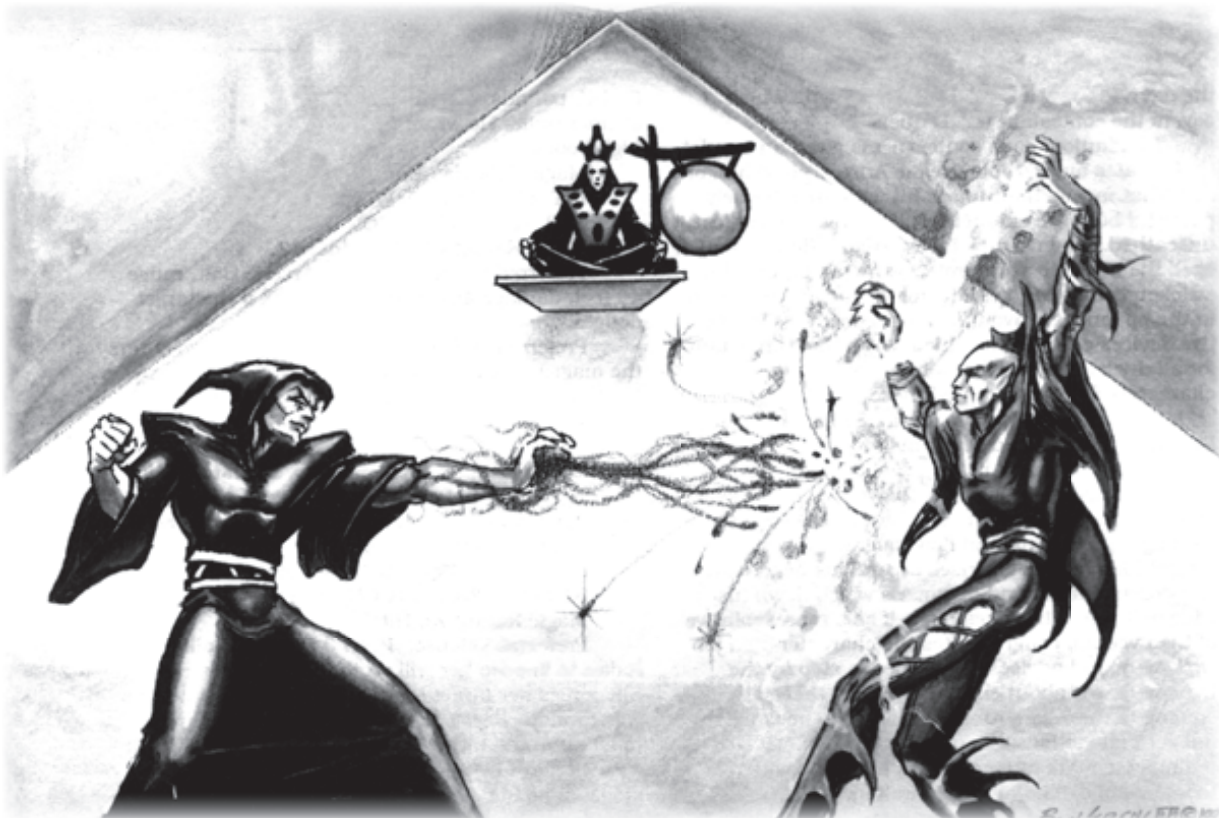
an Illusion with the effect rating becoming levels. In all cases, side effects are up to the GM to determine, using common sense.

Some example side effects:

◆ *A Natural Magician erects a barrier in the form of a wall of thorns. If the wall is attacked with bare hands or natural weaponry, the attackers will suffer scratches. A Pyromancer uses the Move mode to capture his foes in searing bands of fire. If they struggle to escape, the bonds will burn. In both of these cases, the damage is equal to the side effect level.*

◆ *A magician uses the Illusion mode to create the appearance of a bolt of lightning along with a deafening thunderclap. Those who fail their Perception roll could be temporarily stunned, taking the side effect level as a penalty for all actions for a round.*

◆ *A Witch uses the Transmutation mode to cause someone to weaken from disease. Use the side effect level to determine how long the disease will last, how much effect it will have on attributes or die rolls, etcetera.*



ORDERS

Most Talislantans are exposed to one only kind of magic in their lifetimes and know little, if anything, about other styles. Cultural traditions, taboos, and local mythology all shape magical practice in a given region. It is for this reason that certain styles of spell-casting are peculiar to particular peoples or regions and have spread little in the six centuries since the Great Disaster. These styles are referred to by Talislantan magicians as Orders.

the twelve Orders of magic practiced by magicians of the New Age are:

ASTROMANCY*

The magic of Talislanta's suns, moons and stars.

CARTOMANCY*

The magic of, luck, circumstance, and fate as represented in the cards of the Zodar.

CRYPTOMANCY*

The study of magical runes, sigils, and symbols.

CRYSTALOMANCY

The study of crystals and their magical properties.

ELEMENTAL MAGIC

Magicians of this Order draw their power from one of the Elemental Planes of Water, Earth, Air, or Fire.

INVOCATION

Members of this Order call upon supernatural entities for magical power.

MYSTICISM

This Order deals with the powers of the mind, will, and soul.

NATURAL MAGIC

The magic of animals, plants, and the natural world.

NECROMANCY*

The magic of death, decay, and entropy.

SHAMANISM*

Members of this Order draw their power from the totem-spirits of animals and the Dreamrealms.

WITCHCRAFT

The most ancient and secret of Orders, tracing its heritage to the first primitive Archaens.

WIZARDRY

Wizards produce their effects by manipulating the flux of arcane energy that permeates the omniverse. This versatile Order is the most common in Talislanta today.

Order marked with an asterix (*) above are detailed in the *The Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta*.

ORDER FORMAT

Each Order is described according to the following format:

NAME OF ORDER

Description of the Order, its history, and/or practices

Advantages: special advantages of this Order

Limitations: disadvantages or limits of the Order

Modes: bonuses or penalties for certain types of Modes (optional*)

Enchantment: typical types of enchanted items made by members of this Order

Example Spells: examples of spells that might be used by members of this Order. The example spells are categorized into three different difficulty levels: Basic (or beginner) spells, Advanced Spells, and Master Spells.

**GM's note: the special modifiers and restrictions listed here for Modes are optional. Use them if you want to further emphasize the differences between Orders in your campaign. If not, members of every Order should be allowed to learn any of the twelve Modes.*

ASTROMANCY

This magical field governs all aspects of the suns, moons and stars of the Talislanta skies. It is related to the field of astrology and concentrates upon the art of reading starsigns, predicting and controlling the weather and similar uses. Astromantic magic is often used to reveal the future, divine the past or quite often, to attempt to control or alter fate, be it personal or more general as in meteorological control.

Just as Elementalists harness and manipulate elemental powers, Astromancers draw upon the latent magical energy of the Aetheric Sea or Astral plane. It is from this source that Astromancers draw their power and as such, many Astromancers are also scholars of metaphysics and other planes of existence. Astromancers often serve as advisors and administrators of windship crews for their knowledge of navigation and their skills at weather magic is unparalleled.

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

Astromancers require star charts and other astrological devices in order to work their magics. In order to manipulate the ebb and flow of aetheric energy, most Astromancers employ astrolabes, sextants and other astromantic tools in addition to charts and tables.

ADVANTAGES

Astromancers receive a +5 bonus on all spell casting rolls for spells that are attuned in some way to the current month. Attack spells are more powerful during the month of Jhang, while spells of Divination often benefit by being cast during the month of Phandir for example.

LIMITATIONS

Astromancers suffer a -2 to -5 penalty to their casting roll when underground or otherwise separated from the open sky. (-5 in a cavern or mine, -2 in a building)

Astromantic Influences

Suns

The Greater Sun: Strength, power, self-confidence

The Lesser Sun: Aid, assistance, cooperation

Moons

Arday (purple): Passion, romance, love, loyalty

Drome (orange): Magic, power, weather

Talisandre (white): Fortune, luck

Zar (black): Death, decay, darkness

Jhang (red): Conflict, war, blood, pain

Phandir (green): Destiny, mystery, the unknown

Laeolis (blue): Sorrow, separation, emotions

MODES

Not Available: Conjunction

Bonuses: Divination +3, Influence +3

Penalties: Attack -3

Conjunction Effects: N/A

Enchantment Effects: An Astromancer may alter any quality that has a corresponding relationship with a sun or moon (STR using Greater Sun for example; *see sidebar*)

Transmutation Effects: Same as Enchantment Effects above.

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Astromancers typically enchant items that aid them in their works or talismans that bring good fortune to their wearers. Some examples include:

◆ An enchanted Astrolabe that gives the Astromancer a +3 bonus to all astrology or navigate skill rolls.

◆ Sword of Zar: An enchanted sword infused with the powers of the red moon of Zar. The sword gives off a red luminescence in a 30 foot radius.

SAMPLE ASTROMANCY SPELLS

ASTROMANTIC BOLT

Mode: Attack
Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Damage: 10hp
Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

By channeling the power of the twin suns, the Astromancer directs a bolt of astromantic energy at a target of his choosing. This bolt causes 1 hp damage per spell level and deep burning pain in any victim so struck.

HOMEWARD STAR

Mode: Divination
Duration: Instant
Range: Self
Base Difficulty: -10 (level 10 base)

By gazing into the heavens, casters of this spell are able to accurately determine their position on Talislanta, and use this knowledge to find the way to a location they are familiar with (effectively grants a +10 bonus to PER checks to find their way). Needless to say, astromancers rarely get lost.

ASTROMANTIC SIGHT

Mode: Divination
Duration: 1 minute
Range: Self
Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

Similar to the Mystic's ability to Astral Travel, this spell allows the astromancer to peer into the Astral Plane to see astral and other non-corporeal presences by granting them a +1 bonus to PER rolls per level of the spell.

SIGN OF PHANDIR

Mode: Divination
Duration: 1 minute
Range: 50 feet
Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

By summoning strength from the moon Phandir, the astromancer creates a sphere of green light 50 feet in diameter which lasts the duration of the spell. All scrying attempts made against this sphere suffer a -1 difficulty penalty per level of the spell.

SIGN OF ZAR

Mode: Illusion
Duration: 1 minute
Range: 10 foot diameter sphere
Base Difficulty: -3 (level 3 base)

By means of this spell the Astromancer calls forth a 10 foot diameter sphere appears around himself, extinguishing all non-magical light. Those within the sphere can see out fine, but outside observers see only the black sphere.

SUNBURST (ILLUSION)

Mode: Illusion
Duration: 1 minute
Range: 50 feet
Base Difficulty: - 3 (level 3 base)

This spell draws upon the power of Talislanta's twin suns, to produces a bright, torch-like glow centered on whatever the caster wishes, which stays still unless the caster concentrates on moving it. By infusing the spell with more energy (-3 to Base Difficulty per magnitude increase) the caster may create brighter and/or larger globes of light (*see illusion mode for difficulty modifiers*).

SIGN OF LAEOLIS

Mode: Influence
Duration: 1 minute
Range: 10 feet
Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

This spell creates a momentary sphere of blue light with a 10 foot diameter and center on the Astromancer. All those within the sphere (except the Astromancer) are struck by an uncontrollable sense of sadness and loss. Victims suffer a -1 penalty per spell level to all actions from the distracting emotions until they make a successful resistance roll on the Action Table or the duration of the spell expires.

SUNFORM

Mode: Move
Duration: 1 hour
Range: Self
Base Difficulty: -1 (base level 1)

This spell allows the Astromancer to convert their physical bodies, but not their possessions, into a

glowing mass of pulsating solar force. The base SPD the Astromancer may travel is SPD -4 with each additional spell level increasing the SPD by +1, thus SPD -3 is a level 2 spell, SPD +0 a level 5 spell, and so on. While in Sunform, the Astromancer is unable to affect or be affected by the physical world. Likewise, they are unable to cast spells but they may still be affected by magical energy.

SIGN OF STRENGTH

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -5 (level 5 base)

By invoking the power of a constellation that represents a strong hero or creature (the Drakken constellation for example), the Astromancer infuses this mythic strength into any target he touches. For the duration of the spell, the recipient receives a +1 bonus to their STR per 5 spell levels.

SIGN OF JHANG

Mode: Transmutation

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 5 foot radius

Base Difficulty: -5 (level 5 base)

This moon sign causes the Astromancers hands to glow with a crimson light. Anyone touched receives a +1 to their CR per spell level for the duration of the spell.

ASTROMANTIC SHIELD

Mode: Ward

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 10 base)

By means of this spell the Astromancer surrounds himself with a shimmering barrier of astromantic energy that will protect the magician from damage until 20hp of damage have been absorbed.

SIGN OF DROME

Mode: Ward

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 10 foot radius

Base Difficulty: -11 (level 10 base -1 for radius)

This spell creates an amber sphere of light 10 feet in radius, which remains in effect for the duration of the spell. While having no effect on mortal creatures, this ward has 20 hp and is PR20 against all demonic creatures and prevents them from crossing into the sphere.



CARTOMANCY

To most Talisantans, luck, fate and destiny are nebulous forces beyond the province of mortal beings. Though few common folk can grasp the power and meaning of the vagaries of chance, those who know the secrets held within the cards of the Zodar can. It is with this key that a Cartomancer unlocks his powers.

The Zodar was originally a divination tool of an ancient people, long lost to history. In the hands of a skilled Cartomancer, the twenty enigmatic cards are a powerful magical instrument. Each card has both a symbolic meaning in the realm of destiny, and an actual meaning, in the realm of action. Cartomancers believe that the interaction of these two realms creates reality as they know it.

Cartomancers invoke the destiny aspect of the cards when they attempt to divine the future or the past. This is the most commonly known use for the Zodar deck, and is practiced by many Cartomancers to earn a living as a gambler or fortune teller. Destiny readings are usually vague, metaphorical, and difficult to understand. With practice, however, a Cartomancer can learn to better interpret the cryptic pronouncements of the cards.

The action aspect of the cards provides Cartomancers with their more tangible spellcasting abilities. Each card is tied to a real-world effect that the Cartomancer can invoke. For example, the Sun cards can produce light or heat, the Warrior card is useful for attacking enemies or resisting attacks, and the Mystic card can be used to reveal secrets, lies, or hidden knowledge. Unlike the destiny aspect of the deck, spellcasting with the cards uses the inner-power of the magician, and can be very tiring and even dangerous. Most Cartomancers keep this element of their magic hidden and use it only when absolutely necessary.

Cartomancy is typically self-taught and there are few treatises on the Order or spellbooks. After studying the Zodar cards for a certain period of time the neophyte Cartomancer begins to understand their innate capacities for magic. Of course, anyone can use the deck for a friendly game of Zodar, but it takes cartomantic abilities to fully attune to the forces of chance within the cards.

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

A Cartomancer must have one hand free in order to manipulate the cards and cast spells. No spoken words or specific gestures are required.

ADVANTAGES

Spells of Cartomancy can be quite subtle since the magician need only handle her Zodar deck to produce the magic. No lights, noises, or other tell-tale signs emanate from the magician while she is casting a spell. Of course, those familiar with Cartomancy may realize what is happening as soon as the magician begins an innocent shuffle. . . .

LIMITATIONS

As noted under Physical Components, Cartomancers must use their Zodar deck to cast spells. Without his cards on his person, a Cartomancer is powerless. If the magician's personal deck is ever lost or stolen, a new one can be obtained and used after the magician spends one week attuning to it.

MODES

Not Available: Conjunction, Transmutation

Bonuses: Divination +3

Penalties: Attack -3

Conjunction Effects: N/A

Enchantment Effects: Cartomancer's can alter any quality that is depicted on one of the cards of the Zodar. For example, a Cartomancer might alter a character's Combat Rating by drawing "The Warrior" or a character's Haggle skill by drawing "The Peddler."

Transmutation Effects: N/A

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Common enchanted items created with Cartomancy:

◆ Enchanted Zodar cards that can reproduce the Order's spells.



SAMPLE CARTOMANCY SPELLS

HAND OF DESTINY

Mode: Divination

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Base Difficulty: -5 (level 5 base)

Rahastrans use this spell all the time, as it is as much a part of their belief system as anything else. By laying out two cards and divining their meaning, a skilled Cartomancer can determine his destiny. In game terms, this is the PC asking the GM "What is likely to be my best course of action?" The level of the spell should be used as a ruler in deciding how accurate and helpful the insight will be. For example, a 5th level divination might yield only general information, such as, "*The future is obscure, but it seems that subtlety is the best course of action.*" For a 10th level divination the result might be more specific, as in "*Signs indicate that deceit would yield greater fortune than direct action.*" A 20th level divination might yield more detailed information, like "*Fortune would shine on sneaking into the tower in disguise*", while at 30th level the GM might really get specific, as in "*Use a spell to hide your life-essence and enter the necromancer's tower in the guise of undead.*"

FORTUNE'S PURCHASE

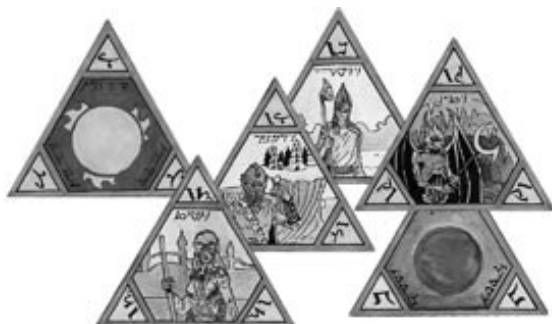
Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Self

Base Difficulty: -15 (level 15 base)

The cartomancer consults the Zodar and draws The Peddler and Talisandre, interpreting that he will have good luck in an upcoming purchase. He then goes and talks to the merchant and makes his purchase, gaining +5 on his Hagglng skill.



THE WARRIOR'S HEART (ALTER)

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch (3 targets)

Base Difficulty: -5 (level 5 base)

By drawing forth The Warrior and the Archon and placing them both face-up on a level surface, the Cartomancer predicts favorable odds in the upcoming battle. Due to this prediction, up to three targets

THE ZODAR DECK

The twenty cards of the Zodar are:

1. Zar: The Dark Moon. An ill-aspected card, signifying evil, conspiracy, black magic.
2. Laeolis: The Blue Moon. Sorrow, disappointment, heartbreak.
3. Jhang: The Crimson Moon. Rage, violence, dark passions.
4. Ardan: The Purple Moon. Romance, passion, desire.
5. Phandir: The Green Moon. Mystery, things unknown.
6. Drome: The Amber Moon. Peace, repose, relief.
7. Talisandre: The Silver Moon. Good fortune.
8. The Lesser Sun. A matter of little import.
9. The Greater Sun. A matter of great import.
10. The Charlatan. Deception or deception discovered.
11. The Rogue. Loss, thievery, distrust.
12. The Warrior. Confrontation, conflict, vigilance.
13. The Assassin. Treachery, betrayal, death.
14. The Peddler. Opportunity, the chance for profit or loss.
15. The Wanderer. Travel and adventure.
16. The Wizard. Sorcery, chance, uncertainty.
17. The Mystic. Hidden knowledge, secrets.
18. The Alchemist. Change, transformation, the unexpected.
19. The Reaper. Inevitability.
20. The Archon. Victory.

will be filled with the courage of the archetypal Warrior, receiving +1 to their CR attribute for each spell level.

PRESTIDIGITATION

Mode: Move

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

By turning The Rogue and The Charlatan face-to-face in the deck, the caster can make any small item within range of the spell come to his hand at SPD -4 (+1 to SPD per spell level). The item could be on the floor, on another person, or even in one of the caster's pockets. A bit of legerdemain is usually used to augment the spell, keeping anyone from noticing the weapon, pouch, or whatever sliding into the casters grip.

THE FOLD (ILLUSION)

Mode: Illusion

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -22 (level 10 base, -3 for motion, -9 for touch, smell and hearing)

Every Rahastran knows when to fold a bad hand and make a discrete exit when his or her luck has changed for the worse. By drawing The Charlatan the caster can appear to vanish into thin air, leaving nothing behind. Even someone holding the caster will believe that the Cartomancer has disappeared, and even beings with keen senses of smell and hearing may be fooled by this illusion. While the spell is in effect, the cartomancer can move silently, hide, or make a quick getaway, as desired.

THE BLUFF (ILLUSION)

Mode: Illusion

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: --16 (level 1 base, +3 levels for Motion, +3 levels for Complex Elements, +3 levels for Precise Details, +6 levels for Magnitude)

The Warrior and The Charlatan must be held in the hand of the cartomancer for the duration of this spell, which allows the caster to assume the semblance of a duelist of unsurpassed skill. A well-chosen prop and a bit of imagination may be used to enhance the effect of the spell. For example, if the caster draws a sword and strikes a dashing pose, he will appear

to those affected by the illusion to be the finest and most deadly swordsman in the land. The whole thing is illusion, however, and if the intended subject or subjects see through the enchantment, mayhem is likely to ensue. NPC opponents roll Combat Rating or Intelligence with a -6 penalty (the Magnitude) to continue the attack, or use GM's discretion.

CARDPLAY (INFLUENCE)

Mode: Influence

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 5 feet

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

This enchantment allows the Cartomancer to dazzle and amaze onlookers by shuffling the Zodar deck, slowly at first, and then with greater and greater flair. If the intended subject or subjects fail a resistance roll (standard Will roll plus MR minus 1/2 spell level), they will become entranced, remaining motionless for the duration of the spell, even if the caster puts away the cards and leaves the area. On a partial success, the subject retains his or her senses, but will stop whatever else they were doing to watch the caster for as long as the display of cardplay continues. On a failed resistance check, the subject will remain entranced for a full minute after the caster stops manipulating the cards. On a mishap, the subject remains entranced even after the spell's duration expires, and will stay that way until someone "awakens" them (by shaking, slapping, shouting, etc.).

LUCK OF THE DRAW

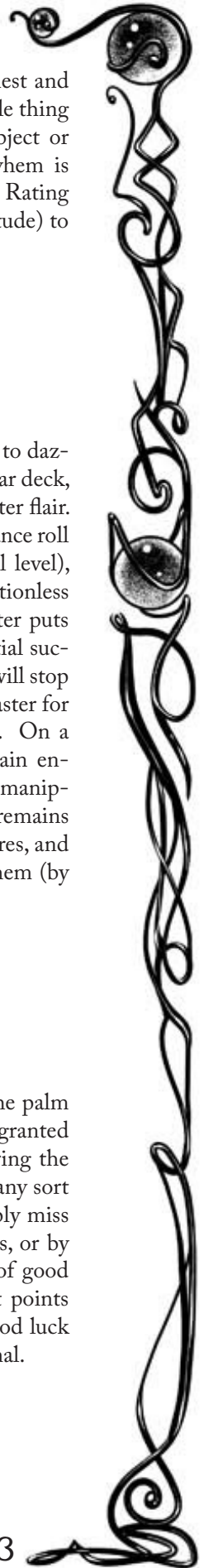
Mode: Ward

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Self

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 10 base)

By drawing Talisandre and keeping it in the palm of the hand, the caster will temporarily be granted good luck in any sort of fight or melee. During the time the enchantment is in effect, attacks of any sort that are aimed at the caster will unaccountably miss the mark, either by the narrowest of margins, or by what will appear to be an incredible stroke of good fortune. Once the spell has absorbed 20 hit points of damage or its duration is exceeded, the good luck fades and the caster's fortunes return to normal.



CRYPTOMANCY

Cryptomancy is the art of inscribing, manipulating, encrypting, and decoding magical and mundane writing. Cryptomancers are generally intrigued by symbology of all kinds and believe that every form of written communication contains magical power.

Cryptomancers cast spells by inscribing magical sigils. During the process of inscription, the Cryptomancer infuses the writing with a portion of his will, thereby bestowing its magical properties. This procedure is often fatiguing, but once completed, the spell is in place and may take effect at a later time or when certain conditions are met. With this Magical Order, the line between Spellcasting and Enchantment is a fine one, indeed.

Because of its subtle yet enduring nature, Cryptomancy is often used by the Trappages of Kasmir to protect valuables and vaults. The founders of the art, the Callidians, employ their spellcraft primarily to decode and translate ancient texts, or for other scholarly purposes.

As would be expected, Cryptomancers learn spells by memorizing written formulas of magical symbols. Books, scrolls, and tomes of Cryptomancy are always in cipher, and are all but impossible to decode. Cryptomancers across the continent share a specialized runic language that bears no resemblance to any contemporary alphabet.

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

A Cryptomancer must be able to trace a pattern with at least one hand in order to cast spells. For many cryptomantic spells, the magician must make an actual mark of some sort. Cryptomancers often carry papers, inks, brushes, pens, and chisels for just this reason.

ADVANTAGES

THE TRIGGER EFFECT

When casting any cryptomantic spell, the magician may choose a circumstance that will trigger the forces of the rune. Until this condition is met, the spell will remain in stasis. Spells in stasis are subject to all forms of magical detection and countermagic.

When the triggering circumstance occurs, the spell will discharge, expending all of its energy. A trigger increases the spell's Degree of Difficulty by 5 levels, and the rune must be clearly inscribed upon the subject. A given spell can only be triggered once. If a cryptomancer wishes to create a permanent effect that can be triggered many times, she must enchant the rune, as per the rules for Enchantment which can be found at the end of this chapter.

LIMITATIONS

Because of the often complex symbology employed by this Order and the need to actually inscribe its spells, cryptomantic magic takes longer to perform than other styles of spellcasting. Unless specifically stated otherwise, all cryptomantic spells take 2 rounds to cast.

MODES

Not Available: Transmutation

Bonuses: Divination +3, Ward +3

Penalties: Illusion -2, Influence -2

Conjuration Effects: Cryptomancers use runes to contact the outer-planes in order to summon extra-dimensional entities such as Devils, Demons, Imps, and Sardonicus.

Enchantment Effects: Cryptomancers can alter attributes by making the appropriate Rune (Rune of Strength, Rune of Reason, etc). A cryptomancer can also alter Damage Rating or Protection Rating with a Rune of Potence or a Rune of Shielding, respectively.

Transmutation Effects: N/A

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Common enchanted items created with Cryptomancy include:

- ◆ Alarm and trap systems designed to defeat intruders and protect valuables
- ◆ Enchanted tattoos that can conjure up weapons or useful items
- ◆ Rings, medallions, bracers, and torcs inscribed with empowering runes
- ◆ Cages and manacles to entrap extra-dimensional entities

EXPLODING RUNES (ATTACK)

Mode: Attack

SAMPLE CRYPTOMANCY SPELLS

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Area of Effect: 10 foot radius

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 1 base, -5 for trigger)

These symbols are usually inscribed on a gate or a doorway to prevent intrusion. Anyone who opens the protected gate or door without first uttering the command word will trigger the runes, causing a deafening explosion. Anyone within ten feet of the explosion will sustain 1hp damage per spell level. Any exploding rune of level 10 or greater will also necessitate a CON roll or the victim will be permanently deafened. A 10th level healing spell (transmutation mode) will be needed to restore hearing.

SYMBOL OF LIGHTNING

Mode: Attack

Duration: Instant

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -15 (level 10 base, -5 for trigger)

The Symbol of Lightning is a large inscription that resembles a jagged lightning bolt bound by a ten foot diameter circle. It is always drawn on the ground or floor, using a staff or dagger (in dirt), or chalk (on stone or wood). Anyone stepping into the area demarcated by the symbol will be struck by lightning for 10 points of damage. Many ancient tombs are guarded with symbols of this sort, which were a favorite of the legendary black magician Mordante who is believed to have inscribed a number of these devices into the very floors of his demesne.

SIGIL OF DETERENCE

Mode: Attack

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

A favorite of Kasmiran trappsmiths, this sigil is usually placed inside a locking mechanism, and is activated by touch. Unauthorized individuals who attempt to open a lock protected with this sigil will suffer a painful blast of energy (1hp damage per spell level) sufficient to damage a key or lock-pick; or incapacitate a thief's hand. A successful Traps skill roll (with a penalty equal to the Traps skill rating of the magician that set the rune) will alert a thief to the

rune's presence.

SHALADIN'S BLADE-ICON

Mode: Conjuration

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base, -5 for trigger)

This symbol is commonly sewn into the sleeve of a robe, or carved into the face of a ring. When triggered by the wearer, the rune causes a dagger to be conjured into his or her hand. Shaladin's Blade is not a magical weapon per se, but does damage equivalent to a common dagger. Note that a Blade-Icon can be triggered only once and must be re-cast before it can be used again. Also note that an untriggered Icon counts as one of the seven magical items that a person can carry.

SEAL OF THE FORBIDDEN PASSAGE

Mode: Conjuration

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

When this Seal is drawn upon the surface of any door, the portal will be sealed shut by the presence of conjured mortar and remain so until the sigil expires (1 minute per spell level), is dispelled or the door broken down by force.

SIGIL OF SUMMONING

Mode: Conjuration

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

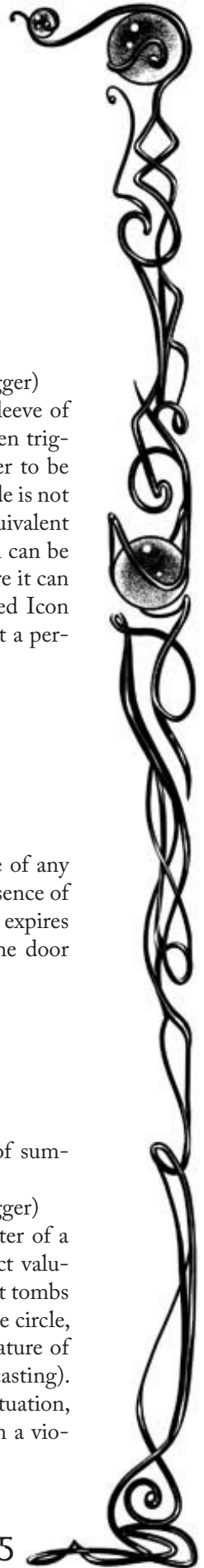
Casting Time: 1 round per ability level of summoned creature(s)

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 1 base, -5 for trigger)

This powerful rune is inscribed at the center of a seven-foot circle, and is often used to protect valuable treasures, such as may be found in ancient tombs and libraries. When an intruder steps into the circle, the Sigil summons an extra-dimensional creature of the casters choice (determined at time of casting). Since obviously no pact is possible in this situation, the type of creature summoned is most often a violent or aggressive one.

MARK OF MIDNIGHT

Mode: Divination



Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -7 (level 10 base, +3 Order bonus)

Casting Modifiers: -8 (1st level, -9 for extra duration, -1 for extra range, +3 due to Order modifier)

Drawn on the forehead, this rune enables the subject to see clearly (PER +0) in complete darkness for up to 50 feet (double this distance in partial darkness or shadow).

MARK OF STEALTH

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -3 (level 3 base)

When inscribed upon the soles of one's boots or other footwear, the Mark of Stealth enables the wearer to move much more quietly (+1 Stealth rating per spell 3 levels) for the duration of the spell.

SYMBOL OF CLARITY

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

Inscribed in the air above a page or other written surface, a Symbol of Clarity will render any form of writings or inscriptions clear and intelligible to the caster. The symbol functions no matter what language the original inscriptions were written in, or what efforts may have been used to obscure the message (codes, obscured letters, etc.) The spell level grants a +1 to the relevant skill (usually a language skill or cryptography) per spell level. Obscured writings may cause a penalty of -1 to -20 to be applied, depending on how badly distorted, faded, or smudged the original inscriptions are. All penalties are cumulative.

RUNE OF BATTLE

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -3 (level 3 base)

When the Rune of Battle is inscribed on a weapon, its wielder has +1 added to the appropriate weapon skill per level of the spell.

TALKING RUNES

Mode: Illusion

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -8 (level 1 base, -5 for trigger, -2 for Order penalty)

Talking Runes are symbols that slowly "speak" a secret message when activated by a specific trigger, which may be as simple as someone opening a door or as complex and specific as the caster desires (such as, "*When the magician Azradamus reads the last page of this book*"). Talking Runes may speak up to 20 words in any language known to the caster, at a rate of about 4 words per round. Talking runes may not speak magical phrases in order to cast a spell.

SYMBOL OF PROTECTION

Mode: Ward

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -15 (level 10 base, -5 for trigger)

This symbol may be inscribed anywhere on a subject's clothing or body. The symbol will lie dormant until the wearer is attacked, at which point it will activate, protecting the wearer from up to 20 hp of any type of damage. After activation, the rune fades and may not be used again.

ARCHONIC HEPTAGRAM

Mode: Ward

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Area of Effect: 5 foot radius

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 10 base)

This potent and complex symbol must be inscribed on the ground or some other flat surface, in a roughly circular area measuring approximately 10 feet in diameter. Individuals who stand within the Heptagram will be protected from devils of all sorts, as long as they take no offensive action against such creatures. The Ward has a default PR of 20 and 20 hp.

CRYSTALOMANCY

The Gnomekin Crystalomancers view their magic as a reflection of Terra, the Earth Mother, and regard Crystalomancy as a divine gift. Both the Crystalomancers and Daughters of Terra use magic of this Order, refusing to burden Terra with requests for aid, and working their spells in accordance with Her protective nature. Like caring gardeners, they tend to the crystals, grow new ones, and use them for the good of their people and the environment. But protect also means defend. Crystalomancers do not hesitate to use destructive forces when needed; creating landslides, producing cave-ins or blasting their enemies with harmful magics, if their homesteads are threatened.

However, these powers are used with strict discrimination. The thought of violating the harmony of nature for personal gain is completely alien to the Gnomekin. Therefore Crystalomancy is considered a great responsibility and requires unclouded judgment. Only those who have a deep respect for life, a compassionate nature and an acute sense of balance and harmony can become Crystalomancers or Daughters of Terra. Few non-Gnomekin are judged to meet these requirements; and outsiders are rarely, if ever, allowed to learn Crystalomancy. All are Terra's children, but experience has taught the Gnomekin that those who do not understand Her nature cannot be entrusted with Her secrets.

Crystalomancers do not use written works. The precepts of this Order are passed down by oral tradition. Every aspiring Crystalomancer or Daughter of Terra also spends a lot of time tending crystals, and learning their properties by taking part in their growth. Over time, the student develops a deep understanding of the nature of the crystals. Often a kind of bond is established, and most Crystalomancers, including Daughters of Terra, prefer to use crystals they have grown themselves.

Use of Crystalomancy is subtle, drawing magical energies from and through the appropriate crystal, causing it to glow and sometimes pulse softly, and the majority of Crystalomantic spells are cast by softly speaking a humble incantation in Terra's name.

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

All Crystalomantic spells require appropriate crystals; (see *Limitations*)

ADVANTAGES

STORE CRYSTALOMANTIC FORCE.

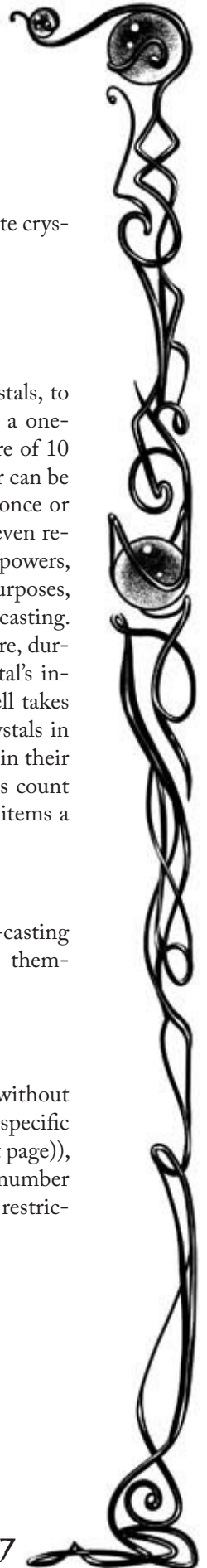
A Crystalomancer can store spells in crystals, to be used at a later time. This effect, basically a one-use enchantment, requires a storage procedure of 10 rounds per level of the spell. The stored power can be used by the caster or by someone else, all at once or a little at a time; but it cannot be reused, or even restored. Once a Stored crystal is emptied of its powers, it is dead and thus useless for all magical purposes, including regular enchantment and spellcasting. This limitation is due to the storage procedure, during which a total merging between the crystal's innate properties and the properties of the spell takes place. Reluctant to burn out the precious crystals in this way, Crystalomancers are very restrictive in their use of Storing. Also note that Stored crystals count against the maximum number of enchanted items a person can carry.

AFFINITY

Crystalomancers get a +1 bonus to spell-casting rolls when using crystals they have grown themselves.

LIMITATIONS

A Crystalomancer cannot perform magic without the requisite crystals. Each Mode requires a specific type of crystal (see *Modes and Crystals* on next page)), and the level of the spell cannot exceed the number of carats of the crystal. Also note the ethical restrictions of Crystalomancy.



MODES

Not Available: None

Bonuses: Ward +3, Transmutation +3

Penalties: Attack -3, Conjunction -3

Conjunction Effects: Crystalomancers may only summon crystal and earth elementals.

Enchantment Effects: Crystalomancers may use this Mode only on appropriate natural materials, such as stone, earth, or crystal. It cannot be used on living beings, or to change abstract qualities.

Transmutation Effects: Crystalomancers may only use this Mode for healing spells, they may not use it for transformative magic.

CRYSTAL GROWING

The art of growing crystals is covered by the skill Agriculture (Crystals) in the standard rules. Crystals grow at a rate of 1 carat per week, and need close supervision during this time. A Crystal Grower can maintain one growing crystal per level of ability; thus, a +10 skill means being able to nurture 10 crystals at the same time. Once harvested, a crystal cannot be grown further. Note that a Crystal Grower does not necessarily have to be a Crystalomancer.

WILD CRYSTALS

The Earth Mother also harbors wild crystals, not grown by Crystal Growers. Such crystals are unpredictable; most of them cannot be used for Crystalomantic purposes at all, and the rest only at the Crystalomancer's own risk. Any Crystal Grower can determine which crystals (1 out of 10) are pure enough for spellcasting and enchantment, but, short of Crystalomantic Scrying, there is nothing that can tell which of these will yield the desired results. One quarter will have properties other than expected, and even those that are what they look like are difficult to control (-5 penalty on all spellcasting and enchantment rolls). Still, Crystalomancers value the wild crystals and take care of all they find. These crystals are Terra's gifts, just as cultivated crystals are, and they should be handled and appreciated accordingly. Also, despite all their modesty, Crystalomancers are not completely without ambition. There is always the possibility that the unknown properties of a wild crystal will lead to the discovery of new uses for Crystalomancy.

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Common enchanted items made by Crystalomancy include:

- ◆ Healing crystals (Transmutation)
- ◆ Crystal blades, with an enchanted Topazine crystal at the pommel (Enchantment, Attack)
- ◆ Crystals of Sealed Passage, vs. e.g. Darklings, Kra, or Subterranooids (Ward)

MODES AND CRYSTALS

Mode	Crystal	Color
Attack	Rubiate	Fiery crimson
Conjunction	Albinite	Milky White
Divination	Glassine	Perfectly clear
Enchantment	Topazine	Rich yellow
Illusion	Prismatite	Clear/refractive
Influence	Amethyte	Vivid purple
Move	Azurite	Bright blue
Transmutation	Variagate	Multicolored
Ward	Amberite	Warm Orange

SAMPLE CRYSTALOMANCY SPELLS

GLASSINE EYE

Mode: Divination

Duration: 2 minutes

Range: 2 miles

Base Difficulty: -3 (level 1 base + duration + range)

By placing a glassine crystal in a desired location, the Crystalomancer can use this spell to turn the crystal into a remote Scrying device. As long as the crystal is in range, the caster can see through the Crystalomantic Eye as though he or she were there, with a PER bonus equal to the level of the spell for purposes of seeing hidden things or beings.

SENSE OF TERRA

Mode: Divination

Duration: 5 minutes

Range: 50 feet

Area of Effect: 5 foot radius

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 1 base + duration)

This spell gives the caster an infallible sense of depth and direction while underground. As long as the spell is in effect, the Crystalomancer will not become disoriented or lost, even in total darkness. In addition, the caster receives a bonus to PER rolls equal to the level of the spell.

SHARPEN WITH STONE

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -3 (+1 enhancement base)

By chanting a simple phrase and rubbing a topazine crystal along the blade of a natural weapon, the Crystalomancer can increase the damage done by the blade. If the blade itself is made of topazine, the Crystalomancer merely needs to speak the incantation and rub the blade with their fingers.

FORTIFY WITH TERRA'S STRENGTH

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -3 (+1 enhancement base)

While touching a shield or suit of armor made out of natural materials with a topazine crystal, and

speaking a short incantation, the Crystalomancer can imbue the item with a temporary increase in the PR.

SAPPER'S SPELL

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -5 (level 5 base)

Through the use of this spell, the Crystalomancer can weaken any stone structure, possibly causing it to collapse under its own weight. The GM should be the final arbitrator for determining the required level, taking into account how structurally sound the structure is in the first place. By assigning a number to the integrity of the structure, the GM can determine how many 'levels' of weakness must be applied to the structure before it collapses (by reducing the assigned number to 0).

HIDDEN PORTAL

Mode: Illusion

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 1 base + magnitude, touch, sound)

This spell allows the Crystalomancer to use a prismatic crystal to conceal an opening the size of a door or smaller. The illusion replicates walls or natural surfaces up to the size of a humanoid, making openings or doorways almost impossible to detect, even by touch.

TERRA'S CONCEALMENT

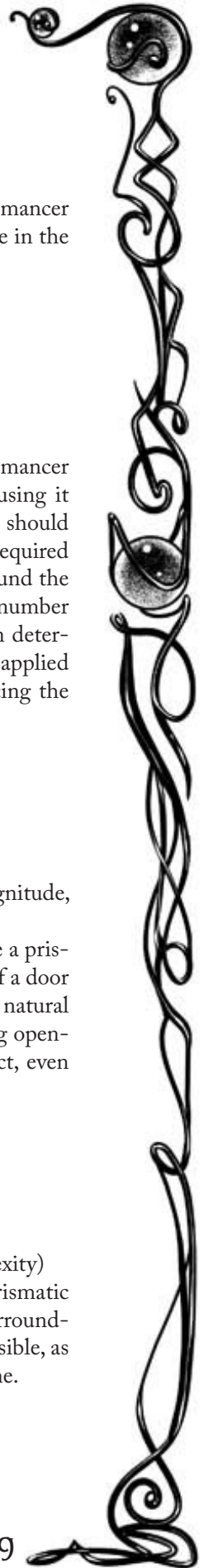
Mode: Illusion

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 1 base + complexity)

By manipulating the properties of a prismatic crystal, the caster is able to blend in with surrounding rocks and earth effectively becoming invisible, as long as they remain stationary, for a short time.



AMETHYTE PERSUASION**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 1 rounds**Range:** 5 feet**Base Difficulty:** -2 (level 2 base)

This spell allows the caster to focus the properties of amethyte crystal, which will produce a glowing light that can instill a sense of peace and passivity in a single creature. The intended target may resist with a WIL check at $-1/2$ the level of the spell level.

TERRA'S COURAGE**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 1 rounds**Range:** 5 feet**Base Difficulty:** -2 (level 2 base)

By manipulating the properties of amethyte crystal, the caster can envelope a creature or being in a glowing light that will push fear out of the targets mind. Gnomekin Priestesses use this to help Protectors when Durne is threatened. The target may resist with a WIL check at $-1/2$ the spells level if so desired.

AZURITE HAND**Mode:** Move**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 1 base)

This simple spell allows the Crystalomancer to handle distant objects with a beam of bright blue light cast from an azurite crystal. The end of the beam will coalesce into the shape of a hand allowing the caster to grasp objects and perform precise manipulations.

TUNNEL HOLD**Mode:** Move**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 50 feet**Area of Effect:** 5 foot radius**Base Difficulty:** -6 (level 1 base + area)

This spell is used by Crystalomancers to support rock walls and ceilings during a cave-in. A network of glowing blue beams shoots forth from the magician's azurite crystal, supporting everything within a 5 foot radius. It should be noted that the spell must be cast at a level high enough to support the ceiling.

TERRA'S TOUCH**Mode:** Transmutation**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -9 (level 12 base + Order bonus)

The Crystalomancer holds an emeralite crystal just above the recipients wounds while casting this spell. This allows the Crystalomancer to focus the properties of an emeralite crystal to heal up to 12 HP of damage to any living creature.

AMBERITE AURA**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** +2 (level 1 base plus Order bonus)

When cast, the Crystalomancers amberite crystal glows with a shimmering golden light that envelops the caster, protecting him from harm. Any attack that tries to penetrate the glow is harmlessly deflected away.

SAFE PASSAGE**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 10 base)

By casting this spell on an umberite crystal and dropping it in a passageway, the Crystalomancer can make it impossible for a certain type of creature to pass through the area for 1 minute. There are actually many different versions of this spell to account for the various creatures that Durne has to fend off – Darklings, Octomorphs, Subterranooids and Drones to name a few.

EARTHWARD**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 10 base)

This spell envelops the Crystalomancer with a brown aura that emanates from an umberite crystal. Protecting them from rocks and earth. Originally created for use in areas known to collapse frequently, this spell is also used against Earth Demons.

ELEMENTALISM

Elemental Magic is the catch-all Order for the various magical traditions that harness and manipulate one of the four elemental powers: Fire, Water, Earth, and Air. Magicians study a single element at a time, often exclusively. Such magicians are known as Pyromancers, Aquamancers, Geomancers, or Aeromancers, respectively.

Elemental power is thought to originate on the Green World, also known as the Elemental Plane. This plane is the primal birthplace of every naturally-occurring being, entity and element, be it a creature of flesh or mountain of stone. Magicians can learn to contact the Elemental Plane to draw forth raw elemental power, or to consort with the denizens of these realms (which are known as Elementals).

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

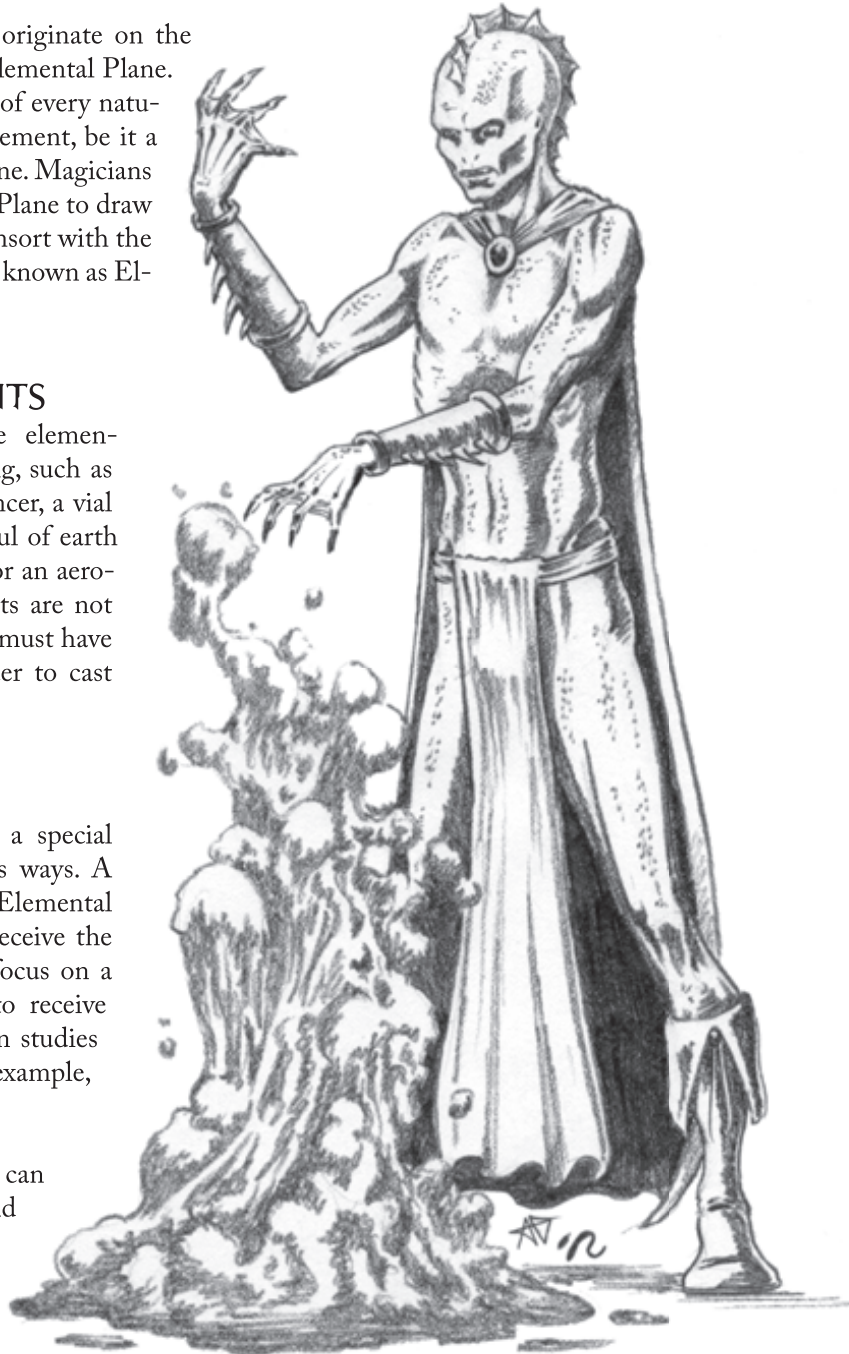
Elementalists often incorporate elemental substances into their spellcasting, such as bits of coal and flint for a pyromancer, a vial of water for an aquamancer, a fistful of earth for a geomancer, or a flute or fan for an aeromancer. Such physical accoutrements are not required, however. An elementalist must have their hands free to gesture in order to cast their spells.

ADVANTAGES

Each elemental power bestows a special ability on magicians that study its ways. A magician must have at least one Elemental Mode rating of +10 or better to receive the abilities below. A magician must focus on a single type of Elemental magic to receive these special benefits. If a magician studies both Air magic and Fire magic for example, he receives no special abilities.

Water: The elemental can breathe freely underwater, and never feels the cold. This does not offer any special defense from elemental cold attacks.

Fire: Extremes of heat do not bother a pyromancer. Additionally, normal, non-magical fires will not harm the pyromancer, although their equipment can still be damaged. This offers no special defense against magical fire attacks.



Earth: Weapons of stone, such as thrown rocks/boulders, slingstones, Ariance maces and arrows, and the Yrmanian r'ruh, will not harm a geomancer, nor will landslides or earthquakes. This offers no special defense against magical earth attacks. The geomancer is also infused with the solidity of earth, and gains an additional 2 HP.

Air: Aeromancers are never bothered by natural winds of any intensity, and natural lightning never harms them, although magical lightning attacks will. Additionally, airborne toxins, gases, etc. are slower to reach them, giving them an extra round in which to act.

LIMITATIONS

All spells of Elementalism lack subtlety. They produce loud noises, bright lights, and strong scents, and are impossible to conceal. Elemental magic is also very limited in the kinds of effects it can produce (see Mode restrictions, below).

MODES

Not available: Illusion, Influence

Bonuses: Conjure +3, plus one of Attack +3 (*Pyromancy*), Move +3 (*Aeromancy*), Ward +3 (*Geomancy*), or Transmutation +3 (*Aquamancy*)

Penalties: None

Conjure Effects: An Elementalist may summon an Elemental appropriate to the type of

energy he studies. A Pyromancer may summon a fire elemental, a Geomancer may summon an earth elemental, etc.

Enchantment Effects: Elementalists may only enchant non-living items. They may imbue non-living items with elemental forces.

Transform Effects: The magician's chosen element can be transmuted through its various forms. Fire may be turned to smoke or ash, and vice versa. Air may be transformed to fog, toxic gases may be changed to fresh breezes. Water can be purified or turned to solid ice or steam. Earth can be altered from oozing mud to solid stone. Elementalists may not use spells of Healing or Harming using this Mode.

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Common enchanted items created with Elementalism include:

- ◆ Medallions that protect the wearer from a specific element (Ward)
- ◆ Wands or staves that project destructive elemental forces (Attack)
- ◆ Devices that can produce elemental matter, such as waterskins that fill themselves, masks or helms that produce fresh air, torches that light on command, etc. (Conjuration)
- ◆ Weapons empowered with an elemental force (Attack)

SAMPLE ELEMENATLISM SPELLS

ICE BLADE

Mode: Attack

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

If the Aquamancer happens to lose his weapon, he can call upon this spell to create one for him, condensing the water in the air into an icy blade that encases his hand and juts outward.

CRACKLING FIST

Mode: Attack

Duration: instant

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

This spell covers the hands of a single being in crackling lightning for a number of rounds equal to the spell level. With a successful attack roll, using the appropriate combat skill, the fists will do damage equal to the spells level. The lighting does no damage to the recipient of the spell.

PYROMANTIC BLAST**Mode:** Attack**Duration:** Instant**Range:** 50 feet**Area of Effect:** 10' radius**Base Difficulty:** -8 (level 1 base + area + Order bonus)

The Pyromancer sends a ball of raging fire towards an area, when the area is reached the ball explodes, damaging everything within and causing combustibles to ignite.

FISTS OF GRANITE**Mode:** Attack**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Self**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 1 base)

With this spell, the caster encases his fists with solid rock and can deliver devastating blows at higher levels. While this spell is active, the recipient cannot perform fine manipulations. This stone covering should be considered weightless for the target.

BREATHE**Mode:** Conjunction**Duration:** 5 minutes**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -3 (level 1 base + duration + Order bonus)

Through the use of this conjunction, an Aeromancer is able to produce breathable air in any environment. 1 cubic foot of air is enough for a single person to breathe for the duration of the spell.

NOXIOUS CLOUD**Mode:** Conjunction**Duration:** 5 minutes**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 3 base + duration + Order bonus)

This spell conjures a cloud of noxious gasses and fumes 3 cubic feet in size that emanates from the casters fingertips and coalesces at the desired range. The cloud is not deadly, but it will incapacitate targets within the area of effect. Victims may resist by making a CON check at -1/3 the spells level.

SUMMON SUB-ELEMENTAL**Mode:** Conjunction**Duration:** 5 minutes**Casting Time:** 5 rounds**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 1 base + duration)

This spell summons a Sub-Elemental of the relevant type that will perform small tasks for the caster including combat. The Sub-elemental will return to the elemental plane after 5 minutes.

SUMMON EARTH DEMON**Mode:** Conjunction**Duration:** 5 minutes**Casting Time:** 8 rounds**Base Difficulty:** -8 (level 3 base + duration)

This spell summons an Earth Demon that will obey the caster for 5 minutes before returning to the Demonrealm. A similar spell is used to summon Sand Demons.

ROLLING STONE**Mode:** Conjunction**Duration:** 3 minutes**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 5 base + duration + Order bonus)

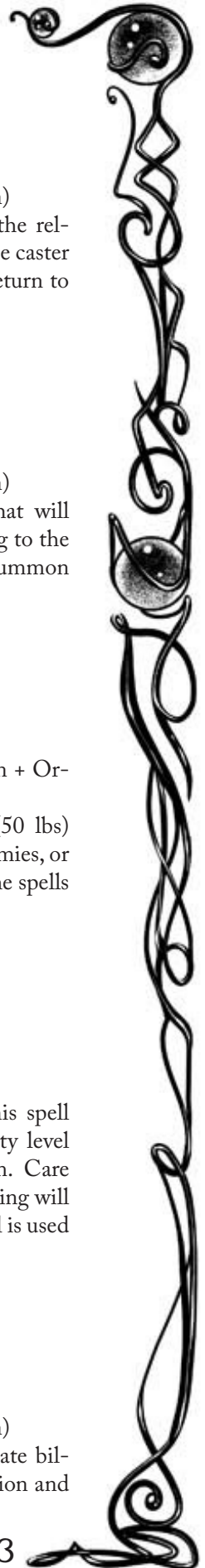
This spell conjures a large round stone (50 lbs) that can be pushed down a hill to scatter enemies, or rolled down a passage to block the way. At the spells expiration, the stone turns to dust.

BANISH FROST DEMON**Mode:** Conjunction**Duration:** N/A**Casting Time:** 3 rounds**Base Difficulty:** -3 (level 3 base)

A popular spell in L'Haan, when cast, this spell opens a portal behind a Frost demon (ability level 3) that will suck it back into the Demonrealm. Care must be taken, as whatever the demon is holding will go to the Demonrealm with it. A similar spell is used to banish other types of Demons.

MISTS OF OBSCUREMENT**Mode:** Divination**Duration:** 3 minutes**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -3 (level 1 base + duration)

This enchantment allows the caster to create billowing clouds of gray mist which obscure vision and



dampen sound in the area of effect. Living creatures within the mists suffer a penalty to PER rolls equal to the spells level.

WHISPERS IN THE WIND

Mode: Divination

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

By studying the flow of the air, the Aeromancer is able to visualize things around him in a much more precise way, thus giving the magician a PER bonus equal to the spells level as they can pick up sounds, perceive the channels of air created by people and objects, and feel changes in the airflow as creatures move around.

EARTH SENSE

Mode: Divination

Duration: 5 minutes

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 1 base + duration)

This spell gives the caster an infallible sense of depth and direction while underground. As long as the spell is in effect, the Geomancer will not become disoriented or lost, even in total darkness. In addition, the caster receives a bonus to PER rolls equal to the level of the spell.

VORTEX

Mode: Move

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: 50 feet

Area of Effect: 5' radius

Base Difficulty: -8 (level 1 base + area + SPD + bonus)

This spell creates high winds (SPD -7, 30 feet per round) in a small area that will pick up objects and swirl them around, possibly causing damage to those in within the vortex. When this spell expires, items in the vortex will be slung in whatever direction they were going at the time.

CHOKO

Mode: Move

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -3 (level 1 base + duration + Order bonus)

By moving the air out of a targets lungs, an Aeromancer can render them unconscious for a period of time. Targets may resist using STR at -1/3 the spells level each round or fall unconscious, even if the roll to resist is successful, the target should suffer penalties to all action table rolls due to choking.

PURIFY WATER

Mode: Transmutation

Duration: 5 minutes

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -4 (level 3 base + duration + Order bonus)

This spell is commonly used to purify salt water for drinking, although it may also be used to protect oneself from any toxic substance that may be present in the water, including parasites and poisons.

STONE STEPS

Mode: Transmutation

Duration: 3 minutes

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -7 (level 5 base + duration)

With this spell, the Geomancer can fashion steps out of stone for a variety of reasons, scaling walls, making travel easier, etc. The steps will last for 3 minutes before returning to their previous shape.

WARD VS STONE

Mode: Ward

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 10 base)

This enchantment will provide the recipient with an immunity to stone, stone weapons, rocks and other earthly devices for a short time. While so protected, the skin of the individual will take on a stone-like appearance.

PROTECTION FROM PYRO DEMONS**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 10 base)

By casting this spell, the Pyromancer can protect himself or another from the attacks of Pyro Demons. Pyro Demons can sense this protection, and have been known at times to wait or follow their prey until the ward wears off.

LIGHTNING SHIELD**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 1 base)

With this spell, the Aeromancer creates a crackling barrier of electrical energy that surrounds them that will shock attackers, forcing them to pull away in-

stinctively, reducing any damage inflicted. Attackers that successfully land a blow will suffer small electrical shocks when coming into contact with the aura and may instinctively drop their weapon (WIL roll at 1/3 the spells level to resist the urge to drop the weapon). Bare fisted individuals may lose some feeling in their hands for a short time.

ARMOR OF ICE AND SNOW**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 1 base)

With this spell the caster conjures ice and snow that will surround the recipients body, fully encasing him without hindering movement, providing protection for 5 rounds. At the spells expiration, the armor falls to the ground and begins to melt normally.

INVOCATION

Invocation is a means of attaining magical power by calling upon the aid of supernatural entities and forces. The type of being called upon varies greatly among Invokers, and is usually dependant upon their superstitious or religious beliefs.

A variety of Talislanta's cultures use Invocation, calling upon entities benevolent and foul. Aamarian Archimages believe they are mortal vessels of their patron deity, Aa the Omnificent, and that their spells are essentially the Will of Aa. Mirin Priests of Borean beseech the God of the North Winds to bestow gifts of magic. Diabolists and Demonologists gain dark powers in exchange for consorting with creatures from the lower planes.

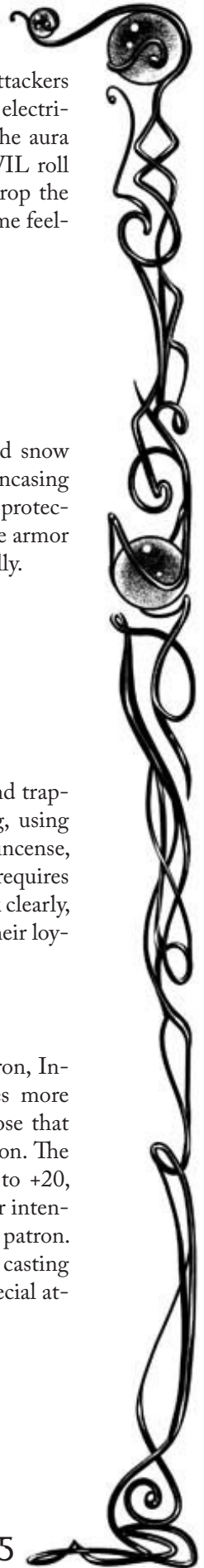
Regardless of their sources, all orders of Invocation share a common philosophy: in order to receive magical power, the Invoker must first gain the favor of the supernatural patron. There are many rites and rituals to accomplish this, depending on the style and beliefs of the Invoker. All Invokers realize that if they fail to act according to the wishes or ideology of their patron, they will find themselves bereft of their powers (or worse).

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

Invokers generally incorporate the icons and trappings of their beliefs into their spellcasting, using such items as holy symbols, ritual vestments, incense, votive candles, and so forth. Invocation also requires that the magician be free to gesture and speak clearly, to better beseech their patron and proclaim their loyalty and faith.

ADVANTAGES

When acting in the interests of their patron, Invokers often find that their magic becomes more powerful and easier to use. Likewise, for those that follow the codes and strictures of their patron. The GM may award a casting roll bonus of +0 to +20, depending on how well-favored the actions or intentions of the magician are in the eyes of his patron. Note that this bonus does not apply to every casting roll, only those situations that warrant the special attention of the patron.



LIMITATIONS

As an Invoker's magic becomes easier when he is faithful, so too does it grow weak when he fails to please his patron being. The GM may subtract a casting roll penalty of -0 to -20, depending on how ill-favored the Invoker's actions are in the eyes of his patron. Note that the GM does not have to reveal these penalties to the player.

MODES

Not available: None

Bonuses: Two Modes befitting the patron entity: +2

Penalties: Two Modes not suiting the patron entity: -2

Conjuration Effects: An Invoker can summon any extra-dimensional being associated with his patron. A Priest of Aa the Omnipotent might summon a shining Avatar of the Almighty, for example. Diabolists summon devils, while demonologists summon demons.

Enchantment Effects: Anything appropriate to the patron entity.

Transmutation Effects: Anything appropriate to the patron entity.

SAMPLE RELIGION MODE MODIFIERS:

Aa (Aamanian):

Influence +2, Divination +2, Conjuration -2, Illusion -2

Aberon (Rasmirin):

Attack +2, Conjuration +2, Influence -2, Transmutation -2

Avar (Farad):

Influence +2, Ward +2, Attack -2, Conjuration -2

Borean (Mirin):

Move +2, Ward +2, Illusion -2, Influence -2

Sham (Darkling):

Illusion +2, Transmutation +2, Conjuration -2, Ward -2

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Common enchanted items created with Invocation include:

- ◆ Weapons enhanced with the blessing of a deity. (Enchantment)
- ◆ Armor or amulets enhanced with protective properties (Ward)

SAMPLE INVOCATION SPELLS

LANCE OF LIGHT

Mode: Attack

Duration: Instant

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

With this simple spell, a Priest of Aa can summon a brilliant shaft of blazing energy which strikes at a single target within 50 feet, doing damage equal to the spells level.

DEATHS TOUCH

Mode: Attack

Duration: Instant

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

Rajan Necromancer-Priests use this spell, believing that they are actually guiding the finger of Death himself. Upon casting, a black, shadowy finger ap-

pears and is guided by the caster to its target. The victim of this attack will feel a cold, deathly touch as their energy and health are drained away.

DEMONBLAST

Mode: Attack

Duration: Instant

Range: 50 feet

Area of Effect: 5'radius

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 1 base + area)

This spell brings forth dozens of demons who flit around doing damage to all within the area of effect. As quickly as they appear, the demons will vanish back to the Demonrealms. The effect of this spell may also cause confusion among the ranks of an enemy (GMs Discretion). A favorite among the Priests of Aberon.

DEMON BILE

Mode: Conjuraton
Duration: 3 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Base Difficulty: -3 (level 1 base + duration)

With a word of power, the invoker calls forth a greenish slime which oozes out of invisible cracks and holes on a chosen surface. This acidic, slippery substance that clings to anything and is difficult to remove. DEX checks at -1/3 the spell level, and Demon Bile inflicts 1/3 the spells level in damage per round it touches unprotected flesh.

HOLY/UNHOLY WEAPON

Mode: Conjuraton
Duration: 1 minute
Range: 50 feet
Base Difficulty: -3 (level 1 base)

This spell is used by priests who suddenly find themselves without a weapon. The weapon is chosen when the invoker learns the spell and cannot change (although, another version of the spell can certainly be learned). The weapon will always have either a beautiful (Aa, Borean) or vile appearance (Aberon, Death).

MANA FROM ABOVE

Mode: Conjuraton
Duration: 10 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Base Difficulty: -10 (level 1 base + duration)

This spell conjures enough food to feed 10 man-sized people. The food is bland, tasteless and has the consistency of gruel, although it is filling and healthy. Pilgrims of Aa actually seem to prefer this substance to real food, as they believe that by suffering on their pilgrimage they are showing how strong their faith and love for Aa is. Other cultures use this as a last resort.

BANISH NIGHT DEMON

Mode: Conjuraton
Duration: 1 minute
Range: Target
Casting Time: 7 rounds
Base Difficulty: -7 (level 7 base)

By invoking the name of the priests chosen deity and instructing the Demon (ability level 7) to return to their place of origin, the caster may push them backwards into an open portal through sheer force

of will. The priesthood of Aa has banishment spells for all creatures of Oblivion and the Demonrealms similar to this spell.

COOL BREEZE OF THE NORTH

Mode: Divination
Duration: 10 rounds
Range: 50 feet
Base Difficulty: -6 (level 1 base + duration)

This spell calls forth a cool breeze that can be commanded by the caster to move objects and lasts for 10 rounds. Others in the area will feel the breeze, depending on the area, this may be welcomed.

COMMUNION

Mode: Divination
Duration: 1 minute
Range: Self
Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

Silently praying to her patron deity, an invoker can learn mysteries and uncover secret knowledge. The player may ask a specific question and roll on the Action Table using the spell level as a bonus to the PER roll. The degree of difficulty is determined based on how well concealed or esoteric the information is.

AA'S BLESSING

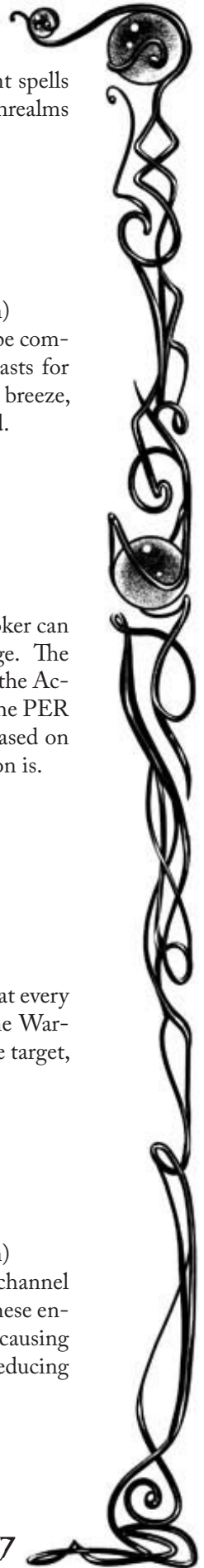
Mode: Enchantment
Duration: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Base Difficulty: -5 (level 5 base)

Warrior-Priests are known to use this spell at every opportunity. With a quick prayer to AA, the Warrior-Priest can bestow a blessing upon a single target, increasing the recipients CR.

ABERON'S CURSE

Mode: Enchantment
Duration: 2 minutes
Range: Touch
Base Difficulty: -6 (level 5 base + duration)

By calling out to Aberon, the priest can channel his dark energies to envelop a single entity. These energies will move and twist around the target, causing a disruption in their spellcasting abilities by reducing their Magic Rating.



FREEZING THE JOINTS**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 5 base)

This spell creates an icy chill in the joints of the chosen target, making them ache. While so enchanted, the victim will receive a penalty to their SPD attribute due to the pain of the chill in their joints. Priests of Borean have been known to halt their enemies with powerful versions of this spell.

URMAN'S FOG**Mode:** Illusion**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 1 base + 2 features)

This spell creates a black, billowing cloud of fog that reduces vision and brings about nausea to all those within. Victims suffer -1 to all vision related rolls due to the darkness, and -3 to ALL rolls due to nausea.

AA'S COMMANDING PRESENCE**Mode:** Illusion**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -7 (level 1 base + magnitude)

This spell creates a large, floating icon of Aa, the all-seeing eye, for all to see. Depending upon the exact look of the eye and the direction in which it is pointing, military commanders and sub-commanders know what orders to give to the troops.

WORD OF COMMAND**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 1 rounds**Range:** 5 feet**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 1 base)

Allows the caster to compel a single creature to obey a spoken command. The command may only be a single word, and cannot cause harm in and of itself, but it can have some nasty side effects (i.e., compelling someone standing next to a cliff to 'jump')

CONVERSION**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 1 rounds**Range:** 5 feet**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 1 base)

Aamanian Priests sometimes use this spell while traveling to simplify dealing with non-believers. The target may resist at -1/2 the spells level, failure indicates a conversion to Aa for the spells duration, a mishap on this roll may extend the belief in Aa's doctrines for a longer period of time.

ATTENTIVE STUDENT**Mode:** Transmutation**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 10 base)

At a touch, the teeth or lips of the target merge, completely preventing speech. This not only prevents the person from speech, but it usually compels those who see it to remain quiet also. At the end of the spells duration, the mouth will return to normal, although the target usually remains a little uncomfortable.

DEMONSBANE**Mode:** Transmutation**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 10 base)

With this spell, the priest can protect himself from Demons of all sorts for a short period of time. This will allow him to erect a more suitable defense, attack safely, or escape quickly. This spell is usually cast in the form of a prayer or quick symbolic gesture.

TOUCH OF ABERON**Mode:** Transmutation (Harm)**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 10 base)

When a priest of Aberon casts this spell he infuses his hands with the dark, destructive energies of Aberon himself, inflicting 10 points of damage to anyone he touches.

FAITH HEALING**Mode:** Transmutation (Heal)**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 10 base)

Calling upon the grace of Aa, the priests hands take on a subtle light. By touching an ally, or by allowing the light to envelope him, the priest can heal damage that has been inflicted.

SHIELD OF FAITH (AURA)**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 1 base)

An invoker can call on the protection of his patron deity when he is faced with danger. The Shield of Faith surrounds the caster with a glowing aura that absorbs damage before dissipating. The aura's actual appearance will match that of the casters chosen deity, white for Aa, ice blue for Borean, a black shadowy aura for Death and a glistening black oil-like substance for Aberon.

SANCTUARY FOR THE FAITHFUL (BARRIER)**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** Touch

Area of Effect: 10' radius

Base Difficulty: -7 (level 1 base + area)

With a prayer to their chosen deity, the priest erects a protective area 10 feet in diameter to shield his companions from harm. This spell does not differentiate between the faithful and the non-faithful, this spell will protect anyone within the area of effect.

MYSTICISM

Thought over Action. Will over Instinct. Mind over Matter. These are the tenets of the Order of Mysticism. Mystics cultivate the powers of their will in order to perform supernatural feats. They also seek to comprehend the unseen world of spirits and the soul. The powers of this Order include the ability to confuse or manipulate the minds of others, fortify the body or soul with energy, perceive invisible auras, read emotions, and commune with spirits of all kinds.

Mysticism has been practiced on the Talislantan continent for untold millennia by many different cultures; most notably, the ancient and enigmatic Ariane, who may have originally brought the discipline to Talislanta from another realm. Conversely, Mysticism has little in common with the magical traditions of the Archans and their descendants. There are no formal schools or institutions of the mystic arts. Most mystics prefer to study in private or with a personal "guide" as their instructor.

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

Mysticism requires very little in the way of physical components. The mystic must be at peace while casting spells, however. Emotional or mental turmoil interferes dramatically with a mystic's abilities. During especially stressful situations, a mystic will first meditate before attempting to cast a spell (see Limitations).

ADVANTAGES

Mysticism has entirely invisible spell effects. It produces no images or sounds and cannot be detected by normal magical means. A mystic employing Aura Reading on another practitioner of Mysticism may "see" forces emanating from the mystic, but cannot be sure what sort of spell is being cast. In addition, spells of Mysticism require no gestures, incantations, rituals, or foci of any kind.



LIMITATIONS

A mystic must be at peace in order to perform any spell casting. Loud noises, bright lights, emotional or physical distress, or any kind of distracting stimulus can cause spells to be cast at a penalty of -5 to -10. A successful Meditation skill roll, using the level of distraction as the Degree of Difficulty, negates this penalty. It is for this reason that Mystics devote themselves to increasing their Meditation skills.

MODES

Not available: Transmutation

Bonuses: Divination +3, Influence +3

Penalties: Attack -5

Conjuration Effects: Mystics have the very special ability to use the Conjuration Mode as a means of leaving their physical body and moving about on the astral plane (see the "Astral Projection" spell, below). A Mystic may also use the Conjuration Mode to



cast spells that call forth spiritforms from the astral plane but not mundane items of substances.

Enchantment Effects: A mystic can alter any quality of body, mind or spirit. A mystic cannot affect any quality of inanimate objects or animals.

Transmutation Effects: N/A

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Mystics rarely practice enchantment, preferring to spend their time meditating and contemplating the deeper mysteries of the omniverse. When they do indulge in it, however, they most often fashion the following:

- ◆ Medallions or rings that inhibit Scrying, Mind Control, or Astral Assault (Divination, Ward)
- ◆ Eyepieces that reveal astral presences or spiritforms (Divination)

SAMPLE MYSTICISM SPELLS

REPEL SUMMONING

Mode: Conjunction

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Target

Casting Time: 1 round

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

By engaging a spiritform in a mind-to-mind battle, the mystic may banish it from this plane, back to where it originated from. This battle will take a mere moment while the two minds lock and the victor is decided.

SUMMON PARAMANE

Mode: Conjunction

Duration: 5 minutes

Range: Target

Casting Time: 1 round

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 6 base + duration)

By calling out mentally into the Astral Plane, a Mystic may attempt to locate a Paramane, a helpful spirit who is willing to do worthy deeds. If the Mystic asks the Paramane to do something unworthy, the Paramane may make an opposed WIL roll, Partial Success indicates that the Paramane can refuse, while a Full Success or higher enables to Paramane to return to the Astral Plane.

ASTRAL TRAVEL (UNIQUE)

Mode: Conjunction

Duration: 5 minutes

Range: Self

Casting Time: 1 round

Base Difficulty: -15 (level 11 base + duration)

This spell allows the Mystic to project his consciousness in astral form, leaving behind the physical body and material possessions. Enchanted items, which have an astral form of sorts, may be brought along into the astral plane. While in astral form, the caster may see clearly for great distances, and will also be able to perceive events transpiring on the material plane, though with somewhat less clarity; PER rolls are necessary to find the caster's way around and notice what is happening on the material plane. While on the Astral Plane, the caster may attack and be attacked by Astral creatures and beings as normal.

LIFESIGHT

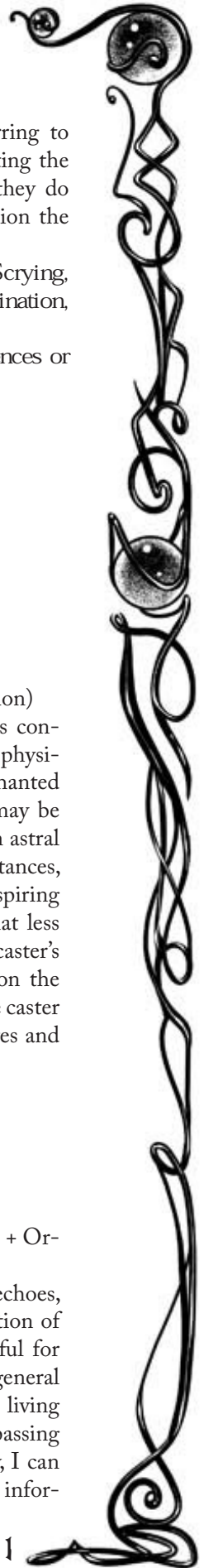
Mode: Divination

Duration: 10 minutes

Range: Self

Base Difficulty: -3 (level 1 base + duration + Order bonus)

By meditating and listening to the aetheric echoes, the mystic can discern the approximate location of all living minds within a mile. It is not useful for precise locations of individuals, but will give general indications such as "There are several dozen living beings in the grove ahead" or "We must be passing over a section of the Underground Highway, I can sense travelers below moving north". Vague infor-



mation is automatic. If details are to be perceived, the mystic adds the spells level to Perception and rolls against a difficulty based on the level of detail desired.

DETECT ASTRAL PRESENCE

Mode: Divination

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Self

Base Difficulty: +1 (level 1 base + Order bonus)

By focusing her attention on the area around her, the Mystic can detect the presence of Astral creatures in the general vicinity (50 feet). Precise details can be noticed with a PER roll adding the level of the spell to the roll.

DOWN IN ALL DIRECTIONS

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 2 minutes

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 5 base + duration)

Through force of will, the mystic can use this spell to enable herself to scale walls and walk on ceilings with ease. For the duration of the spell, the caster can perceive 'down' as any direction, enabling them, in essence, to fall 'up' to the ceiling, or fall sideways to a wall. At the end of the spells duration, the casters perception will return to normal and will likewise be effected. Treat the bonus from the spell as a skill rating to determine if the caster can change the direction of 'down,' once changed, they will not have to roll again unless they wish to change the direction again.

TOWER OF SOLITUDE

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 2 minutes

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 5 base + duration)

By focusing on familiar people and places, the caster erects a tower of Solitude in their mind, allowing them to shrug off urges that they otherwise might not be able to. The Mystic receives a bonus to their WIL score equal to 1/5 the level of the spell.

SKIN OF IRON

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 3 base)

The Mystic focuses their energy into their own body, strengthening skin and bones. Cast at high enough level, the mystic may be able to actually block blows from weapons without taking any damage. The caster receives a bonus to their PR for the duration of the spell.

DEEPEN SHADOWS

Mode: Illusion

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 1 base + 2 features)

Mandalans use this spell to make the shadows around them darker, enhancing their cover so they are harder to spot. As long as the caster remains stationary within the shadow, they are effectively invisible.

THE LISTENING

Mode: Influence

Duration: 1 round

Range: 5 feet

Base Difficulty: +2 (level 1 base + Order bonus)

The Ariane can hear the target's secrets by simply listening to the quiet murmur of their soul. The target may resist, attempting to keep his secrets, with a Will check at -½ the spells level. On a failure, the target spills everything. On a mishap result, the target tells all and volunteers additional relevant information. Note that the target can only reveal what he consciously knows.

MANDALAN MIND TRICK

Mode: Influence

Duration: 6 rounds

Range: 5 feet

Base Difficulty: -3 (level 1 base + duration + Order bonus)

By speaking a phrase in a subtle tone of voice, the mystic can slip the thought into the target's mind unnoticed, and possibly make them think it was their own. Possibilities exist such as "You're overcharging us because we're foreigners... that's really unfair." or "No need to check that door, no one could be hiding in there." or "These aren't the slaves you're looking for."

Move along.”The target may resist with a Will check at $-\frac{1}{2}$ the spells level. On a failure, the target will go along for the duration of the spell. On a mishap, they will continue believing the Mind Trick after the spell duration, unless shown evidence otherwise.

MYSTIC PUSH

Mode: Move

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 1 base + SPD)

Focusing their inner energies forward through their palms, mystics can use this spell to push an object or person at SPD -6 for 5 rounds. If attempting to push a person they can resist with a STR roll at $-\frac{1}{3}$ the spells level. This spell must be cast at such a level to move the desired objects weight.

LOCK/UNLOCK

Mode: Move

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: 50 feet

Area of Effect: 1' radius

Base Difficulty: -2 (level 1 base + area)

Through the use of this spell, the Mystic is able to manipulate non-magical locks, either locking or unlocking them. The caster does not need to be able to see the lock, but must know that it is there. This spell will also work on crossbeams, drawbridges and the like as long as the spell is cast at a high enough level to move the weight of the object.

HEALING TOUCH

Mode: Transmutation (Heal)

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 10 base)

Through a process of touching certain places on himself or an individual, the Mystic can focus the energies within the recipients body to heal wounds and fatigue with amazing quickness. This spell will heal up to 10 points of damage.

THE FORBIDDEN TOUCH (HARM)

Mode: Transmutation (Harm)

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 10 base)

As part of their training in the lines of energy that flow through the mind and body, mystics also learn of how those lines of energy can be disrupted with a touch. This is called The Forbidden Touch, and it is taught so that the student will know that it must never be used. By touching a living being in the exact center of his life's energy, that life can be snuffed out. Mandalan fables tell of the mystic warriors who fell to the temptation of this dark path, and the terrible consequences that befell them.

PURE THOUGHTS

Mode: Ward

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 10 base)

A Mystic can focus their thoughts internally, clearing their mind of all thoughts that might plague them. This protects them from spells of Influence to a great degree as the mystics thoughts will remain pure and clearly focused.

MEDITATIVE FOCUS

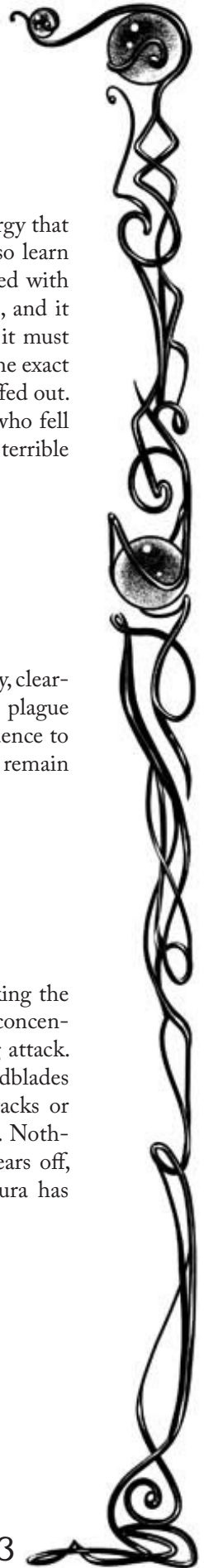
Mode: Ward

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: Self

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

The Meditative Focus is the key to unlocking the body's inner potentials. With a moment's concentration, the mystic is ready for any incoming attack. Arrows can be knocked from the air, swordblades caught between the palms, even hidden attacks or attacks from behind are sensed and avoided. Nothing can reach the mystic until the Focus wears off, which occurs in 30 seconds or when the aura has been breached.



NATURAL MAGIC

The magic of the natural world is subtle, mysterious, and in harmony with its environment. The magicians that practice this Order are similarly at peace with their surroundings. Natural Magic has much in common with Witchcraft, Shamanism, and Mysticism, known collectively in magic circles as “the quiet arts.”

Unlike the destructive sorcery of the Archaens, natural magic comes from a tradition of nurturing and communing with the spirits of nature. One should not be fooled by its placid appearance, however. Nature also has its fury, and should not be trifled with.



Spells of Natural Magic usually involve communion with source of all life—a plane known to Talislantans as the “Green World”. It is from this plane that all natural life-forms draw their sustaining power, and it is this power that fuels Natural spells. The spirits of the Green World take shape on the material plane in the form of trees, grasses, stones, or rivers. These spirits always blend harmlessly with the landscape around them.

Natural Magic is passed down by oral tradition. There are no tomes or scrolls dedicated to its study. In addition, aspiring natural magicians must be “right” for the teachings to work for them. Overly violent or destructive attitudes conflict with this Order, making the magic ineffective.

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

Spells of natural magic require a verbal component, often a song or chant. They also require simple gestures and signs to communicate with the spirits who do not comprehend spoken language.

ADVANTAGES

In wilderness areas such as forests, lakes, rivers, and mountains, Natural Magic works very well. The GM may award a casting roll bonus of +0 to +5, depending on how removed the magician’s surroundings are from the taint of “civilization.”

LIMITATIONS

Natural Magicians suffer a casting roll penalty of -0 to -5 while using their magic in cultivated areas such

as cities or settlements. Note that the settlements of the the Ariane, Aeriad, Gryph, Sawila, Green Men, and Mandalans are designed specifically to enhance the flow of nature’s forces, not restrict them. Natural Magic use in any such area receives a casting roll bonus of +5.

MODES

Not available: None.

Bonuses: Divination +2, Transmutation +2

Penalties: Attack -2, Illusion -2

Conjuration Effects: Natural Magicians can summon creatures from the Green World. These usually take on the form of wood elementals, or benign nature-spirits.

Enchantment Effects: Natural magic can alter only physical properties.

Transmutation Effects: A Natural Magician can transform creatures into natural objects such as tress or stones. Some Natural Magicians cast this type of spell on themselves to better commune with their environment. Natural Magicians can also transform one natural material into another; turning wood to stone and vice versa, for instance. Natural Magicians are loathe to use their transformative magic in a way that harms their environment.

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Most Natural Magicians do not practice enchantment. Those that do sometimes create:

- ◆ Wooden staves or wands enchanted with spells of Natural Magic
- ◆ Enhanced bows and other non-metal weapons for the defense of their lands.

SAMPLE NATURAL MAGIC SPELLS

SPEAK WITH NATURE’S SPIRIT

Mode: Conjuration

Duration: 3 minutes

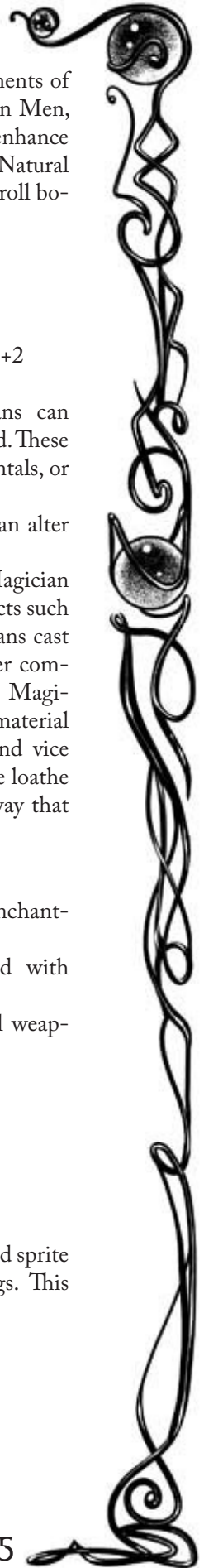
Range: Target

Casting Time: 3 rounds

Base Difficulty: -3 (level 1 base + duration)

Through the use of this spell, the caster summons a spirit of the Green World that can be used for simple

tasks. This spirit will appear as a green-skinned sprite with foliage for hair and small gossamer wings. This spell expires after 3 minutes.



VIRIDIAN'S SILENT MESSENGER**Mode:** Conjurament**Duration:** 10 minutes**Range:** Target**Casting Time:** 3 rounds**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 1 base + duration)

When this spell is cast, a minor windling elemental from the Green World is summoned and given a verbal message to deliver. The spirit then whisks off, traveling hundreds of miles in a few minutes due to the properties of the Green World, and delivers its message to the chosen recipient. Viridian occasionally had difficulties with this spell, as such minor elementals are often of meager intellect, and prone to garbling complicated messages.

FIND THE PATH**Mode:** Divination**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** +1 (level 1 base + Order bonus)

This spell enables the caster to discern a safe path through an area. Dense areas may need a higher level spell, as will areas protected with Illusions. In urban areas, this spell will receive an additional penalty.

IMBUE WITH NATURE'S FORCE**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 5 base)

When this spell is cast, spirits from the Green World enter the Magicians body. Working together, the casters STR attribute is increased while these spirits remain present. At the end of the spells duration, the spirits will immediately return to the Green World. These spirits may not be commanded to do anything other than grant the magician the benefit of their added strength.

TREESKIN**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 5 base)

When this spell is cast, the Magicians skin grows a layer of flexible tree bark, increasing their PR without hindering movement. This may also provide a bonus to concealment attempts in natural surroundings at the GMs discretion.

HIDDEN SPRING**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 3 minutes**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -3 (level 1 base + duration)

By kneeling upon the ground and calling to the spirits of underground springs and rivers, the Natural Magician can use this spell to bring forth a stream that will last for 3 minutes.

NATURE'S SUSTENANCE**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 5 minutes**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 1 base + duration)

When the Natural Magician calls out for aid from the spirits of the Green World, they will bring her berries, nuts and fruits which last for 5 minutes before disappearing. These spirits will not stay, but will flutter away immediately after bringing the Natural Magician nourishment.

PASSIVE CAMOUFLAGE**Mode:** Illusion**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -7 (level 1 base + magnitude + complexity)

As long as the recipient of this spell remains still, this spell will cloak them in colors appropriate to their surroundings, effectively hiding them from sight (roll PER at -7 to spot, -4 if actively searching for the recipient). If the target attacks, they will receive +5 to their first attack roll only. This is a minor version of the spell Camouflage found in the Talislanta 4th edition book.

LOST PATH**Mode:** Illusion**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 1 base + complexity)

This spell conceals a path through the woods making it look naturally overgrown, thus allowing a fleeing caster to hide their way for a brief amount of time. The Muses of Astar use this spell with surprising effectiveness when fleeing from bands of Imrian Slavers.

CRY OF THE PREDATOR**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 8 rounds**Range:** 5 feet**Base Difficulty:** -8 (level 1 base + duration)

The Natural Magician, merging his spirit with those of the great hunting beasts, makes eye contact with the target and roars with the cry of a the predator. The target is filled with the fear of the prey, and flees in a blind panic. The target may resist the effect with a Will roll at -1/2 the spells level.

ANIMAL FRIENDSHIP**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 5 feet**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 1 base + duration)

Natural Magicians can befriend an animal by contacting the sub-elemental that lives within the creature. The Animal Friendship spell is generally short term, long enough for the Natural Magician to request help from the animal for a minute. The target animal resists with it's ability level against half the spell level.

ANIMATE PLANTS**Mode:** Move**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 50 feet**Area of Effect:** 14 feet**Base Difficulty:** -8 (level 1 base + area)

By singing to the sub-elementals that reside in the grasses, trees, and other plants in the area, the caster can call on them to move their leaves, vines, etc to grasp and hold any number of targets in a 14 foot diameter area. Targets may resist the entanglement with a Dexterity check at -7 due to the area of effect.

NATURE'S BOON**Mode:** Transmutation**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -8 (level 10 base + Order bonus)

By collecting bits of vegetation and lightly rubbing them on the forehead and cheeks of the wounded individual while speaking to the Nature Spirits softly, the magician can heal up to 10 points of damage. The type of vegetation does not matter as the healing energies are coming directly from the Green World.

INFLICTION OF THE SLAVER'S WEAKNESS**Mode:** Transmutation (Harm)**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -2 (level 5 base + Order bonus)

Through the use of this spell, the Natural Magician becomes a carrier of Yellow Tinge for a short time. During this time, the Natural Magician can inflict the target with Yellow Tinge merely by touching them. Note that this spell will only work on creatures that can normally contract Yellow Tinge.

POISON THORN**Mode:** Transmutation (Heal)**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -8 (level 5 base + Order bonus)

By striking the target with a thorn from a poisonous plant, the Natural Magician can awaken the fragment of a sub-elemental that still lives in it and cause the poison to infect as though the full plant were alive once more. The poison will deal 1hp damage per round for 10 rounds. The target may resist the poison with a Con check at -5.

SWARMING DEFENSE**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** Self**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 1 base)

When this spell is cast, it summons a swarm of insects that will cover the caster, using their chitinous shells to absorb damage. At the spells duration, the swarm scatters back to the ground and disappears into the surroundings. The insects that appear will be those normally found in the area.

PLANT BARRIER**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** Touch**Area of Effect:** 10' radius**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 3 base + area)

With the use of this spell, the Natural Magician can cause trees and thick plants to spring from the ground directly in front of him, erecting a solid wall of vegetation. The vegetation will resemble that found locally within the area.



NECROMANCY

Necromancy deals with the power of death and the life-force of living beings. Many Necromancers believe death is sacred, and even ascribe a character and personality to death. The Black Magicians of Rajinnar have developed an entire religion around the worship of death, while the carrion-eating Stryx of Urag view Death as a provider-spirit.

Necromantic spellcasting always applies to death in some way, whether it be communing with the soul of a deceased companion, repairing the body of a re-animated corpse, or draining the life essence of a victim. Necromancy is not inherently evil, but, regardless of the morality or intentions of its practitioners, it has a long-standing reputation as "black magic". The sometimes grisly rituals associated with the art do nothing to help change this perception.

Because of its morbid applications, practitioners of Necromancy accumulate knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and the general workings of the body. A character's Necromancy rating may be used as an Anatomy skill during play. Due to cultural taboos regarding the dead across Talislanta, Necromancers are among the only experts in this field.

Necromancers learn their spells by studying the magical writings of ancient black-magicians such as Urmann, Mordante, Narishna, and Drax. Aspiring Necromancers need great numbers of corpses and living beings to practice on, another reason why this Order is unpopular in "civilized" lands. Necromantic spellcasting is usually unpleasant in some way. Spells can be painful for the caster, the subject, or both. Bizarre and gruesome fetishes must be used to focus spells. In some extreme cases, actual death or suffering must be inflicted to empower the magic ritual.

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

A Necromancer must be able to gesture with both hands and speak aloud in order to cast spells. Certain necromantic devices and fetishes are also required, such as a necklace of bones, a bag filled with corpse-dust, a preserved skull, etc. Each Necromancer chooses his or her own personal fetishes.

ADVANTAGES

Death and pain are not only the subject of necromantic magic, they are also its ally. Necromancers are the only characters in the Talislanta game who earn Experience Points for killing other creatures. In order to earn XP, a killing must be accompanied by the ritual burning of incense and the use of a ceremonial dagger, axe, or fire. 5 Experience Points are earned per victim. In ancient times, the necromantic Torquarans subjected untold numbers of Xambrians to ritual murder in the Fire-Pits of Malnangar.

LIMITATIONS

Necromancers are regarded with fear and suspicion by most decent folk, and are welcome in few lands. Nature spirits and other benevolent entities will not willingly cooperate with spell casters of this Order, whom they consider cruel and vile.

MODES

Not available: Illusion

Bonuses: Conjunction +3, Transmutation +2

Penalties: Influence -3

Conjunction Effects: Necromancers can summon extra-dimensional entities including the spirits of the dead and communicate with them. To summon the spirit of a specific being, the Necromancer must possess the being's corpse (or a part of it) or cast the spell at the place where the being died.

Enchantment Effects: Necromancers have great knowledge of the body and its inner workings. Necromancers may affect the physical body but may not alter the qualities of inanimate objects (except in crafting enchanted items)

Transmutation Effects: A Necromancer can take on the form of another creature (humanoid or animal) if she has access to its corpse. This spell ("Face of Death") is detailed in the sample Necromancy spells.

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Common enchanted items created with Necromancy include:

- ◆ Talismans that ward away or control undead (Ward, Influence)
- ◆ Weapons or items enchanted with disease-causing spells (Harm)
- ◆ Amulets that allow Assassins to assume the form of their target (Transform)



SAMPLE NECROMANCY SPELLS

EBON HARBINGERS

Mode: Attack

Duration: Instant

Range: 50 feet

Area of Effect: 5 foot radius

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 1 base, -5 for area)

Dozens of shadowy spiritforms pour from the shadows, moaning in anguish, and attack everything in the area of effect. The harbingers' ethereal "touch" causes chilling pain and the feeling that something vital has been wrenched away, doing 1hp of damage to the victim per spell level. Due to the wide area of effect, there is a -5 penalty to attempts to evade this spell (in addition to the normal penalty of the caster's Attack rating).

RAJ-KAL'S VISCERAL FINGERS (ATTACK)

Mode: Attack

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

Raj-Kal, a Rajan torquar of no small reputation, created this spell early in his career and it soon became his trademark. The hand of the caster takes on a pale, deathly hue. The necromancer's hand can push into a victim as though the body were made of clay, causing terrible agony and eventually death. The victim suffers 1hp of damage per round per spell level until he frees himself from the necromancer's grasp or the spell expires.

BLACK MISTS OF MALNANGAR

Mode: Attack

Duration: Instant

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -10 (level 10 base)

Noxious black vapors pour from the necromancer's cloak or outstretched fingers, enveloping the target in a suffocating cloud. The Black Mists do 1hp of damage per spell level. By taking an additional -5 penalty to his spell roll, the necromancer can direct the Mists through a tiny opening such as a keyhole or the seam in a suit of armor.

BONE SHARDS

Mode: Attack

Duration: Instant

Range: 50 feet

Area of Effect: 10 foot radius

Base Difficulty: -11 (level 1 base, -10 area)

With the final phrase of this incantation, the Necromancer tosses a bone into the midst of the enemy, whereupon it shatters, inflicting damage to everything within a 5' radius (1 hp per spell level).

UNLIFE

Mode: Conjuration

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: +2 (level 1 base, +3 Order bonus)

By touching any corpse, the necromancer calls forth a mindless spirit to reanimate it in a semblance of life. The undead thing created is mindless, and will obey simple commands for the duration of the spell. It has an overall ability level of +1, and its attributes

are the same as a living version of the corpse, with the following modifiers: +3 to Strength and Constitution, -2 to Speed and Dexterity. Intelligence, Charisma, and Will are not applicable. More potent undead can be created by increasing the level of the spell. If a fetish is used, or a soulstone bound within the body (usually the cranium) then the spell persists until the fetish is destroyed otherwise the unfortunate spirit is freed after one minute per spell level.

Note: Since this is a mindless undead spirit, no pact is required.

EYES OF NARISHNA

Mode: Divination

Duration: 5 minute

Range: 1 mile

Base Difficulty: -5 (level 1 base, + duration)

Narishna devised this spell to spy on various enemies and rivals, which he would do by hiding a preserved humanoid eye in some place that he wished to observe. At any later time, he could cast his spell and see through this eye as long as he was within one mile. It is said that Narishna had no less than a hundred such eyes scattered among various lands throughout the Archaen empire.

DEATHLY VISIONS

Mode: Divination

Duration: 5 minutes

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: -5 (level 5 base)

By looking into the eyes of a corpse (or the eye sockets if that is all that remains) the necromancer can see and hear the last five minutes of that person's life. The amount of time since death can also add to the overall Difficulty of the spell at the GM's discretion. Corpses over a day old might incur a further -3 penalty while those over a week old might incur a -5 penalty. Very old corpses (like those found in ancient tombs) might have a -20 or even greater penalty to the casting roll. Spells cast at lower levels have no effect. If the necromancer does not know the age of the corpse, he must guess at the correct spell level.

DARK SIGHT

Mode: Divination

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Self

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

When this spell is cast, the targets eyes will glow like burning embers. For the duration of this spell,

the recipient can see clearly in normal and magical darkness. The person will receive a bonus to PER rolls equal to the spell's level.

ENERGY DRAIN

Mode: Enchantment

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Base Difficulty: -1 (level 1 base)

By touching a hand to the target, the necromancer drains living energy from the subject to himself, inflicting 1hp damage per spell level.

DARK COERCION

Mode: Influence

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 5 feet

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 3 base, -3 Order penalty)

By locking eyes upon the intended victim of this spell, the necromancer reaches beyond the physical realm to coerce the subject's spirit into obedience. If the spell is successful, the caster may force the victim to obey any single, relatively simple instruction, such as "Guard this door" or "Don't Move!". The intended target is allowed a WIL roll modified by MR to avoid the caster's gaze and its intended effect. On a partial success the victim is still coerced, but if given a command that would go against his or her deepest beliefs will break free of the spell. On a mishap resistance roll, the subject will not even remember being coerced, recalling only a mysterious gap or blank spot in his or her memory.

HANDS OF URMAAN

Mode: Move

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Area of Effect: 10 foot radius

Base Difficulty: -23 (level 13 base, -10 area)

Upon completion of this spell, scores of skeletal arms erupt from the ground in the area of effect and grasp the legs and arms of anyone caught in the area. Due to the wide area of effect, there is a -5 penalty to evade their chill embrace. The Strength of the grasping hands is +6, and victims are held immobile until they break free.

FACE OF DEATH**Mode:** Transmutation**Duration:** 15 minutes**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -17 (level 5 base, -14 duration, =2 Order bonus)

With this spell, the necromancer can take the form of any deceased person or being of his own or a similar race. To accomplish the metamorphosis the caster touches the deceased, causing dark shadows to gather around them both. When the casting is complete, the necromancer emerges from the shadows with the appearance of the deceased. This spell can be cast in reverse to give a corpse the appearance of the necromancer.

CORPUS WEAVING**Mode:** Transmutation (Heal)**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Self or Touch**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 10 base)**Casting Modifiers:** -9 (level 12 base, +Order bonus)

By infusing the wounded target with lost life energies, the necromancer can repair in seconds what would normally require weeks to heal (up to 12hp damage). The healing process lasts only one round, but is said to be quite painful, and is horrifying to observe.

CLAW HANDS (TRANSFORM)**Mode:** Transmutation**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Self**Base Difficulty:** -8 (level 10 base, +2 Order bonus)

This spell transforms the subject's hands into long, dagger-like claws, similar to those of a Ghast. The claws are DR 8, and the Brawling skill is used in wielding them.

DARKENING VEIL**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 50 feet**Area of Effect:** 10 foot radius**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 10 base, -5 area)

Black Veil creates a swirling dome of black mists ten feet across. Spiritforms are unable to pierce the spectral substance, which is a solid wall to them (PR 20 and 20 hp). Living beings who approach or pass through the Veil will feel a sense of creeping doom, as

of death being close at hand. Note that certain magic items such as fetishes and soulstones will not be able to pass the barrier as they are repositories for spirits.

EBON ARMOR**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 10 base)

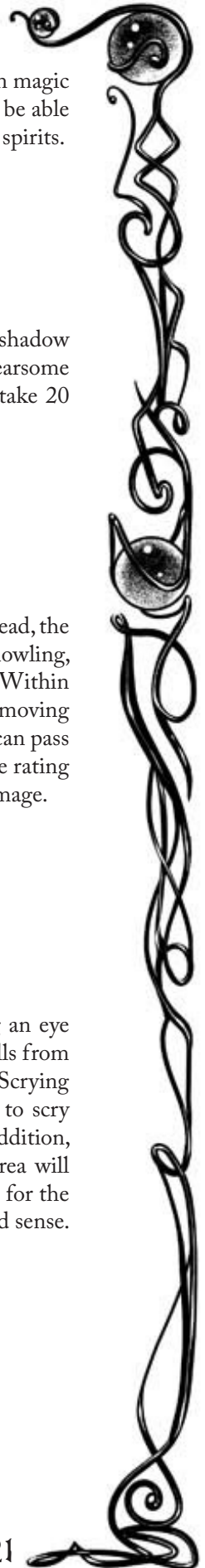
This incantation causes the necromancer's shadow to expand, solidify, and envelop him in a fearsome looking suit of black armor. The armor will take 20 hp of damage before dissipating.

WALL OF SOULS**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -10 (level 10 base)

By calling upon the enslaved spirits of the dead, the necromancer can command them to form a howling, spectral barrier 10 feet wide and 6 feet high. Within the barrier the faces of the dead can be seen moving about, howling their eternal agony. Nothing can pass through the barrier which has a protective rating of 3 and can be broken by inflicting 18hp damage.

PROTECTION FROM SCRYING**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Area of Effect:** 10 foot radius**Base Difficulty:** -6 (level 1 base, -5 area)

By uttering this incantation and dropping an eye into a bag, the Necromancer wards off all spells from the Divination mode (-1 penalty to opposed Scrying attempts per spell level. Anyone attempting to scry upon the caster will see only darkness, in addition, anyone using the Reveal mode to scan an area will not be able to notice the protected individual for the duration of their spell when using the affected sense.



SHAMANISM

Shamanism is the magic of spirit and dream. By connecting with his unconscious dream-self, a shaman can interact with the spirit-gods of the Dream-realms, known as Totems. Totems are the spiritual representation of all the primal energies that inhabit the material realm. For example, the Hunter Totem embodies the spirits of all great hunters, both humanoid and beast. The specific creatures and qualities represented by the Totems vary from region to region.

Most shaman see spirits in abundance in the world. Every natural form is an extension of one Totem or another. The span-oak trees are the many arms of Giver-of-Life; the exomorph is the embodiment of Hunter. When in communion with a Totem spirit, a shaman may either seek the spirit's council or take on the powers and aspect of the Totem. Attaining the dream-like state necessary to commune with the Totems often requires the ingestion of herbs, mushrooms, or other natural psychotropic substances. Some shaman also train themselves to visit the Dreamrealms while sleeping or meditating.

Like Witchcraft and Natural Magic, Shamanism is an oral tradition, without scrolls or spellbooks. Shaman initiates are usually chosen by their instructors and trained in private. In tribal communities, the Shaman is often the leader or chief council to the tribal head.

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

Shamanism relies on complex chants, gestures or dances, and specific natural fetishes. For example, to summon up an Avian-Totem, the Shaman might cry out like an avir, wave his arms like wings, and brandish a fetish made of avir feathers.

ADVANTAGES

PERSONAL TOTEM

Every shaman has a specific totem animal that guides them in the spirit world. When casting spells appropriate to their totem, the shaman receives a casting roll bonus of +3. The player may pick one Mode that this bonus applies to, according to the nature of the chosen totem. For example, a Nighthawk

totem might give a bonus to Divination spells (due to the animal's keen perception). A Shaman will never be attacked or threatened by an animal of the type that corresponds to their totem.

LIMITATIONS

A Shaman must first attain the dream-state to cast her spells. This can be accomplished by ingesting a natural hallucinogen such as Skullcap Mushroom, K'tallah, Blue Lotus, or ritual chanting, drumming, dancing or by careful meditation. For those Shaman that employ the former methods, a full 2 rounds of this action is required before spellcasting may be attempted. Without the benefit of drugs or ritual activity, the shaman suffers a casting roll penalty of -5.

MODES

Not available: None

Bonuses: Divination +2, Transmutation +2

Penalties: Attack -3

Conjuration Effects: Shaman are unable to conjure mundane substances and items and they are only able to summon spirit entities associated with their Totem (*see Summon Totem spell below*).

Enchantment Effects: A shaman can alter a quality that suits his personal totem. For example, an exomorph totem might let the shaman alter strength, perception, and stealth.

Transmutation Effects: Every shaman has the ability to assume the form of their totem animal. See the example spell, "Totem Form" below.

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Shamans rarely practice complex enchantment, though they are known to create simple fetishes or charms.

- ◆ A feather-charm for commanding avians
- ◆ A claw-fetish for tracking prey in the wilderness
- ◆ A blood-tattoo for resisting poisons

SAMPLE SHAMANISM SPELLS

RETRIBUTION

Mode: Attack

Duration: Instant

Range: 50 feet

Area of Effect: 5 foot radius

Base Difficulty: -6 (level 1 base, -5 area)

The spirit-gods rise up in anger against any who seek to harm the shaman. Violent, desctructive nightmares are loosed from the Dreamrealms to attack any enemies nearby, doing 1hp of damage per spell level to those follish enough to stand in their way.

CALL TOTEM ANIMAL

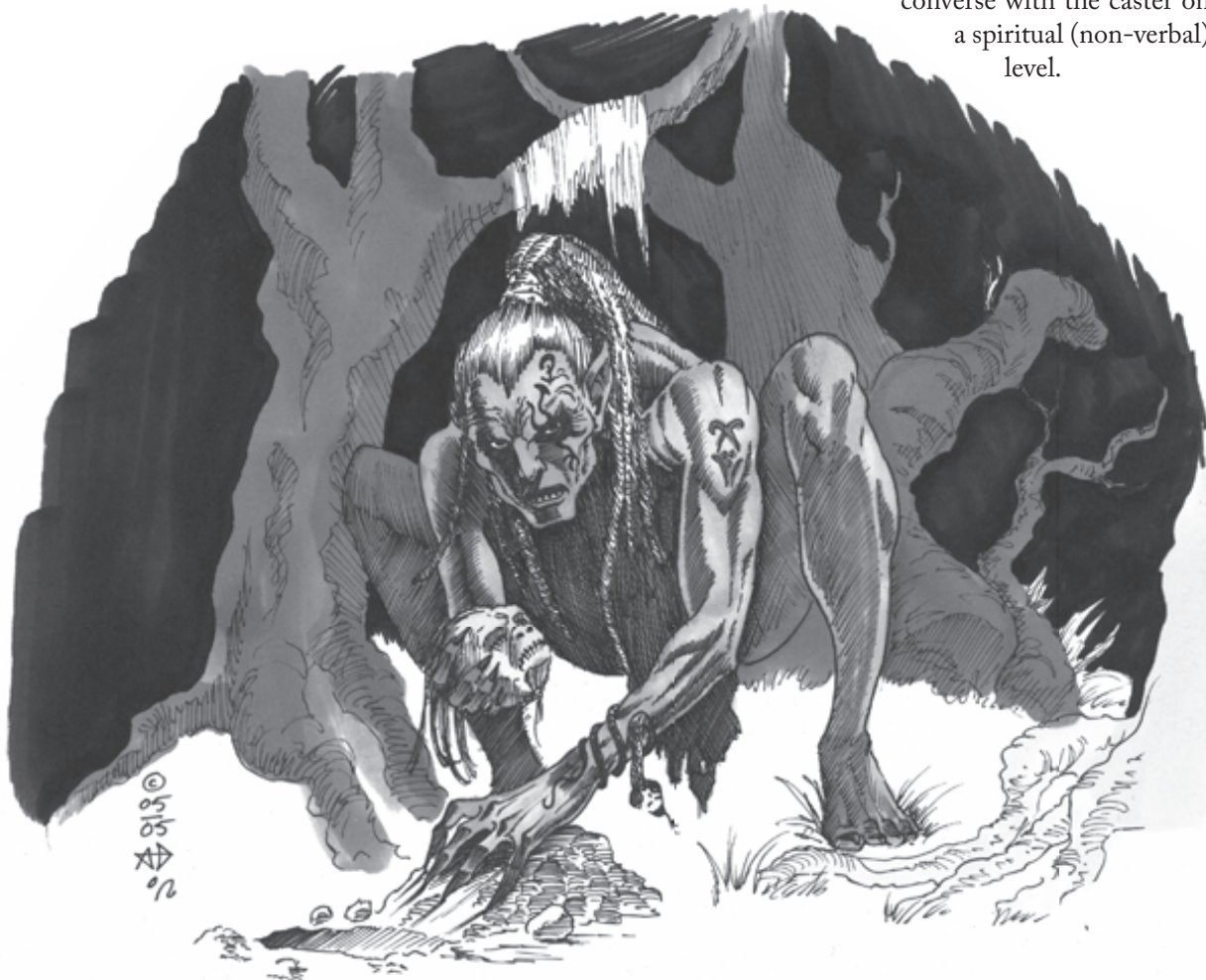
Mode: Conjuraction

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Base Difficulty: +1 (level 1 base, +2 Order bonus)

This spell allows the shaman to summon a totem animal: a creature that will willingly serve the caster as his or her familiar. The type of animal that responds to the summons is the same as that chosen by the player as their shaman's Totem Animal. The animal must be native to the shaman's homeland, and must be of the natural world (i.e., not of sorcerous, demonic, or extra-dimensional origin). A totem animal has the same stats as any animal of the same species and will be of an ability level equal to the spell level. The Totem also has the ability to comprehend and converse with the caster on a spiritual (non-verbal) level.



SPIRIT TRACK**Mode:** Divination**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 7 base, +2 Order bonus)

Allows the caster to see the spirit-traces left by the passage of any living creature, spirit, or extra-dimensional entity. The age of the tracks can also be determined by the use of this spell. The shaman's effective Perception rating is +7 while using this spell.

FAR-SEEING**Mode:** Divination**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 1 mile**Base Difficulty:** +1 (level 1 base, +2 Order bonus)

By entering a trance the shaman can use this spell to see through the eyes of any creature of the same species as the caster's totem animal. For example, if the shaman's totem animal is a death's head viper, he or she will be able to see through the eyes of any death's head viper within range of this spell. If no suitable animal is present in the area, the spell fails (GM's ruling). The shaman must roll a Perception check with a +1 modifier per spell level to detect specific events, the difficulty varying based on the relative obscurity of the event. Note that a shaman will be completely unaware of his or her immediate surroundings while using Far-Sight.

DREAMWALKER**Mode:** Divination**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** +1 (level 1 base, +2 Order bonus)

Using this spell the shaman can enter a trance and send his or her spirit-self into the Dream Dimension. Once there the shaman can enter the dreams of any being within range, and either interact with the dreamers or attempt to read their innermost thoughts. In the latter case, the shaman must make a perception check (with a +1 bonus to PER per spell level) vs the subject's WIL in order to steal information. If the target has any defenses against such an intrusion, then these are added to the target's WIL to determine the degree of difficulty.

ALTERED STATE**Mode:** Divination**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** +1 (level 1 base, +2 Order bonus)

This spell allows the shaman to enter a trance-state in which he or she will be able to see invisible, astral, or spirit entities of any sort with a Perception rating of +1 per spell level.

TOTEMIC ASPECT**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -5 (level 5 base)

After entering the dream-state, the shaman's form shifts to partially resemble that of her Totem Animal. Fingernails extend into small claws, eyes turn to slits, or skin hardens into scaly hide. The Shaman may increase any one Attribute associated with the Totem by +1 per spell level

HUNTER'S MOON**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 1 base)

By entering a trance state and calling upon the spirit of The Hunter, the shaman can imbue himself with predatory instincts. For the duration of the spell the Shaman receives +1 per spell level to their Stealth skill, or a +3 rating if they did not possess this skill before.

MISTS OF THE DREAMREALMS**Mode:** Illusion**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 50 feet**Base Difficulty:** -12 (level 12 base)

By taking on the dream-state aspect of Shifter, the shaman calls forth a billowing cloud of violet mist that obscures vision and masks scent in an area the size of a large wagon. The strange cloud moves as the shaman wills and does not affect her senses of sight or smell.

SUBCONSCIOUS FEAR**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 5 feet**Base Difficulty:** -12 (level 12 base)

By casting this spell and targeting an enemy, the caster can cause them to flee in utter terror. The effect lasts for 1 minute per spell level, during which time, the target can only think about escaping the Shamans presence.

DREAMBANE**Mode:** Transmutation (Harm)**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** -13 (level 15 base, +2 Order bonus)

A vengeful or vindictive shaman can lay a powerful curse with this spell. By touching the victim while he sleeps and whispering the curse, the shaman severs the sleeper's connection to the Dreamrealms. The victim now suffers a Level 15 disease known as Dreambane. He can no longer have a restful night's sleep, and will always awake fatigued and confused from the host of nightmares that visit his sleeping self. For seven consecutive nights, the victim will lose 1 point of Constitution. If the victim's CON rating drops to -7 or below, they fall into a coma. A special tincture of Jabutu, Morphiux, and Black Mushroom can cure the Dreambane (and restore lost CON points) or awaken the victim from a coma. The shaman that cast the spell can also lift its effects at will.

TOTEMIC FORM**Mode:** Transmutation**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Self or Touch**Base Difficulty:** -13 (level 15 base, +2 Order bonus)

This spell allows the shaman to adopt the form of his or her chosen Totem Animal (*see the spell, Call Totem Animal, for more information*). Once the shape-change has been affected, the shaman will have the same abilities (and game stats) as the animal whose form has been adopted.

GIVER-OF-LIFE**Mode:** Transmutation (Heal)**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Touch**Base Difficulty:** +1 (level 1 base, +2 Order bonus)

This ritual allows the shaman to enter a trance and call upon the spirits to heal 1hp of damage per spell level to any living creature or being. A ceremonial drum, flute, or fetish is a necessary component of this spell.

SPIRIT GUARDIANS**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Area of Effect:** 5 foot radius**Base Difficulty:** -1 (level 10 base)

This incantation allows the shaman to call forth a number of ancestral spirits, who will guard and protect anyone within a five foot radius surrounding the caster per spell level. The spirit guardians cannot be made to attack, but will block all magical or non-magical attacks with spirit-shields and spears. Creatures or beings attempting to penetrate the ring of spirit guardians spirit must break through the spirits' defenses, which are treated as a wall with 20hp and a PR 3.



WITCHCRAFT

Witchcraft is perhaps the oldest Magical Order on the continent, tracing its heritage back to the dawn of the Archaens. The principles of the Order operate according to the ancient Law of Association, which states that “like breeds like”, and all things are connected.

Witchcraft relies heavily on physical components for its spells to work. A connection must always be made between the witch, the materials of the spell, and the target. This connection is often metaphorical - a witch may break a handful of twigs to symbolize the breaking of bones, for example - but the spell will work so long as the metaphor has meaning for the witch. The act of association connects magician, materials, and target as if they were one. The most powerful spell components are personal effects owned by a subject, or, better yet, discarded parts of the target; for example, a splinter from a wagon wheel or a lock of hair.

The magic of witchcraft is about relationships, not power. If a witch wants to break a stone in two, he does not hurl destructive energy at the stone. Rather, he associates the stone with a bit of clay, and breaks that instead. To bring a curse on someone, the witch might obtain an article owned by the victim and cast his magic upon it, thereby doing harm to the intended victim. Witchcraft is one of the most subtle forms of spellcasting, often having none of the obvious external effects of other Orders, such as lights or loud noises.

Several Talisantan cultures (primarily the Aama-nians) consider witchcraft to be “black magic”, and openly persecute its practitioners. For this reason, Talisantan witchcraft is taught and practiced in secret. Passed down from generation to generation, Witchcraft is an oral tradition without texts, scrolls, or magical tomes. For example, the Dhuna absolutely forbid the instruction of “outsiders” in the ways of the Art (as they call it), and the Sarista rarely teach anything of value to those who aren’t members of their clan.



PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

A witch must have both hands free and be able to speak aloud in order to cast spells. Some sort of symbolic object must also be used, and is often destroyed as part of the magic ritual. The player is free to improvise appropriate metaphors for the spell components.

ADVANTAGES

Witches possess the power of Binding, allowing them to work their magic across any distance, provided they have a strong mystical connection to their target. Any object that has been on the target's person for three or more days, or a physical piece of the target (such as hair, fingernails, or blood) will suffice. This material can be used for a single ritual only, and is consumed as the spell is cast. Spells that incorporate the power of Binding act as if the witch is touching the target.

LIMITATIONS

The forces that empower a witch's magic can be somewhat capricious. On a natural casting roll of 13, the spell has no effect, regardless of the various modifiers involved.

MODES

Not available: None

Bonuses: Divination +2, Transmutation +2, Ward+2

Penalties: Attack -3

Conjuration Effects: A witch can summon minor spiritforms to perform simple tasks. These spiritforms are Ability Level 7 or less and can do no harm to living things. They do have unique qualities, however, including invisibility, immunity to normal weapons, and the special power of Weirding (see sample spell, below). Witches cannot conjure mundane materials.

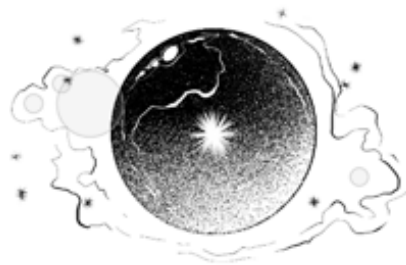
Enchantment Effects: A witch can alter virtually any quality, provided he has the appropriate physical components. The heart of an ogriphant might help the witch alter a subject's strength, for example. No alteration can be made without a metaphorical connection like this.

Transmutation Effects: A witch's "curse" sometimes takes the form of a transformation of the target into an animal. Once the "curse" is cast, it takes one day per level of the spell for the target to transform completely. The process is a gradual one, adding a new animal feature each day as the spell runs its course. Once fully transformed, the target will remain in that state for seven days and then instantly revert to its normal form. It is rumored that the witches of old could transform a victim permanently, but those ancient spells were lost long ago in the depths of witchwood.

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Common enchanted items created with Witchcraft include:

- ◆ Medallions or brooches that protect from harm (Ward, Defend)
- ◆ Rings or stones that render a subject invisible to scrying (Conceal)
- ◆ Crystals or mirrors for viewing distant locales (Reveal)



SAMPLE WITCHCRAFT SPELLS

JINX

Mode: Conjunction
Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Target
Casting Time: 5 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -5 (level 5 base + duration)

This spell summons a spiritling to hound a given subject, wreaking all manner of mischief. Until the jinx expires or is removed, the subject will suffer a penalty equal to 1/3 the spells level on all actions, and will experience numerous minor mishaps and misfortunes at the GM's discretion.

CONSCIENCE

Mode: Conjunction
Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Target
Casting Time: 5 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -5 (level 5 base + duration)

Using this spell, the Witch can summon a minor spirit of conscience to verbally guide, or harass depending upon the targets perception, an individual. By targeting herself, the witch can mingle better in alien cultures, as the spirit will warn her what might be offensive or inadvisable. In game terms, the spirit has the Cultures and Diplomacy skills at a rating equal to its ability level.

OPEN WITCHGATE (UNIQUE)

Mode: Conjunction
Duration: 2 minutes
Range: Target
Casting Time: 13 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -13 (level 12 base + duration)

By casting this spell on a Witchgate, the caster opens a dimensional portal, enabling them to step through and reappear at another Witchgate. The second gate must be chosen when the spell is cast and cannot be changed for the duration of the spell. Dhuna covens guard the secret of this spell, as well as the location of the Witchgates, very closely so that the gates will not be destroyed, and so that others cannot use them against the Dhuna.

HIDE MAGIC

Mode: Divination (Conceal)
Duration: 3 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -1 (level 1 base + duration + Order bonus)

This spell allows the caster to disguise any enchanted object, artifact, creature, or being, causing it to appear to be non-magical in nature. A PER roll using the spells level as a negative modifier must be made in order to see through the effect.

SECOND SIGHT

Mode: Divination
Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 100 feet
Casting Modifiers: +1 (level 1 base + Order bonus)

By concentrating on her inner self, and speaking softly to the forgotten gods, the witch may see into the future. The player should be able to ask a specific question, and the GM should answer as truthfully and as accurately as the spell level and success dictates, the higher the spells level, the more detailed the information, the better the roll, the less cryptic the information will be.

ENFEEBLEMENT

Mode: Enchantment
Duration: 2 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -7 (level 5 base + duration)

By speaking this ancient curse and touching an individual, the Witch can cause a single victim to suddenly feel exhausted, as if from strenuous activity. The victim will suffer a penalty equal to 1/3 the spells level to all action table rolls involving physical actions.

AURA OF ALLUREMENT**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 5 minutes**Range:** Touch**Casting Modifiers:** -7 (level 3 base + duration)

Through the use of this enchantment the caster can make a designated subject appear more attractive and alluring. In game terms, the spell adds to the beneficiary's appearance, but does not effect leadership or other facets of the Charisma attribute. Members of the same (or similar) race will usually respond far more favorably to the subject for the duration of the spell.

BLURRED**Mode:** Illusion**Duration:** 10 rounds**Range:** 50 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -9 (level 1 base + complexity + duration)

Witch's may blur the form of a single object or person, obscuring features and movements with this simple illusion. While blurred, the individual will be hard to see and after this spell ends, no one will be able to recognize or describe the target. A favorite of Witches traveling through Aaman.

STEP AWAY**Mode:** Illusion**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 50 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -13 (level 1 base + complexity + motion)

With an ancient word the Witch mutters this spell and literally *steps away*, out of sight of the viewer, effectively becoming invisible. This spell is taught to Witches to help them escape the Witch Hunters from Aaman with greater efficiency.

OBSESSION**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 5 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -5 (level 1 base + duration)

A simple curse, this spell enables the caster to afflict a subject with an overwhelming craving or desire of the caster's choice. For example: the urge to eat or drink to excess, affection for a particular person or creature, a fixation upon obtaining some object of desire, or compulsive behavior of some sort. The

subject may resist the spell with a WIL check at -1/2 the spells level.

FEAR**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 5 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -5 (level 1 base + duration)

By reaching into the victims psyche and drawing out their darkest fears, the Witch can cause uncontrollable terror in her victim. If the victim fails a WIL roll at -1/2 the spells level, then they will run in terror for the duration of the spell.

ELDRITCH FLIGHT**Mode:** Move**Duration:** 1minute**Range:** 50 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -6 (level 1 base + duration)

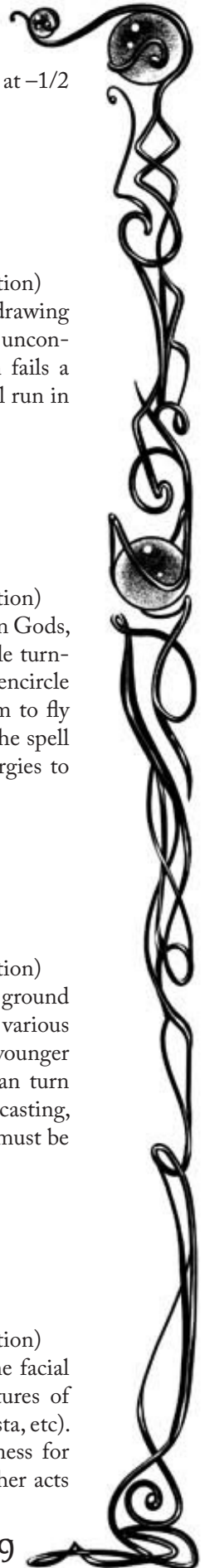
By reaching into the realms of the Forgotten Gods, the Witch can pull their energies to her while turning in a circle. These Eldritch energies will encircle and lift the target into the air, allowing them to fly at a slow speed for a short time. Note that the spell level must be high enough to allow the energies to lift the weight of the target.

LEVITATION**Mode:** Move**Duration:** 1minute**Range:** 50 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -6 (level 1 base + duration)

This spell causes the Witch to rise off the ground as if lifted by a wind. This spell is used for various purposes and has always been a favorite of younger practitioners. While levitated, the Witch can turn her attention to other matters, including spellcasting, as long as she remains unmoving. This spell must be cast at a level great enough to lift the caster.

ALTERED VISAGE**Mode:** Transmutation**Duration:** 5 minutes**Range:** Touch**Casting Modifiers:** -9 (level 5 base + duration)

With this spell, the Witch may assume the facial features of any member of the various cultures of man (Cymrillian, Aamanian, Dracartan, Sarista, etc). The Dhuna use this spell to great effectiveness for the purposes of traveling freely as well as other acts of deception.



SHRINK**Mode:** Transmutation**Duration:** 5 minutes**Range:** Touch**Casting Modifiers:** -10 (level 5 base + duration)

By putting a shrinking violet into her mouth and uttering this quick incantation, the Witch is able to reduce her size, or the size of one other creature, dramatically. A Partial Success will reduce the targets size by $\frac{1}{4}$, a full success by $\frac{1}{2}$ and a critical success will reduce them by $\frac{3}{4}$. A similar spell, Enlarge, does the opposite.

ELDRITCH HEALING**Mode:** Transmutation**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Touch**Casting Modifiers:** -8 (level 10 base + Order bonus)

Calling upon the ancient god of healing, a witch can channel the energies of this god into heal herself or others. The recipient of this spell will be healed of 10 points of damage and feel a warming sensation as the energies course through them.

CAUSE BOILS**Mode:** Transmutation (Harm)**Duration:** Instant**Range:** Touch**Casting Modifiers:** -4 (level 6 base + Order bonus)

With this potent curse, the Witch calls upon dark forces that will cause boils and blisters to cover an individuals body with a touch. This affliction is extremely painful and the recipient suffers a -6 to all rolls requiring concentration until a cure has been affected.

RUMORS**Mode:** Ward (Hex)**Duration:** 3 minutes**Range:** Touch**Casting Modifiers:** -10 (level 10 base + duration + Order bonus)

Those inflicted with this spell will only hear the worst things about themselves from their friends mouths, no matter what is actually being said. In addition, while this hex is in effect others will be more likely to notice bad things about the afflicted than they will good things.

WARD AGAINST HEXES**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 3 minutes**Range:** Touch**Casting Modifiers:** -10 (level 10 base + duration + Order bonus)

Due to the nature of certain covens, the Dhuna teach this spell to all of the younger initiates in order to protect them. This spell will ensure that the recipient is untouched by any hex for a period of 3 minutes, although it is commonly used in enchantments.

ELDRITCH AURA**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** Self**Casting Modifiers:** -1 (level 1 base)

By calling upon long forgotten gods, the Witch may envelope herself in the eldritch energies of those beings. Green fire will swirl about her for the duration of the spell, protecting her from harm.

ELDRITCH BARRIER**Mode:** Ward**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Self**Casting Modifiers:** -6 (level 1 base + duration)

By speaking a brief incantation calling upon long forgotten gods, and pointing at an area, a witch can create a wall of eldritch force that lasts for a single minute. This wall will appear as a shimmering barrier that is almost imperceptible at certain angles.

WIZARDRY

The omniverse is permeated by waves of fluctuating magical power, known to Talislantan spellcasters as Arcane Energy. During ancient times, certain Talislantan magicians developed incantations, gestures, and rituals that could tap into the flow of Arcane Energy that surrounds Talislanta. These procedures, known as Wizardry, have survived almost unchanged to the New Age.

In its natural state, Arcane Energy is an ambiguous, flowing force with no discernible positive or negative characteristics. When directed into the Primal Plane, Arcane Energy can take on a nearly limitless range of forms (excluding elemental forces, which cannot be replicated by Wizardry).

Arcane Energy can be used to surround the caster with a shimmering aura of protective energy; to conjure simple shapes such as ropes, swords, or walls of force; or to manipulate the physical world with grasping tendrils or “magic hands”. Arcane Energy can also manifest as destructive beams of force or the intricate conglomerations of swirling light and shadow used to create illusions.

Compared to more esoteric arts such as Witchcraft or Cryptomancy, Wizardry is a relatively simple magic Order to learn and use. As a result, it is popular among the Cymrillians, Farad, Zandir, Thaecians, and other magic-oriented cultures.

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

Wizards must gesture with both hands and speak Archaen phrases aloud in order to cast spells. A device such as a wand or staff is sometimes used to direct spells, but is not required.

ADVANTAGES

Specialization: The wizard may pick one Mode to represent the type of spells they regularly practice. This Mode receives a bonus of +3 to its overall rating.

LIMITATIONS

Obvious: Spells of wizardry are always accompanied by glowing lights, an electrical charge in the air, and a strange humming sound. Anyone nearby that makes a successful PER roll with a +5 bonus will be aware that magic is being used and will be able to discern its source. Because of this, subtle illusions that are meant to appear “real” are very difficult to accomplish with this Order. Likewise, anyone affected by a spell of wizardry (magical influence, protection) will have a noticeable glow and shimmer about them.

MODES

Not available: Transmutation

Bonuses: +3 to one Mode chosen by the magician.

Penalties: None

Conjuration Effects: Wizards are highly adept at conjuring inanimate objects and substances but are unable to summon extra-dimensional entities.

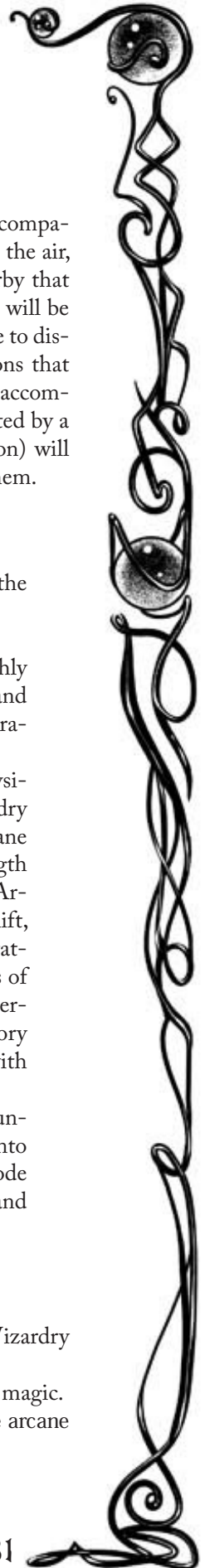
Enchantment Effects: Only simple physical qualities can be altered with Wizardry through the careful application of Arcane Energy. For example, a character’s strength might be altered by applying a field of Arcane Energy that helps the character lift, push, and swing. Or a sword’s damage rating might be altered by adding a nimbus of destructive energy to the blade. Subtle alterations (like increasing a character’s memory or charm, for example) are not possible with this Order.

Transmutation Effects: Wizards are unable to transform one object or creature into another but they are able to use this Mode to channel arcane energy for healing and harming effects.

ENCHANTMENT

Common enchanted items created with Wizardry include:

- ◆ Wands and staves that store defensive magic.
- ◆ Weapons empowered with destructive arcane energies.



SAMPLE WIZARDRY SPELLS

ARCANE BOLT

Mode: Attack
Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -1 (level 1 base)

The caster sends a bolt of arcane force towards the intended target for the sole purpose of causing harm. The color of the bolt is decided upon by the Wizard when they learn the spell and cannot be changed without researching the spell anew. Also, many Wizards will add sound, such as crackling or high pitched whistle to the bolt.

ARCANE BLAST

Mode: Attack
Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Area of Effect: 5' radius
Casting Modifiers: -1 (level 1 base + area)

This spell causes a bolt of arcane force to fly towards an area and explode, damaging all within a 5' radius. The color of the bolt is decided upon by the Wizard when they learn the spell and cannot be changed without researching the spell anew. Also, many Wizards will add sound, such as crackling or high pitched whistle to the bolt and a thundering boom or wailing wind to the blast itself.

ARCANE BLADE

Mode: Attack
Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -1 (level 1 base)

A blade of arcane force appears in the casters hands, lasting a number of rounds, and having a DR, equal to the spells level. The color of the blade is decided upon by the Wizard when they learn the spell and cannot be changed without researching the spell anew. Also, many Wizards will add sound, such as humming or crackling to the blade.

WIZARD'S ROPE

Mode: Conjuraton
Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -5 (level 1 base + duration)

Upon completion of this incantation, the Wizard conjures a rope made of sparkling energy that can be used for any of a multitude of purposes. The rope disappears after 5 minutes.

GLITTERING CLOUD

Mode: Conjuraton
Duration: 2 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -2 (level 1 base + duration)

With the spell, the Wizard conjures a 1 cubic foot cloud of sparkling glitter that swirls around the area of effect for 2 minutes that will reducing visibility. This cloud will act in all ways as normal glitter, and may be blown about by winds.

HIDDEN IN THE FOLDS (CONCEAL)

Mode: Divination
Duration: 1 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: +1 (level 1 base)

When cast, this spell allows the magician to hide an object somewhere on their person, usually within the folds of their robes. The object can be of any size that the magician can usually carry, although weight is not effected.

SEEK THE PATH

Mode: Divination
Duration: 1 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: +1 (level 1 base)

Upon casting this spell, the wizards eyes take on an amber glow. This glow allows the caster to pinpoint the direction of any location he has previously visited to great effect.

ENHANCE WEAPON**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Casting Modifiers:** -3 (level 3 base)

Upon casting this spell, the Wizard targets a weapon and causes it to glow with blue arcane force. This force increases the DR of the weapon (+1).

ENHANCE ARMOR**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Casting Modifiers:** -3 (level 3 base)

This incantation causes the touched armor to shimmer with a silver light, increasing the PR of the Armor (+1).

ARCANE STRENGTH**Mode:** Enchantment**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** Touch**Casting Modifiers:** -5 (level 5 base)

With this spell, the Magicians skin starts to glow bright green. The arcane forces present enhance the Magicians STR (+1)

ILLUMINATING GLOBE**Mode:** Illusion**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 50 feet

Casting Modifiers: -11 (level 1 base + duration + magnitude)

With a gesture, the caster produces a small globe of light that will move as directed. The globe produces light as a torch, and can be used to blind opponents with a ranged attack roll using the Illusion Mode rating with a -7 aiming modifier.

LIGHTING THE WAY**Mode:** Illusion**Duration:** 1 minute**Range:** 50 feet

Casting Modifiers: -10 (level 1 base + magnitude)

Cymrillian Wizards in the employ of the military commonly make use of this spell as a rallying point for troops. The spell brings forth an illusion of a battle standard high above the rally point.

INDUCE SLEEP**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 5 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -5 (level 1 base + duration)

When cast, a sparkling cloud will fall around the target, causing them to become drowsy and sleep for 5 rounds. At the end of the duration, the target will remain asleep until awoken normally. WIL save at -1/2 the spells level to resist.

TRANCE**Mode:** Influence**Duration:** 5 rounds**Range:** 5 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -5 (level 1 base + duration)

Upon casting, the magicians eyes glow with a sparkling blue light, capturing the intended targets attention and sending them into a trance-like state, unable to act for 5 rounds.

SUBJUGATING FORCE**Mode:** Move**Duration:** 1minute**Range:** 50 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -7 (level 1 base + area)

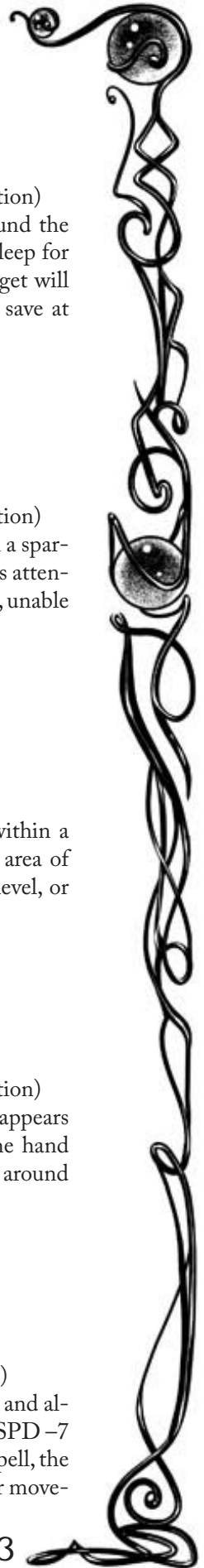
Shimmering forces slam down on those within a 6'x6' area. This spell causes those within the area of effect to make a STR roll vs 1/3 the spells level, or fall to their knees.

ARCANE FINGERS**Mode:** Move**Duration:** 1minute**Range:** 50 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -6 (level 1 base + duration)

A glowing hand of green arcane energy appears and moves at the discretion of the caster. The hand can pick up objects and move them slowly around within range.

ARCANE FLIGHT**Mode:** Move**Duration:** 1minute**Range:** 50 feet**Casting Modifiers:** -7 (level 1 base + SPD)

This spell covers the target in a purple glow and allows them to fly for a short period of time, at SPD -7 (30 feet per round). For the duration of this spell, the effected individual will be able to control their move-



ments very precisely and will also be able to hover if so desired. Note that this spell must be cast at a high enough level to lift the targets weight.

MINOR DISRUPTION (HARM)

Mode: Transmutation (Harm)

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Casting Modifiers: -5 (level 5 base)

By disrupting the natural flow of magical energies through a targets body, the Wizard can deal 5 points of damage. This spell causes the Wizards hands to glow bright green until the spell expires, and upon touching the victim, the green energy will course over and through their body as it inflicts the damage.

HEALING OF THE BODY'S WOUNDS

Mode: Transmutation (Heal)

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Casting Modifiers: -10 (level 10 base)

When this spell is cast, the Wizards hand glow brightly with a blue light. Upon touching an individual, 10 HP are restored as the targets wounds are healed through the power of arcane forces.

INCITEMENT OF THE SPINNING SICKNESS

Mode: Transmutation (Harm)

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Casting Modifiers: -10 (level 10 base)

Upon casting, the Wizards hands become covered in blue, green and black vortices. When the caster touches the target, the vortexes move up the body from the point of contact and swirl around the victims head. This causes the victim to suddenly become afflicted with Spinning Sickness, luckily for the victim, this disease is not fatal and usually runs its course in a few days.

WARD VS MAGICAL ATTACKS

Mode: Ward

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Casting Modifiers: -10(level 10 base)

Upon casting this spell, the targets skin starts to shimmer with silver arcane forces that will prevent all damage from Attack Mode spells. If an attack mode targets the individual, the energies will be seen to disperse upon contact.

ARCANE AURA

Mode: Ward

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: Self

Casting Modifiers: -1 (level 1 base)

When cast, the Wizard glows with an amber light and is surrounded by crackling arcane energies, which will shield him from physical and magical attacks that might otherwise do damage.

WIZARDS WALL

Mode: Ward

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Self

Casting Modifiers: -6 (level 1 base + duration)

This spell has been used for centuries to block off an escape, or to stop pursuers. By speaking a brief incantation and pointing at an area, the wizard creates a shimmering wall of arcane force that lasts for a single minute.

HONORABLE DUEL

Mode: Ward

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: Self

Casting Modifiers: -7 (level 1 base + area)

The caster creates a barrier of bright blue force big enough to encompass himself, and his opponent in an 8' circle. This allows both combatants to focus on the duel without having to worry about friends that the other might have.



CREATIVE CANTRIPS

Magic, in particular spellcasting, is one of the cornerstones of the Talislanta setting. The great masters of the past wove enchantments so potent that modern magicians can but marvel at their achievements. Even so, latter day magicians are still capable of producing wondrous magics, though these are but a pale shadow of the past.

With magic being of such importance to the game, it is worth making it that bit more exotic, and enriching the roleplaying experience in the process.

The Talislanta magic system actively permits and encourages players and GMs to create their own, unique, imaginative spells, and presents fantastic opportunities for the creative individual.

However, creating a spell can prove daunting for some players, and as a result, many spellcasting descriptions in-game can become seem dull or clichéd. This need not be the case, for creating a memorable spell requires but a little thought, and is easier than might at first be believed.

Here is a step-by-step guide:

INTENT

When creating a new spell, the first thing to do is decide precisely what you want it to achieve. This might be as simple as “Hurt my enemy at range”, or as involved as “Steal the keys from the guard’s belt and place them in my grasp”.

BASIC IDEA

Taking your Intent, and the restrictions of your Order into account, think for a moment of how it might be achieved. Take a moment to consider what the spell could possibly do. In the case of one designed to cause injury, think what things can hurt someone. For example, being cut, impaled, burnt, bludgeoned, frozen, crushed, or electrocuted.

DESCRIBING THE SPELL

Suppose you decide that you want your enemy to burn in a ball of flame (in essence the classical “Fireball”). Well, now you have the idea, you can go on to describe the spell itself. Just by considering each of the following components of a spell’s description, you can make it far more unique:

APPEARANCE

What exactly does the spell look like? What substance forms the physical aspect of the spell? A Fireball, for example, need not look like a simple ball of flame. It could look like a flaming winged skull, a fiery fist, incandescent heart, or glowing phoenix. It’s still a fireball, but it need not look so basic. Also consider the color or colors of the spell; where magic is concerned you need not adhere to the expected. Why not make the fireball green, blue, purple or even pink? Giving the spell an unusual appearance is entirely permissible, providing it makes no change to the effect of the spell (in this case, burning someone).

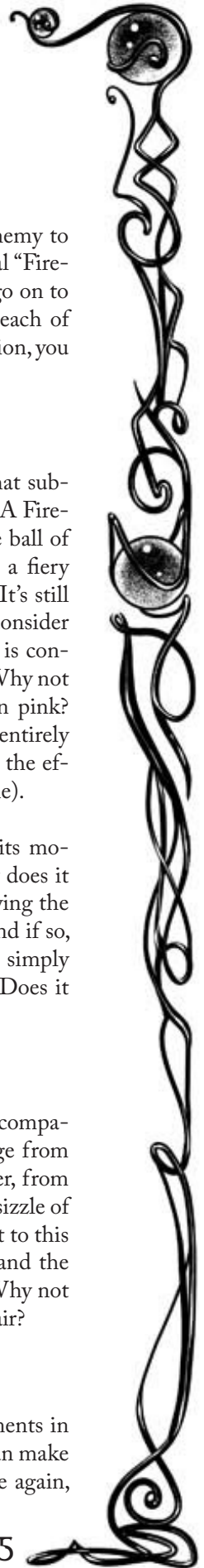
Another part of the spell’s appearance is its motion. If the spell has to cover a distance, how does it do so? Does it erupt, or does it travel? Following the fireball example, does it fly through the air, and if so, does it fly straight, spiral, or zigzag? Does it simply appear out of nowhere to engulf the target? Does it bounce or roll along the ground?

SOUND

What does the spell sound like? Sound accompanies the casting of many spells, and can range from the tinkling of bells to the rumble of thunder, from echoes of chilling laughter to the crackle and sizzle of energy. Once again, giving just a little thought to this aspect of a spell gives it much more depth, and the sound need not necessarily match the spell. Why not have your fireball sing as it flies through the air?

SMELL

The least important of the descriptive elements in most cases, describing the scent of the spell can make it seem far more real in the mind’s eye. Once again,



the scent of the spellcasting, if indeed there is any, can be unique or unexpected. For example, the fireball may well smell of brimstone, but it could just as easily smell of lavender, or anything else.

NAMING THE SPELL

Now you have decided what your spell does, and described it, it is time to give it its all-important name. Even the most mundane spell can be made exciting when given an impressive title.

Given the eccentricity and egotism of many magicians, it is hardly surprising that even the most banal of cantrips may often bear a flamboyant title. Precious few magicians, having spent weeks or months in toil creating a new spell, would then give their unique creation a humdrum name. Instead, they would make it grandiose, taking pride in their personal achievement.

Giving a newly created spell a good title is satisfying and easy. All spell-titles are composed of one or more of the following components, although two-three components is the optimum.

DESCRIPTOR

The most vital part of any spell name informs of the spell's effects, appearance, or less commonly, results, and in many cases, a truly evocative Descriptor is often all that's needed to make a spell sound fantastical. When describing the spell, try to avoid the most mundane descriptions, and choose those less immediately obvious. For example, while "Fireball" does accurately describe the spell producing the ball of fire, it is hardly flamboyant. Take a second to think of alternate or related words that can be used to describe the same thing; a quick look through a thesaurus can provide all manner of cool alternatives. In this case, such words as Flaming, Blazing, Incendiary, Conflagrating, Scorching, Burning, Searing, and Lambent, as well as Sphere, Orb, and Globe, are also appropriate substitutes for "Fire" and "Ball". "Searing Orb" sounds far more exotic than "Fireball".

CREATOR'S NAME

A common spell-naming convention, especially as regards the more egotistical or famous creators of spells, is that of appending the individual's name to

FAMOUS TALISLANTAN MAGICIANS

Archimandius - Wizardry
Arkon - Wizardry
Astramir - Elemental Magic (Geomancy), Thaumaturgy
Cascal - Cryptomancy, Wizardry (focus on the Illusion Mode)
Cerene - Elemental Magic (Aquamancy - Ice)
Etzel - Wizardry, Natural Magic
Drax - Necromancy
Drugalia - Necromancy, Elemental magic (Pyromancy)
Enchantress, the - Wizardry (focus on the Influence Mode)
Hotan - Mysticism, Wizardry
Ilse - Witchcraft
Kabros - Cryptomancy
Koraq - Cryptomancy, Wizardry
Lamune - Elemental Magic (Aquamancy), Wizardry
Magian - Wizardry
Malderon - Wizardry
Melandre - Necromancy
Miraja - Wizardry (Illusion specific)
Mordante - Invocation, Necromancy
Narishna - Necromancy
Nauticus - Elemental Magic (Aeromancy, Aquamancy)
Oranthus - Necromancy
Rodinn - Wizardry
Sargan - Wizardry (Illusion)
Sassan - Elemental Magic (Pyromancy)
Shaladin - Cryptomancy, Wizardry
Solimorrion I - Cryptomancy
Sylan - Cryptomancy, Wizardry
Thaumaste - Wizardry, Biomancy
Thystram - Cryptomancy, Natural Magic
Urmaan - Necromancy
Viridian - Natural Magic (flora based)
Xanadas - Mysticism, Natural Magic
Zanillo - Wizardry (focus on trickery)
Zorion - Wizardry (focus on spells of a martial nature)

the front of the spell's title. For example, the infamous pyromancer Sassan may very well have created the Searing Orb spell, and named it "Sassan's Searing Orb".

In the sidebar is a brief list of magical luminaries responsible for creating many existing spells, along with their appropriate Orders, although one should not feel restricted to these names; there were a multitude of powerful and creative magicians, so making up a name is always a viable option.

EMBELLISHMENT

Spell creators sometimes added certain extravagant descriptors to their spell titles, particularly if especially proud of a spell, or excessively egotistical. For example, if Sassan was particularly delighted with his Searing Orb spell, he might add such a word as Excellent, Magnificent, Superior, Superlative, Brilliant, or Triumphant, to the spell's title. It might have been named "Sassan's Triumphant Searing Orb" in this case.

SPELL, CANTRIP, OR DWEOMER

Another common spell-naming convention is the actual referral to the spell as being a spell, placed before or after the main description. For example, Sassan might have named his Fireball spell, "Sassan's Searing Orb Spell" or "The Spell of Searing Orbs". Alternately, he could have chosen to use a different word, such as Cantrip, Dweomer, Enchantment, Charm, Glamour, Weird, or Incantation.

MODE NAME

Adding a direct referral to the type (i.e. Mode) of the spell is also a common spell-naming option. For example, Sassan might have named his Searing Orb spell, "Sassan's Searing Orb Attack", or might have substituted such words as Assault, or Strike. In the case of an Illusion spell, such words as Illusory, Phantasmal, Ephemeral, Deceptive, or False, can just as easily be used, and so on.

SIGNATURE SPELLS

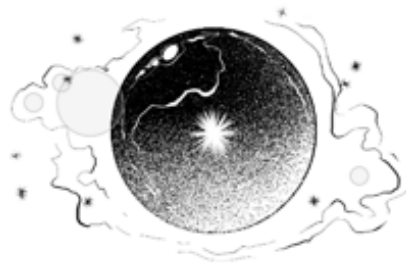
The ability to be truly individual when creating new spells means that it is quite possible for all of a magician's spells to bear some kind of personal trademark or signature, if desired, that makes all their spellcastings instantly recognizable as their work, for better or worse. For example, the spells of Moncarr the Mauve might always feature a particular red hue in some way, irrespective of the spell's appearance or

effect. His "Crimson Fist of Justice" spell might resemble a clenched fist of cracking red energy, while his "Invocation of Carnelian Regeneration" might turn the skin of the individual he is healing temporarily red.

A signature need not be a color, nor necessarily even a visual clue. A specific scent, sound, or other theme, is just as appropriate.

Making magic memorable does take imagination, and a little thought, but the result is always worth it, as it will entertain all concerned, enrich the game, and perhaps even garner an additional XP or two from an appreciative GM.

Any semi-encephalon can say "I cast a Fireball! A ball of fire flies forth and strikes my target!", but stating something like "I invoke Sassan's Searing Orb! A ball of vivid green flame spirals swiftly through the air, shrieking, the scent of brimstone in its wake!", makes the tired old fireball exciting, and magic as magical as it should be.



CREATING AND MAINTAINING THE GRIMOIRE

As any experienced roleplayer knows, keeping notes can be vital to the success of a game, and scraps of paper, torn notes, and other hastily scribbled messages can be easily lost. When keeping a record of a character's spells, relying on scraps of paper to record the character's them can waste a lot of time if such pieces are misplaced.

It is worthwhile investing in an attractive notebook to act as the character's spellbook; one with an unusual cover, such as a mottled or marbled effect, or a fake leather binding, is especially appropriate. Such a notebook can even be used as a physical prop, embellished as desired with gold pen, transfers, or stickers, and need not be expensive.

Treat the notebook as if it is the character's traveling spellbook, and record any custom designed spell descriptions in it; use pencil when scribbling down spontaneous creations, or descriptions that lack spell mechanics, as these can easily be written in properly with ink later, and the pencil erased. Try and use the same color ink throughout the notebook to give the spellbook a more uniform look. Using a fountain pen or quill, while extremely authentic, is not necessary. Don't worry about ink blotches or errors either, as magician's spellbooks are stereotypically replete with such marks.

If possible, try and write as the character would, because doing so is a good roleplaying experience, and can provide the character with more depth.

The spellbook need not be restricted solely to the containment of the character's spells either. Magicians often scribble notes in their traveling grimoire, especially in the margins, and many also keep their journal, details of notable events, dates and times of meetings, important clues, personal theories, and so on, in them as well. Some even add sketches and diagrams of things they have seen, such as magical symbols they wish to investigate or research later.

Few magicians are particularly artistic in nature, so it doesn't matter if these illustrations are rough. Physical clues, such as fragments of parchment, and letters used as props in a game can also be kept in the pages of the spellbook, or even glued in. Printing off pieces of text using the Talislan or High Talislan fonts (available on the Talislanta website) on a computer, or any number of other arcane-looking fonts, can add even more realism to the grimoire, and the translated or legible text can even be printed off and glued onto the back of the page, so it can be easily read.

Just a little preparation and thought when playing a spellcaster can make the game more enjoyable for all concerned, and keeping and maintaining a notebook as if it is the character's eclectic traveling grimoire, can be one of the most enjoyable aspects of playing a spellcasting character.



CHAPTER THREE

CHARACTER CREATION



Talislanta has a plethora of sentient races, most of which make for interesting player characters. Players should familiarize themselves with the races available for play along with the *Traveler's Guide* section of this book before selecting the race they wish to play.

The first step in creating a *Talislanta* player character is to select the character's race or culture. This choice will determine the character's general outlook on life. Additionally, each Race will have a list of base attribute ratings, default skill ranks and special abilities open to characters of the race. These serve to differentiate the races and cultures from each other.

The skills and special abilities are always considered Preferred Skills

Once a race is selected, the player may now increase any one Attribute by +1. If they do this however, they must further decrease one Attribute by -1.

Each race also has a list of possible Paths open to characters of that race. Players should record all of this information on their character sheet.

The second choice a player need make when creating a character is to determine the background of that character. Players should now review *Chapter Four: Paths*. During character creation, characters begin with a blank slate. After selecting your character's race, it is assumed they are just entering adulthood and thus begin with only rudimentary skills.

By selecting different Paths open to the character's race, the character acquires new skills, special abilities and quirks. How many Paths may be selected is

determined by the type of campaign the GM wishes to run. Typically, three Path campaigns are about average. Single Path games can also be fun but players should be prepared to face tough obstacles as they are only at the point in their life when they are starting to learn to survive in the oft dangerous world of *Talislanta*. For heroic or epic campaigns, GMs may permit four, five or even more Paths to starting characters. Such games can also prove fun but GMs will need to be careful to fill their campaigns with epic foes to properly challenge the heroes.

Players should consult with the GM to determine how many Paths the player is allowed to select for his or her character.

Players should record all relevant Race and Path information on their character sheet such as skill ranks, special abilities, attribute bonuses or penalties, default Quirks, starting equipment, etc.

Review the section on Attributes in Chapter One, and follow the guidelines to determine your character's Hit Points (HP), Movement, and Encumbrance ratings.

Finally players should personalize their characters by giving them a name, background and interesting personality traits. They may also spend any currency acquired from their Paths on additional equipment, mounts or conveyances, weapons, armor, etc.

Some helpful hints on creating interesting player characters can be found on the pages following the Race descriptions further in this chapter.

PLAYER CHARACTER RACES

The humanoid peoples of modern-day Talislanta are remarkably diverse in outward appearance, exhibiting an uncanny variety of skin colorations, facial features, and bodily forms. Yet despite these discrepancies, the continent's humanoid inhabitants are all believed to be descended from one of four* root sources:

1. THE WILD RACES

Primitive tribesfolk such as the Yrmanians, Druhks, Za, Beastmen, Jaka, and Ur.

2. THE ARCHAENS

"Civilized" humanoids such as the Cymrilians, Phantasians, Thaecians, Hadjin, Aamanians, Zandir, and Mandalans.

3. NEOMORPHS: MAGICAL HYBRIDS/MUTATIONS

A wide-ranging group consisting of hybrids such as Thralls, Muses, Bodor, Green Men, Araq, and Yassan; mixed breeds such as Rajans and Virds; magically evolved or devolved species such as the Gryphs and Aeriad; and magically mutated species such as the Ahazu and Moorg-Wan.

4. EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL ENTITIES

Includes the Sindarans and Ariane; also, so-called demons, devils, and other entities who have come to Talislanta from other planes of existence.

** Although the Archaens are descended from the Wild Races, scholars of the New Age claim that the two races diverged and became distinct after the Archaens discovered how to use magic to alter their appearance. This theory is supported by the Wild Races as well; such is the ages-old animosity between the two peoples that neither race will acknowledge being related to the other. This should tell you all you need to know about Talislantan race relations.*

A NOTE ON BALANCE

Many different roleplaying games go to great lengths to ensure a proper balance is maintained between characters of different types. Talislanta has never been one of those games.

The sheer number of playable races makes balancing them all impossible. Talislanta has always been about the setting, and as such, matters of balance are largely ignored. The focus of Talislanta has been, and should be, about roleplaying. This means that certain character types might be less powerful than others in game terms, however this should have no bearing on the fun a player will have playing a lesser powered character. An Aeriad Botanomancer can be just as much fun to roleplay as a mighty Thrall or Kang warrior.

PLAYABLE RACES

With the sheer number of races and ethnicities found on the continent of Talislanta, it is impossible to include them all in one book. The playable races found in this chapter represent the most common groups that take up an adventuring lifestyle. There are races here from all over Talislanta with a concentration on those found regularly in and around the Seven Kingdoms region.

For players looking for even more choices, more than 50 other playable races are fully detailed in the *Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta*, including many of the races normally considered malign in the civilized lands of Talislanta (*the Za, Beastmen and Urag for example*) as well as those considered exotic and bizarre (*like the Green Men, Bodor, Snipes and Gnorls*).



AAMANIAN

Stern of bearing, Aamanians have copper-colored skin, sculpted features, and deep green eyes. In order to promote the Orthodoxist ideal of “oneness in body and spirit”, Aamanians use an extract of the bald nettle plant to remove all facial and body hair, thus achieving a sameness of appearance. Astringents and powders that whiten the skin are also used by many, as an expression of “purity”. Only the most modest attire is permissible in Aaman — colorless smocks, robes designed to conceal the figure, and caps of starched linen.

The Aamanians are descended from the ancient Phaedrans (and from them, the Archaeans), rulers of an empire that once encompassed the greater part of the Western Lands. Aaman became an independent nation following the long and bloody Cult Wars,

which pitted the Orthodoxists against the Paradoxists of neighboring Zandu.

Aamanian society is rigidly structured, and is based on a religious caste system. Higher caste Aamanians work in mercantile guilds, elite ranks of the military, or the clergy and its various branches. The lower classes work as farmers, laborers, vendors, or as conscripts in the infantry. Slaves are used for the most odious types of manual labor. They have no rights and are regarded as property, to be bought and sold as desired by their Aamanian masters.

RELATIONS

Devout fundamentalists, Aamanians shun any form of merry-making or improper behavior, and are taught never to question the dictates of their superiors. Disagreement with Orthodoxist doctrine is considered tantamount to heresy, and may result in unpleasant consequences; a trip to the House of Penance is the usual remedy. Visitors from other lands are required to show respect for the local customs. Outsiders are constantly watched by Monitors in the service of the Knights of the All-Seeing Eye, from the moment they enter Aaman to the moment they leave. In this regard they are treated no differently from any other



AAMANIAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'6"-6', 100-180 lbs. Cinnabar skin, sculpted features, deep green eyes, all facial and bodily hair removed.

Base Attributes:

INT +0	PER +0	WIL +1
CHA -1	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +1

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Doctrines (Orthodoxy) +4, Language (High Talislan - native), Cultures (Aamanian) +6, Fashion (Aaman) +3.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Enemy (Paradoxists).

Open Paths: Acolyte, Apprentice Craftsman, Bodygurad, Captain, Master Craftsman, Merchant, Monitor, Priest, Rural, Sailor, Siege Engineer, Teamster, Urban, Warrior, Witch Hunter.

Starting Equipment: Aamanian Holy Symbol (unenchanting); coarse woolen garments; bleached erd leather boots; 20 gl in aamanian coppers.

**Aamanian characters may replace any armor received from Paths with Partial Plate armor (laquered white).*

RELIGION

High Orthodoxy is the official state religion; all other beliefs are regarded as heresy. Aaman's religious caste system is based on the acquisition and accumulation of mana, or "spiritual purity", which is measured in units known as "aalms". One can attain aalms by entering the priesthood or a Monastic Order, making donations to a temple, or by undertaking a pilgrimage to one of the cult's officially sanctioned holy places. In order of esteem, these are: the Well of Saints, which lies beyond the Volcanic Hills; the Watchstone, situated amidst the Plains of Golarin; the Red Desert in Carantheum; and several places of lesser significance.

It is the custom of Aamanians to bury their dead in plain iron coffins painted white and stamped with the All-Seeing Eye icon; even in death, the faithful cannot escape the all-knowing gaze of Aa. The pious are buried in white funerary shrouds, while those who died "in a state of sin" are buried in black. A stone tablet enumerating the deceased's final aalms total and cult status serves as a grave marker.

LANGUAGE

Aamanians speak a simplified version of High Talislan. Stripped of the flowery turns of phrase and flourishes that are a part of High Talislan, the

language sounds rigid, overly formal, and restrained. Aamanians converse mainly in clichéd cult dogma and quotations from Orthodoxist scripture. Gesticulation is practically unknown; Aamanians are taught to speak with the hands clasped together in the traditional gesture of piety. Male and female cult members always have the "Aa" prefix affixed to their names, as in Aamar, Aabas, Aalm, Aama. Converts to the faith are given an Aamanian name to distinguish them from "infidels".

ADVENTURERS

Aamanians rarely travel outside of their homeland except for mercantile business or on pilgrimage. The traditional enemy of Aaman is the nation of Zandu; their enmity dates back over five hundred years. The Great Barrier Wall, built after the Cult Wars of the early New Age, is all that separates the two rival states.

Aaman continues to pursue a policy of persecution against all practitioners of witchcraft and pagan cults, particularly the Dhuna of neighboring Werewood. Arim is officially neutral as regards Aaman and Zandu; so are the Djaffir and Farad, whose interests in Aaman are strictly mercantile. The Seven Kingdoms has censured Aaman as a slave-state, and diplomatic relations and communications between the two nation-states are infrequent at best.

AERIAD

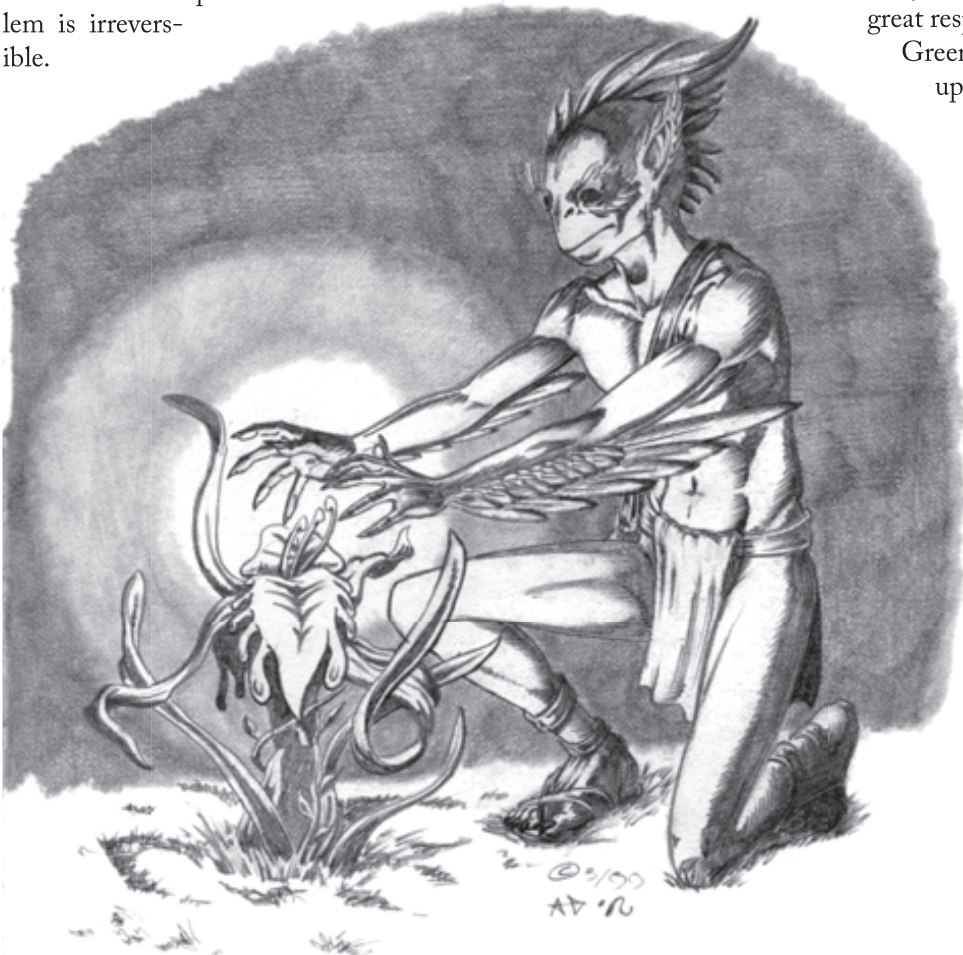
There are two sub-species of Aeriad: Green Aeriad, who seldom exceed five feet in height, and the taller and somewhat more aggressive Blue Aeriad. Both species are slender and frail in stature, and have skin that glistens with a metallic sheen. A crested coxcomb of feathers adds to the distinctive appearance of these folk. By contrast, their manner of dress is simple and austere, typically featuring a short tunic, loin cloth, and a cape of plain viridian linen.

The Aeriad race is in the process of devolving from an avian to a ground-dwelling species. Their vestigial wings, once used for flying, have atrophied from disuse. For the majority of Aeriad, these appendages are now more decorative than functional, though they can still be used for gliding short distances. The Aeriad attribute the process of devolution to the after-effects of The Great Disaster, and believe that the problem is irreversible.

RELATIONS

Though they are of the same species, Blue and Green Aeriad have different outlooks on life. Blue Aeriad identify more closely with their avian ancestors. To these folk, their species' gradual transmutation is a form of "devolution", indicative of the decline of a once-great people. Blue Aeriad yearn to recapture the glory of the past, when their ancestors flew free upon the winds. To this end Blues sometimes seek the companionship of Gryphs, another avian species that may be related to the Aeriad. Some Blues have even been known to mate with Gryphs in an attempt to reinvigorate their line, or at least retard its further devolution.

Green Aeriad regard the transition of their species as "evolutionary", rather than "devolutionary". While they also have great respect for their ancestors, Greens tend not to dwell upon the past. They believe that the future of the Aeriad is among



AERIAD CHARACTERS

Appearance: *Blue:* 5'5"-6', 80-120 lbs. Blue skin and plumage with metallic sheen, slender stature, sharp bird-like features, crested coxcomb of feathers, vestigial wings; *Green:* 4'10"-5'2", 70-90 lbs. Green skin and plumage with metallic sheen, slender stature, sharp bird-like features, crested coxcomb of feathers, vestigial wings.

Base Attributes (Blue/Green):

INT +0/+2	PER +1/+1	WIL +0/+0
CHA +0/+0	STR -1/-3	DEX +2/+2
CON -1/-3	SPD +2/+0	
CR +1/+0	RC +2/+0	MR +0/+2

Hit Points: 18

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Cultures (Aeriad) +5, Culures (Seven Kingdoms) +3, Fashion (Seven Kingdoms) +2, Survival (forest) +2.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Glide, Speech Impediment, Magic Item: *Bracers of Levitation* (Blue Aeriad only).

Open Paths (Blue Aeriad): Airman, Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Guide, Hunter, Master Craftsman, Ranger, Rural, Scout, Urban.

Open Paths (Green Aeriad): Alumnus, Botanomancer, Diplomat, Guide, Healer, Herbalist, Liti-gator, Magician, Peddler, Rural, Savant, Talismancer, Urban.

Starting Equipment: Short tunic, loincloth and cloak of plain veridian linen; sandals; stoppered gourd of vinesap; coin purse with 20 gl in gold pentacles. Aeriad characters may replace any weapon received from Paths with a crescent knife, tri-bow, dart thrower or crescent spear.

other ground-dwelling peoples, such as the Cymril-ians and Sindarans. Like Blues, they are protective of the natural riches of their forest home, though most Green Aeriad express this through their interest in horticulture and botanomancy. By enriching their environment and increasing Vardune's natural resources they hope to ensure the future survival of their species.

RELIGION

Blue and Green Aeriad revere the deity called Creator, whom they depict as a great winged humanoid with rainbow-colored plumage. Blues and Greens gather together to roost in the branches of great span-oak "temples" and raise their voices in the ancient songs of their ancestors. Many of these songs are about the "Tree of Life", which Aeriad believe is the ancestral home of the first avian race, from whom the Aeriad and Gryphs are descended. When an Aeriad dies, his body is covered with a shroud of woven vines and laid to rest amidst the uppermost branches of a great viridia tree; a ritual signifying the Aeriad's connection to the Tree of Life.

LANGUAGE

Aeriad speech is characterized by a slight stutter, evident only on words which begin with a hard "C" or "K" sound. This occurs because the Aeriad's vestigial beak has not yet evolved (or devolved) sufficiently to allow for all nuances of the Talislan tongue. Common names tend to sound like bird-calls, as in Kree-Kya, Cha-Chik, Kee-Ree, etc.

ADVENTURERS

Located far to the west, Vardune feels less threatened by the presence of the Za and other Wilderlands tribes than most of the other states in the Seven Kingdoms confederation. Even so, Blue Aeriad often volunteer to serve as aerial reconnaissance in the Borderlands Legion and throughout the Seven Kingdoms. Green Aeriad, may be found far from their forest homes practicing the art of Botanomancy or otherwise seeking rare and exotic plant life.

AHAZU

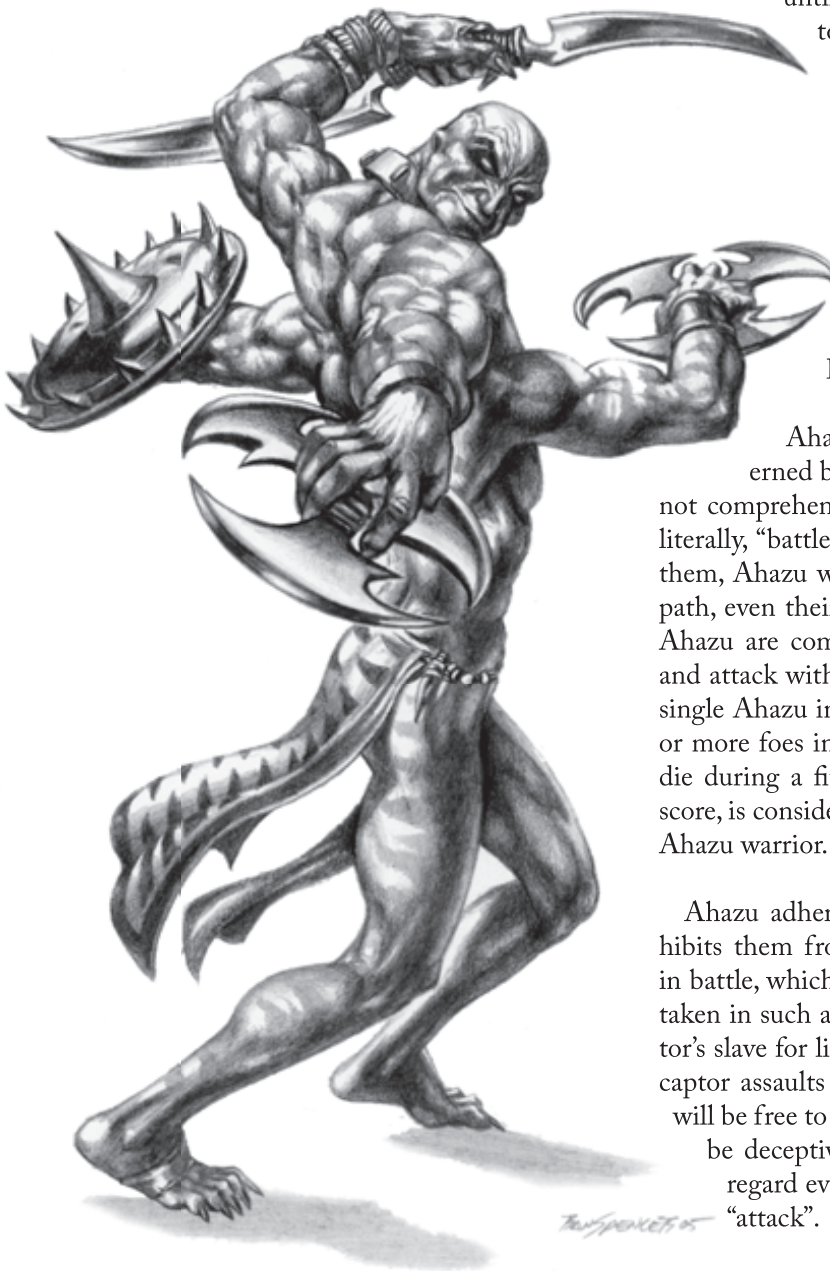
These fierce, four-armed folk may exceed seven feet in height, and are quite imposing to behold. They have bright-yellow skin, with fiery red markings lining the face and neck and running down the back of the arms, legs and spine. Their features are almost demonic: sloping forehead, forked tongue, thin nostrils, and dark-green, pupil-less eyes vacant of mercy or compassion. Long and lean of build, Ahazu dress in reptile-hide loincloths, with numerous thongs tied below the shoulder and at the elbows, wrists, knees and ankles.

Ahazu are nomadic predators who subsist on fresh game, from small creatures like avir and winged serpents to large beasts such as land lizards and even exomorphs. Because they eat raw meat only and use no preserving techniques, Ahazu require plentiful supplies of fresh game in order to thrive. Their tribes make no permanent dwellings, preferring instead to sleep in the treetops. The typical Ahazu tribe is constantly on the move; once they claim a territory as their hunting ground they guard it aggressively, hunt until the area is played-out, then move on to the next area.

Males and females mate for life. Both take turns transporting their young in backpacks made of woven vines. Ahazu young are carried everywhere, even into battle, until they are strong enough to run with the adults. Ahazu who are too old or infirm to keep up with the tribe generally commit suicide by jumping off Leaper's Ridge.

Ahazu are beset by dark moods and governed by strange passions that other races do not comprehend. They are prone to fits of shan-ya; literally, "battle madness". When "the rage" is upon them, Ahazu will attack any living creature in their path, even their own comrades. In such a condition Ahazu are completely devoid of fear, feel no pain, and attack with incredible ferocity – it is said that a single Ahazu in shan-ya can sometimes kill a dozen or more foes in the span of just a few moments. To die during a fit of shan-ya, slaying enemies by the score, is considered the greatest possible death for an Ahazu warrior.

Ahazu adhere to a secret warrior code that prohibits them from attempting to escape if captured in battle, which is considered a grave humiliation. If taken in such a manner an Ahazu becomes the captor's slave for life. The pact can be broken only if the captor assaults the slave, at which point the Ahazu will be free to do as it pleases. This arrangement can be deceptive, however, as an angry Ahazu may regard even an accidental bump or touch as an "attack".



AHAZU CHARACTERS

Appearance: 6'8"-7'6", 160-260 lbs. Bright yellow skin with fiery red striations, four arms, lean build, sloping forehead, forked tongue, thin nostrils, dark-green, pupil-less eyes.

Base Attributes:

INT -1	PER +1	WIL +1
CHA -2	STR +3	DEX +4
CON +2	SPD +4	
CR +3	RC +1	MR -2

Hit Points: 28

Skills: Language (Sign - native), Language (Ahazu - native), Cultures (Ahazu) +5, Survival (jungle) +2, Weapon (2 Handed Hafted or Thrown) +2

Special Abilities: +3 to Stealth in native environment; May make one extra attack or parry per round without suffering any multiple action penalty.

Quirks: Shan-Ya, Multiple Limbs, Obedient (to slave master)

Open Paths: Gladiator, Hunter, Tribal, Warrior

Starting Equipment: loincloth, chest wrap (females) and arm and leg thongs of reptile leather. *(Ahazu characters never receive armor from Paths. Ahazu may replace any weapon received from Paths with a gwanga or matsu)*

When on the hunt, an Ahazu tribe will be led by the group's best tracker, who is called the Hunter-Chief. The best warrior, called the War-Chief, leads the tribe when it is intent on battle. Either chieftain may be a male or female. While Ahazu may fight each other to settle disputes, violence of this sort is accepted as part of the warrior life. No punishment need ever be meted out among these folk, for Ahazu who have failed in any way to live up to the tribe's standards generally commit suicide.

RELATIONS

Most Talislantans who are aware of the existence of the Ahazu regard them as fierce, blood-thirsty savages. Such impressions are not far from the mark. The Ahazu have no known ties to any other tribe, race, or nation. They mark the Moorg-Wan as their ancient enemies and territorial rivals, and often engage in vicious battles with the swamp people. Ahazu will never do harm to a Green Man, believing that such actions anger the ancient Forest Gods, and may yield terrible consequences.

RELIGION

The Ahazu have no spellcasters, and consider magic the domain of cowards and weaklings. They are said to revere a secret warrior-deity, whom they believe determines the outcome of all battles. Ahazu observe no formal rituals or holidays as regards their secret deity or any other occasion. To die anywhere but in battle is considered dishonorable.

LANGUAGE

These folk have their own language, called Ahazu, which is typified by harsh shrieks and yells, frequently punctuated by violent gestures and the brandishing of weapons. Common names include Y'azu, K'yaz, I'zu, S'azu, Y'ozu, A'zu, and so on. Ahazu have no written language.

ADVENTURERS

Ahazu excel at jungle warfare, their striated coloration enabling them to blend into the surrounding vegetation. Their warriors wield heavy three-bladed throwing knives in combat, and are absolutely fearless; there are few more terrifying experiences than an all-out charge by a band of screaming, blood-crazed Ahazu. Ahazu rarely venture beyond their territories the exception being those captured and sold into slavery in civilized lands.

ARIANE

The Ariane are striking in appearance. They have skin the color of onyx, long snowy-white hair, and grey eyes flecked with sparkling silvery motes. Tall and slender of build, Ariane exhibit a grace and serenity approximated only by the enchanting folk of Astar or Thaecia. Their mode of dress is simple but elegant: their capes, flowing garments and high boots are all made of spinifax, a silken cloth derived from the flax-bearing pods of the thistledown plant.

The Ariane are the oldest of Talislanta's inhabitants. The fabled mystic, Hotan, referred to them as "*the Elder Ones*", and claimed to have discovered Ariane records dating back to the Time Before Time. Talislantan scholars now believe that the Ariane were originally not native to Talislanta, but came here ages ago when their own home was ravaged by a terrible cataclysm.

In the north central region of Tamaranth, surrounded on three sides by the purple-hued peaks of the Amethyst Mountains, is a sylvan valley of rare beauty. The woods here exude an ancient magic, as if permeated with the essences of a forgotten age. At the foot of the mountains stands the maze-city of Altan, home of the Ariane. Altan is a fabulous city carved from a single mound of violet stone, using only magic.

The ways of the Ariane are difficult for others to comprehend. On the surface, they seem closed and introspective, as if dreaming or lost in thought. In truth, the Ariane possess an altogether different view of the world than most Talislantans, and are practitioners of the mystic doctrine known as Transascendancy — a philosophy based on the concepts of reincarnation and animism.



The Ariane's belief in Transascendancy has influenced their culture in many ways. To the Ariane, all creatures great and small, and even inanimate materials such as stone and water, are alive. Fearing to do harm to some reincarnating lifeform, the Ariane eat only ripened fruits and vegetables. Their tools and utensils are fashioned from stone or dead wood, never from living trees. Ariane make a distinction between physical age and "spiritual age"; i.e., the number of incarnations that a given spirit has gone through. Spirits who have experienced seven or more incarnations are deemed "wise" or "venerable" by the Ariane. All others are still considered "young".

ARIANE CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'8"-6'2", 100-180 lbs. Onyx-black skin, snowy-white hair, silver-gray eyes, slender build, graceful and serene appearance.

Base Attributes:

INT +2	PER +2	WIL +3
CHA +0	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +3

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Language (Elder Tongue - native), Language (Archaen - native), Language (Low Talislan - fluent), Doctrines (Transascendancy) +2, Cultures (Ariane) +8.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Code of Conduct, Commune with Nature, Mind Shield.

Open Paths: Disciple, Druas, Healer, Magician, Neophyte Magician, Rural, Savant, Urban.

Starting Equipment: tamar; flowing garments, cloak, high boots and headband of spinifax; belt pouch with various herbs, quarterstaff, coin purse with 5 g.l. in assorted currency.

Ariane value the experience of existence above all things, and consider knowledge to be the greatest of treasures. They record the collective histories and experiences of their people on tamar - orbs of violet stone, magically imbued with the thoughts and memories of those who create them. Each Ariane has his or her own tamar, within which is contained the sum total of that individual's experiences. The devices are also used to contain messages, historical data, and other information. By the exchange of tamar, the Ariane are able to communicate their thoughts and feelings in ways which mere words cannot convey. The great obelisk that stands at the center of the maze-city of Altan is actually a massive tamar, which has served as a repository for the accumulated knowledge of the Ariane and their ancestors for countless centuries.

RELATIONS

The Ariane are strict neutrals; they never involve themselves in the affairs of other peoples or governments. Secure in their hidden city they have remained aloof from the affairs of other Talislantans for thousands of years.

RELIGION

Joined in spirit as members of the nature-oriented "cult" of Transascendancy, Ariane are able to commune with all things in nature. Masters of Transascendancy claim to be able to "read" a person's past lives. High Masters of the art are reportedly able to maintain a constant consciousness throughout

any number of future incarnations, and can choose the nature of their successive future reincarnations. To the Ariane, time is "*the river upon which all living things flow enroute to their next incarnation*". "Following the river" in astral form, High Masters are said to be able see into the past or the future.

When an Ariane dies, there is no mourning. It is merely part of the cycle of life, death, and renewal. The body is returned to the earth, and the spirit moves on to its next incarnation. Finally, the deceased's tamar must be brought before the great obelisk at Altan, so that his life experiences can be transferred within.

LANGUAGE

All Ariane are fluent in the Elder Tongue, old Archaen, and common Low Talislan. Additionally, their Transascendant abilities allow them to commune with all things in the natural world. Among their own people, Ariane do not use names, for each knows who the other is.

ADVENTURERS

The majority of the Ariane spend their entire lives in the city of Altan, where they strive to master the secrets of Transascendancy. Yet for some, the search for enlightenment requires them to journey beyond the Forest of Tamaranth, perhaps even to distant lands. Such individuals are known as a Druas, meaning "seeker". Ariane encountered outside of Altan will always be Druas, who have left the maze-city to gather experiences in the outside world.

ARIMITE

A dour and moody lot, the Arimites are swarthy of complexion, with long black hair and dark, deep-set eyes. The customary mode of dress in this region consists of sackcloth garments, animal-hide boots, and bulky fur vests, accented with wristbands, earrings and knives made of black iron.

The origin of the Arimites is uncertain; some say they are descended from Farad traders, who sometimes sail to Arim via the Axis River, and the wild tribes known as the Drukhs. The Arimites hotly deny such claims, and state that they are a distinct and unique ethnic group whose ancestors have occupied the hills of Arim since the Time Before Time.

The population of Arim is divided between the country's rural and urban areas. Rural Arimites dwell in stone huts with thatched roofs and dirt floors. They live under a feudal-type system, with wealthy land owners providing arable land and protection to families in return for half of what they grow or raise. Their urban counterparts dwell in houses made of stone with black iron sheeted or plated roofs, typically streaked red with rust. All Arimite dwellings have heavy wood and reinforced iron doors and shutters, which are always locked to keep out assassins and thieves.

Arimites subsist on grains, wild game, erd's milk, erd cheese, tubers, and domesticated livestock. Roast avir is a particular favorite. In the outlying hill regions, Arimite hunters and trappers still subsist primarily on wild game, as did their ancestors.

The clan is the foremost unit of Arimite society, a holdover from tribal days. Blood ties are strong, and often take precedence over local law. Ari-

mites excel at knife-throwing, which serves both as sport and as a form of self-defense. Most carry a throwing knife or two with them at all times, thereby helping promote the generally unsavory image that these folk bear among other Talislantans.

The Arimites are a humorless people, most of whom live hard lives as miners of the country's considerable mineral wealth. They favor chakos, a fiery liquor brewed in black-iron kegs. Abuse of this potent intoxicant is widespread in Arim, especially among the overworked miners, who seek escape from the tedium of their existence. Even discounting the influence of chakos, various forms of pathologically deviant behavior seem to be ingrained traits among these folk. Accordingly, the Arimites bear a reputation in other lands as cut-throats, an assessment which experts say is not without merit.



ARIMITE CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'2"-6'2", 90-170 lbs. Swarthy complexion, long black hair, dark eyes.

Base Attributes:

INT +0	PER +1	WIL +1
CHA -1	STR +0	DEX +1
CON +1	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC +2	MR +0

Hit Points: 21

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Brawling +1, Cultures (Arimite) +5, Cultures (Drukh +1).

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: None

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Assassin, Bandit, Bodyguard, Caravan Master, Guide, Knife Fighter, Master Craftsman, Miner, Peddler, Pickpocket, Rural, Scout, Siege Engineer, Teamster, Warrior.

Starting Equipment: fur vest, hide boots, sackcloth breeches and shirt or vest, black iron armbands and earrings; bottle of chakos, 2 Daggers.

The theme of revenge runs through Arimite culture. Arimites have long memories, and never forget an affront or insult. This is most evident in the history of the Revenant Cult, a secret society that specializes in revenge-for-hire. Anyone who can afford their fees — which range from as little as ten silver pieces to over 100,000 gold lumens — can obtain the services of the cult. This is done by the simple method of posting a notice in some public place. The prevalence of the cult is such that a Revenant, attired in customary night-grey cloak and veil, will perform the desired service by the following day.

Government officials, common laborers, merchants, and even jealous lovers and irate housewives have all been known to employ the services of the Revenants to settle disputes or avenge affronts. The popularity of this impersonal means of seeking redress is such that, in most parts of Arim, the mere shaking or brandishing of a change purse is considered suggestive of a threat to hire the Revenants. The only way for an intended victim to cancel a Revenant contract is to buy it back — at twice the original price.

RELATIONS

The Ur clans of neighboring Urag and their allies pose a constant threat to the Arimites, and are greatly despised. The Darklings of Urag are regarded as thieves, baby-stealers, and bogey-men, and are usually killed on sight. The Arimites have waged war against the Drukh tribes for over a thousand years, and there is much bad blood between the two. Arim is officially neutral as pertains to Aaman and Zandu.

RELIGION

Arimites are agnostics who place little faith in a supreme being. They rarely practice magic, which most regard as a pastime that only the wealthy or highborn can afford. Still, some dabble in the arcane arts or practice witchcraft, and a few Arimites become accomplished wizards. Arimites bury their dead without ceremony.

LANGUAGE

Arimites speak a version of Low Talislan, liberally flavored with an impressive variety of curse words and epithets. Their dialect is considered crude and uncouth, even by others who speak Low Talislan. Common names for males typically consist of two syllables, such as Hakmir, Yaku, and Abdul. Female names usually have three syllables, like Hakmira, Yakuo, and Abdul.

ADVENTURERS

Arimite adventures can be found across the length and breadth of Talislanta. Life in Arim can be grim and many seek to escape this land through adventuring.

CYMRILIAN

Tall and slender in stature, Cymrilians have pale green skin and hair, with golden eyes and handsome features. All types of exotic apparel are in vogue, with magical enhancements used to alter appearance as desired.

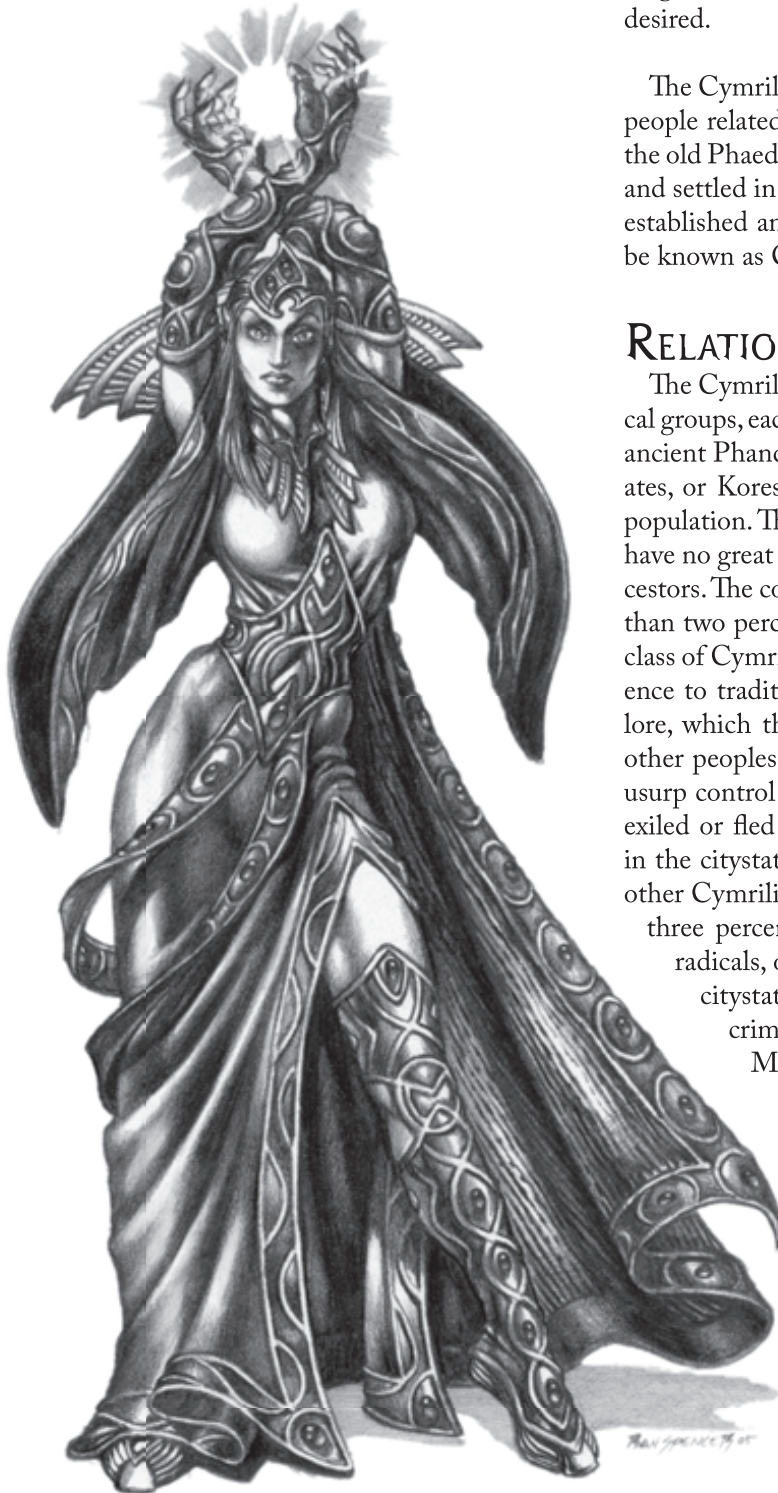
The Cymrilians are descended from the Phandre, a people related to the ancient Archaens. Exiled from the old Phaedran Empire, the Phandre fled eastwards and settled in the woodlands of Cymril. In time they established an independent citystate, which came to be known as Cymril.

RELATIONS

The Cymrilian people are divided into three political groups, each of which had their origins among the ancient Phandre. The most numerous are the moderates, or Koresians, who comprise about 95% of the population. These folk are flexible in their views, and have no great attachment to the old ways of their ancestors. The conservatives, or Tanasians, make-up less than two percent of the population. Once the ruling class of Cymril, they are known for their strict adherence to tradition and stern views regarding magical lore, which they believe should not be shared with other peoples. Following an unsuccessful attempt to usurp control of the monarchy, most Tanasians were exiled or fled to distant lands. The few who remain in the citystate are regarded with some suspicion by other Cymrilians. The third group, comprising about three percent of the population, is known as the

radicals, or Pharesians. Most Pharesians left the citystate long ago, protesting against the discriminatory practices of the conservatives.

Many became peddlers of magical paraphernalia, traversing the Cymrilian countryside and beyond.



CYMRILIAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 6'-6'4", 120-160 lbs. Pale green skin and hair, golden eyes, slender build, handsome features; may alter appearance with magical enhancements.

Base Attributes:

INT +1	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC +0	MR +3

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (High Talislan - fluent), Language (Archaen - fluent), Cultures (Cymrilian) +5, Cultures (Seven Kingdoms) +3, Fashion (Seven Kingdoms) +5.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: None

Open Paths: Airman, Alumnus, Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Aristocrat, Burglar, Captain, Caravan Master, Charlatan, Courtesan, Diplomat, Duelist, Enchanter, Gambler, Healer, Herbalist, Litigator, Magician, Master Craftsman, Merchant, Neophyte Magician, Peddler, Pickpocket, Savant, Teamster, Urban, Warrior.

Starting Equipment: high collared cloak, breeches and tunic of various colors; dyed leather boots; minor magical trinket, choice of weapon; 25 gl in gold pentacles. (*Cymrilian characters may replace any armor received from Paths with spangalor*)

**Players should select an ethnic group for their Cymrilian character:*

Koresian: +1 to any one primary attribute

Pharesian: +1 to PER

Tanasian: +1 to INT

RELIGION

Cymrilians are not an especially devout people. Most are more interested in magic than religion, which is not surprising given the peculiarities of Cymrilian culture. Though practicing magicians make up less than one-tenth of the populace, Cymrilians of all ages possess an insatiable curiosity as pertains to magic.

Cymrilians inter their dead in crystal sarcophagi, a practice that goes back hundreds of years to the founding of the nation-state. The color of the crystal used in the making of these funerary devices has varied from one age to the next, though until recent times variations of green and yellow were the most popular hues.

LANGUAGE

Cymrilians converse in either High or Low Talislan, depending upon their profession, level of education, and purported degree of sophistication. Common names are derived from old Archaen nomenclature, as in Celene, Cirelle, Califax, Merdigan, and Pandaran.

ADVENTURERS

Cymril plays an important role in the Seven Kingdoms, both as a supplier of magical wares and as an integral part of the confederation's defenses and diplomatic efforts. Cymrilian ambassadors represent the Seven Kingdoms' interests in many foreign countries, including Carantheum, the Independent Citystates, the Western Lands, and even the Quan Empire. Likewise, Cymrilian adventurers can be found the length and breadth of the continent seeking lost magics or other treasures.

DANUVIAN

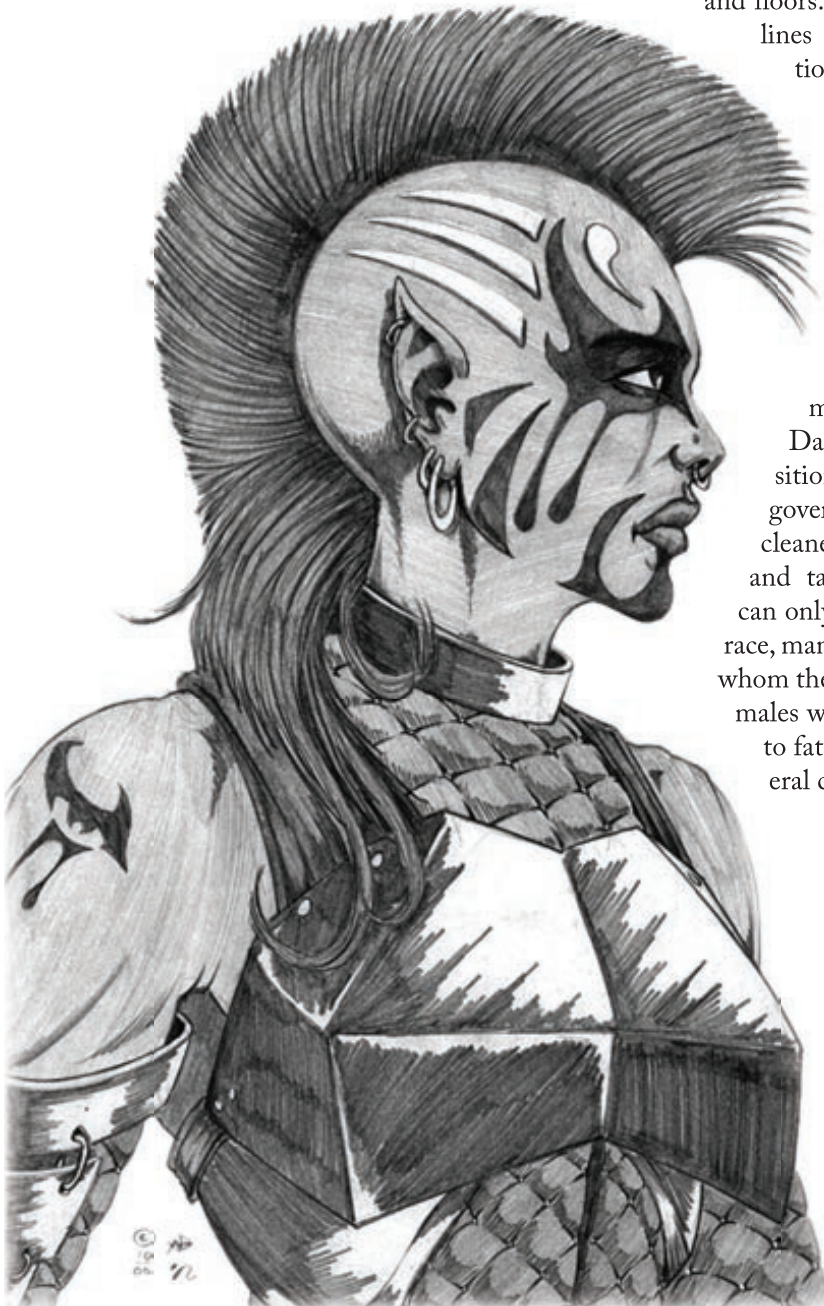
Danuvian females are tall and bronze-skinned, with strong features. They decorate their faces with bold pigments, dress in martial attire replete with iron torc and corslet, and wear their hair in a stiffly-lacquered crest. Danuvian males tend to be smaller, physically weaker, and somewhat more pale of complexion. They dress in robes and sandals, and arrange their hair in elaborate coiffures.

Descendants of the ancient Phaedrans, the Danuvians were exiled from the Western Lands during the latter part of the Cult Wars. They settled in the eastern Wilderlands and established the independent citystate of Danuvia in the year 480.

The Danuvians live in a walled city of brick, stone, and mortar. Their dwellings are spacious, with high ceilings and hides draped across their furnishings and floors. Danuvian society is divided along

lines of gender. Females hold all positions of authority, while males serve a subservient role and are treated as inferiors. Females may take as many husbands as they can support, and may divorce an unwanted mate at any time. Female children are greatly favored; they inherit their mother's name and, by association, her status.

Women raise their daughters, and men raise their sons. The majority of Danuvian females are employed in positions of influence in the military and government. Danuvian males are house-cleaners, artists, horticulturists, weavers, and tailors. Though Danuvian females can only procreate with males of their own race, many actively seek males of other races, whom they prefer as consorts. Thus many females will have at least one Danuvian male to father her offspring, but also have several consorts of other races.



DANUVIAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 6'2"-6'6", 160-200 lbs. Bronze skin, black mane in lacquered crest or long and braided, strong features, face decorated with pigments.

Base Attributes:

INT +0/+0	PER +1/+1	WIL +0/-2
CHA +0/+2	STR +3/-2	DEX +3/+1
CON +2/-1	SPD +1/+0	
CR +4/-5	RC: +1/-5	MR: +0/+0

*Female/Male

Hit Points: 22

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Cultures (Danuvian) +5, Brawling +1 (females only), Fashion +3 (males only), Art or Music +1 (males only) .

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: None

Open Paths: Aristocrat, Bodyguard, Gladiator, Hussar, Urban, Warrior.

Starting Equipment: black iron corselet; hip-high leather boots; red iron earrings; 40 gl in assorted currency. (*Danuvian characters may replace any armor received from Paths with a corselet & bracers*).

Note: Male Danuvians rarely travel beyond the confines of the City-State of Danuvia.

The Conjugal Feast is a colorful pageant that is held in Danuvia each year, on the 42nd of Drome. This event features a procession of males, each competing for the affection of the Danuvian queen. The top three contestants are rewarded by being appointed to the queen's "harem" of male consorts. The Queen's Ministers bid on the remaining eligible males.

RELATIONS

Danuvia is officially a neutral, independent state. However, it clearly sides with the Seven Kingdoms on the issue of the Za tribes, and is sympathetic to Carantheum, an important trading partner. Danuvia is considered vital to the defense of the other independent citystates, and to the Wilderlands territories in general.

RELIGION

The Danuvians have no formal religion, though they express reverence for a war god similar in some ways to Zoriah, the Kang's God of War. However, in the Danuvian interpretation, the god is called Danu, and is a female. Danuvian females are given a warrior's funeral and buried with honor, along with their best weapons and ceremonial armor. Danuvian males are buried in wooden coffins, without great fanfare.

LANGUAGE

Females Danuvians converse primarily in Low Talislan. Males speak High Talislan exclusively, in order to avoid being accused of being too "aggressive". Female names typically have the U sound like Ullu, Ular, Alu and Ozulu. Male names can vary by Povyn, Daryn and Bryn are common.

ADVENTURERS

Lacking in any form of ambition, Danuvian males are generally weak, docile, and subservient to the female population. This is a tradition among Danuvian males, and there is no stigma associated with such behavior. In fact, a male who exhibits aggressive behavior is considered "pushy" or disrespectful, and may be disciplined in order to keep him in his place. Danuvian adventurers are always female.

DHUNA

An olive-skinned folk, the Dhuna have jet-black hair and expressive features. The females dress in linen robes, cloaks, and tunics, with sandals or boots. Male Dhuna wear shirts, breeches, and cloaks, with knee-high boots of soft leather.

The Dhuna are believed to be related to the Sarista gypsy folk and the Zandir. Persecuted for practicing witchcraft, their ancestors were forced to seek refuge in the forests of Werewood following the Phaedran Cult Wars. Hidden deep in these woods the Dhuna discovered a number of sacred groves, each demarcated by a circular ring of ten-foot tall runestones. Here they settled, and remain to the present day.

The Dhuna live in communal groups, called covens, ranging in size from small family groups of less than a dozen to large fraternal orders that may number into the hundreds. Each coven has its own settlement. Dhuna live in simple huts

made of stone and earth, and roofed with woven thatch. The huts are well-hidden by the surrounding woods, and occasionally by certain spells and charms, as well.

Dhuna are liberal in their views towards matrimony; both males and females may have more than one spouse. Covens live together in their communal dwellings, but are free to come and go as they please. The Dhuna are vegetarians, subsisting on a diet of wild berries, mushrooms, roots, tubers, and other edible plants, all of which are readily available in Witchwood — provided one knows where to look.

The Dhuna are practitioners of witchcraft, and are thought to have



DHUNA CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'-5'10", 90-150 lbs. Olive skin, black hair, expressive features, romantic or melodramatic appearance.

Base Attributes:

INT +2	PER +1	WIL +1
CHA +6/+1*	STR -1/+1	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +0/+2	RC +0/+2	MR +3/+0

*females/males

Hit Points: 18

Skills: Language (Elder Tongue - native), Language (Low Talislan - fluent), Cultures (Dhuna) +5, Cultures (Sarista) +1, Survival (forest) +1.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Dhuna Kiss

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Guide, Healer, Herbalist, Hunter, Initiate Witch, Rural, Scout, Witch.

Starting Equipment: *Females:* Linen robe and tunic; sandlas or boots; *Males:* linen short and breeches; knee-high soft leather boots; *Both:* long cloak and belt pouch with various herbs, 5 gl in assorted currency.

strange powers, such as the ability to cast curses by means of 'the evil eye'. The womenfolk are said to possess extraordinary talents, not the least of which is the reputed ability of Dhuna witchwomen to capture a man's heart with but a single kiss. Long persecuted for their pagan beliefs, the Dhuna are highly suspicious of outsiders. Such suspicions are warranted, as the covens are still persecuted by Aamanian witch-hunters to the present day.

certain of which may date back to the Age of Mystery. Witchgates play an important role in certain of these rituals, and may be used to summon entities from other planes of existence.

Dhuna inter the dead along with their clothes and possessions in hidden caves warded with runes and symbols. Believing that it is unwise to disturb the sleep of the dead, Dhuna do their best to avoid such places.

RELATIONS

Aside from their trade contacts, the Dhuna have no formal relations with other countries or peoples. No other folk are allowed to pass through Dhuna territory without their permission.

RELIGION

All Dhuna covens claim alliance to one of three general Orders: White, Black, or Grey. Covens of the White Order focus on the creative and fertile aspects of nature, and are diametrically opposed to the Black covens, who employ the destructive forces of nature. Grey covens seek a balance between the two, while favoring neither.

The covens gather together during certain cycles of the suns and moons, meeting in secret among the ancient runestones. Here the Dhuna hold their rituals,

LANGUAGE

Though some Dhuna speak Low Talislan, the language most used by these people is the arcane Elder Tongue. Dhuna names are said to date back to the Forgotten Age, and indeed have a somewhat archaic sound, as in Alasta, Abramelus, Perdurabo, Nagina, and Mecasefir.

ADVENTURERS

Dhuna rarely travel beyond the borders to Were-wood for fear of persecution. Occasionally a Dhuna will take up the adventuring life, bringing their witchcraft secrets along with them. Some few Dhuna are outcasts from their Covens and reside in northern Zandu or amongst the Sarista.

DJAFFIR

The Djaffir are uniformly slender and wiry of build, dark skinned, and of average height. Flowing head dresses, robes, and cloaks of beige or white linen are worn by both tribes, along with boots of soft animal hide. All Djaffir wear traditional fetish-masks made of cured hide and decorated with occult symbology.

The Djaffir people are comprised of many families and clans, each of which belongs to one of two main tribes: merchant traders or bandits. By far the most numerous of the two tribes, the Djaffir merchants make their living by buying and selling goods from distant lands and importing them across the continent in large caravans. They also breed aht-ra and other beasts, which they sell at markets from the Western Lands to the Quan Empire. The bandit tribes are mainly caravan robbers, though on rare occasions they have been known to raid small settlements and encampments, taking anything of value that can be carried off.



DJAFFIR CHARACTERS

Attributes: 5'-6', 80-160 lbs. Dark brown skin, hair, and eyes, wiry build.

Base Attributes:

INT +1	PER +1	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR +0	DEX +1
CON +3	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC +0	MR +0

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Language (Nomadic - native), Language (High Talislan - fluent), Language (Low Talislan - fluent), Cultures (Djaffa) +5, Cultures (select one) +1, Ride (Aht-Ra) +1 Survival (desert) +1.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Magic Item: *Djaffir Fetish Mask*

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Bandit, Caravan Master, Guide, Healer, Magician, Neophyte Magician, Nomadic, Peddler, Scout, Talismancer, Teamster.

Starting Equipment: Cloak, robes and headress of linen; aht-ra leather boots; curved dagger; 25 gl in assorted currency.

It is the peculiar custom of all Djaffir to wear leather fetish masks, which cover the entire face. The Djaffir will not remove these masks except in the privacy of their tents, believing that "the face mirrors the soul", and that their masks protect them from hostile magics. These devices do indeed seem to confer some protection from magical influences, and certainly are of practical use against sand storms. Individuals of a more skeptical nature claim that the Djaffir wear masks simply to conceal their identities from those whom they intend, by one means or another, to eventually relieve of their money.

RELATIONS

The Djaffir are allies and friends of the Dracartans, both of whom despise the Rajans. They are also on good terms with the Yitek, Yassan, and to a lesser extent, the Danelek. The Djaffir and Kasmirans have been trading partners for many years, despite some animosity between the two. Djaffir complain that the Kasmirans are cheap, while the Kasmirans complain that Djaffir merchants are no different than Djaffir bandits. Some say both make valid points.

RELIGION

The Djaffir are a devoutly religious people who revere the deity, Creator, whom they depict as a desert wanderer who watches over all nomads. Djaffir "priests" and "priestesses" are known as wizards, but serve mainly as tribal healers and seers. They are often called upon to interpret the meaning of

events, which are regarded as omens of symbolic, if not actual, significance. Djaffir wizards make the fetish-masks worn by all their people. They are also employed to cast spells of warding upon the bodies of the deceased, in order to protect them from grave robbers.

LANGUAGE

Djaffir speak Nomadic and both High and Low Talislan. Since Djaffa are a well traveled race, it is not uncommon to find individual who speak two, three or even more languages. Djaffir first names often begin with the prefix "Dj". For example: Djamal al Arin, Djerai djen Harune, Djalla il Faruud, and so on.

ADVENTURERS

Both bandit and merchant Djaffir travel the continent widely. As such, they often become familiar with other cultures and normally make excellent adventurers. Their desert survival skills, business acumen and talent with a scimitar can all be put to good use by a band of adventurers.

DRACARTAN

The Dracartans are tall and jade-skinned, with chiseled features. They dress in flowing robes of fine white linen, and adorn themselves with necklaces, bracers and torcs of red iron.

Formerly a tribe of poor nomadic wanderers, the ancestors of these hardy folk settled in the Red Desert some centuries ago. With the re-discovery of the lost art of Thaumaturgy, the Dracartans learned how to create red iron, a metal superior in all aspects to common black iron. The Dracartan people prospered, and Carantheum soon became a strong and prosperous nation.

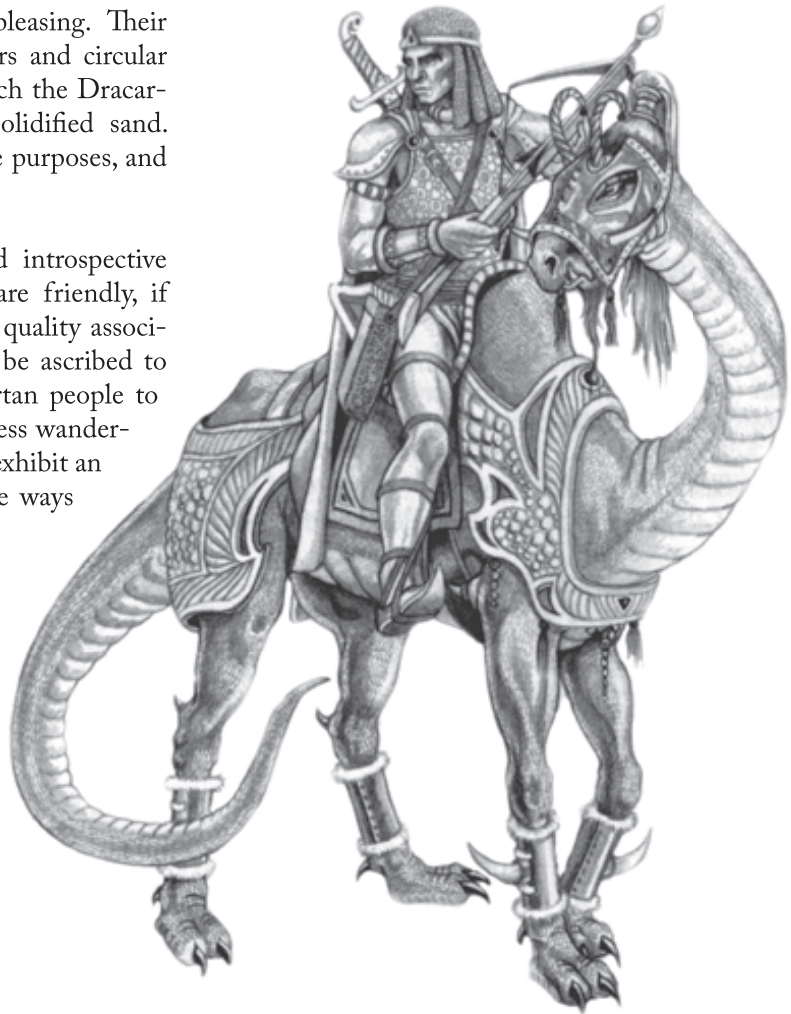
With little more than their own ingenuity and thaumaturgical talents, the Dracartans have built a flourishing and sophisticated civilization in the midst of a barren desert. Dracartan architecture tends to be on the grand scale, but aesthetically pleasing. Their cities are comprised of domed towers and circular structures of whitewashed stone, which the Dracartans make from thaumaturgically solidified sand. Red iron plating is used for defensive purposes, and to add decorative touches.

The Dracartans are a moody and introspective people, prone to brooding. Most are friendly, if somewhat reserved; frivolity is not a quality associated with these folk. This trait can be ascribed to the unending struggle of the Dracartan people to survive, first as a tribe, then as homeless wanderers, and now as a nation. Dracartans exhibit an admirable degree of tolerance for the ways and beliefs of most other peoples, except as pertains to the inhabitants of Faradun, the Quan Empire, and Rajinnar. The former two, while accorded a modicum of courtesy in Carantheum, are regarded with suspicion and distrust. The prevailing attitude towards Rajans is less indistinct, and can be categorized as "murderous." Enemies of the Dracartans since their nomadic days, the Rajans have long sought to wrest control of the Red Desert and its wealth of minerals from Carantheum, and there is no love

lost between these two peoples. Despite their current wealth and prosperity, the Dracartans remember the old days when they had nothing.

RELATIONS

The Dracartans have good relations with the Djafir and Yitek tribes, whom they have known since the time of their nomadic ancestors. They have close ties to the Yassan, a people displaced by The Great Disaster and given safe haven in the Dracartan settlement of Nadan. The nation-states comprising the Seven Kingdoms are also considered to be close friends.



DRACARTAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 6'-7', 125-240 lbs. Jade-green skin, dark hair and eyes, chiseled features.

Base Attributes:

INT +1	PER +1	WIL +1
CHA +0	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +2	SPD +0	
CR +0/+2	RC +1	MR +0/+2

**Dracartan characters may select either CR +2 or MR +2*

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Language (Nomadic - native), Language (Low Talislan - fluent), Cultures (Dracartan) +5, Survival (desert) +1.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: None

Open Paths: Acolyte (Jamba), Alumnus, Apprentice Craftsman, Aristocrat, Bodyguard, Burglar, Captain, Caravan Master, Courtesan, Diplomat, Healer, Hussar, Magician, Master Craftsman, Merchant, Neophyte Magician, Novice Thaumaturge, Pickpocket, Priest, Sailor, Savant, Scout, Siege Engineer, Thaumaturge, Urban, Warrior

Starting Equipment: linen shirt and breeches; cap or linen headress; red iron torc and bracers; 40 gl in dracartan pyramids. (*Dracartan characters may replace any armor received from Paths with red iron versions at no additional cost*).

RELIGION

The folk of Carantheum revere Jamba, the mysterious god of their nomadic ancestors. Dracartans build pyramid-shaped shrines in honor of their patron, whose ways are said to be beyond the understanding of mere mortals. According to legend, it was Jamba who guided the Dracartans into the Red Desert and told them where to find the fabled seventeen Ruby Tablets practice many a diverse array of crafts and professions.

LANGUAGE

Most Dracartans are bilingual, speaking a simplified version of High Talislan and the language of their ancestors, Nomadic. The former, stripped of some of its more pretentious affects, is used extensively in everyday life, and in all dealings with civilized peoples. The latter tongue is reserved for matters pertaining to the Dracartans themselves, and to converse with nomadic peoples such as the Djaffir and Orgovians. Common male names end in an "a", and female names end in "al". For example: T'Jama, K'Tara, M'Dama (males), K'Jamal, K'Taral, M'Daral (females).

ADVENTURERS

Dracartan desert scouts are in high demand as scouts and fighters. Dracartan scholars are amongst only a handful of Talislantans to understand the metaphysical science of Thaumaturgy.

FERRAN

Ferrans are rodent-faced humanoid of short stature. Their bodies are covered with a coat of dirty brown fur, and they dress in scavenged bits of clothing and gear.

Ferrans are believed to be descended from the Jaka or Beastmen. During The Great Disaster, their ancestors hid in underground tunnels and burrows in order to avoid the destruction. Eventually, they adapted to their subterranean surroundings, smaller and more agile forms being best suited to movement underground.

Ferrans live in underground warrens comprised of a maze of narrow tunnels, pits, shafts, and peep-holes. Compact of size, with excellent night vision and keen senses, Ferrans navigate such places with ease. Ferrans congregate in groups called packs, which may range in size from well over a hundred individuals to as few as a dozen or so. The packs come forth at

night to scrounge for food or to rob unwary travelers of their possessions, taking stolen goods back to their lairs and hiding them in deep holes. Ferrans will eat practically anything except carrion; what others regard as garbage may well be considered a feast by Ferran standards.

Ferrans are incredibly prolific; the average adult female will give birth to a litter of a dozen or more babies every three months. Males and females change partners often, females being attracted to males who have acquired the most goods and loot. The young are raised in underground nurseries until they are old enough to scavenge with the rest of the pack.



FERRAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 3'6"-4'4", 50-75 lbs. Coarse brown fur, rodent-like features, hairless tail, invariably dirty.

Base Attributes:

INT +1	PER +3	WIL -2
CHA -2	STR -3	DEX +6
CON +2	SPD +4	
CR +1	RC +0	MR -2

Hit Points: 10

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Cultures (Ferran) +5, Survival (underground) +1, Survival (urban) +1.

Special Abilities: Smell with PER +9; Bite does DR 2

Quirks: Stench

Open Paths: Beggar, Burglar, Peddler, Pickpocket, Salvager.

Starting Equipment: Tattered loincloth or tunic; belt pouch; dagger; assorted worthless baubles; 3 gl in assorted currency

Ferrans are virtual pack-rats who hoard items of all sorts. Every male has his own hide-hole, in which he keeps his most prized possessions – much of it useless junk by the standards of other folk, but every piece a precious treasure to a Ferran. Scavengers by trade and preference, a Ferran will not acquire by honest means anything that he or she can steal — however, the preferred term for such activities is “finding”. Ferrans avoid direct conflict whenever possible, preferring instead to utilize stealth, speed, and the element of surprise. If attacked, they are capable of releasing a noxious scent that most creatures find repulsive.

Ferrans do not practice art, music, or craftsmanship. They make nothing of their own, but scavenge everything that they need. Ferrans cannot stand loud music, which hurts their sensitive ears.

RELATIONS

Ferrans have no allies, and no formal relations with other nations or peoples. Their packs are found throughout the Wilderlands region, and to a lesser extent, in the Western Lands. Ferrans sometimes travel to other countries, where they may operate as thieves, spies, and adventurers. They are seldom welcome in civilized lands, for the Ferran scent is considered offensive by most other races.

RELIGION

Ferrans have no talent for magic, and lack all interest in the concept of religion. “Finding”, and acquiring a mass of loot, is all that matters to these folk. Ferrans bury their dead above ground, covering the body with stones and debris after dividing-up the deceased’s possessions.

LANGUAGE

Ferrans speak a crude version of Low Talislan. Common names end with a double “X”, “K” or “Z”, as in Pixx, Firzz, Shizz, Fezz, and Dworkk.

ADVENTURERS

Ferran packs are led by a pack leader; typically a male who has shown that he has a real nose for scavenging and pilfering, and has amassed a rich horde of “treasure”. Pack leaders plan thieving raids, allocate loot, and also attract the most coveted females. If a Ferran is not pulling his or her weight, the pack leader may expel the culprit from the pack. Such as loss of face can only be remedied by performing some heroic act of theft or scavenging.

GNOMEKIN

The Gnomekin are a diminutive folk who average just over three feet in height. They have nut-brown complexions, muscular bodies, and wide-eyed, almost childlike features. Both the males and females have a crest of soft, black fur running from the center of the forehead to the small of the back.

Gnomekin live in underground colonies, each comprised of a number of single-family dwellings known as nooks. Gnomekin nooks are like small

caves, lined with carpets of soft and sweet-smelling moss; furnishings are spare and made from polished stone covered with moss for comfort. Underground streams and brooks provide fresh water. Phosphorescent fungi provide a faint illumination - enough for a Gnomekin to see clearly, though outsiders sometimes have a hard time getting acclimated to the gloom.

Gnomekin are a warm and friendly folk, possessed of an almost childlike innocence. Their families are close-knit, and often quite large. It is not uncommon for a Gnomekin couple to have a dozen or more offspring (see *All in the Family*). Gnomekin subsist on mushrooms, tubers, roots, and lichen; many tasty dishes are made from these simple ingredients. A sweet and nutritious syrup, made from the sap of certain roots that extend far below the earth, is a favorite drink of the young. Adult Gnomekin prefer mushroom ale.

RELATIONS

Gnomekin mark the Ur and their allies as enemies, and have good reason to be wary of the Satada and Subterranoïds.

They enjoy excellent relations with the other member states of the Seven Kingdoms, but otherwise have few contacts with other countries.



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GNOMEKIN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 2'10"-3'6", 60-100 lbs. Nut-brown complexion, wide green eyes, childlike features, muscular physique, crest of soft black fur from center of forehead to small of back.

Base Attributes:

INT +0	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA +2	STR +0	DEX +3
CON +6	SPD +0	
CR +0/+2*	RC +1	MR +0/+2*

* *Gnomekin characters may select either CR +2 or MR +2.*

Hit Points: 16

Skills: Language (Durnese - native), Language (Low Talislan - fluent), Cultures (Gnomekin) +5, Cultures (Seven Kingdoms) +3, Fashion (Seven Kingdoms) +1, Survival (subterranean) +2.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Natural Climber, Night Vision, Sunblind

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Crystalomancer, Daughter of Terra, Diplomat, Engineer, Guide, Master Craftsman, Merchant, Miner, Peddler, Rural, Scout, Urban, Warrior.

Starting Equipment: Durnean cusps; breeches and tunic of spun moss; leather boots; flask of mushroom ale; belt pouch or sling bag; 20 gl in gold pentacles and/or crystals. (*Gnomekin characters replace any armor received from Paths with scale armor*).

RELIGION

Gnomekin have a deep reverence for the earth and for the earth goddess Terra, who is revered as their people's benefactor. They are not much for dogma or formal ceremonies, but prefer simple prayer services conducted in sacred caverns by the female priestesses of the Great Mother. Gnomekin inter their dead deep in the earth, or as they say, "*close to the Goddess*."

LANGUAGE

Gnomekin are so modest and unassuming by nature that they almost never refer to themselves in conversation. For example, among these folk "*Am pleased to see you*" means "*I am pleased to see you*". Gnomekin speech sounds much like purring. Common names have a lilting sound, such as Abo Ebo, Eno Erobia, Aba Edaba, and Obo Orabio.

ADVENTURERS

Of all the Talisland races it is likely that none knows more about the Underground Highway the Gnomekin. The Gnomekin began a concerted effort to map the full extent of the Underground Highway in the year 607. To date, they have charted most of the tunnels that extend beneath the Seven Kingdoms, and have surveyed parts of the system extending as far east as the Volcanic Hills, as far north as the borders of Narandu, and as far south as the borders of the Dark Coast.

Gnomekin guides and guards are often sought by those finding it necessary to travel underground for any distance. Other Gnomekin travel widely. They can usually be found outside Durne practicing the secret arts of Crystalomancy or acting as merchants and diplomats.

GRYPH

An impressive race of winged humanoids, Gryphs stand up to seven feet tall, with wingspans in excess of twenty-four feet. Their bodies are covered with a thick feathery down, usually brilliant red or orange in color. They have hawk-like visages and bright, piercing eyes.

Originally the first inhabitants of Tamaranth, the Gryphs claim descent from an ancient race of avians who are said to have fled from their ancient homeland and migrated to Talislanta following The Great Disaster. Gryphs have inhabited the Forest of Tamaranth for untold centuries. They share a common ancestry with the Aeriad of the Seven Kingdoms, though the Gryphs do not suffer from the effects of devolution as their western brethren do.

The Gryph clans live in eyries built in the tops of the tallest span-oaks. Their dwellings resemble great bird's nests constructed of tightly woven vines and roofed with canopies of living, leafy boughs. Few stand at altitudes of less than one hundred feet, making access by non-avians a somewhat chancy endeavor. A Gryph settlement may consist of as many as forty eyries, each housing a family of up to eight individuals. The largest settlements often include great "Council Eyries" spanning two or more trees in length and breadth.

Like the birds of prey they resemble, Gryphs are hunters by nature. They have exceptionally keen vision, which enables them to spot from great altitudes even the slightest movement on the ground. The clans subsist primarily on fresh game, usually large predators and other dangerous beasts.



The Winged Folk (as Gryphs are sometimes called) are an independent and strong-willed race who prize freedom above all things. Gryphs are uncomfortable in enclosed spaces, and cannot survive for long in captivity. They are an honorable people; a Gryph's word is his or her bond, and their promises are never broken. Gryphs despise Stryx, whom they regard as a living plague. Gryphs will break off from other activities in order to attack Stryx who have ventured too close to their domains. A Gryph who has been touched by a Stryx will scour the affected part of his or her body with sand and water at the first opportunity; the same process is used to clean weapons used to kill Stryx.

GYPH CHARACTERS

Appearance: 6'10" - 7'2", 220-280 lbs; Covered with brilliant red and orange feathery down, hawk-like visage, piercing eyes, 24+ foot wingspan, lean and muscular physique.

Base Attributes:

INT +2	PER +4	WIL +2
CHA +0	STR +2	DEX +2
CON +3	SPD +2*	
CR +2	RC +3	MR -2

* on the ground; flying is SPD +8

Hit Points: 24

Skills: Language (Avian - native), Language (Low Talislan - fluent), Cultures (Gryph) +5, Cultures (Ariane) +2.

Special Abilities: May converse with all avian species,. A Gryph's talons inflict DR 3 (+ STR)

Quirks: Aerial Combat, Acute Sense (vision), Phobia (underground)

Open Paths: Archer, Guide, Hunter, Rural, Scout, Talismaner.

Starting Equipment: loin cloth and bracers of exomorph hide; shoulder pouch; belt pouch with 20 gold lumens in precious stones. (*Gryph characters never receive any armor from Path selection. They may also replace any weapon received from Paths with a duar.*)

RELATIONS

Through their travels and communications with other avian species, the Gryph clans are often aware of events that have transpired in even the most far away places. With the exception of the Ariane, and to a lesser extent the Blue Aeriad of Vardune, they have close relations few peoples.

RELIGION

Gryphs revere the deity Creator, whom they depict as a powerful winged warrior. Unlike the Aeriad, Gryphs hold no formal religious ceremonies or observances, though every Gryph warrior says a silent prayer to his or her god before going into battle. Like Aeriad, Gryphs believe the legend of the "Tree of Life", which is thought to be the ancestral home of the original avian race. When a Gryph dies, the body is borne aloft and laid to rest on a bower of branches atop the tallest span-oak tree.

LANGUAGE

Gryphs speak avian and Talislan. All Gryphs have the ability to speak with avian creatures. Gryph names are similar to Aeriad names in that both sound a lot like bird calls. For example: Rawk, Kyaa, Chak, Kyaw, and Kree. Unlike Aeriad, Gryphs do not "stutter" when speaking, though they pronounce "ch" or "k" sounds very forcefully.

ADVENTURERS

Although they are territorial by nature, Gryphs will sometimes leave their eyries to travel to distant lands. A rare few have chosen to live amongst men, taking to adventuring for profit or working as mercenary scouts, guides, or bounty hunters. However, the majority of Gryphs consider such prospects to be only slightly more desirable than contracting a case of gange (also known as "the slow death").

JAKA

The Jaka are a striking people, with sleek black fur, a silvery-gray mane, and blazing green eyes. Most stand about six feet in height, a certain lithe muscularity being a common trait of all members of this race. Jaka dress in loincloths, with vests of toughened and boiled leather for protection. Most favor leg and arm bracers as decoration an additional armor. All wear pendants that the Jaka believe protect them from the “evil eye”.

The Jaka claim to descend from a noble race of intelligent beast-folk who once roamed the forests of northern Talislanta before the coming of the Archans. They do not identify with most of the other wild tribes, and consider themselves superior to such races as the Beastmen and Mondre Khan.

It is difficult to generalize about the Jaka, as they are a fiercely independent folk who value freedom above

all things. Some prefer to live alone, or in mated pairs. Others hunt or trade in small bands of up to a dozen or so individuals. They make no permanent dwellings, though a group of Jaka may mark an expanse of woods or hills as their territory and settle in the region for a time. Most prefer to live in the wild, though some readily associate with “civilized” peoples. When male and female Jaka mate it is usually for life. Jaka females rarely give birth to more than two litters in their lifetime, and almost always give birth to twins.

When traveling in hunting or trading bands Jaka will often be led by the most experienced member of the group. Otherwise, they share responsibilities and decision-making, though even this is too much structure for those Jaka who prefer to be alone.

RELATIONS

Jaka are normally peaceful, but if threatened, they will respond with great ferocity. Despite a dread of magic, they are fearless in battle.

Jaka hunters often transport hides, horn and wild beasts from this region for trade in Arim and Zandu. Jaka who live in or travel through civilized regions use coin. All others use barter.

The Jaka remain as they always have been: independent and free to do as they wish, never bound to any nation or creed. Talislantans who are ignorant of their ways sometimes confuse Jaka with Beastmen or other savage races. To a Jaka, this is a grave insult.

Jaka fashion superior horn bows and articles of bone, hide, and furs, decorating their wares with elaborate designs. Jaka do not play musical instruments, though singing is an old tradition among these folk. To most other peoples, Jaka “songs” sound like the howling of timber-beasts.



JAKA CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'10"-6'2", 120-180 lbs. Sleek black fur, silvery-gray mane, blazing green eyes, lithe musculature, features a cross between wolf and panther.

Base Attributes:

INT -1	PER +4	WIL +0
CHA -2	STR +1	DEX +3
CON +1	SPD +3	
CR +2	RC +4	MR +0

Hit Points: 22

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Cultures (Jaka) +5, Stealth +2, Survival (forest) +2.

Special Abilities: Sixth Sense +5; without their talismans jaka react to magic with INT -4.

Quirks: Night Vision, Soft Landing, Stealthy, Fear (magic), Magic Item: *Luck Talisman*

Open Paths: Archer, Beastmaster, Guide, Healer, Hunter, Peddler, Scout, Talismancer, Tribal, Wandering.

Starting Equipment: Loincloth, vest & arm and leg bracers (all boiled leather); 25 gl in skins, hides and other valuables.

Jaka characters must replace any armor received from Paths with light or heavy leather armor.

Jaka characters may add the Beast Lore Quirk to their list of available Quirks regardless of Path.

RELIGION

Jaka have no formal religion, though they claim reverence for a manifestation of one of the Forgotten Gods, known in legend as the Beast-God. The Jaka call their deity Jakar, meaning Lord of the Beasts. According to legend Jakar was the scion and companion of Creator, who made him the first beast to walk erect and the master of all other animals in the forest. It was Jakar and his mate, Jalar, who gave birth to the race of Jaka, they say, and who taught the first Jaka the secret lore of the Beastmasters. Following The Great Disaster the Jaka lost many of the secrets of their ancestors. Ever since, Jaka have had a superstitious dread of magic. The last request of all Jaka is to be buried in the woods like their ancestors, rather than some "civilized" land.

Among many Talislantans, it is considered an established fact that the Jaka exhibit a deep-rooted aversion for Magic, a trait that many believe is based upon ignorance and superstition. What is not generally known is that the Jaka do not fear Magic so much as they distrust it.

This attitude can be traced to two sources. First, the Jaka have seen the effects that The Great Disaster had on the continent of Talislanta, and are well aware of the destructive and unpredictable forces that can be unleashed by the misuse of Magic. Second, and perhaps more importantly, close proximity to power-

ful magical energies can activate the Jaka's uncanny "sixth sense", which warns them when they are in the presence of danger; a not altogether inappropriate response, given the potential for mishaps and unintentional side-effects associated with the use of Magic.

LANGUAGE

Jaka converse in Sign and a dialect of Low Talislan. Their speech is punctuated by growls and snarls, which are used for emphasis. Common Jaka names include Tane, Jarak, Tala, Jata, Taka, Jabas, and Tavas.

ADVENTURERS

Though considered barbaric by most Talislantans, the Jaka are actually a complex and cunning folk. They are canny traders, and as mercenaries are much in demand as scouts, hunters and guides. A few also possess some talent for the taming of wild beasts, an ability which in ancient times led to the ancestors of the Jaka being known as "the Beastmasters of the Northern Woods."

While the Jaka are loners at heart, they are known to make steadfast, if not particularly sociable, companions. They are equally famous for turning on those who seek to cross them, and are quite capable of cold-blooded murder if the situation warrants.

JHANGARAN

Jhangarans are odd and ungainly in appearance. They have marbled brown and sepia-colored skin, elongated limbs, elliptical craniums and pinched, angular features. Both the males and females are hairless, and may attain heights in excess of six and a half feet. They go about barefoot, and wear only loincloths and bands of coarse cloth wrapped about their arms and legs.

The Jhangarans are thought to be descended from a mixture of several wild humanoid peoples. Their striated skin suggests a possible connection with the Ahazu tribes of the Dark Coast.

Jhangarans are a sullen and superstitious people, prone to displays of hostile or even violent behavior. They live in tribal groups, typically comprised of individuals of the same occupation.

Within these tribal groups are subdivisions representing clans – loosely-knit family units comprised of

individuals related by birth, “marriage”, or even more specious connections. There is little sense of unity, and less cooperation, among these folk.

Conditions in a typical Jhangaran settlement are abysmal. Open ditches serve as sewage lines, and the air is heavy with the stench of filth and decay. The huts are alive with insects and vermin, and ragged bands of filthy children run around unattended. An outer wall constructed of rude axe-hewn timbers affords their settlements some protection from against attack by bandits, wild beasts, and murderous hordes of water raknids. The tribes subsist on sea-slugs and raw meat, do not use fire, and have no knowledge of metal-working or magic. Jhangarans have a great weakness for alcohol, and consume as much cheap ale and grog as they can afford. Unfortunately, alcohol makes them mad and unpredictable.

The Jhangaran people are divided into four different tribes, who differentiate themselves by the color of the arm and leg-wrappings that they wear. Mud-Miners wear grey, Marsh-Hunters wear green, black is for Mercenaries, and red for Outcasts. Rivalries between the four tribes are common, the effects of which may range from prejudicial behavior to all-out warfare. The strangest of the tribes are the Outcasts, who wander the swamps and jungles of Jhangara in groups ranging in size from a half dozen to as many as a hundred individuals (see sidebar). The other tribes regard them with superstitious dread, and will do almost anything to keep a group of Outcasts from approaching their own camps and settlements. It is the belief of the Jhangarans that all Outcasts bear with them the “stigma of doom.” A Jhangaran who is so much as touched by one of “the cursed ones” is immediately branded an Outcast. He or she then has two choices: commit suicide, or join the Outcasts. To kill an Outcast, the Jhangarans believe, brings a terrible curse upon the murderer and his or her family.

RELATIONS

The Aeriad and Zandir tolerate Jhangaran excesses in order to obtain valuable trade goods, but most other Talislantans consider Jhangarans to be untrustworthy. The unscrupulous Farad make no such distinctions, and employ Jhangarans to harvest k'tallah.



JHANGARAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'7"-6'7", 100-200 lbs. Marbled brown and sepia-colored skin, elongated limbs, elliptical cranium, pinched, angular features, hairless.

Base Attributes:

INT -1	PER +2	WIL -1
CHA -2	STR +1	DEX +1
CON +2	SPD +0	
CR +2	RC +3	MR -4

Hit Points: 21

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Cultures (Jhangaran) +5, Survival (swamp) +2.

Special Abilities: None; Outcasts considered to have CHA -10 to other Jhangarans

Quirks: Phobia (the Horag)

Open Paths: Archer, Hunter, Miner, Rural, Tribal, Warrior.

Starting Equipment: loincloth, arm and leg wrappings females also get brief cloth vest); cloak (black for mercenary, green for hunters, gray for miners, red for outcasts); 10 gl in scintilla or hides.

In recent years the Aamanians have sent missionaries to Jhangara in the hope of converting the tribes to Orthodoxy. The missions have met with some success, mainly because Jhangarans are eager to embrace any philosophy that promises them a way out of the swamps.

RELIGION

Jhangarans have no religion, and know nothing about magic. They observe only two ritual days of note: Jha, a holiday viewed by the populace mainly as a good excuse to get as intoxicated as possible; and The Septenarial Concordance, a fourteen-day period in which the seven Talislantan moons remain in alignment. During this time no citizen of Jhangara will dare to venture forth into the swamps at night. The Jhangarans claim that the Horag, a monster of immense proportions, stalks the swamplands during the Septenarial Concordance, searching for victims. Jhangarans accidentally caught in the swamps after sunset during such times have been known to slit their own throats rather than face the terror of this fearsome monster. Jhangarans do not cremate or bury their dead, but merely discard them in the nearest swamp, bog, or ditch.

LANGUAGE

The Jhangaran tongue is a mangled dialect derived from Low Talislan. Jhangarans generally begin all conversation by the use of a single imperative, delivered in a gruff or forceful manner, as in "Hold!", "Hear!", and the popular Jhangaran insult, "Die!". Common names are harsh-sounding, with hard consonants, as in Yazk, Jhank, Kozk, and Kyuk.

ADVENTURERS

Many Jhangarans seek employ as caravan guards or mercenaries. Many more seek adventure as a means of escaping their horrible lives living in a fetid swamp.

KANG

Tall and fierce, Kang have fiery red skin, white pupil-less eyes, and brutal features. Both the males and females wear their long black hair pulled straight back in a single queue. Iron collars and armbands are the fashion among these folk, who customarily attire themselves in armor even when off-duty. So is Kanjiko, a form of scarring used to decorate the body.

The ancestors of the Kang were wild tribesmen of the steppes who reveled in battle, hunted wild tarkus for sport, and loved as fiercely as they fought. In the second century, the Kang tribes united and threatened to take over territories the Quan Empire. They were bought off by the Quan, and were absorbed into the growing Empire that they now serve as loyal guards, soldiers and protectors.

No longer the wild hillmen who once roamed the steppes and slept under the stars, the Kang now live in walled citadels and fortified outposts. Their dwellings are made of rough-hewn stone, with rugged furnishings of carved hardwood and hides arranged about a central fire-pit. Crossed swords and other battle regalia are hung from the walls, proudly displayed as trophies from past engagements.

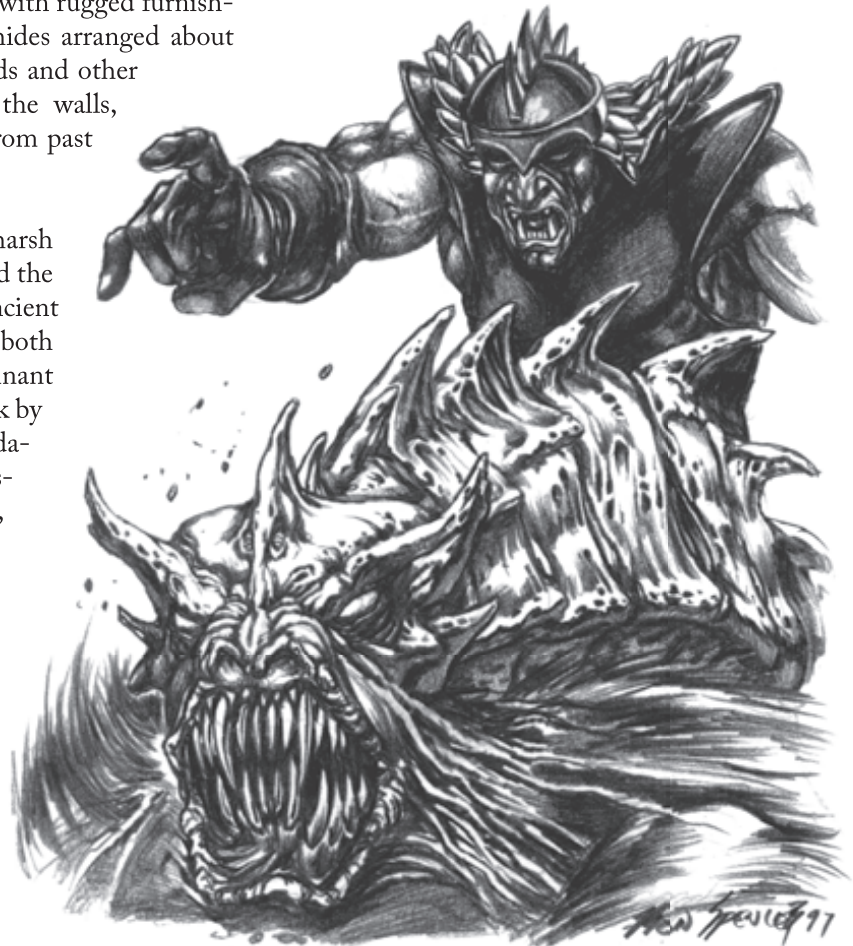
Kang culture reflects the harsh military training that has formed the basis of their upbringing since ancient times. Males and females are both aggressive, competing for dominant status among those of equal rank by blustering and physical intimidation. Kang seethe with wild passions; if insulted or provoked, they find it difficult to restrain themselves. Counteracting this is the intense military training which all Kang undergo from birth, instilling in them a deep-seated respect for authority.

The length and adornment of a Kang's queue is a mark of pride. For festive occasions, the queue may be bound with

silver bands or jeweled rings. In battle, iron rings of leather thongs usually suffice. Kang never wear their hair down or unbound except to bathe. Losing one's queue in battle is considered a terrible disgrace; the victim will know no rest until he or she gains revenge for this evil act by killing the perpetrator and recovering the lost queue.

RELATIONS

Bought off in the past, the Kang now serve the Quan as soldiers of their Empire. The Kang themselves take orders from their Warlord but he himself takes direction from the Emperor of Quan. Relations with the other Quan subject races range from peaceful coexistence to open warfare. The Ispasians manage the Empire's trade and economic concerns with exceptional skill; still, the Kang do not trust them. The Sunra and Vajra serve as instructed, though not willingly. The Mandalans continue to exhibit an out-



KANG CHARACTERS

Appearance: 6'-6'8", 120-220 lbs. Fiery red, leathery skin, white pupil-less eyes, brutal features, long black hair pulled back into queue, kanjiko facial scars.

Base Attributes:

INT +0	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA -2	STR +3	DEX +1
CON +2	SPD +0	
CR +3	RC +0	MR +0

Hit Points: 26

Skills: Language (Quan - native), Cultures (Kang) +5, Cultures (Quan Empire) +2, Weapon (select one) +2, Brawling +1.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Kanquan

Open Paths: Acolyte (Zoriah), Bodyguard, Healer, Hunter, Hussar (strider), Priest, Rural, Siege Engineer, Urban, Warrior.

Starting Equipment: Quilted Mandalan silkcloth tunic; strider leather gauntlets and boots; crimson red cloak; weapon of choice; 40 gl in Quan Emperors. (*Kang characters may replace any armor received from Paths with battle armor*).

wardly placid demeanor, while the Mondre Khan remain hostile and aggressive. During the last years, the Kang Warlord has been lobbying the Quan to take military action against the Suarans of the Volcanic Hills and would like nothing more than to extend the Empire through military conquest. Evidence of the growing power of the Kang is viewed with concern by the leaders of Carantheum and the Seven Kingdoms.

RELIGION

All Kang revere Zoriah, the Red God of War, who is most often pictured as a giant male warrior attired in ceremonial battle armor, and a long queue adorned with spiked silver rings. Kang pray to Zoriah for courage, strength, and victory. In return, they donate one-tenth of their pay to the War God's Temple as an offering. It is rare for Kang to visit the War God's temple except to have their newborn children subjected to the ritual "*Baptism by Fire*", and to attend funeral services for great war heroes. Kang dead are cremated in a solemn ceremony, the size of the funeral pyre reflecting the deceased's *khir*.

LANGUAGE

Kang converse in a modified version of Quan, a language common to most of the indigenous peoples of this region. The Kang's dialect is heavy on action verbs, and is harsh and unmusical to the ear. Common names all begin with "K", as in Kuata, Kiyen, Kudan, Kran, etc.

ADVENTURERS

The vast majority of Kang are soldiers and serve in the Crimson Horde, the military of the Quan Empire. Some few have been assigned to guard duty for trade caravans and thus may find themselves far from the borders of the Empire. Other Kang who have lost their queue may take up the life of an adventurer rather than the humiliation of living amongst other Kang.

KASMIRAN

The Kasmirans are short and lean with odd-looking, shriveled features. They dress in hooded cloaks, loose robes, and curl-toed boots or slippers, apparel well-suited to the extremes of their environment.

Originally a nomadic folk displaced by The Great Disaster, the Kasmirans are a wealthy people, though how they acquired their fortune is unknown; some say they were once partners of the Djaffir. They established settlements in the Kasmir desert around the beginning of the second century.

Kasmirans live in windowless stone towers, their doors barred and locked to protect against thieves. Spy-tubes are used to scan the surroundings before allowing any visitor to enter. They subsist on a simple diet of coarse black bread, desert palm fruit, a type of hard erd's cheese called kasmara, and cups of steaming-hot mochan. Kasmiran families are insular by

nature and suspicious of outsiders. Only members of the same family and ancestral clan truly are trusted; a Kasmiran's lineage is evident in his or her name, which among Kasmirans serves as an individual's references (see Language). Cooperative endeavors with other families can be achieved, though usually only through protracted negotiations. Kasmirans marry late in life, and never divorce. No marriage is allowed to take place without the permission of both families. The husband is the nominal head of the household, though a wife who earns more than her husband may surpass him in influence. Children are raised by the parents until age three, when they are sent to a guild-school to learn a profession.

The Kasmirans are renowned throughout the continent as misers, and as crafty negotiators. The Djaffir merchant tribes, who still do business with the Kasmirans from time to time, commonly refer to them as *tu-beshal*, which means "blood-suckers", though the term carries certain lewd connotations as well. In truth, the Kasmirans are not cheap or stingy; they are just extremely frugal (see sidebar). This is an old habit acquired from the days when the ancestors of the Kasmirans were poor desert nomads, homeless and destitute. In order to ensure that such an occurrence could never happen again, Kasmirans made it a practice to save and safeguard their money, which they keep in personal vaults warded with multiple locks and trap-mechanisms.

In many ways, Kasmirans are different from the other mercantile peoples of Talislanta. Unlike the Ispasians, Kasmirans are hard-working folk who are not afraid to get their hands dirty. They tend to be fiscally conservative, and don't like to invest in large scale commodities or risky ventures. Unlike the Farad, Kasmirans never deal in drugs, stolen goods, or dangerous contraband. Though they can be



KASMIKIRAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 4'6"-5', 70-110 lbs. Mahogany brown skin, shriveled features, hunched posture.

Base Attributes:

INT +2	PER +1	WIL +1
CHA -1	STR -1	DEX +1
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +0	RC +1	MR +1

Hit Points: 19

Skills: Language (Nomadic - native), Language (Low Talislan - native), Cultures (Kasmiran) +5
Cultures (Seven Kingdoms) +3, Haggle +3, Fashion (Kasmir) +2, Weapon (spring) +2.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: None

Open Paths: Alumnus, Apprentice Craftsman, Aristocrat, Enchanter, Litigator, Magician, Master Craftsman, Merchant, Neophyte Magician, Urban.

Starting Equipment: hooded cloak, loose robes, curl-toed slippers; concealed coin purse; heavy brass key ring & keys; assorted locks; iron bound ledger; 500 gl in assorted currency.

shrewd and crafty, most Kasmirans are scrupulously honest, and are sticklers for detail; their contracts are interpreted exactly, to the letter. Still, it is wise to read the fine print before signing a contract with a Kasmiran, in order to avoid the possibility of unpleasant surprises.

RELATIONS

Kasmirans are concerned about the wild tribes that inhabit the territories on Kasmir's eastern border and beyond. Some believe that the Borderlands Legion could not repulse a large-scale assault, and that the three border outposts provide insufficient protection for their country. Accordingly, the King of Kasmir has recommended that funds be raised for the construction of a so-called Wilderlands Wall, which would extend from Sindar to the southern border of Astar. The project would cost millions of gold lumens, however, and some Kasmirans have already begun to grumble about having to bear such an expense.

RELIGION

A small percentage of the Kasmiran population practices magic, mainly for its financial benefits. Kasmirans are atheists; they have no religion, and revere no deities. Some say that the ancestors of the Kasmirans abandoned their god after The Great Disaster, believing that he had forsaken them. Kasmirians bury the dead along with a portion of their wealth in locked stone vaults warded with traps of many sorts.

The buried wealth is considered an investment, and a hedge against inflation or other financial calamities. The traps are a necessary safeguard against tomb-robbers.

LANGUAGE

Kasmirans are fluent in Low Talislan and the old Nomad tongue. Kasmiran names are a combination of personal (first) name, family name, and ancestral clan name. For example, Azi al Din means "Azi of the al family, of the Din tribe". Other common names include Abn na Fal, Abas el Adin, Kafa da Nir, and so on.

ADVENTURERS

Kasmiran are not common adventurers, most preferring the stability and security of their homes to life on the road. Because they are in great demand as trapmakers and artisans, some Kasmiran do travel widely selling their services and wares. Kasmiran adventurers are usually tomb robbers or spellcasters and their high manual dexterity can be of great value to most parties.

MANDALAN

A golden-skinned folk, the Mandalans are slender of build, with almond-shaped eyes and pleasant features. It is the custom of the males to shave their skulls, while the females do the same, leaving only a top-knot of long, black hair. Both sexes wear loose fitting robes or pajama-style garments, typically of silkcloth, a material which is common in the regions in which the Mandalans live.

The origins of the Mandalan race date back to the Forgotten Age, when their nomadic ancestors migrated from the Opal Mountains and established permanent communal settlements along the eastern coasts of what is now the Quan Empire. Here, the Mandalans established a peaceful society devoted to the cultivation of the mystic arts and sciences. The arrival of a succession of hostile nomads ensued soon

afterwards, from the Zhan to the Mazdaks, and the Quan. Each in turn subjugated the Mandalans, who offered no resistance. Each, in their turn, eventually grew complacent and were overthrown by other peoples. Only the peaceful Mandalans remain as they were before.

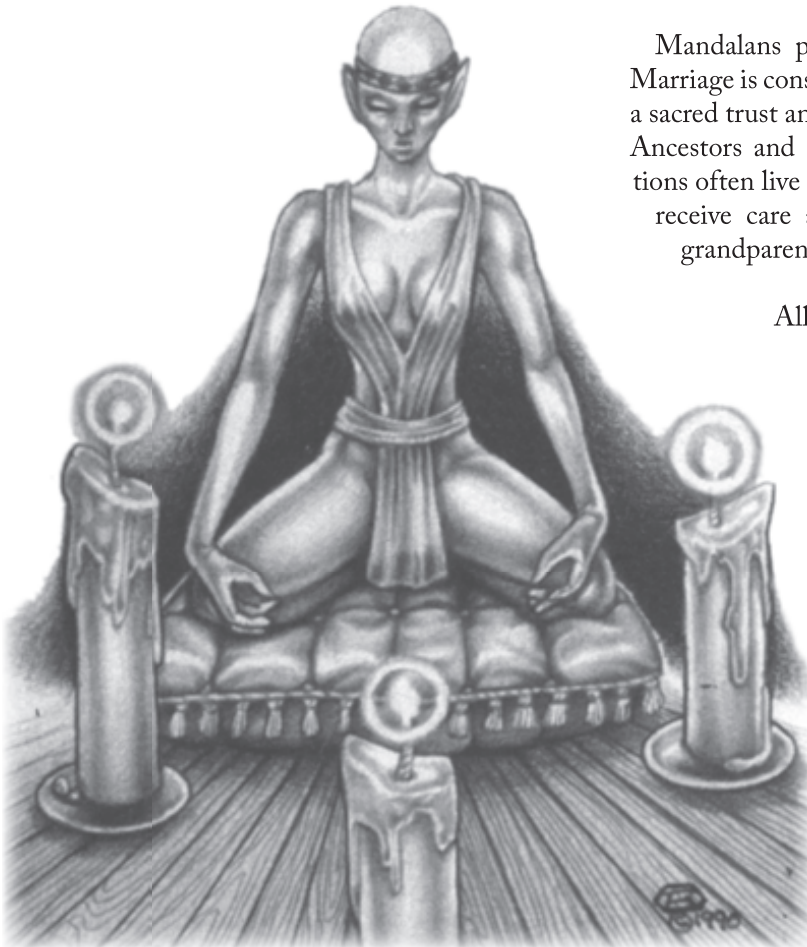
The Mandalans have an advanced and enlightened culture centered amidst the pastel spires, arches, and promenades of the coastal city of Jacinth and outlying regions. Those who live in Jacinth serve as artisans, scholars, and historians. They live in simple but elegant dwellings made of parchment stretched over wood frames, with rock gardens, meditation areas, and shaded arbors adding a sense of serenity and beauty to their surroundings. The remainder of the population is scattered throughout the countryside, making their home in small villages. They live in rustic dwellings of artfully woven reeds and thatch, and work as farmers, herders, and weavers.

Mandalans place great emphasis on the family. Marriage is considered a bonding of bodies and souls; a sacred trust and covenant between the participants. Ancestors and elders are respected; several generations often live together in the same home. Children receive care and instruction from their parents, grandparents, and often their great-grandparents.

All Mandalans are vegetarians. They subsist on a diet of grains and fruits.

Mandalan green wine is a favored drink.

To many Talisantans, the Mandalans appear weak and submissive, unwilling to offer even the slightest resistance to those who have invaded their lands in the past as well as the present. While there is considerable evidence to support such a view, this perception of the Mandalans is in many ways inaccurate. Practitioners of an ancient mystical discipline, Mandalans abhor violence, considering militarism to be the domain of unsophisticated



MANDALAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'6"-6', 90-170 lbs. Golden skin, almond-shaped eyes, placid features, slender build, shaven head; females wear a topknot of long, black hair.

Base Attributes:

INT +1	PER +2	WIL +3
CHA +1	STR +0	DEX +1
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +2

Hit Points: 18

Skills: Language (Quan - native), Language (High Talislan - fluent), Cultures (Mandalan) +5, Cultures (Quan) +3, Meditation +2.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Code of Conduct (non-violence)

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Artist, Courtesan, Disciple, Healer, Herbalist, Magician, Master Craftsman, Musician, Mystic, Mystic Warrior, Neophyte Magician (any except necromancy), Peddler, Rural, Savant, Urban.

Starting Equipment: Silkcloth robe; sandals; shoulder bag; string of meditation beads.

and primitive peoples. Yet despite a great aversion to physical violence, the Mandalans are neither weak nor entirely submissive. It is no accident that they have survived centuries of oppression, or that their culture has endured long after the demise of the warlike races who have conquered their lands and subjugated their people. Rather, over the course of many centuries, the Mandalans have developed a unique methodology for dealing with repressive regimes; a philosophy based upon the principles of passive resistance, and the concept of the Mystic Warrior.

RELATIONS

Under the Quan the Mandalans continue to be virtual slaves of the Empire. They obey the commands of their Quan masters without question, never showing signs of overt emotion. Yet in the countryside strange events continue to transpire for which there is no explanation: a barge carrying a shipment of weapons sinks below the waters of the Shan river; a group of Kang trackers disappears without a trace; Kang troops are repeatedly inconvenienced by washed-out roads, collapsing bridges, and other logistical nightmares. Meanwhile, the barbaric Harkin clans gather along the northern borders of Quan, waiting and watching, while the Mandalans remain, passive and aloof.

RELIGION

Mandalans worship the deity known as Creator, but observe no formal rituals. Worship is centered around meditation, and is considered a matter between one's god and one's self. Mandalans bury their dead in a simple ceremony, erecting a small shrine of river stones and flowers on the grave of the deceased.

LANGUAGE

The native tongue of the Mandalans is Quan, though many also speak either High or Low Talislan. Common Mandalan names are hyphenated, as in Shan-Yan, Xhan-Han, Zen-Shen, etc.

ADVENTURERS

As slaves of the Quan Empire, the Mandalans have little opportunity to better their lives and are rarely found as adventurers within the Empire. More than a few have fled the Empire as refugees and may now be found as far away as the Seven Kingdoms and Zandu.

MARUKAN

Once a robust and hearty folk, the Marukans now exhibit a wan and unhealthy appearance. Most have pale sallow complexions, sunken eyes, and limp brown hair. Morose and gloomy by nature, they dress in unflattering garments made of sackcloth and walk about with their eyes downcast.

The Marukan are descended from the ancient Numenians, a people whose lands were destroyed by The Great Disaster. The survivors sold salvage from the ruins, eventually earning enough to acquire a tract of land from the Haddin, upon which they erected the city of Maruk. For a time the Marukans prospered, selling food crops to Carantheum, Danuvia, and Haddin. But sometime afterwards a series of misfortunes beset them. Their crops failed, their animals died, and their people became dispirited. The Marukans continue to labor under this curse to the present time.

Marukans once lived in artful structures of brick and masonry, with domed copper roofs. Now, most of their buildings are in disrepair, the copper plating stripped from the roofs and sold for salvage. Formerly known for its stable family units, Marukan society has fallen apart. Many families have been forced to split-up, as individuals leave the citystate in order to find work elsewhere. Those who remain in the citystate now work as dung merchants, menial laborers, subsistence farmers, salvagers, and talismancers. Few Marukans marry anymore, and the birth rate continues to drop each year.

Marukans are perhaps the most downtrodden and ill-aspected of all the Talislantan races. They suffer from an ancient curse that has brought ill fortune down upon their heads. Considered harbingers of doom in many lands, Marukans are shunned as if they carried the plague. Fear of curses and bad luck dominates what is left of Marukan culture. Consequently, the people have taken to wearing "Luck Talismans" of many types and descriptions (see sidebar).

Until the advent of the curse, the citystate had been governed by a Ruling Council comprised of eleven of the city's leading agriculturists, merchants, magicians, statesmen, artists, and military leaders. Now the Marukans are sometimes hard-pressed to find eleven individuals who have the time or energy to handle the responsibilities of governing, and the Council is often comprised of whoever is willing to do the job. The legal system is now in a shambles. Most of the judges have had to take other work in order to feed their families, and criminals often get off without penalty due simply to the inefficiency of the bureaucracy. The good news is that thievery is almost unknown in the citystate; the bad news is that there isn't much worth stealing anymore in Maruk.



MARUKAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'4"-6'2", 80-120 lbs. Pale complexion, sunken eyes, limp brown hair

Base Attributes:

INT +0	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA -2	STR +0	DEX +1
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC+0	MR +0

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Cultures (Marukan), Laborer +2.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Unlucky, Magic Item: *Marukan Luck Talisman*

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Beggar, Burglar, Pickpocket, Salvager, Peddler, Talismaner, Urban, Wandering, Warrior.

Starting Equipment: Sackcloth garments; shoulder bag; ogront leather boots; coin purse with 3 gl in copper coins.

RELIGION

Marukans are a superstitious folk who believe that their lives are controlled by the caprices of fate, luck, and omens. Hoping to change their fortunes, they seek the aid of Talismancers—minor magicians who specialize in the making of luck medallions, charms, and other enchanted items. These individuals claim to be masters of Talismancy, a field of magical study considered somewhat specious by other Talislanans. Their wares are available for sale throughout the citystate.

The Marukans once practiced elaborate funeral rites such as embalming, laving the deceased with scented oils and perfumes, adornment in costly vestments, and interment in splendid underground tombs. Now Marukans are buried with no concern for ritual, while the tombs of their ancestors are plundered for valuables.

RELATIONS

Maruk has no allies or enemies of note, as it has little that anyone wants or needs. Though the Marukan government has technically been bankrupt for decades, the Ruling Council continues to offer a reward of one hundred thousand gold lumens to anyone who can successfully lift the curse from the city. The offer still draws a few optimistic mystics, savants and reputed miracle-workers, though not nearly so many as in years past.

LANGUAGE

Marukans are conversant in Low Talislan. Common male names include Merdmire, Marud, Merduk, and Marik. Female names end in an "a", as in Merdmira, Maruda, Merduka, and Marika.

ADVENTURERS

Maruk's prosperous agrarian society is on the verge of bankruptcy. Its fields have gone barren, and the farmers barely grow enough to feed their own people. The only remaining crops are a bland type of tuber from which a coarse gruel called phlan is made, and rock-lichen, which is used to make a type of unleavened bread. Among the few remaining resources are the giant ogront that roam the sparse plains around Maruk. Their dung is in plentiful supply, and is collected from the surrounding environs and sold for fuel and fertilizer. For those marukans not content to harvest dung, the life of a mercenary or adventurer is the only option.

MIRIN

A people of noble bearing, the Mirin are tall and statuesque. They have bright blue skin and hair as fine and white as gossamer. Mirin dress in robes, boots, and headdresses trimmed with frostwere's hide.

The Mirin are believed to be descended from a group of Archans whose cloud-city fell to earth following The Great Disaster. Pursued by vengeful bands of Wild Folk, they fled north into the wilderness. Along the way many died from exposure, wild beasts, and battles with their pursuers. Facing certain death, the last members of the group commended their souls into the hands of whatever deity held sway over the region. According to Mirin legend their

prayers were heard by the Forgotten God, Borean, an ancient elemental deity who granted them a miraculous boon: immunity to cold. The grateful survivors went on to establish the first shrine to Borean, and later, the first Mirin settlement.

Mirin live in crystalline ice castles constructed from blocks of solid ice, cut from glacial ice-quarries and carved into useful and decorative forms. Mirin have close family ties, a holdover from the days when cooperation was absolutely essential to their survival. Members of all professions are equally valued in Mirin society. Hunters provide the settlements with edible lichen, wild and aquatic game, hides and horn.

Priests and priestesses provide guidance and keep written records; warriors defend the settlements. Alchemists forge adamant, an alloy of blue diamond that is one of a very few metals that does not become brittle in sub-zero temperatures.

It is the custom among the Mirin to undertake a ritual "bonding of spirits" with a chosen mate or close friend. The procedure, known as "melding", creates a type of innate psychic link between the two individuals. While melded individuals cannot actually communicate via this ability, each will instinctively know if the other is in danger or in great distress. For entertainment and diversion, Mirin enjoy racing sailed ice schooners on the frozen lakes of L'Haan and across the Sea of Ice. The winners are awarded valuable trophies made of adamant and blue diamonds, and are greatly admired for their achievements.



MIRIN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'8"-6'6", 110-210 lbs. Bright blue skin, hair as fine and white as gossamer, statuesque figure.

Base Attributes:

INT +0	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +1	SPD +0	
CR +0/+2*	RC +2	MR +0/+2*

*Mirin characters may select either CR +2 or MR +2.

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Language (Elder Tongue - native), Language (High Talislan - basic). Cultures (Mirin) +5, Fashion (L'Haan) +2.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Immune to Cold; Melding

Open Paths: Acolyte (Borean), Alchemical Adept, Alchemist, Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Aristocrat, Artist, Bodyguard, Captain (ice schooner), Enchanter, Healer, Hussar (snowmane), Magician, Master Craftsman, Neophyte Magician, Priest, Sailor (ice schooner), Scout, Trader, Urban, Warrior.

Starting Equipment: Linen garments; cloak & boots of frostwere hide; belt pouch; ice skates or snow shoes; 35 gl in L'Haan adamants.

RELATIONS

The Mirin are currently at war with the Ice Giants of Narandu, whose forces have sought to conquer L'Haan for centuries. In the recent past they have fought against the Rasmiran, members of a sect of anarchists that was exiled from L'Haan to the Out-cast Isles, in the Midnight Sea.

RELIGION

A deeply religious folk, the Mirin revere Borean, the God of the North Wind. Mirin Priests and Priestesses are the spiritual advisors of their race, and regard Borean as the protector of their land and its ecology. They do not build temples in his name, but erect altars on the snowy steppes around frozen lakes such as L'Lal and Rhin. It is only in such open and natural surroundings, the Mirin say, that one can truly feel the presence of the God of the North Wind. Mirin inter their dead in ornate coffins carved from solid ice, which are "buried" below the surface of a frozen lake.

LANGUAGE

Mirin converse in the Elder Tongue, a language dating back to ancient times; some say they learned it from the lesser elementals who serve Borean. Examples of common male names include Miralos, Mirtos, Miral, and Miros. Common female names include L'Mir, L'Lis, and L'Halla.

ADVENTURERS

Mirin are rarely found outside of their icy kingdom. Some do venture south to trade for good ahrd to come by in the frozen north. The longer a Mirin is away from the tundra, the paler his skin becomes. After being in a warm clime for a week the bright blue skin coloration has already begun to fade. After a month away from the cold, a Mirin's skin is almost chalky white.

MUSE

Muses are among the most beautiful of the humanoid races. Their bodies are slender and lithe, their features delicate and exquisitely fashioned. They dress in translucent robes shaded in hues complementing the colors of their skin, hair, and butterfly wings – pastel blue, aquamarine, turquoise, violet, and rose, to name just a few.

Muses are descended from an archaic race of forest nymphs, possibly of magical origin; the ancient Archaens often summoned such creatures for their pleasure, and their couplings occasionally yielded unexpected results.

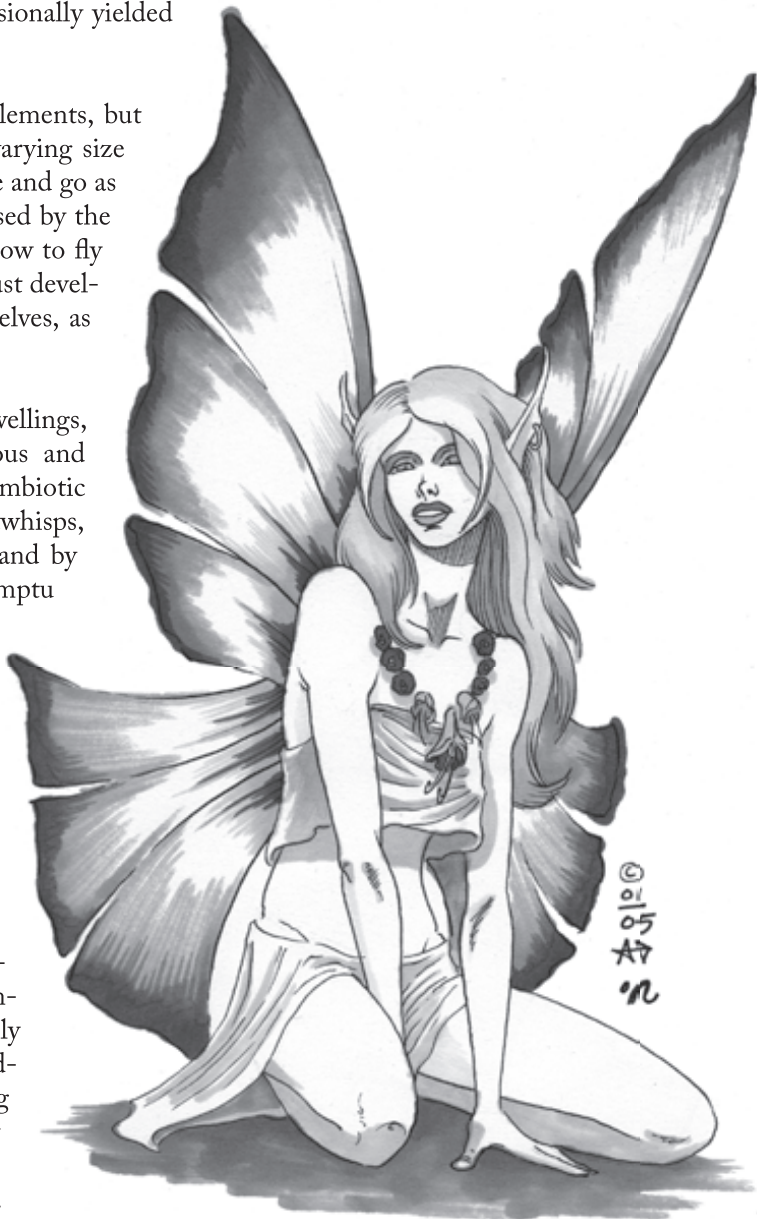
The Muses have no actual settlements, but tend to congregate in groups of varying size and composition; individuals come and go as they please. Muse children are raised by the group's whisps, who teach them how to fly and to find food. Young Muses must develop telepathic powers for themselves, as these talents are never taught.

Muses erect no permanent dwellings, shunning physical labor as tedious and uninspiring. They have a near-symbiotic relationship with the race of woodwhisps, who serve them as "translators" and by gathering food and erecting impromptu tent-pavillions of gossamer and flowering vines, which in Muse society pass for domiciles. In return, whisps are rewarded with stimulating telepathic visions and the pleasure of the Muses' company. Every Muse has at least one whisp companion.

To other Talislantans, Muses often seem distracted, disinterested, and aloof. In fact, they are contemplative by nature, and are highly perceptive as regards their surroundings. Muses rarely speak, preferring to communicate via telepathy, or thought-images, which are used to convey information and emotions. When Muses wish to conserve

telepathic energy, they have their whisp companions speak for them. Given the animated and occasionally sarcastic nature of whisps, communications of this sort can yield unusual results.

Muses are promiscuous, and may take numerous sexual partners – including non-Muses, though such unions rarely bear offspring. These trysts may be of long or short duration, but are always intensely passionate (at least from the Muse's point of view).



MUSE CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'6"-6', 80-140 lbs. Skin, hair, and butterfly-like wings in pastel hues (blue, aquamarine, turquoise, violet, rose), delicate features, lithe body

Base Attributes:

INT +2	PER +2	WIL -2
CHA +2	STR -3	DEX +2
CON -3	SPD -1*	
CR -2	RC -2	MR +1

Hit Points: 17

Skills: Language (High Talislan - native), Language (Sylvan - native), Cultures (Muse) +5, Cultures (Seven Kingdoms) +2, Art +2 or Music +2.

Special Abilities: Infatuated with one specific being (to be chosen at character creation); Limited Flight - may remain airborne for two minutes then must rest for 5 minutes. Natural Telepathy +2.

Quirks: None

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Artist, Herbalist, Magician (natural magic), Master Craftsman, Musician, Naturalist, Neophyte Magician (natural magic), Wandering.

Starting Equipment: Translucent gossamer robe of pastel colors; musical instrument of choice; belt pouch with nectar, flower blossoms, pretty stones, etc; wood whisp companion.

Sometimes the attraction is such that a Muse will telepathically "bond" with the object of his or her affection. While the obsession lasts a Muse will follow the beloved one anywhere he or she goes, sharing all that they experience together. The infatuation may pass as quickly as it began, though Muses always remain sentimental as regards their former lovers.

RELATIONS

The Muses of Astar remain as they always have been: aloof, and seemingly preoccupied with their own concerns. Attitudes towards these folk have begun to change, as the full extent of their extraordinary telepathic powers begins to be understood by the other members of the Seven Kingdoms.

RELIGION

Muses have no formal religion, but revere nature spirits of all sorts and have a great love of life. The death of a Muse or a whisp-companion is regarded as a great tragedy, requiring an elaborate funeral that may go on for days after the deceased has been laid to rest.

LANGUAGE

Muses are natural telepaths, able to communicate by means of thoughts and images. All possess this unusual ability, the range and scope of which increase with practice. Muses can sense the strong emotions of others, broadcast and receive thoughts, project mental images, sense the presence of living beings, and even influence others' emotions. Muses are fluent in High Talislan and Sylvan, but regard common speech as coarse and unaesthetic. They much prefer to communicate telepathically, and will often use whisp "translators" to put their thoughts into words. Muse names are based on flower-names, such as Lilyandre and Aramantus.

ADVENTURERS

Though most Muses couldn't care less about such matters, some of these beings find it exciting to travel beyond the boundaries of Astar, their sylvan homeland. A rare few, considered demented by their peers, occasionally take to travelling in the company of adventurers. While they possess a natural facility for magic, few Muses possess the discipline necessary to master this art.

ORGOVIAN

Orgovians are a wiry, rugged people, hard and spare as flints. Notable features include dusky-orange skin, protruding chin, squinty eyes, and nostrils that resemble vertical slits. They dress in leather vest and curl-toed boots, loincloth, and brown felt headdress. Iron armbands are worn for decoration, typically by the dozen.

The Orgovians are the last remnants of a people who once hailed from the small kingdom of Orgovia. Following The Great Disaster, their homeland was

overrun by savage tribesmen and their nation driven into ruin.

They are now nomadic traders who range from the Wilderlands of Zaran to the Desert Kingdoms, and sometimes as far as the Eastern and Western Lands. They travel in small armed bands of up to twenty individuals, carrying parcels of goods from many lands on the backs of their loper steeds. Orgovian bands are loosely organized and usually consist of one or more extended families, plus a number of males or females from other bands who have joined the group through marriage or choice. As bands are always on the move

females must often give birth while "in the saddle".

Infants are wrapped in swaddling and affixed to the back of their mother's steed with the rest of the baggage and possessions. Most learn to ride before they can walk. Orgovians subsist on foods gathered in the wild or obtained through trade with other peoples.



ORGOVIAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'4"-6', 90-160 lbs. Dusky orange skin, protruding chin, squinty eyes, slits for nostrils, lean and wiry build.

Base Attributes:

INT +1	PER +1	WIL +2
CHA -2	STR +0	DEX +2
CON +2	SPD +0	
CR +2	RC +2	MR +0

Hit Points: 21

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (Sign - native), Cultures (Orgovian) +7, Survival (wilderlands) +2, Haggle +1.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: None

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Guide, Hussar (loper), Master Craftsman, Peddler, Scout, Teamster, Wandering, Warrior.

Starting Equipment: Lether vest, loincloth and curl-toed boots; brown felt headress; black iron armbands; prod-hook; assorted pouches and sacks; 30 gl in barter good.

Orgovians have dealt exclusively in barter ever since the fall of the old nation of Orgovia and the subsequent devaluation of its currency, a lead coin called the yatma (hence the origin of the popular phrase, "*not worth a lead yatma*"). If offered coin instead of barter for their wares, Orgovians may accuse the unwitting offender of attempting to rob them, generally with disastrous results. They tend to be suspicious of civilized folk, whose ways the Orgovians neither fully understand nor trust.

RELATIONS

Though suspicious by nature, Orgovians will deal with most anyone, provided they are offered fair value for their wares. They despise bandits and cheats, and routinely kill such individuals in order to trade their scalps and possessions for useful goods. The Orgovians are on good terms with the Yitek and Djafir, both trusted trading associates. The Dracartans also enjoy good relations with these people, as do the Sindarans of the Seven Kingdoms; many Sindaran collectors maintain close friendships with Orgovian traders in order to obtain items that they wish to acquire.

RELIGION

The Orgovians once had a god, but no more. After The Great Disaster they said their god had abandoned them, and so they did the same. They know little or nothing of magic, which they regard with suspicion and distrust. Orgovians bury their dead in shallow graves and quickly move on.

LANGUAGE

Most Orgovians speak both Low Talislan and sign. Common male names typically begin with the prefix "Or", or "Org" for females. For example: Orfir, Ordavo, Orva, Ortu (male); Orgovia, Orgala, Orgolas, Orgavi (female).

ADVENTURERS

Orgovians are the consummate adventurers, travelling and exploring the often dangerous Talislanta countryside.

PHANTASIAN

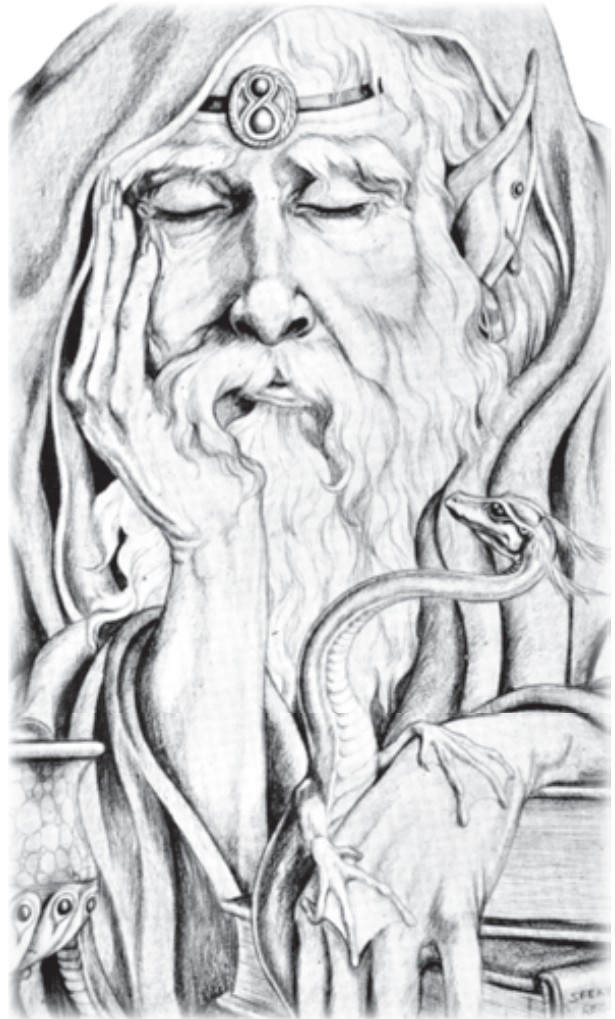
A pale-skinned people, the Phantasians are tall and very thin, with delicate features reminiscent in some ways of the Thaecians. They dress in long, trailing robes, conical caps, and necklaces of colored crystals.

The Phantasians are believed to be descended from the Archaens of ancient Elande, a great sky-city that was destroyed during the Great Disaster. Refugees fleeing from Elande in windships settled on Phantas, where they built Cabal Magicus.

Cabal Magicus is a fabulous castle that hovers high above the Isle of Phantas, tethered to the ground below by chains of adamant. The castle was constructed along the same principles as the sky-cities of the ancient Archaens, which were purportedly fashioned from solidified cloud-stuff. The modern-day Phantasians have long since forgotten the secret of manufacturing such materials, and now have all they can do merely to keep Cabal Magicus afloat.

Like the ancient Archaens, the Phantasians once lived in splendor and ate only the finest and most costly fare. Now, they subsist on bland foods grown in their hydroponic gardens and nutritive elixirs of various sorts. Once among the most skilled practitioners of magic, the Phantasians have forgotten much of the fabled knowledge possessed by their ancient ancestors. Among the few secrets left to them are the talents associated with the building of windships and the art of distilling dream essence. It is these abilities that provide the Phantasians with their livelihood, such as it is.

Phantasian society and civilization are in a state of decline, and appear to be on the verge of collapse. There is a sadness about these folk, whom many deem to be relics of a forgotten era. More than a few Phantasians prefer the old colonial Archaen worldview to the more liberal views currently in vogue among such folk as the Cymrilians. A return to the old ways, and Archaen-style dominance, would be looked upon with much favor by these folk – assuming there was some practical way to recapture the glory of those halcyon times.



RELATIONS

Cymril remains Phantas' closest ally, though the relationship shows signs of strain. Some members of the Phantasian Cabal have proposed that Phantas should sell windship arcanology to underdeveloped countries in exchange for gold. The Cymrilians oppose such actions, which they regard as irresponsible. An anonymous consortium of foreign investors has offered to acquire a controlling interest in Cabal Magicus. However, so far the Phantasian Cabal has resisted such a plan. A disturbing threat may be posed by the Farad and Rajans, both of whom now possess limited windship arcanology.

PHANTASIAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 6'8"-7'2", 160-200 lbs. Pale skin, amber-colored hair, narrow build, delicate features.

Base Attributes:

INT +2	PER +1	WIL -1
CHA +0	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +0/+2*	RC +0	MR +0/+2*

**Phantasian characters may select either CR +2 or MR +2*

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Language (Archaen - native), Language (High Talislan - native), Cultures (Phantasian) +5, Fashion (Archaen) +2.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Eye For Magic

Open Paths: Airman, Alumnus, Aristocrat, Captain (windship), Courtesan, Engineer, Healer, Magician (astromancy, wizardry, elementalism), Naturalist, Neophyte Magician (astromancy, wizardry, elementalism), Novice Thaumaturge, Savant, Thaumaturge, Trader, Urban.

Starting Equipment: Linen robes or linen shirt and breeches; necklace of colored crystals; vial of dream essence; 20 gl in assorted currency.

RELIGION

Religion never was the strong suit of the Archaens, nor is it much of a factor in Phantasian culture. The old Archaens thought of themselves as akin to gods; the Phantasians merely wish they were. When a Phantasian dies, his body is placed in a crystal sarcophagus, carried aloft by windship, and dropped overboard into the ocean.

LANGUAGE

The Phantasians speak a particularly archaic version of High Talislan, which to most modern Talislantans sounds somewhat "stiff" or "stodgy". Common names have an old Archaen sound, as in Astramiros, Cascalo, Malderune, and Lamir.

ADVENTURERS

Some of the talents of the old Archaen sorcerers are still evident among the Phantasians, though these are limited to a few dints of thaumaturgy, sorcery, and windship arcanology. Among these abilities is the art of concocting dream essence; the stuff of which dreams are made, captured and distilled in amberglass vials.

To obtain capital the Phantasians sell dream essence, magical mixtures, and other exotic wares to foreigners. Phantasian Dream Merchants still sail across the skies of Talislanta in their archaic windships, carrying Phantasian goods to such far-distant lands as Cymril, the City State of Hadj, Thaecia, Zandu, Faradun, and the Quan Empire.

SARISTA

The Sarista are built along slender proportions, and have skin the color of topaz, dark eyes and jet black hair. They are partial to such forms of ornamentation as ear bangles, facial tattooing, and all types of gaudy raiment. The men sport colorful capes, berets, tight fitting hose, sashes and high boots; the women: all manner of sultry and provocative attire, also of a colorful nature.

The history of the Sarista consists of a baffling collection of anecdotes, fables and bawdy ballads. From these, scholars have theorized that the Sarista are descended from the Phaedrans, and related to the Aamanians and Zandir. Others believe they are kin to the Dhuna witch-covens of Werewood.

Sarista families are close-knit - "as thick as thieves", according to some Talislantans - and often quite large. Young males attract wives by acts of courage

and daring; an offering of gold coins to the wife's parents seals the deal. Their children are raised in liberal fashion, and travel with the tribe. Sarista caravans roam the Western Lands from Silvanus to the Seven Kingdoms, stopping in cities and villages along the way. In such places, the Sarista are renowned for their talents as folk healers, fortune tellers and performers- or as mountebanks, charlatans and tricksters, depending upon one's point of view.

The discrepancy of opinion regarding the Sarista may be attributed to their mysterious customs and traditions. The tribes do not keep written records of any sort, but rely upon their elders to teach their offspring the secret lore of their people. These studies consist primarily of minor magics, herb lore, local geography and "Sarista culture", a euphemism held to be roughly equivalent to the less flattering term, "thievery". By age seven, a Sarista child will know



SARISTA CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'-6', 80-180 lbs. Topaz skin, dark eyes, black hair, slender build, neatly trimmed mustaches and beards (males), possible facial tattoos.

Base Attributes:

INT +0	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA +2	STR +0	DEX +2
CON +0	SPD +1	
CR +1	RC +1	MR +1

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (Sarisa - native), Cultures (Sarista) +5, Cultures (one other) +2, Fashion (Sarista) +2, Deception +1, Ride (eques) or Conveyance (wagons) +1.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Sarista add Tantara to their available Quirks regardless of Path.

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Caravan Master, Charlatan, Courtesan, Gambler, Guide, Herbalist, Musician, Novice Witch, Peddler, Pickpocket, Rural, Scout, Urban, Wandering, Witch.

Starting Equipment: colorful garments including cape, beret, sash, tight-fitting hosiery, high boots of soft hide; ear bangles and silver necklace; dagger; 2 belt pouches, coin purse with 15 gl in assorted currency.

every woodland trail in Silvanus by heart, and will have an alarmingly comprehensive understanding of Sarista culture.

The Sarista love music, one of the few things about which they are deeply sentimental. They enjoy dance, and many are skilled musicians. Sarista crafts include metal working, weaving, and pottery.

RELATIONS

The Sarista are an insular folk who generally have little interest in the affairs of other people. They remain apart from other cultures by choice, following the same traditions as their ancestors.

RELIGION

The Sarista religion revolves around two obscure demigods: Fortuna, lovely but fickle goddess of luck, and the grim entity known as Death. The Sarista revere Fortuna, but mock Death, whom they strive to cheat at every opportunity. Many Sarista dabble in magic, and some become quite accomplished in the arcane arts. The womenfolk all seem to be adept at making folk remedies, potions, and minor magic charms, and at telling fortunes. Sarista dress the dead in bright raiment, adorn their bodies with baubles, and bury them standing-up; a final act of defiance in the face of Death.

LANGUAGE

The Sarista have their own language, a version of the common Low Talislan tongue which allows the speaker to convey hidden meanings by the use of subtle gestures and inflections. Sarista names are colorful and varied, such as Romaro, Salvagio, Garinda, Eviaro (males), and Romi, Esmeralle, Havia, and Kataea (females).

ADVENTURERS

The Sarista are a people of diverse qualities. Some are loners who make their living as peddlers, mercenaries or vagabonds. Others, notable for their skill at witchcraft, live in secluded wilderness regions. The majority of these folk are more gregarious in nature, preferring to travel in loose-knit tribal groups, carrying all that they own in brightly painted wagons.

SINDARAN

Sindarans bear little resemblance to any other humanoid species native to the continent. They stand over seven feet in height, emaciated in build, with wrinkled, sandy-colored skin. All Sindarans have a row of horn-like nodules running from the crown of the head to the back of the neck, and a curved spur of cartilage protruding from beneath the chin. They dress in cloaks, loincloths, and sandals, with earrings, wrist bracers, and ankle bracers for decoration for both genders. Sindarans are dual-encephalons; they have two brains, each capable of independent function.

Sindarans live in mesa-top communes composed of elegant tiered structures, each built around a structure of carved stone blocks and hardwoods imported from Vardune and Taz. Gossamer curtains, dyed various shades of orange and burnt umber, serve as the walls of the Sindarans' pavilions, and provide a measure of privacy while retaining a feeling of wide-open spaces. Communication between Sindaran communes is made possible by means of large reflective crystals, which are mounted on tripods and used to flash coded messages from one outpost to the next.

Sindarans subsist on a diet of vegetables and tubers, supplemented by certain powdered minerals and crystals. These substances are required to meet Sindaran nutritional needs, which are different than those of native Talislantans. Skoryx, a potent liquor of rare qualities and multiple taste sensations, is a favorite drink.

Sindaran culture is influenced by the concept of Duality, or the attraction of opposites. The ability of Sindarans to follow two lines of thought simultaneously is both alien and somewhat disconcerting to most Talislantans. Further complicating matters is the propensity of Sindarans to argue both points of any issue before arriving at a single decision. Sindarans may lose their

dual-encephalic abilities through accident, injury, or attempting to practice magic. Individuals who have suffered such a fate often become irrational and unpredictable, and are called "Sindra", a respectful yet condescending term meaning "demented one".

Sindarans have two passions: trivarian and collecting. Trivarian is a test of skill that requires an exceptional degree of intellect and abstract reasoning, and is virtually impossible for anyone but dual-encephalons to comprehend. Sindarans say that it is inaccurate to refer to trivarian as a "game", as it is much more than that. The physical components of trivarian include a pyramid-shaped crystal, which is suspended above a table. Orbs of colored crystal, engraved with complex symbology, are inserted into various slots in the pyramid, producing patterns of colored light



SINDARAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 7'-7'4", 180-220 lbs. Rough, sandy-hued skin, emaciated build, row of horn-like nodules running from crown of head to back of neck, curved spur of cartilage protruding beneath chin.

Base Attributes:

INT +6	PER +0	WIL +4
CHA +0	STR -1	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD +1	
CR +0	RC +1	MR -7

Hit Points: 18

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (High Talislan - native), Cultures (Sindaran) +5, Cultures (Seven Kingdoms) +3, Gamecraft +2, Any One Scholar skill +3.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Ambidextrous, Dual Encephalon

Open Paths: Alchemical Adept, Alchemist, Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Effectuator, Healer, Litigator, Master Craftsman, Savant, Siege Engineer, Scout, Trader, Urban.

Starting Equipment: Cloak, loincloth or caftan; sandals; silver earrings, torc, wrist and ankle bracers; assorted pouches; flask of skoryx; Trivarian game choice of collection worth 500 gl; 75 gl in assorted currency. **Sindaran characters replace any armor received from Paths with leather armor. Likewise, they may replace any weapon received from Paths with a Rod of Alchemy.*

which have great significance to the contestants. Trivarian tournaments are held throughout Sindar, and are considered events of great importance by the Sindarans. Wagering is popular, the odds often wildly fluctuating with each turn.

Second only to trivarian is collecting. Sindaran collectors are completists who find it difficult to resist indulging in their obsession. One should never touch a collector's cherished wares unless specifically invited to do so, as this may be construed by a Sindaran as attempted theft.

RELATIONS

The Sindarans play an important role in formulating policy for the Seven Kingdoms, but prefer to keep a low profile as pertains to relations with foreign lands. Sindarans have interests apart from those of the confederation, but in diplomatic matters they generally abide by the decisions of the Council of Seven Kings - after first presenting their own views in detail, of course.

RELIGION

Sindarans revere a deity similar in some respects to the Talislantan Creator, but known to Sindarans as "The Duality", signifying the joining of mind and spirit. Sindarans relate the "heavens" to the stars, where they believe their lost home world can be

found. Sindarans do not bury their dead. Instead, following a short ceremony the body of the deceased is disposed of by dissolution in alchahest, leaving not so much as a trace.

LANGUAGE

Sindarans are fluent in both High and Low Talislan, and frequently combine elements of both dialects in order to express contrasting concepts. They tend to be verbose, and are partial to the use of multi-syllabic words. If given the opportunity, a Sindaran can go on for hours about almost any subject. Sindaran nomenclature is based on gender, "personal" name, and family name. Common personal names for males include Taj, Nas, Dar, Naj; female personal names are similar, but end in an "i", as in Taji, Nasi, Dari, Neji. Family names are the same for both sexes. The most common include Modan, Nadar, Motas, Najar, and Narune.

ADVENTURERS

Unlikely adventurers, Sindarans nonetheless are found in adventuring parties throughout Talislanta. Sometimes they are sought as travelling companions because of their alchemical skills while other times Sindarans join adventuring parties with the goal of seeking rare and valuable additions to their collections.

SUNRA

Sunra are graceful in stature, with silver-scaled skin and deep-blue eyes. The customary mode of dress for both males and females consists of a simple robe of Mandalan silkcloth, sandals, and a silk headband.

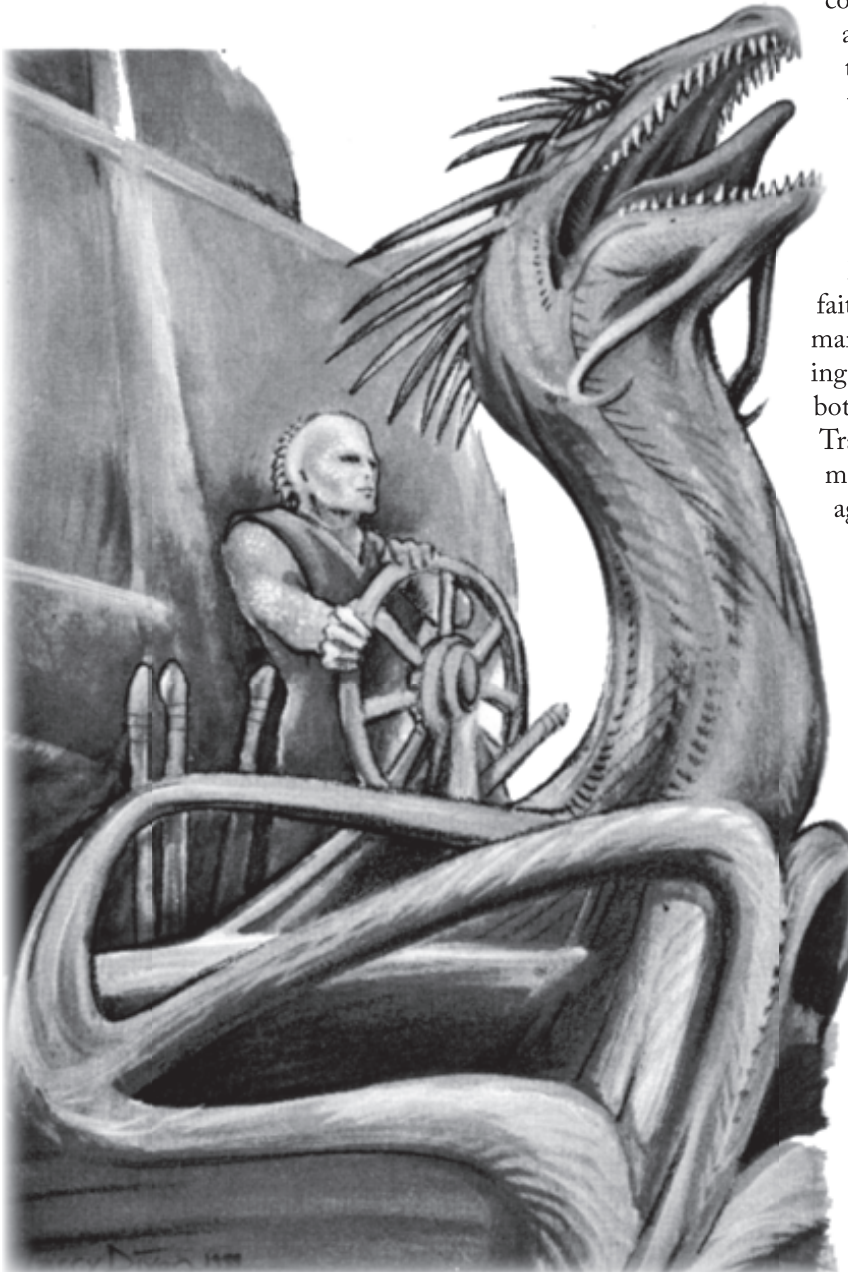
The Sunra are a semi-aquatic race whose origins predate The Great Disaster. Their ancestors, the Sun-Ra-San, once ranged the Far Seas in glittering dragon barques, hunting sea dragons and trading

with far-distant lands. Now the majority of the Sunra population is housed in the Coral City of Isalis, as subjects of the Quan.

The Sunra of Isalis live in graceful dwellings carved from great mounds of coral and decorated with shells. They subsist primarily on kelp and algae, which the Sunra serve in soups, broths, and stews – Sunra food is always high in liquid content and, by the standards of most other folk, very salty. The combination of fluids and salts enables Sunra to function out of water for extended periods of time without experiencing discomfort.

Sunra society is centered around their extended family groups. Sunra couples mate for life and beyond, swearing eternal faithfulness even in the afterlife; the marriage ceremony is called a “merging of souls”. Children are raised by both their parents and grandparents. Training in Sunra culture, astrology, and other skills begins at age two.

The Sunra have a great love of learning. Their children are taught to read and write at an early age, and are given basic training in the various crafts and professions practiced by the Sunra people: sea-farming, astromancy, ship-building, piloting sea craft, etc. Once this general education has been completed, Sunra schools allow students to concentrate on a preferred subject or subjects, as they wish. Sunra have long wished to regain their freedom, but for the present they remain subjects of the Empire.



SUNRA CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5-10'-6'4", 120-180 lbs. Skin covered with fine silvery scales, deep blue eyes.

Base Attributes:

INT +1	PER +2	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD +0*	
CR +1	RC +0	MR +1

* on land; +4 underwater

Hit Points: 18

Skills: Language (Quan - native), Cultures (Quan Empire) +3, Cultures (Sunra) +5, Swim +9.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Semi Aquatic

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Captain, Magician (aquamancy), Neophyte Magician (aquamancy), Sailor, Urban.

Starting Equipment: Mandalan slickcloth robes, tunic and headband; rainbow kra leather boots; kra scrimshaw case with sea charts and scrolls; belt pouch. (*Sunra characters replace any armor received from Paths with dragon scale armor*).

Sunra believe that the souls of their ancestors reside within Moonfish, and so will never harm these creatures. They believe that anyone who captures or kills a Moonfish will suffer a terrible curse.

RELATIONS

The Sunra serve the Quan not out of loyalty, but because they fear that if they did not, their oppressors would dam the River Shan, causing the Inland Sea to go dry. It is no secret that the Sunra yearn to swim free, as they did in ancient times. Given the opportunity, some believe that the Sunra might rebel against the Quan. The Quan know this, and they maintain a heavy Kang military presence among Sunra lands. So far, these measures have served to maintain order, but some wonder for how long.

RELIGION

The Sunra worship an elemental ocean deity named Aqus. They have a great love of the sea, and revere the Moonfish as an avatar of their elemental deity. Priests and priestesses of the sect are aquamancers. Sunra take their dead aboard a dragon barque for burial at sea. In this way they believe that the spirits of the dead may be reborn as moonfish.

LANGUAGE

Though the Sunra have an ancestral tongue, Quan is the language most commonly spoken by those who live in the Empire.

Common names are hyphenated, begin with "Su" (males) or "Sa" (females). For example: Sur-Rin, Sun-Ran, Sut-Ra (males); Sar-Rin, San-Ran, Sat-Ra (female).

ADVENTURERS

Slaves of the Quan Empire, Sunra don't generally have a lot of free time for adventuring. Some few Sunra have escaped the Quan and may be found elsewhere on Talislanta. Most Sunra strive for a time when they might be free from foreign powers.

THAECIAN

Thaecians are slender and graceful in stature, with silvery complexions and hair a deep blue color. They dress in diaphanous robes of many hues and styles.

The Thaecians are believed to be descended either from the ancient Archaens, or from a race of neomorphs created in their image. They are probably related to the Thiasians, to whom they have close ties.

Thaecians live in fanciful pavilions constructed of a translucent fabric called gossamer, artfully stretched over frameworks of silken cords. They build no cities,

but simply erect pavilions wherever they wish to live. As such, small “colonies” of Thaecians are scattered across the main island and certain of the smaller isles. The single settlement of noteworthy size is Caprica, site of the “Festival of the Bizarre” (see sidebar).

Thaecians do not marry, though some couples remain together for life; most prefer the freedom to change partners as they desire. Thaecian “families” are loose-knit units at best. A single individual may have dozens of sisters and brothers, and hundreds upon hundreds of cousins. Children are raised by their older siblings and extended families, who dote upon their young charges with great joy and affection.

The Thaecians are devout pleasure-seekers who enjoy indulging in all manner of stimulating pastimes. Like the Muses of Astar, they show an aversion to hard work of any sort. The pursuit of various romantic confluxes, and the study of certain forms of magic, occupy much of their leisure hours. The folk of this isle are partial to the nectar of rainbow lotus flowers, a secret distillation of which is used to create “Thaecian nectar”, a drink noted for its exotic flavor and exhilarating properties.



THAECIAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5-10'-6'4", 120-180 lbs. Skin covered with fine silvery scales, deep blue eyes.

Base Attributes:

INT +1	PER +2	WIL -2
CHA +2	STR -1	DEX +0
CON -1	SPD +0	
CR -1	RC -1	MR +2

Hit Points: 18

Skills: Language (Thaecian - native), Language (High Talislan - fluent), Language (Archaen - fluent), Cultures (Thaecia) +5, Seduction +2.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: Attractive

Open Paths: Apprentice Craftsman, Artist, Courtesan, Enchanter, Magician, Master Craftsman, Musician, Neophyte Magician Peddler, Rural,

Starting Equipment: Diaphanous gossamer robes; gossamer purse and shoulder pouch; flask of Thaecian nectar; 100 g.l. in coins, gemstones and wares (Thaecians don't use currency themselves)

RELATIONS

The Thaecians welcome visitors from other lands, particularly the Thiasians, whose performing talents they greatly admire. Due to past difficulties, the Imrians are treated with a notable lack of tolerance. The Thaecians allow the Imrian ships to stop at Thaecia in order to purchase nectar, gossamer, and other products. None, however is allowed to stay so much as a single night on any of Thaecia's islands. Thaecia currently has no treaty relations with any other nation, and generally remains neutral in all matters involving foreign powers.

RELIGION

Thaecians revere the entity known as Creator, but practice no formal religion, build no temples, and have no clergy. To these folk faith is considered a subject for private meditation, rather than public observance. Thaecians enchanters and enchantresses are renowned for the creation of wondrous images and illusions, which they capture within glassine spheres called Thaecian orbs. By placing these devices to the forehead, the holder is able to experience unequaled panoramas of color and sound. Thaecian orbs can also be used to store spells, which can be released by breaking the orb. Such devices are sometimes found in old Thaecian tombs, interred along with the deceased in glass sarcophagi

LANGUAGE

Thaecians are bilingual, and are fluent both in High Talislan and their native tongue, Thaecian. The latter is regarded as the most "romantic" of Talislantan languages, and may be expressed in any of three forms: written, spoken, and — using fluid hand gestures and facial expressions — somatic. All three forms of the language are said to be quite beautiful.

Common names are likewise pleasing to the ear, and usually begin with the prefix, "Th", as in Thasha, Thalias, Thelaus, and Thania.

ADVENTURERS

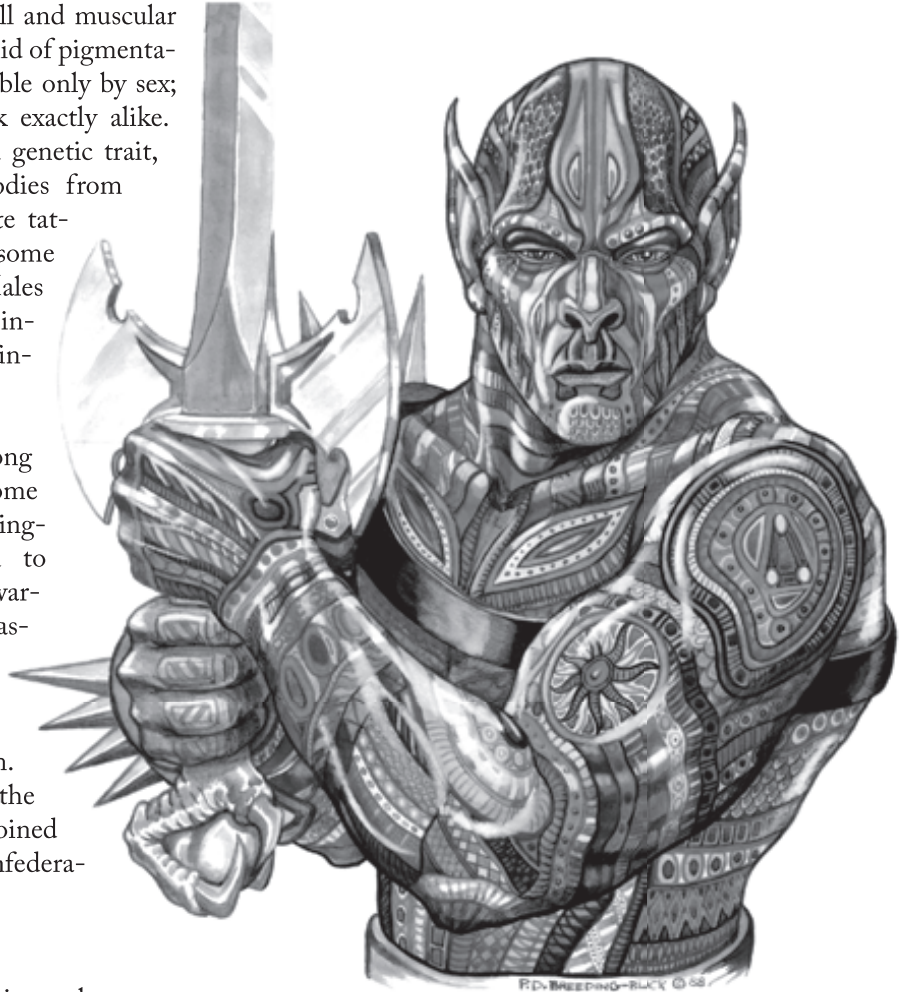
The Thaecians have no army or navy, and in fact disdain violence, which they consider an over-strenuous form of physical activity. They depend upon their enchanters to protect Thaecia from aggressors, a task that has proven to be well within their capabilities. Thaecian Enchanters frequently travel, selling their services to those who can afford them.

THRALL

Thralls are uniformly tall and muscular of build. Hairless and devoid of pigmentation, they are distinguishable only by sex; otherwise, all Thralls look exactly alike. In defiance of this inbred genetic trait, Thralls decorate their bodies from head to toe with elaborate tattoos, thereby attaining some degree of individuality. Males dress in sandals and loincloths; females in vest, loincloth, and sandals.

A hybrid race created long ago by the sorcerers of some ancient and forgotten kingdom, Thralls were bred to serve as an army of slave warriors. After The Great Disaster they were freed from servitude, and spent many years wandering in the Wilderlands of Zaran. They eventually settled in the jungles of Taz, and later joined the Seven Kingdoms confederation.

The Thralls of Taz live in settlements ringed by high palisade walls constructed of cut stone blocks. Each village is a fortified camp, with sheds for supplies and provisions, stables for mangonel lizard mounts, a foundry for making weapons and armor, and communal barracks. Thrall society is based upon the military chain of command. The family is like a platoon; a settlement comprised of many families operates like a division, while the race of Thralls functions like an army. Males and females form “alliances” rather than marrying, remaining steadfastly loyal to each other until death. Their young are raised in separate training facilities, and learn to fend for themselves quickly (by eight years of age Thralls are fully-grown). Thrall children remain loyal to their parents throughout their lives, but also forge a strong sense of duty from their common link to the division to which they belong.



Bred for combat, Thralls know no other way of life. While their talents are limited to martial abilities, they have developed a unique culture that sets them apart from the other warrior peoples of Talislanta. Unlike the Kang, Thralls excel both at offense and defense, and are never ruled by their passions. Unlike the Danuvians they have no elite units, and never discriminate on the basis of gender. Thralls are skilled strategists and careful planners. The chain of command is rigidly adhered to, and their troops are always disciplined and highly motivated. Thrall units are never demoralized or routed; if required to retreat units always do so in an orderly fashion. Thralls are skilled tacticians who possess an instinctive ability to grasp even the most complex military strategies. Conversely, Thralls have little interest in other skills and professions, which they generally do not com-

THRALL CHARACTERS

Appearance: 6'8", 300 lbs. (males); 6'4", 200 lbs. (females); Hairless, devoid of pigmentation, muscular build, all members of each gender are identical in appearance, body covered with elaborate tattoos.

Base Attributes:

INT -3	PER +2	WIL +2
CHA +0	STR +3	DEX +2
CON +3	SPD +1	
CR +6	RC +2	MR -4

Hit Points: 30

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (Thrall Tattoos - native), Cultures (Thrall) +5, Cultures (Seven Kingdoms) +3, Brawling +2, Weapon (any one) +2

Special Abilities: INT +3 for tactical and combat matters; unable to comprehend magic

Quirks: Immune to Fear, Tazian Combat

Open Paths: Bodygurad, Gladiator, Hunter, Hussar (mangonel), Rural, Siege Engineer, Scout, Urban, Warrior.

Starting Equipment: Loincloth and vest; sandals; shoulder scabbard and greatsword; flask of Tazian fire-ale; coin purse with 35 gl in gold pentacles. (*Thrall characters replace any armor received from Paths with Garde or Partial Garde.*)

Note: Thrall characters do not gain any Attribute adjustments from Path selection. As a result of their neomorph heritage, all Thralls are identical although individual Thralls may still adjust one Attribute up by +1 and another down by -1 like other characters. In addition, players of Thrall characters may also increase either PER, STR, DEX or CON by +1 to reflect time spent training in a combat speciality.

prehend. The highly specialized nature of Thralls has led some folks to assume that they are dull-witted or ignorant. However, it is a grave mistake to underestimate a Thrall.

RELATIONS

Taz is an active and integral part of the Seven Kingdoms confederation, planning strategies for national defense and helping keep the Seven Roads safe for merchants and travelers. Thralls rarely get involved with foreign relations or diplomatic matters, preferring to leave such concerns to the Cymrilians or other members of the confederation.

RELIGION

Thralls possess no talent whatever for magic. They revere the warrior-spirits of their early ancestors, whose names live on in tales passed from one generation to the next. Thralls have no illusions as to their origins. They know that their race was created by sorcery, rather than some deific being. Thralls cremate their dead in a simple but moving ceremony. To die in battle, defending one's beliefs, is considered the highest honor.

LANGUAGE

All Thralls converse in Low Talislan. Despite the stereotype, Thralls do not speak poorly; rather, they speak simply, and often movingly. Common names tend to have a militaristic slant, such as Ramm, Axa, Axus, Striker, Barax, Kadre, Fortus, Blade, and Cestus.

ADVENTURERS

Bred for combat, Thralls have little talent for any skill not associated with warfare. In their homeland of Taz, they serve as protectors of the Seven Kingdoms, and are highly regarded for their skill and bravery in battle. In times of peace, many Thralls seek adventure outside the Seven Kingdoms, usually as mercenaries or caravan guards.

XAMBRIAN

Xambrians resemble the Ariane in stature, but have bone-white skin and long, raven-black hair. Their customary mode of dress includes a cape, high boots, a vest, and tight breeches of black strider hide, with gauntlets of fine silver mesh.

These folk are descended from the ancient Xambrians, a peaceful people who were all but exterminated by a cult of black wizards known as the Torquarans. At their hands, untold thousands of Xambrians perished in the Firepits of Malnangar. A few Xambrians escaped into the Wilderlands and went into hiding. Assisted by unknown benefactors, they somehow managed to survive The Great Disaster, disease, and starvation. To the spirits of their ancestors they swore an unbreakable oath, to find and bring to justice the murderers of their people. The last of their descendents, the Xambrian wizard hunters, can still be found scattered across the Talisantan continent.

The few remaining Xambrians have but one goal in life: to hunt down and bring to justice the reincarnations of their ancient enemies, the Torquarans.

The Xambrians have no homeland, no clans, and no families. They do not marry, and can mate only with another Xambrian; no other union will bear fruit. Unable to bring infants with them while undertaking such dangerous work, Xambrian females are forced to abandon their offspring at birth; usually to a family or individual whom the Xambrian has come to know and trust.

No matter how they are raised, Xambrian children are doomed to grow up as outcasts. They look, act, and feel different from others, and are subject to protracted periods of depression. During their early years they may hear "voices" in their heads, or experience hallucinations of varying duration and severity. As they get older they begin to develop strange powers, for which



XAMBRIAN CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'6"-6'2", 100-180 lbs. Bone-white skin, long raven-black hair, dark violet eyes, hard features.

Base Attributes:

INT +1	PER +2	WIL +1
CHA -1	STR +1	DEX +0
CON +1	SPD +0	
CR +2	RC +0	MR +2

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (Archaen -fluent), Language (Xambrian - fluent), Weapon (large blades) +2.

Special Abilities: Dispel Magic +4

Quirks: Spirit Force

Open Paths: Bandit, Guide, Scout, Wizard Hunter, Warrior, Wandering.

Starting Equipment: Linen vest, leather breeches and high boots; cloak of black strider hide; silver gauntlets; shoulder bag; coin purse with 20 gl in assorted currency.

there seems to be no logical explanation. Then, on the eve of their thirteenth birthday, young Xambrians receive a vision from an ancestral spirit, who explains the Xambrians' heritage and the reason for their existence. From this point on the child is a Xambrian wizard hunter, and will receive spiritual guidance and training from the ancestors, until he or she is ready for "the Calling".

At any time following the first spirit vision, a Xambrian may receive "the Calling" — a summons from the spirit guides, letting the Xambrian know that one of the enemies of his people has returned to Talislanta in the form of a reincarnator, and directing him to travel to the place called Omen, the mountain of skulls. Once here, the ancestor-spirits will tell the Xambrian how to locate the reincarnator, and will invest the wizard hunter with a portion of their spiritual strength. From this moment on, the Xambrian will not rest until he or she has carried out the vendetta.

RELATIONS

Xambrians owe allegiance to no king or nation. A grim and moody lot, they are regarded with suspicion by most Talislantans. Many regard them as cursed, and want nothing to do with them. Xambrian regard for modern-day magic-users of any sort ranges from distrust to outright hatred.

RELIGION

Xambrians revere and obey the spirits of their ancestors, whose souls can never know rest until their murderers have been brought to justice. From their ancestors, Xambrians learn abilities that enable them to resist and combat magicians; talents necessary to the pursuit of their life's goal. Xambrians believe that upon passing from the mortal world they will be reunited with their ancestors. Whatever burial customs their people once had are now lost.

LANGUAGE

Most Xambrians speak Low Talislan, and can read old Archaen. Among themselves, wizard hunters prefer to converse in ancient Xambrian, an otherwise dead language that was once used by their ancestors. Common Xambrian names usually end with the suffix, "an", a tradition among the families of old Xambria. For example: Javan, Xiran, Shian, Ishan, and Xian.

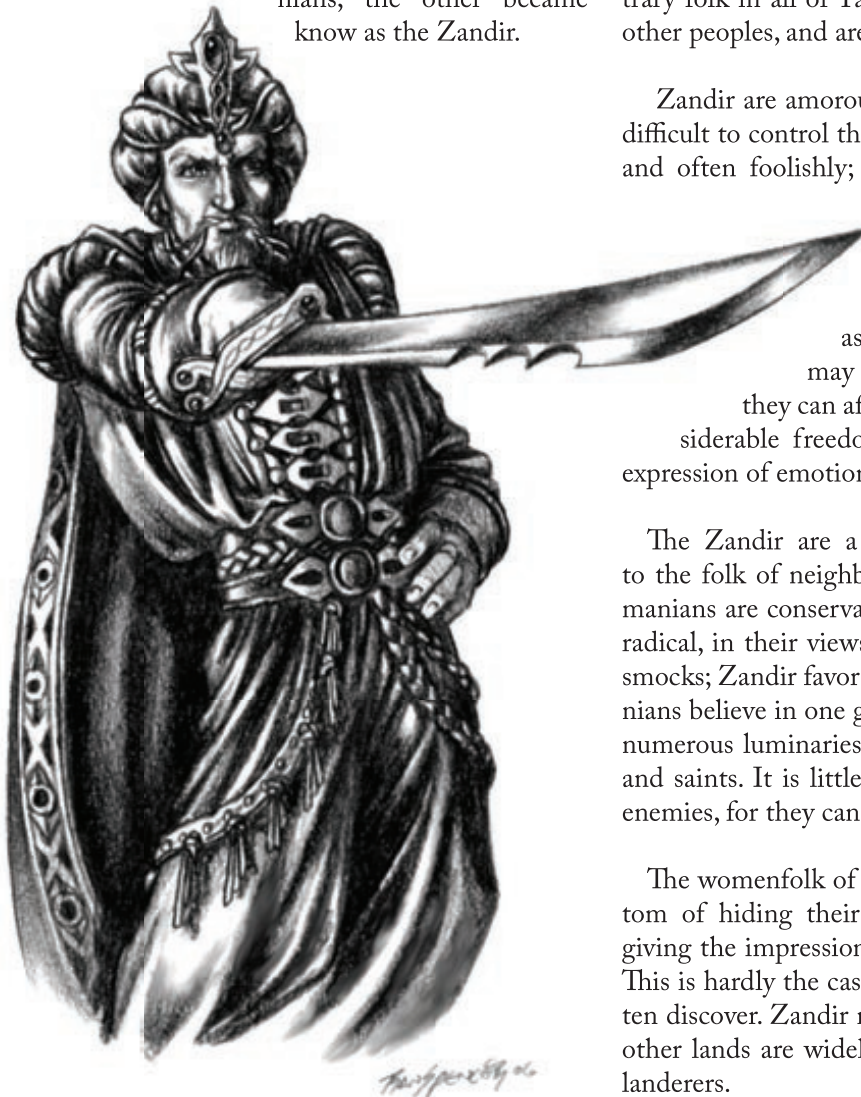
ADVENTURERS

Instructed by their spirit guides, Xambrians learn the use of the spiritblade, tracking skills, and the ability to counter and dispel magic. Thus, they are well able to defend themselves.

ZANDIR

The Zandir are a handsome folk with copper-colored skin, dark hair, and dark eyes. They enhance their features with vividly colored pigments, adorn their hair with silver bands, and dress in flamboyant apparel — velvet blouses and trousers, capes of silken brocade, curl-toed boots or slippers, and so forth.

Like the Aamanians, the Zandir are descended from the Phaedrants, a people who ruled the Western Lands during the early part of the New Age. A dispute over religious views caused the Phaedrants to split into opposing factions, who proceeded to wage war on each other for nearly four hundred years. One of the factions that participated in these Cult Wars became known as the Aamanians; the other became known as the Zandir.



In the capital of Zanth, the Zandir live in copper towers and minarets. In smaller settlements they live in stone cottages, and in the coastal fishing villages they live in thatch huts. The Zandir diet is diverse, and consists of roasted meats and poultry, cheeses, fruits and vegetables, ales and wines.

The population of Zandu includes numerous minority groups and factions. The Causidians serve as legal advisors, diplomats, and scribes. The Certaments are a class of professional duelists, many of whom are skilled both in magic and swordplay. The Serparians are professional beggars who wander the streets in rags, asking for alms. The Zann are fishermen who bear a wide reputation as the most steadfastly contrary folk in all of Talislanta. They rarely agree with other peoples, and are extremely opinionated.

Zandir are amorous and hot-blooded, and find it difficult to control their passions. They marry young, and often foolishly; both males and females have numerous affairs and trysts, and are quite flirtatious. Zandir are polygamous; males may have as many wives as they can afford, and females may keep as many male consorts as they can afford. Children are allowed considerable freedom, particularly as regards the expression of emotions.

The Zandir are a people diametrically opposed to the folk of neighboring Aaman. Where the Aamanians are conservative, Zandir are liberal, or even radical, in their views. Aamanians dress in colorless smocks; Zandir favor the most colorful attire. Aamanians believe in one god, while the Zandir believe in numerous luminaries, pagan gods, woodland spirits, and saints. It is little wonder then that the two are enemies, for they can agree on almost nothing.

The womenfolk of Zandu practice the quaint custom of hiding their faces behind decorative fans, giving the impression that they are shy and demure. This is hardly the case, as male visitors to Zandu often discover. Zandir men are even less subtle, and in other lands are widely regarded as lechers and philanderers.

ZANDIR CHARACTERS

Appearance: 5'6"-6'2", 100-200 lbs. Copper or cinnabar skin, dark hair, dark green eyes, skin enhanced with vividly colored pigments.

Base Attributes:

INT +0	PER +0	WIL -2
CHA +1	STR +0	DEX +1
CON +0	SPD +1	
CR + +0/+2*	RC +1	MR +0/+2*

* Zandir characters may select either CR +2 or MR +2

Hit Points: 20

Skills: Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (High Talislan - native), Cultures (Zandir) +5, Fashion (Zandir) +3, Doctrines (paradoxy) +2.

Special Abilities: None

Quirks: None

Open Paths: Alumnus, Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Aristocrat, Artist, Beggar, Burglar, Captain, Charlatan, Courtesan, Duelist, Gambler, Guide, Healer, Litigator, Magician (any), Master Craftsman, Musician, Neophyte Magician (any), Peddler, Pickpocket, Rural, Sailor, Trader, Urban.

Starting Equipment: Silken brocade cape, velvety blousey shirt and trousers; curl-toed boots; 30 gl in Zandir crescents.

RELATIONS

For many centuries Zandu and Aaman waged ceaseless war against each other, until the building of the Great Barrier Wall. Modern relations between the former antagonists, while overtly peaceful, are still far from cordial. The differences between their cultures remain extreme, and there is no love lost between the two peoples. Zandu has good relations with the Seven Kingdoms, whose rulers consider the Zandir much easier to deal with and less threatening than the Orthodoxists of Aaman.

RELIGION

The Zandir are Paradoxists who profess to be mystified by the nature of their own existence. The tenets of the Zandir "religion" are perhaps best explained in the Paradoxist text, *The Book of Mysteries*, a lengthy tome filled with over 100,000 questions, and no answers. Paradoxist seers, widely regarded as charlatans by other folk, are well-liked in Zandu. Some possess actual magical abilities.

LANGUAGE

Zandir speak High or Low Talislan, depending upon their level of education and chosen occupation. Zandir names tend to be colorful, as were those of the Phaedrans. For example: Palitane, Celestea, Crystaball, Balalamos, and Schezalle. The only exception is the Zann, who go for short, blunt-sounding names such as Neb, Sej, Menk, and Zaj.

ADVENTURERS

A passionate people, many Zandir have taken up the adventuring life as a means to alleviate boredom. Zandir merchants also ply the waters off Talislanta's coasts and may be found in overland caravans across the continent. Zandir prefer a swashbuckling style of combat and are showman if nothing else.

The age of a character is determined by the number of Paths used in the campaign. All characters are assumed to be near the end of their adolescence as they take their first Path (a background Path). Each Path selected thereafter adds a certain number of years to the character. Players should consult the following chart to determine the starting age of their characters and add any relevant increases from Path selection.

CHARACTER AGE

LIFESPAN CHART

DESCRIPTION OF TERMS

ADOLESCENT

The period from infancy to early adulthood. Adolescent characters cannot have more than a single background Path. All Adolescent characters take the following adjustments to their Attributes: +1 STR, +1 DEX, -1 INT, -1 WIL. All characters begin play at their maximum adolescent age minus 3 years.

ADULT

The period when characters have reached full physical maturation; the term, "Adult," is used here to denote physical maturation; not social status, which is subject to cultural mores and traditions. There are no Attribute adjustments required for Adult characters.

ELDER

A period of gradual physical decline tempered somewhat by the acquisition of wisdom and experience. Elder characters take the following adjustments to their Attributes: -1 STR, -1 CON, -1 PER, +1 INT, +1 WIL, +1 CHA.

VENERABLE

As per the latter category, though physical decline is more pronounced over time. Venerable characters take the following adjustments to their Attributes: -2 STR, -2 CON, -2 DEX, -2 SPD, -2 PER, +2 INT, +2 WIL, +1 CHA

Note: The above Attributes are not cumulative.

Race	Adolescent	Adult	Elder	Venerable
Aeriad	1-11	12-33	34-60	61-145
Archaens ¹	1-17	18-40	41-75	66-140
Ariane	1-13	14-49	50-79	80-140
Ahazu	1-9	10-30	31-40	41-65
Araq	1-3	4-19	20-24	25-40
Batrean	1-16	17-38	39-69	70-90
Beastman	1-11	12-25	26-39	40-56
Bodor	1-19	20-50	51-75	76-120
Callidian	1-20	21-55	56-75	76-230
Chanan	1-12	13-35	36-45	46-75
Chromid	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-20
Danelek	1-19	20-40	41-60	61-85
Darkling	1-6	7-22	23-30	31-47
Druhk	1-13	14-29	30-49	50-70
Ferran	1-3	4-19	20-39	40-70
Gnomekin	1-4	5-50	51-100	101-200
Gnorl	1-10	11-25	26-99	100-285
Greenman	1-2	3-50	51-100	101-200

Race	Adolescent	Adult	Elder	Venerable
Gryph	1-10	11-35	36-45	46-75
Harakin	1-5	6-25	26-34	35-50
Imrian	1-8	9-24	25-40	41-75
Ispasian	1-20	21-39	40-64	65-95
Jaka	1-11	12-35	36-60	61-90
Jhangaran	1-19	20-30	31-50	51-85
Kang	1-5	6-24	25-39	40-80
Kasmiran	1-18	19-40	41-80	81-150
Kharakhan	1-12	13-35	36-60	61-100
Manra	1-12	13-30	31-40	41-70
Mogroth	1-29	30-79	80-119	120-190
Moorg Wan	1-17	18-28	29-39	40-70
Monad	1-2	3-25	26-30	31-45
Mondre Khan	1-8	9-20	21-33	34-60
Muse	1-49	50-75	76-95	96-145
Nagra	1-15	16-49	50-69	70-110
Na-Ku	1-10	11-25	26-35	36-55
Orgovian	1-12	13-36	37-55	56-85
Parthenian	0-1	2-100	101-250	250+
Rajan ²	1-12	13-35	36-55	56-95
Sauran	1-5	6-24	25-39	40-80
Sawila	1-20	21-45	46-75	76-140
Shadinn	1-10	11-30	31-55	56-80
Sindaran	1-19	20-39	40-59	60-100
Snipe	1-25	26-60	61-95	96-155
Sunra	1-24	25-35	36-49	50-110
Stryx	1-9	10-19	20-39	40-85
Thrall	1-7	8-28	29-49	50-80
Ur	1-19	20-39	40-50	51-65
Vajra	1-39	40-70	71-99	100-220
Verdir	1-20	21-50	51-80	81-130
Yassan	1-9	10-30	31-89	90-120
Yrmanian	1-15	16-25	26-35	36-60
Za	1-12	13-30	31-45	46-80

1. *Archaens:* Includes most humanoid races believed to be descended directly or indirectly from the Archaens, such as the Aamani-ans, Arimites, Azir, Castabulanese, Cymrilians, Danuvians, Dhuna, Djaffir, Dracartans, Farad, Haddin, Mandalans, Mangar, Marukan, Mirin, Oceanians, Phantasians, Quan, Rabastrans, Rasmirin, Sarista, Thaecians, Thiasians, Xambrians, Yitek, and Zandir

2. Includes Aramut, Zagir and Vird.

CREATIVE CHARACTERS

Many players new to *Talislanta* may feel overwhelmed by the rich cultural details provided for the numerous races found on the continent, and can find it difficult to portray their character as anything but a stereotypical member of its culture. However, the cultural details presented in the game are merely representative of the broad traits ascribed to those cultures, and just as people in our own world rarely fit a stereotype exactly, the same is true of those native to Talislanta.

Even in cases where a character is fairly typical, many aspects of personality, not to mention background and appearance, are not mentioned in the cultural guides, such as sense of humor, personal quirks and preferences, and so on. These present any player with a wide number of ways in which to personalize the archetype they choose, without contradicting the broad cultural description if they don't wish to.

Three factors contribute to the overall quality and depth of any given character: Background, Personality, and Appearance. When creating a character it is not necessary to write chapter upon chapter, painstakingly detailing the character's life, outlook, and appearance, but by simply considering the questions put forward in this document, and writing a handful of short answers, a character can be given a life and personality beyond that of a simple archetype. Each of the three sections will present twenty appropriate questions, not all of which need be answered, and not all of which will necessarily be applicable. If possible, the player and GM should work together to create the character, ensuring it is playable and not overly disruptive to the game they wish to play.

BACKGROUND

Arguably the most important aspect of character creation, a character's background provides a sense of personal history and it is often the character's upbringing and experiences in life that most define their personality and outlook. Remember: significant events, personages, and the like, need not necessarily be notable for good reasons; bad events can be just as memorable.

FAMILY

- *What were the character's parent(s) or guardian like?
- *Does the character have any siblings?
- *Does the character have a family of their own, or did they?
- *If no, do they ever intend to settle down?
- *What about other relatives; were any memorable for any reasons?
- *What is the current status of any of the character's relatives, i.e. alive, dead, missing, estranged, ill, enslaved, imprisoned, or divorced?
- *Were there any skeletons in the family closet?

HOME

- *Where was the character raised?
- *What was the family's status in terms of wealth, social, and local standing?
- *Did the family move at all?
- *Does the character have a home of their own?

CHILDHOOD/ADOLESCENCE

- *What was the character like as a child/adolescent?
- *Were any childhood/adolescent friends or enemies particularly memorable?
- *Were any childhood/adolescence events particularly memorable?
- *Did the character learn any skills as a child/adolescent?

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

- *Why did the character enter the profession they did?
- *How did the character get their training?
- *Did they find any of it particularly difficult or easy?
- *Has the character done anything particularly notable since completing their training?

- *What contacts, friends, enemies or mentors did the character make while training, or pursuing their career?

PERSONALITY

The character's personality defines how they are role-played, and should be detailed bearing in mind the character's Background, as described above. Consider how the character's upbringing, family, past experiences, etc. affected their worldview, morality, and so on, and if they turned out the way they did because of, or in spite of, their Background. Consider how they fit their cultural stereotype, and how they differ from it.

ATTITUDES

- *What does the character like/love?
 - *What does the character dislike/hate?
 - *What is the character's attitude to sex?
 - *What is the character's attitude to religion?
 - *What is the character's attitude to magic?
 - *What is the character's attitude to illegal activities?
 - *What is the character's attitude to conflict, physical or otherwise?
 - *Does the character have any misconceptions/ bigoted outlooks?

CONCEPTIONS

- *How does the character see themselves?
- *How do other people see the character?
- *If the character could be summed up in one word, what would that word be?
- *What would the character change about themselves, if they could?

DIRECTIVES

- *What is the character's greatest fear/worst nightmare?
- *What is the character's greatest hope/dream/ aspiration?
- *What motivates the character?
- *Is there anything the character will not do?

MISCELLANEOUS

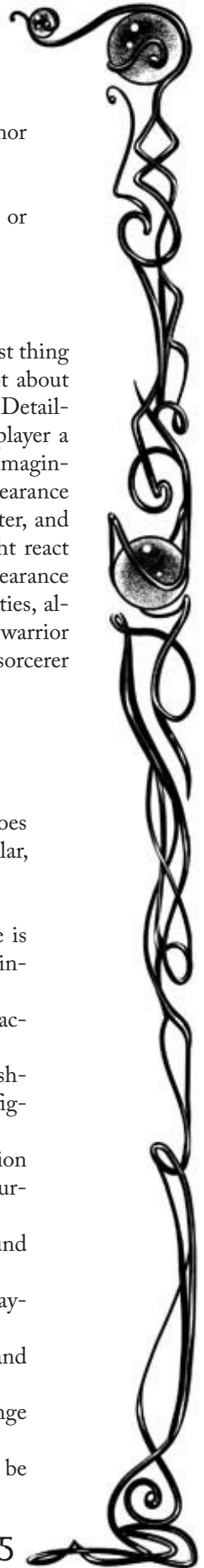
- *What is the character's sense of humor like?
- *Does the character have any hobbies?
- *Does the character have any mental or behavioral quirks, flaws, or aberrations?

APPEARANCE

The character's appearance is usually the first thing anyone notices about them, and can say a lot about their personality, profession, and background. Detailing what the character looks like gives the player a good mental image of the character, vital in imagining scenes in the game. The character's appearance also helps other players visualize the character, and enables GMs to determine how NPCs might react to the character. However, the character's appearance need not necessarily reflect all of their qualities, although it will always reflect some; not every warrior looks grim and determined, and not every sorcerer looks thin and bookish, for example.

PHYSICALITY

- *How tall is the character?
- *What kind of build and proportions does the character have, and are they muscular, toned, scrawny, or overweight?
- *How much does the character weigh?
- *What kind of style, color, and texture is the character's head/facial/body hair, if indeed they have hair?
- *What shape and color(s) are the character's eyes?
- *Does the character have any distinguishing marks such as birthmarks, scars, disfigurements, tattoos, or brands?
- *What does the character's expression usually convey, i.e. disdain, friendliness, surliness, calm?
- *What does the character's voice sound like?
- *Does the character have any favorite sayings or catch phrases?
- *How does the character move, walk, and carry themselves?
- *What would the character like to change about their appearance?
- *If the character's appearance could be



summed up in one word, what would that word be?

*How would others generally describe the character's appearance?

APPAREL

*How does the character dress when relaxing?

*How does the character dress when they wish to make an impression?

*How does the character dress when traveling? Working?

BELONGINGS

*What item(s) is the character rarely without?

*Does the character have any particularly cherished possession(s), such as an heirloom, memento, gift, or childhood possession?



CHAPTER FOUR

PATHS



In the *Talisanta Fantasy Roleplaying Game*, beginning characters have had lives prior to the start of the game. They all had childhoods, likely spirited and confused adolescent years and possibly even some form of career, job or profession prior to taking up the life of an adventurer.

All characters, no matter their age and race, have some measure of skill and talent to fall back on and use in day-to-day life. In the game, this is represented by Paths; the collections of skills, talents and traits unique to your character.

Paths are not simply careers that a character is bound within. The Paths your character has is the sum total of your character's life experience to date, and based on several factors such as region of birth, family background, careers and the character's own personality.

In selecting one or more Paths for your character, in effect, you build a unique character class that applies to your character, constructed from the game mechanics most suited to his past, rather than simply selecting a single Archetype or template that is applied to all characters of the same Race.

HOW MANY PATHS?

The number of Paths a player may select for her character is limited by the GM. Normal campaigns typically find characters having two or three Paths. Grim and gritty campaigns might find characters restricted to only one Path or perhaps receiving only half the normal Build Points per Path selected. More heroic games could find characters with four or even more paths under their belt.

It should be noted that players are under no obligation to select more than one Path. It is a perfectly valid option to select a Path you like and stick with it. In such situations, the character receives the normal Attribute Adjustments and Skill Ranks each time the Path is selected but rather than receiving the same starting equipment multiple time, they instead receive a +80 g.l. bonus in assorted currency for each time the Path is followed.

For example, Alison is building a new character and her GM has informed her that the campaign is limited to three Paths. She selects her background Path (Nomadic) which takes up one spot and has two Paths left. She finds she really likes the idea of her character (a Danelek) remaining true to his primitive roots and selects the Hunter Path as her second choice. After allocating her skill ranks among the Hunter preferred skill list, Alison decides she likes this Path and elects to select it for a second time meaning she receives another allotment of skill ranks that she is free to spend on the Hunter Path preferred skills.

Note: Some Paths may only be selected once while others have pre-requisites for entry. Players should familiarize themselves with the Path requirements of any Paths they believe relevant for their character.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A PATH?

Paths are essentially a collection of skills, special abilities, quirks and attribute adjustments available to the character. Each Path has a set number of skill ranks available. Players are free to allocate these ranks among the skills available to their Path.

ATTRIBUTE ADJUSTMENTS

Many Paths will alter a character's base racial Attribute ratings in some manner. This could be a bonus or penalty to a primary or secondary Attribute.

The first time a Path is followed, the character receives the first Attribute Adjustment listed. The second time the Path is followed the character receives the second adjustment listed and so on. If a single Path is selected more than 3 times, Attribute adjustments for the fourth and subsequent selections are ignored.

ASSIGNING SKILL RANKS

Each Path comes complete with a list of Preferred Skills available to characters of the Path along with a set number of skill ranks that the player may spread among any and all Skills on that Path's preferred list.

Players may not allocate more than 4 ranks to any single preferred skill per Path followed. If the character has one Path, that means no single skill can be increased above Rank +4. Characters with two Paths cannot have a single skill above rank +8 and so on.

In addition, players may purchase ranks in skills not found on their Path's preferred list but at a much increased cost. Players may allocate 3 of their allotted skill ranks to purchase a +1 rank in a skill not found on their Path's preferred list.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Some Paths grant characters free Quirks and other special abilities. These are clearly listed under each Path where appropriate.

QUIRKS

Each Path also has a list of Quirks commonly encountered in characters from the chosen Path. Players may select a Quirk for their characters from this list by forfeiting 2 skill ranks from those gained from the Path. In other words, if the Path has 12 skill ranks available, a player may opt to take only 10 skill ranks but also gain a Quirk. This cost can be reduced to only 1 skill rank if the player also selects a negative Quirk. When selecting a negative Quirk, the player may opt for any negative Quirk for which they meet all pre-requisites (i.e. appropriate race, etc.).

STARTING GEAR

Finally, each Path has a list of gear, equipment, magical trinkets, wealth and other property. The character starts with all relevant equipment as listed on each Path he possesses. This should be recorded on the player's character sheet. Equipment is only received the first time a Path is followed while any currency received from Path selection can be multiplied by the number of times the Path is followed.



ACOLYTE

Ever faithful, the Acolyte is a Priest in training. Religious indoctrination and clerical training normally begins young (in some cases at birth) and the life of an Acolyte is one of study and work. Acolytes normally live outside of their societies, among the other clerics at a temple of remote monastery where they are instructed in the mysteries of their religion but also where they toil in the day to day tasks required in these religious communities. This can involve anything from tending the temples orchards, fields and livestock, to building repairs, cooking and other menial duties. These tasks are intended to humble the aspiring Priest and teach him a good work ethic. Acolytes learn their religion's understanding of the Invocation Order and are taught the basic spells known to all religious practitioners of the faith. Each time this Path is followed the character ages 5 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

WIL +1 or INT +1 or CHA +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Agriculture, Arcane Lore, Astrology, Brewer/Vintner, Cook, Doctrines, Cultures, Healer, Language (any two), Laborer, Livestock, Meditation, Mode* (see below).

Special Features: Acolytes receive the Order: Invocation Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Benefactor, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Tireless.

Starting Equipment: Plain linen smock; cloth cloak; cloth boots; black iron holy symbol; ritual vestments; religious tomes; spellbook with ceramic inkwell and quills; hide scroll case; small belt pouch, small chest; lodging in local temple or monastery; coin purse with 10 g.l. in assorted currency.

* The modes available to Acolytes vary by religion as follows:

Aa: Influence, Divination plus one of choice.

Aberon: Attack, Conjunction plus one of choice.

Avar: Influence, Ward plus one of choice.

Borean: Move Ward plus one of choice.

Creator: Divination, Transmutation plus one of choice.

Sham: Illusion, Transmutation plus one of choice.

Zorlah: Attack, Ward plus one of choice.

AIRMAN

The Airman's heart belongs to the boundless vault of the heavens, and they feel truly at home on the deck of a windship as it glides through the eddies of the sky, far above the land, sails billowing in the wind. Few landlubbers could understand the feeling of freedom that air sailing grants, and fewer still would willingly face the dangerous storms or aerial predators that can bring peril to a journey. Airmen work hard and play hard, proud to serve in the majestic navies of Cymril or Phantas, using their unsurpassed skills as pilot, navigator, and crewman to see their vessel through any trials it may face. Foreign and exotic lands hold a great deal of appeal, though Airmen seldom visit them for more than short periods before taking to the air again, bound for other locations. Along with the skills required to operate a windship safely, many Airmen also pick up a rudimentary understanding of the merchant's craft as they are frequently in positions to trade goods with foreigners and countrymen alike. Each time this Path is followed the character ages 5 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

DEX +1 / PER +1 / CON +1

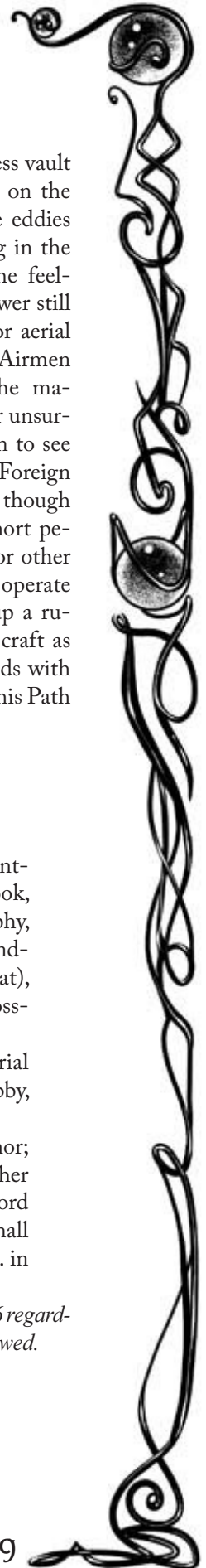
Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Artillerist (ship mounted weapons), Brawling, Climbing, Cook, Cultures, Haggle, Gambling, Geography, Laborer, Language (any one), Pilot (windship)*, Signal, Tactics (aerial combat), Weapon (large blades, small blades, crossbows).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Aerial Combat, Fearless, Good Balance, Hobby, No stutter, Quick Reflexes, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: Light leather armor; cloth cloak; padded helmet; high leather boots; goggles; dagger, saber or longsword and crossbow; quiver with 20 bolts; small chest; belt pouch; coin purse with 30 g.l. in assorted currency.

* Airman may not increase this skill above +6 regardless of the number of times this Path is followed.



ALCHEMICAL ADEPT

Those who begin studying alchemy often undertake rigorous training from a master of the alchemical arts. In many cities, one or more adepts may apprentice under the tutelage of a master alchemist; elsewhere, a young apprentice may work with a village elder or tribal shaman to learn the properties of plants and poisons.

Much like a neophyte magician, an adept may spend their days crushing leaves, bone, or horn into powder; stirring a noxious, bubbling pot a precise number of times in an exact way; measuring the height of plants to determine if they are of adequate height to be picked; or any other of a variety of tasks that their mentors disdain or have no time for completing. While adepts may not yet understand the subtle workings of alchemy and the world around them, they do learn quite a bit about life by dealing with the tasks set for them.

This Path may only be followed once. Characters following this Path age 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1, CR -1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Alchemy (any two substances), Analysis, Arcane Lore, Handicraft (Artificer, Brewer/Vintner), History, Herb Lore, Language (Archaen or Phaedran), Naturalism.

Special Features: Alchemical Adepts receive one of the following Quirks at no cost: Concoct Powders, Craft Alchemical Materials, Distill Poison, or Distill Elixirs.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense (taste or smell), Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Nimble Fingers, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: Alchemical apparatus; belt pouch containing various vials, bottles, and bags of powder; quarterstaff or dagger; vial of alchemical solvent; 35 gl in assorted currency.

ALCHEMIST

Alchemy is a quasi-magical science practiced in many areas of Talisanta, but perhaps perfected by the Sindarans of the Seven Kingdoms. As alchemists generally believe that everything, even living creatures, can have their essences distilled down and manipulated many of them are quite adept at categorizing and recognizing various types of flora and fauna. However, in some regions alchemy is less of a science and more of a tradition that is passed down from generation to generation.

While such cultures do not typically attach the same significance to 'distilling essences,' they do recognize that the qualities of various plants and animals can be bestowed upon others. Urban alchemists tend to be quite wealthy, both making and spending small fortunes in their trade. Rural or tribal alchemy practitioners may have less monetary wealth, but carry instead the respect or fear of their neighbors.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 5 years.

Prerequisite: Alchemical Adept

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1 / PER +1 / INT +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Alchemy, Analysis, Appraise, Arcane lore, Handicraft (Artificer, Brewer/Vintner), Herb Lore, Language (Archaen or Phaedran), Merchant, Naturalism.

Special Features: Alchemis receive one of the following Quirks at no cost: Concoct Powders, Craft Alchemical Materials, Distill Poison, or Distill Elixirs.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense (taste or smell), Benefactor, Concoct Explosives, Concoct Powders, Craft Alchemical Materials, Disease Immunity, Distill Elixir, Distill Poison, Fame, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Magical Item, Nimble Fingers, Pet, Poison Immunity, Rich, Single Minded, Tireless.

Starting Equipment: Alchemical apparatus; belt pouch containing; various vials, bottles, and bags of powder; vial of alcahest; medium apartment or townhouse; small shop and laboratory; coin purse with 100 gl in assorted currency.

ALUMNUS

The Lyceum Arcanum in Cymril—known continent wide as the most prestigious college of arcane lore—and you’ve had the privilege to study there under some of the best minds of Talislanta. Lyceum Arcanum alumni have access to a more varied array of magical skills than those magicians trained by private tutors. While not considered true magic, disciplines such as alchemy, botanomancy and thaumaturgy are all taught at the Lyceum Arcanum although these subjects are not covered in as great a depth as are the magical arts (*see footnote below*). While the vast majority of Talislantan magicians know only a single Order, it is possible to learn more than one Order by selecting this Path multiple times (indicating graduate studies at the Lyceum Arcanum).

This Path may only be followed once. Characters following this Path age 4 years. .

Prerequisite: INT +2

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1, MR +1, CR -1

Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Alchemy, Antiquarian, Arcane Lore, Astrology, Botanomancy, Cultures, Cryptography, Diplomacy, Fashion, History, Naturalism, Mode (any), Oratory, Thaumaturgy*.

Special Features: Alumnus receive an Order Quirk at no cost (select one from: Astromancy, Cryptomancy, Elementalism, Natural Magic, Necromancy, Wizardry).

Available Quirks: Attractive, Battle Magic, Benefactor, Dilute Telepathy, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Magical Item, Order (select from: Astromancy, Cryptomancy, Elementalism, Natural Magic, Necromancy, or Wizardry).

Starting Equipment: Spellbook or equivalent; high collared cloak; leather boots; belt pouch; dormitory room at Lyceum Arcanum; small chest; coin purse with 80 g.l. in gold pentacles.

**Thaumaturgy may not be increased beyond +2.*

APPRENTICE CRAFTSMAN

Learning how to design and craft shields, armor, weapons, ships, carts, or other conveyances is a long, arduous process. Apprentices can work and study for years before becoming masters themselves. The first step is choosing a trade, such as a blacksmith, potter, armorer, weaponer, or even a shipwright. Then the prospective student must find a master to learn from.

Apprentices only rarely get to practice their chosen craft, and instead, perform menial labor like cleaning and running errands. In return for their labor, the master will often give the apprentice room and board. Apprentices are expected to pay careful attention to the activities of the master, and to learn by observation, and not so much by doing.

This Path may only be followed once. Characters following this Path age 5 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

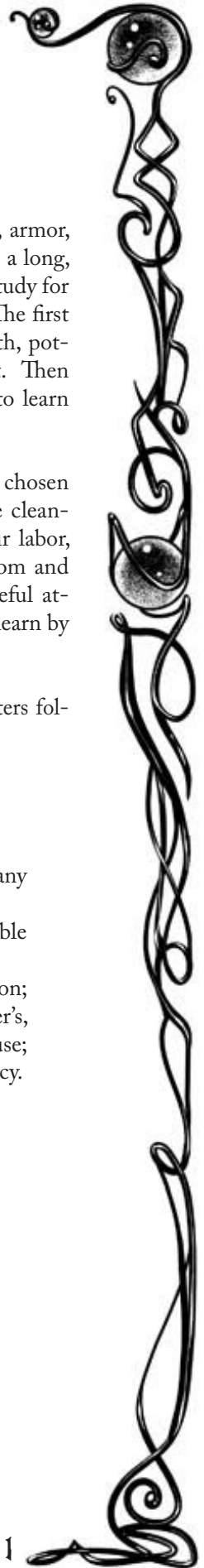
STR +1 or DEX +1 or CON +1

Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Haggle, Handicraft (any two), Laborer.

Available Quirks: Hobby, Literate, Nimble Fingers, Tireless.

Starting Equipment: Leather or hide apron; belt pouch; appropriate tools (glassworker’s, woodworker’s, etc.); room in master’s house; coin purse with 10 g.l. in assorted currency.



ARCHER

The bow is a weapon of distinction, but the truest weapons of the Archer are her calm hand, steady eye, and unwavering courage. The first to strike in conflict the Archer's role is one feared by all that must close distance to join in combat.

A specialist combat unit the Archer is highly prized on the walls of a city, as the first strike unit in an army as well as a highlight in any martial competition. Archers are generally lithe and athletic, requiring keen senses and fast reactions to respond to distant situations as the target closes with them. The Archer sees only targets and the paths that their ammunition must take to destroy their target. They are feared and revered in armies and city defences throughout the continent.

It should be noted that Archers vary in their weapon of choice by region and race and quite often the weapon may not, in fact, be a bow. For example, while few Arimites employ the bow, the Arimite version of an Archer is the Knife Fighter, a group that excels at ranged combat using throwing knives. Similarly Dracartan Archers typically employ the hurlant; Aeriad Archers favor the tribow or dart thrower; Orgovians the star thrower, and so on.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 2 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

RC +1 / RC +1 / RC +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Signal, Evade, Guard, Language (sign), Tactics, Weapon (bows, crossbows, slings, blades- small).

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Aeriad Precision Archery, Ambidextrous, Arimite Knife Fighting, Fearless, Good Balance, Hobby, Light Sleeper, Nimble Fingers, Quick Reflexes, Single Minded.

Starting Equipment: Appropriate ranged weapon of choice; quiver and appropriate ammunition; short sword or dagger; heavy cloth or light leather armor; leather boots; leather bracers; backpack and bedroll; 35 gl in assorted currency.

ARISTOCRAT

Politics is often called "*the Great Game*", and experienced Aristocrats are definitely its greatest players. The level of vassalage, sworn service, alliance, allegiance and ties of marriage between the aristocratic families across talislanta is utterly staggering. There are sides that must be appeased, factions that need to be controlled, other elements to be placated and wooed.

In any court, those who walk the delicate social balance with skill and grace are respected, envied and admired greatly. It is no easy feat – and these are just the legal considerations. When matters of treachery, infidelity, assassination and treason come into play – and they *always* do – the lives of the highborn become even more complicated, confusing and outright dangerous. Aristocrats know how to move through these chaotic webs of plotting and intrigue. Most importantly, an Aristocrat knows how to get through and bend the situations to his or her own advantage.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 7 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

WIL +1 / CHA +1 / CHA +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Administrator, Bribe, Cultures (any two), Dance, Deception, Diplomacy, Cultures, Fashion, Gamecraft, History, Language (any two), Oratory, Ride, Weapon (large blades).

Special Features: Aristocrat characters receive the Highborn Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Attractive, Benefactor, Commanding Voice, Fame, *Highborn* (see above), Hobby, Literate, Magical item, Rich, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: Expensive garments including elaborate robe or velvet tunic & breeches; velvet boots and gloves; silver headband; gold rings, necklace and bracelet, 2 Equus and carriage; large townhouse or house including furnishings; 1500 g.l. in valuable (artwork, gems and precious metals, etc.); coin purse with 400 g.l. in assorted currency.

ARTIST

From the art halls of Zandu to the telepathic “*paintings*” of the Muses of Astar, artists make life in Talislanta more colorful and vibrant. Artists create sculptures, paintings, drawings, jewelry, ornate pottery, and more. Some Artists, depending on culture, may seek to glorify deities through their works, to inspire emotion, or simply to pass the time doing something that they love.

Whether producing the mundane or the fantastic, artists must sell their works and services to make a living; though some artists are loathe admitting it, shrewd business skills and charisma are extremely helpful. Some artists are fortunate enough to have a wealthy patron, or garner enough fame so that finding work is never a problem. There are few regions in Talislanta that do not have a great love of the arts, so while the work may not be financially rewarding, their creations are not unappreciated.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1 / DEX +1 / DEX +1

Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Anatomy, Appraiser, Art, Handicraft (Artificer), Cultures, Doctrines (specific), Cultures, Fashion, Haggle, Laborer.

Available Quirks: Attractive, Benefactor, Fame, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Pet, Rich, Wealthy.

Starting Equipment: 30 gl in art supplies, hide boots, belt, backpack, small loft apartment or cottage; 50 gl in various currencies.

ASSASSIN

Government officials, well-to-do merchants, cheating husbands, and powerful wizards are killed on a fairly regular basis in some of the lands of Talislanta. Assassinations happen for a variety of reasons, whether they are motivated by politics or revenge.

Some assassins belong to an organization and feel strongly about a given cause, while others perform freelance work for monetary gain, like the Revenants of Arim. To become an assassin, one must be exceptionally skilled in the arts of deception, weaponry, breaking and entering, and stealth. The most important attribute an assassin can have is patience—it takes an incredible amount of time to gather information to plan a successful assassination. It must be remembered that an assassin must always be at his prime, or die a horrible death at the hands of those that guard his target, or even the target himself.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 5 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

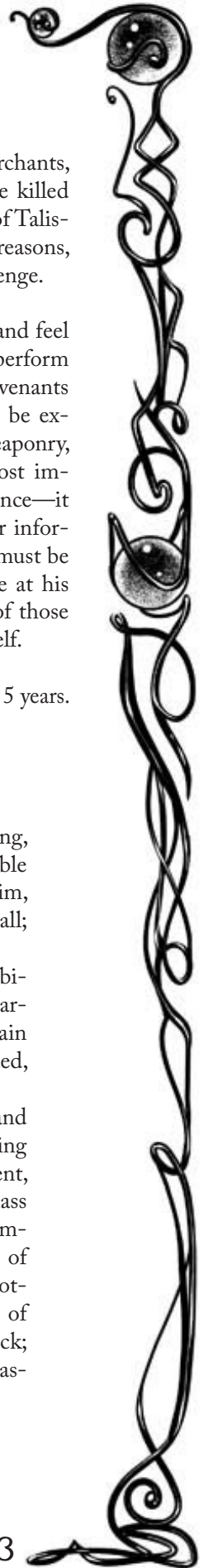
DEX +1 / CR or RC +1 / PER +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Assassinate, Climbing, Deception, Evade, Lip-Reading, Disable Device, Sabotage, Search, Stealth, Swim, Tracking, Traps, Weapon (Blades, small; Blades, large; Bows; Thrown).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Ambidextrous, Arimite Knife Fighting, Fearless, Good Balance, Light Sleeper, Pain Tolerance, Quick Reflexes, Single Minded, Stealthy, Strong Willed, Swift, Tireless.

Starting Equipment: Black silk shirt and pants, belt, backpack; dagger or throwing knife, short bow with ammunition; tent, rugged traveling clothes, bedroll; three glass vials of poison (paralytic poison, Venomwood resin, and Viper's Blood), pouch of Morpheus Powder (two doses); small cottage or apartment, wardrobe with 50 gl of disguises, heavy storage chest with lock; thieves' tools; coin purse with 35 gl in assorted currency.



BANDIT

Bandits lie in wait, ready to ambush hapless travelers and unwary merchants. Between towns, in forests, plains and desert, bandits set up camps where they prepare and plan for their raids. A successful bandit must have intimate knowledge of the local terrain, as well as a flare for tactics. Not all bandits use mounts, although they can be very helpful, especially if there is ever a need to leave an area quickly.

The threat of violence is the most important tool of a bandit, and though many bandits have no qualms over killing, most would prefer not to – if only to conserve arrows. A life on the run from the law has its share of dangers and difficulties, but hard times falling on good people can be enough to turn most anyone toward such actions.

Nations and regions hit by heavy taxes or natural disasters see a massive upturn in banditry, as the lay people try to salvage what coin they can to stay alive. Not all bandits, despite at least some skill with weapons, are overtly violent or cruel. Of course there will always be those who turn to the criminal life and care little for the lives of others in doing so. “Your lumens or your life” is no idle threat on the trade routes of Talislanta. Every time this Path is taken, the character ages 3 years.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 10 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

RC +1 / CR +1 / CR or RC +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Appraiser, Command, Conveyance (any one), Evade, Geography, Guard, Haggle, Ride, Survival, Tactics, Weapon (any three).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Light Sleeper, Quick Reflexes, Stealthy, Terrain Familiarity (any one).

Starting Equipment: Belt pouch; heavy leather or hide armor; bedroll; tent; hooded fur or hide cloak; leather boots; Graymane, Aht-Ra or Strider mount with tack and saddle; saddle bags; coin purse with 30 g.l. in assorted currency.

BEASTMASTER

At home travelling the paths of the woods the Beastmaster cares for the creatures that fill their homelands. Often loners the Beastmaster are highly sought after to control wild animal populations or to trade in the less wild species in animal markets.

More at home than in the wilderness the Beastmaster is often seen as lacking social graces, much more at home in a glade with wild animals than a marketplace full of sentient races. It is difficult to find a Beastmaster in their own element, generally when a Beastmaster is encountered it is because they wish to be found.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1 / CR +1 / PER +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Animal Handler, Artificer, Brawling, Mimicry, Naturalism, Stealth, Survival (any one), Tracking, Traps, Weapon (bow, small blades, large blades, spears)

Special Features: Beast Lore special ability

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Ambidextrous, Animal Empathy, Disease Immunity, Fearless, Good Balance, Light Sleeper, Quick Reflexes, Swift, Terrain Familiarity (any one).

Starting Equipment: Short Bow with ammunition; longsword; light leather armor; 50' rope; backpack; bedroll; tent; waterskin; coin purse with 30 gl in assorted currency; select one animal companion: *Avir, Catdrac, Drac, Draconid, Equus, Exomorph, Feather Dractyl, Kirryan, L'latha, Machakka, Nighthawk, Preen, Quaal, Ravir, Rayk, Rictus, Rime Hound, Sharl, Tardisite, Tarkus, Timber beast, Tundra Beast, Urthrax, Winged Viper.*

BEGGAR

The streets of Talislanta's cities are dangerous places, full of vermin of all varieties, where the unwary are viewed as potential targets for begging, scams, theft, and even violence. Beggars have lived their entire lives on the mean streets, and have become one of the vermin in order to survive. Being a beggar, cheap prostitute, thug, or information gatherer may not be glamorous or esteemed work, but it keeps them alive.

In Zandu, Beggars even have some respect, and the loose protection of the Serparian guild. Beggars might well be riff-raff and ne'er-do-wells, but they also look out for each other; after all, no one else is going to. Those individuals in the know often trade for the information Beggars find, and many people would be amazed at what a Beggar can find out after rummaging through someone's litter, or merely begging across the street from a building. If anything is going down on the streets, Beggars are sure to know about it.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CON +1 / PER +1 / PER +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Brawling, Bribe, Coerce, Deception, Evade, Haggle, Laborer, Streetwise, Underworld, Weapon (small blades).

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Alcohol Tolerance, Disease Immunity, Light Sleeper, Poison Immunity, Slippery, Tough.

Starting Equipment: ripped and torn garments; worn sandals; moth-eaten blanket; 3 gl in assorted currency

BODYGUARD

Talislanta is a dangerous place, particularly in the wilderness but just as often within the walls of so-called civilized city-states. The well-to-do often have need of hired protection; both for their person and for their property and possessions. The Bodyguard is hired-muscle—hired to protect the wealthy and celebrities of a given area from harm.

Bodyguards are trained and experienced in basic combat but it is their ability to end a fight before it begins that is most highly sought after by the rich and famous. Bodyguards must always be on the alert from trouble and must know how to react to almost any contingency.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

STR +1 / PER +1 / SPD +1

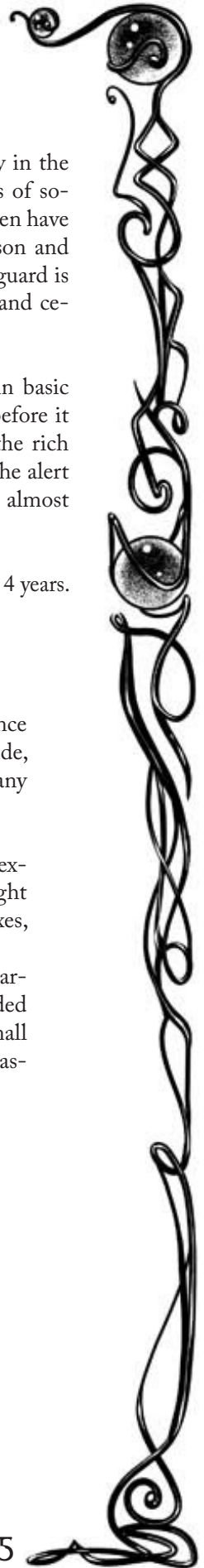
Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Brawling, Conveyance (wagons), Guard, Cultures, Evade, Ride, Shield, Streetwise, Swim, Weapon (any one-handed).

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Ambidextrous, Commanding Voice, Fearless, Light Sleeper, Pain Tolerance, Quick Reflexes, Single Minded, Tough.

Starting Equipment: Heavy leather armor; hooded cloak; belt pouch; one-handed weapon of choice; black iron shield; small apartment; coin purse with 16 g.l. in assorted currency.



BOTANOMANCER

Botanomancy is the Talisantan equivalent of metaphysical botany. It is a pseudo-magical art in the vein of alchemy and thaumaturgy and is largely unknown in the New Age beyond the borders of the Seven Kingdoms. Originally developed by the Arch-chaen sorcerer Viridian, it is studied primarily by the Green Aeriad of Vardune. To the Aeriad, Botanomancy is closely linked to their religious beliefs in the Creator and their conception of the great “**Tree of Life**” and they revere Viridian for his invention of their art. Much like the Crystalomancers do in Gnomekin society, in Vardune, Botanomancers fill the societal roll that Priests serve in other cultures.

Botanomancy consists of several disciplines that are derived from the botanomancer’s training, study of the plant kingdom, and intuition. Botanomancers spend their days tending to plants of all types as well as crafting incredible floral displays, pruning and shaping plants not to mention hybridizing and creating new forms of plant life.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 7 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CR -1 & INT +1 / PER +1 / INT +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Agriculture, Appraiser (plants), Art (topiary), Botanomancy, Handicraft (Brewer/Vintner), Cook, Geography, Healer, Herb Lore, Survival History, Naturalism.

Special Features: Botanomancers receive the Shap Plants Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Benefactor, Disease Immunity, Fame, Hobby, Literate, Magical Item, Nimble Fingers, Pet, Poison Immunity, Single Minded, Speak with Plants, Terrain Familiarity (forest or jungle).

Starting Equipment: scroll case for writings; pouches containing seeds a reed pen, inkwell and 5 vials of plant-based elixirs; d20 small plant samples; d20 assorted tomes; medium treehouse in Vardune; coin purse 100 gl in assorted currency.

BURGLAR

If the Bandit is the scourge of the countryside, the Burglar is his urban counterpart. Lawlessness strikes at the hearts of hard-living town-dwellers just as easily as it does in the deprived folks of rural regions. And there are just as many who turn to the trade out of malice, spite or a lack of desire to earn a fair living.

The only difference between these rogues in the two settings is that while Bandits must make do with robbing what a traveler has on his person, a Burglar has the pick of a person’s belongings once he has gained entrance to the victim’s dwelling.

Burglars are skilled in the art of stealth and work primarily under the cover of darkness, foiling the locks and traps of the wealthy, scaling the walls of walled compounds or jumping from rooftop to rooftop to gain access to otherwise inaccessible floors of buildings.

Burglars typically have a network of contacts within the underworld of their local city-state including corrupt city officials, bodyguards, fences and even assassins.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 2 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

DEX +1 / SPD +1 / PER +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Brawling, Bribe, Climbing, Deception, Disable Device, Evade, Haggle, Search, Stealth, Streetwise, Swim, Traps, Underworld, Weapon (small blades, crossbows, slings, thrown)

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Ambidextrous, Good Balance, Nimble Fingers, quick Reflexes, Single Minded, Stealthy, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: Light Cloth, Heavy Cloth or Light Leather armor; backpack; belt pouch; thieves tools; 50’ rope & grapple; crowbar; 3 cloth sacks; run-down small apartment; 40 g.l in misc stolen goods of choice; coin purse with 12 g.l. in assorted currency.

CAPTAIN

After years of experience, many Sailors (or Airmen) eventually come to command their own vessel. With the variety of large conveyances found in Talislanta, Captains might be in command of one of the following types of vessels: Aeriad Barge Fort, Carrack, Coracle, Dragon barque, Duneship, Galley, Ice Schooner, Land Ark, Land Barge, Merchant Ship, Trireme, Windships or Windships of War. Captains often own their vessels but could also simply have a commission on a vessel owned by a national government or mercantile interest. In either case, her word is law aboard the ship and the Captain has complete discretion in terms of hiring crew, charting a course and, of course, defense of his ship.

It is Talislantan custom that the Captain receives a 10% levy of all cargo transported aboard their craft or its monetary equivalent. If the Captain is of a privateer or pirate sort, the typical share of plunder that goes to the Captain is 40%. Ship's Captains are skilled in all aspects of the operation of their vessel and often have great knowledge of the geography and languages of the many ports of call they frequent. Each time this Path is taken ages the character 7 years.

Prerequisite: Sailor or Airman

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1 / CHA +1 / CON +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Administrator, Artillerist (shipboard weapons), Artisan, Cartography, Climbing, Command, Cultures, Geography, Haggle, Language (any three), Merchant, Pilot, Signal, Swim, Tactics (aerial or naval combat), Weapon (any three).

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Alcohol Tolerance, Benefactor, Commanding Voice, Fame, Fearless, Good Balance, Highborn, No Stutter, Single Minded, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: Heavy leather or spanglor armor; two weapons of choice; fine garments; high leather boots; cloth or fur cloak; large chest with lock; appropriate maps and charts; pottery inkwell & quills; iron bound logbook; appropriate vessel for race (GMs discretion); coin purse with 90 g.l. in assorted currency.

CON ARTIST

When seeking out occult knowledge, medicine, or ancient artifacts, one must be careful to verify the accuracy or authenticity of the knowledge or item—more than a few people have been swindled by a fast-talking con-artist. A Con Artist is a master of deception, able to convince marks that he is a fount of knowledge, or that he possesses special, magical remedies. Con Artists are constantly on the move, traveling from town to town, either using the same con or changing their tactics, making it harder for them to be caught. Feigning knowledge and proficiency takes much studying: an effective con Artist will always find a handful of facts to make his con seem more authentic.

Some Con Artists sell faux artifacts, quack remedies, or forged documents, so skill in haggling is needed in addition to the fast-talking and lying. Finally, it is useful to have a mount handy, in case one must leave an angry town quickly.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 3 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CHA +1 / PER +1 / CHA +1

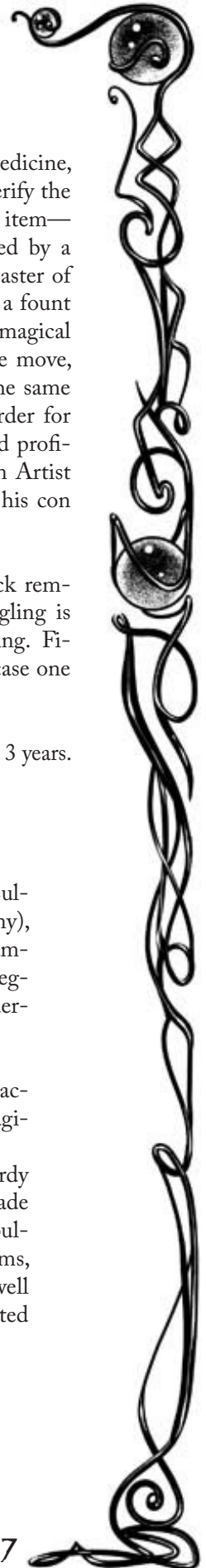
Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Acting, Appraiser, Cultures (any), Deception, Doctrines (any), Cultures, Evade, Fashion, Forgery, Gambling, Haggle, Language (any three), Ledgermain, Ride (any), Streetwise, Underworld.

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Ambidextrous, Attractive, Hobby, Light Sleeper, Literate, Magical Item, Quick Reflexes, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: silkcloth shirt, sturdy cloth pants, fine leather boots, well-made cloak; Equus with cart; tent; bedroll; Shoulder bag with 50gl in fake artifacts, gems, and potions; notebooks, ceramic inkwell and quills; coin purse with 40 g.l. in assorted currency.



COURTESAN

A courtesan is a woman paid and/or supported in return for providing social companionship and intimate liaisons to more than one partner. The word is generally reserved for those who enjoyed an elevation in social status as a result of providing such services. Although the term can be applied to people in several cultures, it was originally coined to describe the slave-women of Batre who held the socially recognized (if not quite socially accepted) position of well-compensated companions.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 2 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CHA +1 / CHA +1 / PER +1

Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Cook, Cultures, Fashion, Haggle, Language (any modern), Acting, Dance, Music, Oratory, Song, Cultures, Diplomacy, Deception, Seduce, Streetwise.

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Alcohol Tolerance, Attractive, Beguile by Scent, Benefactor, Fame, Hobby, Nimble Fingers, Literate, Pain Tolerance, Pheromones, Quick Reflexes, Sensual Voice, Stunning.

Starting Equipment: Sarista love locket; 6 ounces of Love Potion; Silk Robe (x2); sandals, silver earrings, ring and necklace; 50 gl in assorted currency.

CRYSTALOMANCER

Crystalomancers study crystals and their magical properties. An art known only to the Gnomekin of Durne; they view their magic as a reflection of Terra, the Earth Mother, and regard Crystalomancy as a divine gift. While the Daughters of Terra also use magic of this Order, they are a religious group with slightly varying philosophies from the more secular Crystalomancers.

Unlike magicians of other Orders, Crystalomancers do not normally serve a period of apprenticeship under a master or teacher. New Crystalomancers are trained by their peers as this form of cooperative effort is common to Gnomekin culture.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 7 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CR -1 & INT +1 / INT +1 / WIL +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Agriculture (crystals), Appraiser (crystals), Artificer, Climbing, Geography, Merchant, Mode (any 4).

Special Features: Crystalomancers receive the Order: Crystalomancy Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Alcohol Tolerance, Ambidextrous, Benefactor.

Starting Equipment: cloak, knee-length smock, pouch with assorted crystals for spell-casting; small home in Durne; 100 gl in crystals and gold pentacles.

DAUGHTER OF TERRA

The worship and belief in Terra is universal among the Gnomekin, and colors their very existence, personality and society, influencing the way they behave, and the way they view the world. They believe Terra is a living entity; an elemental of vast proportions that forms the world itself. The earth is Her flesh, the rocks Her bones, the waters Her blood, and the air Her breath. She provides shelter, food, water, and the very ground upon, within, and above which all things live. She is benign and loving: the ultimate mother, providing for all life. All living creatures are Her children, even if they do not realize it, and children should reciprocate Her love, treating Her with care and respect.

All Gnomekin clergy of Terra are female, and call themselves "Her Daughters". These Daughters of Terra seek to increase the appreciation and communion with nature in those around them, as well as promoting the tenets of their faith, and providing services as healers, midwives, and counselors. While they avoid gender prejudice, for all are beloved of Terra, it is felt that females understand *Her* best, being intimately connected to creation in a way no male could ever completely appreciate.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 5 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CR -1 & INT +1 / CHA +1 / WIL +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Agriculture (crystals), Arcane Lore, Artificer, Appraiser (crystals), Climbing, Doctrines (Terra), Cultures, Haggle, Geography, Litigator (Durne), Meditation, Oratory, Song, Survival (subterranean).

Special Features: Daughters of Terra receive the Order: Crystalomancy Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Hobby, Magical Item.

Starting Equipment: Hooded cloak of woven moss; knee-length smock; pouch with assorted crystals for spellcasting; 80 g.l. in gold pentacles or precious stones.

DIPLOMAT

Diplomats are normally functionaries of one of the civilized nations of Talislanta, acting as intermediaries between the various governments. Trained primarily in Cultures and polite society, a good diplomat is also part spy and is always on the look-out for opportunities to improve the lot of their nation.

Diplomats are skilled orators and know how to read a situation and size up an opponent quickly. While the vast majority of Diplomats serve national governments others may be found in the employ of Farad Merchant houses and other mercantile interests across Talislanta.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 7 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

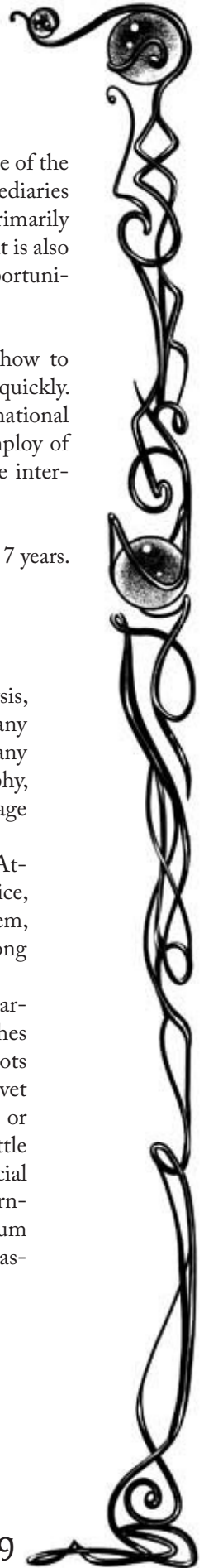
CHA +1 / INT +1 / PER +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Administrator, Analysis, Bribe, Conveyance (carriage); Cultures (any 3), Deception, Diplomacy, Cultures (any 3), Espionage, Fashion (any 3), Geography, Haggle, History, Ride (Eques), Language (any), Oratory.

Available Quirks: Alcohols Tolerance, Attractive, Benefactor, Commanding Voice, Highborn, Hobby, literate, Magical Item, Rich, Sharp Tongue, Single Minded, Strong Willed.

Starting Equipment: High quality garments including velvet or silkcloth breeches and shirt or robe, elaborate slippers or boots and cap; personal jewelry; leather or velvet boots; velvet gloves; carriage and 2 Eques or Strider drays; notebook or folio; ink bottle and several quills; sealing wax and official seal; small strong box with 500 gl in government currency; key ring and keys; medium townhouse; coin purse with 100 gl in assorted currency;



DISCIPLE

Disciples are mystics in training, studying under a teacher for many years, constantly exploring the potential of the mind and the nature of the Omniverse in general. Many travel great distances seeking a like-minded teacher while others are sought out by the teacher themselves.

The exact nature of a teacher-Disciple relationship will vary from case to case and depends primarily upon the nature of the philosophy being studied. Ariane often study under a number of elders while Mandalans typically enroll in a school where they are taught a particular aspect of Mandalan spirituality.

Disciples from other races can also be found throughout Talislanta, often living ascetic lives under the tutelage of an experienced Mystic.

This Path may only be followed once. Characters following this Path age 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments: WIL +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Anatomy, Arcane Lore, Astrology, Doctrines, Meditation, Healer, Herb Lore, Mode (any 4).

Special Features: Disciples receive the Order (Mysticism) Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Animal Empathy, Attractive, Disease immunity, Fearless, Good Balance, Literate, Pain Tolerance, Quick Reflexes, Single Minded, Slippery, Strong Willed.

Starting Equipment: Simple robe & sandals; belt pouch; walking stick; philosophical tomes; coin purse with 10 g.l. in assorted currency.

DRUAS

The vast majority of Ariane encountered outside of the Maze-City of Altan will be Druas or “*Seekers*”. Druas leave Altan to experience the world beyond the city and to bring their experiences back to the rest of the Ariane. Every seven years, a Druas will return to Altan to add the experiences recorded within his or her personal tamar to those stored in the great obelisk by past generations of Ariane, a procedure which takes seven days to complete. Once the process is complete, a Druas is free to again go out into the world, or to remain in Altan for as long as he or she desires.

Aside from gathering experiences, Druas characters generally have no set goals. They consider the acquisition of wealth to be a pointless exercise; Ariane forage for the food they need, make their own garments and implements and prefer to sleep seated in a meditative position, in natural surroundings. Though many Druas prefer to travel alone, it is not uncommon for these individuals to form close friendships with other creatures or beings or even to accompany a group of trusted companions on adventure.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 7 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1 / CON +1 / WIL +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Climbing, Cook, Cultures, Doctrines (transcendancy), Evade, Geography, Healer, Herb Lore, Meditation, Mode (any five), Ride, Survival (any two), Swim, Tracking, Weapon (hafted or bow).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Animal Empathy, Fearless, Light Sleeper, Literate, Magical Item, Single Minded, Stealthy, Swift, Terrain Familiarity (select one), Tireless.

Starting Equipment: None

DUELIST

Duelists are flamboyant swordsmen who revel in the fine art of the duel and are, by their very nature, a flamboyant lot. Many make a living in professional duels (often to the first blood) while others are mountebanks and thieves, accosting travellers and relieving them of their coin and valuables.

Duelists are common throughout Zandu where they are known as Certaments. Some few are also known to operate in Dracarta, Faradun and L'Haan while the government of Cymril cross trains a special cadre of elite troops with a mixture of Duelist skills and magic. Cymrilian Swordmages are most often found as officers aboard Cymrilian windships across the continent.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CR +1 / DEX +1 / CR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Acrobatics, Brawling, Climbing, Cultures, Evade, Fashion, Weapon (Large blades, Small blades), Ride,

Available Quirks: Alcohol Tolerance, Ambidextrous, Attractive, Fame, Fearless, Good Balance, Highborn, Magical Item, Quick Reflexes, Sensual Voice, Sharp Tongue, Slippery, Swift, Tantara, Zandir Swordsmanship.

Starting Equipment: Spangalor, chain or light leather armor; velveteen cloak; knee-high boots; silver hair bands, ring and bracelets; Zandir dueling sword and one other weapon of choice; Equis with tack and saddle; modest apartment in urban center; coin purse with 80 g.l. in assorted currency.

EFFECTUATOR

Mystery is found throughout Talislanta, from the city streets of Cymril to the forests of Werewood. Many of these mysteries are related to crimes, such as the whereabouts of murderers and thieves, as well as the location of stolen or smuggled goods. Effectuators go out in search of these mysteries, and can be hired for a modest fee. They are experts in uncovering information of all kinds. Talking to thieves, smugglers and other miscreants is a common tactic for gathering information, though the bribing of certain officials can garner similar results. Often times, an effectuator must stoop to spying on suspects, and so stealth is a coveted skill. Learning local laws is also a useful skill for an effectuator, as it allows him some leverage with certain informants. It is easy for these sleuths to make enemies, so all successful effectuators learn some form of self-defense.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 5 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

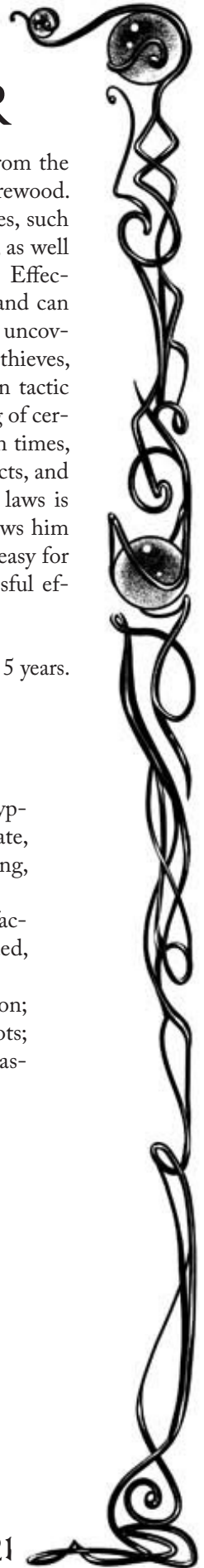
PER +1 / INT +1 / PER +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Analysis, Bribe, Cryptography, Espionage, Haggle, Interrogate, Litigator, Ride, Search, Stealth, Tracking, Underworld, Weapon (select one).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Benefactor, Fame, Hobby, Literate, Single Minded, Stealthy, Tireless, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: Choice of weapon; sturdy travelling garments; leather boots; various maps; coin purse with 60 g.l. in assorted currency.



ENCHANTER

Almost everywhere across the continent of Talislanta magical creations are in demand. While examples of ancient arcane works can be found in tombs and abandoned ruins, they are hazardous to reach and occasionally hazardous to handle. Therefore, the crafting of magical items through the practice of enchantment is a widespread practice.

In cultures where magic is widely practiced, such as Cymril, enchanters often sell their wares in shops. In other cultures where magic is less common, enchanters produce just enough to support their fellow tribesmen who take care to protect them while they work. Since enchantment works in conjunction with magical Modes, there is always the possibility of mishap or danger while crafting magical devices, and therefore Enchantment is often first learned as a neophyte and later mastered by experienced magicians.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 6 years.

Prerequisite: Alumnus or Neophyte Magician

Attribute Adjustments:

CR -1 & MR +1 / INT +1 / MR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Arcane Lore, Handicraft (Artificer), Astrology, Cryptography, Enchantment, Haggle, Merchant, Mode (Enchantment), Mode (Any two).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Ambidextrous, Benefactor, Hobby, Familiar, Literate, Magical Item, Pet, Rich, Single Minded, Strong Willed.

Starting Equipment: Spellbook or equivalent; belt pouch containing various spell components; small apartment or house; 2 enchanted items of choice; 150 gl in assorted currency.

ENGINEER

Engineers are trained in the various tasks required in construction: be in construction of buildings, bridges, monuments and mines or the more complex conveyances such as land arks and barges, ice schooners and even the hulls of windships (although Technomancers are required for most of the rest of the windship's construction).

Engineers have an innate understanding of the calculations required to build stable structures and also in overseeing the labor required to construct such things. Engineers are often employed by government and cities to construct government buildings, monuments and roads but also by mercantile interests; especially in the mining trade.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 7 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1 / PER +1 / INT +1

Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Administrator, Handicraft (Artisan), Conveyance (any one), Engineer, Mining, Sabotage.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Benefactor, Fame, Literate, nimble Fingers, Rich, Single Minded.

Starting Equipment: Leather apron and gauntlets; backpack; lantern, pint of oil; belt pouch; abacus; crowbar; notebook; pottery inkwell and quills; small apartment or house; coin purse with 40 gl in assorted currency.

GAMBLER

To the Gambler, life is simply a constant series of gambles, and the fickle hand of fortune throws its dice for them every day. Gamblers revel in the unpredictability that is life itself, trusting to chance and no little skill to make their name and fortune at gambling dens and casinos across the continent.

For Gamblers, it is not a matter of winning, though that is certainly beneficial, but cheating random chance through their ability to evaluate the odds, read the subtle signs in their opponents, and use a deft hand to shift luck in their favor. Win or lose, most Gamblers conduct themselves with class and style, putting a smile on even the soundest of defeats, ready to tempt the capriciousness of chance yet again.

Each time this Path is taken ages the character 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1 / CHA +1 / CHA +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Acting, Cultures (any one), Deception, Evade, Fashion, Gambling, Gamecraft, Haggle, Legerdemain, Streetwise, Weapon (small blades).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Alcohol Tolerance, Ambidextrous, Attractive, Dilute Telepathy, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Nimble Fingers, Quick Reflexes, Sharp Tongue, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: Quality garments including velvet breeches and shirt, wide-brimmed hat, sateen cape; leather boots; choice of: 10 caltrops, dagger, spring-knife or short sword; unenchanted zodar deck; choice of pentadrille, quadrillion deck or ska-wae dice; belt pouch, small metal mirror; silver ring, necklace or earrings; coin purse with 60 gl in assorted currency.

GLADIATOR

Fighting Arenas and Death Pits dot the landscape of Talislanta. Gladiators, slaves, criminals and animals fight to the death for the amusement of others. The crowd does not simply wish to watch mindless fighting, but a spectacularly violent show; a fact that the best gladiators quickly latch onto. Gladiators feed off of the energy of the crowd: their cheers, their jeering of the opponent. It takes more than skill in fighting to become a great gladiator – it takes a good deal of showmanship as well.

Gladiators ceaselessly train in myriad weapons and fighting styles, but also in gratuitous taunts and outlandish moves. It is a constant battle to become the best in the Death Pit, because as the name implies, defeat often means death. Some gladiators move on from the arena, seeking greater challenges after the monotony of pits. Denizens of Talislanta would be hard pressed to find warriors with more zeal and dedication than a champion of the arena.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 2 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CR +1 / STR +1 / CR +1

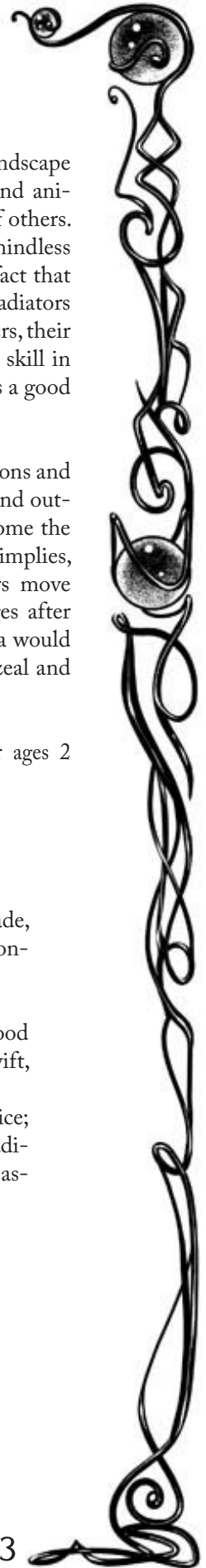
Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Acting, Brawling, Evade, Healer, Shield, Weapon (any four non-ranged).

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Fame, Fearless, Good Balance, Mighty Blows, Slippery, Swift, Tough.

Starting Equipment: Armor of choice; three weapons of choice; lodging at gladiatorial stables; coin purse with 1 g.l. in assorted currency.



GUIDE

Mountain, wilderness, rivers, cities, tundras, there are many places that need a guide to show the way. Skilled in survival and a knowledge of the ins and outs of the region the guide is a highly sought after commodity. There are as many different types of guide on the continent as there are terrains, cities and countries. From the underground to the floating city there is always a need for a guide.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 3 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1 / CON +1 / PER +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Climbing, Cartography, Conveyance (row boat), Cook, Geography, Guard, Guide, Herb lore, Naturalism, Ride, Search, Survival (any 2), Swim, Traps, Weapon (any one)

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Fearless, Good Balance, Hobby, Light Sleeper, Literate, Pet, Swift, Strong Willed, Terrain Familiarity (any two), Tireless.

Starting Equipment: Weapon of choice; maps & charts; hide scroll case; backpack; bedroll; tent; leather armor; 50' rope; graymane steed with saddle & tack; 30 gl in assorted currency.

HEALER

Broken bones, poisoning, and odd diseases are just a few ailments a healer encounters on a regular basis. It takes years of experience—and often times a goodly amount of luck—to know how to treat different maladies. There are hundreds of different medicinal herbs, and incorrectly using them can do more harm than good. Unfortunately, healing is not so much a science as an art in Talislanta, and even an experienced healer can make serious mistakes. Adept healers should be able to bandage wounds, set bones, administer teas and tinctures, mix basic medicinal concoctions, and act as a midwife.

Healers will often tend a small garden of medicinal herbs and keep a small stock of commonly used medicines. It is occasionally necessary to search out rare ingredients, and when a trade caravan or market is not nearby, the Healer must go out on his own or with aid if it can be found or afforded.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1 / CHA +1 / INT +1

Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Agriculture, Anatomy, Handicraft (Brewer/Vintner,) Cook, Healer, Herb Lore.

Available Quirks: Benefactor, Disease Immunity, Hobby, Literate, Poison Immunity.

Starting Equipment: Simple garments; hooded cloak; hide boots; Healer's toolkit; extra bandages; belt pouch; 1 oz. neutralizing powdered; 1 oz. medicinal purge; 3 oz.. healing elixir; coin purse with 25 g.l. in assorted currency.

HERBALIST

Practitioners of herbalism use their skills to allay physical, mental, emotional, and even spiritual illness. Sometimes overlooked as simple folk remedies, herbalism is an effective means of healing. Herbalists in cities draw upon knowledge from books, while those in villages or tribes usually learn through oral traditions. Many common afflictions can be cured or alleviated by an herbalist, using readily available herbs.

Most herbalists grow their own herbs whenever possible, so that they always have a ready supply. For rare herbs, an herbalist will travel to apothecaries in distant cities and nations, or will hike deep into woodlands and steppes to search on her own. A gifted herbalist can be famous in the surrounding countryside, and people will travel great distances to seek her services.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1 / CHA +1 / PER +1

Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Agriculture (herbs), Appraiser, Handicraft (Brewer/Vintner), Haggle, Healer, Herb Lore, Survival (specific).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense (sight or smell), Distill Elixir (plant-based), Distill Poison (plant-based), Hobby, Single Minded, Terrain Familiarity (specific), Tireless.

Starting Equipment: Small cottage with a small garden with various herbs, gardening tools, drying rack, glass jars with stoppers, cloth bags; backpack, belt, large belt pouch filled with bags of herbs, a few cloth poultices, twine; books on herbs; well made clothes, leather boots, heavy cloak, coin purse with 40 gl in assorted currency.

HUNTER

The hunt is a test of skill and determination; and an admirable test for a born warrior. Hunters brave the greatest of dangers to bring food to their people, often emerging from the steaming jungles or parched deserts bloodied but victorious, their latest conquest in tow. Tactical cunning and caution - natural parts of the hunter psyche - enable them to outflank their prey, and bring them down with a swift, precise and effective assault. In times of war and battle Hunters become the guerilla warriors of their tribes.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 2 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

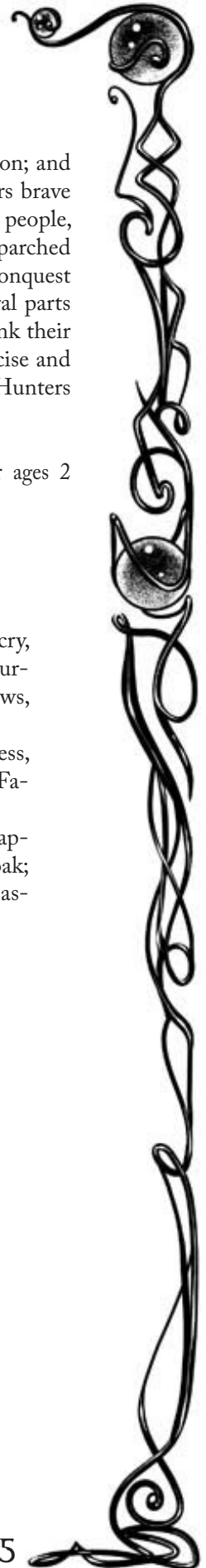
RC +1 / PER +1 / CR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Cook, Fishing, Mimicry, Ride, Signal, Swim, Tracking, Traps, Survival (any one), Weapon (small blades, bows, spears or thrown)

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Fearless, Quick Reflexes, Stealthy, Swift, Terrain Familiarity (any one), Tireless.

Starting Equipment: Spear plus one weapon of choice; hide shield; hide or fur cloak; 50' rope; tinder box; waterskin; 5 gl in assorted currency.



HUSSAR

Hussar is a word from the Phaedran language and it refers to those who make their living as riders. Originally thought to refer to overland couriers, it has now come to define mounted military units and troops. Almost all organized militaries on Talislanta have Hussar regiments. The Thralls of Taz use Mangonel Lizards as their primary mounts while the armies of the Aaman and Zandu favor the Greymane and those of L'Haan employ the Silvermane Equis. In other areas mounted troops are used alongside war chariots and similar conveyances (the Rajans and Kang chariot units are greatly feared by their respective enemies). Hussars learn to live from the back of their mounts often sleeping while riding to make the most of their mobility and speed.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 3 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CR +1 / DEX +1 / CR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Caravan Master, Cook, Command, Conveyance (chariot or wagons), Ride, Signal, Tactics (cavalry), Weapon (lance or polearm plus two of choice).

Special Features: Hussars receive the Mounted Combat Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Animal Empathy, Charioteer, Danuvian Riding, Fearless, Mirin Formation Fighting (mounted),

Starting Equipment: Studded armor; lance or polearm of choice; one weapon of choice; Equis, Aht-Ra, Strider or Mangonel Lizard mount plus saddle and tack; saddle bags; tent; bedroll; tinder box; waterskin; road rations; coin purse with 35 g.l. in assorted currency.

INITIATE WITCH

Witchcraft is likely the oldest form of magic on Talislanta but its practice in modern times is often met with superstition and suspicion. Supplanted by newer magical Orders, the practice of Witchcraft now occurs on the fringes of society and in the wilderness. As such, Witchcraft is an oral tradition, passed on from one generation of practitioners to the next. Initiate Witches are often selected from childhood and instructed in the ways of their people and in the knowledge of the old Gods.

Initiates often go on to become the wisewomen and men of their clans or tribes while some take the rudimentary magical knowledge they learn to go on to careers as healers or even clan defenders.

This Path may only be followed once. Characters following this Path age 3 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1 or WIL +1 or CHA +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Artificer, Cook, Dance, Doctrines (old gods), Healer, Herb Lore, Language (elder tongue), Mode (divination), Mode (ward), Song.

Special Features: Initiate Witches receive the Order (Witchcraft) Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Animal Empathy, Disease immunity, Hobby, Pet, Terrain Familiarity (forest).

Starting Equipment: Linen robes; quarterstaff; soft leather boots; pouch containing various herbs; belt pouch with 20 g.l. in assorted currency.

LITIGATOR

While civilization is not what it once was on Talislanta, the civilized lands adhere to the rule of law (for the most part). Litigators are masters of the law, schooled in its sometimes confusing statutes and judicial decisions. Litigators are most common in the Seven Kingdoms (where they pride themselves on their liberal and fair laws) and the Western Land of Zandu (where litigators are known as Causidians and sometime win case not based on justice by because of their oratory and theatrical talents. In other lands, while laws are common, it is more common that local aristocrats or religious functionaries serve the role that Litigators would otherwise serve.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 10 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1 / CHA +1 / WIL+1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Acting, Cultures, Deception, Diplomacy, Cultures, Fashion, Haggle, Interrogate, Language (any three), Litigator (any three), Oratory, Streetwise, Underworld.

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Attractive, Benefactor, Commanding Voice, Dilute Telepathy, Fame, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, No Stutter, Rich, Strong Willed, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: town house in urban center; coin purse with 100 gl in assorted currency.

MAGICIAN

The life of a magician is often a prestigious one. The drive and dedication required to master even the simplest of spells often precludes many would-be magicians from learning the deeper secrets of the arcane arts. Whether enrolled at the Lyceum Arcanum, the continent's premier center for magical instruction, or learning directly from an archmagus, magicians across Talislanta can wield fearsome power. Only the arcane metaphysical limitations of magic prevent them from causing more havoc than they already do; magicians become exhausted after casting more than a few spells and every spell cast has a chance to backfire horrendously in unexpected ways.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 7 years.

Prerequisite: Alumnus or Neophyte Magician

Attribute Adjustments:

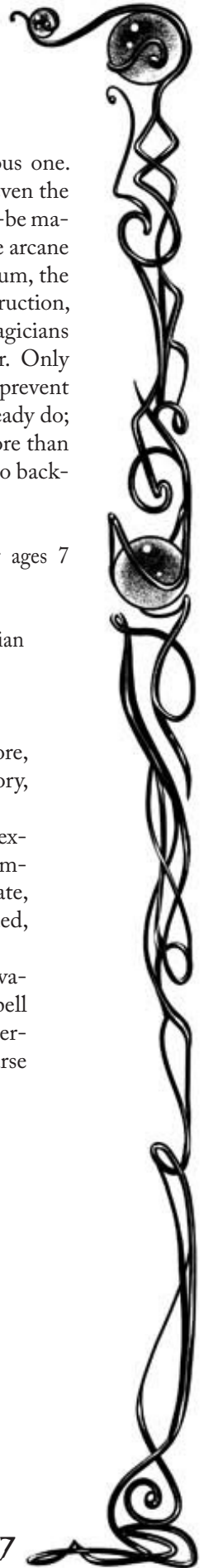
MR +2 / INT +1 / MR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Antiquarian, Arcane Lore, Astrology, Cryptography, Cultures, History, Mode (any).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Ambidextrous, Attractive, Benefactor, Dilute Telepathy, Familiar, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Magical Item, Pet, Rich, Single Minded, Strong Willed.

Starting Equipment: Spellbook or equivalent, belt pouch containing various spell components, fashionable clothing; quarterstaff; small apartment or cottage; coin purse with 100 gl in assorted currency.



MASTER CRAFTSMAN

After many long years of study, dedication, and work, an apprentice can become a master craftsman. Master craftsmen have a deep understanding of their trade, and can make a large variety of wares from their chosen trade. These professionals usually garner a great deal of respect from the community and their peers. Many masters have their own shops, stands, or tents, where they can sell their wares directly to the public, while others forge deals with merchants. To manufacture large items, such as windships and land barges, master craftsmen oversee other craftsmen and general laborers. If someone should need custom work, such as armor made from a rare metal, a master craftsman can usually get the job done – for a fee.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 5 years.

Prerequisite: Apprentice Craftsman

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1 / DEX +1 / STR +1

Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Handicraft (any), Haggle, Laborer, Merchant.

Available Quirks: Hobby, Literate, Nimble Fingers, Tireless.

Starting Equipment: Leather or hide apron; belt pouch; appropriate tools (glassworker's, woodworker's, etc.); small house and workshop; 250 g.l. in wares; coin purse with 50 g.l. in assorted currency.

MERCHANT

Merchants are found throughout the whole of Talislanta selling goods from stalls in open-air markets or from inside their own shops. Wealthy merchants may even own more than one shop with many people in their employ. Specializing in a type of good, such as clothes, foodstuffs, slaves, or gems, is the usual practice. Some merchants chose to deal in contraband, while most try to keep their business as legitimate as possible. Skill in appraising goods and negotiating deals are paramount to a merchant. Being adept at handling money is also important if one wishes to keep a working business. Some merchants travel across the land, making deals with those in different nations, and so knowledge of regional cultures and diplomatic skills are needed to properly close deals without offending their customers.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 5 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CHA +1 / WIL +1 / INT +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Cultures (any two), Diplomacy, Cultures (any one), Fashion, Haggle, Merchant, Underworld.

Available Quirks: Benefactor, Fame, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Magical Item, Pet, Rich, Wealthy.

Starting Equipment: 2500 gl in trade goods, iron bound ledger & writing tools, fine garments, cloak and boots; Kasmiran made strong box and lock; permanent shop or stall in urban center; townhouse or small house; 500 gl in assorted currency.

MUSICIAN

Music fills the air of taverns, theatres, camp fires, and the streets. Whether it is a Jaka leading his brethren in traditional howling or a Bodor glass flute virtuoso composing complex polyrhythms and melodies, musicians dedicate themselves to their art. Music performs the essential function of bringing together people in worship or camaraderie, and is often a way for stories and history to be recounted in various oral traditions. Musicians are a diverse lot, ranging from singers and drummers to composers and lyricists. Many musicians travel from tavern to tavern, town to town, or even nation to nation in order that people may hear their music. For some, being a musician is a life of luxury and fame, and for others, it is a pauper's life, playing for change on street corners and in taverns.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

DEX +1 / CHA +1 / CHA +1

Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Dance, Fashion, Linguistics, Mimicry, Music, Oratory, Seduce, Song.

Available Quirks: Attractive, Benefactor, Commanding Voice, Fame, Literate, Nimble Fingers, Sensual Voice, Stunning, Tantara, Terrain Familiarity (specific).

Starting Equipment: two musical instruments of choice; leather boots; colorful garments; cloak; small apartment or cottage; coin purse with 70 gl in various currencies.

MYSTIC

Traveling from town to town to speak of philosophy and religion, mystics are nomadic folk who seek for a higher truth, and share their beliefs with others. Mystics spend time in prayer or meditation to speak with higher powers or to touch the sublime. In established religions, doctrines are used to point the mystic along her path, while a rural or tribal mystic will follow the rhythm of her own drum—sometimes literally.

Many mystics practice various rituals to seek communion with spirits, or to look deeply within themselves. Studying texts, history, and philosophy are immensely helpful for religious mystics; meditation, ritual drumming, singing, dancing, and spiritual communion are more important for tribal mystics. No matter the path taken, or the philosophy believed, mystics always share stories of their journeys, if for no other reason than to financially support their sojourn.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 7 years.

Prerequisite: Disciple

Attribute Adjustments:

WIL +1 / INT +1 / CON +1

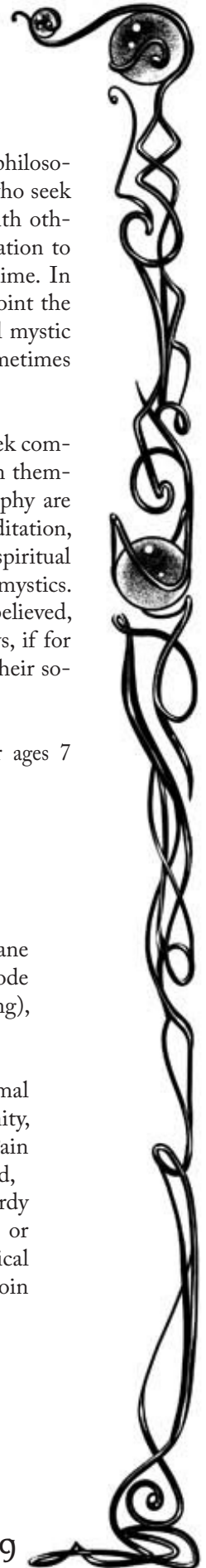
Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Art, Anatomy, Arcane Lore, Doctrines, History, Meditate, Mode (any), Music (tambour, chimes or gong), Oratory.

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Animal Empathy, Benefactor, Disease immunity, Familiar (minor elemental), Literate, Pain Tolerance, Single Minded, Strong Willed,

Starting Equipment: Simple robe, sturdy sandals, walking staff, small back pack or shoulder bag; religious or philosophical texts; incense; small drum or gong; coin purse with 6 g.l. in assorted currency.



MYSTIC WARRIOR

In Mandalan lore, the Mystic Warrior is an ideal, symbolizing the indomitability of the spirit. It is the unshakable belief of the Mandalans that, though their people may be enslaved and oppressed, their hearts and minds shall always remain free. Thus, in the Mandalan perspective, no enemy can ever truly conquer their race.

For the vast majority of Mandalans, the practice of this philosophy is limited to various subtle forms of passive resistance. In rare instances however, a Mandalan may actually adopt the persona of the Mystic Warrior. Operating in total secrecy, these individuals often engage in overt forms of resistance, including acts of sabotage and other secret activities. According to legend, those who heed the call of the Mystic Warrior become as the wind: their presence is felt but never seen. Such is the mystery which surrounds these individuals that the Mandalans do not even admit that they exist.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 7 years.

Prerequisite: Mandalan race only

Attribute Adjustments:

CR +1 / DEX +1 / SPD +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Acrobatics, Artificer, Brawling, Disable Device, Meditation, Sabotage, Stealth, Traps, Weapon (select one)

Special Features: Mystic Warriors receive the Mandaquan Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Ambidextrous, Benefactor, Good Balance, Mandaquan, Pain Tolerance, Quick Reflexes, Single Minded, Slippery, Stealthy, Strong Willed, Swift.

Starting Equipment: Amysram; silkcloth robe; sandals; blue iron parrying bracers; short staff; pouch to conceal folded costume; length of silk cord worn around waist; belt pouch; thieves tools; coin purse with 5 g.l. in Quan Emperors.

NEOPHYTE MAGICIAN

Becoming a great wielder of arcane might does not come easy nor does it come quickly to most. The vast majority of Talisantan magicians begin their careers as neophytes studying under a master magician. Neophytes spend the days doing the bidding of their masters. Those with kind instructors will be taught many magical secrets while studying under their master. Some are not so lucky however and many a master mage treat their apprentices as virtual slaves, requiring that they perform all mundane chores and dictates that the master wishes. Whatever the case, the Neophyte Magician will learn various skills required to control the arcane power of magic. The normal progression beyond this Path is obviously into the Magician Path although some players may opt to select this Path more than once. In each case the player may select a new Order and/or Modes as they wish. Characters following this Path age 5 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CR -1, MR +1, INT +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Arcane Lore, Astrology, Cryptography, History, Mode (any).

Special Features: Neophyte Magicians receive an Order Quirk at no cost (select one from: Astromancy, Cryptomancy, Elementalism, Natural Magic, Necromancy, Wizardry).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Ambidextrous, Attractive, Battle Magic, Benefactor, Dilute Telepathy, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Magical Item, Pet, Single Minded, Strong Willed,.

Starting Equipment: Spellbook or equivalent; belt pouch containing various spell components; quarterstaff or dagger or short sword or sling or spear; room at boarding house; 50 gl in assorted currency.

***Note:** This Path may be followed more than once but each time it is selected a different Order must be selected and the skill ranks gained may not be used on Modes from other Orders nor are any additional Attribute adjustments received for the second and subsequent times the Path is followed.*

NOVICE THAUMATURGE

Novice thaumaturges undergo rigorous training to achieve the discipline, knowledge, and skill required to master the secrets of their ancestors. In some ways, the life of a novice thaumaturge is much like that of an alchemical adept. Students of thaumaturgy typically have a broader range of studies, but tend to focus on one or two fields outside their primary discipline.

Novices from Cabal Magicus, the Phantasian sky-city, spend much of their time pouring over ancient records and listening to the lectured experiences of their elders. Dracartan novices, on the other hand, learn the basics of construction, alchemical sciences, and business acumen.

This Path may only be followed once. Characters following this Path age 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments: INT +1, CR -1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Alchemy, Astrology, Diplomacy, Cultures, Handicraft (Artificer), Historian, Merchant, Sabotage, Thaumaturgy

Special Features: Novice Thaumaturges receive the Derive Distillation Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Benefactor, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Single Minded, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: Long robes; notebook; crystal inkwell and quills; vial of dream essence (Phantasian) or distillation (Dracartan); room at boarding house; 45 gl in assorted currency.

NOMADIC

Individuals of this Path were raised among tribes or clans of nomads. They will have knowledge of their people's customs, including familiarity with tribal laws and beliefs. They will also be familiar with the nomadic lifestyle, the migratory habits of herd animals, and the habits of certain predatory beasts that prey upon their animals. More specific knowledge includes the ability to pack animals to distribute weight properly, and to find water or other useful geographic features. Some nomadic groups may be accustomed to visiting cities and villages, while most tribal peoples may avoid them entirely. In any case, nomads tend to find cities too confining and village life too sedentary for their tastes. City and village dwellers often regard individuals of this background as barbarians.

This Path may only be followed once.

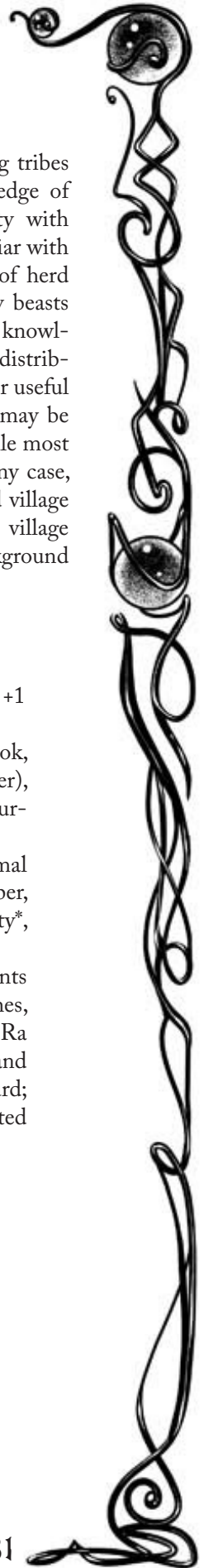
Attribute Adjustments: PER +1 or CON +1

Skill Ranks: 6

Preferred Skills: Art, Conveyance*, Cook, Cultures*, Haggle, Handicraft (Artificer), Language*, Livestock, Ride*, Signal, Survival*, Swim. ** of appropriate type*

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Animal Empathy, Disease Immunity, Light Sleeper, Strong Willed, Swift, Terrain Familiarity*, Tireless, Tough. ** of appropriate type*

Starting Gear: Appropriate garments (loincloth, simple robe, tunic and breeches, etc.); sandals or hide boots; Equis, Aht-Ra or Land Lizard plus saddle, saddle bags and tack; bedroll; waterskin or stoppered gourd; tinder box; coin purse with 3 gl in assorted currency.



PEDDLER

Travelers can't go far in a town without encountering peddlers of various odds and ends. The quality and legality of these items is sometimes questionable, though a skilled peddler will carefully mask that fact. Peddlers eke out a living by traveling from town to town and attempting to hock their wares to anyone who will listen. For those that traverse long distances, it is often handy to know the customs of the area: some selling tactics may work only in certain regions. During their travels, peddlers may come into trouble with bandits or unhappy customers, and so it is important for them to think and talk quickly in order to avoid nasty situations.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CHA +1 / WIL +1 / CHA +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Conveyance (specific), Cultures (specific), Geography, Haggle, Linguistics, Ride (specific), Streetwise, Underworld.

Available Quirks: Alcohol Tolerance, Hobby, Literate, Terrain Familiarity (select one).

Starting Equipment: 200 gl in trade goods; backpack; sturdy travelling garments; leather boots; belt pouch; bedroll; cloak (cloth); tent; cargo wagon and appropriate dray beast; 50 gl in various currencies.

PICKPOCKET

Walking around towns without your guard up can often lead to the "misplacement" of your purse or other possessions. Traveling groups of performers often have pickpockets working among them in order to gather some additional coin during their performances. Some cutpurses can disappear into crowds, and move through the throngs of people with ease, making it almost impossible for them to be followed. The pickpocket often needs to pawn off trinkets that she has stolen; so, having contacts with the seedier merchants in town are useful.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 3 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

DEX +1 / PER +1 / DEX +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Acting, Appraiser, Evade, Haggle, Legerdemain, Stealth, Streetwise, Underworld, Weapon (blades, small).

Special Features: Pickpockets receive the Nimble Fingers Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Good Balance, Light Sleeper, Natural Climber, Quick Reflexes, Stealthy, Swift.

Starting Equipment: Belt pouch, cloak (cloth), boots (hide), dagger; coin purse with 20 g.l. in assorted currency.

PRIEST

Priests have been known since the earliest times and in the simplest societies. There are priests in all branches of the major religions of Talislanta, and many of the smaller religions. Priests are generally regarded as having good contact with the deities of the religion to which he or she ascribes, and other believers will often turn to a priest for advice on spiritual matters. In many (but not all) religions, being a priest is a full-time assignment, ruling out any other career. In some religions it is a position inherited in familial line. A priest or priestess is a person having the authority, or power, to perform and administer religious rites. Their office or position is the priesthood, a term which may also apply to such persons collectively.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 7 years.

Prerequisite: Acolyte

Attribute Adjustments:

WIL +1 / CHA +1 / INT +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Administrator, Antiquarian, Arcane Lore, Astrology, Doctrines (any), Diplomacy, Cultures, History, Meditation, Mode (any), Oratory.

Available Quirks: Benefactor, Commanding Voice, Fame, Highborn, Literate, Magical Item, Strong Willed, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: Appropriate ritual vestments; sandals or soft boots; velvet cloak; appropriate holy symbol (silver or gold); lodging at temple or monastery; coin purse with 40 gl in assorted currency.

RANGER

Rangers are an elite military organization found in the Seven Kingdoms and made up exclusively of Blue Aeriad. Combining warrior and wilderness skills, the Aeriad Rangers defend Vardune against all enemies and also protect the greater Seven Kingdoms but supplementing and supporting the Grand Army. Many Rangers also serve in the Air Navy of the Seven Kingdoms, employing their aerial combat skills to defend the windship fleets. Although Aeriad are no longer able to fly, each Ranger is equipped with magical bracers that make the Aeriad all but weightless, allowing them limited flight through the use of their vestigial wings.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

RC +1 / PER +1 / CR +1

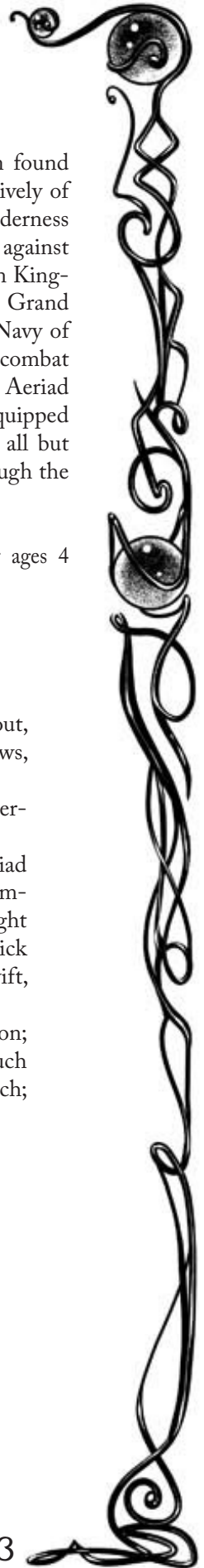
Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Evade, Guard, Scout, Tactics, Weapon (small blades, crossbows, spears), Weaponer.

Special Features: Rangers receive the Aerial Combat Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Aeriad Precision Aerial Combat, Archery, Ambidextrous, Fearless, Good Balance, Light Sleeper, Literate, Pain Tolerance, Quick Reflexes, Single Minded, Stealthy, Swift, Terrain Familiarity (forest), Tough.

Starting Equipment: Bracers of levitation; 2 crescent knives; dart thrower with pouch of 10 darts; tri-bow with 5 clips; belt pouch; coin purse with 35 g.l. in gold pentacles.



RURAL

Individuals of this Path were raised in a small village or other relatively undeveloped settlement. They will have knowledge of the customs of their native people, including familiarity with local laws, traditions, and the village's main source or sources of livelihood (agriculture, fishing, mining, warfare, etc.). More specific knowledge includes the ability to approach the proper individuals for shelter, aid, and guidance and to follow proper manners of speech and action. Outsiders tend to stand out in close-knit communities of this sort, where, for the most part, everyone knows each other.

This Path may only be followed once.

Attribute Adjustments:

STR +1 or CON +1

Skill Ranks: 6

Preferred Skills: Agriculture, Handicraft (Artificer), Brewer/Vintner, Conveyance*, Cook, Fishing, Haggle, Language*, Livestock, Ride*, Swim. ** of appropriate type*

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Animal Empathy, Hobby, Literate, Pet, Single Minded, Tantara, Tireless, Tough.

Starting Gear: Sturdy linen breeches and tunic; hide boots; domesticated animal animal of choice (non-mount); waterskin; coin purse with 6 gl in assorted currency.

SAILOR

Trading ships, warships, galleys, land barges, and other sea and land conveyances would be nothing more than immobile junk if it wasn't for their crew. Sailors ride across, through, and around Talislanta, either for trade, diplomacy, travel, or war. On ships traveling the rivers, lakes and seas of Talislanta, sailors make sure the sails are mended, the decks are clean, and perform more menial tasks than can be easily counted. For land barges, duneships, and other land conveyances, sailors make sure the mechanisms that propel the craft are in working order, that the ship is clean, and to keep the craft from hitting obstacles.

To defend a vessel from bandits and raiders, sailors are at least moderately trained in hand-to-hand or ranged combat and many sailors know how to use ballista and other artillery. Sailors occasionally learn different languages during their travels, and most sailors know a good amount about the various locations and cultures that they encounter – even if it is only the best places to get a decent drink.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 5 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CR +1 / DEX +1 / CON +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Artillerist (ship mounted weapons), Brawling, Climbing, Cultures (any two), Fishing, Laborer, Language (any one), Pilot, Swim, Tactics (naval), Weapon (any two).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Alcohol Tolerance; Disease immunity, Fearless, Good Balance, Hobby, Light Sleeper, Pet, Tough.

Starting Equipment: Linen breeches and short; leather boots; belt pouch; shell necklace; weapon of choice; scrimshaw case with sea charts; coin purse with 20 g.l. in assorted currency.

SALVAGER

The vast majority of Talislantans walk by piles of trash and junk without a second thought, but salvagers are drawn to those piles of refuse and the potential that they represent. Slightly-worn clothing, mostly-working gadgets, old jewelry, glass and clay storage containers, even weapons and building materials are thrown away; salvagers make sure that none of this goes to waste. Traveling about the countryside might lead to an abandoned wagon, a deserted mine, or any number of these treasure troves. Salvagers can dismantle abandoned vehicles and loot deserted buildings in a short period of time, taking all that they can haul back to town to sell.

Salvagers are experts at determining the value of goods, and can be fierce trading partners. Though given a rather lowly reputation for digging through others' refuse, salvagers can make a decent living finding and selling their used goods. When dealing with a salvager, most individuals are surprised to see what others throw away – but for a salvager, it is a fact of life.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1 / CON +1 / STR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Antiquarian, Climbing, Conveyance (wagons), Cryptography, Haggle, Locks, Traps, Salvager, Survival (any one), Weapon (any one).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Disease immunity, Good Balance, Literate, Magical Item, Single Minded, Terrain Familiarity (any one), Tireless, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: garments of choice; belt pouch; backpack; bedroll; tent; water-skin; mount of choice plus saddle and tack; thieves tools; crowbar; map case and maps; coin purse with 20 g.l. in assorted currency.

SAVANT

Savants are the scholars and sages of Talislanta. They spend their lives in study and research. Most have single areas of expertise while some few study a broad range of subjects. Most are content to pass their days over dusty old tomes in places like the Lyceum Arcanum or the Library of Jalaad while a few exceptional Savants find more value in studying their passions up close.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 10 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1 / INT +1 / INT +1

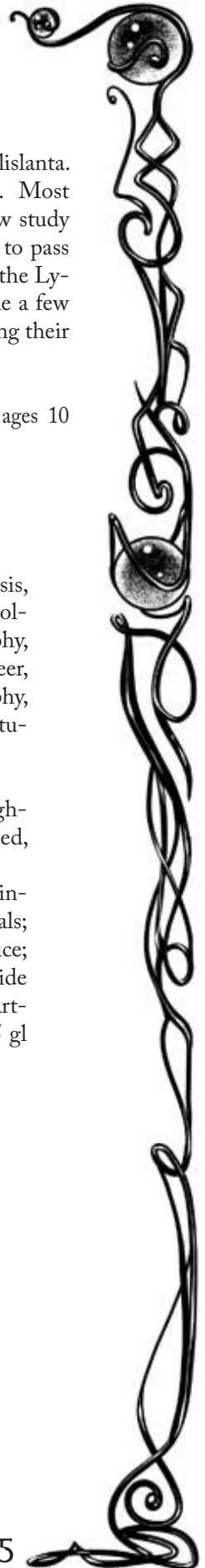
Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Alchemy*, Analysis, Anatomy, Antiquarian, Arcane Lore, Astrology, Cartography, Cultures, Cryptography, Botanomancy*, Doctrines (any), Engineer, Cultures, Forgery, Gamecraft, Geography, History, Language (any), Linguistics, Naturalism, Oratory.

** Cannot be increased above +2.*

Available Quirks: Benefactor, Fame, High-born, Hobby, Literate, Pet, Single Minded, Windfall.

Starting Equipment: Quality garments including tunic and breeches or robe; sandals; velvet cloak; 2 pieces of jewelry of choice; abacus; d20 tomes on various subjects; hide scroll case; crystal inkwell and quills; apartment or small house; coin purse with 75 gl in assorted currency.



SCOUT

The Scout is a widely respected occupation across the continent of Talislanta. Sometimes attached to military units or often just exploring the wide expanses of the continent the Scout is an invaluable source of information on the dangers located in the surroundings. Intelligence gathering is the main function of the Scout, be it looking for specific dangers right through to mapping unknown surroundings. Well trained in martial skills and keen perception skills, the Scout is a perfect companion for any traveller.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1 / CR +1 / PER +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Cartography, Climbing, Evade, Language (sign), Ride, Scout, Signal, Survival (any one), Swim, Tactics, Traps, Weapon (any two).

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Fearless, Good Balance, Light Sleeper, Literate, Swift, Terrain Familiarity (any two), Tireless.

Starting Equipment: Leather or hide armor; leather or hide boots; hooded cloak; any two weapons of choice; greymane steed with tack and saddle; 50' rope; tent; water-skin, tinderbox; coin purse with 35 g.l. in assorted currency.

SHAMAN

Shaman are the spiritual guardians of their tribes and are often the only spellcasters in primitive and barbaric societies. Often as feared as they are respected in their tribes, Shaman have the ability to see into the spirit realm, an ability that can be terrifying to the uninitiated. Shaman are also often called upon to be the healers of their people and thus many learn primitive medical skills along with knowledge of various plant and animal cures.

Shaman who hail from traditions that employ narcotics for their Shamanic powers (as opposed to chanting, drumming or dancing), are normally physically addicted to these substances and may not perform any spellcasting without them.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Prerequisite: Shamanic Student

Attribute Adjustments:

MR +1 / PER+1 / MR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Anatomy, Arcane Lore, Art, Astrology, Cook, Dance, Doctrines (spirits & totems), Healer, Herb Lore, Mode (any), Narcotic Tolerance, Oratory, Song, Survival (select one), Talismancy, Weapon (spears or blowgun).

Special Features: Shamans from narcotic using cultures have the Addiction negative Quirk.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Animal empathy, Commanding Voice, Disease Immunity, Poison Immunity, Strong Willed.

Starting Equipment: 10 doses of relevant narcotic; magical fetish or talisman of appropriate type; 3 vials of poison.

SHAMANIC STUDENT

The path to becoming a Shaman is most often thrust upon unsuspecting individuals by elder Shaman. Young tribe members are often selected from birth (or a young age) to be taught the often-dark secrets of the spirit world.

Along with being instructed in the methods of entering into and communicating with the Totems, Shamanic Students are also taught the uses and properties of many native plants and herbs and the nature and instincts of the local fauna.

In many shamanic societies, the use of narcotics is required of Shamans and many become physically addicted to substances such as K'tallah and Kesh or, in the case of the wildmen of Yrmania, the otherwise lethal skullcap mushroom.

This Path may only be followed once. Characters following this Path age 2 years.

Prerequisite: Tribal Path

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Arcane Lore, Art, Cook, Dance, Doctrines (spirits & totems), Healer, Herb Lore, Language (sign), Mode (divination), Music, Song.

Special Features: Shamanic Students receive the Order (Shamanism) Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Animal empathy, Pet, Pain Tolerance, Terrain Familiarity,

Starting Equipment: pouch of herbs (possibly including 5 doses of narcotics if appropriate) OR drum or other ritual instrument; various feathers, stones and other natural substances.

TALISMANCER

Many people feel fate is at work in their lives, while others believe it to be luck. For those that believe in luck, there is good luck and bad luck, and ways to have both. As a ward against bad luck, or to attract good luck, some people keep or wear specific trinkets and charms. Talismancers create a variety of necklaces, talismans, rings and other jewelry to help promote good luck. These talismans are often simple stones or crystals bound to a cord, but are empowered and charged with good luck by the talismancer.

While most of the "civilized" peoples of Talislanta will dismiss these talismans as mere superstition, many of these same people secretly keep good luck charms of their own. Talismans of good fortune can be sold for a fair number of lumens to people across Talislanta, but it is in the city-state of Maruk where talismans are in the highest demand. Maruk is also from where most talismancers hail.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

MR+1 / DEX +1 / MR +1

Skill Ranks: 14

Preferred Skills: Appraise, Deception, Handicraft (Artificer), Haggle, Talismancy

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Ambidextrous, Disease immunity, Magical Item, Poison Immunity.

Starting Equipment: Loincloth or robe and sandals; staff; luck medallions of assorted types; coin purse with 7 g.l. in assorted currency.



TEAMSTER

Teamsters are the glue that holds together the tapestry of trade across the face of Talislanta. Often working long hours, enduring hard labor and working in some of the most dangerous conditions on the continent, Teamsters are the men and women who make up the vast majority of the trade caravans and expeditions both within civilized lands and across dangerous landscapes like the wilderlands of Zaran. It is the Teamster who feeds and waters the beasts of burden, maintains and repairs the drays, wagons and carriages, sets camp at night, loads and unloads the cargo, etc.

Skills teamsters often go on to become master's of their won caravans while others of a more martial bent tend to go into the mercenary trade.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

STR +1 / CON +1 / STR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Animal Handler, Caravan Master, Conveyance (any), Cook, Cultures, Evade, Guard, Haggle, Language (any two), Ride, Signal, Swim, Weapon (any one), Survival (any one).

Available Quirks: Alcohol Tolerance, Light Sleeper, Mounted Combat, Terrain Familiarity (any one), Tough.

Starting Equipment: rough garments; cloak; hide boots; weapon of choice; berth aboard conveyance or caravan of choice; coin purse with 8 g.l. in assorted currency.

THAUMATURGE

Thaumaturges study the fundamental nature of the Omniverse: matter, essence, and quintessence. Somewhere between priest and an engineer, thaumaturges preserve the knowledge of the past. While the practice of thaumaturgy is the same worldwide, there are two differing approaches to thaumaturgy practiced by the Dracartans and the Phantasians.

For the Dracartans, thaumaturgy is akin to a religious practice for they believe that its secrets were imparted to them by their silent god, Jamba. The Phantasians, on the other hand, preserve the knowledge of their ancestors and long to recreate past glories and discoveries. In either case, thaumaturges are capable of distilling the very essences of the universe, transmuting matter, and creating wondrous substances.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 7 years.

Prerequisite: Novice Thaumaturge

Attribute Adjustments:

INT +1 / WIL +1 / INT +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Administrator, Analysis, Antiquarian, Handicraft (Artificer), Diplomacy, Cultures, Merchant, Thaumaturgy.

Available Quirks: Benefactor, Derive Dream Essence, Derive Elemental Essence, Fame, Highborn, Hobby, Literate, Magical Item, Nimble Fingers, Rich, Single Minded.

Starting Equipment: *If Dracartan:* Ritual white robes and cap; red iron torc and bracers; caduceus; red iron bound notebook; crystal inkwell and quills; 6 amberglass vials of distillations; 2 amberglass vials of elemental essences; medium apartment in Dracarta; 200 gl in Dracartan pyramids. *If Phantasian:* Long robe and conical cap; notebook; crystal inkwell and quills; metal scroll tube for sky charts; 6 amberglass vials of dream essence; 150 gl in assorted currencies.

TRIBAL

Individuals of this Path were raised among one of the many primitive tribes of Talislanta. They will have knowledge of their people's customs, including familiarity with tribal laws and beliefs. They will also be familiar with the tribal lifestyle, the migratory habits of herd animals, and the dangers posed by various predatory creatures. More specific knowledge includes the ability to construct shelter and to find water, edible plants or other useful geographic features. Tribal characters of a magical bent are restricted to learning either Shamanism or Witchcraft. Other Orders of magic are closed to them at the beginning of play (although they could learn other Orders as play progresses). City and village dwellers often regard individuals of this background as barbarians.

This Path may only be followed once.

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1 or CON +1

Skill Ranks: 6

Preferred Skills: Art, Conveyance*, Cook, Cultures*, Handicraft (Artificer), Language*, Livestock, Ride*, Signal, Survival*, Swim. ** of appropriate type*

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Animal Empathy, Light Sleeper, Poison immunity, Stealthy, Swift, Terrain Familiarity*, Tough.

** of appropriate type*

Starting Gear: Weapon appropriate to race (spear, blowgun, short bow, etc.); belt pouch; waterskin; tinder box.

URBAN

Individuals of this Path were raised in a city or other relatively large and civilized settlement. They will have knowledge of the customs, laws, and mores of their particular city, and will understand the concepts of division of labor, monetary exchange, and taxation. More specific knowledge includes the ability to navigate city streets, identify figures of authority, find or avoid shadier parts of town, and follow public ordinances. Individuals who do not hail from this background can become lost or disoriented in any large or unfamiliar city. Conversely, city-dwellers are often woefully unsuited to survival in uncivilized locales.

This Path may only be followed once.

Attribute Adjustments:

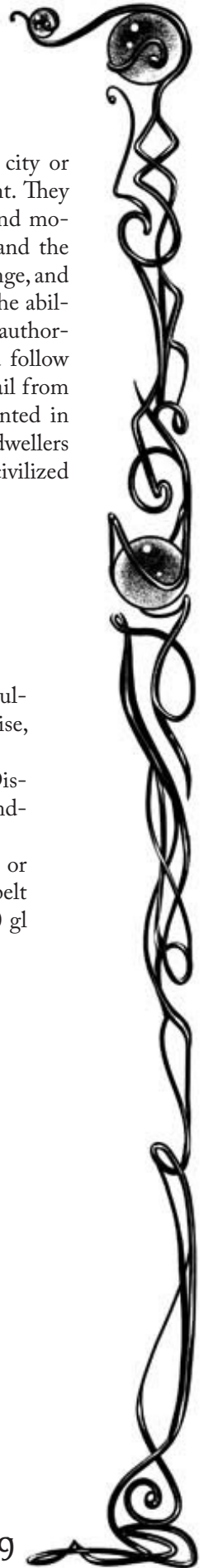
CHA +1 or WIL +1

Skill Ranks: 6

Preferred Skills: Cultures (any two), Cultures*, Haggle, Language*, Streetwise, Swim. ** of appropriate type*

Available Quirks: Alcohol Tolerance, Disease immunity, Hobby, Literate, Pet, Windfall.

Starting Gear: linen tunic and breeches or robe; sandals or hide boots; cloth cap; belt pouch; shoulder bag; coin purse with 10 gl in assorted currency.



WANDERING

Individuals of this Path will have either fled or been driven from their native lands as outcasts, escaped slaves, or refugees, or will have decided to emigrate and travel in order to find employment, adventure, and so forth. They generally have some knowledge of their native society and other backgrounds, depending on their particular situation. More specific knowledge includes the ability to remain fairly inconspicuous when entering a new area, identify potential sources of temporary work or financial opportunities, and avoid conflicts with unfamiliar laws and customs. Individuals of this background are often treated with mistrust and suspicion.

This Path may only be followed once.

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1 or WIL +1

Skill Ranks: 6

Preferred Skills: Cartography, Conveyance*, Cook, Cultures (any three), Geography, Haggle, Language*, Ride*, Swim. * of appropriate type

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Light Sleeper, Literate, Pet, Single Minded, Tantara, Terrain Familiarity, Tough.

Starting Gear: Linen tunic and breeches or dress; leather boots; cloth or hide cloak; cloth or hide cap; backpack; bedroll; waterskin; lantern; pint of oil; Equis with saddle and tack; coin purse with 5 gl in assorted currency.

WARRIOR

The majority of Talislanta's people live out their lives in backbreaking drudgery, never leaving the boundaries of their communities. Others find skill with a shield and a sword can evolve far beyond boyhood play, and allow them a chance to earn gold lumens using the talent for war. These people typically serve in local militias or as tribal defenders while others are drawn by the lure of a steady wage or a simple desire to live as a fighting man. Warriors can be found in all Talislantan societies from the most civilized to the most barbaric.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CR +1 / CR +1 / CR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Brawling, Coerce, Command, Evade, Laborer, Ride, Swim, Tactics, Weapon (any four).

Special Features: None

Available Quirks: Alcohol Tolerance, Commanding Voice, Fame, Fearless, Kanquan, Light Sleeper, Mighty Blows, Mirin Formation Fighting, Pain Tolerance, Quick Reflexes, Sand Fighting, Tazian Combat, Tireless, Tough, Virago.

Starting Equipment: Two weapons of choice; leather boots; backpack; bedroll; waterskin; hide or leather armor; wood or hide shield; coin purse with 40 gl in assorted currency.

WITCH

A Witch is many things to the settlement he or she lives in. Some play the part of defenders: using witchcraft to keep the evils of the wild at bay. Others healers: using magic, herbs and other medicines to cure illness and use their experience and expertise to decrease the risks of childbirth. Lastly, they are lore-masters: ancient knowledge and rituals are handed down from the Witches who came before, and this lore is used for the betterment of the community. Many accuse Witches of dealing with dark forces and demons but this is rarely true. Certainly they summon otherworldly creatures but most of these are of the benign sort. Witches are now relatively rare even though their Order is perhaps the oldest magic order on Talislanta. Aamanian Orthodoxist oppression and propaganda have sullied the name of all Witches, yet the Witches live on.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

Prerequisite: Initiate Witch

Attribute Adjustments:

WIL +1 / MR +1 / MR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Antiquarian, Cook, Dance, Doctrines (old gods), Handicraft (Artificer), Healer, Herb Lore, Language (elder tongue), Mode (any), Song, Weapon (spears).

Available Quirks: Attractive, Disease Immunity, Familiar, Literate, Magical Item, Pet, Strong Willed.

Starting Equipment: quarterstaff; robes and sandals; silver dagger; belt pouch with various herbs; spellbook; silvermane with saddle and tack; coin purse with 43 g.l. in assorted currency

WITCH HUNTER

Witch Hunters are the members of the Orthodoxist Order of the Knights of Retribution. Tasked with hunting down, and exterminating “enemies of the faith” Witch Hunters are both feared and respected in Aaman. In all things, Witch Hunters obey the will of Aa and of his agent, the Hierophant. Witch Hunters normally begin their careers seeking lapsed Orthodoxists and heretics within Aaman, eventually however, most will be sent on assignment beyond Aaman’s borders, particularly into the wilderness of Werewood, ever seeking the Dhuna witches who are the enemy of Aa the omniscient. Most you capture are sent to the Inquisitors at the House of Penance in Aamahd. The unrepentant however are dispatched without malice. Aa will deliver justice. With each witch, heretic or infidel brought to the glory that is Aa, the Witch Hunter increases his aalms and his position within Aamanian society.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 7 years.

Attribute Adjustments:

CR +1 / WIL +1 / PER +1

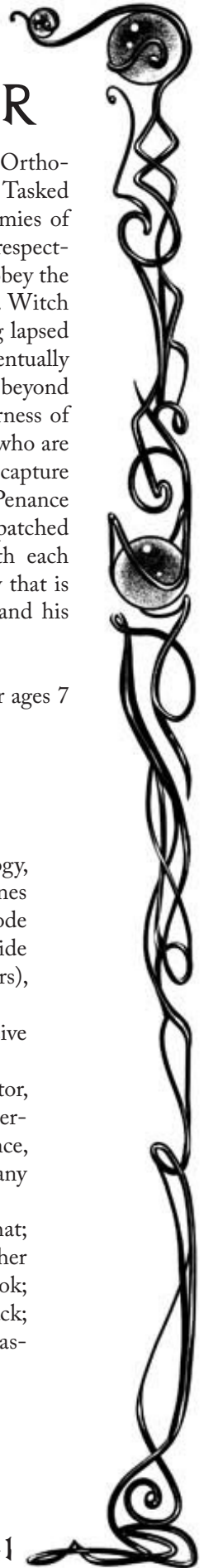
Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Assassinate, Astrology, Brawling, Conveyance (wagon), Doctrines (Orthodoxy), Evade, Mode (attack), Mode (divination), Mode (ward), Oratory, Ride (eques), Swim, Tracking, Weapon (spears), Weapon (any two).

Special Features: Witch Hunters receive the Single Minded Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Benefactor, Commanding Voice, Fame, Fearless, Literate, Order: Invocation (Aa), Pain Tolerance, Strong Willed, Terrain Familiarity (any one), Tireless.

Starting Equipment: Wide-brimmed hat; cloak; leather armor (dyed white); leather boots (dyed white); iron-bound spell book; Staff of Aa; Weapon of choice; backpack; bedroll; waterskin; manacles; 500 gl in assorted currency.



WIZARD HUNTER

Long ago, the Xambrians had a homeland, a history, and a culture of their own. Then the Torquaran wizards came: they razed the Xambrian lands, erased their culture, and sent their innocent victims to perish in the Fire-Pits of Malnangar. The few to escape swore a sacred and binding oath to hunt down their people's killers, even if it took until the end of time. The Wizard hunter bears the ancient burden of their Xambrian ancestors. The spirits of the ancient Torquarans live on, cloaked in the dark forms of reincarnators. Time and again they return, claiming new bodies from the living. The Wizard Hunter as heard the Calling in their soul, and know that it is all that matters in life.

At some point in their life all Wizard Hunters will be drawn to Omen (the mountain of skulls) there to be directed by their ancestors to a Torquaran reincarnator that must be killed.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 7 years.

Prerequisite: Xambrian race only

Attribute Adjustments:

PER +1 / CR +1 / MR +1

Skill Ranks: 12

Preferred Skills: Arcane Lore, Brawling, Coerce, Interrogate, Ride, Stealth, Survival (wilderlands), Tracking, Traps, Underworld, Weapon (large blades),

Special Features: Wizard Hunters receive the Single Minded Quirk at no cost.

Available Quirks: Acute Sense, Alcohol Tolerance, Disease, Immunity, Light Sleeper, Pain Tolerance, Strong Willed, Tireless, Tough.

Starting Equipment: Spiritblade; leather vest, breeches and high boots; cloak of black strider hide; large shoulder bag; weapon (one of choice); equus or strider or aht-ra mount plus saddle and tack; coin purse with 65 g.l. in assorted currency.

SAMPLE ARCHETYPES

Since Talislanta was first published in 1987, it has always had an Archetype character creation system. In that system, several dozen character archetypes were presented and players simply selected one they were attracted too, tweaked it slightly and started playing.

While that system was fast and made sure all characters fit the general overview of the way Talislanta was designed (no Thrall magician or Cymrilian Shaman archetypes for example), it also often served to stifle player creativity and was perhaps the most frequent complain received about the game. Some loved it, others hated it.

This was the primary motivating factor to the design of the character creation system in this, the 5th edition of Talislanta. That said, having character archetypes is also often useful. Some players simply don't want to spend the time creating a character while GMs are often in need of a quick, pre-generated character when their players take their char-

acters in unanticipated directions. To that end, we include here a number of pre-generated character Archetypes. These Archetypes present the types of characters that are most likely to take up an adventuring lifestyle in the dangerous lands of Talislanta.

Each is created using the new character creation rules presented within this book. The majority use three Paths by default, while others have followed more Path



MUSE TELEMPATH

"He wants me to ask you where you plan to drag us both next, dear thing." [as "translated" by a Whisp companion]

Are you truly as aloof and frivolous as you appear to others? That is not a matter that you would ever deign to discuss. There is little that you find interesting enough to drive you to speech. Your voice and the languages of the other humanoids are such limited tools. You find yourself frustrated when forced to rely upon them. Such moments are rare, for your whisp companion accompanies you always, translating from your telepathic projections for those confused by them. The being with whom you have bonded has long since grown accustomed to the images and emotions you send and responds with thoughts for you to perceive. This confidante, your friend and lover, has led you upon experiences that other Muses will never know, unless you choose to show them through the telepathic images that you compose to complement your music. There is a vicarious thrill, it is true, in experiencing this other being's life through your bond. There is a sense of aesthetic value in the ripples of historical tide that you witness. There are the vivid impressions from which you derive your art. Yet this obsession may be as ephemeral as your creations. Your bond-mate, you are certain, fears as much. If it is to be, it will make a grand lament indeed.

-3	+3	+2	+2
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-2	+0	-2	+3
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
-3	-3	+2	17
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Astrology +2,
Cook +2
Cultures (Muse) +5
Cultures (7 Kingdoms) +2
Dance +4
Language (H Talislan) +10
Language (Sylvan) +10
Mode (illusion) +4
Mode (enchantment) +2
Mode (move) +2
Music +6
Natural Telempathy +4
Seduce +4

Quirks:

Order: Natural Magic
Terrain Familiarity (forest)
Sensual Voice
Ambidextrous



Equipment:

Translucent gossamer robe of pastel colors; gossamer harp; glass flute; pouch (pigments, blossoms, nectar); pouch (spell components); spellbook; whisp companion; whisp companion has 50 gold lumens.

Paths Followed:

Rural, Musician, Neophyte Magician

THRALL MERCENARY

"Enough talk. I will crush the enemy myself."

You are a Thrall, and your life is warfare. It is true that you ache for the sensations of war. That is why your people have chosen Taz for their home. The jungles and swamplands are teeming with such sport as bog devils and aramatus to keep your senses and skills keen. Yet you left the stone barracks of home, a fully grown warrior of eight years, to join the legions of the Seven Kingdoms. For the core desire of a Thrall is to protect your nation and your allies. You've fought in battles and performed with honor. You earned your tattoos for courage and service. You wield the greatsword and the garde with skill and strength. New challenges await you now, as a soldier or a mercenary, as the continent grows tense with the drums of war. Others may believe that you lack the wit to feel fear or to mark a true threat. But you understand war better than any of them. You are confident of victory for your people. To you personally, it may bring honor, glory, injury, death. Regardless, the Thralls and the Seven Kingdoms will triumph.

+3	+2	+2	+0
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+4	+1	+2	-3
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+6	+2	-4	35
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Brawling +6
Cultures (Thrall) +5
Cultures (7 Kingdoms) +3
Evade +2
Language (Low Talislan) +10
Language (Thrall Tattoos) +10
Ride +2
Tactics +2
Weapon (spear) +6
Weapon (2H blades) +6
Weapon (lg blades) +4

Quirks:

Immune to Fear
Tazian Combat
Tough



Equipment:

Loincloth, vest (females), sandals, garde (parrying armor/weapon), greatsword with shoulder sheath, halberd, bedroll, waterskin, flask of Tazian fire-ale, 75 gold lumens in gold pentacles and assorted currencies.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Warrior, Warrior

SINDARAN EFFECTUATOR

"A being of your nature may conceive that one has the capacity to commit such a crime without detection and retribution. Yet, only one who exhibits the thought capacity of a durge would believe so."

You are of the most intelligent species living on Talislanta, and your profession is to penetrate mysteries; no being could be more suited to one's task in life. Since your skin was still translucent, you have been drawn to puzzles, and your toys as a small child would confound most other beings. Before you had attained the age of ten years, you had come to the conclusion that you would train with the Order of Mesa Security at its primary facilities at Nankar. Under the tutelage of four successive Effectuator Nadirs, you have developed proficiency sufficient to predict before they occur infractions of public ordinances. More difficult, typically, is resisting the desire to advance your collection at the expense of your investigations; primary among the lessons taught to students of the Order is the ability to resist the inevitable attempts at bribery along this tangent. You presently pursue enigmas to which you are unaccustomed - the veracity of pseudo-historical mythologies among the other humanoid populations, and the current locales of artifacts from Ages prior to the Great Disaster. You are confident that you will discover mysteries that will astound even one such as yourself, and equally certain that few things you encounter will exceed your powers of comprehension.

-1	+0	+2	+1
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+0	+1	+4	+6
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+0	+1	-7	18
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Analysis +5
Bribe +1
Cultures (Sindaran) +5
Cultures (7 Kingdoms) +3
Gamecraft +2
Haggle +2
Interrogate +3
Language
(Low Talislan) +10
Language
(High Talislan) +10
Linguistics +3
Search +4
Underworld +4
Streetwise +6
Tracking +1
Weapon (rod of alchemy) +2

Quirks:

Dual Encephalon
Ambidextrous
Literate



Equipment:

Cloak, loincloth (males) or caftan (females), sandals, silver earrings and necklace, wrist and ankle bracers, Trivarian game, collection, flask of skoryx, assorted tomes, 85 gold lumens in assorted currencies and 500 g.l. value in collectibles.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Effectuator, Effectuator

KASMIRAN TRAPMAGE

"Certainly, I can disarm the spring-needle in that lock. For a price..."

Your family, one of the eleven clans of the Barred Tower of Kasir, has constructed mechanisms for the protection of valuables since the nomadic years. It has improved its proficiency in every generation through your own. Across the continent, the engraved emblem of your clan has turned away thieves - the devices you leave unmarked have had more direct results. Even the Yassan respect your craft sufficiently to accuse you of stealing their secrets. Outsiders refer to you as a "trapmage." They do not understand the subtleties of your profession nor the extent of your expertise. You are a wizard, yes, and an artificer of mechanical surprises. You are also a locksmith and an engineer, a person of business and of politics. Litigation, as well, is a mechanism you master, and you enjoy the artful sparring of words with its layered deceptions. On occasion, when your observations have detected defects in security, you are as much the collector as any Sindaran. Your own subject of acquisition is money, and you protect it not only from theft but from waste. Away from Kashmir, when business calls, you are sickened by the indulgence of other peoples and disturbed by the rampant invitations to theft. Windows, indeed. On the back of the lumen, you have found that you get the best of any deal with a foreigner. Yes, you will travel - for a price.

-1	+2	+2	-2
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+0	+0	+1	+4
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
-1	+1	+2	19
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Appraise +4
Cultures (Kasmiran) +5
Cultures (7 Kingdoms) +3
Fashion (Kasmir) +2
Haggle +8
Handicraft (artificer) +8
Handicraft (weaponer) +4
Language
(Low Talislan) +10
Language
(Nomadic) +10
Merchant +4
Mode (enchantment) +4
Mode (ward) +4
Mode (attack) +4
Streetwise +4
Weapon (spring) +4

Quirks:

Literate
Nimble Fingers
Order: Cryptomancy



Equipment:

Hooded cloak, loose robe, curl-toed boots slippers, concealed coin purses, spring blade, heavy brass key-ring affixed to belt via chain, assorted trap- and locksmith tools, locking iron-bound spell book and ledger, 560 gold lumens (hidden in vaults), 250 g.l. in locks and small traps.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Apprentice Craftsman, Master Craftsman, Neophyte Magician

KASMIRAN MERCHANT

The Djaffir call you tu-beshal, "blood-suckers." They never understood you, even in the old days. They enjoy a life of risk; you are a people of caution. They play loose with the laws of other peoples; you are meticulous about following a contract to the letter. That is the way things are done in Kasmir. It doesn't bother you that you are regarded as a miser. It is the highest compliment that a business acquaintance could give. It means you are good at what you do. You protect your family's fortune. You tend to it, as one tends to the sick or to a cherished desert palm. You help it to grow, and you are both stronger for it.

-1	+1	+1	+1
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+0	+0	+2	+2
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+0	+1	+1	19
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Appraise +6
 Cultures (Kasmiran) +5
 Cultures (7 Kingdoms) +3
 Diplomacy +2
 Fashion (Kasmir) +2
 Haggle +9
 Language
 (Low Talislan) +10
 Language
 (Nomadic) +10
 Merchant +8
 Streetwise +2
 Underworld +2

Quirks:

Literate
 Rich

**Equipment:**

Hooded cloak, loose robe, curl-toed boots slippers, concealed coin purses, heavy brass key-ring affixed to belt via chain, spring-knife with pouch of six blades, strong box, locking iron-bound ledger, 5000 g.l. in trader goods, 1000 gold lumens (hidden in vaults).

Paths Followed:

Urban, Merchant, Merchant

BLUE AERIAD WINDSHIPMAN

"I am no less a hunter than my ancestors. That is the sort of insult that c-can get a land dweller k-killed."

You still think of yourself as a bird of prey, sibling to the nighthawk and Gryph, true children of the Aeriad. It irritates you that you must wear enchanted bracers to keep you aloft, angers you to have the Cymrilians to thank. Still, it's your own skill that makes you a graceful flyer, and your own deft aim that puts your tri-bow bolts and crescent knives into the flesh of your quarry. You love the hunt, because it's in your blood and it fills your mind with a hunger. You love the forests of Vardune, and you watched over them as a ranger. The greens understand, even if they have their own path now. The Thralls understand it, too, but most of the others you meet think you're high-strung and aggressive. And they don't appreciate a juicy waterbug or a glass of fine ripe vinesap neither. That's the problem outside of Vardune - nothing's really made for you. If the other races could fly, they'd never build houses on the ground, like rows of cages. You try to explain this to them, but to no avail. They're your friends and your allies, even if they see things differently. They're just lucky to have you covering their backs.

-1	+2	+1	+0
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	+2	+1	+0
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+1	+3	+0	18
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Artillerist +4
 Cultures (Aeriad) +5
 Cultures (7 Kingdoms) +3
 Evade +1
 Fashion (7 Kingdoms) +2
 Haggle +4
 Language
 (Low Talislan) +10
 Language
 (Sign) +2
 Pilot (windship) +2
 Scout +3
 Survival (forest) +2
 Weapon (crossbows) +6
 Weapon (sm blades) +2

Quirks:

Glide
 Speech Impediment
 Aeriad Precision Archery
 Magical Item (Bracers)
 Aerial Combat

**Equipment:**

Short tunic, loincloth, and cloak of plain viridian linen, Bracers of Levitation, sandals, two crescent knives, dart-thrower with pouch of ten darts, tri-bow with five clips, belt pouch, stoppered gourd flask of vinesap, 30 gold lumens in gold pentacles and assorted currencies.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Ranger, Airman

GREEN AERIAD BOTANOMANCER

"Yes, an interesting specimen indeed. I suppose I can study it later, after I prevent it from choking you to death."

Botanomancy is not a skill to be mastered, it is a path of life to be explored. Your teachers encouraged you to immerse yourself in the reflections of the Green World all around you. You spent your childhood gliding among the viridia trees and pondering lotus blossoms. Gliding still fills you with joy, yet you see the Great Change as a gift that has brought your race closer to its purpose. Once you flew above the plant world, using the trees for rest and shelter. Now you dwell on the ground with the trees and plants, and you understand more fully their needs and desires. It is to that end that you study the bark runes of your sages and the texts of the great Viridian. Your studies have led you time and again away from your home. Your companions often seem concerned that you spend so many hours consulting books and speaking with plants. You enjoy their company: scholarly discussions with Sindarans, contemplation of the natural world with Gnomekin and Muses. You are happy to explain your latest attempt at hybridization or the healing drought you are concocting. Yet you need that quiet space away from words where you can become immersed in floral scents and dig your fingers into moist soil. Cultivation of the self, your teachers named it. You are yet the young sapling.

-3	+2	+2	+0
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-2	+0	+0	+3
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
-1	+0	+2	18
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Agriculture +4
 Botanomancy +8
 Cook +2
 Cultures (Aeriad) +5
 Cultures (7 Kingdoms) +3
 Fashion (7 Kingdoms) +2
 Handicraft (artificer) +2
 Healer +4
 Herb lore +6
 Language
 (Low Talislan) +10
 Survival (forest) +2

Quirks:

Glide
 Speech Impediment
 Terrain Familiarity (forest)
 Speak with Plants
 Shape Plants



Equipment:

Short tunic, loincloth, and cloak of plain viridian linen, sandals, wooden staff, scroll case for writings, pouches (seeds, reed pen, inkwell, five vials of plant-based concoctions), several small plant samples, assorted tomes, stoppered gourd flask of vinesap, 220 gold lumens in gold pentacles and assorted currencies.

Paths Followed:

Rural, Botanomancer, Botanomancer

GNOMEKIN TUNNEL GUARDIAN

"Pardon for this disturbance, but must ask you to identify yourself and drop the war axe."

You have spent your life traveling the Underground Highway, and much of it is as familiar as your parents and fifteen siblings. Other sections are foreign to your people, and it has been your task to explore and map them. Two generations ago, even, your people had no need for these maps, as you rarely traveled beyond Dume. But the Subterranooids have emerged from your dark legends, and the Satada have migrated westward. Beyond those threats, the Highway is crucial to the Seven Kingdoms, and the Queen sends caravans weekly these years. You have emerged from a long slumber back into the light of history, and that light, as the glare of the two suns, blinds you. Yet, just as you wear cusps to shade your eyes from the suns, you wear your faith in Terra and in yourself to shield against fear of your people's rising status. To meet this fear, you travel in the world above to find your place among the other humanoid peoples. Their beds are never as comfortable as the moss of your nook, they know nothing of cooking fungi, and they have little sense of modesty. There is good in almost all of them, though, and you probe gently to locate this hand of Terra upon their souls. You are a part of their world, now, and you are, quietly, proud to be Gnomekin.

+0	+3	+1	+2
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+6	+0	+1	+0
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+3	+1	+0	16
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Climbing +2
 Cultures (Gnomekin) +5
 Cultures (7 Kingdoms) +3
 Evade +4
 Fashion (7 Kingdoms) +1
 Handicraft (brewer) +3
 Language
 (Durnese) +10
 Language
 (Low Talislan) +7
 Survival (subterranean) +2
 Swim +4
 Weapon (thrown) +8
 Weapon (sm blades) +8

Quirks:

Natural Climber
 Night Vision
 Sunblind
 Hobby (Brewer)
 Terrain Familiarity (subterranean)



Equipment:

Scale armor over rough linen tunic, cloak, crystalblade, sling, pouch of twenty stones, four pottery vials of stenchroot sap and orange fungus, crystalblade, amber cusps, flask of mushroom ale, 125 gold lumens in crystals and gold pentacles.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Scout, Warrior,

CYMRILIAN SWORDSMAGE

"The wind is a force today. It would toss a windrigger around like a leaf. I'm up for it."

It's difficult not to love magic. You are not so enamored of the theories behind it or the beauty of its form, as so many Cymrilians are. You love it for its effects, for the way in which you can use it in your chosen profession - as a swordsmage. You train intensely to improve your skill with the sword, and you have great respect for warriors such as the Thralls. Yet your arcane blade provides you with a keen advantage over others, and your own Order is a more potent weapon yet. The windship is your passion. Since you were a youth, fresh to the armada, you learned to climb riggings, care for levitationals, consult navigational charts, pilot riggers and skiffs. Someday you may take the time to visit other lands. Perhaps you and the companions you find will buy your own vessel to cross the skies for commerce or adventure. Such a life would hold many glories. Or perhaps you will become a captain of your own windship of war, leading the Seven Kingdoms into battle against its enemies. In the skies over fields of battle, you will show the world why you love magic.

+1	+0	+0	+0
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+0	+0	+1	+2
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+1	+0	+4	20
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Cultures (Cymrilian) +5
 Cultures (7 Kingdoms) +3
 Evade +2
 Fashion (7 Kingdoms) +5
 Haggle +2
 Language (Archaen) +5
 Language (High Talislan) +7
 Language (Low Talislan) +10
 Mode (attack) +4
 Mode (ward) +4
 Mode (move) +4
 Swim +2
 Weapon (lg blades) +4
 Weapon (bows) +2
 Weapon (sm blades) +2

Quirks:

Literate / Battle Magic /
 Order: Wizardry

**Equipment:**

High-collared cloak and garments of spangalor (metallic cloth); dyed leather boots; assorted jewelry; leather and silver-bound spell book; pouch; longsword; short bow and quiver with 20 arrows; dagger; minor magical trinkets; swordsmages based in Cymril may have access to a windship; 115 gold lumens in gold pentacles.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Neophyte Magician, Warrior

CYMRILIAN MAGICIAN

"I have studied at the Lyceum Arcanum. Can you truly imagine that you rival my skills?"

You are riding the crest of ancient Archaen knowledge into a glorious new era for your people. You are a Cymrilian, and you are a member of the most enlightened and advanced civilization on the continent, the rising star of Talislanta. You would never think to leave the other six Kingdoms behind, of course. They are your valued allies, and you wish for them to share in the coming prosperity. They will contribute to it substantially, you realize, with their own skills of combat and alchemy, horticulture and finance. Yet it is your magic that will lead the way. It will be the means for your personal success, as well, and you strive ever to improve your skill and enhance your knowledge. Whenever you quest abroad, for whatever purpose, you never ignore an opportunity to acquire ancient texts or artifacts. Whenever you meet a mage of talents different from your own, you barter your lore and lose hours in abstract conversation. You have made a solemn promise to visit in your lifetime the other cities of magic: Carantheum, Altan, Rhin, Jacinth, Cabal Magicus. Yet it is always the Crystal City that calls to you. One day, perhaps, you will be elected to the throne of the Wizard King, at the center of that city and at the center of the world. You have every reason to believe.

+0	+0	+0	+0
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+0	+0	+1	+3
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+0	+0	+6	20
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Alchemy +2
 Arcane Lore +4
 Cultures (Cymrilian) +5
 Cultures (7 Kingdoms) +3
 Fashion (7 Kingdoms) +5
 Haggle +2
 Language (Archaen) +5
 Language (High Talislan) +7
 Language (Low Talislan) +10
 Mode (attack) +8
 Mode (ward) +3
 Mode (enchantment) +5
 Mode (conjunction) +4
 Streetwise +3
 Swim +1

Quirks:

Order: Wizardry

**Equipment:**

High-collared cloak and robes of spinifax in various colors; dyed leather boots; assorted jewelry; leather and silver-bound spell book; pouch; 3 potions in amberglass vials; magical trinket; 80 gold lumens in gold pentacles.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Alumnus, Magician

JAKA MANHUNTER

"I don't trust the scent of you. Stay in front of me, where I can keep an eye on you."

You have every reason to be wary of outsiders. They reek of fear, they avoid your gaze, and their voices quiver to your ears. Yet that's how you'd expect most of them to act in front of a "wild beast" such as yourself. You rely upon your sixth sense and your instincts to identify those who pose a true threat, and your talisman protects you from the curses of foul magic. You are cautious, though you were not afraid to leave the Brown Hills you hunted in as a whelp. At first, you traded in the hides and fangs of werebeasts and yaksha. Later, you found mercenary employment as a scout and guide. Your typical trade in these years is the tracking and capture of criminals. Most you'd rather bring back dead, but the victims have the right to their own justice. You usually work alone, though you'd take a partner if you found one you could trust with your life. You've tested a few, and you haven't minded the company. Still, you remain wary of being betrayed, and your hand is never far from the hilt of your sword. It's not all that much different than Ymania, really. Not as cold, though. You never much cared for the cold.

+1	+3	+5	-2
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+3	+1	-1
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+2	+3	+0	22
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Cultures (Jaka) +5
 Geography +1
 Language
 (Low Talislan) +7
 Ride (eques) +3
 Survival (forest) +4
 Tracking +8
 Traps +4
 Weapon (bows) +8
 Weapon (sm blades) +2

Quirks:

Night Vision, Soft Landing, Stealthy, Fear (magic), Single Minded



Equipment:

Loincloth, vest, leg and arm bracers (all of boiled leather), luck talisman (+1) worn on thong around neck, short bow with quiver of twenty arrows, longsword, dagger, rope, 15 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

Paths Followed:

Wandering, Hunter, Hunter

ARIANE SEEKER

"Destiny drives us along this path. Perhaps our future incarnations will benefit from the mistakes we made today."

You are a Druas, a "Seeker" to the outsiders you travel among. You learn much from these others, even if they will never understand your own ways. To them, you are too quiet, too dark, too different. Most avoid looking into your eyes, clutching at charms and amulets for protection. This does not disturb you. They are young souls who still have much to learn. Your people are the oldest of all the Talislantan races. You commune with the spirits of the elements and turn your vision towards emanations of the past. The others see you speak with grass and stone and think it is witchcraft. You communicate with other Ariane by attuning yourself to their tamar, and know that language is but one of many tools; the others see you caressing violet stones and need to choose for you a name, as if you could not exist without one. You follow strictly the teachings of Transcendancy and never utter an untruth. You return every seventh year to your home, to add the experiences you've gathered to the great tamar at the center of Altan. When you pass from this existence, that part of you will remain among your people's heritage, awaiting your soul's return to continue your journey along the river of time.

+0	+0	+1	-1
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+0	+5	+2
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+0	+0	+3	20
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Agriculture +2
 Cultures (Ariane) +8
 Doctrines
 (transcendancy) +6
 Healer +2
 Language
 (Elder tongue) +10
 Language
 (Archaen) +10
 Language
 (Low Talislan) +6
 Meditation +4
 Mode (Divination) +2
 Mode (Influence) +3
 Mode (Ward) +1
 Ride (eques) +4
 Survival (wilderlands) +4
 Weapon (hafted) +4

Quirks:

Order: Mysticism



Equipment:

Cloak, flowing garments, high boots, and headband (all of spinifax); pouch (herbs); shoulder pack; Ariane mace; Ariane bow; quiver or twenty Ariane blunt arrows; tamar; spell book; silvermane steed; 21 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

Paths Followed:

Rural, Disciple, Druas

AHAZU HONOR SLAVE

"Your language I do not understand, but your drawn sword tells me all I need to know."

Your God is displeased with you. He sent the slavers with their woven vines and clouds of sleep to take you from the jungles. Your honor was lost in their capture-nets, and now only your master may restore it, if the God so wills. Your master tells you to fight, to guard him and home against his enemies. Sometimes, you fight with many others watching, and they cheer for the blood you spill with the three blades of your gwanga. You miss the crimson leaves of the parasol tree which hid you from the sight of foes. Yet your enemies have only two arms, and few can match your strength and prowess. You wish to fight the bronzed women, the warriors with pictures on their hides, and the armored red-skins of the east; only by defeating worthy enemies will you redeem yourself in the sight of the God. You know he watches you, for at times he tests you with shan'ya, and through your limbs his rage brings death to all who are near. One day, he will be pleased with you once more, and he will incite your master to strike you. Then you will shatter the master's skull with the smooth stone of your matsu, and you will be free to find battles of your own.

+3	+4	+2	-2
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	+4	+1	-1
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+4	+2	-2	28
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Brawling +4
 Cultures (Ahazu) +5
 Language (Sign) +10
 Language (Ahazu) +10
 Survival (jungle) +6
 Tracking +4
 Weapon (2H hafted) +6
 Weapon (thrown) +6
 Weapon (sm blades) +2

Quirks:

Shan-Ya
 Multiple Limbs
 Obedient
 Terrain Familiarity (jungle)
 Stealthy

**Equipment:**

Loincloth; chest wrapping (females); arm and leg thongs (all of reptile hide); shoulder pouch; two gwanga (throwing blades); matsu (war club); black iron shield; no wealth.

Paths Followed:

Tribal, Hunter, Warrior

ARIMITE REVENANT

"My client has paid me fifty gold lumens to do you an injury. Offer me a hundred to buy back the contract, and you may go in peace."

Most people are fools. If they had brains, they'd settle their problems on their own, and settle them for good. But they're amateurs. They don't want to get their hands dirty, so they hire someone like you. It usually starts as just a little thing: maybe they want to hire a Revenant to deliver an insult to someone they don't like, or to rough-up a local merchant who sold them inferior goods. It almost never ends there. Someone usually ends up dead, and you're the one who must do the killing. It is, after all, your job. You're a professional, and they pay you well. Yes, the chief assassins always take a cut of your fees. They assign the contracts, and make all the arrangements. Your job is to fulfill the contract. If a disguise is needed, you'll play the part of mercenary, trader, traveler, or priest - whatever it takes to get the job done. Whenever you go someplace new, you leave a coded message in a public place, next to the clients' notes. You meet with the local chiefs so they don't end up crossing each other. Whenever you visit Shattra, you pay the chiefs their tithe and make your reports. It's just good business. And maybe, if you do your job well, you'll rise up through the ranks like they did. That's where the real

+0	+2	+1	-2
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+0	+2	+0
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+1	+3	+0	21
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Assassinate +4
 Brawling +1
 Cultures (Arimite) +5
 Cultures (Druhk) +1
 Disable Device +4
 Haggle +2
 Language
 (Low Talisman) +10
 Language (Ahazu) +10
 Sabotage +2
 Stealth +6
 Streetwise +4
 Weapon (small blades) +6
 Weapon (lg blades) +2

Quirks:

Arimite Knife Fighting

**Equipment:**

Cloak, veil, gloves, and garments (all dyed night-gray), fur vest, hide boots, sackcloth breeches, armbands and earrings of black iron, four throwing knives, choice of two weapons, pouch, iron flask of chakos, three vials of poison (various types, 100 gold lumens in mixed coins and other valuables).

Paths Followed:

Urban, Assassin, Assassin

DANUVIAN VIRAGO

"Come and get it, foolish male."

Combat is grace and power. Your halberd is an extension of your body as you weave your pattern in the air. A parry with your bracers flows into a slash of your blade. Your bristling mane makes you seem even taller than you are, and the symbols painted on your face add to the fear you strike in his heart. Combat is passion, directed and released. Your mother and drill leader taught you this, as they taught you the need for discipline and for tactics. Your seven years of Queen's service complete, you hold these lessons dear. A skilled soldier never wants for employment. The Legion of the Borderlands, the Hadjin, the merchant houses of Kasmir and Ispasia, and the royal army of Zandu all vie for your services. Yet you covet adventure and victories worthy of story and song, and you may resign a mercenary post to seize such a chance. You are happiest along this road, with trusted comrades at your back. With them, you share all of the passions of life. Strong warrior men are a welcome change from the feeble creatures with whom you must mate. Some year, perhaps, you will bid for them as consorts during the Conjugal Feast, and they will sustain you through motherhood and the burden of command. For now, you enjoy the freedom of your youth, this freedom of combat.

+3	+3	+1	+0
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	+1	+1	+0
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+6	+1	+0	+2
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Brawling +3
 Cultures (Danuvian) +5
 Haggle +1
 Language
 (Low Talislan) +10
 Ride (equis) +4
 Streetwise +2
 Swim +3
 Tactics (cavalry) +2
 Weapon (polearms) +8
 Weapon (lg blades) +4

Quirks:

Virago
 Mounted Combat
 Danuvian Riding



Equipment:

Black iron corselet, torc, and parrying bracers; padded uniform; hip-high leather boots; shoulder pouch; bedroll; tinderbox; waterskin; road rations; klaive; longsword; dagger; earrings; equus steed with saddle, saddle bags and tack; 85 gold lumens.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Warrior, Hussar

SARISTA GYPSY

"Thief? You call me thief? You tarnish my reputation as a thespian and a merchant."

Fortuna has blessed you with the good sense to enjoy life. Silvanus is a beautiful home, and living there is beyond restful. Fishing, hunting, exploring wooded trails - all are treasured pastimes. The dangers are few along the western coast, and you rarely want for anything. Yet even the good life can grow boring after a time, and so you roam far across the continent: by yourself, with your friends, or with the wagons of your clan. The splendor of fortune is that it changes, and you know that you'll have your share of good and ill luck in your lifetime. You expect to live a long and full life, for you intend to cheat Death often. After all, life is a game, and cheating, part of the challenge. A pity that foreigners seldom see it that way. When it comes to their money, few appreciate the fickle goddess of luck. They welcome your performances and diversions, and rarely begrudge the few coins they must pay for your services. But should you misrepresent a trinket or two, or should the children get caught relieving the audience members of their purses, they fail to see the merit. But that is the nature of Fortuna; sometimes she smiles down upon you, and sometimes she doesn't. And when she frowns, that is when you know it is best to once again be moving on.

+0	+3	+1	+3
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+0	+1	+0	+0
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+1	+1	+1	20
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Cultures (Sarista) +5
 Cultures (Zandir) +2
 Deception +5
 Evade +2
 Haggle +2
 Language
 (Low Talislan) +10
 Language
 (Sarisa) +10
 Legerdemain +8
 Ride (equis) +3
 Stealth +2
 Swim +2
 Streetwise +2
 Weapon (sm blades) +2

Quirks:

Quick Reflexes
 Stealthy
 Nimble Fingers



Equipment:

Colorful garments, including cape, beret, sash, tight-fitting hose, high boots of soft hide, ear bangles; dagger; saber; pouch with thieves' tools, graymane mount with saddle & tack, tent, bedroll, shoulder bag, 50 gl in fake gems, 65 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

Paths Followed:

Wandering, Con Artist, Pickpocket

MIRIN ALCHEMIST

It is your craft, above all others, that has sustained your people. Your solvents dissolve the stone that laces quarries of blue diamonds and silver; your neutralizing powders preserve the meat of ogriphants. And the adamant you forge is the secret of your civilization. Iron and bronze grow brittle beneath the breath of your God. Yet with adamant, you can mine the glaciers to build cities from blocks of ice; you can cross the frozen lakes on ice schooners and barges; your warriors can defend L' Haan against the tireless Ice Giants. These are humbling thoughts, and you give praise to Borean for the gifts that have allowed you to meld your spirit and intellect with His natural power. By His graces the spires of Rhin shall always stand.

+0	+0	+0	+1
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+0	+0	+2
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
-1	+0	+2	26
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Alchemy +8
Appraise +3
Arcane Lore +4
Cultures (Mirin) +5
Fashion (L'Haan) +2
Haggle +4
Handicraft (artificer) +4
Herb Lore +3
Language
(Elder Tongue) +10
Language
(High Talislan) +3
Language
(Low Talislan) +4
Naturalism +4

Quirks:

Immune to Cold
Melding
Craft Alchemical Substances



Equipment:

Cloak, robes, headdress, and boots of frostwre hide; alchemical apparatus; assorted concoctions in amberglass vials; vial of alcahest; vial of alchemical solvent; adamant dagger; satchel; 135 gold lumens in L' Haan adamants.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Alchemical Adept, Alchemist

MANDALAN MYSTIC WARRIOR

"They may enslave and oppress us; they may put us in shackles, and silence us so none can hear our words. But in our minds and hearts we will always remain free."

You follow the path of the Mystic Warrior, a legend unacknowledged by your people to outsiders. Once you were simply a slave of the Kang, humbly searching to find contentment in your life. One fateful day, as you witnessed yet another in a long chain of cruelties, a portal opened in your mind. You maintained your old identity but secretly trained yourself in skills of stealth and sabotage. Family and friends honored your calling and crafted for you the amysram that you wear to disguise your identity. Always you refrain from the ways of war and violence, relying upon mysticism and Mandaquan to avoid direct conflict. You are as the wind, quietly carrying words of resistance to others who also hope one day to regain their freedom. Like your ancestors, you are patient; as the wind and water wear away even the hardest stone, you know that time is your ally. So it has always been, and so it will always be. The other enslaved peoples of the Empire have heard the legend of the Mystic Warrior. They may not believe it in their minds, but they can feel it in their hearts. And someday, they will awaken and see that the legend is true.

+0	+1	+2	+1
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+0	+0	+5	+1
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+1	+0	+2	18
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Brawling +4
Cultures (Mandalan) +5
Cultures (Quan) +3
Disable Device +2
Doctrines (mandalan) +2
Healer +2
Language (Quan) +10
Language
(High Talislan) +6
Meditation +3
Mode (influence) +4
Mode (ward) +2
Stealth +4
Streetwise +2
Swim +4
Weapon (hafted) +3

Quirks:

Code of Conduct
(non-violence)
Order: Mysticism
Mandaquan



Equipment:

Silkcloth robe; sandals; amysram (Mystic Warrior costume of loose pants, blouse, boots, jupon, gauntlets, headdress of black silkcloth, reinforced with mesh of blue iron); blue iron parrying bracers; short staff; pouch to conceal folded costume; thieves tools; length of silk cord worn around waist; coin purse 25 gold lumens in Quan Emperors.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Disciple, Mystic Warrior

AAMANIAN WARRIOR—PRIEST

"Aa the Omnipotent judges you ever, and you will suffer in the next realm for your transgressions. Shall I send you to Him?"

The Eye of Aa watches all, and there are times when this burden is great. Matters are simpler when you reside in Aaman. The squared buildings and streets, the modest attire of the aspirants, the familiar axioms of conversation - all are comforting to your soul. When you accompany the witch hunters in Wërewood, you have few misgivings; the Dhuna practice evil rites indeed. In leading the pilgrimages, you are preoccupied with protecting your charges as you pass through the backwater haunts of primitive infidels. Yet you must also travel the Seven Roads to begin these journeys, and at other times you are bidden to find converts among the heretics. They laugh when you quote from the sacred texts, and taunt you with innuendoes and insults. You must stray in your sermons from the Omnival and partake of food and activities you would prefer to shun. But you see the fear in their eyes, that you will convert them through the power of Aa, that the Hierophant will call for holy war. You await that Judgment Day when you are tallied your thousandth aalm of mana and take your rightful place among the Monitors. That will be your reward for these battles of flesh and piety. If death comes before that time, your place beside the Omnificent will be just as worthy.

+0	+0	+0	-1
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+0	+0	+2	+1
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+1	+0	+1	20
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Command +2
 Cultures (Aamanian) +6
 Cultures (Marukan) +3
 Doctrines (Orthodoxy) +6
 Fashion (Aaman) +3
 Language
 (High Talislan) +10
 Meditation +2
 Mode (Attack) +4
 Mode (Influence) +1
 Mode (Divination) +1
 Ride (equus) +2
 Swim +3
 Weapon (hafted) +5
 Weapon (crossbows) +2
 Weapon (polearms) +3

Quirks:

Enemy (paradoxists)
 Order: Invocation



Equipment:

Black iron helm, shield, and partial plate armor worn over coarse woolen garments, boots, cloak (all dyed or lacquered white), iron-bound spell book, iron holy symbol of Aa, ritual vestments, black iron mace lacquered white, heavy crossbow, 20 gold lumens in offerings and salary.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Acolyte, Warrior

ZANDIR CERTAMENT

"You cannot hope to match me with sword or spell. Surrender now, and the only harm will be to your pride."

You are a duelist, a Certament, and an artiste who paints with the sword. If insulted you will defend your honor, or that of your friend, your family, your spouse, or your lover. If hired by a Zandir noble to fight a duel to the death, you will do so, but only if you are accorded payment commensurate with your talents. Certaments are masters of display, with flashing swords, deft movements, and spells of sound and fury. Often you duel others of your kind, to make a point or perhaps to impress a prospective lover. You rarely cause each other permanent harm over such trivial matters. Dueling is as much a game as gambling or romance, and you pursue them all with equal fervor. Other matters are of more serious consequence. When you enlist for a term with the city sentinels or elite guardsmen, you are responsible for the safety of others. You may banter and flirt, but you are always attentive to the assignment at hand. When you adventure abroad, you do so with panache, but you have no desire to become a flamboyant corpse. Your antics distract your foes, and when you must, you are cold and direct. When you relate the tale later in a tavern over wine, you can always embellish. The telling is an art as well.

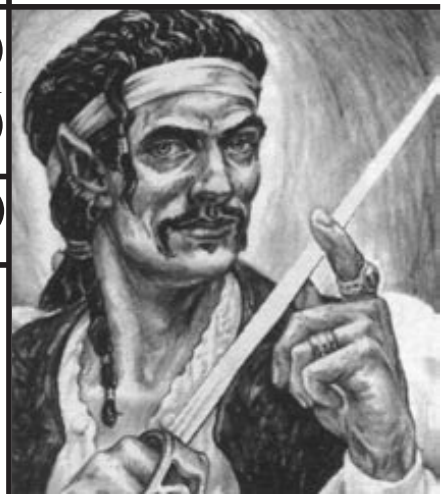
+0	+1	+0	+2
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+0	+1	-2	+0
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+3	+1	+0	20
CR	RC	MR	HP

Skills:

Acrobatics +1
 Cultures (Zandir) +5
 Doctrines (paradoxy) +2
 Evade +3
 Fashion (Zandu) +3
 Language
 (High Talislan) +10
 Language
 (High Talislan) +10
 Mode (attack) +4
 Mode (ward) +4
 Mode (enchantment) +4
 Streetwise +4
 Swim +2
 Weapon (lg blades) +4
 Weapon (sm blades) +2

Quirks:

Zandir Swordsmanship
 Order: Wizardry



Equipment:

Fine black iron chain mail over fine leather undergarments, velveteen cloak, knee-high boots, hair confined in silver bands, dueling sword, zendal, leather-bound spell book, grayman mount with saddle & tack, 140 gold lumens in Zandir crescents.

Paths Followed:

Urban, Duelist, Neophyte Magician

CHAPTER FIVE

SKILLS AND QUIRKS



Like Attributes, Skills are more than a collection of numbers to be manipulated and optimized. Skills are the most fundamental way of describing a character — even more so than Attributes and Quirks. “Deception +5” is not just a number to be used with the Action Table. It’s an aspect of the character, and it tells a lot without ever rolling dice or assessing modifiers.

SKILL BENCHMARKS

The Skill Benchmarks section below is provided to help players and GMs better understand how their character’s skill ratings correspond to more familiar levels of ability.

Skill Rating	Description
0	Novice
3	Apprentice
5	Competent
7	Adept
10	Professional
15	Expert
20	Master
30	Grandmaster
40	Legendary

For example, a character with a +10 skill can be expected to know most things a professional in that field would know, have contacts with other professionals in the field, and be up-to-date on the latest developments and theories.

TYPES OF SKILLS

COMMON SKILLS

Unless otherwise noted:

Training Period: five weeks.

CLIMBING

Basic ability to climb rocks, walls, trees, ladders, ropes, etc. The availability of hand-holds, the condition of the surface or object being scaled, and similar factors can all contribute to the Degree of Difficulty for this skill (GM’s ruling).

Attribute Modifier: DEX

CONVEYANCE (SPECIFIC)

Ability to operate a type of simple land or water-borne conveyance. This ability does not include navigation skills or other detailed knowledge, which is covered under Pilot. The various sub-skills include: Chariots; Wagons (includes carts & carriages), Rafts (includes skiffs), and Rowboats (includes kayaks).

Attribute Modifier: DEX

COOK

The ability to prepare food in such a way as to ensure that it will be edible and reasonably tasty.

Attribute Modifier: PER

FASHION (SPECIFIC)

Indicates familiarity with a type of fashion, including the knowledge of how to dress in order to simulate a particular “look” or social position (bohemian, working class, middle class, affluent, aristocratic, etc.). Individuals with this skill keep up with the latest trends and styles in a given culture, and are aware of what is and is not currently in vogue. Characters can use their Fashion skill rather than their CHA rating when rolling for reaction from those of similar cultures.

Attribute Modifier: CHA

HAGGLE

Ability to argue effectively over the prices of various goods. By haggling, individuals with this skill can negotiate the list price for an item or service up or down by as much as 50%. A failed Hagglng roll results in the opposite of the haggler’s intended result.

Attribute Modifier: CHA

RIDE (SPECIFIC)

Ability to ride one type of steed, such as an equus or strider. This skill does not allow a character to take advantage of a steed’s abilities in combat, which is covered under Mounted Combat.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

SIGNAL

The ability to communicate over vast distances by means of smoke signals, drums, reflective crystals, and the like.

Training Period: 2 weeks

Attribute Modifier: INT

SWIM

Staying afloat and getting from place to place in the water. Characters can attempt lifesaving techniques using this skill, with negative modifiers dependent on conditions in the water, size and weight of the victim, and so forth.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Unless otherwise noted:

Training Period: five weeks.

The following is a list of the major languages spoken by the peoples of Talislanta. Characters are rated in their proficiency with a language on a three-tiered scale, as follows: Native, Fluent, or Basic.

SKILL RATING	PROFICIENCY
0 to +3	Basic
+4 to +9	Fluent
+10 or greater	Native

Attribute Modifier: INT

Note: *Language Skills for beginning characters start at the low end of the Proficiency scale. For example, a beginning character with a rating of “Fluent” starts with a Language skill Level of +3. Possessing skill ranks in a language does not give the character the ability to read and write (see Quirks – Literate).*

LOW TALISLAN

This common tongue is spoken throughout much of central and western Talislanta and is often learned as a second language in the rest of the continent. Its use marks one as a person of low to average social standing, and as such is shunned by most nobles, intellectuals, bureaucrats, and scholars.

HIGH TALISLAN

Essentially a more elaborate and flowery version of Low Talislan, High Talislan is employed throughout most of the continent. Its use marks one as a person of high social standing, education, or extreme snobishness. Speakers of Low and High Talislan can usually (but not always) understand each other.

ARCHAEN

The written language employed by most Talislantan magicians to record their spells and enchantments, Archaen dates back to the Forgotten Age. Many of the oldest known scrolls and stone tablets were written in this highly complex language, which is no longer employed except as pertains to the casting of spells.

BODORIAN

This complex language does not use words or letters; rather, musical notes and rhythms are used exclusively to convey meaning. Bodor musical troupes employ this language, which is greatly admired by the Muses and the Thaecians.

CHANAN

Language of the eastern coastal peoples. Different dialects are spoken by such groups as the Chana witchfolk, Manra, Nagra, Batreans, and Sawila. There is a runic version of this tongue, but it is very rudimentary.

ELDER TONGUE

Ancient language of the Ariane peoples, the Elder Tongue is also spoken by certain witches and warlocks. Its written form is sometimes employed as a magical script by spell casters. The Mirin of L'Haan speak a derivative of this tongue.

NOMADIC

This simple yet elegant tongue is spoken by the Djaffir tribes, most of whom speak Talislan as well. It is also employed by the Dracartans of Carantheum. The written form of Nomadic is especially concise and easy to learn.

NORTHRON

Language of the Ur clans of Urag. The race of Darklings speaks a tangled dialect of Northron, as do the Stryx.

PHAEDRAN

Technically a “dead” language, the complex Phaedran tongue is primarily employed in its written form only. It is still in wide use among western scholars, who value tradition above practicality.

QUAN

Stolen in large part from the ancient Mazdak tongue, Quan is still the official language of the Quan Empire. The subject peoples of the empire each have their own individual dialects, which are more or less compatible with one another. Its written form is employed exclusively by eastern scholars, including the Chroniclers of Xanadas.

RACIAL TONGUES

The Talislantan races that are known to have their own distinct languages include: the Ahazu, Gryphs (Avian), Imrians (Piscine), Moorg-Wan, Muses (Sylvan), Saurans, and Sun-Ra-San. Several of these racial tongues have been adopted by other groups; the Araq for example, speak a variation of the Sauran tongue. The “Secret Language” of plants is the native language of the Green Men and Verdir.

RAJANIN

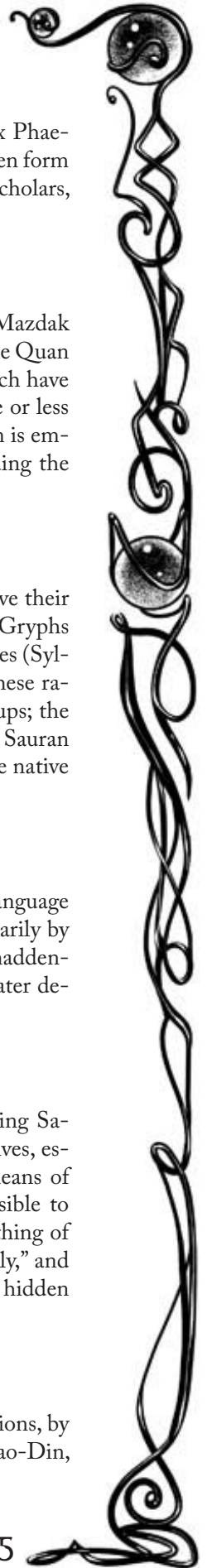
A harsh tongue derived from the ancient language of the Torquarans, Rajanin is employed primarily by the various tribes inhabiting Rajinnar. A maddeningly complex written form of Rajanin was later developed by the Rajans.

SARISA

The multi-layered language of the wandering Sarista peoples, Sarisa is rich in colorful adjectives, especially those of a disparaging nature. By means of various slight gestures and signals, it is possible to convey secret meanings, such as: “Believe nothing of what this one says,” “We must speak privately,” and so forth. No Sarista would ever teach the hidden meaning of this tongue to an outsider.

SEA NOMAD

This tongue is employed, with slight variations, by the folk of Oceanus, the Sea Rogues of Gao-Din, and the Mangar corsair clans.



SIGN

A “universal” language of hand gestures is employed by most of the primitive tribes of Talislanta, and certain others as well. Individuals who are proficient in Sign can communicate with most sign-using peoples, though the variations used by some races can be more difficult to read unless one has specific knowledge of those cultures (-1 to -10 difficulty).

THAECIAN

Romantic language of the Thaecians, this elegant tongue is much favored by poets, writers, and musicians. The Thaecians employ it as an adjunct to High Talislan, which is spoken as their common tongue.

XAMBRIAN

An ancient variant of the Archaen tongue, Xambrian is used only among Xambrian wizard hunters when conversing among themselves. Xambrian is considered a “dead” language by most Talislantans, as both its spoken and written forms all but disappeared from the continent long ago. Xambrians have been known to take offense at such remarks.

COMBAT SKILLS

ARTILLERIST (SPECIFIC)

Proficiency in one specific type of siege weapon, such as ship's hurlants, catapults, ballistae, or spring-als. Includes the abilities to target, fire, and load the weapon, and to accurately judge distances.

Training Period: 10 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: RC

ASSASSINATE

Ability to plan and effectively execute an assassination. Characters with this skill may study a target's habits, schedule, and associates; locate suitable am-

bush spots; and prepare escape routes and safe houses. Assassins may add their skill rating to damage when making undefended attacks.

Training Period: 50 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: INT

BRAWLING

Proficiency in an unsophisticated form of hand-to-hand combat. Brawling is typically used for Close Attacks and Grappling, although characters can also use it to employ make-shift weapons, such as broken bottles or furniture, or to use such “dirty tricks” as eye-gouging and biting. The Damage Rating and Action Table penalty for such weapons and tactics is at the discretion of the GM. Individuals can also use Brawling to attack with natural weaponry, such as claws or tails.

Training Period: 10 weeks

Attribute Modifier: Combat Rating

COMMAND

Ability to organize, coordinate, and direct groups of trained combatants. Individuals with this skill can personally command up to 10 combatants or one lower-level sub-commander per level of ability. Each sub-commander can in turn direct 10 combatants or one subordinate per level, thereby establishing a hierarchy of command.

Training Period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: CHA



EVADE

Ability to avoid being struck by an attack, such as a blow from a hand-held weapon, an arrow, or a magical bolt.

Training Period: five weeks.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

GUARD

Ability to serve as a sentinel, watchman, or bodyguard. The Guard skill is used in place of PER for rolls to detect intruders and potential threats. It also includes knowledge such as how to patrol and stand watch effectively and how to challenge and evaluate strangers. Characters trained in this skill have some ability to physically defend others; they can parry (at Guard skill level) a blow intended for an ally standing next to them.

Training Period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: PER

TACTICS (SPECIFIC)

Training in formal military strategy and tactics. Includes the abilities to follow orders effectively, evaluate combat situations to determine appropriate tactics, and identify and compensate for the tactics of opponents. A successful attempt to identify opponents' tactics will allow the player to declare her own intent for a round after the GM informs the player of enemies' combat plans. A successful attempt to determine appropriate tactics will result in a +3 modifier to the character's actions for the round. Failures at either type of attempt results in the opposite effect. Use the enemy's Tactics skill or INT as the Degree of Difficulty; for groups, use the Tactics skill or INT of the commander. The various sub-skills include: infantry, cavalry, siege warfare, guerrilla warfare, aerial combat, urban combat, naval combat and subterranean combat.

Training Period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: INT

WEAPON

Proficiency with a group of similar weapons.

The various weapon groups include:

WEAPON SKILL SUB-CATEGORIES

Group	Example Weapons
Blades, 2-handed	Tazian Greatsword
Blades, large	Za Broadsword, Falchion
Blades, small	Dagger, Crystalblade
Bows	Ariane Bow, Shortbow
Crossbows	Correg, Tri-Bow
Flails	War Whip, R'ruh
Hafted	Prod-Hook, Hand Axe
Hafted, 2-handed	Ur Club, Matsu
Polearms	Spear, Bladestaff, Klaive
Slings	Sling, Oc
Spring	Springshot, Blade Bracer
Thrown	Blade Star, Jang, T'sai

Training Period: 50 weeks for the first weapon group, 10 weeks for additional weapon group

Attribute Modifier: CR or RC

Note: Some specialized weapons may require their own weapon group (example: Tarak, Rod of Alchemy, Blowgun, etc.)



PERFORMING SKILLS

ACROBATICS

Ability to perform most types of acrobatic maneuvers, including tight-rope walking, tumbling, leaping, vaulting, juggling, break-falling (falling up to 20 feet without taking damage), and scaling walls. Group actions include pyramids, flinging other acrobats (or non-acrobats) into the air, and interactive juggling.

Training Period: 50 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

ACTING

Individuals with this talent will be able to perform any of the skills normally associated with thespians, such as engaging an audience's attention, memorizing lines of dialogue, conveying a range of emotions, impersonating or parodying other individuals or character types, and so on. Acting is perhaps one of the most difficult skills practiced in Talislanta, requiring slavish rehearsals and training sessions in the tutelage of the most demanding and temperamental masters of the art.

Training Period: 100 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: CHA

ART

In Talislanta, visual art is considered one of the performing arts. This skill represents the ability to produce aesthetic creations of a visual nature, such as paintings, tapestries, mosaics, sculptures, and magical arts such as illusory panoramas (requires a combination of Magic and Art skills). Characters with this skill will also be able to evaluate and appraise the work of other artists and may be able to apply their talents to more practical crafts.

Training Period: 50 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: PER

DANCE

Ability to perform popular, expressive or ritual dances. Popular Talislantan dances include the light-hearted caperetto, the romantic avante, and the formal sauntre. Expressive dances include the seductive Dance of the Diaphanous Veils (Batrean), the Dance of Subtle Passions (Mandalan), and the Dance of the Rainbow Plumes (Sawila). Many cults and reli-

gions have their own ritual dances, such as the Ritual of Spirit Calling (Chana Witchfolk), the Dance of Death (Rajan necromancers), the Celebration of Terra (Gnomekin), and the Kang Sword Dance, and to name but a few.

Training Period: 10 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

LEGERDEMAIN

Ability to perform various tricks and sleights of hand, including card tricks, palming (concealing small objects in the hand), passing or switching small objects without being detected, ventriloquism, and so on. Individuals with this talent can employ it to cheat or "fix" games of chance or to detect cheaters. Legerdemain is also described under Thieving Skills.

Training Period: 10 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

MIMICRY

Ability to mimic sounds, other voices, and animal calls convincingly. Individuals who use this talent for entertainment often learn to mimic the voices and mannerisms of famous individuals; adopting the voice of an audience member or someone else just met is more difficult (-10 penalty), although every minute spent studying an individual's voice reduces that penalty. Mimicry is also described under Wilderness Skills.

Training Period: 20 weeks

Attribute Modifier: PER

MUSIC

Ability to play one of the various types of musical instruments found in Talislanta, such as the gossamer harp, glass flute, tambour, gongs, water chimes, and so on.

Training Period: 50 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

ORATORY

Ability to engage the attention of an audience, small or large, and to effect a desired response among listeners, such as sympathy, antipathy, or fascination. An orator can use his or her skills to incite a crowd

to action, calm a hostile mob, create a diversion, and so on. Failure means the crowd pays little heed to the speaker; a result of mishap could mean the crowd becomes angry or even violent towards the speaker. The GM will apply a degree of difficulty to the roll equal to the crowd's receptiveness to the orator's ideas.

Training Period: 10 weeks

Attribute Modifier: CHA

SONG

Ability to effect emotional responses by the use of song. Possible uses include the furthering of romantic interests, diversion, singing to earn a meal or a place to sleep, stirring interest in a cause of some sort, and so on.

Training Period: 10 weeks

Attribute Modifier: CHA

SCHOLARLY SKILLS

Unless otherwise noted:

Training Period: 30 weeks.

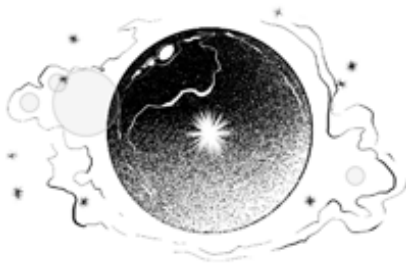
Attribute Modifier: INT

ANALYSIS

Ability to use logic to assimilate evidence and form an accurate conclusion. Includes training in basic forensic and alchemical methods. The GM determines what information is uncovered according to the line of reasoning and investigative techniques employed.

ANATOMY

Knowledge of the structure and inner workings of living beings. The scholar will have dissected and studied the corpses of a variety of animals and, possibly, sentient beings and will have some familiarity with the function and purpose of specific organs, structures, and systems. This field is rarely studied in most Talislantan cultures; where it is studied, its scholars are limited in their knowledge. A scholar who is also proficient as a Healer receives a +1 bonus to that skill for every two points of Anatomy skill rating, but only in regards to a specific species of choice, such as Archaens or Sunra; the bonus may be split among multiple species.



ANTIQUARIAN

Skilled at identifying, appraising, and dating ancient artifacts. Note that an artifact must be at least one hundred years old to qualify as an antique by Talislantan standards. Cultures of interest to antiquaries, listed in descending order of estimated rarity and value, are as follows:

◆ Time Before Time
(Khazad)

◆ *Early Forgotten Age*
(Torquaran, Xambria, Zaran)

◆ *Late Forgotten Age*
(Elande, Phandril, Pompados, Sharna)

◆ *Early New Age*
(Phaedran, Hadjin)

ARCANE LORE

Knowledge of Talislantan myths, folk beliefs, and legends, particularly those steeped in magical lore. Individuals skilled in this field will be able to decipher runes and magical scripts, identify and appraise magical artifacts, determine the authenticity of magical tomes and scrolls, and so on.

ASTROLOGY

By studying the configurations of the suns, moons, and stars, practitioners of this skill can determine if the signs are well-aspected (favorable) or ill-aspected (unfavorable), and may thus be able to divine the outcome of future events. An astrologer can make one divination per night, modified by the difficulty of the divination attempted.

CARTOGRAPHY

Cartographers are able to read and make accurate maps of almost any type of terrain. The amount of unfamiliar terrain that can be mapped in a day is equivalent to the distance the cartographer can cover during that period, based on the mode of travel employed (on foot, steed, sea vessel, windship, etc.).

CULTURES (SPECIFIC)

Knowledge of the diverse races of modern-day Talislanta, including their habits, traditions, laws, and mores. The scholar will be aware of what constitutes proper and improper behavior in foreign lands, among primitive tribes, and so forth. The ability to identify tools, weapons, and implements associated with other peoples is also acquired.

Training Period: 100 weeks

CRYPTOGRAPHY

The ability to decipher cryptograms, codes, and secret languages, and to write in code. Each text that a cryptographer attempts to decipher is given a difficulty rating, usually equal to the encoder's level of cryptography. Decoding a text requires one hour per level of the text's difficulty.

DOCTRINES (SPECIFIC)

Study of one particular religion or philosophy. Knowledge of a doctrine includes the ability to recite passages of important texts or orations, explain critical teachings, describe underlying symbolism, identify relevant artifacts, cite historical examples, and so forth. Few Talislantans learn multiple doctrines with any degree of depth. See the *Talisanta Game-master's Guide* for more information on Talislanta's various religions.

DIPLOMACY

Knowledge of the finer points of protocol, oratory, and negotiation. Individuals with this talent may seek positions as ambassadors, mercantile representatives, public officials, and so forth.

Attribute Modifier: CHA

ENGINEER

Ability to design and oversee construction of one or more of the following: fortifications, roadways, bridges, cities, settlements, siege engines, mines, and excavations, and other complicated construction projects. Engineers are able to draft and appraise plans and schematics for such projects, determine the suitability of proposed construction sites, and spot potential structural weaknesses and strong points.

GAMECRAFT

This skill governs the character's ability to play complex strategic board games such as pentadrille, but only Sindarans may use this skill to play trivarian.

Training Period: 10 weeks

GEOGRAPHY

Knowledge of the continent of Talislanta, including its resources, topographical features, and climatic conditions. The scholar will know where, in any given region, deposits of precious stones or metals are most likely to be found and where conditions may indicate the likelihood of danger from floods, rock-slides, avalanches, and seismic or volcanic activity. The scholar can gain familiarity with one geographical region per level of ability.

HISTORY

Knowledge of the notable figures, events, and cultures of ancient times. A historian will be familiar with written works pertaining to such subjects, including legends, and will be able to identify, authenticate, and date ancient ruins, writings, and relics.

LINGUISTICS

The study of languages. An individual who studies linguistics will be able to learn how to speak, read, and write one new language at a rating of "Fluent" per level, including any ancient or "dead" language; alternatively, a language already rated at Fluent can be improved to a rating of "Native. Linguists can also identify languages that they do not know, at a penalty based on the unknown language's degree of difficulty (age, obscurity, complexity, etc.). Scholars with this skill may seek employment as translators.

Training Period: 50 weeks

LITIGATOR (SPECIFIC)

Knowledge of the laws and customs of at least one land, and skill at representing individuals accused of criminal wrongdoing. Litigators may wield little influence or may not even be available in lands where totalitarian governments are in power.

MEDITATION

Ability to reach a state of calm reflection though the use of controlled breathing, posture, and mental imagery. A character may meditate in lieu of normal sleep with a successful meditation skill roll. While meditating, a character is aware of her surroundings but distractions and external stimulus can make meditation more difficult (the GM will assign a difficulty modifier to the meditation skill roll based on the severity of the distractions). Magicians who study the order of Mysticism use this skill to calm themselves before casting a spell. One hour of meditation provides the same benefits as two hours of sleep.

Attribute Modifier: WIL



NATURALISM

Ability to identify and catalogue all species of animals native to the continent and to breed animals in captivity. With a critical success, a naturalist may be able to cross-breed different species in the hope of creating a hybrid. The GM should assign a difficulty modifier to this roll, depending on how different the two species are.

THIEVING SKILLS

Unless otherwise noted:

Training Period: 10 weeks.

BRIBE

Ability to influence by promises of wealth. A successful Bribe roll will lower the Bribe RES requirement by 1.

Attribute Modifier: CHA

COERCE

Ability to influence by threats or violent actions.

Attribute Modifier: STR

DECEPTION

Ability to deceive other individuals without arousing their suspicion and to win their trust by deceitful means. Includes the use of various scams, rigged games, and the like. Also includes the ability to disguise one's appearance, background, profession, and so forth.

Training Period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: CHA

DISABLE DEVICE

Ability to foil locks, traps and other similar mechanical devices typically with the use of thieves' tools. Characters may spend more than one round attempting to open a particular lock; for each additional minute (specified in advance), add a +1 modifier (up

to a maximum of +10). Characters can attempt to open a lock that they have previously failed to open, with a -5 modifier for each previous failed attempt. This skill may also be used to design and install lock mechanisms, although the Artificer skill is required to construct such mechanisms.

Training Period: 20 weeks

Attribute Modifier: DEX

ESPIONAGE

Proficiency in the time-honored art of acquiring information by covert means. The Espionage skill is used in place of PER for rolls to identify important documents, listen in on the conversations of others, locate hidden safes and compartments, detect approaching guards, and so forth. This skill is often used in conjunction with Stealth and Deception.

Training Period: 20 weeks

Attribute Modifier: PER

FORGERY

Ability to duplicate written documents, seals, signatures, and so forth. Also includes the ability to create counterfeit replicas of coins, cut stones, or other valuables, which are practically indistinguishable from the genuine articles.

Training Period: 20 weeks

Attribute Modifier: DEX

GAMBLING

Familiarity with any of a variety of games involving skill and chance, including the ability to detect or engage in illicit methods of determining the outcome of such contests.

Attribute Modifier: INT

INTERROGATE

Ability to acquire information by psychological intimidation or by more subtle verbal methods.

Attribute Modifier: INT

LEGERDEMAIN

Ability to perform various tricks and sleights of hand, including picking pockets, cutting purses, and swiping small objects. Additional applications of this skill are described under Performing Skills.

Training Period: 10 weeks

Attribute Modifier: DEX

LIP—READING

Ability to eavesdrop by watching a speaker's lips and reading what he or she is saying. The practical range of this ability may be enhanced by the use of a spyglass or other optical device. The lip-reader must be familiar with the language being spoken.

Attribute Modifier: PER

SABOTAGE

This is the ability to disable or destroy most types of mechanisms, conveyances, and structures by covert means. While simply breaking an item requires no special ability, doing so quickly and/or quietly or in such a way as to make the item still appear to be functional requires a roll against this skill.

Training Period: 20 weeks

Attribute Modifier: INT

SEDUCE

Ability to influence by charm, suggestion and sex appeal.

Attribute Modifier: CHA

SEARCH

The practiced and studied use of Perception, Search is used when carefully looking for traps, secret doors and other details that may be hidden or concealed. You generally must be within 10 feet of the object or surface to be searched.

Training period: 8 weeks.

Modifier: PER

STEALTH

The ability to move silently, hide in shadows, and otherwise avoid detection. Note that using this skill in an unfamiliar environment may entail a penalty of -1 to -10, based on the Degree Difficulty involved (GM's ruling).

Attribute Modifier: DEX

STREETWISE

Knowledge of the typical scams and cons run by the least reputable members of a city's population, such as beggars, pickpockets, gamblers, charlatans, peddlers, and so forth. Individuals without this skill are considered to be "marks," or fair game for any likely scam, by disreputable city dwellers.

Attribute Modifier: INT

TRAPS

Ability to design, build and set traps. The difficulty rating of the trap is usually equal to its maker's skill level. Traps is also described under Wilderness Skills.

Attribute Modifier: PER

UNDERWORLD

Intimate knowledge of the customs peculiar to criminal groups or organizations, such as thieves, assassins, smugglers, and so forth.

Attribute Modifier: INT

Unless otherwise noted:

Training Period: 10 weeks.

TRADE SKILLS

ADMINISTRATOR

Ability to command subordinates and oversee all details crucial to the operation of a business, government agency, or similar activity.

Attribute Modifier: CHA

AGRICULTURE

Skilled at planting, producing, and harvesting one or more of the following crops: viridia, subterranean crystals, mushrooms or other fungi, Mandalan silk, thistledown, timber, foodstuffs, herbs, and so on. This skill includes intimate knowledge of the life cycle of the specific crops and the ability to research into developing non-magical means of increasing yield, survivability, or palatability of the crops.

Attribute Modifier: INT

ANIMAL HANDLER

Ability to capture, tame, train, and/or breed wild beasts. Taming takes one week per every three Ability Levels of the creature; training to perform a single task on command, such as carrying a rider, attacking, or guarding, requires an additional four weeks, or longer if the beast is particularly fierce or stubborn in nature. The Intelligence of a beast typically determines the limits as to how much a creature can learn.

Attribute Modifier: WIL

APPRAISER

Ability to determine the basic value of one or more types of goods and commodities, including slaves, treasure, crystals, and so forth.

Attribute Modifier: PER

CARAVAN MASTER

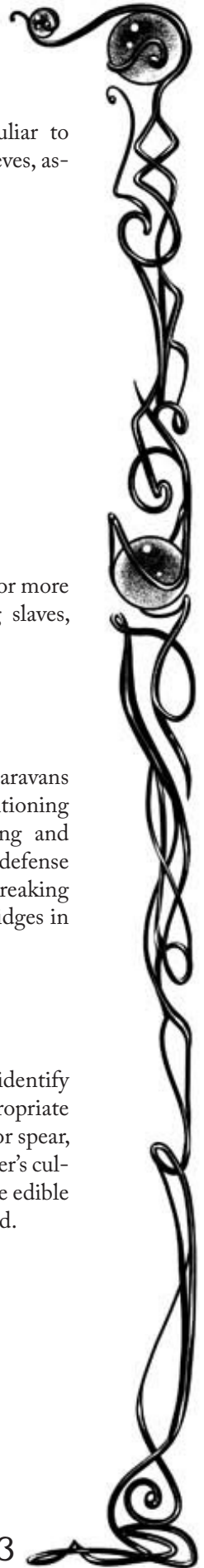
Skilled at outfitting and running overland caravans and overseeing any of the following: requisitioning supplies, managing teams of drivers, loading and off-loading goods and materials, organizing defense against attacks by bandits, making and breaking camp, and fording and crossing rivers and bridges in orderly fashion.

Attribute Modifier: CHA

FISHING

This skill grants the character the ability to identify the best locations to fish, select the most appropriate bait, and fish with a rod and line, net, basket, or spear, as appropriate to the situation and the character's culture. It also grants knowledge of which fish are edible or otherwise and how they should be prepared.

Attribute Modifier: INT



HANDICRAFT

Like Lore, Perform and Survival skills, Handicraft is actually comprised of a number of sub-skills. These sub-skills are all tracked separately so you could have several Handicraft skills each at different ranks.

The various Handicraft skills are used whenever you need or want to create an item. The Degree of Difficulty depends on the item to be created. If you succeed with a Critical Success, you have created a masterpiece. This exceptional item is then worth from 150% to 300% its normal value and/or it will convey a bonus to anyone using it (usually +1 to +5 for weapons, armor or tools). The Handicraft skill is also used to repair items. A partial success is required to repair a broken item.

A few examples of Handicraft sub-skills related to Trades are included below and GM's are encouraged to create new ones as needed in their campaigns:

ARMORER

Skill in the fashioning of protective apparel and gear using hide, bone, or metal. Type of material and style of armor is usually dictated by region, culture, and availability of goods.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

ARTIFICER

Skill in the making of useful and decorative wares and items from one or more of the following materials: crystal, black iron, red iron, blue iron, adamant, black adamant, stone, wood, bone, clay, silver, gold, copper, brass, gemstones, fine fabrics, glass, and ceramics. The artificer may learn how to work with one type of material per +3 ability in this skill. Artificers can identify their own and their competitors' handiwork, and appraise any item that they can produce.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

ARTISAN

Skilled builders and craftsmen specializing in one or more of the following: windships, levitationals, duneships, wind funnels, siege hurlants, ice schooners, land barges, dragon barques, pleasure barges, sea galleys, or any type of major device or construction utilizing stone, glass, metal, or wood. The artisan may learn how to build one

type of device per +5 ability in this skill. Note that this skill does not give the character the power to create a fully enchanted and functioning magical item, unless the character also has the appropriate magical training.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

WEAPONER

Skilled in the making of one or more types of weapons. The style and materials used are determined by the weaponer's race, homeland, and culture. Included in this category are bladesmiths, axe-grinders, bowyers, hurlant-makers, swordsmiths, Gnomekin crystalsmiths, and so on. Weaponers are able to identify their own and rivals' work and can repair, sharpen, and appraise any weapon that they can produce.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

HEALER

Skill in the arts of Talislantan folk medicine, a speculative field of study at best. Healers are able to identify and utilize plants and herbs with reputed medicinal properties, provide aid and comfort to sick and wounded individuals, and serve as midwives. As this field is limited in its capabilities, all rolls determining the accuracy of a healer's attempts to diagnose or cure a patient's ailments suffer a penalty of -5.

Attribute Modifier: INT

LABORER

Ability to perform basic manual labor. To determine the quality of a crew of laborers, average the level of ability of all workers, foremen, and other supervisors.

Attribute Modifier: DEX

LIVESTOCK

This is the ability to farm, tend, and rear one or more varieties of domestic livestock, such as durge, erd, or even farmed fish.

Attribute Modifier: INT

MERCHANT

Skilled at buying and selling goods and commodities. Included in this category are shop owners, vendors, peddlers, procurers, mongers, and so forth. By purchasing goods and materials in sizable quantities, individuals of this profession save up to 50% off standard list prices. By haggling and hard bargaining, merchants and traders can drive list prices up or down by as much as 25%.

Attribute Modifier: CHA

MINING

Knowledge of the techniques used in one of the following trades: pit mining (common), dredging (swamps), ice mining (L'Haan), sand-mining (Dracarta), etc.

Attribute Modifier: INT

PILOT

Ability to operate and navigate a duneship, windship, or other type of large vessel (one type only). Pilots can read any type of chart or map needed to navigate their vessels and can recognize familiar hazards, such as obstructions and coming storms. A cursory inspection is sufficient for any pilot to determine if a given vessel is in good condition. The Pilot skill may also be used to ride a an aerial mount such as a dractyl.

Attribute Modifier: PER

SALVAGER

Knowledge of the techniques used to retrieve valuable goods and artifacts from sunken ships, ruins, or similar places.

Attribute Modifier: PER



WILDERNESS SKILLS

Unless otherwise noted:

Training Period: 10 weeks

GUIDE

The ability to escort others through a given region, territory, city, structure, or route. Includes detailed knowledge of potential hazards, sources of food and water, friendly groups and individuals, and so forth.

Attribute Modifier: INT

HERB LORE

Ability to identify useful or harmful plants, and to use such materials to concoct simple medicines or poisons (relevant Distill Quirks are also required).

Attribute Modifier: INT

MIMICRY

Ability to mimic sounds, other voices, and animal calls convincingly. While often used to entertain, members of certain tribes and military orders learn to imitate avir calls in order to communicate warnings undetected. Hunters and trappers may also use mimicry to attract prey. Mimicry is also described under Performance Skills.

Training Period: 20 weeks

Attribute Modifier: PER

SCOUT

Ability to infiltrate wilderness regions and avoid detection by adversaries, in order to study and obtain information on such factors as terrain, road or trail conditions, the general status of an opponent's fortifications or defenses, the movement and/or condition of troops or groups of creatures, and the availability of food, water, or other natural resources. In most cases, Scout may be substituted for Perception.

Attribute Modifier: PER

SURVIVAL (SPECIFIC)

Ability to forage for food and water, navigate, and find or construct suitable shelter in the wilds. Also includes knowledge of the flora and fauna of a given region, including techniques for hunting, capturing, and using their remains. The various sub-skills of Survival include: alpine, desert, forest, jungle, steppes, subterranean, swamp & urban.

Training Period: 30 weeks

Attribute Modifier: CON

TRACKING

Ability to read and follow tracks and traces left by creatures or beings. A tracker can identify and estimate the age of such tracks and often determine under what conditions (flight, exhaustion, heavy encumbrance, etc.) they were made. The surrounding terrain and the age and overall condition of the traces affect the Degree of Difficulty for this skill.

Attribute Modifier: PER

TRAPS

Ability to design, build and set traps. The difficulty rating of the trap is usually equal to its maker's skill level. Traps is also described under Wilderness Skills.

Attribute Modifier: PER



MAGICAL SKILLS

ALCHEMY

Alchemy is the Talislantan equivalent of chemistry. Though based on metaphysical principles, this skill is not a magical field of study like spellcasting or enchanting. That is, while alchemical creations often have magical effects, they are not enchanted, and do not count against the seven-item limit for enchanted items. An important precept of Talislantan alchemy is that the characteristics of living creatures and inanimate substances can, in some sense, be distilled from their physical components.

Basic knowledge of alchemical lore and practices includes the ability to read alchemical ciphers, prepare and preserve ingredients, identify mixtures by test, and utilize alchemical apparatus. Alchemists can also concoct, forge, or otherwise create the categories of substances listed below.

- ◆ Alchemical Materials ◆ Elixirs
- ◆ Explosives ◆ Poisons
- ◆ Powders
- ◆ Narcotics & Medicinal Mixtures

An Alchemist character must possess the relevant Quirk to create the above substances.

Specific substances are described in detail in the *Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta*, including Degree of Difficulty, ingredients, creation time, cost of materials, and typical selling price. The Quirks required to create alchemical substances are detailed fully later in this chapter.

When creating an alchemical substance, a failure means that the ingredients are lost and the alchemist must start again from scratch; a partial success means that the alchemist has failed, but can continue to work on the creation without new ingredients; and a success or critical success means that the process works as planned. An alchemist can work on more than one project at a time, but if so, she takes a -5 penalty on each roll for each extra project (the standard multiple action penalty).

Training Period: 100 weeks

Attribute Modifier: INT



BOTANOMANCY

This skill is the Talislantan equivalent of botany. Perfected by the Green Aeriad of Vardune, Botanomancy consists of several related talents that are derived from the botanomancer's training, study of the plant kingdom, and intuition.

At its basest level, Botanomancers are able to identify and locate specific flora in the wild, nurture and grow plants from seeds or cuttings and diagnose and treat damage to plants from drought, cold neglect and so forth. Botanomancers may protect plants from threats such as extreme weather conditions, insects pests, parasitic organisms, molds, and other natural or magical phenomena.

Using the Botanomancy skill, a botanomancer can use herbs and plant products to create *medicinal mixtures*, *narcotics*, and plants-based *poisons* as an alchemist of the same skill level (*with the relevant Quirks*). Also, as alchemists experiment and concoct new elixirs and powders, so too do Botanomancers experi-

ment with botanomantic hybridization and the Botanomancy skill may be used in creating a new forms of flora by combining two or more existing species.

Some of the more advanced uses of the skill include the ability to cause living plants to reshape themselves to any desired form (*see the Shape plant Quirk*) and a limited ability to communicate in the secret language of plants (*see the Speak with Plants Quirk*).

Training Period: 100 weeks

Attribute Modifier: INT

MODES

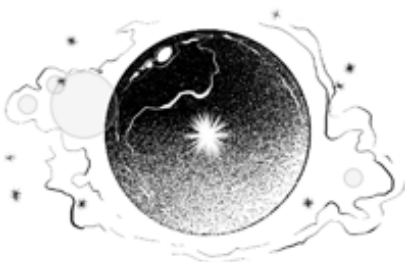
Modes are the skills used to govern a general type of spell-effect, such as Illusion, Conjunction, etc. There are nine different Modes that together describe all the powers and abilities of modern magicians, (described in detail in Chapter Two). The nine Modes are:

<i>Attack</i>	<i>Conjunction</i>	<i>Divination</i>
<i>Enchantment</i>	<i>Illusion</i>	<i>Influence</i>
<i>Move</i>	<i>Transmutation</i>	<i>Ward</i>

Each Mode is treated as a separate skill for each order the character knows. In other words characters with multiple Orders will also need to track multiple versions of the same Mode, one for each Order known.

Training Period: 20 weeks

Attribute Modifier: MR



TALISMANCY

This is the art of making simple charms, which some say is based on a primitive form of Enchantment. Talismancers are skilled at the design and manufacture of the talismans and tokens common to their people to help ward against evil and danger.

Talismans are small tokens that provide a minor effect for a limited amount of time and then become inert. Some talismans mimic very low-powered spells, while others provide small bonuses to specific actions. Talismans look just like everyday objects, so physical inspection does not reveal the power held in such items. A talisman may appear to be a sprig of d'oko, a smooth river stone, or any other mundane object. In fact, the best talisman weavers select objects so ordinary that no one would even look twice at them, much less consider them sources of power.

Some few skilled Talismancers are able to craft talismans that have permanent effects. True talismans are an exception to the above rule that such items only provide benefits for a limited time. They grant specific benefits to their bearers and some are quite potent. Anyone with knowledge of ancient rituals and a close connection with natural energies can create a talisman. It does not require any spellcasting ability or knowledge of arcane magical formulas, nor does it require expensive components or the expenditure of one's personal energy. There are, however, prerequisite levels of knowledge of the ways of magic and nature.

All talismans other than true talismans are single-use items, meaning that after they have been used they hold no further power. A true talisman's ability is always active. Activating a talisman can take the form of anything from snapping a twig of d'oko to rubbing a stone to crushing a flower. Talismans are often worn on necklaces or other jewelry to make them easily accessible to characters in need of their powers.

The four types of talismans are described below.

MINOR TALISMAN

Degree of Difficulty: -5

Example Benefits: +1 luck bonus to any single skill check Attribute check or Attack roll or a -1 penalty on a single attack roll against the wearer.

LESSER TALISMAN**Degree of Difficulty:** -10

Example Benefits: +1 luck bonus for one minute to any skill check, Attribute check or Attack roll or a -1 penalty on all attack rolls against the wearer for one minute.

GREATER TALISMAN**Degree of Difficulty:** -15

Example Benefits: +4 luck bonus to any single skill check, Attribute check or Attack roll or a +2 bonus to all skill checks, Attribute checks and Attack rolls for 1 minute or grants minor, specific protections.

TRUE TALISMAN**Degree of Difficulty:** -20

Example Benefits: +4 luck bonus to all resistance rolls against a specific danger (mind-affecting spells and effects, poison, disease, etc.), immunity to a specific type of disease or poison, grants major, specific protections. Any minor or lesser effect on a permanent basis.

Training Period: 40 weeks**Attribute Modifier:** MR**THAUMATURGY**

This field of study combines certain aspects of technomancy, alchemy, and enchantment; some scholars believe that the field is an offshoot of the lost art of sorcery. In the current age, the Dracartans of Carantheum and the Phantasians of Cabal Magicus are the only practitioners of thaumaturgy. Each is proficient only in their own limited areas of knowledge, the vast majority of thaumaturgic lore having been lost during The Great Disaster.

Thaumaturgy operates according to the principles of Talislantan metaphysics, which state that even the most fundamental or elusive substance has an essence that can be extracted and concentrated. Thaumaturges use a device called an essence accumulator to distill such essences from the surrounding environs. Like alchemical wares, essences are not “magical” and do not count against the seven-item limit for enchanted items.

Basic knowledge of thaumaturgy includes overall knowledge of the science, its history and function, the safe procedures for handling essences, the use of thaumaturgical tools such as the essence accumulator and caduceus and the distillation of Quintessence.

The ability to use an essence accumulator to collect and refine various substances requires the relevant Quirk (*see the various Distill Quirks*).

Phantasian thaumaturgy has declined to the point that the only substances their people are capable of creating is Dream Essence and certain types of Distillations.

Dracartan Thaumaturges are able to build or repair an essence accumulator, the device used to derive and distill essences. They are also skilled in the use of the thaumaturgic wand, or caduceus. This is a rod-shaped device made from a mixture of red iron powdered diamond, and quintessence (*see Equipment*). By adjusting two moveable metal bands the wand can be used to utilize the properties of quintessence (or to analyze materials and substances). Because they contain quintessence, these wands are charged with volatile forces and only a trained thaumaturge can safely utilize their properties. A caduceus is always carried in a special tube-like container in order to prevent accidental contact with elemental essences, which can have disastrous consequences.

Training Period: 100 weeks**Attribute Modifier:** INT

For more information on Thaumaturgical substances see the Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta.



SPECIAL ABILITIES

BEAST LORE

This skill is known only to the Jaka beastmasters. Individuals with this skill will be able to:

Communicate with animals: One species per skill rank.

Call animals: Ability to call animals of a chosen species. The animals must be within one mile per level of the beastmaster's ability. The combined levels of the creatures being called is applied as a penalty for Degree of Difficulty when attempting to use this ability. Note that the beastmaster must be able to communicate with the species in order to use this talent.

Command: Ability to influence animals. Only one command can be given per attempt. The beastmaster must be able to communicate with the species in order to use this talent. An animal that is by nature exceedingly hostile or aggressive may be allowed a chance to resist the Command using its WIL rating (GM's ruling).

Prerequisite: Jaka race only

Training Period: 40 weeks

Attribute Modifier: WIL

DISPEL MAGIC

Xambrians are the only non-spellcasters who are able to acquire this talent, which they learn from their ancestors. They can use this skill to negate spells and enchantments of any Mode or Order, a useful ability to have when working as a wizard hunter. However, Xambrians cannot use this talent in reverse to cast spells.

Prerequisite: Xambrian race only

Attribute Modifier: WIL

NATURAL TELEMPATHY

The Muses of Astar communicate through this ability. A Muse can use Telepathy to detect emotions or communicate as often as she wishes with up to one selected individual per skill level over a distance of 10 feet per level. Alternately, she may detect the presence of living beings or broadcast to everyone in range over a distance of 25 feet per level. Range can be extended for either manner of communication at a cost in technique and complexity of one level for every ten feet. Complexity refers to the number of senses involved in the communication and the specificity of the message. Technique refers to the aesthetic value of the message; Muses consider telepathy an art form, and they often give concerts. When trying to communicate with individuals unfamiliar with telepathy, Muses must make an Action Table roll; partial success means that part of the message is lost or unclear. A mishap confuses the target for one round per skill level (-3 on all actions).

Muses can attempt to influence the emotions of living beings; the WIL rating of such beings serves as the Degree of Difficulty. Muses can also attempt telepathic hallucination once per day per skill level, affecting one individual per attempt at a range of 10 feet per level. This form of mental attack, modified by the target's WIL rating, directly affects the victim's perception of reality. In game terms, the attack inflicts a penalty to all the victim's actions equal to the telepathy skill level. Duration is one round per level for partial success; one hour per level for full success; or permanent for critical success. Permanent effects can only be reversed by characters with a higher level of telepathy, requiring a critical success.

Prerequisite: Muse race only (or Dilute Telepathy Quirk)

Attribute Modifier: PER

QUIRKS

Quirks are personality traits, physical characteristics or other eccentricities of fate that differentiate characters of similar backgrounds, profession or station in society. Some Quirks are restricted to a single Race or Path (like Dual Encephalon for Sindarans) while others are open to all characters. Which Quirks a character is able to select is dependent upon their Race and Path selection. Many Quirks give the character situational bonuses or penalties while others allow the character to *bend* the rules of the game in some fashion.

ACQUIRING QUIRKS

Many races automatically receive one or more Quirks at character creation. These are Quirks that all members of the race possess like an Aeriad's stutter (Speech Impediment) or a Thrall's fearlessness (Immune to Fear).

In addition to racial Quirks, each Path has a list of available Quirks. Players may opt to exchange some of their allotted skill ranks to acquire any of these

Quirk. (*see Character Generation*)

Like Skills, Quirks can also be acquired through the expenditure of XP. Not all Quirks are available for acquisition beyond the Character Creation stage of the game however. Quirks like Attractive, High Born and Stench are all Quirks a character is born with. Others like the various fighting styles (Mandaquan, Tazian Combat, etc.) may be learned.

Learned Quirks that are among the available Quirks open to the character's Paths cost a number of XP equal to the Training Time to learn the Quirk and must be accompanied by an in game reason the Quirk is being learned. In other words, a character cannot simply learn a Quirk like Danuvian Riding, they must first seek out a master Danuvian rider, convince them to train the character and spend the time actually learning the style. The same process used to find an instructor to acquire a new Skill is also used in acquiring a new Quirk.

Learnable Quirks that are not among the available Quirks to the character's Paths cost 2 XP per week of training time required.

Once the necessary XP and time have been expended, the player may add the new Quirk on their character sheet.



POSITIVE QUIRKS

ACUTE SENSE

One of the character's senses is sharper than usual. Add 2 points to PER when making rolls using that sense only.

AERIAD PRECISION ARCHERY

Primarily practiced among the Blue Aeriad of Vardune, practitioners use the Tri-bow almost to the exclusion of all else, making the weapon a part of themselves. The archer can reload a tribow in a single round.

Prerequisite: Aeriad race only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

AERIAL COMBAT

This Quirk allows the character to fight while airborne without penalty, a skill learned by avian folk such as Gryphs, Blue Aeriad, and Stryx and those cutlures familiar with flying mounts. Characters using aerial combat may make charging attacks, adding their STR and SPD as modifiers to Damage Rating. They may, alternatively, make diving attacks, allowing them to make one attack and one evade maneuver in the same round, without penalty.

Training Period: 40 weeks (half for Avian races)

ALCOHOL TOLERANCE

The character receives a +2 bonus to CON for the purposes of resisting the effects of alcohol.

Training Period: 20 weeks

AMBIDEXTROUS

The character can use either hand with equal proficiency and does not suffer a penalty for attempting anything with her off-hand. This does not mean she can fight with two weapons without penalty.

Training Period: 40 weeks

AMPHIBIOUS / SEMI-AQUATIC

The character may live both on land and in the water and may breath freely underwater for up to 24 hours. Amphibious characters will suffer a cumulative -1 penalty to all Action Table rolls for every 2 days they are unable to submerge themselves in water for at least an hour.

Restrictions: Imrian, Moorg Wan, Sunra and Sun Ra San only.

Training Period: 20 weeks

ANIMAL EMPATHY

The character receives a +2 bonus to CHA when making reaction rolls involving animals. This Quirk only affects those creatures with an INT between -11 and -6.

ARIMITE KNIFE-FIGHTING

Proficiency in the Arimite style of combat, using one or more throwing knives. This Quirk allows the character to make two ranged attacks with throwing knives per round without suffering a multiple action penalty. In addition, a result of a Partial Success is all that is required to succeed on an Aimed Shot stunt (see page 56 - *Aimed Shots*)

Restrictions: Arimite race only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

ATTRACTIVE

The character is a good-looking member of his race. They receive a +1 bonus to CHA when making a good first impression on those likely to find the character attractive, and a +1 bonus to any attempts to charm or seduce such individuals.

BATTLE MAGIC

Trained and practiced all throughout Cymril and sometimes in Zandu, Battlemagic is usually learned at a young age and only improved upon with age and practice in combat and magic. This Quirk allows the caster to take defensive actions while trying to cast spells while in combat without suffering a multiple action penalty or affecting their spell casting.

Restrictions: Cymrilian or Zandir races only. (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

BEGUILE BY SCENT

The female character was born of the union between a Batrean female and a male of another race, and she possesses some her mother's ability to beguile by scent. The character receives a +2 bonus to all reaction rolls with those of those of the opposite sex.

Restrictions: Female characters only.

BENEFACTOR

A powerful individual or notable organization has taken an interest in the character's continued well-being for some reason, and the benefactor often provides the character with aid, be it the provision of information, equipment, rescue, or monetary funds. The character may not necessarily know who her benefactor is.

BLIND FIGHTING

This rare skill enables a character to fight effectively in reduced visibility conditions, including complete darkness. All penalties to Attack or Defend from visibility are effectively nullified. Training in this skill is a lengthy process, and practitioners of this Talent are exceptionally rare, save among certain masters of Mandaquan.

Training Period: 40 weeks

CHARIOTEER

Popular among the Rajan tribes and the Crimson Legions of the Quan Empire the heavy war chariot can be a devastating weapon when under the command of a skilled charioteer. Charioteers are adept at steering their conveyance while engaged in combat, and add +2 to hit and damage while riding in a chariot.

Restrictions: Kang or Rajan race only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

COMMANDING VOICE

The character's voice is powerful and authoritative. The character receives a +2 bonus to CHA or Command when making vocal attempts to command or inspire others.

COMMUNE WITH NATURE

The mystical Ariane possess this ability, which allows them to converse with all things in nature, including creatures, plants, and even stones, within a 10 foot radius. Things they speak to will generally talk about things important to them; creatures will explain how hungry they are; plants will talk about sunlight, and their favorite nutrients; stones aren't terribly interesting to talk to at all. To successfully use this Quirk, the character must first make a successful Meditation roll.

Restrictions: Ariane characters only

CONCOCT EXPLOSIVES

This Quirk allows a character with the Alchemy skill to use that skill to craft various explosive substances. Using Alchemy for this purpose could have dire consequences in the event of a failure or Mishap on the Action table roll.

Restrictions: Alchemy +10

Training Period: 30 weeks

CONCOCT POWDERS

This Quirk allows a character with the Alchemy skill to use that skill to create alchemical powders and similar substances.

Training Period: 20 weeks

CRAFT ALCHEMICAL MATERIALS

Character with this Quirk may use their Alchemy skill to create various types of alchemical substances such as alcahest, alchemical solvents, vitriol, amberglass and even substances such as adamant.

Training Period: 20 weeks

DERIVE DISTILLATION

Character with this Quirk and the Thaumaturgy skill can use that skill to distill various distillations using an essence accumulator. Distillations are thaumaturgically concentrated essences of otherwise elusive substances such as colors, scents, tastes and even sentiments. These exoticwares were once popular during the Archaen Age, and were used to enhance the ambience of gardens, pleasuredomes and so forth.

Training Period: 20 weeks

DERIVE DREAM ESSENCE

With this Quirk, a character with the Thaumaturgy skill may use an essence accumulator to distill dream essence. (*more information on Dream Essences can be found in the Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta.*)

Restrictions: Phantasian Race only

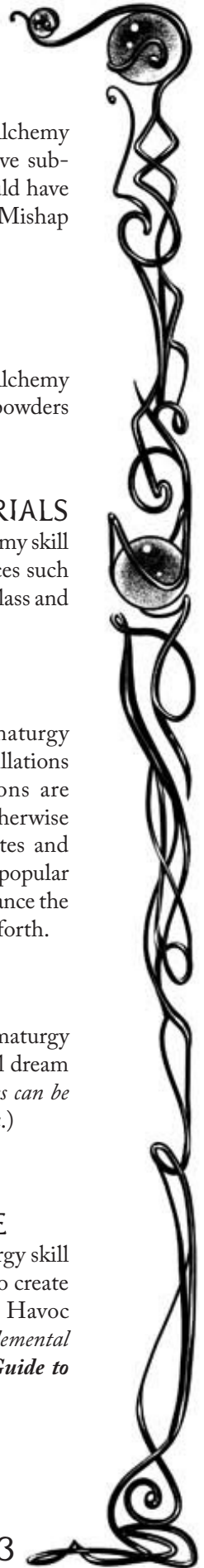
Training Period: 20 weeks

DERIVE ELEMENTAL ESSENCE

Character with this Quirk and the Thaumaturgy skill can use that skill and an essence accumulator to create elemental essences like Red menace, Blue Havoc and Storm Crystals. (*more information on Elemental Essences can be found in the Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta.*)

Restrictions: Dracartan Race only

Training Period: 20 weeks



DANUVIAN RIDING

This style of mounted combat was developed and perfected by the warrior-women of Danuvia. Danuvian riding involves great flourishes of the most favored of Danuvian weapons: the klaive. As the rider charges a group of opponents, she swings her klaive in wide arcs, able to attack two adjacent opponents in a round with no multiple action penalty.

Restrictions: Danuvian race only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

DILUTE TELEMPATHY

The character has Muse in his family; either a parent or grand-parent and has inherited dilute telempathy. He has the Natural Telempathy Special Ability possessed by her Muse relative, with a Skill Level of +1 and half the usual effective range. This diluted form of Telempathy is restricted to detecting strong emotions and living beings within a range of 20 feet.

DISEASE IMMUNITY

The character is resistant to one specific disease, such as Gange or Spinning Sickness. The character receives a +2 bonus to CON for all rolls to resist that disease.

DISTILL ELIXIRS

This Quirk allows a character to use their Alchemy skill (or Botanomancy or Herb Lore skill for plant-based elixirs only) to create various types of elixirs, potions and medicinal mixtures.

Training Period: 20 weeks

DISTILL POISON

With this Quirk a character may use their Alchemy skill (or Botanomancy or Herb Lore skill for plant-based poisons only) to create various types of poisons.

Training Period: 20 weeks

DHUNA KISS

Dhuna witchwomen can capture a man's heart with a single kiss; victims must make a WIL roll (with the Dhuna's CHA as a negative modifier) or fall under her charms. Once charmed, the victim may make another WIL roll at a cumulative -1 penalty once per day to escape. If the victim succeeds in breaking the spell, he gets a +3 to resist all future attempts by the Dhuna to recapture him.

Restrictions: Female Dhuna characters only.

DUAL—ENCEPHALON

The Sindaran are dual-encephalons who possess the ability to use both sides of their brains independently and can concentrate on two different subjects at the same time. They are ambidextrous and can avert the need for sleep by resting one brain at a time. When one brain is resting, subtract four from the Sindaran's effective INT Rating. Dual-encephalons are allowed two chances to resist any spell or substance that affects thought, brain function, or emotions.

Restrictions: Sindaran characters only.

EYE FOR MAGIC

Because of their heritage, some characters are able to detect magic by sight at a range of five feet. A successful PER roll is required to detect magic.

Restrictions: Relevant races only.

FAME

The character has achieved a measure of fame. The majority of individuals are far more willing to aid, employ, trust, or associate with famous characters. Famous characters may find it difficult to avoid attention, favorable or otherwise. Famous characters receive a +2 bonus on most reaction rolls (GMs discretion).

FAMILIAR

The character starts with a personal, magical servitor. The character may choose from the following: monitor imp, minor elemental, or sardonicus. The entity starts at its lowest possible Ability Level.

Training Period: 30 weeks

FEARLESS

Although not immune to fear like a Thrall is, the character is very stout-hearted. Add a +2 bonus to WIL when resisting the effects of fear, magical or otherwise.

GLIDE

When the Aeriad aren't wearing their levitation bracers, their small wings only allow them to glide. When gliding, they can't gain altitude but can travel at SPD +4 for a total of 5 rounds before needing to land. Aeriad characters also never suffer falling damage if they are able to use their glide ability.

Restrictions: Aeriad characters only.

GOOD BALANCE

The character has an excellent sense of balance. They receive a +2 bonus to DEX when making any roll to remain standing.

HIGHBORN

The character is a member of an influential or powerful family or lineage, specific to a single area. She can command respect and wield influence when her standing is known. Being Highborn does not guarantee wealth; some Highborn families and individuals are actually poor. Highborn characters receive a +1 bonus on all reaction rolls.

HOBBY

The character may select one of the following skills and add it to their preferred skills list. When this Quirk is selected the character starts with the skill at rank +1. Available skills include: *Cook, Fashion, Swim, Language (select one), Art, Dance, Music, Astrology, Cultures (select one), History, Meditation, Naturalism, Gambling, Agriculture, Artificer or Brewer/Vintner.*

Training Period: 10 weeks

IMMUNE TO COLD

The character is completely unaffected by cold, and may operate for extended periods in sub-zero temperatures. This does not provide any special DR from cold based attacks however. This Quirk diminishes whenever the character spends more than 3 weeks in temperate or warmer climes.

Restrictions: Mirin and Rasmirin characters only.

IMMUNE TO FEAR

Thralls are veritable rocks; calm and collected in the face of danger, sometimes to the point of foolishness. The character need never roll against the effects of fear.

Restrictions: Thrall characters only.

KANQUAN

Proficiency in the vicious Kang style of weaponless combat. All Kang are taught this ability from their first days of sentience. Basic moves include claw strikes, snap kicks, double leaping-kick (employed versus two opponents at close range, with no penalty for two attacks), head-butt, throw, and various disabling blows. Kanquan emphasizes offense and attack at the expense of defense, achieving lethal results. A Kanquan stylist inflicts a Damage Rating of 4 while unarmed (+STR). Targets struck with a suc-

cessful Kanquan attack must make a CON roll (minus the attacker's STR) or be stunned for 3 rounds. Stunned characters act with a -3 penalty to all skill rolls. While utilizing Kanquan, characters receive a +2 modifier to all attacks; however, they receive a -2 modifier to all defensive maneuvers. Kanquan uses the Brawling skill.

Restrictions: Kang race only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

LIGHT SLEEPER

The character awakens with even the slightest disturbance. The character receives a +2 bonus to PER when making rolls to see if she notices anything in her sleep, and awakens as a result.

LITERATE

The character can read and write all of the languages in which she has at least a Fluent level.

Training Period: 20 weeks

MANDAQUAN

Proficiency in the Mandalan art of weaponless, defensive combat. The basic principle of Mandaquan is passive resistance—in effect turning an opponent's offensive energy back upon him and avoiding harm by dodging or eluding attacks. Mandaquan cannot be used offensively. Mandaquan uses the Evade skills and successful use of Mandaquan allows the stylist to avoid an attack while disarming, throwing, or grappling the attacker. Those with the Mandaquan Quirk may also substitute their Evade rating for STR while in grappling combat. Mandaquan always inflicts Subdual Damage, rather than normal, lethal damage. Mandaquan uses the Brawling skill.

Prerequisite: Mandalan race only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

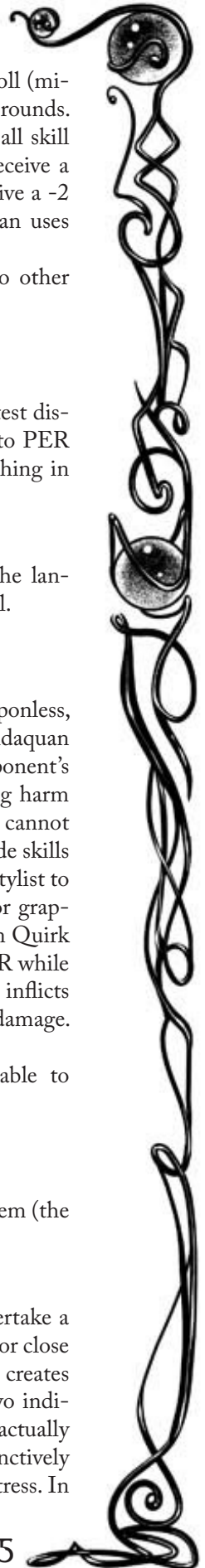
Training Period: 20 weeks

MAGICAL ITEM

The character starts with a single magical item (the type is at the GM's discretion)

MELDING

It is the custom among the Mirin to undertake a ritual "bonding of spirits" with a chosen mate or close friend. The procedure, known as "melding", creates a type of innate psychic link between the two individuals. While melded individuals cannot actually communicate via this ability, each will instinctively know if the other is in danger or in great distress. In



addition, when the two are near one another (close enough to interact) and in combat, each receives +1 to all rolls as the two seem to compliment each other's movements, almost as if they are in continual, silent communication.

Restrictions: Mirin characters only.

MIGHTY BLOWS

Specialization in fighting with large weapons, this fighting style is practiced across Talislanta, from Harak to Taz. It focuses on heavy, cleaving attacks at the expense of finesse. The warrior using this style suffer a -2 penalty to defense but automatically knock their opponent to the ground on a successful Attack roll.

Prerequisite: STR +3

Training Period: 20 weeks

MIND SHIELD

The character is completely immune to spells of the Influence Mode.

Restrictions: Ariane characters only.

MIRIN FORMATION FIGHTING

For each ally (who also possesses this Quirk) adjacent to you, opponents receive a -1 to hit you due to your overlapping defensive style. Example: If you have three allies (all possessing this Quirk) in formation with you, opponents have -3 to hit you.

Restrictions: Mirin characters only. (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

MOUNTED COMBAT

Ability to fight from the back of a steed or mount without penalty. Mounted Combat enables a character to direct a mount to take action in combat without incurring a multiple action penalty to the character's own actions. Steeds can be directed to move at their normal SPD or to attack or evade attacks at their Ability Level. Characters can, alternatively, engage in a charging attack, adding the mount's STR and SPD as damage modifiers in place of the character's own STR.

Prerequisite: Ride skill at +4 or higher.

Training Period: 20 weeks

MULTIPLE LIMBS

The character has more than the standard two arms or legs. Characters with more than 2 arms receive one extra attack or parry per round without incurring a multiple action penalty. Characters with more than two legs receive a +5 bonus to resist being tripped

forced back or otherwise knocked off balance. Multiple legged characters also may also quadruple their normal encumbrance allowance.

Restrictions: Characters with more than two arms or legs only.

NARCOTIC TOLERANCE

The character receives a +2 bonus to WIL for the purposes of resisting the negative effects of narcotics.

NATURAL CLIMBER

Characters with this Quirk receive a +2 bonus on any Climb roll. For some characters, this is due to their claws, for others, it's due to their small size and weight while for tohers it may be experinec or training.

Training Period: 20 weeks

NIGHT VISION

The ability to see clearly in the dark is a natural ability of certain Talislantan races, such as Gnomekin and Vajra. Characters with Night Vision take no penalties to PER from non-magical darkness.

NIMBLE FINGERS

The character has an exceptional manual dexterity and receives a +2 bonus to DEX as it pertains to manual manipulation of objects (such as technomancy, picking pockets, or playing musical instruments.)

NO STUTTER

The character's vocal capabilities are more evolved than most Aeriad, enabling him to speak Talislan without stuttering.

Restrictions: Aeriad characters only.

Training Period: 40 weeks

ORDER: ASTROMANCY

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Astromancy Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: CARTOMANCY

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Cartomancy Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Restrictions: Rahastran race only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: CRYPTOMANCY

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Cryptomancy Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: CRYSTALOMANCY

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Crystalomancy Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Restrictions: Gnomekin race only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: ELEMENTAL MAGIC

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Elementalism Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: INVOCATION

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Invocation Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: MYSTICISM

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Mysticism Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: NATURAL MAGIC

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Natural Magic Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: NECROMANCY

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Necromancy Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: SHAMANISM

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Shamanism Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Restrictions: Character must have Tribal or Nomad Background Path

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: WITCHCRAFT

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Witchcraft Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Training Period: 50 weeks

ORDER: WIZARDRY

The character has studied the mysteries and methods of the Wizardry Order and may cast spells from this Order.

Training Period: 50 weeks

PET

The character has a loyal and devoted pet. She may choose from the following: Catdrac, Death's Head Viper, Feather Dractyl, Gruffan, L'latha, Quaal, Rayk, Rictus, Smokk, Sniper Bug, Tarkus, or Nighthawk.

PAIN TOLERANCE

The character can resist pain better than most. The character receives a +2 bonus to WIL when resisting pain and torture.

Training Period: 40 weeks

POISON IMMUNITY

The character has acquired limited immunity to a single toxin, such as venomwood resin or Rajan scorpion venom. They receive a +2 bonus to CON for all rolls to resist that poison, and treat doses of that toxin as only being half as effective.

Training Period: 40 weeks

QUICK REFLEXES

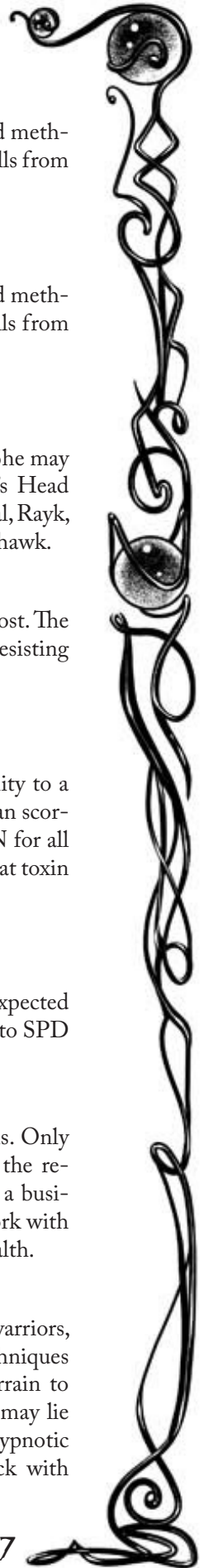
The character reacts to stimuli and unexpected situations far more quickly than usual. Add 1 to SPD when calculating reactions and Initiative.

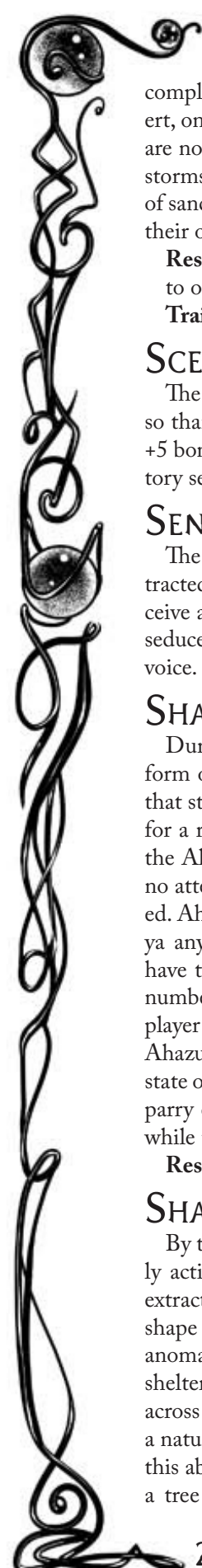
RICH

The character receives 10,000 gold lumens. Only 2500 of this wealth is in the form of coin, the remainder consisting of investments, property, a business venture or the like. The player should work with the GM to determine the exact source of wealth.

SANDFIGHTING

A style of combat taught to elite Rajan warriors, sandfighting is a combination of stealth techniques and an understanding of how to use the terrain to the best advantage. Those with this training may lie in the sand, motionless for hours in a semi-hypnotic state, and erupt from the ground and attack with





complete surprise (+8 to Stealth checks in the desert, only when motionless.) In addition, sandfighters are not impaired by the reduced visibility from sandstorms, and in fact will often kick up a whirling spray of sand around themselves while in combat, to reduce their opponent's ability to see (-2 to all rolls).

Restrictions: Rajan (or allied) race only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 40 weeks

SCENT

The character has a superior sense of smell (more so than even the Acute Sense Quirk). They receive a +5 bonus to Action Table rolls that involve the olfactory sense (PER rolls, Tracking by scent, etc.)

SENSUAL VOICE

The character has a sexy voice, affecting those attracted to the character's race and gender. They receive a +1 bonus to CHA on attempts to charm and seduce those who might be affected by the character's voice.

SHAN-YA (BATTLE MADNESS)

During combat, Ahazu occasionally succumb to a form of madness, which they refer to as shan-ya. In that state of frenzy, they will attack everyone in sight for a random period of time. This state is viewed by the Ahazu as a blessing of their god, and they make no attempt to restrain an individual who is so affected. Ahazu characters have a 1-in-20 chance of shan-ya any time they go into combat. To simulate this have the person playing the Ahazu character pick a number between one and twenty. Should the Ahazu-player roll that number in any combat situation, the Ahazu goes into shan-ya for 1-10 rounds. Ahazu in a state of shan-ya attack at a bonus of +5, but will never parry or take evasive or defensive action of any sort while the battle madness is upon them.

Restrictions: Ahazu characters only.

SHAPE PLANT

By touching special pressure points, pouring swiftly acting additives on the soil, and applying herbal extracts directly to the plant, botanomancers can reshape plants to any reasonable form. Using the Botanomancy skill, characters can transform a tree into a sheltering hut or a cluster of sturdy vines into a bridge across a nearby chasm. However, the plant remains a natural plant of its type; botanomancers cannot use this ability to alter a plant's size or substance. When a tree is made into a hut, it bends over, forms its

branches into a shelter, and tightly overlaps its leaves to keep out rain. However, it remains a tree. Similarly, when vines are made into a bridge, they remain a group of interwoven living vines. The degree of difficulty of manipulating flexible plants like vines or ferns is Routine (+0), while the degree of difficulty of controlling woody plants like trees is Tricky (-3). In all cases, the botanomancer must touch the plant to affect it and the transformation takes between 15 and 30 minutes – the more complex the transformation and the less flexible the plant, the longer the transformation takes. Normally, these transformations are temporary and last between one hour and one day; the exact duration is based upon the botanomancer's wishes. Alternately, the botanomancer can make this transformation permanent; doing so adds +5 to the difficulty of the roll and requires the botanomancer to spend at least eight hours working with the plant. Although *shape plants* can be used to create elaborate snares and traps, it cannot be used as a direct attack, since the plants move far too slowly to be a danger to anyone. This Quirk requires the botanomancer to touch the plant, and can only affect a single large plant or a group of closely growing smaller plants (like a small grove of reeds) at a time.

SHARP TONGUE

The character has a quick mind and excellent understanding of their native language and may use witty repartee during combat to their advantage. The character may attempt to stun, shock or taunt an opponent during combat. Victims must make a successful WIL roll with the character's CHA score as a negative modifier or suffers a -2 penalty to all actions during the next round. This action does not count as a multiple action (talking is essentially a free action). For this Quirk to function, the victim of the Sharp Tongue must fully understand the native language of the sharpened tongue character.

SINGLE MINDED

The character has the ability to ignore most distractions. Halve any penalties the character might suffer due to distractions.

SIXTH SENSE

The ability to sense danger, or even potential danger, is an ability possessed by members of the race of Jaka. The type, location, or degree of danger cannot be apprehended by the use of Sixth Sense. A Jaka receives a -1 penalty to the Action Table roll for ev-

ery foot of distance from the source of the danger. The Sixth Sense reacts strongly to magic, increasing a Jaka's already strong sense of suspicion to a point of paranoia; without their talismans, Jaka react to magic with INT -4. A failure or mishap on this reaction roll means the Jaka is uncomfortable to the point of flight or violence.

Restrictions: Jaka characters only.

SLIPPERY

The character is particularly talented at wriggling out of tight situations. The character may substitute DEX for STR when attempting to break a grappling hold.

Training Period: 20 weeks

SOFT LANDING

The character may fall up to 30 feet and always lands on their feet unharmed. On falls greater than 30 feet, they may make a DEX roll with a full success indicating the character suffers only half damage.

Restrictions: Jaka characters only.

SPEAK WITH PLANTS

Skilled Botanomancers are taught to feel the subtle reactions that plants have to all forms of contact while some races (like the Green Men of the Dark Coast) have this ability innately. By carefully touching and examining a plant, the character can initiate limited degree of communication with it. In addition to this communication being rather inexact, plants only know what their limited senses can perceive. A plant could easily tell the botanomancer about soil conditions or about how long ago and how hard the last rain was. However, asking a tree about a broken or cut branch typically reveals little more than that the branch was broken four days ago, in the morning, by three blows from a hard, sharp object like a sword or ax. Thos with this Quirk can communicate freely with all intelligent or semi-intelligent plants.

Restrictions: Botanomancy +6

Training Period: 20 weeks

SPECIALIST

The character is a specialist in a particular aspect of one skill. The player should select one of the following skills and state their character's specialty in that skill: Administrator, Agriculture, Appraiser, Art, Artificer, Artisan, History, Music. All Action Table rolls with this skill that involve the specialty receive a +4 bonus.

Training Period: 20 weeks

SPIRITFORCE

Only Xambrians have this Quirk, which manifests only when a wizard hunter has been possessed by his ancestral spirits after receiving "*the Calling*" — a spiritual summons to help locate and bring to justice the reincarnated form of one of their ancient enemies, the Torquarans. This type of possession, known as Spiritforce, bestows the following capabilities and corresponding disadvantages:

⚙ **Increased WIL:** the Xambrian's WIL rating increases by +1 per each ancestral spirit that possesses him. The maximum increase is determined by the ancestors' estimation of the reincarnator's abilities, which may or may not always be accurate (in game terms, the GM's decides how many spirits will possess a Xambrian character on a given spiritquest).

Disadvantage: the Xambrian hears the spirits' voices in his head, making it difficult for him to concentrate on anything but the spiritquest (-1 penalty to INT rolls per level of the Spiritforce ability).

⚙ **Increased PER:** like Increased WIL, though this increases the Xambrian's PER rating, allowing him to detect the presence of magic, extra-dimensional entities, or danger at a (roll vs PER, range 10 feet).

Disadvantage: the Xambrian's heightened senses cause him to experience feelings of intense paranoia on any PER roll that results in a critical success (-3 penalty to all actions for 3 rounds).

⚙ **Increased CON:** like Increased WIL or PER, but this increases the Xambrian's CON rating, allowing him to put off the need for sleep, rest, or sustenance while on a spiritquest and increases his Hit Point total by +2 per point of Spiritforce.

Disadvantage: following the conclusion of a spiritquest, the Xambrian will be incapacitated by weakness for a number of days equal to the level of the Spiritforce that possessed him.

⚙ **Increased Damage:** when used against reincarnators or other extra-planar entities, the Xambrian's spiritblade does an additional amount of damage equal to the Level of the Spiritforce.

Disadvantage: when charged with Spiritforce, the spiritblade radiates a powerful aura that cre-

ates a feeling of nameless dread and distrust in other humanoid beings (-1 reduction in the Xambrian's CHA rating per level of the Spiritforce)

Note that abilities and disadvantages acquired through Spiritforce last only as long as the Xambrian needs them to track down and bring to justice the reincarnator he was called to find. Once the spiritquest is completed, the additional abilities disappear until the next time the Xambrian receives "the Calling".

Restrictions: Xambiran characters only.

STEALTHY

The character naturally moves noiselessly. Individuals receive a +5 bonus to their Stealth skill if perfectly still, or +3 if moving.

Training Period: 20 weeks

STENCH

Ferrans possess a small gland at the base of their tail, which they can use to emit a terrible stinking cloud three times per day. The cloud has a 50 foot radius, and anyone inside must make a CON roll with a -5 penalty to resist or become nauseated for 3 rounds. Nauseated victims cannot take any actions for the duration of the effect.

Restrictions: Ferran characters only

STRONG WILLED

The character has an unusual amount of mental toughness. They receive a +2 bonus to WIL when resisting mind-influencing magics, telempathy, and interrogation.

STUNNING

The character is a stunningly attractive member of his race. They receive a +2 bonus to CHA when making a good first impression on those likely to find the character attractive, and add 2 to any attempts to charm or seduce such individuals. Note that what is considered attractive for one race or culture may be viewed entirely differently in another.

SWIFT

The character is exceptionally fast. The character receives a +1 bonus SPD when calculating how fast she can run, swim, or fly.

TANTARA

A stylized form of combat usually performed at weddings and festivals among the Sarista of Silvanus, the Tantara involves dramatic flourishes with a sword,

elaborate footwork, and acrobatic leaps, all done in time with music. The Tantara is generally done only to disarm the other dancer, as it is considered a great insult and personal shame to injure your dance partner. The master of the Tantara may add his or her Dance skill to parry and disarm rolls, and may attempt Legerdemain rolls in combat at no additional penalty beyond the normal for multiple actions.

Restrictions: Sarista characters only. (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

TAZIAN COMBAT

Proficiency in the Thrall art of hand-to-hand combat, a complex mixture of fighting styles utilizing the garde, a type of parry/attack armor that extends from shoulder to wrist. Basic maneuvers include parries, attacks, and grappling, as well as the body slam. Tazian Combat uses the Brawling skill and successful attacks with the latter maneuver require a victim to succeed in a CON roll against the attacker's STR or be stunned, suffering a -3 penalty to all actions for three rounds. Characters using the body slam maneuver may not dodge or parry that round. Only characters skilled in Tazian Combat can use garde effectively as armor. It should be noted that Garde gives the character one free Parry attempt per round without suffering a multiple action penalty for the attempt. In addition, a successful parry roll with this skill, while wearing garde, disarms the attacker. Individuals with a STR rating lower than +3 and a body weight less than 150 pounds cannot acquire this Quirk. Tazian Combat uses the Brawling skill.

Restrictions: Thrall race only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

TERRAIN FAMILIARITY

The character is particularly adept at moving in one specific terrain type. The player should select one of the following terrain types: alpine, desert, forest, jungle, steppes, subterranean & swamp. The character may travel in the relevant terrain at one category better than the actual conditions. That is, Very Rugged terrain becomes Rugged; Rugged terrain becomes Open and Open terrain becomes Road. This Quirk only functions while on foot or mounted on an appropriate mount for the terrain type.

Training Period: 40 weeks

THICK SKIN

The character's skin is especially tough and thick and provides PR 1 protection against physical damage.

Restrictions: Non-Archaeon races only.

TIRELESS

The character may exert himself for protracted periods. They receive a +1 bonus to CON when making an Action Table roll to resist fatigue or exhaustion.

TOUGH

The character is unusually resistant to damage. Increase HP by five.

VIRAGO

Virago is a Danuvian fighting style that emphasizes the use of a sword (any large blade) and the Danuvian Parrying Bracers. In fact, elite Danuvian Swordswomen are known as Viragos. Whenever a Virago practitioner scores a critical hit in combat, they may immediately make a second Attack against the same target without any multiple action penalty. In addition, their training with the Danuvian Parrying Bracers grant them one free Parry per round without incurring a multiple action penalty for the attempt and they may attempt to Parry ranged attacks using the bracers with only half the normal penalty.

Restrictions: Danuvian characters only. (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

WEALTHY

The character receives 75,000 gold lumens. Only 7,500 of this wealth is in the form of coin, the remainder consisting of investments, property, business ventures or the like. The player should work with the GM to determine the exact source of wealth. As the existence of wealthy characters *could* destabilize a game, this Quirk should be considered optional by GMs.

WINDFALL

The character receives 500 gl; 100 in the form of coin with the remainder as equipment or other property.

ZANDIR SWORDSMANSHIP

This swashbuckling style of swordsmanship was first made popular by the ancient Phaedrans and later adopted by the Zandir and Gao. This Quirk places a premium on flamboyant attacks, flourishes, and acrobatic maneuvers, utilizing paired weapons such as a dueling sword and dagger. The master of Zandir Swordsmanship can perform two related actions in combat without incurring the multiple action penalty. Related actions include attacking and parrying, or attacking and performing an acrobatic move (swinging from a rope, leaping onto a table, etc.), or parrying and distracting an opponent with something thrown. Additional actions after the first incur the normal penalties.

Prerequisite: Zandir and Gao races only (available to other races only at GM's discretion)

Training Period: 20 weeks

NEGATIVE QUIRKS

ADDICTION

The character is addicted to some form of drug. Once per day the character must succeed on a WIL roll with a -3 penalty to resist their addiction. Failure results in a -1 cumulative penalty to DEX, STR, WIL and CHA until such time as the character indulges or overcomes their addiction (see *Medicines and Narcotics* in the *Talisanta Gamemasters Guide*).

ALBINO

The character has a complete lack of pigmentation, making bright light uncomfortable (subtract 1 from all their visual PER rolls under such light condi-

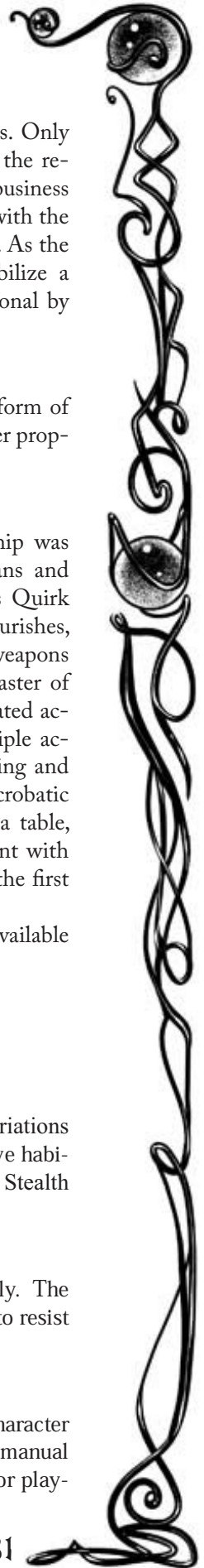
tions). Ahazu that take this Quirk lose their striations and the associated Stealth bonus in their native habitat, while Darklings with this Quirk lose their Stealth bonus in darkness.

ALCOHOL INTOLERANCE

The character gets drunk relatively easily. The character receives a -2 penalty to CON rolls to resist the effects of alcohol.

ALL THUMBS

The character has poor coordination. The character receives a -1 penalty DEX for purposes of manual tasks, such as picking pockets, engineering, or playing an instrument.



ANIMAL ANTIPATHY

The character receives a -2 penalty to CHA when determining how well animals react to him. This Benefit only affects those creatures with an INT between -11 and -6.

ANOSMIA

The character has no sense of smell or taste whatsoever. Jaka with this Quirk also lose their ability to track by smell, and Stryx with this Quirk lose their ability to detect carrion.

BLIND

The character cannot see at all. All actions involving vision are performed as if in total darkness (-10 action penalty), although the Blind Fighting skill can alleviate this penalty in some situations. PER rolls involving vision are impossible, as is ranged combat. Black Savants and Phantasians with this Quirk lose the ability to see invisible/astral presences and magic, respectively. Gnomekin and Darklings lose their ability to see in any form of darkness, Nagra lose their ability to spirit-track, Gryphs lose their superior vision, and those races with night vision lose that ability also. On the positive side, both Darklings and Gnomekin are no longer effected by bright light.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The character has a detailed and extensive code which dominates her behavior. The player must work with the GM to outline her character's particular code in detail and then adhere to it. Breaking the code for any but the most extreme of reasons means that the character receives no experience points for role playing that session.

*Example: Gao Sea Rogue Code of Honor
Never steal from another Gao; never harm innocent victims if you can avoid it, only steal from those who can afford it; your friend's foe is your own; always avenge an insult.*

COMPULSION

The character has an overpowering drive to do or take something as often as possible. She must make a WIL roll to avoid following her drive when the opportunity arises.

DEAF

The character cannot hear anything and must rely on Sign, Lip Reading, writing/reading, or some other means of communication. The character automatically fails any hearing-based PER rolls.

DECLAWED/DEFANGED

The character has lost the use of his natural weapons.

DEEP SLEEPER

The character is all but oblivious to the world when she is asleep. The character receives a -2 penalty PER when she must make a roll to notice something while asleep.

DEPENDENT

An individual relies on the character to look after him, occupying a great deal of the character's time and effort. Any Dependent should be created in cooperation with the GM.

DERANGEMENT

The character is insane in some way. This insanity cannot be suppressed and must be role played, as it dominates the way the character thinks and acts. Those aware of the character's insanity will often be ill-at-ease around him.

DESTITUTE

The character has no starting wealth and begins play with a RES -5 (possibly modified by other Quirks and subsequent Path selections). In addition, most of her Equipment is of poor quality.

DRIVING GOAL

The character is obsessed with achieving a particular goal; everything else is a distraction at best. The goal should be far-reaching and extremely difficult, if not high-impossible.

ENEMY

An individual or organization is actively hostile to the character. Enemies should be created in cooperation with the GM and at his full discretion.

FEAR

The character is afflicted with a mild phobia. The character suffers a -1 penalty on all her actions when faced with the subject of her phobia. The focus of the fear must be something the character has a reasonable chance of encountering, such as heights or darkness.

FLASHBACKS

In moments of great stress, the character has a 1-in-20 chance of suffering flashbacks to some traumatic event of her past, lasting 1-10 rounds. A WIL roll

may be made each round to escape the flashbacks. While experiencing flashbacks, the character is incapable of action.

FLIGHTLESS

Through some physical accident or birth defect, you are unable to fly.

FRAGILE

The character has a brittle and fragile physical structure, and takes double damage from attacks with blunt weapons.

FRAIL

The character is more susceptible to damage than most members of his race. Reduce HP by 3

INDEBTED

The character owes a powerful individual or organization something significant. The character begins play owing a contact 5d20gl.

INFAMY

The character has achieved a measure of infamy. The majority of individuals are far less willing to aid, employ, trust, or associate with infamous characters. Famous characters may find it difficult to avoid attention, favorable or otherwise. Infamous characters receive a -2 penalty on all reaction rolls with all but the seediest of contacts.

INSOMNIAC

The character has a hard time falling and staying asleep. The character requires and 10 full hours of sleep to recover from spell fatigue and to heal wounds (instead of the usual 7).

LIMP

The character's locomotion is impaired. The character receives a -2 penalty to SPD when calculating rate of movement.

MISSING HAND

The character has lost the use of one hand and cannot perform tasks requiring the simultaneous use of both hands. Many tasks normally requiring two hands can still be performed (subtract 1–5 points from DEX if appropriate and increase time required). If the character uses a prosthesis (typically a hook or similar primitive appendage), these penalties are reduced, when appropriate.

MUTE

The character is incapable of speech.

NIGHTMARES

The character suffers from night terrors whenever he sleeps. He cries out and struggles, disturbs others, often wakes feeling exhausted, and often tries to avoid sleep. The character regains only half their normal spellcasting ability and regains only half the normal number of Hit Points with 7 hours of sleep.

NOCTURNAL

The character's is accustomed to activity at night. The character suffers a -1 penalty to PER when in daylight.

OBEDIENT

The character is subservient to either a cause or organization and must obey the orders of officers or superiors (alternately, the character is a slave as is the case with most Ahazu PCs).

OBESE

The character is extremely overweight. Reduce SPD by 2 when calculating movement and halve her encumbrance limit. Finding new garments or armor that fits will be difficult and costly.

ONE EYE

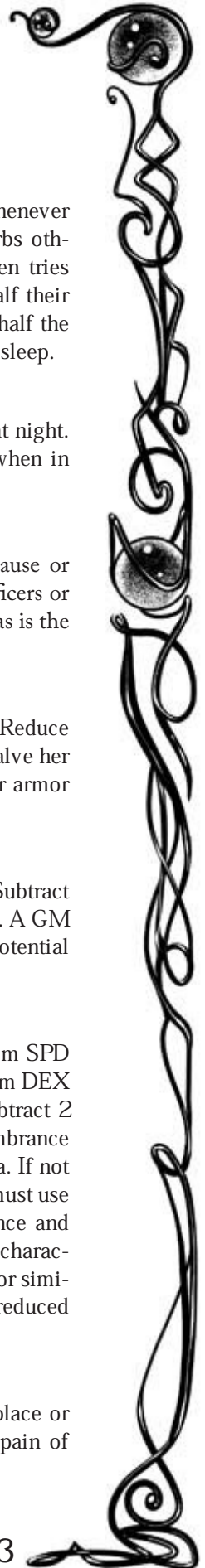
The character only has the use of one eye. Subtract 1 from PER when making vision-based rolls. A GM may also consider that the character has a potential blind side.

ONE LEG

The character has lost a leg. Subtract 3 from SPD for purposes of calculating movement and from DEX on any attempts to maintain balance, and subtract 2 from STR for purposes of calculating encumbrance and from CON for movement-related stamina. If not using some type of prosthesis, the character must use a cane, crutch, etc. for movement and balance and may not use that arm for other actions. If the character uses a prosthesis (typically a wooden peg or similar primitive appendage), these penalties are reduced by 1 point each.

OUTCAST

The character has been outcast from the place or group she called home, never to return on pain of death or imprisonment.



PHOBIA

The character is afraid of something, beyond any fear it might be expected to provoke. The character must make a WIL roll to even stay in the vicinity of whatever he is terrified of, let alone do anything nearby it, save panic. The focus of the phobia must be something the character has a reasonable chance of encountering, such as heights or darkness.

POOR

The character's begins play with only 1/4 of their normal starting allowance in gold lumens and the quality of their weapons and armor is poor as well (-1 to DR or PR)

POOR SENSE

One of the character's senses is less effective than usual. Subtract 1 from PER when making rolls using that sense only.

SLAVE MENTALITY

The character possesses no initiative of their own, and becomes confused and ineffectual without a "master" to give them orders. The character must make a successful WIL roll before taking any action that's not either obeying a direct order, or part of an established daily routine.

SPEECH IMPEDIMENT

The character has a pronounced stutter, lisp or stammer, when speaking and suffers a -1 penalty to reaction rolls when speaking is involved. (*an Aeriad's stutter for example*)

SUNBLIND

The character's eyes are extremely sensitive to the light of Talislanta's twin suns. The character suffers a -3 penalty to PER when in daylight.

THREATENING VOICE

The character's voice is unnerving. Individuals hearing the character talk will consider him eerie or threatening. Subtract 2 from the character's CHA for the purposes of vocal attempts to charm, impress, or seduce, but add 1 to his CHA for vocal attempts to intimidate.

UNATTRACTIVE

The character is less attractive than is normal for his race but is not truly ugly. Subtract 1 from CHA for the purposes of rolls to charm, seduce, or determine initial reaction of individuals likely to find the character unattractive.

UNLUCKY

The Marukan curse isn't a mere delusion, they actually suffer serious bad luck, which is alleviated to some degree by their luck talismans. When not wearing luck talismans, the character suffers a -2 penalty to all Action Table rolls.



MASTER SKILLS LIST

COMMON SKILLS

Climbing	DEX
Conveyance	DEX
Cook	PER
Fashion	CHA
Haggle	CHA
Ride (specific)	DEX
Signal	INT
Swim	STR

LANGUAGE SKILLS

High Talislan	INT
Low Talislan	INT
Archaeon	INT
Bodorian	INT
Chanan	INT
Elder Tongue	INT
Nomadic	INT
Northron	INT
Phaedran	INT
Quan	INT
Racial Tongues (specific)	INT
Rajanin	INT
Sarisa	INT
Sea Nomad	INT
Sign	INT
Thaecian	INT
Xambrian	INT

COMBAT SKILLS

Artillerist	RC
Assassinate	INT
Brawling	CR
Command	CHA
Evade	DEX
Guard	PER
Tactics (specific)	INT
Weapon	CR/RC

PERFORMING SKILLS

Acrobatics	DEX
Acting	CHA
Art	PER
Dance	DEX
Legerdemain	DEX
Mimicry	PER
Oratory	CHA
Song	CHA

SCHOLARLY SKILLS

Analysis	INT
Anatomy	INT
Antiquarian	INT
Arcane Lore	INT
Astrology	INT
Cartography	INT
Cultures (specific)	INT
Cryptography	INT
Doctrines (specific)	INT
Engineer	INT
Gamecraft	INT
Geography	INT
History	INT
Linguistics	INT
Litigator (specific)	INT
Meditation	WIL
Naturalism	INT

THIEVING SKILLS

Bribe	CHA
Coerce	STR
Deception	CHA
Disable Device	DEX
Espionage	PER
Forgery	DEX



Gambling	INT
Interrogate	INT
Legerdemain	DEX
Lip-Reading	PER
Sabotage	INT
Seduce	CHA
Stealth	DEX
Streetwise	INT
Torture	DEX
Traps	PER
Underworld	INT

TRADE SKILLS

Administrator	CHA
Agriculture	INT
Animal Handler	WIL
Appraiser	PER
Caravan Master	CHA
Fishing	INT
Handicraft (armorer)	DEX
Handicraft (artificer)	DEX
Handicraft (artisan)	DEX
Handicraft (weaponer)	DEX
Healer	ITN
Laborer	DEX
Livestock	INT
Merchant	CHA
Mining	INT
Pilot	PER
Salvager	PER

WILDERNESS SKILL

Guide	INT
Herb Lore	INT
Mimicry	PER
Scout	PER
Tracking	PER
Traps	PER
Survival (specific)	CON

MAGICAL SKILLS

Alchemy	INT
Botanomancy	INT
Mode (attack)	MR
Mode (conjunction)	MR
Mode (divination)	MR
Mode (enchantment)	MR
Mode (influence)	MR
Mode (illusion)	MR
Mode (move)	MR
Mode (transmutation)	MR
Mode (ward)	MR
Talismancy	MR
Technomancy ¹	DEX
Thamaturgy	INT

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Beast Lore	WIL
Dispel Magic	WIL
Influence Plants ¹	WIL
Natural Telepathy	PER
Rhabdomancy ¹	PER
Shapechange ¹	WIL

*1. These Special Abilities are detailed in the **Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta** and are used primarily by races described in that book.*

CHAPTER SIX

EQUIPMENT



The diverse inhabitants of Talislanta exhibit an uncanny aptitude with regard to the making of a wide variety of tools, implements, and mechanisms. This is particularly evident as pertains to the creation of devices intended to kill, maim, and mutilate, a talent for which the Talislantans display a practically limitless degree of creativity and invention.”

- Excerpted from the journals of the wizard Tamerlin

This chapter describes the most common pieces of equipment that characters may wish to purchase and use. Magical devices of various types, particularly the most minor sorts, are relatively common in Talislanta, as are products made of exceptional metals. As you will see, however, the large supply of these items does not mean that their prices are low. Beginning characters will have the basics of what they need, but to get those exceptional weapons, armor, and devices, they will have to save for a while.

Also bear in mind that items from all across Talislanta are described together in this chapter. In certain areas, however, the prices for some items are considerably higher than listed here, if they can be found at all. If your character is buying something unusual, check with your gamemaster first to be sure that it is available in your area of Talislanta, and what the price is there.

In addition to these lists, players and gamemasters alike will find additional equipment and enchanted items in the *Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta*.

MONEY & WEALTH

As in real life, characters in the game will need money to purchase food, clothing, equipment, and shelter. In Talislanta, the rate of exchange is based on the gold lumen, a coin equal in value to ten silver pieces or one hundred copper pieces. One silver piece is worth ten copper pieces. For game purposes, assume that twenty coins of any type weigh approximately one pound (see Chapter One for a list of Talislantan currencies).

The cost of living in Talislanta depends on a character's status and the lifestyle he or she wishes to enjoy. Use the *Incomes and Expenditures* chart on the following page as a guideline. Note that characters must pay to maintain their upkeep while training or otherwise taking time off from duties that earn them steady income.

Those characters who live below their means may save money, but they may also find that their status in the eyes of peers and potential employers may drop. In addition, living among those who are considerably poorer can put a character in dangerous circumstances, as envy and greed have been known to overcome neighborliness on more than a few occasions.

Note that the incomes listed in the chart must be continuous in order to allow a character to attain the niceties that go along with them. Spending 300 g.l. a week for two weeks does not allow a character to move to a better part of town, hire guards and servants, and get a new, stylish wardrobe.

As a rule of thumb, assume a character must spend 100 times the normal weekly expense in order to *move up* to that level of income. Once the character has made this transition, he or she must then make the necessary expenditure regularly in order to cover such expenses as taxes, rent, fees, and pay for servants. For example, someone who wants to be “beyond considerations of cash” would have to spend 30,000 g.l. setting up his or her place and then 300 g.l. per week from then on.

In civilized areas, a character can often invest capital and receive interest from those who borrow it, provided he or she has a considerable sum, such as 10,000 g.l. Generally speaking, a character can earn 10% annual interest, though the chance of loss is always present. That means that 50,000 g.l. invested one time could produce a very comfortable but not truly wealthy income, a little over 100 g.l. per week. The dependability of these investments is strictly up to the GM.

INCOMES AND EXPENDITURES

Expenditure	Lifestyle Notes
1 g.l./week	Dirt poor and miserable. A shameful number of laborers and servants live at this level even in prosperous nations such as the Seven Kingdoms, but the upper classes try not to let this fact preoccupy their minds.
3 g.l./week	A comfortable life with some amenities. Unexceptional craftspeople and clerks or scribes can hope to maintain this type of lifestyle. To these people, the luxuries that make Cymril famous are unattainable. Any valuable jewelry or magic devices that these people have are most likely heirlooms.
10 g.l./week	Very comfortable, with free funds for inexpensive amusements, travel, and so forth. Skilled crafters and retailers often attain this level of wealth, as do petty dealers in illicit substances and specialist scribes. Successful adventurers usually live at least at this level, though many of them earn much more than they spend, since they often stockpile money for an early retirement or save to get the best armaments. Adventurers who live below this level find their persons frequently subject to the attentions of the unscrupulous and the greedy. Keep in mind that a longsword can be sold to a fence for what amounts to several weeks' wages for a laborer.
30 g.l./week	Luxurious, but not extravagant. All material needs are seen to admirably with some expensive foods and amusements available. Natu rally, a residence in a safe neighborhood and a variety of efficient locks come along with this level of luxury. Even a mediocre wizard or alchemist should be able to attain this level of living, along with administrators, skilled silversmiths and jewelers, well-positioned caravan masters, and engineers. At this level, a character first comes to the notice of the upper classes, albeit definitely as an inferior. Many adventurers effect this level of lifestyle as a just reward for their dangerous work.
100 g.l./week	Flamboyant, but many special magical charms or services are still not commonplace in this lifestyle. A person at this income level can freely pursue one expensive pastime or interest, but not two or more. A servant or two, excellent clothes, a small house in a city or a large one in the country-side, and traps as well as locks to protect valuables are all available at this level. Diplomats, merchants, moneylenders, skilled architects, and litigators who cater to the needs of moneyed interests predominate in this class.

300 g.l./week

Beyond considerations of cash. A person at this income level enjoys any amenities that a city like Cymril has to offer. Servants, a guard or two, intricate traps and locks, and nothing but fine foods, drink, and clothing are expected of someone at this level. Higher-ranking government officials, renowned architects, specialist engineers, and healers that specialize in the ailments of the wealthy predominate in this class. Envy of those wealthier is universal, as the “almost” in being able to afford almost anything can become very annoying.

1,000 g.l./week

Incredible luxury and ostentatious wealth, with minor magics and charms for every need or whim. Servants, guards, and a manse in the city or a huge estate in the countryside can be expected at this level of income. The scraps from a typical meal cost as much as a week's wages for a laborer. Highly successful merchants, powerful wizards, major dealers in contraband, and those who have inherited great wealth are the most common members of this class.

3,000 g.l./week

Bewildering wealth, generally enough to put the few people who attain it into their own worlds. Several residences, elegant conveyances, a healthy contingent of guards, plentiful servants—including the most exotic consorts—and considerable influence throughout various levels of society mark this class. Since scheming, greedy con artists are willing to work for years to gain such a person's confidence, paranoia is a common downfall of these people. Successful Farad usurers, mediocre Farad monopolists, Ispasian mercantilists, secondary dealers in contraband, successful government officials, and those who founded mercantile empires often find themselves at this level.

10,000 g.l./week

Obscene wealth, attained only by a handful. Little other than dealing in illicit trade can bring a character to this level of wealth in one lifetime. More often such fortunes are inherited, or come from profitable businesses acquired through years of work and scheming. People at this income level generally have several homes in a variety of lands, perhaps a small private army, too many servants to know them all by name, and whatever addictions, hobbies, or diversions they desire. Farad monopolists, guan nobles, central dealers in contraband, and those born into riches are the most likely to attain this level of wealth.

CURRENCY

Economics on Talislanta function much as they do on other worlds. The gold lumen is the standard coin of the realm throughout much of Talislanta. A single gold lumen is equivalent in value to ten silver pieces, or one hundred copper pieces; the weight of any twenty standard-sized coins can be estimated at approximately one pound. Other currencies in use throughout the continent include:



Aamanian Coppers: These wafer-like coins are in wide use only in Aaman. At one hundred to the pound, Aamanian coppers are considered to be practically worthless, and are spurned in other regions.



Antique Coins: Several ancient varieties of coin are valued as antiques by Talislantan collectors and curio dealers. The most notable are include coins of the old Phaedran dynasty, worth twice their face value; coins of the old Mazdak dynasty, equal in value to Phaedran coin-

age; skull-visaged coins from the tombs of Khazad, worth up to five times their face value; any type of coin dating from the Time Before Time, all of which may be worth as much as one hundred times their face value (especially rare coins may be worth even more than this).

Dracartan Pyramids: These triangular coins are made of red iron, and are valued at five silver pieces each. They are honored in all lands except Rajinnar, where the ownership of even a single such coin is deemed an offense punishable by death.



Farad Sul: Talislanta's newest currency, the Farad began minting their own coinage in the year 602 NA. Like the Gold Pentacle of the Seven Kingdoms, the Sul's intricate shape makes it a difficult coin to counterfeit.





Gold Pentacles: These fine, star-shaped coins are popular in the Seven Kingdoms, and are worth five gold lumens throughout the continent. As their intricate shape renders them difficult to counterfeit, gold pentacles are especially favored by merchants and traders.



Imrian Brass Rings: Worth two copper pieces each, these ring-shaped coins are popularly worn about the neck on strings or chains. Most lands that outlaw slavery will not accept the Imrians' crude coinage.



L'Haan Adamants: Rarely seen outside of L'Haan, adamants are valued at twenty gold lumens each in this region. They are worth twice as much in other lands, where adamant is practically unknown.



Oceanian Radiants: These "coins" are actually the iridescent scales of ancient sea dragons. In Oceanus, a radiant is worth one gold lumen; elsewhere, radiants are valued only as curios.

Orgovian Yatma: A lead coin of no great value, rendered completely worthless when the yatma was devalued following the dissolution of the old Kingdom of Orgovia. Hence the term, "not worth a lead yatma".



Quan Emperors: By decree of the Emperor, these handsome coins (which feature a crested dragon in relief on one side and the Emperor's face on the other) are redeemable for one hundred gold lumens. Outside the Quan Empire, the coins are valued at only ten gold lumens.



Zandir Crescents: These half-moon shaped, attractive gold coins are valued at ten gold lumens in Zandu. Elsewhere, they are worth a single gold lumen, when they are accepted at all.



WEAPONS & ARMOR

WEAPONS

Adamant Broadsword: Made from the hardest of Talislantan metals, these swords are used by the Mirin tundra scouts of L'Haan to fight Ice Giants. They are the only weapons adept at cutting through the animate ice of which these creatures are comprised (treat Ice Giants as unarmored targets), and are effective against other types of armor as well (half normal Protection Rating).

Ariane Bow: The arrows of this bow are tipped with round, polished stone heads. Like the Ariane mace, this weapon is used to stun rather than kill.

Ariane Mace: This mace is topped by a smooth head of polished purple stone. Like the Ariane bow, it is used to stun rather than kill.

Ball and Chain: A ball and chain consists of a wooden handle attached to a weighted chain. Because they are flexible weapons, they are harder to block or parry. They are also very good for entangling an opponent's weapon or tripping them. When using a ball and chain with the stated intent to trip or disarm your opponent, you gain a special +2 bonus to your *Action Table* roll.

Barbed Arrows: The Za tribes often employ these projectiles in battle. Upon initial impact, the weapons inflict damage identical to that of standard ar-

rows. However, barbed arrows can be very difficult to remove (make a successful Dexterity or Healing skill roll or suffer an additional point of damage).

Battleaxe: A huge, often double-headed axe, the battleaxe requires two hands to wield.

Battle Maul: This massive, hammer-like weapon is backed by a heavy spike designed to penetrate armor. Kharakhan Giants find the devices useful for certain their crude salvage operations as well.

Battle Fan: Attributed to the famed Phaedran beauty and duelist Naemarra, the battle fan remains a rare weapon, save for its use among a handful of courtesans and female duelists. While these weapons appear to be ornate, attractive, folding ribbed fans, they are also useful weapons for both parrying (+1 bonus when fully fanned out) and attacking. The ribs of the fan are inevitably constructed of black iron or a superior metal, and the “fabric” of the fan itself, originally of thin leather, is now commonly made of spangalor, albeit heavily decorated. Additionally, the tip of each rib is sharpened, allowing it to be used as a slashing weapon. Duelists may use a battle fan as one of their swordsmanship weapons.

Blade-Bracer: This is an iron bracer housing a Kasmiran spring-knife. The weapon is employed by making a fist and touching a trigger mechanism that extends towards the palm. The trigger releases a spring-loaded knife blade that flies forth at the designated target.

Blade-Staff: This Kasmiran device resembles a common wooden staff or walking stick. When the center section is twisted, blades hidden inside either end of the staff snap into place, enabling the device to be used as a spear.

Blade-Star: The Mondre Khan employ these razor-sharp devices as missile weapons and as cutting implements. Most measure about four inches across.

Blow Gun: This device is found amongst several of the more primitive cultures of Talislanta. The device consists of a long hollow tube through which a dart (often coated with poison) is ejected by blowing through one end of the tube. The Withcmen of Chana and the Arborin of the Aberrant Forest commonly employ this type of weapon.

Bolts: The projectile used with a corssbow. Bolts may be used as melee weapons and are treated as an improvised dagger. Sometimes bolts may be retrieved after an encounter. Assume 50% are retrievable and may be used again.

Bwan: This weapon is a large club fashioned from the lower section of a thornwood vine. It is fearsome

in appearance, with many six-inch spiky thorns along its length. The Moorg-Wan of the Dark Coast favor this weapon in battle.

Caltrop: This device consists of four iron spikes pointing out from a central core; when stepped on the spikes cause damage to the victim's feet, hooves, etc. Strewn upon the ground in great numbers, caltrops are used to slow or redirect enemy forces, and are most effective versus steeds and beast-drawn conveyances. The Mondre Khan often use these devices in their raids against the Kang. Caltrops do not require a specific weapon skill to use. Rather, a Tactics, Sabotage, or INT roll determines whether they are placed effectively.

Capture Bow: These unusual weapons resemble heavy crossbows with a crude reel-mechanism affixed to the stock. The capture-bow fires a barbed bolt similar to a small harpoon, with a line of stout whipcord attached to its end. The barb snares the target (at STR +2) on a full success or critical success, but not a partial success. Satada employ these cumbersome devices to snare prey or dismount riders.

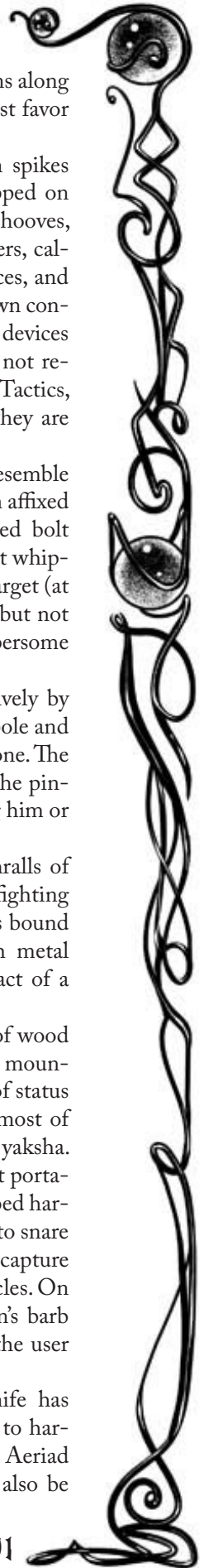
Capture-Pole: This device is used extensively by Imrian slavers. It consists of a long, wooden pole and a pair of grasping “pincers” made of iron or bone. The accompanying rope enables the user to pull the pincers shut around the intended victim, holding him or her fast (at STR +1).

Cestus: Commonly found amongst the Thralls of Taz and elsewhere in gladiatorial and prize fighting cricles, the Cestus is a series of leather things bound over the fists. They are often adorned with metal spikes, plates and rings to increase the impact of a normal punch.

Club, Ur: This polearm consists of a haft of wood topped with the mummified, taloned paw of a mountain-dwelling yaksha. The weapon is a mark of status and courage among the Ur clans, although most of these items are obtained from aged or infirm yaksha.

Correg: This weapon consists of a large, but portable, tripod-mounted crossbow that fires a barbed harpoon trailing a cord. It is used by the Imrians to snare larger slaves, such as the Moorg-Wan, and to capture ocean kra, which are used to pull Imrian coracles. On a full success or critical success, the harpoon's barb catches in the target (at STR +4), allowing the user to pull in the victim.

Crescent Knife: This crescent-shaped knife has traditionally been used by the Green Aeriad to harvest viridia plants and other crops. The Blue Aeriad later discovered that the crescent knife can also be used as a missile weapon.

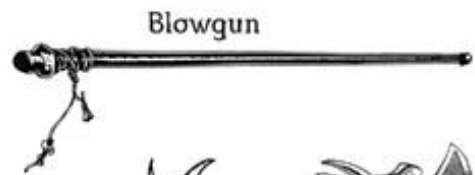




Battle Axe



Caltrops



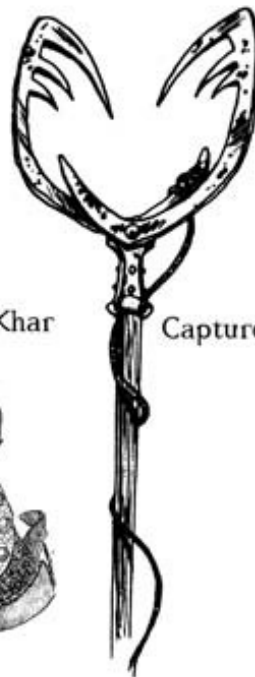
Blowgun



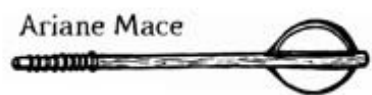
Blade Stars



Hand
Axe



Capture Pole



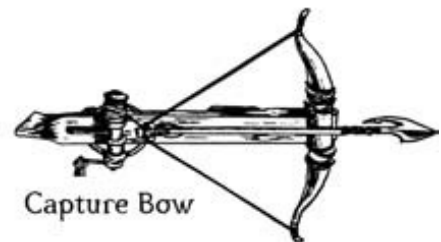
Ariane Mace



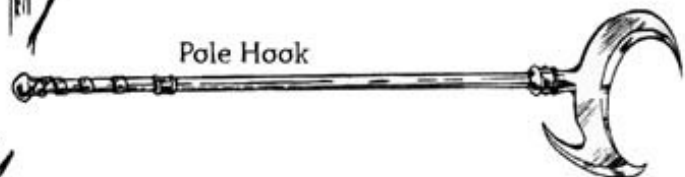
Cestus



Da-Khar



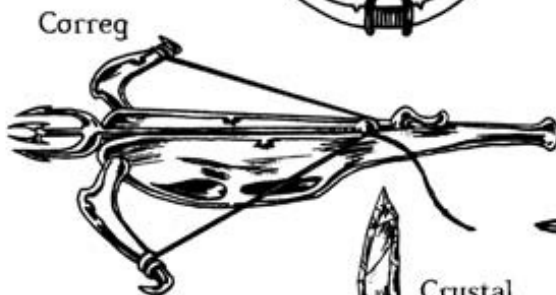
Capture Bow



Pole Hook



Crescent Knife



Correg



Bwan



Blade Staff



Blade
Bracer



Crystal
Blade



Battle Maul

Crescent Spear: This Aeriad weapon is like a normal spear except instead of a sharp point at one end, it ends instead in broad crescent-shaped blades on both ends. Aeriad Rangers often use such weapons to cut the rigging and ropes of hostile windships but the weapon is also deadly against humanoid targets.

Crystalblade: Traditional weapon of the Gnomekin, the crystalblade is a short sword made of solid crystal. The sharp, diamond-hard edge can cut through hide, non-magical metal armor, or exoskeletal plates and scales with ease (treat such armor as having half its usual Protective Rating).

Cutlass: The cutlass is a heavier and broader version of the scimitar. It is popular among the Mangar corsairs and some Gao Sea Rogues.

Dagger: Daggers (and knives) are considered light blades when used as melee weapons. When thrown (at a normal rate of one per round) they use the Weapon (thrown) skill.

Da-Khar: These leather gauntlets are fitted with retractable, razor-sharp “claws”, usually made of black iron. Favored by the assassin-mages of Rajinnar, da-khar are employed in pairs; the blades are released by striking the backs of the hands together. As da-khar look like ordinary leather gloves, they are often used for assassination attempts.

Dart: These short throwing weapons feature feathered wooden shafts and piercing heads. They are thrown like short spears, and they make effective hunting weapons against small prey. When held, they can be used as makeshift daggers but suffer a -1 attack penalty.

Dart-Thrower: These small, one-handed crossbows are favored by the Aeriad of Vardune. Damage and range are about half that of a standard light crossbow.

Dragon Hunter's Harpoon: This barbed weapon has been used by Sun-Ra-San dragon hunters since ancient times. It is employed primarily to deliver the deathblow to a sea dragon; this is considered the most honorable means of dispatching the prey. Sun-Ra-San harpoons are carved with elaborate markings and symbols that indicate the owner's status and clan affiliation.

Drahkan: These whip-like weapons are found amongst the Druhk tribes of Arim but are also often found in the hands of Revenants. A Drahkan consists of a flexible rod tipped with a razor-sharp barb, often crafted from the claws or teeth of Banes. The Druhk often tip this bard with a anti-coagulating poison derived from an herb native to Arim.

Duar: This large two-pronged spear is favored by the avian Gryphs of Tamaranth forest. It can be used as a capture weapon (at the wielder's STR), a missile weapon, or to impale.

Falchion: Used by Kang heavy troops, the falchion's heavy blade is designed to cut through armor. In the hands of a sufficiently strong and skilled warrior, the weapon can punch through the stoutest battle armor (metal, partial metal, scale, and exoskeletal armor provides only half normal protection).

Flange-Bow: This curious type of light crossbow is employed by the Sea-Nomads of Oceanus. The weapon is capable of unleashing a half-dozen sea anemone quills with a single shot, but it has an effective range of only about 100 feet, or 20 feet underwater.

Garde: This spiked body-armor is worn on the arm and can be used for both parrying and attack. It is a weapon much-favored by the Thralls of Taz, who generally shun other types of armor. Full garde is spiked body-armor worn on both the arms and the legs (see Armor, in this section).

Garrote: A slim wire or cord usually attached to a pair of wooden handles, the garrote is used to strangle an opponent in ambush. A garrote does no damage by itself but if it is used in a Grapple attack to choke an opponent, it doubles the damage done. When using a Garrote, the Assassinate skill may be substituted (at no penalty) for the Brawling skill.

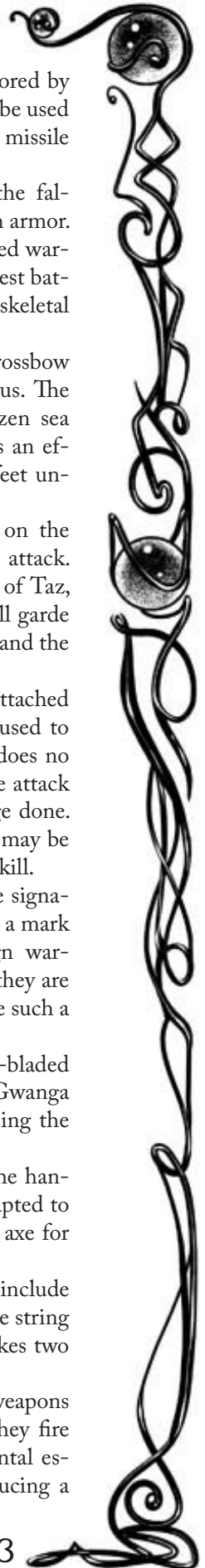
Greatsword: This two-handed blade is the signature weapon of the Thrall warriors, granted as a mark of adulthood. Thralls grimly respect foreign warriors who have taken a greatsword in battle; they are quite offended, however, by those who acquire such a weapon through less honorable means.

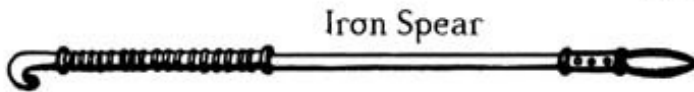
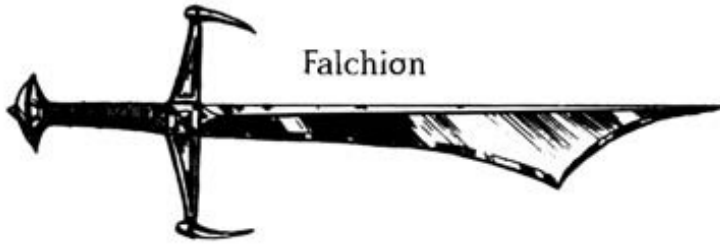
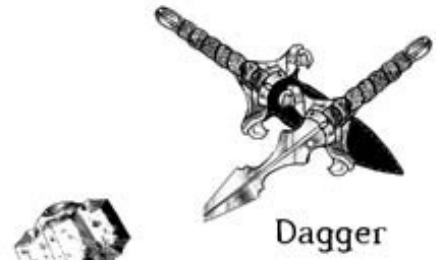
Gwanga: This weapon is a heavy, three-bladed throwing knife favored by the Ahazu tribes. Gwanga are thrown with an underhand motion, causing the blade to spin as it flies through the air.

Handaxe: A light axe used in one hand, the handaxe is one of the first tools to have been adapted to military use. It can also be used as a normal axe for cutting wood.

Heavy Crossbow: Most heavy crossbows include a small winch or lever to facilitate drawing the string back. Loading a heavy crossbow normally takes two rounds.

Hurlant: These hand-held, crossbow-like weapons are employed by Dracartan desert scouts. They fire bolts containing a glassine capsule of elemental essence. The capsule shatters on impact, producing a





one-foot radius explosion of elemental force. Hurlant ammunition is used exclusively by the military and is not legally available to civilians. Hurlants are also capable of firing standard light-crossbow bolts.

Incendiary Bolts: The alchemists of L'Haan have developed these crossbow bolts as a weapon against the Ice Giants. In addition to the typical damage for a light crossbow bolt, the alchemical coating ignites on impact (burning for two rounds at a damage rating of 3, ignoring armor; Ice Giants and other beings vulnerable to fire suffer double damage). Incendiary bolts are forged of adamant, the hardest of all Talislantan metals (armor provides only half normal protection).

Iron Spear: This device is basically a solid iron spear with a blade at one end and a hook at the other. It is employed extensively by the Vajra, who use it as both an excavating tool and a weapon.

Jang: This device is a peculiar type of saw-edged boomerang employed by the Harakin. It is usually made of black iron, jagged and saw-toothed along one edge, and weighs as much as three pounds. The jang has the useful attribute of returning to its user in the event of a miss. Heavy gloves or gauntlets must be worn when using this weapon.

Javelin: Javelins are normally used as missile weapons but may be used in melee if required. As the weapon is slender and not suited to the rigors of melee combat, any attempt to disarm or break a javelin receives a +2 special bonus.

Khu: This two-bladed knife is used by the warrior tribes of Harak. Usually made of black iron, the khu inflicts approximately twice as much damage as a standard dagger but also weighs twice as much. It is of no use as a missile weapon.

Kavar: Primarily favored as a gladiatorial weapon, the kavar resembles a cross between a hand axe and spiked hook. It can be used to hook and opponent or weapon, or strike with the hooked, spiked blade. The female Beastman pictured above is using a kavar.

Klaive: The preferred weapon of the warrior-women of Danuvia, the klaive is an ornate type of polearm consisting of a curved blade affixed to a long pole. This is typically enhanced further by the addition of a spike on the back of the blade.

Krin: Employed by the Harakin warrior tribes, this crossbow utilizes armor-piercing iron spikes as bolts. It requires significant strength and time (3 rounds) to re-load between shots, but is very powerful.

Lance: A lance is essentially a long spear used while mounted. If used as a melee weapon, it requires two

hands to wield but may be couched when mounted and charging and requires only one hand. As a lance is far too long and heavy to be effectively used afoot, any attempt to do so incurs a -2 penalty unless the user has a strength of +3 or greater. When used in a mounted charge, a successful attack roll will result in great damage (*see the Mounted Combat Quirk*).

Light Crossbow: Most light crossbows incorporate a lever to facilitate drawing the string back. Loading a light crossbow normally takes one round.

Long Bow: You need both hands to use any bow, regardless of its size. Longbows are far too large to use from horseback. A longbow may normally be fired every round.

Mace: A heavier version of the club, maces most often have a metal head and are sometimes constructed entirely of black iron. Maces can be used to deal non-lethal damage, such as when attempting to disable or knock out an opponent, at no penalty.

Matsu: This Ahazu weapon is a long-hafted, two-handed war club, equipped with a rounded head of polished stone. The matsu's slightly flexible handle allows an experienced wielder to use it to deliver a tremendous blow, similar in effect to a heavy war hammer.

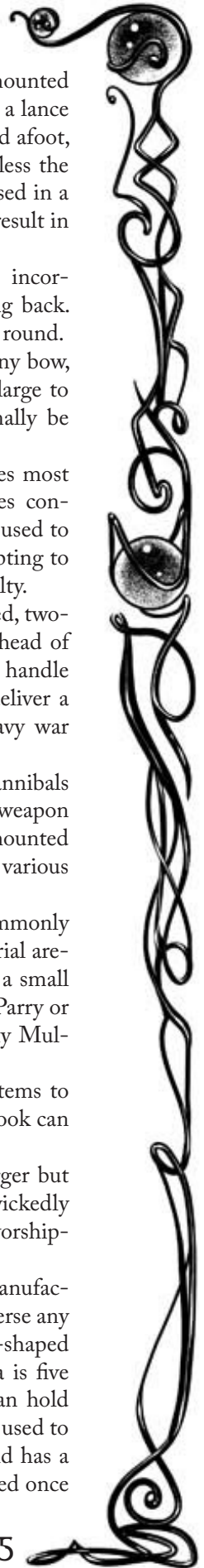
Pacho: A weapon employed by Na-Ku cannibals of the Crescent Isles, the Pacho is a whip-like weapon comprised of flexible wood or reed core surmounted by razor sharp shells, coral and the teeth of various sea creatures.

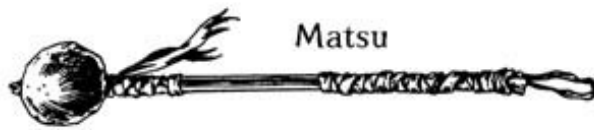
Pit Buckler: This odd looking shield is commonly found in pit fights and other similar gladiatorial arenas. It is an otherwise normal buckler with a small blade affixed. A Pit Buckler may be used to Parry or Attack once per round without incurring any Multiple Action penalty from the action.

Prod-Hook: Orgovian traders use these items to control their unruly loper steeds. The prod-hook can also be used as a weapon.

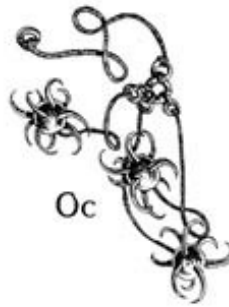
Rajan Dagger: Longer than a typical dagger but smaller than a typical short sword, this wickedly curved knife is a ritual weapon of the death-worshipping cult of the Rajans.

Rod of Alchemy: This useful item is manufactured by the Sindarans. It can be used to disperse any type of alchemical dust or powder in a cone-shaped area (range 10 feet, maximum width of area is five feet). The inside of the rod is hollow and can hold up to five vials. The spring mechanism that is used to propel the contents is of Kasmiran make, and has a pump-mechanism that enable it to be reloaded once per round.

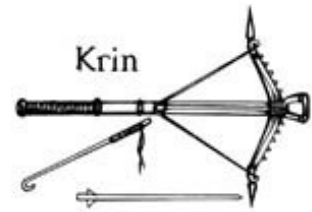




Matsu



Oc

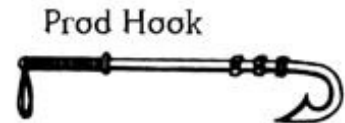


Krin

Rajan Dagger



Rasp



Prod Hook



R'ruh



Shadinnar Axe



Spring Shot



Short Sword



Spear



Targ Staff



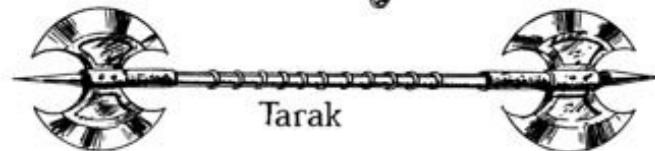
War Whip



Whip



Quarter Staff



Tarak



Long Sword



Star Thrower

R'ruh: This crude weapon, also known as a singing axe, is a heavy, disk-like stone blade affixed to a long leather thong. It is used by the Wildmen of Yrmania, who employ it in two ways. Swung above the head at great speed, the r'ruh is used as a hand weapon, emitting a "singing" sound that the Wildmen believe generates fear in the heart of their foes. It is also of some use as a hurled missile weapon.

Rasp: The Mondre Khan employ these grim-looking hand-weapons in close combat against the Kang. The saw-toothed blade leaves an awful, jagged wound that is difficult to heal (twice the normal healing is required to close rasp-wounds).

Scimitar: A light curved blade common in the Wilderlands of Zaran and Desert Kingdoms regions.

Short Bow: You need both hands to use any bow, regardless of its size. With the proper training (*Mounted Archery Quirk*), shortbows may be used while mounted. A shortbow may normally be fired every round.

Slaver's Flail: Popular among Farad slave-mongers, these weapons consist of a wooden haft and three leather cords topped with spiked, metal spheres. The weapon is used to inflict pain in rebellious slaves; on a full or critical success, victims must make a WIL roll or suffer a -3 penalty on all actions for the next round.

Sling: A sling is a pliable piece of material or leather that is used to deliver a stone or other small object at great force. When determining damage, add the wielder's STR.

Spear: A spear may be used as both a melee and a ranged weapon. As a polearm it can be used to keep an opponent at distance.

Spiritblade: These weapons are used by Xambrian wizard hunters, and are often passed down from one generation to the next. They resemble standard longswords but are engraved with the sigils of their past owners. Spiritblades are enchanted, and are effective against beings that are only affected by magical weaponry. When invested with spirit-force by a Xambrian's ancestors the weapon is effective versus reincarnators and other extra-dimensional entities; only Xambrians can use spiritblades for the latter purpose.

Spring-Knife: This Kasmiran device resembles a small scroll tube made of metal or ivory. When a hidden button is depressed, a spring-loaded knife blade flies forth from inside the tube.

Springshot: Another device of Kasmiran origin, this ranged weapon has also become quite popular among the Gnomekin of Durne. A Springshot consists of a leather thong attached to a sturdy handle by means of taught metal springs. A stone or other ammunition is loaded into a small pouch on the thong which is then pulled back and released, sending the stone flying towards the target at great speed.

Staff of Aa: Aamanian Witch-Hunters wield these black iron-shod staves as symbols of their authority and status. The staves are lacquered white and topped with the Orthodoxist emblem, the all-seeing eye. They do not differ in function from other iron-shod staves.

Star-Thrower: Orgovian traders favor these weapons, which resemble light crossbows with a deep groove cut into the shaft. These devices are used to propel three-inch diameter spiked iron balls called "shooting stars."

Studded Gloves: Studded gloves include any weapon that reinforces a punch and protects the fist, including brass knuckles, iron gauntlets, and knuckle dusters. Such weapons use the character's brawling skill, and allow the character to do DR2 +STR damage with a punch.

Tarak: This weapon is a four-bladed, two-handed iron axe employed by the warriors of Harak. Only a very strong individual can wield this ponderous weapon without looking extremely foolish.

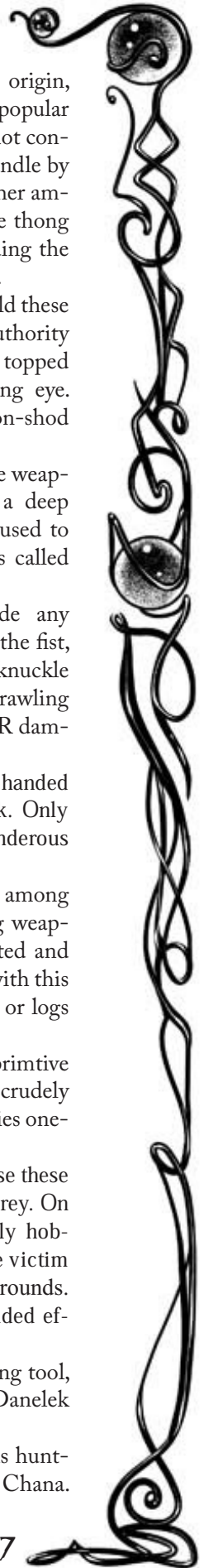
Targ Staff: This weapon is popular among Thralls as a preferred gladiatorial or sporting weapon. It consists of a quarterstaff with weighted and spiked ends. Combats are frequently fought with this weapon while poised upon narrow walkways or logs as sporting events in the Thrall nation of Taz.

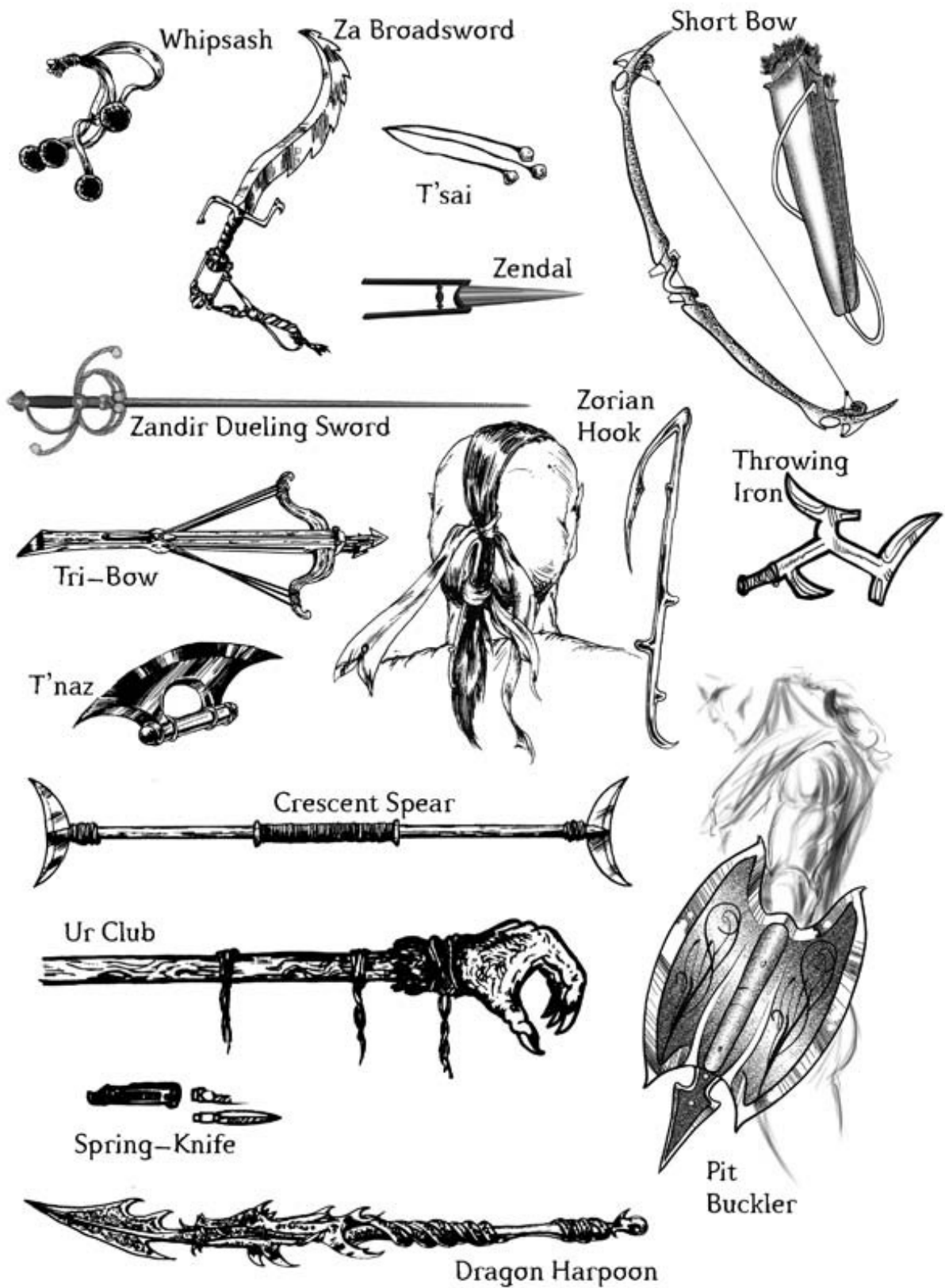
Throwing Iron: Used by a wide array of primitive talisanta cultures, these ranged weapons are crudely wrought from black iron and thrown at enemies one-handed.

Throwing Stick: The Witchfolk of Chana use these weighted wooden clubs for bringing down prey. On a full success, the throwing stick temporarily hobbles the victim in addition to full damage; the victim moves at a SPD penalty of -5 for the next five rounds. On a critical success, the weapon has the added effect of bringing the victim down.

T'naz: Derived originally from a salt-cutting tool, the T'naz is a popular weapon among the Danelek tribes.

T'sai: Similar in design to a light bolas, this hunting weapon is used by the Manra tribes of Chana.





A t'sai consists of several three-foot long strips of hide tied together and weighted on their ends by small river-rocks or polished stones. While one ball is held in the hand, the others are whirled, and then the entire weapon is thrown to entangle the target. On a partial success, the t'sai inflicts half damage but does not entangle. On a full success, the thrower can choose to entangle (at STR +1) the target's arms or legs in addition to full damage; entangling the legs will bring down a running target. On a critical success, the weapon has the added effect of bringing down even a stationary victim.

Tri-Bow: Used primarily by Blue Aeriad rangers and scouts, the tri-bow is a light crossbow that has been modified so that it can fire a "clip" of three bolts or blunt quarrels; the latter type is used to stun. The bow's three strings can be drawn together using a metal "claw" lever built into the stock; one bolt may be fired each round, or multiple bolts may be fired at the normal penalty for multiple attacks. A tri-bow takes two rounds to re-load; one to drop in the clip, and one to affix a wooden clasp that keeps the bolts from falling out while the user is airborne.

War Axe: The Sauran version of a hand axe is so large and cumbersome as to require two-handed use by all but the largest and strongest of creatures. Nevertheless, Saurans and their Saurud brethren use these heavy axes as one-handed weapons to great effect.

War Flail: The native weapon of the Danelek clans, the war flail has a stout handle crafted from a land lizard's thigh bone. Eight four-foot strips of hide are attached to it, each barbed with sharp spikes and culminating in a razor-edged disk of black iron. In skilled hands, the weapon can be quite deadly. Those untrained in its use, however, must make a DEX roll whenever they use it to avoid wounding themselves.

Warhammer: A massive weapon that can crush nearly any armor and most men wearing it as well, the warhammer is a weapon greatly feared on the battlefield. Due to its weight and the ungainliness, the warhammer is a two-handed weapon.

War-Whip: This Sauran weapon consists of a two-foot iron handle wrapped with strips of hide and attached to a length of spiked iron squares linked together with chain. It is very heavy and can only be used by an extremely strong individual.

Whip: The whip is not a weapon made for combat. Rather it is an adapted tool that sees use in combat or combat-like situations and therefore merits inclusion here. It is unlikely that a whip will cause any dam-

age to an opponent wearing any amount of armor. Where the whip does shine is when it is being used to entangle or disarm. With a stated intent to disarm or trip, the wielder receives a +2 special bonus to his roll.

Whipsash, Za: The whipsash is a belt worn by many members of the Za war clans. It is made from six long strips of braided hide, the ends of which are tipped with two-inch diameter iron balls. When removed, a whipsash can be used to entangle an opponent's weapon-hand or legs, or as a weighted whip. It is used in close combat, not thrown. On a partial success, the whipsash inflicts half damage but does not entangle. On a full success, the wielder can choose to entangle (at STR +2) the target's arm or leg in addition to full damage. On a critical success, the weapon has the added effect of bringing the victim down.

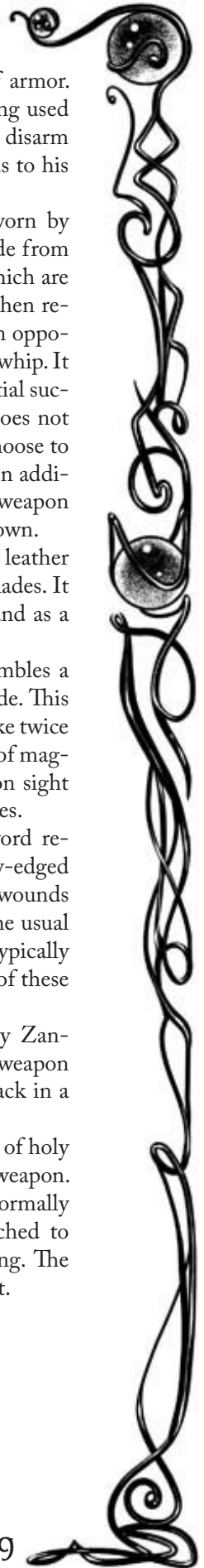
Wristblade: This Za weapon is a studded leather bracer equipped with a row of razor-sharp blades. It is used to slash opponents in close combat and as a handy utility knife.

Za Broadsword: The Za broadsword resembles a heavy scimitar with a jagged, saw-edged blade. This terrible weapon causes ragged wounds that take twice as long as normal (or twice the usual amount of magic or healing) to heal. The Za typically kill on sight any foreigner seen wielding one of these blades.

Zandir Duleing Sword: The Za broadsword resembles a heavy scimitar with a jagged, saw-edged blade. This terrible weapon causes ragged wounds that take twice as long as normal (or twice the usual amount of magic or healing) to heal. The Za typically kill on sight any foreigner seen wielding one of these blades.

Zendal: This type of dagger is favored by Zandir Certaments as a parrying weapon. The weapon can be used to parry or it can be used to attack in a punching fashion.

Zorian Hook: Worn by the Kang as a type of holy symbol, the Zorian hook is also a dangerous weapon. The hook is crafted from blue iron and is normally concealed by brilliant red ribbons and attached to long queue of hair common among all Kang. The hook can be a deadly surprise in close combat.



MELEE WEAPONS

Type	DR	WT	STR	Skill	Cost
Ball & Chain	8	8	+1	F	5 g.l.
Battle Axe ¹	8	9	+1	H	14 g.l.
Battle Maul ¹	16	90+	+6	2H	50 g.l.
Blade-staff ¹	8	6	-2	P	25 g.l.
Bwan ¹	8	15	+2	2H	2 c.p.
Caltrops	2	.5	--	n/a	1 s.p.
Capture Pole ¹	1	6	+1	P	10 g.l.
Cestus	4	1	-3	B	1 g.l.
Club	6	6	-1	H	1 s.p.
Club, Ur	10	40	+3	2H	200 g.l.
Crescent Knife	8	4	+0	SB	25 g.l.
Crescent Spear ¹	6	4	+0	P	30 g.l.
Crystalblade	6	3	-2	LB	60 g.l.
Dagger	4	1	--	SB	1 g.l.
Da Khar	3	.5	--	B	20 g.l.
Drahkan	4	2	-2	F	8 g.l.
Dragon Hunter Harpoon ¹	8	8	+2	P	100 g.l.
Duar ¹	8	5	+0	P	2 g.l.
Falchion	8	16	+3	LB	50 g.l.
Garde	4	10	+1	BR	10 g.l.
Garde, Full	4	40	+3	BR	40 g.l.
Garotte ¹	6	.5	-2	AS or B	1 c.p.
Halberd ¹	10	10	+1	P	15 g.l.
Hand axe	4	5	0	H	5 s.p.
Iron Spear ¹	10	20	+2	P	15 g.l.
Kavar	6	5	-1	H	5 g.l.
Khu	6	2	-1	SB	8 g.l.
Klaive ¹	10	8	+1	P	20 g.l.
Lance ⁴	8	5	+1	P	5 g.l.
Mace	8	10	0	H	4 g.l.
Mace, Ariane	8	10	0	H	5 g.l.
Matsu ¹	10	25	+3	H2	40 s.p.
Pole Hook ¹	8	8	-1	P	2 g.l.
Prodhook	4	2	-1	H	6 s.p.
Quarterstaff ¹	6	3	-3	P	5 s.p.
R'ruh	6	3	+0	F	6 g.l.

Type	DR	WT	STR	Skill	Cost
Shield (bash)	4	--	--	B	--
Slaver's Flail	6	6	+0	F	2 g.l.
Spear ¹	8	4	-1	P	1 g.l.
Spiritblade	8	6	0	LB	--
Staff, Iron-shod ¹	8	6	-2	P	2 g.l.
Staff of Aa ¹	8	7	-2	P	25 g.l.
Staff, Short	4	3	-3	H	5 s.p.
Sword, Cutlass	8	10	0	LB	15 g.l.
Sword, Long	8	6	0	LB	12 g.l.
Sword, Greatsword ¹	10	15	+2	B2	60 g.l.
Sword, Saber	6	4	+0	LB	18 g.l.
Sword, Scimitar	8	6	+1	LB	15 g.l.
Sword, Short	6	3	-1	SB	5 g.l.
Sword, Zandir Dueling	6	2	-2	LB	25 g.l.
Sword, Za Broadsword	8	10	+1	LB	20 g.l.
Tarak ¹	10	30	+2	P	15 g.l.
Targ Staff ¹	10	12	+1	P	25 g.l.
Tnaz	4	1	-1	SB	8 s.p.
Trident ¹	8	6	-1	P	5 g.l.
War Axe ¹	8	7	+3	H	5 s.p.
War Flail	10	12	+1	F	12 g.l.
War Whip	10	10	+3	F	2 g.l.
War Hammer ¹	10	30	+2	H2	5 g.l.
Whip	2	1	--	F	1 g.l.
Whipsash, Za	5	2	+1	F	3 g.l.
Wristblade	3	1	--	B	3 g.l.
Zendal	4	1	--	SB	3 g.l.
Zorian Hook	3	1	--	H	15 g.l.

1. This weapon requires two hands to use. 2. Damage varies depending on the alchemical mixture dispensed. Uses the *Weapon* (rod of alchemy) skill. 3. This weapon uses the *Weapon (thrown)* skill. [X] Number in brackets is the number of rounds required to reload the weapon. 4. For mounted charge, add mount's STR +SPD to damage, instead of wielder's STR.

WEAPONS CHART NOTES

Unless noted otherwise in their descriptions, these weapons are not made of superior metals. Weapons other than blades are rarely made from superior metals.

- For blades of red iron: divide weight by 2, subtract 1 from STR, and double price.
- For blades of adamant: multiply price by 20; armor provides only half normal protection, rounded down.
- Blue iron is not generally used for weapons because its lightness reduces the weapon's impact.
- For brass weapons: increase price by half; certain devils are vulnerable to brass.
- For silver weapons: multiply price by 5; certain extraplanar creatures are vulnerable to silver.

Skill Legend: SB: Small blades, LB: Large Blades, H: Hafted, B2: 2-handed blades, H2: 2-handed hafted, F: Flails, P: Polearms, B: Brawling, AS: Assassinate

RANGED WEAPONS

TYPE	DR	WT	STR	SKILL	COST	RANGE
Blade Bracer [1] ³	3	2	--	S	15 g.l.	10'
Blade Star	3	.25	-2	T	2 s.p.	thrown
Blowgun	2	2	--	U	1 g.l.	50'
Bow, Ariane ¹	6	5	+0	B	5 g.l.	150'
Bow, Long ¹	8	5	+2	B	7g.l.	300'
Bow, Short ¹	6	5	+0	B	5 g.l.	150'
Capture Bow ¹ [2]	6	7	+1	C	25 g.l.	100'
Correg ¹ [2]	10	15	+2	C	40 g.l.	100'
Crescent Knife ³	3	.5	--	T	2 g.l.	thrown +20'
Crescent Spear ³	6	4	+0	T	8 g.l.	thrown
Crossbow, Heavy ¹ [2]	8	5	-1	C	20 g.l.	200'
Crossbow, Light ¹ [1]	6	2	-3	C	10 g.l.	150'
Crossbow, Vardune ¹ [2]	4	4	-2	C	80 g.l.	100'
Dart	2	.5	-1	T	1 s.p.	thrown
Dart Thrower	3	1	--	C	5 g.l.	75'
Harpoon ³	8	8	+2	T	100 g.l.	thrown
Duar ³	8	5	+0	T	2 g.l.	thrown
Flange Bow ¹ [2]	10	2	+0	C	20 g.l.	100'/20'
Gwanga ³	8	4	+1	T	20 g.l.	thrown
Hurlant ¹ [1]	10	12	+1	C	500 g.l.	100'
Jang	6	3	+2	T	40 c.p.	thrown
Javelin ³	6	2	-1	T	1 g.l.	thrown
Krin ¹ [4]	12	10	+1	T	12 g.l.	100'
Rock ³	2	.5	-1	T	--	thrown
Rod of Alchemy [2] ¹	* ²	3	--	U	75 g.l.	15'
R'ruh	6	3	+0	T	6 g.l.	thrown
Sling [1]	4	.25	--	S	2 c.p.	100'
Spear ³	8	4	-1	T	1 g.l.	thrown
Springknife [1] ³	3	.5	--	S	5 g.l.	10'
Springshot ¹	6	1	+0	S	20 g.l.	75'
Star Thrower ¹ [1]	7	3	-1	T	25 g.l.	100'
Throwing Axe ³	4	3	+0	T	2 g.l.	thrown
Throwing Iron	6	5	--	T	8 s.p.	thrown
Throwing Stick	4	3	--	T	1 s.p.	thrown
T'sai	2	1	--	T	2 g.l.	thrown

Skill Legend: B: Bows; C: Crossbows; S: Spring; SP: Unique weapon skill; T: Thrown

AMMUNITION & ACCESSORIES FOR MISSILE WEAPONS

Type	WT	Cost
Case (flange-bow)/60 quills	5	1 g.l./1 g.l.
Clip (tri-bow)/3 bolts or quarrels	1	1 g.l./5 s.p.
Harpoon bolt (capture bow)	.5	2 s.p.
Harpoon bolt (correg)	2	1 g.l.
Punch w 12 shooting stars	6	5 g.l.
Pouch w/20 sling stones	5	1 s.p.
Pouch w/6 spring-knife blades	1.5	1 g.l.
Quiver (ariane arrows)/20 arrows	5	1 g.l./2 g.l.
Quiver (barbed arrows)/20 arrows	4	5 s.p./1 g.l.
Quiver (normal arrows)/20 arrows	4	5 s.p./1 g.l.
Quiver (dart-thrower)/10 darts	5	2 s.p./1 g.l.
Quiver (heavy crossbow)/20 quarrels	6	5 s.p./2 g.l.
Quiver (hurlant)/6 bolts	6	5 s.p./1 50 g.l.
Quiver (incendiary bolts)/20 bolts	4	1 g.l./30 g.l.
Quiver (krin)/10 bolts	12	5 s.p./1 g.l.
Quiver (light crossbow)/20 quarrels	4	5 s.p./1 g.l.
Quiver /20 normal arrows	4	5 s.p./5 s.p.

ARMOR

Many types of armor are used by the peoples of Talislanta. From the heavy battle armor of Crimson Horde of the Kang to the woven cord of the Jhangarans, armor may be broken into a number of categories.

LIGHT CLOTH

Light cloth armors are probably the most common along with light leather armor. They consist of multiple layers of linen or another cloth used to soften the blows of light weapons or the claws and teeth of beasts. It is very light weight but offers little in the way of protection for serious injury. Normal clothing does *not* equate to Light Cloth armor.

HEAVY CLOTH

Heavy cloth armor is traditionally made by layering linen or another cloth until it is about half an inch or so thick. This is normally accomplished by

glueing the fabric layers together making the whole armor stiff but still light weight. Other types of armor also fall into this classification including Jhangaran cord armor, Gnomkein mossweave armor, padded armor and armor of woven reeds and grasses.

LIGHT LEATHER

Soft Leather armor is made from the hides of Erd, Durge, Gruffan and similar creatures. It is soft and supple but provides adequate padding and protection from blunt weapons and some slashing attacks.

HEAVY LEATHER (OR HIDE)

This type of armor consists of normal leather that has been treated and hardened or from the hide of a creature with thick hide such as ogriphants, striders and land lizards. Wooden armor also falls into this category of armor.

STUDDED ARMOR

This type of armor consists of normal leather or heavy cloth with the addition of metal rings, disks or studs affixed to the outside of the armor. This additional armor helps to deflect piercing attacks as well as slashing weapons. Wearers suffer a -1 penalty to all DEX based Action Table rolls.

SCALE ARMOR

Scale armor is made of a series of metal scales that are laced together rather than riveted into leather as in the case of studded armor. This type of armor offers excellent protection against all types of attack and is fairly easy to move in. This is the preferred armor of the Gnomekin of although their version replaces the metal scales with the rugged scales of certain aquatic predators indigenous to the underground lakes of Durne. Armor made from land dragon hide is the equivalent of scale armor. Wearers suffer a -1 penalty to all DEX based Action Table rolls.



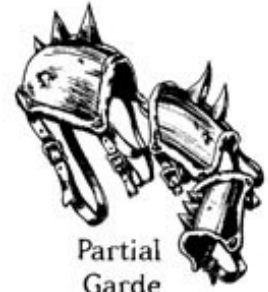
Danuvian Corselet



Danuvian
Parrying Bracers



Helmet



Partial
Garde

Studded Armor



Chain Mail



Shield

Leather Armor



Spangalor

MAIL

Mail armor consists of small metal rings linked one to the other to form a metal fabric. Mail is very time consuming to make and is therefore quite expensive. It does offer a fair amount of freedom of movement and protection against all types of attacks. Mail armor has all but been replaced in the Seven Kingdoms by the newer spangalor armor. Wearers suffer a -1 penalty to all DEX based Action Table rolls.

PLATED

Plated armor consists of a solid metal breast and/or back plate and metal plates mounted on leather in other vital areas (arms, legs, groin, etc.). A full suit also come complete with a helm. Wearers suffer a -2 penalty to all DEX based Action Table rolls.

ARMOR TABLE

ARMOR TYPE	PR	WT	STR	Cost
Amysram (Mandalan) ¹	3	4	-2	750 g.l.
Battle armor (Kang)	7	50	+3	1,000 g.l.
Chain mail	5	40	+3	250 g.l.
Cloth, light	1	5	-	2 g.l.
Cloth, heavy	2	12	-	3 g.l.
Cord armor (Jhangaran)	2	15	-1	2 g.l.
Corselet (Danuvian)	4	35	+1	300 g.l.
Garde, full (Thrall) ²	5	40	+3	40 g.l.
Hide , heavy (land dragon)	5	35	+1	250 g.l.
Leather, heavy (or hide)	3	25	-	8 g.l.
Leather, light	2	15	-	5 g.l.
Mossweave armor (Gnomekin)	2	10	-	10 g.l.
Plated armor	6	50	+3	500 g.l.
Plated, Dragon Scale (Sunra)	4	30	+1	200 g.l.
Scale armor	5	35	+1	300 g.l.
Spangalor (Cymrilian)	3	25	-	400 g.l.
Studded armor	4	40	+1	150 g.l.
Wood armor	3	8	-	6 g.l.

1. Characters must possess the Manadquan Quirk in order to benefit from the Amysram's PR.

2. Characters must possess the Tazian Combat Quirk in order to benefit from the Garde's PR.

ARMOR TABLE NOTES

All armor is rated according to Protection Rating (PR) weight in pounds (WT), minimum strength required to employ the armor (STR), and average cost. Characters have a -1 penalty to all actions for each point their Strength Rating falls short of the armor's minimum STR requirement.

All metal armor is assumed to be constructed of black iron. For red iron, divide the WT by 2, subtract 1 from the STR, and double the Cost. For blue iron, divide the WT by 4, subtract 2 from the STR, and quadruple the cost. For adamant armor, the WT and STR remain unchanged, but multiply the cost by 10, and double the PR.



SPECIAL TYPES OF ARMOR

AMYSRAM

The costume of the Mandalan Mystic Warriors serves as form of light armor, in addition to covering and disguising the entire body. The garment is woven of black silkcloth, reinforced with a mesh of lightweight blue iron. Amysram also come with defensive bracers, also of blue iron, that can be used by a practitioner of Mandaquan for parrying melee weapons.

BATTLE ARMOR

Battle armor is comprised of interlocking plates of black iron, or in the case of elite Kang troops and warrior-priests, red iron. The plates are padded for comfort, and the joint sections are hinged to allow for relative ease of movement. Battle armor leaves very few unprotected areas of the body. A full suit comes complete with a helmet. This form of armor is very costly to make and is seldom available outside of the Quan Empire. Wearers suffer a -3 penalty to all DEX based Action Table rolls.

CORSELET

The Danuvian Viragos favor these pieces of black iron armor above all other forms of protection. When combined with the famous Danuvian parrying bracers, this armor provides a protection rating equivalent to that of a suit of chain mail. In addition, the wrist bracers may be used to parry melee and ranged attacks; the Viragos are renowned for their ability to block arrows with these bracers (*see Quirks: Danuvian Fighting*).

DANUVIAN PARRYING BRACERS

These black iron bracers have been made famous by the Virago warriors of Danuvia. When equipped on a trained Danuvian (*see Quirks: Danuvian Fighting*), these bracers grant one free Parry attempt per round and may be used to Parry ranged attacks (at a reduced or no penalty depending on Quirks).

DRAGON SCALE MAIL

Sun-Ra-San armor is made from the scintillant scales of sea dragons and the eel-like predators known as rainbow kra. It is tough and fairly lightweight, and it will not rust when exposed to salt water, as metal armor will. Penalties to DEX-based rolls are the same as plated armor.

GARDE

Thrall armor consists of spiked iron plates, padded for comfort and affixed to the limbs by leather straps. Standard garde covers one arm only, while full garde covers all four limbs. Garde can also be used to parry blows and to batter opponents in close combat. If the wearer is trained in Tazian Combat and is actively defending, he or she can catch all blows on the armor. An untrained warrior attempting to use this armor, or a trained Thrall caught entirely by surprise, may find many of the blows landing on the unprotected body or head. With the spikes removed, full garde is used for tournaments and in training. Partial Garde covers just the shoulder and arm and may be used to parry blows but otherwise provides no protective value.

SPANGALOR

This lightweight and flexible form of metallic cloth replaced light chain mesh sometime around the year 600 of the New Age. The Cymrilian material offers the same protection as chain mesh, but it is as light and comfortable as cloth. Spangalor is also valued for its decorative qualities; a garish, light-weight variety known as silversparkle is favored by some Cymrilians.

XAMBRIAN SILVER GAUNTLETS

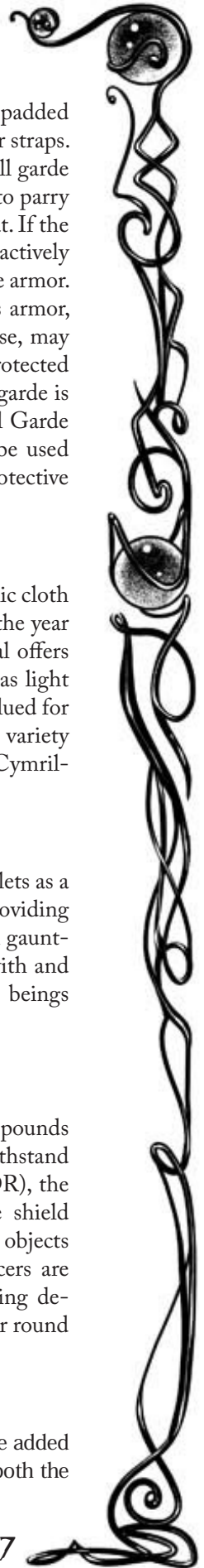
Xambrian wizard hunters wear these gauntlets as a symbol of their profession. In addition to providing a +1 bonus to Parry attempts, the chain mesh gauntlets allow Xambrians to physically grapple with and parry attacks from Reincarnators and other beings affected only by magic and silver.

SHIELDS

Information on shields includes weight in pounds (WT), maximum damage the shield can withstand in a single attack without breaking (Max. DR), the minimum strength required to employ the shield (STR) and average cost. Other parrying objects like Xambrian gauntlets and Danuvian bracers are also included here. Shields and other parrying devices grant the user one free Parry attempt per round without suffering a Multiple Action penalty.

SHIELD STUDS AND SPIKES

Numerous heavy metal studs or spikes can be added to any variety of shield, thereby increasing both the



maximum damage the shield can withstand in a single attack without breaking (Max. DR) and the damage it inflicts when used to bash an opponent. Studs are more effective for resisting damage, while spikes are more effective for inflicting damage. A shield cannot have both studs and spikes.

For studded shields: increase the Cost by half, the Max. DR by a third, and Weight by a quarter; add +1 to the STR rating, and increase the shield bash DR by 1. **For spiked shields:** double the Cost, increase the Max. DR by a sixth, and Weight by a quarter; add +1 to the STR rating, and increase the shield bash DR by 3. These rules represent iron studs and spikes. For spikes and studs of other metals, apply the material modifiers to the basic spiked or studded shield.

SHIELD TYPE	WT	Max.		Cost
		DR	STR	
Bracers, black iron (Danuvian)	3	25	-1	20 g.l.
Bracers, blue iron (Mandalan)	1	25	-2	100 g.l.
Buckler, adamant	6	40	+0	350 g.l.
Buckler, black iron	6	20	+0	12 g.l.
Buckler, blue iron	2	20	-1	60 g.l.
Buckler, hide/wood	2	10	-1	3 s.p.
Buckler, red iron	3	20	+0	30 g.l.
Garde, Partial	10	n/a	+0	100 g.l.
Shield, adamant	20	60	+1	400 g.l.
Shield, black iron	20	30	+1	20 g.l.
Shield, blue iron	5	30	-1	100 g.l.
Shield, hide/wood	5	15	-1	5 s.p.
Shield, red iron	10	30	0	40 g.l.
Shield, zaratan shell	7	20	0	2 g.l.

GENERAL EQUIPMENT

While there is an abundance of equipment, apparel and other items available for Talislanta characters, the vast majority requires little explanation. Some items are described below to provide specific game mechanics as needed. More specialized equipment like thaumaturgical and alchemical substances, enchanted items, poisons and medicines, conveyances and even siege weapons can be found in the *Game-master's Guide to Talislanta*.

Aamanian Holy Symbol: These simple medallions depict the all-seeing eye of Aa the Omniscient, the patron deity of Aaman. They are non-magical in nature.

Alchemical Test Kit: This is a pouch containing amberglass vials, pipettes, and other items used to test and identify mixtures or substances of various sorts. A skilled alchemist can use this kit to identify potions, powders, poisons, dusts, and other substances. Each kit contains enough materials for ten tests.

Botanomancer's Toolkit: This kit contains the soil additives and herbal extracts used to reshape plants are herbal mixtures that any botanomancer can create. These mixtures can be applied to any plant and need not be specially made for specific plants. A standard

kit of herbal mixtures that weighs 2 lb. and contains chemicals sufficient to reshape up to a dozen plants.



Caduceus: One of the thaumaturge's most important tools, these wands are used to activate the innate properties of various types of essences. Only a character trained in Thaumaturgy can utilize the properties of a caduceus. They are rarely made for sale, as those who use them know how to craft their own. With a caduceus and the correct quantity of quintessence, a thaumaturge can solidify, gassify or liquify substances, or identify the properties of a given object or substance.

Candle: A candle dimly illuminates a 5-foot radius and burns for 1 hour.

Chain: Breanking a chain is a Difficult to Extreme degree of difficulty on a STR roll.

Crowbar: A crowbar grants a +2 bonus on STR rolls made to pry open a door or similar item. If used in combat, treat a crowbar as a club.

Durnean Cusps: These devices are made of finely polished crystal, usually colored violet, blue, or green. The Gnomekin of Durne wear cusps to protect



their sensitive eyes from light when traveling above ground.

Glass Worker's Tools: These special tools include the items needed for work crafting items from glass. Without them, a character must use improvised tools (-10 penalty on skill roll), if they can do the job at all.

Grapnel: Throwing a grappling hook successfully requires a Partial Success on the Action table using the Weapon (thrown) skill. The degree of difficulty is determined by the GM.

Hammer: If a hammer is used in combat, treat it as a club.

Healer's Kit: A Healer's kit contains various bandages and compresses along with herbs, disinfectants and other basic medicines. It provides a +2 bonus on Heal rolls. A healer's kit is exhausted after ten uses.

Ink: This is black ink. You can buy ink in other colors, but it costs twice as much.

Lamp, Common: A lamp clearly illuminates a 15-foot radius, provides shadowy illumination out to a 30-foot radius, and burns for 6 hours on a pint of oil. You can carry a lamp in one hand.

Lantern, Hooded: A hooded lantern clearly illuminates a 30-foot radius and provides shadowy illumination in a 60-foot radius. It burns for 6 hours on a pint of oil. You can carry a hooded lantern in one hand.

Lock: The degree of difficulty to open a lock with the Locks skill depends on the lock's quality: simple (+5), average (+05), good (-5), or superior (-7). Locks of Kasmiran design are always of superior or better quality.

Manacles: Manacles can bind a human-sized creature. For a larger creature, manacles cost ten times the indicated amount. Manacles for tiny creatures (like Whisps or Chromids) must be custom made and the cost will general be twenty times the listed amount or more.

Metal Worker's Tools: These special tools include the items needed for work crafting items from metal. Without them, a character must use improvised tools (-5 penalty on skill roll), if they can do the job at all.

Oil: A pint of oil burns for 6 hours in a lantern. You can use a flask of oil as a splash weapon. Use the

Weapon (thrown) skill and the resulting burning oil will cover a 5 foot radius.

Pentadrille: Pentadrille is a popular pastime among Cymrilians, and to a lesser extent, the Hadjin. The game consists of a pentagram-shaped board engraved with arcane symbols and fashioned of green glass. Playing pieces carved from colored crystal are used to represent wizards (the players), devils (the wizard's servants, also controlled by the player), and various types of demons; the latter move about at random, impelled by a minor enchantment imbued within the board. Five players compete against each other, with the object of the game to establish control of the board by occupying three of the five pentagram points. Pentadrille dates back to the early Archaen Age, and may be based on the history of the Thane, ancient ancestors of the Black Savants.

Quatrillion: Quatrillion is a game played by the Sarista gypsies, using a deck of sixty-four circular cards. Many variations of play are possible, with the object to gain high cards or "*the Fortuna*," a card depicting the Sarista Goddess of Luck and Chance. Quatrillion is always played for money.

Ram, Portable: This iron-shod wooden beam provides a you a +4 on STR rolls made to break open a door.

Scale, Merchant's: A scale grants a +2 bonus on Appraise skill rolls involving items that are valued by weight, including anything made of precious metals.

Ska-Wae: A favorite of the Mangar corsairs, skawae (the name means "think fast" in the Mangar dialect) is a game of chance and skill played with curved daggers and dice, with the participants seated around a wooden table. Each round, players ante-up into a common pot and take turns rolling three six-sided dice. Whenever an individual rolls a 6 or a 12, he must snatch up the dice before the opponent seated to his left can strike his hand with a thrown dagger. Whoever succeeds wins the pot. Typically played while drinking grog or other intoxicants, skawae is not a game for the faint of heart. If the knife-thrower scores a critical hit, the dice-roller loses a finger, a not-uncommon occurrence among poor skawae players.

Spy-Tube: This Kasmiran device consists of two lenses, one affixed to either end of a flexible metal tube. A spy-tube can be used to see around corners, through narrow openings, and so forth. Portable spy-tubes telescope between one and four feet in length as needed; longer versions are often built into Kasmiran domiciles, allowing a view of the front entrance and surrounding area.

Stone Worker's Tools: These special tools include the items needed for work crafting items from stone. Without them, a character must use improvised tools (–5 penalty on skill roll), if they can do the job at all.

Thief-Catcher: This device fits into a pocket or pouch and is designed by Kasmiran trapmages to ward against pickpockets. The metal “jaws” snap shut on contact, inflicting DR 1 to anyone who attempts to reach into a pocket, pouch, or bag protected by this device without deactivating it first.

Thieves' Tools: This kit contains the tools needed to use the Locks skill and to use the Traps skill to disable mechanical traps. Without these tools, a character must improvise tools, and suffer a –5 penalty on the skill roll. Particularly well-made thieves' tools (like those of Kasmiran manufacture) may grant a bonus to the thief's skill check as well.

Tinder Box: Lighting a fire with a tinder box takes 2 rounds.

Torch: A torch burns for 1 hour, clearly illuminating a 20-foot radius and providing shadowy illumination out to a 40-foot radius. If a torch is used in combat, treat it as a one-handed improvised weapon that deals bludgeoning damage equal to that of a gauntlet of its size, plus 1 point of fire damage.

Trivarian: Trivarian is the favorite pastime of the dual-brained Sindarans, who are the only Talislantans capable of comprehending the abstract principles involved in this game. The board is a three-foot tall pyramid of translucent crystal, illuminated from within by a glowing orb (usually a scintilla) and suspended above a triangular table of polished stone by means of a silken cord. Amberglass orbs, marked with distinctive hieroglyphs, serve as the playing pieces. Three opponents play, each pitted against the other two. The players take turns inserting orbs into slots carved into the sides of the pyramid, thereby creating intricate patterns of light and color. The general objective is to establish control over the base of the pyramid; hence, masters of trivarian are referred to as Nadirs. In Sindar, spectators often bet on each round of a contest, as well as on its eventual winner. Wagers can also be placed on who will lose first and when. Nadirs gain status and political power, as trivarian is viewed as a reflection of mental capability.

Vial: A vial holds 1 ounce of liquid. The stoppered container usually is no more than 1 inch wide and 3 inches high. Amberglass vials are used for holding alchahest and other alchemical substances. Quicksilver vials are lined with quicksilver and used for holding vitriol.

Wood Worker's Tools: These special tools include the items needed for work crafting items from wood. Without them, a character must use improvised tools (–5 penalty on skill roll), if they can do the job at all.

Zodar: In popular usage, zodar is a game employing a deck of twenty cards, each depicting some aspect of Talislantan cosmology or metaphysics: the twin suns, the seven moons, or various fates and destinies. In ancient tradition, the zodar is a magical device used to cast divinations. Only the Rahastran cartomancers, wandering seers from the Wilderlands of Zaran, know the secrets of employing the zodar deck in this manner.

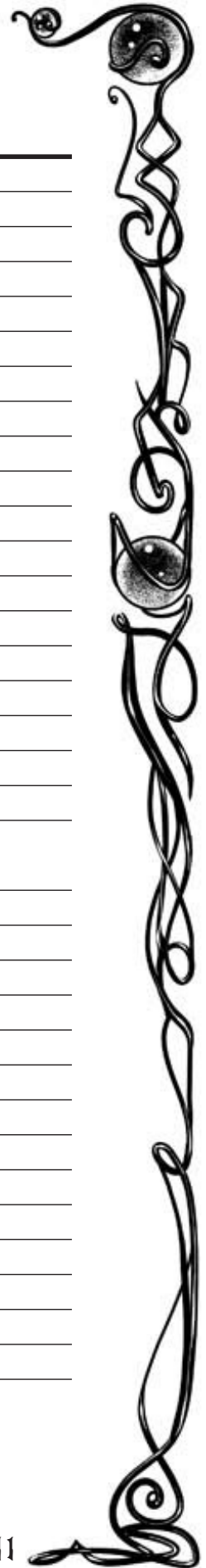
EQUIPMENT MASTER LISTS

The following is a list of equipment and supplies available in the world of Talislanta, including information such as price, weight, etc. Descriptions of weapons and armor can be found earlier in this chapter. Prices listed here reflect the average price for goods of standard quality, as found in regions where such goods are in abundant supply. Prices may be adjusted as follows:

- ▶ Half price for shoddy or used goods
- ▶ Double price or more for goods of superior quality or material, such as red iron.
- ▶ +50-200% in areas where such goods are rare or illegal.
- ▶ +10-40% for tariffs on imported goods
- ▶ Weights listed for metal weapons and gear are for black iron; use half weight for red iron or adamant and quarter weight for blue iron.

TRAVELER'S GEAR

Type	Cost
Backpack/Shoulder Bag	2g.l.
Bandolier belt	10g.l.
Bedroll	1 s.p.
Candle, tallow	1 c.p.
Chest, large (10,000 coins)	10g.l.
Chest, small (1,000 coins)	5g.l.
Coin purse (50 coins)	1 s.p.
Durnean cusps (pair)	2g.l.
Fan	1-5 s.p.
Flask, iron (1 pint)	1 s.p.
Flask, pottery (1 pint)	5 c.p.
Gourd (w/stopper; 1 quart)	1 c.p.
Grapnel (black iron)	2 s.p.
Lamp, common	2g.l.
Lamp oil (pint; one hour)	1g.l.
Lantern, hooded	4g.l.
Mirror, crystal	10g.l.
Mirror, metal	2g.l.
Pipe, smoking	1 s.p.
Pipe, water	5g.l.
Pouch, belt (100 coins)	2 s.p.
Pouch, shoulder (500 coins)	1g.l.
Rope (per foot)	1 c.p.
Rope ladder (per foot)	2 c.p.
Sack, cloth (1,000 coins)	1 c.p.
Sack, hide (1,500 coins)	1 s.p.
Strongbox, large (10,000 coins)	25g.l.
Strongbox, small (1,000 coins)	10g.l.
Tent	1g.l.
Tinder box	5 s.p.
Torch (burns four hours)	1 c.p.
Walking stick	1 s.p.
Waterskin, large (2 gallons)	5 s.p.
Waterskin, small (2 quarts)	2 s.p.
Wineskin (2 pints)	1 s.p.



TOOLS AND PROFESSIONAL EQUIPMENT

Item	Cost
Abacus	2 s.p.
Astrolabe (Sunra)	50 g.l.
Barrel (20 gallons)	5 s.p.
Botanomancer's Toolkit	10 g.l.
Caduceus	10,000 g.l.
Cage, metal (per cubic foot)	1 g.l.
Cage, wood (per cu. foot)	1 s.p.
Cask (1 gallon)	1 s.p.
Chain (per foot)	5 s.p.
Chart, astromantic	100 g.l.
Costume (fool/jester)	10+ g.l.
Costume (for stage)	25+ g.l.
Crowbar	2 s.p.
Crystal worker's tools	25 g.l.
Glass worker's tools	25 g.l.
Hammer	5 s.p..
Healer's kit (bandages, salves, etc.)	2 g.l.
Jeweler's tools	25 g.l.
Juggler's pins (each)	1 s.p.
Key	1 s.p.
Keyring	1 s.p.
Lock, Kashmir (per mechanism)	5 g.l.
Lock, simple	1 s.p.
Lock, average	1 g.l.
Lock, good	5 g.l.
Lock, superior	10 g.l.+
Locksmith's tools	20 g.l.
Logbook/ledger	2 g.l.
Loom	1 g.l.
Mallet	1 s.p.
Manacles	1 g.l.
Map	1+ g.l.
Metalworker's tools	50 g.l.
Net, dredging	2 g.l.
Net, fishing/throwing	1 s.p.
Notebook/folio	2 s.p.
Oil cloth (per square foot)	1 c.p.
Performer's make-up kit	2 g.l.

Pick /shovel	1 s.p.
Saw	2 s.p.
Seal (to stamp documents)	25 g.l.
Sharpening stone	5 c.p.
Spikes /pitons (10)	1 s.p.
Spy-tube	25 g.l.
Stone worker's tools	10 g.l.
Thespian's mask	5 s.p.
Thief-catcher (Kasmiran)	5 g.l.
Thieves' tools	20 g.l.
Veil, silk (dancer's)	1 g.l.
Vizard (costume masque)	1 s.p.
Winch	5 s.p.
Woodsman's axe	2 s.p.
Woodworker's tools	10 g.l.

CLOTHING

Type	Cost
Belt /Sash (leather /cloth)	2+ s.p.
Boots (cloth /hide)	5 s.p.
Boots (velvet /leather)	10+ g.l.
Bracers (leather)	5 s.p.
Cap (cloth /hide)	5 c.p.
Cap (velvet, satin)	10 g.l.
Cape (cloth /hide)	2 s.p.
Cape (silk, sateen)	5+ g.l.
Cloak (cloth /hide)	5 s.p.
Cloak (fur)	5 g.l.
Cloak (hooded)	6+ s.p.
Cloak (velvet /brocade)	10+ g.l.
Gauntlets (chain)	10 g.l.
Gauntlets (thick hide)	5 s.p.
Gloves (hide /cloth)	1 s.p.
Harness (leather)	1 g.l.
Headband (cloth /hide)	1 c.p.
Headband (silver)	5 g.l.
Loincloth (cloth)	1 c.p.
Loincloth (hide /fur)	2 c.p.
Ritual vestments	10+ g.l.
Robe (elaborate)	20+ g.l.



Robe (simple)	5s.p.
Sandals/slippers	5c.p.
Scabbard (leather/hide)	1 g.l.
Scarf /Headress	4+ s.p.
Slippers (elaborate)	10+ g.l.
Smock/dress (simple)	2s.p.
Smock/gown (elaborate)	20+ g.l.
Tunic/breeches (cloth)	1 g.l.
Tunic/breeches (velvet)	10+ g.l.

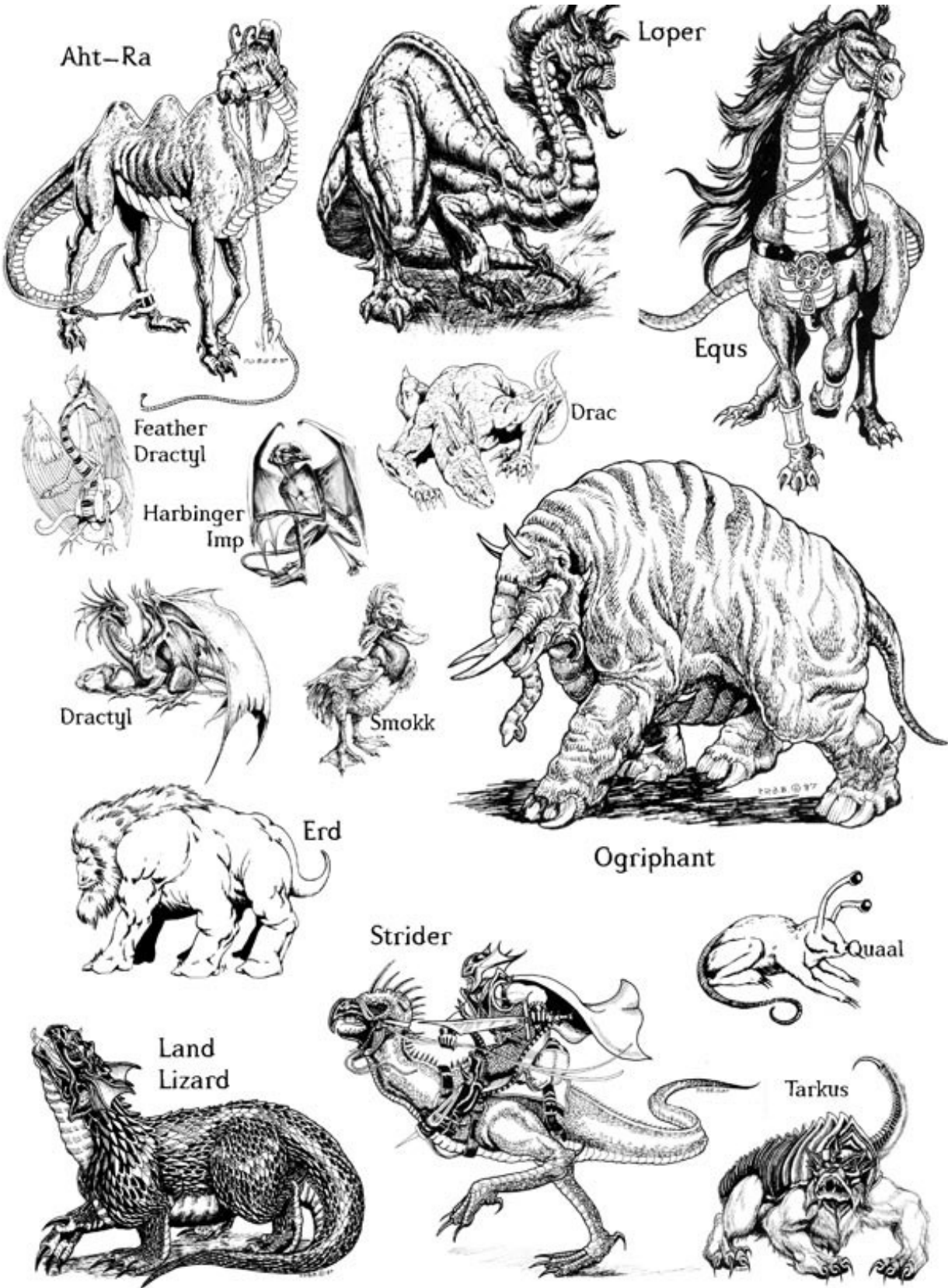
CONVEYANCES

Type	Cost
Barge, cargo	5000 g.l.
Carriage (fancy)	200 g.l.
Cart, small	5 g.l.
Galley	10,000 g.l.
Kayak	20 g.l.
Palanquin	100 g.l.
Raft	2 g.l.
Rowboat	12 g.l.
Ship, merchant	15,000 g.l.
Ship, warship	20,000 g.l.
Skiff/punt	10 g.l.
Sled	8 g.l.
Wagon, dray (cargo)	200 g.l.
Wagon, enclosed	100 g.l.
Wagon, open	50 g.l.

*More conveyances, along with rules governing vehicle movement and combat can be found in the **Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta**.*

BEASTS

Type	Cost
Aht-ra (any type)	200-800 g.l.
Avir	50+ g.l.
Avir, talking	100+ g.l.
Catdrac (trained)	400 g.l.
Catdrac (young)	100 g.l.
Chang	25 g.l.
Drac (trained)	250 g.l.
Drac (untrained)	50 g.l.





Type	Cost
Draconid	600 g.l.
Durge	50 g.l.
Erd	500 g.l.
Equs, Darkmane*	200 g.l.
Equs, Gramane	300+ g.l.
Equs, Silvermane	500+ g.l.
Equs, Snowmane	400+ g.l.
Feather Dractyl	400 g.l.
Gold beetle (live)	2,000 g.l.
Gruffan	20 g.l.
Ironshrike (trained)	200 g.l.
Kirryan (trained)	1200 g.l.
Land lizard	1,000 g.l.
L' latha (trained)	400 g.l.
L' latha (untrained)	100 g.l.
Loper	200 g.l.
Machakka (trained)	850 g.l.
Malavrax (trained)*	1500 g.l.
Mandragore	500 g.l.
Mangonel lizard	2,000 g.l.
Marsh strider	300+ g.l.
Monitor imp	2,000+ g.l.
Moonfish	100+ g.l.
Nighthawk (trained)	200+ g.l.
Ogriphant	800+ g.l.
Quaal (trained)	50+ g.l.
Rayk (trained)	1000 g.l.
Rayk (untrained)	350 g.l.
Rictus (trained)	30 g.l.
Rock urchin (live)	10 g.l.
Sardonicus	600-1,200 g.l.
Servitor imp	45 g.l.
Silkwyrm	1 g.l.
Silkwyrm (trained) *	1,000 g.l.
Strider	500+ g.l.
Tarkus *	1,000 g.l.

* *Rarely sold.*

TACK & HARNESS

Type	Cost
Barding	*
Battle rig (land lizard)	20g.l.
Battle tower (land dragon)	1,000g.l.
Harness (any steed)	1 g.l.
Saddle bag	1 g.l.
Sedan chair (ogriphant)	40g.l.
Yoke (per burden beast)	1 s.p.

* Base price is the cost for comparable armor for humanoids. For aht-ra, equus, and strider mounts: multiply cost by 5. For land lizard, mangonel lizard, and ogriphant: multiply cost by 10. For land dragon: multiply cost by 50.

ALCHEMICAL & MAGICAL EQUIPMENT

Item	Cost
Alchemical test kit	5g.l.
Alembic	1 g.l.
Apothecary jars (12)	1 g.l.
Bellows	5 s.p.
Blowtube (alloy)	2g.l.
Blowtube (silver)	25g.l.
Brazier	2 s.p.
Capsule (Sindaran; 10)	1 g.l.
Censer	5 s.p.
Crucible	1 g.l.
Crystal ball (unenchanted)	20g.l.
Furnace	200g.l.
Hour glass	5g.l.
Incense	1 s.p.
Ink, sepia (per ounce)	1 s.p.
Inkwell (crystal)	5 s.p.
Inkwell (pottery)	2 s.p.
Mirror (obsidian)	200g.l.
Mirror (silver)	10g.l.
Mortar and pestle	1 g.l.
Piping / tubing (per foot)	1 s.p.
Prism	2g.l.
Quill pen	1 s.p.
Retort	1 g.l.
Scroll (hide)	5 s.p.
Scroll (parchment)	1 g.l.





Item	Cost
Scroll case (bone)	1 g.l.
Scroll case (hide/wood)	5 s.p.
Scroll case (silver)	10 g.l.
Spell book (iron-bound)	50 g.l.
Spell book (leather-bound)	20 g.l.
Spell book (silver-bound)	100 g.l.
Sphere (per inch diameter)	1 g.l.
Tongs	1 s.p.
Vat (per cubit foot)	5 g.l.
Vial (12)	2 g.l.
Vial, amberglass (each)	20 g.l.
Vial, quicksilver (each)	20 g.l.
Wand (unenchanting, costly)	100 g.l.
Wand (unenchanting, simple)	10 g.l.

► 100 times listed price for amberglass wares in place

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Type	Cost
Chime	1 s.p.
Clarion	20 g.l.
Cymbals	1 g.l.
Drum	1 g.l.
Four-man bellows horn	200+ g.l.
Glass bells	5 g.l.
Glass flute	2 g.l.
Gong	1-10 g.l.
Gossamer harp	500+ g.l.
Intricate spiral-horn	50+ g.l.
Tambour	20+ g.l.
Triole	10+ g.l.
Water chimes	5 g.l.

AMUSEMENTS

Item	Cost
Cloth/wooden ball	1 c.p.
Pentadrille	500+ g.l.
Puzzle-lock, Kasmiran	10+ g.l.
Quatrillion deck	2 g.l.
Ska-Wæe	
Trivarian	800+ g.l.
Zodar deck (unenchanted)	20+ g.l.

FOOD & LODGING

Type	Cost
Amber wine *	2 s.p.
Aquavit *	2 g.l.
Blossom wine *	5 s.p.
Chakos *	6 s.p.
Giant waterbug (Aeriad meal)	2 s.p.
Grog *	1 c.p.
Mandalan tea *	1 s.p.
Meal (full)	1+ g.l.
Meal (simple)	1 s.p.
Mochan *	1 g.l.
Mushroom ale *	5 c.p.
Night's lodging (good)	2+ g.l.
Night's lodging (average)	5 s.p.
Quaga (shellfish; delicacy)	1 g.l.
Road rations (per week)	3 s.p.
Rock urchin (steamed)	10 g.l.
Seeds (Aeriad meal)	1 s.p.
Skoryx *	10 g.l.
Stable fee (basic)	1 s.p.
Stable (with groom's fee)	2 s.p.
Tazian fire-ale *	1 g.l.
Thaecian nectar *	5 g.l.
Vinesap *	1 g.l.
Zandir wine *	1 g.l.

**Prices listed are for single glass or cup.*

Multiply by 10 for bottle or pitcher, by 100 for cask or keg.

INDEX

A

Aamahd 14
 Aaman 14
 Aamanian 14, 142
 Aamanian Copper 289
 Aberrant Forest 16
 Acolyte 209
 Acquiring New Skills 47
 Acquiring New Spells 83
 Acquiring Quirks 271
 Action Table 37
 Action Table Modifiers 38
 Advance 58
 Aeriad 13, 144
 Age 202
 Age of Confusion 9
 Ahazu 27, 146
 Aimed Shots 58
 Airman 209
 Alchemist 210
 Alchemy 267
 Allegiances 43
 Alumnus 211
 Amysram 305
 Antique Coins 289
 Apprentice Craftsman 211
 Aramut 19
 Archaen 140
 Archaen Age 7
 Archaen Spells 66
 Archer 212
 Archetypes 242
 Ariane 25, 148
 Arim 14
 Arimite 14, 150
 Aristocrat 212
 Armor 303
 Artist 213
 Assassin 213
 Astar 10
 Astromancy 87
 Attack 52
 Attack Mode 70
 Attribute Adjustments 208
 Attribute Benchmarks 41
 Attribute Rolls 41
 Attributes 39, 40
 Axis River 13, 29

B

Badijan 15
 Bandit 214
 Banishment 73
 Batre 27
 Batrean 27
 Beast Lore 270
 Beastmaster 214
 Beastmen 25
 Beasts 313
 Beggar 215
 Black Mystic Cult 19
 Black Savants 24, 29
 Bodor 17
 Bodyguard 215
 Borean 23
 Botanomancer 216
 Botanomancy 267
 Burglar 216
 Buying Spells 84

C

Cabal Magicus 29
 Caduceus 307
 Captain 217
 Carantheum 18
 Cartomancy 90
 Chana 20
 Character Creation 139
 Charisma Rating 40
 Chroniclers, The 22
 Close Attacks 52
 Clothing 312
 Combat 48
 Combat Modifiers 51
 Combat Rating 40
 Combat Skills 256
 Combat Tactics 52
 Common Skills 253
 Con Artist 217
 Conceal 74
 Conjuraction Mode 70
 Constitution Rating 40
 Conveyances 313
 Counterspells 66
 Courtesan 218
 Creating Enchanted Items 75

Crescent Isles 29
 Critical Wounds 59
 Cryptomancy 94
 Crystalomancer 218
 Crystalomancy 97
 Cult Wars 15
 Currency 289
 Cymril 11
 Cymrilian 152
 Cymrilians 11

D

Damage 44
 Damage Rating 48, 50
 Danelek 17
 Danuvia 17
 Danuvian 154
 Danuvian Parrying Bracers 305
 Danuvians 17
 Dark Coast 27
 Darkling 25
 Daughter of Terra 219
 Dead River 12
 Defense 55
 Degree of Difficulty 38
 Desert Kingdoms 18
 Dexterity Rating 40
 Dhuna 15, 156
 Diplomat 219
 Disciple 220
 Dispel Magic 270
 Displaced Peoples 17
 Divination Mode 74
 Djaffa 18
 Djaffir 158
 Djaffir, 18
 Dodge 55
 Dracarta 18
 Dracartan 18, 160
 Dracartan Pyramid 289
 Druas 220
 Dual-Encephalon 274
 Duelist 221
 Durne 11

E

Eastern Lands 20
 Effectuator 221

Elementalism 101
 Enchanter 222
 Enchantment Mode 74
 Encumbrance 44
 Engineer 222
 Enhanced Spells 84
 Equipment 287, 307
 Escaping 55
 Exarch 15
 Expenditures 288
 Experience Points 47
 Extra-dimensional entities 140

F

Farad 27
 Farad Sul 289
 Faradun 27
 Far Isles 29
 Ferran 162
 Flee 57
 Food 318
 Forgotten Age 7

G

Gambler 223
 Game Balance 140
 Gao 27
 Gao-Din 27
 Garde 305
 Gladiator 223
 Gnomekin 11, 164
 Golarin, Plains of 25
 gold lumen 289
 Gold Pentacle 290
 Gold Pentacles 289
 Grappling Attacks 54
 Great Barrier Wall 15
 Great Disaster, The 8, 16
 Green Men 27
 Grimoire 138
 Gryph 25, 166
 Guide 224

H

Hadj 17
 Harak 20
 Harakin 20
 Healer 224
 Healing 44
 Herbalist 225

Hex 82
 Hierophant 14
 Hit Points 41
 Hunter 225
 Hussar 226

I

Ice Giants 24
 Illusion Mode 77
 Improving Skills 46
 Imria 28
 Imrian 28
 Imrian Brass Ring 290
 Imrian Brass Rings 290
 Income 288
 Influence Mode 78
 Initiate Witch 226
 Intelligence Rating 40
 Intent 38, 45, 49
 Invocation 105
 Iron Citadel 25

J

Jaka 24, 168
 Jhangara 27
 Jhangaran 27, 170

K

Kang 21, 172
 Kanquan 275
 Kasmir 12
 Kasmiran 12, 174
 Khadun 19
 Kharakhan Giants 17
 Kharakhan Wastes 16
 Khazad 24

L

L'Haan 23
 L'Haan Adamant 290
 L'Haan Adamants 290
 Language Skills 254
 Ichemical Adept 210
 Life and Death 44
 Lifespan 202
 Litigator 227
 Lodging 318
 Lost Sea 24

M

Magic 63
 Magical Mishaps 66
 Magical Skills 267
 Magician 227
 Magic Rating 40
 Malum 25
 Mandalan 21, 176
 Mandaquan 275
 Mangar 29
 Maruk 17
 Marukan 17, 178
 Master Craftsman 228
 Merchant 228
 Mirin 23, 179, 180
 Modes 63, 68, 268
 Mog 29
 Mogroth 29
 Money 287
 Movement 43, 57
 Move Mode 79
 Mud People 27
 Multiple Actions 38
 Muse 10, 182
 Musician 229
 Mystic 229
 Mysticism 109
 Mystic Warrior 230

N

Narandu 23
 Natural Magic 114
 Natural Telepathy 270
 Necromancy 118
 Necron 24
 Nefaratus 29
 Negative Quirks 281
 Neomorph 140
 Neophyte Magician 230
 New Age, The 9, 32
 Nomadic 231
 Novice Thaumaturge 231

O

Oceanian Radiant 290
 Oceanian Radiants 290
 Oceanus 29
 Opposed Actions 38
 Orders 63, 86



Orgovian 184
Orgovian Yatma 290
Orthodoxist 14, 27

P

Pacts 71
Parry 56
Paths 207, 208
Peddler 232
Perception Rating 40
Performing Skills 258
Phaedran Empire 14
Phantas 29
Phantasian 29, 186
Pickpocket 232
Plains of Golarin 25
Playable Races 140
Positive Quirks 272
Preffered Skills 47
Priest 233
Protection Rating 48, 50

Q

Quan 21
Quan Emperor 290
Quan Emperors 290
Quan Empire 21
Quriks 271
Quirks 208, 281

R

Races 140
Rahastran 17
Rajan 19
Rajinnar 19
Ranged Attacks 53
Ranged Combat Rating 40
Ranger 233
Reaction Rolls 43
Recovery 59
Retreat 57
Revenants 15
Rural 234

S

Sailor 234
Salvager 235
Sarista 15, 188

Savant 235
Sawila 29
Scholarly Skills 259
Scout 236
Seven Kingdoms 10
Shadinn 19
Shadow Realm 25
Shaman 236
Shamanic Student 237
Shamanism 122
Shan-ya 278
Sharna 16
Shattra 15
Shields 50, 307
Side Effects 85
Silvanus 15
Sindar 12
Sindaran 12, 190
Sinking Land 25
Skill Benchmarks 253
Skill Ranks 208
Skill Ratings 45
Skill Rolls 45
Skills 45, 253
Skills List 285
Snipe 25
Southern Rim 27
Spangalor 305
Special Abilities 270
Speed Rating 40
Spellcasting 64
Spell Definitions 63
Spell Penalty 67
Spell Research 66, 84
Spells, Enhanced 84
Spells, Signature 137
Spells Casting, Archaen 66
Spiritforce 279
Starting Gear 208
Starting Spells 83
Strength Rating 40
Stryx 25
Stunts 58
Subdual Attacks 55
Summoning Spells 71
Sunra 21, 192

T

Talismancer 237
Talismancy 268
Tamaranth 25

Tarun 27
Taz 13
Tazian Combat 280
Teamster 238
Telempathy 270
Thaecia 29
Thaecian 29, 194
Thaecian Isles 30
Thane 24
Thaumaturge 238
Thaumaturgy 269
Thieving Skills 261
Thrall 13, 196
Throwing 53
Thrown weapons 53
Time 47
Trade Skills 263
Transmutation Mode 80
Tribal 239

U

Ur 25
Urag 25
Urban 239

V

Vajra 21
Vardune 13
Vashay 13
Virago 281
Volcanic Hills 22

W

Wandering 240
Ward Mode 81
Warrior 240
Watchstone 25
Weapons 290, 300, 302
Werewood 15
Western Lands 14
Wilderlands of Zaran 16
Wilderness Skills 266
Wild Folk 7
Wildmen 24
Wild Races 140
Will Rating 40
Witch 241
Witchcraft 126
Witchfolk 20
Witch Hunter 241

Wizard Hunter 242
Wizardry 131

X

Xambrian 17, 198
Xanadas 22

Y

Yatma 290
Yitek 17
Yrmania 24
Yrmanian 24

Z

Zagir, 19
Zandir 15, 200
Zandir Crescent 290
Zandir Crescents 290
Zandir Swordsmanship 281
Zandu 15
Zanth 15



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PLAYER CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

SKILLS				
SKILL NAME	RATING	SKILL LEVEL	ATTRI-BUTE MOD	ATTRI-BUTE
Acrobatics				DEX
Acting				CHA
Administrator				CHA
Agriculture				INT
Alchemy				INT
Analysis				INT
Anatomy				INT
Animal Handler				WIL
Antiquarian				INT
Appraiser				PER
Arcane Lore				INT
Art				PER
Artillerist				RC
Assassinate				INT
Botanomancy				INT
Brawling				CR
Bribe				CHA
Caravan Master				CHA
Coerce				STR
Culture ()				INT
Culture ()				INT
Climbing				DEX
Command				CHA
Conveyance ()				DEX
Cook				PER
Cryptography				INT
Dance				DEX
Deception				CHA
Disable Device				DEX
Doctrines ()				INT
Engineer				INT
Espionage				PER
Evade				DEX
Forgery				DEX
Fashion				CHA
Fishing				INT
Gambling				INT
Gamecraft				INT
Geography				INT
Guard				PER
Guide				INT
Haggle				CHA
Handicraft ()				*
Handicraft ()				*
Healer				INT
Herb Lore				INT
History				INT
Interrogate				INT
Laborer				STR
Language ()				INT
Language ()				INT
Language ()				INT
Legerdemain				DEX
Linguistics				INT

SKILLS				
SKILL NAME	RATING	SKILL LEVEL	ATTRI-BUTE MOD	ATTRI-BUTE
Lip Reading				PER
Litigator ()				INT
Livestock				INT
Meditation				WIL
Merchant				CHA
Mimicry				PER
Mining				INT
Naturalism				INT
Oratory				CHA
Pilot ()				PER
Ride ()				DEX
Sabotage				INT
Salvager				PER
Scout				PER
Seduce				CHA
Signal				INT
Song				CHA
Stealth				DEX
Streewise				INT
Survival ()				CON
Survival ()				CON
Swim				STR
Tactics ()				INT
Talismancy				MR
Thaumaturgy				INT
Torture				DEX
Traps				DEX
Tracking				PER
Underworld				INT

Quirks	
Quirk	Effect

Background

ORDER	Mode	Lvl	Mod	Rtg
	Attack			
Physical Components	Conjuration			
	Divination			
	Enchantment			
Advantages	Influence			
	Illusion			
	Move			
Limitations	Transmutation			
	Ward			

Spell Penalty:



[illegible]