TALISLANTA

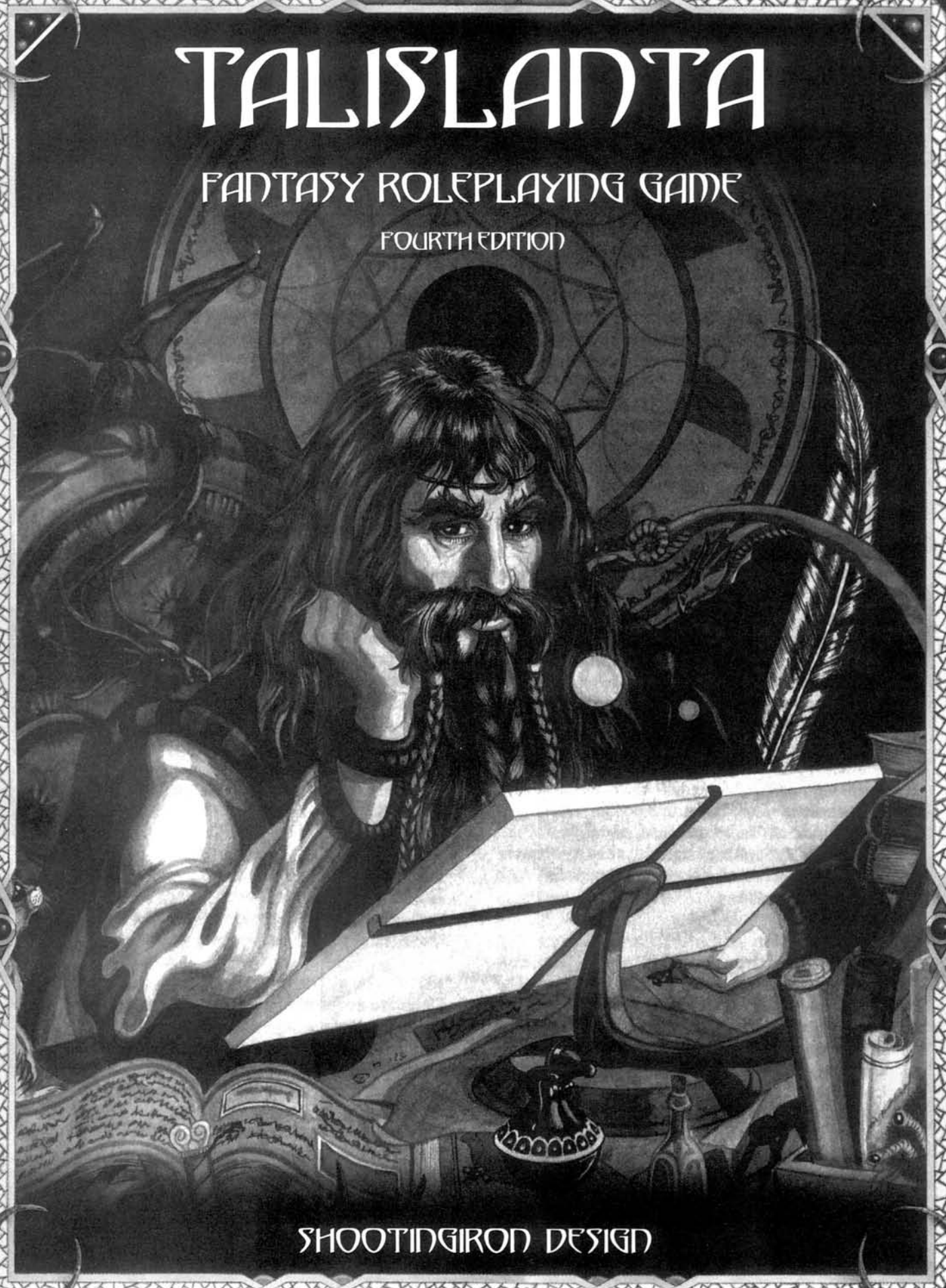


FANTASY ROLEPLAYING

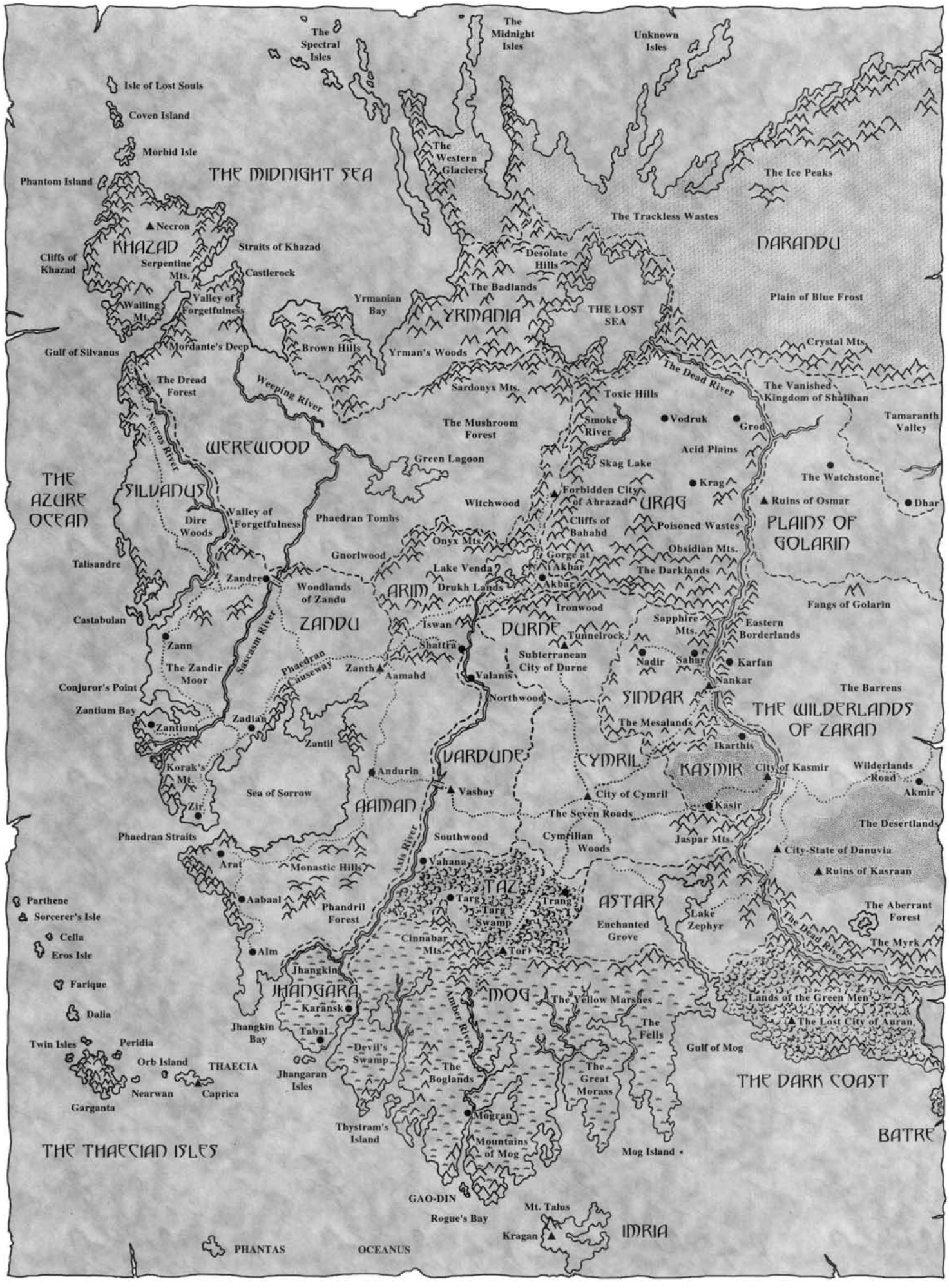
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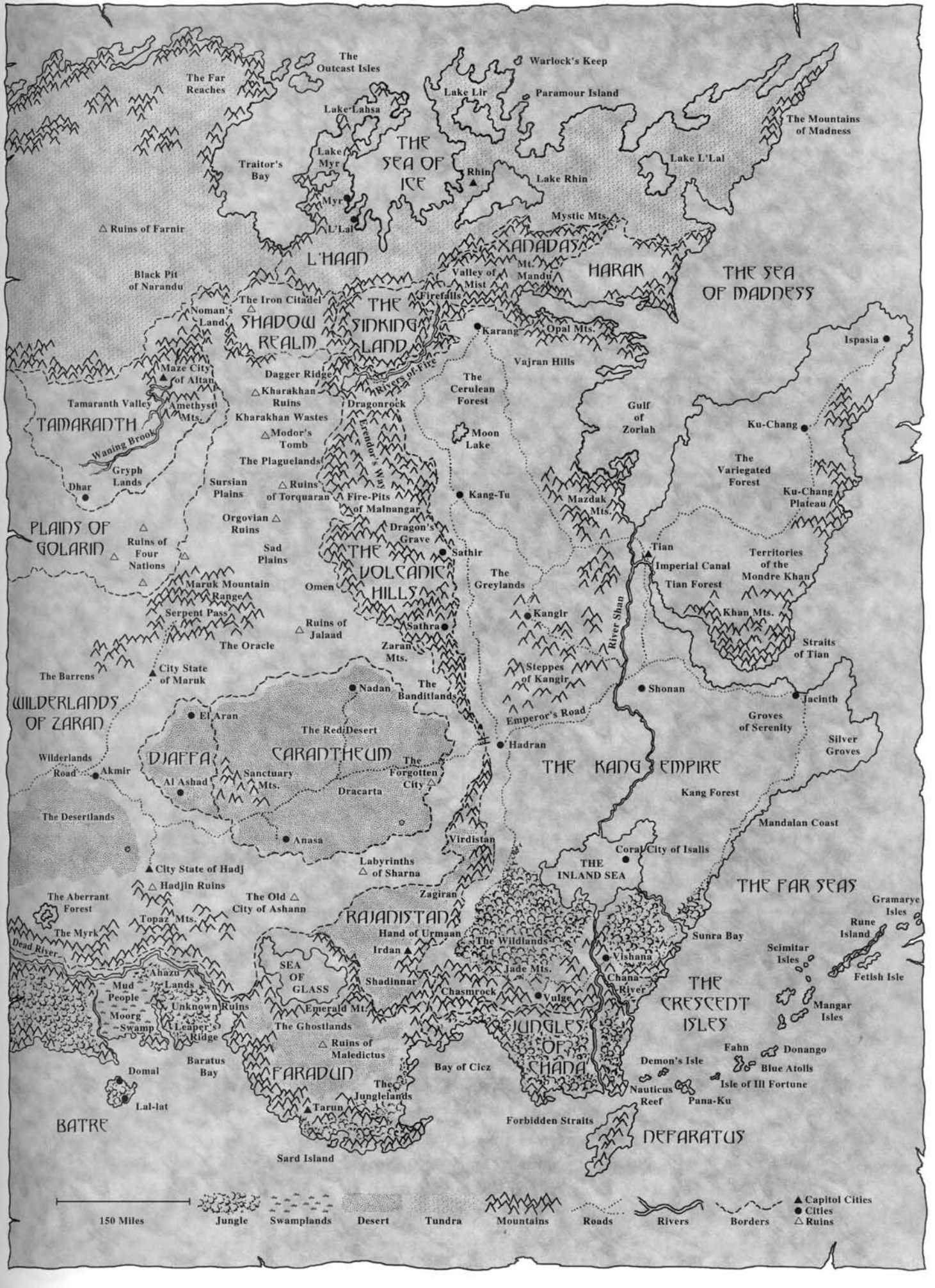
FANTASY ROLEPLAYING GAME

FOURTH EDITION



SHOOTINGIRON DESIGN


The Spectral Isles
The Midnight Isles
Unknown Isles
Isle of Lost Souls
Coven Island
Morbid Isle
Phantom Island
THE MIDNIGHT SEA
The Western Glaciers
The Ice Peaks
The Trackless Wastes
Necron
KHAZAD
Straits of Khazad
Cliffs of Khazad
Serpentine Mts.
Castlerock
Desolate Hills
NARANDU
The Badlands
Plain of Blue Frost
Wailing Mt.
Valley of Forgetfulness
Yrmanian Bay
YRMADIA
THE LOST SEA
Gulf of Silvanus
Mordante's Deep
Brown Hills
Yrman's Woods
Crystal Mts.
The Dead River
The Dread Forest
Weeping River
Sardonyx Mts.
Toxic Hills
The Vanished Kingdom of Shalihan
Necros River
The Mushroom Forest
Smoke River
Vodruk
Grod
Tamaranth Valley
WEREWOOD
Acid Plains
Green Lagoon
Skag Lake
THE AZURE OCEAN
SILVANUS
Krag
The Watchstone
Forbidden City of Ahrazad
URAG
Ruins of Osmar
Dhar
Witchwood
Valley of Forgetfulness
Phaedran Tombs
Cliffs of Bahahd
Poisoned Wastes
PLAINS OF GOLARIN
Dire Woods
Onyx Mts.
Obsidian Mts.
Gnorlwood
Gorge at Akbar
Talisandre
Lake Venda
Akbar
The Darklands
Zandre
Woodlands of Zandu
ARIM
Drukh Lands
Fangs of Golarin
Ironwood
Castabulan
ZANDU
Iswan
DURNE
Sapphire Mts.
Eastern Borderlands
Tunnelrock
Zann
Shattra
Subterranean City of Durne
Nadir
Sahar
Karfan
Sascasm River
Phaedran Causeway
Zanth
Aamahd
Valanis
Nankar
The Zandir Moor
Conjuror's Point
Northwood
SINDAR
The Barrens
Zantium Bay
Zadian
Zantium
THE WILDERLANDS OF ZARAN
The Mesalands
Ikarthis
Zantil
VARDUNE
CYMRIL
KASMIR
City of Kasmir
Wilderlands Road
Korak's Mt.
Andurin
Vashay
City of Cymril
Akmir
Sea of Sorrow
AAMAN
Zir
The Seven Roads
Kasir
The Desertlands
Phaedran Straits
Southwood
Cymrilian Woods
Jaspar Mts.
Axis River
City-State of Danuvia
Arat
Monastic Hills
Vahanu
Ruins of Kasraan
TAZ
Parthene
Aabaal
Targ
Trang
ASTAR
The Aberrant Forest
Sorcerer's Isle
Phandril Forest
Targ Swamp
Lake Zephyr
Enchanted Grove
Cella
Cinnabar Mts.
Tor
The Myrk
Eros Isle
Alm
Jhangkin
Farique
JHANGARA
MOG
The Yellow Marshes
Lands of the Green Men
Karansk
Amber River
The Lost City of Auran
Dalia
Jhangkin Bay
Tabal
The Fells
Twin Isles
Peridia
Devil's Swamp
Gulf of Mog
Orb Island
THAECIA
Jhangaran Isles
The Boglands
The Great Morass
THE DARK COAST
Nearwan
Caprica
Garganta
Mogran
Thystram's Island
BATRE
THE THAECIAN ISLES
Mountains of Mog
Mog Island
GAO-DIN
Mt. Talus
Rogue's Bay
Kragan
IMRIA
PHANTAS
OCEANUS


The Outcast Isles
Warlock's Keep
The Far Reaches
Lake Lir
Paramour Island
Lake Lahsa
The Mountains of Madness
THE SEA OF ICE
Lake Myr
Traitor's Bay
Rhin
Lake Rhin
Lake L'Lal
Myr
Mystic Mts.
Ruins of Farnir
L'Lal
KANADAS
L'HAAN
Black Pit of Narandu
Valley of Mist
Mt. Mandu
HARAK
THE SEA OF MADNESS
The Iron Citadel
Firefalls
Noman's Land
SHADOW REALM
THE SINKING LAND
Karang
Opal Mts.
Ispasia
Vajran Hills
Maze City of Altan
Dagger Ridge
Rivers of Fire
The Cerulean Forest
Gulf of Zoriah
Tamaranth Valley
Amethyst Mts.
Kharakhan Ruins
Dragonrock
Ku-Chang
TAMARANTH
Kharakhan Wastes
Moon Lake
Waning Brook
Modor's Tomb
The Variegated Forest
Gryph Lands
The Plaguelands
Erendor's Way
Dhar
Sursian Plains
Ruins of Torquaran
Fire-Pits of Malnangar
Kang-Tu
Mazdak Mts.
Ku-Chang Plateau
Orgovian Ruins
Dragon's Grave
PLAINS OF GOLARIN
Ruins of Four Nations
Sad Plains
Sathir
Tian
Imperial Canal
Territories of the Mondre Khan
THE VOLCANIC HILLS
The Greylands
Tian Forest
Maruk Mountain Range
Omen
Kangir
Khan Mts.
Serpent Pass
River Shan
Ruins of Jalaad
Sathra
Straits of Tian
The Oracle
Zaran Mts.
The Barrens
City State of Maruk
Steppes of Kangir
Nadan
The Banditlands
Shonan
Jacinth
WILDERLANDS OF ZARAN
El Aran
Emperor's Road
Groves of Serenity
The Red Desert
Hadran
Silver Groves
Wilderlands Road
Akmir
DJAFFA
CARANTHEUM
The Forgotten City
THE KANG EMPIRE
Sanctuary Mts.
Al Ashad
Dracarta
Kang Forest
The Desertlands
Mandalan Coast
Anasa
Virdistan
Coral City of Isalis
City State of Hadj
Labyrinths of Sharna
THE INLAND SEA
THE FAR SEAS
Hadjin Ruins
The Aberrant Forest
The Old City of Ashann
Zagiran
Gramarye Isles
Topaz Mts.
RAJANISTAN
Rune Island
The Myrk
Hand of Urmaan
The Wildlands
Sunra Bay
Dead River
Irdan
Vishana
Scimitar Isles
Ahazu Lands
SEA OF GLASS
Jade Mts.
Fetish Isle
Shadinnar
Chana River
Mud People
Chasmrock
Vulge
THE CRESCENT ISLES
Unknown Ruins
Emerald Mt.
Mangar Isles
Moorg Swamp
Leaper's Ridge
The Ghostlands
JUNGLES OF CHADA
Ruins of Maledictus
Fahn
Donango
Demon's Isle
Baratus Bay
Bay of Cicz
Blue Atolls
Domal
FARADUN
Isle of Ill Fortune
Nauticus Reef
Pana-Ku
The Junglelands
Lal-lat
Tarun
Forbidden Straits
BATRE
NEFARATUS
Sard Island
150 Miles
Jungle
Swamplands
Desert
Tundra
Mountains
Roads
Rivers
Borders
Capitol Cities
Cities
Ruins

TALISLANTA

FANTASY ROLE PLAYING GAME
FOURTH EDITION

The Fourth Edition of Talislanta is dedicated to Jack Vance, preeminent author of fantasy and science fiction, and also to Talislanta fans all over the world, for whom this book was created. Thanks to all of you who contributed to this book and to those who have continued to support the Talislanta game.

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Second Printing, August 2002

What a long, strange, trip it's been. . .

In 1987 a small company called Bard Games published *The Chronicles of Talislanta*, the first in a series of books about a role playing game called Talislanta. The fantastic artwork of P.D. Breeding-Black and a quirky world setting influenced by the works of author Jack Vance soon earned the game something of a cult following as well as some pretty good reviews. "Out of the ordinary," said Dragon Magazine. "So rich with information that even non-role-players will enjoy reading it," said Science Fiction Age. "Top 10 Recommended Games" (*Heroic Worlds* by Lawrence Schick); "Ten Favorite Games" (*The Complete Guide to Role-Playing Games* by Rick Swan). And my personal favorite, also from Mr. Swan: "It's as if H.P. Lovecraft had written *Alice in Wonderland* with Hans Christian Anderson and William S. Burroughs."

Over a decade has passed since then. In that time, Talislanta has been through four different publishers (and one non-publisher), three different editions (and an aborted fourth edition), and enough perils, pitfalls, and near-death experiences to kill off a dozen other games. Yet despite the problems Talislanta has survived, thanks mainly to the efforts of its fans, whose loyalty and support have made Talislanta "the Rasputin of role playing games" – hard to kill (and also a little weird).

If this is your first exposure to Talislanta, a word of explanation is probably in order. Talislanta is not your average role playing game. Unlike most fantasy games, Talislanta isn't based on traditional European mythology or some archetypal medieval setting. Instead, Talislanta is a strange and exotic place populated by unusual cultures, creatures, and characters such as Wizard Hunters, Dream Merchants, Thaumaturges, Rogue Magicians, and Mystic Warriors, to name just a few. If you're looking for elves and dwarves here, you're out of luck. However, if you're looking for a unique and colorful role playing experience, you've come to the right place.

SMS Thanks

My very good friend (and original Bard Games Legal Eagle), Joel Kaye, without whom the first Talislanta books would never have been published; artist P.D. Breeding-Black, who helped create the original look and feel of the Talislanta milieu, and is also a great and loyal friend; Ron Spencer, a terrific artist who also added a lot to the milieu, and was always a pleasure to work with; Anson Maddocks and Mark Tedin, whose work did so much to enhance the look of the 3rd edition Talislanta books; Patty Sechi, my lovely wife and also Talislanta's very first graphic artist; Jesper Myrfors, for his inspired art direction during the WotC years; Joe Bouza, for the original map of Talislanta and for his help throughout the Bard Games era; equipment expert Richard Thomas, archetype-guy Rick Emond, expert bird-man Larry Dixon, Todd Cameron Hamilton, Victor Wren, Sandra Santaro, Daniel Gelon, Grant Costa, Richard Kane Ferguson, Siamak Naficy, Tal3 cartographer Eric Hotz, Sandra Everingham, Rich Kaalaas, Jeff Goldman, and Spencer Kip; writers, editors, and wordsmiths John Harper, Adam Sonfeld, Colin Chapman, Mark (Tipop) Williams, for service well beyond the call of duty on Tal4 and its ill-fated precedents; typist Lauren Schnitzer for turning my hand-written scrawls into the first Talislanta manuscripts; Eric Chandler, Tony Herring, Anthony Pryor, Bill Armintrout, Stevie McBride, and all the writers who contributed to the CT series; Jonathan Tweet, Robin Laws, Mike McDonald, James Hayes Jr., Beverly Marshall Saling, Jenny Scott, Peter Adkison, Jeff Goldman, George Lowe, and all the WotC crew. 1st and 2nd Edition playtesters Rick Petrone, Simon Shapiro, Butch Taylor, Fred Dobratz, Osiris Wisdom, Graham and the mysterious Brad; Eric Chandler, Brad lewis, Alex Whitney, Brian Bilski, Pat Olsen, Nick Juliusburger, Cheryl Berti, and Kim Donnell; 3rd Edition playtesters Steve Bishop, Marty Dennis, Hubert T. Dolan Jr., Jeff Goldman, Mike Halse, Gail hermodsen, Michael R. Kilpatrick, Thomas Lents, George Lowe, Jesper Myrfors, Mary Oettinger, Brandon Clark Parks, Torr Randall, Chuck Sohlberg, David Sandberg, Greg Stolze, and Eric Tumbleson

Special Thanks

Lisa Stevens, Peter Adkison, and everyone at WotC for their efforts on behalf of the Talislanta game; Jesper Myfors, John Tynes, Daniel Gelon, Rob Heinsoo and Maria Garcia for helping to save the old Talislanta inventory from a fate worse than death; to anyone whom I might have accidentally forgotten to thank; my wife, Patty, and my step-children Kayte and Jesse, for putting up with all of this crazy business in the first place; and last but certainly not least, to all the Talislanta fans around the world who have helped support the game throughout the years, and have hung in there despite numerous set-backs, snafus, and abortive almost-editions: you cats are the coolest.

John Thanks

John Tynes, for advice and support when we were struggling to get this thing off the ground; Christine Felton, PageMaker Guru; Jason Werner, for going there first; Steve and Jeannie, for love, support, encouragement, inspiration, and finances.

The original Talislanta game group – Patrick Cunningham, Chris Holmes, Hiren Desai, Kevin Denehy, and Drew Curtis. You guys are the best. Without you (and the Kang Civil War) I never would have had the opportunity to work on this book.

Visit Talislanta on the Web:

www.talislanta.com

Web enhancements, the Talislanta mailing list, new character types, spells, equipment, the Fan Zone, and more!

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CHAPTER ONE



THE RULES

This chapter contains the complete rule system for the 4th edition of the Talislanta fantasy role playing 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 game

Character Creation: Guidelines for designing characters used in the game.

Attributes, Skills, Combat, and Magic: General rules and examples for each. Skills, Combat and Magic each receive a more thorough treatment in their own chapters, as well.

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 - 5	Failure
6 - 10	Partial Success
11 - 19	Full Success
20 or more	Critical Success

Overview: 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.**

That's all you really need to know. All the rules in this book are just variations of the above procedure. Players contribute by describing the Intent of their character's actions to the GM. Then it's the GM's job to interpret the outcome of the Action Table and how it effects the particular scene the player characters are involved in.

For your convenience, the Action Table is printed on the character sheet provided in the back of this book.

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**

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.

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 talent, Picking Pockets, 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.

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.

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. Sehrra'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 (optional)

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 equs 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.

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.

Other Modifiers

Combat, Magic, and some of the more complicated Skills have additional rules and modifiers that the Gamemaster and players should know about. For more information see the corresponding chapters in this book.

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, as explained in Chapter 4. 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, as explained in the Gamemaster's Section in Chapter 6.

- Bonus of 1-10 XP for good role playing, based on the persona that the player has created for his or her character. 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.

Character Creation

The following outline provides a general overview of the procedure for character creation. More specific information can be found in the corresponding sections, as indicated.

1. Choose an Archetype

The Archetype section of this book contains over a hundred different archetypes, each representing a type of character that hails from a particular Talislantan culture. Over half of these are specifically designed to be used as Player-Characters. Those designated as NPCs are Non-Player Characters, designed primarily to be used by the Gamemaster. As such, they may not be suitable for use as PCs in a beginning-level game (check with your GM). Use the Archetype Index in the Appendix to quickly find any archetype you're looking for.

Each PC archetype requires only a few modifications in order to be ready for use in the game (NPCs can be used by the GM as is, or modified as desired). After looking over the various PC archetypes, choose one that you'd like to play.

2. Record the Archetype's Information

Using a pencil, record the archetype's Physical Characteristics, Attributes, Skills, Special Abilities (if any), starting Equipment, and Wealth on the Character Sheet included in the Appendix (you may photo-copy this for personal use). Choose your character's height and weight based on the range of measurements described in the archetype.

3. Personalize Your Character (Optional)

If you want, you can personalize your character by any of the following methods:

- Further embellish the description of your character by adding distinguishing features and detailing the outward appearance of the character, as desired. For example, you may decide that your character favors flamboyant attire, has a wicked-looking scar over one eye, affects a sinister demeanor, or whatever you choose.



- To make your character different from other characters of the same archetype, increase any Attribute (or Attributes) by a total of up to two points, and reduce any Attribute (or Attributes) by a total of two points. For example, a player creating a warrior-character might decide to increase the Warrior's Strength by +2, and decrease his Intelligence and Charisma by -1 each.

- To create personality traits for your character, review the entry for your character's homeland in the Traveler's Guide section and decide how your character differs from the typical member of her society. For example, you might choose to have your character be brave, cowardly, greedy, generous, shy, or outgoing. Traits can also have a basis in the character's personal history. For example, ever since his encounter with a werebeast, Miramus the Magician has been afraid to be alone in the woods at night.

4. Determine Other Characteristics

Review the section on Attributes in this chapter, and follow the guidelines to determine your character's Hit Points (HP), Movement, and Encumbrance ratings.

5. Choose Skills

If your character's archetype includes a choice of Skills, review the Skill descriptions in Chapter 4 and

choose the Skills you want. If the archetype includes a choice of magical Orders or Modes, review the chapter on Magic and decide which ones you prefer. You'll need to choose a Background skill, based on the type of culture in which your character was raised (Nomadic, Rural, Urban, etc.). You're also allowed 2 additional Common Skills of your choice.

Note that Language Skills for beginning characters are based on degree of proficiency, as follows: Basic: Level 0, Fluent: Level +3, Native: +10.

To simplify things it's best to figure out the Skill Ratings for each of your character's Skills in advance, before you begin your first adventure. To do so, add each Skill's level to its Attribute modifier and and write down the totals in the appropriate space on your Character Sheet.

6. Record Equipment and Wealth

If your character's archetype includes a choice of weapons, review the chapter on Equipment and make your selections. Record any important information about your character's possessions, such as the Damage Rating of any weapons and the effective Range of any missile weapons your character may possess. See the Equipment section in Chapter 7 for information on weapons, shields, and armor.

Record your character's starting Wealth. The figures included in the archetypes are meant as guidelines, and the GM may decide to increase or decrease your character's available funds according to your character's particular background. If you want to buy additional equipment before the game begins, check the price lists in the Equipment chapter to see what's available and what your character can afford.

7. Contacts and Character History

Ask your GM to provide some Contacts (acquaintances) for your character. With the GM's assistance, fill in some of the details of your character's past and the circumstances under which your character will begin his or her game career.

8. Choose a Name

Turn to your character's homeland in the Traveler's Guide section. Using the examples in the Language entry for reference, make up a name for your character. *The character is now ready to enter the world of Talislanta.*

Attributes

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

- **Intelligence Rating**
- **Perception Rating**
- **Will Rating**
- **Charisma Rating**
- **Strength Rating**
- **Dexterity Rating**
- **Constitution Rating**
- **Speed Rating**
- **Combat Rating** *
- **Magic Rating** *
- **Hit Points**

* Note: Unlike previous editions of this game, Combat Rating and Magic rating are now separate attributes rather than derived characteristics.

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.

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 combat-related skills.

Magic Rating (MR)

This is a measure of a character's natural affinity for Magic. Like Combat Rating, 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 archetype. 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, Hit Points do not increase. Hit Points are not used as an Attribute Modifier or 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.

Overview: Procedure for 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.**

Attribute Rolls

1. Stating Intent

Before rolling on the Action Table to use an 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 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.

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.

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.

Abilities Related to Attributes

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.

Movement

Individuals and creatures can move up to 100 feet in one round's time, plus twenty feet per +1 Speed Rating or minus ten feet per -1 Speed Rating. 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. Normal walking speed for most humanoid creatures can be considered to be about 20 feet per round. It is only rarely necessary to keep track of movement on a foot-by-foot basis, however. See the "Movement" section of the Combat Chapter for more details.

Encumbrance

The maximum amount of weight that a Talislantan humanoid with average ("0" Rating) Strength can carry is their own body weight, plus twenty-five pounds per each additional +1 Strength Rating or minus ten pounds 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

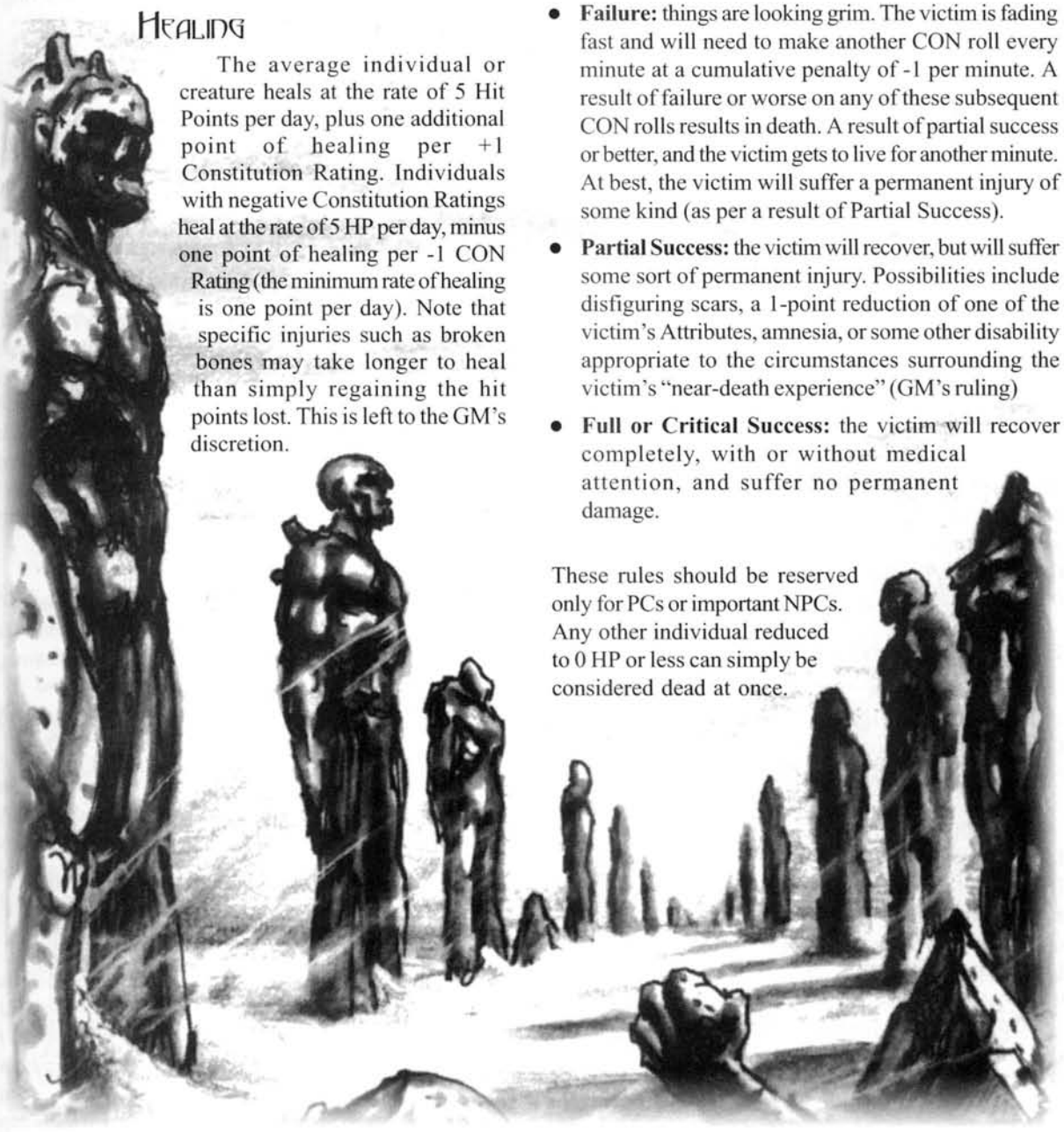
(including all combat and spellcasting that requires getsures). Encumbrance figures for quadrupeds are quadrupled.

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. For more information on Damage Ratings see the chapter on Combat.

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. A result of partial success or better, 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.

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.

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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

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 situaiton.

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 Club skill, but he does have Short Sword at +5. The GM decides that this is close enough and lets Scratch's player use the Short Sword 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 possess them.

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.

Acquiring New Skills

Experience Points accumulated though 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, as indicated in the Skill's description (see the Skills Chapter for this information).

If a new Skill is completely unrelated to the PC's archetype, 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 chapter, 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 Character Sheet. 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.

A Note About Special Abilities

Though some Special Abilities are used much like Skills, they can not be acquired as additional skills. Rather, Special Abilities are talents derived as a result of an individual's race, background, or culture. Those Special Abilities with a Skill Level and an Attribute Modifier can be improved, as per the rules of Improving Skills.

Skill Ratings for Creatures

The creatures included in the Traveler's Guide section of this game use a simplified system for determining the extent of their abilities. In place of the assortment of Skills that PCs and NPCs possess, creatures are rated according to their overall Ability Level, which is used as an Action Table modifier for almost every situation. Additionally, Constitution Ratings have already been added to Hit Point totals, and Strength Ratings have been factored into Damage Ratings. Creatures do not have Combat Ratings or Magic Ratings, since all fighting or spellcasting abilites are based on Ability Level.





Combat

Like all actions in the Talislanta game, Combat results are determined by rolling a d20 on the Action Table. However, the level of detail required to simulate Combat in the game is significantly greater for Combat than for Skills or Attributes.

As with all Skills, Combat Skills also have an Attribute Modifier, which is called Combat Rating (CR for short). The term, Combat Skill Rating, always refers to the combination of a Combat Skill's level plus the character's CR modifier.

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

In the 4th edition of the Talislanta game, it is no longer 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.

For more information on Damage Rating, Protection Rating, weapons, and armor, see the chapter on Combat.

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.**

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 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 in the chapter on Combat. For example, a character's Intent might be to throw a spear, parry with a shield, retreat, or try to trip or distract an oppoent.

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 Bonuses 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 weapon, use the defender's Skill Rating in that weapon as the Degree of Difficulty.**
- **If the defender is unarmed, use the defender's Brawling or Martial Arts 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.

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 eleven Orders practiced by Talislantan magicians of the New Age, described in detail in the chapter on Magic. 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, Conjuration, etc. There are twelve different Modes that together describe all the powers and abilities of modern magicians, described in detail in the chapter on Magic. 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.

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.

OVERVIEW: CASTING SPELLS FROM MEMORY

The following is an overview of the procedure for casting spells from memory. Each of the steps is explained in detail below.

1. **Player states Intent (what is the spell's Mode & intended effect?)**
2. **Player chooses Spell Level (how powerful will the spell be?)**
3. **GM determines bonuses or penalties (based on the character's Mode rating, spell level, and other factors)**
4. **Player rolls to cast spell**
5. **GM judges result.**

CASTING SPELLS FROM MEMORY

1. Stating Intent

Decide what kind of spell you want to cast, based on the Modes your character knows; if your character doesn't know the Mode, you can't cast a spell of that type. 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 it's 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. Then apply a penalty of -1 per level of the spell that is to be cast as the Degree of 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) at Level 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 of +5 to her casting roll. However, this type of spell casting requires a minimum of 1 minute (10 rounds) per Spell Level to cast.

Scrolls are lightweight and easily carried, and can be reused any number of times. However, a scroll can only contain a single spell. Spellbooks can contain hundreds of spells, but are usually cumbersome and ill-suited for travel. Most magicians are careful to guard their books from those who might want to steal their secrets.

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 (Defend), 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. Each time a spell is cast, 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.

See The GM's Chapter for alternative Spell Penalty systems that can allow for a more (or less) magic-rich game.



ENCHANTMENT

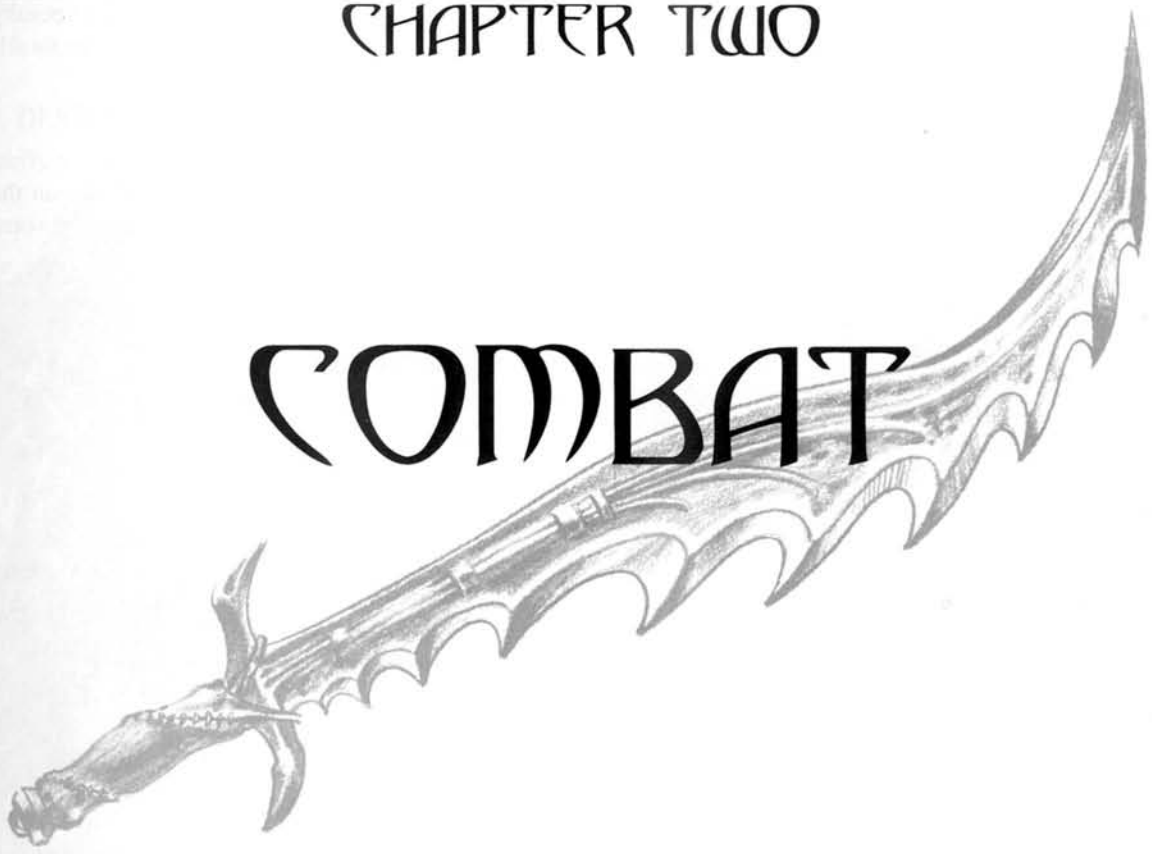
Rules for Enchanting Items can be found at the end of the chapter on Magic, following the lists of Modes and Orders.

ENCHANTED ITEMS: THE SEVEN-ITEM LIMIT

Should an individual attempt to carry more than seven enchanted items on his or her person at a time, each will cancel out the other and all will temporarily cease to function. Only by reducing the number of items being carried to seven or less will the remaining devices return to normal operation. Note that potions, powders, and other alchemical concoctions are not enchanted items, and do not count towards the seven-item limit. For more information, see the rules for Enchantment, at the end of the Magic chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

COMBAT



In the Talislanta game, Combat can be a swift and deadly affair. Whether you're playing in an Heroic or a Grim Fantasy campaign, the chances of your character's survival will improve considerably the more you know about the rules in this chapter. This section includes information on:

Damage Ratings: for weapons and other attacks
Protection Ratings: the protective value of armor
Combat Tactics: strategies for combat

Note that Combat and Weapon skills can be acquired and improved as explained in the rules for Skills in Chapter 1. See Chapter 4 for descriptions of these Skills.

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.

Miscellaneous Damage Ratings

Body slam	DR 3 +STR
Choke	DR 4 per round (no armor)
Kick	DR 2 +STR
Punch	DR 1 +STR
Head butt	DR 1 +STR
Shield bash	DR 3 +STR
Burning	DR 4 per round (no armor)
Drowning	DR 4 per round (no armor)
Falling	DR 6 per 10-foot drop (max 60)
Thirst	DR 2 per day
Hunger	DR 1 per day
Exposure	up to DR 10 per hour in extreme temps.

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 Chapter 1, rules for Encumbrance). 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 by an individual with the Shield skill, 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. Individuals who lack Shield skill can substitute their Combat Rating attribute if attempting to use a shield. However, they will receive only half the shield's benefits (-1 reduction in attacker's Combat die roll), and must accept a penalty of -4 on all DEX realted rolls while wielding the shield.

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
- **Defending from below:** -2
- **Mounted vs unmounted opponent:** +3
- **Limited visibility*:** -1 to -10
- **Unstable footing (mud, ice, etc.):** 1- to -10

*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 (see **Rules** section). 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 or parried 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 the

defender's modified defensive combat Skill or Attribute Rating. Penalties for range and availability are as follows:

- **Target is within half effective range:** no penalty
- **Target is beyond half effective range:** -5
- **Target is beyond effective range:** -10
- **Target is beyond 2 times effective range:** -20
- **Target is moving:** -3, plus an additional -1 per point of target's Speed Rating
- **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 to +10

Notes

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 -9.

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.

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.

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 within 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. Flynn takes a penalty equal to the Beastman's defensive skill rating of +9. Flynn's Shortbow skill rating is +14, for a total Action Table modifier of +5. Flyn's player rolls a d20 and gets a 5 for an attack total of 10: Partial Success. Flyn'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), Brawling -3, or Martial Arts skill -3. 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 4 +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 has a -5 penalty to his defensive skill rating and the victim has an effective 0 defensive skill rating.

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 uses his Tazian Combat skill rating of +19 versus Sla-kthor's impressive +18 Brawling. 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-kthor 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

A Defense can be defined as any action intended to avoid or block an attack. There are two types of defense tactics in the Talislanta game: Dodge and Parry.

An opponent who does not have the initiative or who willingly surrenders the initiative can elect to either Dodge or Parry an 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**
- **Mandaquan 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 gtes 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. Shields are designed expressly for this purpose, and give defenders who have the Shield skill a +3 bonus when used for Parrying (or +1 for individuals who don't have Shield skill and are attempting this tactic). This maneuver is known as a Shield-Parry. Note that Enchantment increases the Shield-Parry bonus according to it's plus-rating. For example, a +1 shield would confer a bonus of +4 to Shield-Parries.

Any of the following Skills or Attributes can be used as the modifier for a Parry attempt:

- **Weapon Skill Rating**
- **Guard or Shield Skill Rating**
- **Martial Art Skill Rating**
- **Brawling (no penalty if parrying a Brawling attack; penalty of -5 if parrying a weapon attack)**
- **Combat Rating (substitution)**

Ranged Attacks can also be parried, but at an increased Degree of Difficulty (penalty of -5 to -10). 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 Slaver decides to hit back with its claws. Abdul chooses to actively defend against this attack, by parrying with his knives. Abdul's Arimite 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 additional -5 to his Parry rolll 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.

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 or Parry 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 Combat Skill, Mounted Combat, for additional modifiers.

Stunt

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 Martial Arts, Acrobatics, and certain Performing Skills 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 Lucasz to seemingly vanish. (Acrobatics; Difficulty 15 to confuse all three guards)

Z'ro the Zandir Swordsmage vaults over his opponent at the last second, causing the attacker to lunge into one of his own men. (Acrobatics vs. the skill of the attacker, needs a Critical Success.)

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 temporaily 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 in the introductory chapter on Rules, 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.

CHAPTER THREE



MAGIC

Talislanta is a land filled with magic, in a myriad of forms. The material in this chapter explains how Magic is used in the Talislanta game. In it you will find information on:

About Orders and Modes: definition of terms
Modes: the backbone of the system
Orders: magical professions plus sample spells
Creating Enchanted Items: rules for Enchantment

If you're a Gamemaster, you should read this chapter so that you'll understand the basics of how Magic works. If you're a player with a magician character you need only concentrate on the sections that describe your character's Order(s) and the Modes in which he or she is proficient. Players with non-magician characters can skip this chapter altogether, if they like.

Note that Modes can be acquired and improved as explained in the rules for Skills, in Chapter 1. Orders can be acquired, but cannot be improved as they are never used for Action Table Die rolls.

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 twelve 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 ten 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). However, Orders are not Skills per se, and are not used for Action Table die rolls.

A Mode is essentially a spell-effect, such as Conjure, Alter, and Transform. Modes can be used in one of two ways. As described in this chapter, most Modes can be used as basic spells without the need for further embellishment. Modes can also be used as a

basis for creating original spells, if the player or GM so desires. Each Order uses Modes in a different way; the differences are substantial enough that even if a magician knows the Mode, Alter, in one Order, she will not be proficient in the same Mode as it is practiced by members of other Orders.

A Magician's Orders and Modes

Here's an example of a Cymrillian Magician's magical Orders and Modes, illustrating the Skill Ratings for each Mode:

Elemental Magic (Aeromancy)
Attack +6
Defend +8
Summon +6
Transform +6
Move +7

Wizardry
Illusion +9
Heal +6
Defend +7
Conjure +6
Alter +4
Enchantment +6

As you can see, the magician used in this example (call her Cyrila) has two different ratings in Defend, depending on which Magical Order she is employing. If she wishes to conjure something, she must use her Wizardry. Cyrila cannot conjure with Aeromancy until she learns the Mode within that Order. Similarly, she can enchant items with Wizardry, but not with Aeromancy. At present, Cyrila has no rating in the Modes Ward, Reveal, or Influence, and therefore cannot attempt spells that have those effects. However, she can learn those Modes in the future, should she so desire.

Limitations of Talislantan Magic

Modern Talislantan magic is not free-form or spontaneous. Rather, it is a precise disipline 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 Talislantan magic.

Modern Talislantan 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 Talislanta 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 twelve Modes and their primary effects. Each is described in detail later in this chapter.

The Twelve Modes

Alter	Alters attribute and skill ratings.
Attack	Projects destructive magical energy.
Conjure	Produces objects, materials, or elemental substances.
Defend	Protects against damage — mystical or mundane.
Heal	Repairs damage to living beings or objects.
Illusion	Produces illusory images of varying realism and complexity.
Influence	Controls the thoughts and emotions of others.
Move	Affects all types of motion, including flight, levitation, and telekinesis.
Reveal	Enhances awareness, including scrying and divination.
Summon	Transports creatures from other planes of existence.
Transform	Turns one thing into another.
Ward	Provides immunity to diseases, poison, the environment, mind-control, etc.

Modes can be acquired at a cost of 20 weeks of training (20 XP), and can be improved as per the rules for Skills. When a character learns a new Mode, they are actually learning many specific spells, all of a certain theme. Talislantan magic is not very flexible, so magicians must learn dozens of similar spells in order to have some versatility in a given area. This versatility is represented in the game with the Mode system.

Talislantan 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 hundreds of specific spells that fall into 12 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.

The player of Moranar the Diabolist describes his spell "Infernal Terror": "I summon a 1' tall demon that will arc through the air and claw someone's face, then disappear back from whence it came." The spell seems to involve summoning a demon, but the primary effect here is a simple attack. The Attack Mode is the obvious choice. Later, Moranar's player describes a different spell, "I want to summon a demon that will fight the whole band of beastmen while I run away." This spell's primary effect goes beyond simply doing damage to a target. The player wants to create an autonomous entity which can fight, create a diversion, and move about on its own. This is truly a Summon Mode spell.

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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 slavering 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 Conjure 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 lots of little spells to create rocks and dirt from nothing (represented by his Conjure 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 Conjure 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.

How do Orders use the Modes differently?

Even though all of the magicians in Talislanta use the same twelve 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 12 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.

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.

Mode Format

Several special terms are used in the following Mode descriptions. These terms are defined below:

- **Area:** The maximum spacial area the Mode can affect. Modes without this component listed affect a pinpoint-sized area.
- **Duration:** The amount of time the effects of the Mode last. Modes with a duration of "Instant" last only a moment and then expire. Their effects (damage done, for example) may linger, however.
- **Casting Time:** The amount of time it takes to cast a spell of that Mode. If the magician takes any other action during the time she is casting the spell, the spell automatically fails. Modes with no casting time listed take one round to cast.
- **Range:** The maximum distance a spell of the given Mode can travel from the caster.
- **Resistance:** The means by which the Mode can be resisted by the target (if any). If no resistance is listed, spells of that Mode may be Dodged like any normal attack, assuming the target is aware of the spell (see Combat Chapter for details).

Alter

Alter in Brief:

Specific Alteration: +1/-1 per 3 Spell Levels
Broad Alteration: +1/-1 per 5 Spell Levels
Range: Touch
Subjects: -1 to casting roll for each extra subject
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll for each extra minute of duration)

The Alter Mode deals with spells that modify a being's 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.

Alter 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.

Alter 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.

Alter spells are not cumulative in effect. One cannot gain +5 Strength by casting five consecutive +1 STR spells on oneself. If multiple Alter spells are cast on a single subject, only the highest level spell takes effect. Alter 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 Sword 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. See the individual Order descriptions for examples of what kinds of abilities can be altered.

Alter Examples

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

"I call upon my ancestors' spirits to invest me with their wisdom."

Attack

Attack in Brief:

Damage: 1 Hit Point per Spell Level
Range: 50 feet (-1 to casting roll per 10 extra feet of range)
Duration: Instant / 1 round per level (no range)
Area: -1 to casting roll 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 Chapter.

Most Attack effects are Ranged Attacks, meaning that they are subject to penalties based on the range and availability of the intended target (see the Chapter on Combat for details). Ranged spell attacks may 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 a number of rounds equal to the spell level. 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 counts as -1 to the casting roll.

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."

Conjure

Conjure in Brief:

Maximum Mass: 10 pounds per Spell Level
Maximum Area: 1 cubic foot per Spell Level
Range: 50 feet (-1 to casting roll per 10 extra feet of range)
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll per extra minute of duration)

Conjuring 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.

Conjure Examples

"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."

"Of course he'll figure out the lumens are conjured! We should be far out of town by then..."

DEFEND

Defend in Brief:

Hit Point Rating: +2 points per Spell Level
Range: Self / Touch / -1 to roll per 10 feet
Flat Barrier Size: 4 feet squared (4'x4'). (-1 to casting roll per extra foot squared)
Cylinder/Cone Barrier Area: 4 feet high, 2 ft. radius. (-1 to casting roll per extra foot of height or radius)
Dome/Sphere Barrier Area: 2 feet high, 4 ft. radius. (-1 to casting roll per extra foot of height or radius)
Barrier Armor Rating: 1/3 the Spell Level
Duration: 5 rounds (-1 to casting roll for each extra round of duration)

Defend spells absorb damage the target would normally suffer. All Defend effects can absorb a number of Hit Points equal to 2 times their Spell Level before dissipating; for example, a shield created with a level 3 Defend spell will absorb 6 HP of damage before it dissolves into nothingness.

There are two basic types of Defend effects: Auras and Barriers. Both last for a minimum of 5 rounds or until destroyed (whichever comes first).

Aura spells cover a single individual or item with a protective shield. The composition and appearance of this field depends on the Order being used, and may look like a glowing "second-skin", ornate all-enclosing armor of energy, etc. Alternately, aura spells 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, auras do not protect against blinding lights or harmful gasses. The aura also moves with the magician. Only a single aura may be worn at a time. If a second aura is cast on the same target, only the aura offering greater protection remains.

While protected by an 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.

A Barrier is a two-dimensional shield of magical energy that can take whatever simple shape the caster desires. Like auras, their appearance depends on the Magical Order employed. A barrier can be a wall of ice, a bridge of arcane force, or a column of swirling winds.

All barriers have an armor rating equal to one-third the Spell Level. So, a Level 12 barrier would have an armor rating of 4 and would stop 24 points of damage before dissipating.

The barrier can cover a flat rectangular area (such as a doorway), or it can be curved into a cylinder, dome, cone or sphere. The basic size of a flat barrier is 4 feet squared (4'x4'), though the barrier can be made smaller in either dimension if the caster wishes. Each extra foot squared of coverage yields a -1 to the casting roll. So a 5'x5' barrier would be cast at -1, a 6'x6' barrier at -2 and so on. The basic size of a cylinder or cone shape is 4 feet high with an interior radius of 2 feet. The basic size of a dome, or sphere shape is 2 feet high with an interior radius of 4 feet. In both cases, each extra foot of height or interior radius yields a -1 to the casting roll.

The barrier must be created in sturdy form. It cannot lean without some type of support. If it crosses open space, such as a pit or chasm, both ends must be on solid ground. Barriers are immobile. Like any other wall, most magical barriers can be climbed, but they cannot be toppled. Barriers also prevent the passage of physical objects and energy (including light, depending on the nature of the barrier). They do nothing against subtle magical effects such as Influence or Illusion. If a barrier is sealed on all sides, it also prevents the flow of air.

DEFEND EXAMPLES

"Let the Earth rise, and shield us from harm!"

"I make the seventh sign and produce 'Koraq's Interposing Shields' which dance between me and my enemies."

HEAL

Heal in Brief:

Effect: 1 hit point per Spell Level / 1 disease level per Spell Level
Range: Touch
Duration: Instant

Heal restores 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 Heal 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 regenerated with this Mode, nor can the dead be restored to life.

Reverse: Harm

Harm does damage by creating wounds or disease. Unlike Attack spells, spells based on the Harm 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.

Heal examples

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

"I command the spirits of disease to leave this body at once!"

"May the holy light of Aa restore your soul and body, brother."

Illusion

Illusion in Brief:

Basic Illusion: Level 1
Features: +3 Spell levels per each additional feature
Range: 50 feet (-1 to casting roll per 10 extra feet of range) / scrying
Duration: 5 rounds (-1 to casting roll for each extra round 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 equs.

  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 Reveal 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. This light can be used to blind

enemies by directing it into their eyes. To accomplish this, the magician must make a ranged attack roll using her Attack or Illusion Mode rating with an additional penalty of -7 for aiming at a small location. If successful, targets are blinded for three rounds, +1 round for each magnitude feature added to the spell.

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 Reveal). In this case, the range of the Illusion is unlimited.

Illusion Examples

"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
Duration: 1 round (-1 to casting roll for each extra round of duration)
Resistance: WIL roll - 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 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 Willpower roll. For every 2 levels of the spell, the target takes a -1 to its WIL 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.

Influence Examples

"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: +0 (100 lbs.) (+1 STR per 3 Spell Levels)
Range: 50 feet (-1 to casting roll for every 10 feet of extra range.)
SPD: -9 (10 feet per round) (-3 to casting roll for each +1 SPD rating.)
Area: 0' radius (-1 to casting roll per foot of radius)
Duration: 5 rounds (-1 to casting roll per extra round of duration)

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 100 pounds of material at STR +0, and allows the magician to control the target to a range of 50 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 thief who was trying to run off with the magician's purse. A level 9 spell would allow the magician to hold the thief with a STR rating of +3. If the magician wanted to also levitate the thief off the ground, he would have to add 6

more spell levels for a lifting STR of +2 (enough to lift 150 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. The default Strength Rating that can be applied at a distance is 0. 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 Dexterityor Acrobatics roll for the magician to maintain control, and a failed roll may result in a crash or other unfortunate mishap (GM's ruling).

Move Examples

"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."

Reveal

Reveal in Brief:

Sense: +1 PER per Spell Level
Range: 50 feet (-1 to casting roll per 10 extra feet of range)
Scrying Range: 1 mile (-1 to casting roll for each extra mile of range)
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll for each extra minute of duration)

Reveal 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 Reveal 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).

Reveal 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 Reveal 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 (see Obsidian Mirrors, in the Equipment chapter). 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 Reveal 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.

Reveal Examples

"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."

Summon

Summon in Brief:

Ability Level of Summoned Creature: 1 per Spell Level
Casting Time: 1 round per Spell Level
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll for each extra minute of duration)

Spells that use the Summon Mode involve consorting with extra-dimensional entities and manipulating the borders between the planes of existence. For this reason, Summon is by far the most dangerous Mode, and involves great risk when used at high levels of power. Only extremely capable or foolish magicians dabble in potent exercise of this magic.

The primary effect accomplished with this Mode is the summoning of extra-dimensional beings. Spells of this kind transport a creature from their native plane of existence, across the invisible inter-planar seas, to Talislanta. The type of creature summoned is up to the summoner to decide, though all Orders have some restrictions regarding the type of entities that may be called upon. The level at which a Summon spell is cast determines the level of the entity that will be summoned. For example, using a level 3 spell to summon a necrophage will yield a necrophage with an overall Ability Level of +3.

If a magician wants to summon a being for which no specific statistics are provided, the GM will determine the statistics based on those of a similar creature. For example, the summoned spirit of a dead Thrall would have attributes similar to those of the normal Thrall Warrior archetype. Summoned creatures may have additional special abilities such as flight or immunity to normal weapons, as determined by the GM. As with all summoned entities, the Ability Level of the being is equal to the spell level.

A spell of summoning requires a number of rounds to cast equal to the Spell Level. The basic duration of a summoned creature's servitude is one minute, plus one minute for every -1 to his casting roll the summoner is willing to take. The summoner can extend the duration indefinitely, however, provided he has the magical means to do so. Certain enchanted items can be used to imprison summoned creatures in gemstones, crystal orbs, brass lanterns, and so forth. If the being is not restrained, it vanishes instantly when the spell ends.

If the Summoning spell is cast correctly, the intended subject will appear at once. Constrained by the forces of the spell, it will be unable to do harm to the caster or move without his permission. In return for the caster's promise to release it, the creature can be compelled to answer up to three questions, or to perform a single, specified service. This it will do, to the best of its capabilities. Summoned beings can only provide useful answers to questions they are likely to know. For example, the spirit of a murder victim may be able to name its killer, assuming it saw the murderer. The GM is the final judge of what the summoned being does and does not know.

If the magician fails to cast a Summoning spell properly, (getting a result of Failure on the Action Table) the intended creature still appears but will be unrestrained by the forces of the spell. Malign entities may seek to slay the caster and his associates, while chaotic creatures may engage in acts of wanton destruction. Diabolical beings may avenge themselves by more subtle means, such as a curse of ill-fortune, lingering disease, etc. Even normally benign creatures may resent being summoned, and if so will make their displeasure known.

In the event of a Spell Mishap, an inter-dimensional rift is created. This is the most terrifying prospect for any that consort with the outer planes. Legions of horrifying creatures might find their way through the rift, laying waste to everything in sight. Or, the caster may be hurled across far dimensions and driven insane by the mad geometry of elder worlds. A mishap while employing Summon is always extraordinarily bad. This rift between the planes will last for one minute per Spell Level. Just exactly what happens during this period is left to the twisted imagination of the Gamemaster.

Reverse: Banish

Cast in reverse, this Mode returns a summoned creature to its home dimension. Attempts to Banish are subject to a Degree of Difficulty penalty equal to the creature's overall Ability Level. Like Summon, Banish spells take 1 round per level to cast. A magician can attempt to banish entities that she cannot summon, but she takes a substitution penalty when doing so, determined by the GM (usually -5 to -10).

Summon Examples

"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."

TRANSFORM

Transform in Brief:

Level Required: 3-25+ (see table below)
Range: Touch
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll for each extra minute of duration)

Transform spells turn one type of person or thing into another by changing the subject's shape and form. 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 Transform spell. 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 Transform 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.

In order to take the form of a creature, the magician must add enough spell levels to match the minimum Ability Level of that creature type. Spell levels cannot be added to increase a creature's Ability Level beyond its normal maximum (if it has one).

If the subject was injured before transformation, it remains injured after being changed. Cast as a counterspell, this Mode can be used to return transformed subjects to their original forms. Each Magical Order has guidelines for what sort of metamorphosis it can accomplish. Regardless of Order, magicians can not take the form of extra-dimensional entities with this Mode.

TRANSFORM EXAMPLES

"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 transform this old rug into a splendid robe, the better to impress the enchantress, Jasmeen."

WARD

Ward in Brief:

Base Level: 10
Range: Touch
Area: -1 to casting roll per foot of radius
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll for each extra minute of duration)

Wards are defensive spells that can be used to protect against certain specified threats or maladies. Wards can be cast upon living creatures or inanimate objects such as doors, locks, shields, etc. In either case, the Ward only confers protection to the creature or item it is cast upon. For example, a shield that has been Warded against fire will make the shield immune to flame, but not the bearer himself.

Wards can be used to confer protection from any one of the following types of threats or maladies:

- A single type of weapon such as longswords, shortswords, or greatswords; not swords or weapons in general.
- A single element or elemental effect such as fire, ice, lightning, cold, or heat; not all elements.

- A single type of Thieving skill such as picking pockets, lock-picking, spying, or tailing; not thieves or assassins in general.
- Any single type of Mode (regardless of Order) such as Alter, Transform, or Attack; not Magic in general. It's not possible to cast a Ward against Wards, though it is possible to cast a Ward against Hexes.
- Any single type of creature such as Tazian flies, Beastmen, demons, or exomorphs; not all insects, all extra-dimensional entities, all humanoids, or wild beasts in general. In this case the Ward will prevent the specified creature from touching the protected creature or item or passing through a protected doorway. Should an individual protected by a Ward attempt to attack or even touch a creature of the specified type, the Ward will be dispelled at once.

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 Mode, Alter.

Wards cannot be cast at levels 1-9. A minimum level 10 spell must be cast in order to achieve the effects of this Mode.

Spells of Warding have a base duration of one minute (10 rounds), and must be cast by touch. The Ward appears as a glowing symbol, which can be read or deciphered by individuals who are fluent in magical scripts. Wards can be negated by counterspells, as per the rules for Counterspells and Anti-Magic (see Chapter 1). 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.

Reverse: Hex

A Hex increases the affected subject's susceptibility to harm, causing them to suffer twice the normal damage from the specified threat or malady. For example, an individual who has an arrow-Hex placed upon him will suffer double damage from arrows, and will also find himself more susceptible to be struck by arrows in combat (-1 penalty to defense skill rating per 3 levels of the Hex). Aside from the obvious differences, the rules for Wards and Hexes are essentially the same.

Ward examples

"I inscribe Diabolus' protective ward on the door, that no Demon-spawn may pass."

"I raise my hand and inscribe a protective sigil on the forehead of my steed, rendering him proof from the effects of cold."

Hex examples

"May serpents crawl into your bed and visit you by night."

"May you be consumed by fire, until there is nothing left but your blackened bones."



THE ORDERS OF MAGIC

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 spellcasting 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 eleven Orders of magic practiced by magicians of the New Age are:

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.

ORDERS 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.



Cartomancy

To most Talislantans, 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: Transform, Summon

Alter 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 Bargain skill by drawing "The Peddler."

Transform Effects: N/A

Summon Effects: N/A

Enchantment

Common enchanted items created with Cartomancy:

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

Example spells of Cartomancy follow.

CARTOMANCY SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Hand of Destiny (Reveal)

Duration: 1 minute
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level)
Description: 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."

Prestidigitation (Move)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -4 (1st level)
Description: 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 -8 Speed (20 feet per round.) 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.

Luck of the Draw (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level spell)
Description: 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.

Wizard's Trump (Ward)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level)
Description: The Wizard's Trump is a combination of The Wizard and The Archon. While holding these two cards, the cartomancer is protected from all Attack mode spells directed at his or her person, and cannot be harmed by such magics.

Fool's Gold (Conjure)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 50 feet (usually cast on self)
Casting Modifiers: -5 (1st level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: Casting this spell and tapping The Peddler three times will cause a cache of coins (up to 100 g.l., as the caster requires) to appear in the casrtomancer's pocket. The conjured coins look and feel quite real, but will remain in existence for only 5 minutes, after which they will vanish without a trace. This spell has many practical applications, though its use is not without certain risks. Kasmirans in particular have little fondness for enchantments of this sort.

Turn of a Friendly Card (Heal)

Range: Self or Touch
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level)
Description: By placing Drome upon the breast of a wounded individual, the healing nature of the amber moon fills the target, soothing wounds (up to 10hp damage) and relieving pain. Some who have been near death when healed this way claim to have experienced odd dreams, including visions of possible futures and images of what might have happened if they had died. Side-effects of this sort are rare, however (GM's choice, or 1-in-10 chance), and Rahastrans regard them as a gift from the Zodar.

Wrath of the Warrior (Attack)

Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -6 (6th level)
Description: By tapping the Warrior card three times and pointing at a target, the cartomancer causes her victim to be pummeled by a pair of ghostly fists for 6 points of damage. If the spell is cast at a higher level, the disembodied hands will appear to hold weapons.

CARTOMANCY SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED SPELLS

Fortune's Purchase (Alter)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -19 (15th level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: 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 Haggling skill.

The Fold (Illusion)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -19 (1st level base, +9 levels for Touch, Sound, and Scent, +3 levels for Motion, +3 levels for Complex Elements, +3 levels for Magnitude.)
Description: 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)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -16 (1st level base, +3 levels for Motion, +3 levels for Complex Elements, +3 levels for Precise Details, +6 levels for Magnitude)
Description: 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.

The Warrior's Heart (Alter)

Duration: 2 minutes
Range: Touch (three targets)
Casting Modifiers: -18 (15th level, -1 for extra duration, -2 for extra targets)
Description: 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 will be filled with the courage of the archetypal Warrior, receiving +3 to their CR attribute.

Cardplay (Influence)

Duration: 10 rounds (1 minute)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Modifiers: -13 (8th level, -5 for extra duration)
Description: 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 Will check at -4, 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 somone "awakens" them (by shaking, slapping, shouting, etc.).

Card of Concealment (Conceal)

Duration: 2 minutes
Casting Modifiers: -13 (12th level spell, -1 for extra duration)
Description: This spell uses the properties of the card, the Mystic, to make a Zodar deck or any small item virtually undetectable when hidden on the cartomancer's person. Anyone trying to steal or search for a concealed item does so at a -12 penalty to their perception.

CARTOMANCY SPELLBOOK
MASTER SPELLS

Friendly Hand (Influence)

Duration: 10 rounds (1 minute)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Modifiers: -25 (20th level, -5 for extra duration)
Description: By drawing The Assassin and holding it in the hand, the cartomancer can make the target believe that he is a close friend or associate, someone to be trusted. The subject may resist (Will check -10); if the result is a partial success, then the subject will be neutral as regards the caster, viewing him as neither friend nor foe. On a mishap result on the resistance, the target will continue to consider the cartomancer a friend after the spell expires, unless something happens to indicate otherwise.

Amber Waves (Influence)

Duration: 10 rounds (1 minute)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Modifiers: -25 (20th level, -5 for extra duraiton)
Description: By drawing Drome and placing it face up on a level surface the cartomancer causes a wave of somnolence to descend on all those nearby (within a 5 foot radius around the card). Each target must succeed at a Will roll (-10 penalty) or be compelled to lie down and fall asleep on the the spot. A result of partial success means the subject does not sleep, but becomes drowsy and sluggish (-5 to all actions) for the duration of the spell. A result of failure or mishap indicates that the target sleeps until awakened normally. The cartomancer herself is immune to the sleep effect of her spell.

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.

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 Trapmages 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: Transform

Bonuses: Ward: +3, Reveal: +3

Penalties: Illusion:-2, Influence: -2

Alter 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.

Transform Effects: N/A

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

Enchantment

Common enchanted items created with Cryptomancy include:

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

Example spells of Cryptomancy follow.

CRYPTOMANCY SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Symbol of Clarity (Reveal)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: 50 feet
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -Variable (see below) +3 due to Order modifier.
Description: 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 level of difficulty entailed in the translation is used as a spell penalty in this case. For foreign languages, the penalty is -1 to -10, depending on the age and/or relative obscurity of the writings. For codes and cyphers, subtract the skill level of whoever devised the encryption. 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.

Talking Runes (Illusion)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -6 (1st level, -5 for trigger effect, -2 due to Order modifier)
Description: 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.

Mark of Midnight (Reveal)

Duration: 10 minutes
Range: 60 feet
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -8 (1st level, -9 for extra duration, -1 for extra range, +3 due to Order modifier)
Description: Drawn on the forehead, this rune enables the subject to see clearly in complete darkness for up to 60 feet (double this distance in partial darkness or shadow).

Shaladin's Blade-Icon (Conjure)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -6 (1st level, -5 for trigger effect)
Description: 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 (Conjure)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -6 (2nd level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: When this Seal is draw upon the surface of any door, the portal will be sealed shut by the presence of conjured mortar and remain so until the sigil is dispelled or the door broken down by force.

Sigil of Deterence (Attack)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: Touch
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -10 (5th level, -5 for trigger effect)
Description: A favorite of Kasmiran trapsmiths, 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 (5hp damage) 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.

CRYPTOMANCY SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED SPELLS

Mark of Stealth (Alter)

Duration: 3 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -11 (9th level, -2 for extra duration)
Description: When inscribed upon the soles of one's boots or other footwear, the Mark of Stealth enables the wearer to move much more quietly (+3 stealth rating) for the duration of the spell.

Symbol of Protection (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds
Range: Touch
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -15 (10th level, -5 for trigger effect)
Description: 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 10 hp of any type of damage. After activation, the rune fades and may not be used again.

Rune of Battle (Alter)

Duration: 2 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -16 (15th level, -1 for extra duration)
Description: When the Rune of Battle is inscribed on a weapon, its wielder has +5 added to the appropriate weapon skill (or a skill of +5 if they were unfamiliar with that weapon before).

Archonic Heptagram (Ward)

Duration: 5 minutes
Area of Effect: 5 foot radius centered on the caster
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -16 (10th level, -4 for extra duration, -5 for area of effect, +3 due to Order modifier)
Description: 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 and demons of all sorts, as long as they take no offensive action against such creatures.

Ephemeral Runes (Illusion)

Duration: 10 rounds (1 minute)
Range: Touch
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -11 (1st level, -5 for extra duration, -5 for trigger effect, -2 due to Order modifier)
Description: Ephemeral Runes are often inscribed upon books, scrolls, or tablets to protect them from prying eyes. Once these Runes are activated, a command word must be spoken before the work can be referenced, or else the protected writings will vanish, leaving nothing but blank paper or stone. The vanished writings can only be made to reappear by the use of the command word.

Symbol of Healing (Heal)

Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -15 (15th level)
Description: Inscribed upon an injured person or creature, the Symbol of Healing will restore up to 15 points of physical damage.

Rune of Foreboding (Defend)

Duration: 3 minutes
Range: 10 feet
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -17 (9th level, -6 for area of effect, -2 for extra duration)
Description: The Rune of Foreboding is a two-part symbol that may be inscribed between any two surfaces up to ten feet apart, such as a pair of pillars, opposite sides of a corridor, etc. When activated, the twin Runes create a magical barrier up to 100 square feet in area that emanates a palpable sense of fear and dread in most types of living creatures. Animal handling or riding checks will be called for, at a -3 penalty, and Morale Checks for NPCs are at -3 as well. The barrier has an armor rating of 3 and will remain until 18hp damage has been inflicted upon one of the Runes, or until the symbol is dispelled or its duration expires.

CRYPTOMANCY SPELLBOOK
MASTER SPELLS

Solomnent Script (Influence)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -21 (14th level, -5 for trigger effect, -2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: The Somnolent Script is a set of runic inscriptions that when read by any sentient individual or creature will cause drowsiness and lethargy. The reader is allowed a Will check at -7 to resist the effect. On a partial success the reader will be groggy and slow to react to stimulus (-5 to Perception). On a failure the reader will fall asleep for 5 rounds, then awaken. On a mishap the reader will fall asleep and cannot be awakened by any means for 5 rounds; after that the reader will continue to sleep, but can be awakened by external stimuli.

Sigil of Summoning (Summon)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Casting Time: 16 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -23 (18th level, -5 for trigger effect)
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 two 9th level Vorls: creatures comprised of animate mist, whose deadly embrace can drain living beings of their bodily fluids, leaving behind a dried husk.

Exploding Runes (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 10 foot radius
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -25 (10th level, -10 for area of effect, -5 for trigger effect)
Description: 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 10hp damage and be permanently deafened unless a Constitution check at -3 succeeds. A 10th level healing spell will be needed to restore hearing.

Symbol of Lightning (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -25 (15th level, -5 for area of effect, -5 for trigger effect)
Description: 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 15 points of damage. Due to the large area of effect, attempts to evade damage suffer a penalty of -5 (in addition to the normal penalty of the caster's Attack rating). Once a Symbol of Lightning has been triggered, it will continue to crackle with electrical energy for 15 rounds, during which anyone who enters the inscribed area will also be struck by lightning. 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.

Symbol of Banishing (Banish)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Time: 16 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -25 (20th level, -5 for trigger effect)
Description: This symbol may be used to banish summoned entities of any sort, sending up to 20 levels of summoned creatures or beings back to their place of origin. If the creature to be banished is greater than 20th level, then a more powerful Symbol must be employed.

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 judgement. 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 Limitationsbelow.

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 re-stored. 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 below), and the level of the spell cannot exceed the number of carats of the crystal. Also note the ethical restrictions of Crystalomancy.

Modes Optional

Not Available: Conjure, Transform
Bonuses: Defend +3, Heal +3
Penalties: Attack -3, Summon -3
Alter Effects: Crystalomancers may used Alter only on appropriate natural materials, such as stone, earth, or crystal. It cannot be used on living beings, or to change abstract qualities.
Transform Effects: N/A
Summon Effects: Crystalomancers may only summon crystal and earth elementals.

Enchantment

Common enchanted items made by Crystalomancy include:

- Healing crystals (Heal)
- Crystal blades, with an enchanted Topazine crystal at the pommel (Alter, Attack)
- Crystals of Sealed Passage, vs. e.g. Darklings, Kra, or Subterranoids (Ward)

Modes and Crystals

Mode	Crystal	Color
Alter	Topazine	Rich yellow
Attack	Rubiate	Fiery crimson
Conjure*	Albinite	Milky white
Defend	Amberite	Warm orange
Heal	Emeralite	Deep green
Illusion	Prismatite	Clear/refractive
Influence	Amethyte	Vivid purple
Move	Azurite	Bright blue
Reveal	Glassine	Perfectly clear
Summon	Ebonite	Glossy black
Transform*	Variagate	Multicolored
Ward	Umberate	Dark brown

* The Conjure and Transform Mode details have been included for those players who do not utilize the optional Mode rules.

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.

Example spells of Crystalomancy follow.

Crystalomancy Spellbook

Basic Spells

Glassine Eye (Reveal)

Duration: 2 minutes
Range: 2 miles
Casting Modifiers: -6 (4th level, -1 for extra duration, -1 for extra range)
Description: 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 within range, the caster can see through the Crystalomantic Eye as though he or she were there, with a +4 bonus to Perception for purposes of seeing hidden things/beings.

Rubiate Beam (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -9 (6th level, -3 for Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell uses a rubiate crystal as a focus to create a fiery beam of light that will do 6hp damage to any creature or object that it hits. Targeted creatures may try to dodge the beam.

Terra's Touch (Heal)

Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -9 (12th level, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell allows the crystalomancer to focus the properties of an emeralite crystal to heal up to 12hp of damage to any living creature.

Amethyte Persuassion (Influence)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level)
Description: This spell allows the caster to focus the properties of amethyte crystal, creating a glowing light that can instill a sense of peace and passivity in creatures or beings within the area of effect. The intended target may resist with a Will check at -5. On a partial success on the resistance the target will feel the calming influence, but will still be able to attack if desired, though at -3 for the spell duration. On a failure, the target will cease all fighting unless directly attacked. On a mishap the spell effect lasts indefinitely: until dispelled or the target is attacked or otherwise put in danger.

CRYSTALOMANCY SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Amberite Aura (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -9 (12th level, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: When this spell is cast, the crytalomancer's amberite crystal glows with a shimmering golden light that envelops the magician. Any attack that tries to penetrate the glow is harmlessly deflected away. The aura persists until 24hp of damage is done to it, or the spell duraiton expires.

Wound Maker (Harm)

Range: Touch
Duration: Instant
Casting Modifiers: -9 (12th level, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: As a spell of last resort a crystalomancer can reverse the healing properties of an emeralite crystal and wield it as a powerful weapon. Wherever a victim is touched with the crystal, terrible wounds appear, doing great harm (12 hp of damage).

Sense of Terra (Reveal)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -9 (5th level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: 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 magician may make Perception rolls at +5 to detect deadfalls, traps, and potential cave-ins.

Azurite Hand (Move)

Duration: 5 rounds
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -6 (6th level for +2 Strength)
Description: This simple spell allows the crystalomancer to handle distant objects with a beam of bright blue light cast from her azurite crystal. The beam acts as if it had a Strength rating of +2 and is capable of precise manipulations.

Amberite Wall (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: Touch
Area of Effect: 10 x 10 foot wall
Casting Modifiers: -15 (12th level, -6 for area of effect, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell allows the crystalomancer to focus the properties of an amberite crystal to create a 2-dimensional wall of lambent crystal up to 10 x 10 feet. The barrier has an armor rating of 4 and can withstand up to 24p damage before shattering.

CRYSTALOMANCY SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED AND MASTER SPELLS

Prismatic Burst (Illusion)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -16 (1st level base, +15 levels for Magnitude.)
Description: This spell allows the caster to use a prismatite crystal to create a blinding burst of radiant light (as bright as the greater sun). Anyone facing the crystalomancer will be blinded for the spell's duration unless they make a Perception check at -5, -10 if the spell is cast in total darkness. On a partial success on the resistance roll they will be blinded for one round only. On a mishap they will be blinded for the duration of the spell plus an additional minute. Beings who are highly sensitive to light, such as darklings and gnomekin (without eyecusps) take double the penalty to their perception check.

Safe Passage (Ward)

Duration: 5 minutes
Area of Effect: 5 foot radius centered on the crystal
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -19 (10th level, -4 for extra duration, -5 for area of effect)
Description: By casting this spell on an umberate crystal and dropping it in a passageway, the crystalomancer can make it impossible for a certain type of creature (such as Darklings) to pass through the area for 5 minutes. This spell is very useful when fleeing from pursuers underground.

Hidden Passage (Illusion)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -16 (1st level base, +6 levels for Touch and Sound, +9 levels for Magnitude.)
Description: This spell allows the crystalomancer to use a prismatite crystal to conceal the opening of any passage, hall, or tunnel. The illusion replicates walls or natural surfaces (up to the size of a large wagon), making openings or doorways almost impossible to detect, even by touch. Cast in reverse, this spell can be used to create illusory doors or openings.

Shimmering Guardian (Summon)

Duration: 5 minutes
Casting Time: 10 rounds (1 minute)
Casting Modifiers: -14 (10th level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: This spell allows the caster to focus the properties of ebonite crystal to summon a crystal elemental to do his or her bidding. The crystal guardian has the following traits: STR +3, SPD +2, PER -2, INT -3, 20hp, and an armor rating of 3. It can fight or cast one crystalomantic spell with a skill rating of +10.

Tunnel Hold (Move)

Duration: 5 rounds
Range: 50 feet
Area of Effect: 10 foot radius centered on crystal
Casting Modifiers: -34 (24th level for +8 Strength, -10 for extra area)
Description: This powerful spell is used by a crystalomancer 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 10-foot radius.

Elemental Magic

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 Elemental Planes -- extra-dimensional realities comprised of pure energy. There is an Elemental Plane for each of the four primary elements, supposedly arranged in a ring around the sphere of the Primal Plane on which Talislanta sits. Magicians can learn to contact the Planes 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 acoutrements 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. If a magician studies both Air magic and Fire magic for example, he receives no special abilities.

Water The elementalist 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: Alter, Heal, Illusion, Influence

Bonuses: Conjure +3. plus one of Attack +3 (Pyromancy), Move +3 (Aeromancy), Defend +3 (Geomancy), or Transform +3 (Aquamancy)

Penalties: None

Alter Effects: N/A

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.

Summon 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

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. (Conjure)
- Weapons empowered with an elemental force (Attack)

ELEMENTAL MAGIC SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Elemental Shards (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -12 (12th level)
Description: This spell can be used to create aquamantic shards of ice or geomantic shards of stone, which may be hurled at target, inflicting 12hp of damage. To cast the enchantment, the elemental mage must have a small amount of the chosen element in hand.

Mists of Obscurement (Conceal)

Duration: 3 minutes
Range: 50 feet radius
Casting Modifiers: -10 (8th level, -2 for extra duration)
Description: This enchantment allows the caster to create billowing clouds of gray mist, obscuring vision and damping sound in the area of effect. Living creatures caught within the mists suffer -8 to any Perception-based rolls they make.

Aquamantic Globes (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -8 (8th level)
Description: By taking a handful of water and tossing it into the air, the aquamancer can use this spell to create a number of water bubbles that hover in the air. These magical spheres will follow the aquamancer wherever he goes, and will move to intercept incoming attacks, bursting as they absorb the blow. The globes can sustain a total of 16hp damage before they are all expended.

Pyrotechnic Aura (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: Self or Touch
Casting Modifiers: -9 (9th level)
Description: Among the most dazzling and memorable effects in the realm of Elemental magics, the Pyrotechnic Aura envelops the target in a sheath of actual flames. These flames will burn anyone who attacks the target in melee for 3hp damage (one-third the spell level). The flames will absorb 18hp damage before dying, although any large amount of water can quench the flaming aura instantly.

Conjure Water (Conjure)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -3 (2nd level, -4 for extra duration, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell conjures enough water to sustain two average-sized adult humanoids for one day. A suitable receptacle must be provided to hold the water until it is consumed, and it must be consumed before the spell expires, after which the water evaporates swiftly.

Thunderbolt (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Area of Effect: 3 foot radius sphere
Casting Modifiers: -12 (9th level, -3 for area of effect)
Description: This spell allows the aeromancer to generate a bolt of lightning, which can be sent arcing through the air with the sound of thunder and will do 9hp damage to all within a six foot diameter area of the strike. A side effect of this spell is that all within the area of effect must make Constitution checks at -3 or be deafened for three rounds (one-third the level of the spell). The bolt may be dodged as usual, with a -3 (in addition to the normal penalty of the caster's Attack rating) due to the area of effect.

Scryer of the Deep (Reveal)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: 5 miles
Casting Modifiers: -9 (5th level, -4 for extra range)
Description: This spell allows an aquamancer to locate missing persons, sunken ships, or almost anything that has been lost below the surface of any sea, ocean, lake, or river. In order for the spell to be effective the caster must have in his or her possession some item or piece of the lost subject, such as an article of clothing from a missing person or a piece of a sunken ship. Once the spell is cast, the aquamancer must make a Perception check at +5 to locate the specific item being sought. The GM sets the Degree of Difficulty from 1 to 20 based on how distant, buried, or hidden the item is.

ELEMENTAL MAGIC SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED SPELLS

Pyroclasm (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Area of Effect: 5 foot radius sphere
Casting Modifiers: -12 (10th level, -5 for area of effect, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell creates a stream of coruscating flames that will inflict 10hp damage to all in the area of effect and ignite all combustible materials. Victims caught in the area of effect may continue to take an additional 3 hp of damage per round from burning clothing, hair,and/or other items until they spend at least one round to extinguish the flames. Items of paper or light cloth (such as books and normal clothing) will almost certainly be set aflame, while other items may get a roll at the GM's discretion. Individuals targeted by this spell may attempt to evade or dodge as usual, but at a -5 penalty (in addition to the normal penalty of the caster's Attack rating) due to the spell's area of effect.

Curtain of Flames (Conjure)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: 50 feet
Area of Effect: 8 feet high, 18 feet wide, 1 inch thick
Casting Modifiers: -9 (12th level, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: By pointing at the ground and drawing an imaginary line a pyromancer can use this spell to conjure a wall of translucent, magical fire. Anything caught near the flames or trying to pass through it will sustain 4 points of damage (one-third the level of the spell) from the heat, and flammable items such as hair and clothing will almost certainly catch fire.

Servant of the Waves (Summon)

Duration: 12 minutes
Casting Time: 12 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -12 (12th level)
Description: Whenever an aquamancer is traveling in a waterborne vessel of any sort, he or she may send a call out to the Green World, summoning a sea elemental. The elemental can be commanded to pull the vessel through the water at +12 Speed (340 feet per round, 38mph). Few watercraft are built for this kind of speed, so the GM may call for a Pilot roll with a penalty of -10 or greater to keep the craft from capsizing.

Whirlwind (Move)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -15 (6th level for +2 Strength, -12 for increased speed, +3 due to element modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell allows an aeromancer to use the minor spirits that exist everywhere in the air to create a whirlwind that can be made to move individuals and objects weighing up to 150 lbs. At the caster's discretion, the whirlwind can be used like a spell of levitation to lift either the aeromancer or a designated subject into the air. Or it may be directed in a more forceful manner, to force back assailants, scatter small objects or creatures, disperse mists or gasses, and so forth. In the latter case, the vortex will cause up to 2hp of damage per round and move objects or creatures up to 50 feet per round (Speed rating of -5).

Elemental Ward (Ward)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -14 (10th level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: With this spell the elementalist can protect a designated subject from the element related to his chosen Order. Pyromancers can protect the target from all forms of heat; Aquamancers can protect the target from drowning, freezing, or crushing water pressures. Geomancers can protect the target from stone, earth, or mud in any form, while Aeromancers can protect the target from the effects of storms, winds, gasses, or falling.

ELEMENTAL MAGIC SPELLBOOK
MASTER SPELLS

Flameform (Transform)

Duration: 4 minutes
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -33 (20th level, +10 spell levels for Ability Level in Sunform, -3 for extra duration)
Description: Only the most skilled pyromancers are capable of using this spell, which transforms the caster into living flame. Once transformed in this manner, the pyromancer is as intangible as fire and cannot manipulate objects or be hit by ordinary attacks (spell attacks and magic weapons still hit as normal). Anything touched by the Flameform takes normal fire damage and may be set alight. For the purposes of striking and dodging, the Flameform has a combat rating of +10. While in this state, the pyromancer cannot cast additional spells, but can communicate by speaking normally. Any items on the pyromancer's person when the spell is cast become part of the Flameform, but revert to their normal substance once the spell has lapsed. Other elemental versions of this spell are:
Windform: Intangible and invisible. Cannot make attacks. Flight at +5 Speed.
Stoneform: Appears as a humanoid pile of stones. +5 Strength bonus. Can wield weapons. Armor Rating 12.
Seaform. Appears as humanoid fountain of water. Can pass through any opening or through porous materials. +5 Speed bonus in water. Immune to normal attacks. Can attack with jet of water (DR 4).

Rain of Ice (Summon)

Duration: 7 minutes
Area of Effect: 15 foot radius sphere
Casting Time: 15 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -21 (15th level, -6 for extra duration)
Description: Using this spell, an aeromancer or an aquamancer can summon a minor elemental of aberrant weather. As the summoning is being cast, the clouds darken overhead and a low rumbling can be heard. Soon shards of ice being to rain down. The ice shards do 5 points of damage per round to all in the area of effect, although they can be avoided with a Dexterity or Evade skill check at -5. The caster can control the direction the tiny storm moves, guiding it at a +3 Speed.

Wall of Stone (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 0
Area of Effect: 9 feet high, 20 feet wide
Casting Modifiers: -22 (15th level, -10 for increased area [14x14 area], +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell allows a geomancer to call forth elemental forces from deep inside the ground and raise a wall of solid stone. This barrier will remain standing until it has taken 30 points of damage. The wall of stone has an armor rating of 5.

Petrification (Transform)

Duration: 2 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -21 (20th level, -1 for extra duration)
Description: Using this spell, a geomancer can turn a living being or creature into stone. The spell may be resisted with a Constitution check at -7 (half the spell level, rounded down). On a partial resistance the spell still turns the victim to stone, but spell duration is reduced by half.

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. Aamanian 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
Alter Effects: Anything appropriate to the patron entity.
Transform Effects: Anything appropriate to the patron entity.
Summon Effects: An Invoker can summon any extra-dimensional being associated with his patron. A Priest of Aa the Omnificent might summon a shining Avatar of the Almighty, for example. Diabolists summon devils, while demonologists summon demons.

Sample Religion Mode Adjusts:

Aa (Aamanian):
Influence +2, Reveal +2, Illusion -2, Summon -2
Aberon (Rasmirin):
Attack +2, Summon +2, Heal -2, Influence -2
Borean (Mirin):
Defend +2, Move +2, Illusion -2, Influence -2
Death (Rajan):
Attack +2, Summon +2, Defend -2, Heal -2

Enchantment

Common enchanted items created with Invocation include:

- Weapons enhanced with the blessing of a deity. (Alter)
- Armor or amulets enhanced with protective properties (Defend)

Example spells of Invocation follow.

INVOCATION SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Conversion (Influence)

Range: 5 feet
Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level)
Description: Aamanian Priests sometimes use this spell while traveling to simplify dealing with non-believers. The target may resist with a Will check at -5. On a partial success, they will generally agree with the priest on matters of religion, but will not do anything out of their nature. On a failure, they will be complete believers in Aa for the duration of the spell, and will obey simple commands given. On a mishap they will continue to believe in Orthodoxy after the spell's duration, and as long as they are not exposed to anything outside orthodoxy's teaching, may remain that way until the magic is dispelled or countered in some way.

Laying on of Hands (Heal)

Range: Touch
Duration: Instant
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level)
Description: By touching the subject and invoking her patron deity, an invoker can heal up to 10 hit points of damage with this simple spell.

Lance of Light (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifers: -10 (10th level)
Description: With this simple spell, a Priest of Aa can summon a brilliant shaft of blazing energy which strikes a single target within 50 feet, doing 10 HP of damage.

Shield of Faith (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: Self or Touch
Casting Modifiers: -9 (9th level)
Description: An invoker can call on the protection of his patron deity when he is faced with danger. The Shield of Faith suurounds the caster with a glowing aura and will absorb 18 hit points of damage before dissipating.

Sword of Zoriah (Illusion)

Range: 50 feet
Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Casting Modifiers: -7 (1st level, +6 levels of Magnitude)
Description: Worshipers of the war god Zoriah use this spell to invoke the powers of their patron deity. The spell creates a large, floating icon of Zoriah: the Red Sword, to shine high overhead for all to see. When the sword is shown with blood, it is the attack signal. When it is shown sheathed, it is the signal to retreat. There are dozens of other ways the sword is shown, and the direction in which it points also conveys information (such as direction of retreat).

Rhetoric of Saint Aadric (Alter)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -9 (9th level)
Description: The conversion of those ignorant of the ways of Aa must overcome the unholy nature of their upbringing. They were raised outside of Aa's light, and thus are resistant to the truth when they hear it. By reciting the Rhetoric of St. Aadric and laying a gentle (or firm, if necessary) hand on the misguided, their unfortunate resistance can be diminished. The result is -3 to Will to resist Aa's teachings. Will is unaffected in other matters.

Circle of Summoning (Alter)

Duration: 4 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -15 (12th level, -3 for extra duration)
Description: While it is certainly possible to summon beings without the benefit of a Circle of Summoning, relying on the Pact alone for safety, wise diabolists will take the time to prepare a circle first, to give themselves an extra margin for error. A circle of summoning must be seven paces across, inscribed clearly with dark ink or sprinkled blood. Once the circle is complete it gives +4 to the summoning roll, although it must be used immediatly. Many diabolists will have such a circle inscribed into their floor and enchanted.

INVOCATION SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED SPELLS

Heavenly Light (Illusion)

Range: 50 feet
Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Casting Modifiers: -13 (1st level base, +12 levels for Magnitude)
Description: With this spell, the invoker beseeches her patron deity to shine a great holy light down upon the believers (or non-believers) and fill them with grace and power. A massive beam of illumination radiates outward from the caster, covering an area as large as a house and as bright as the Lesser Sun. Believers will be filled with a great sense of peace and understanding, while outsiders may feel cowed or threatened by the massive radiance.

Sacraficial Trance (Influence)

Range: 5 feet
Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Casting Modifiers: -18 (18th level)
Description: Rajan death-priests use this spell to put a victim into a deep trance so that they will not disturb a ritual. The target may resist with a Will check at -9. On a partial success they will be lethargic for the duration, but still able to act, albeit slowly. On a failure the target will walk where lead, lay down where told, and die when stabbed. On a mishap, the target will remain in the trance even after the spell expires, although any shock (such as a slap) will awaken them.

Terra's Grasp (Move)

Range: 50 feet
Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Casting Modifiers: -12 (12th level)
Description: The gnomekin priestesses of Terra have been known to utilize the land's natural effect (pulling things down) to put a stop to fights before they've begun. When Terra's Grasp is cast at a target, they feel the crushing weight of the earth upon them far greater than normal. Treat the target as though being pulled to the ground with a +4 strength. Any rolls that require movement will suffer a -4 penalty for the duration.

Demon Bile (Conjure)

Duration: 3 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -11 (9th level, -2 for extra duration)
Description: With a word of power, the invoker calls forth a greenish slime which oozes out of invisible cracks and holes on a chosen surface. The Demon Bile is an acidic, slippery substance that clings to anything and is difficult to remove. Often used to cover a floor (DEX check at -3 to avoid slippling) or hang down in a thin transluscent curtain across an archway, the Demon Bile inflicts 3hp damage per round it touches the skin, and must be manually scraped off, as water alone will not remove it.

Northwind's Blast (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -15 (15th level)
Description: Mirin Priests of Borean developed this spell for combat against the Ice Giants of Narandu. The fearsome blast of this supernatural wind deals out 15 hit points of damage to one target.

Communion (Reveal)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -12 (12th level)
By communing in silent prayer with her patron deity, an invoker can learn mysteries and uncover secret knowledge. The player may ask a question like, "Where have the gate keys been hidden in this room?" and then roll on the Action Table using the Perception rating of the spell as a positive modifier (+12). The degree of difficulty (1-20) is determined by the GM, based on how well concealed or esoteric the information is.

INVOCATION SPELLBOOK
MASTER SPELLS

Contact Lower Planes (Summon)

Duration: 5 minutes
Casting Time: 20 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -24 (20th level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: This spell is often employed by a Diabolist to call forth the mighty beings of the lower planes and force them to do the caster's bidding. These creatures have an Ability Rating of +20 and most Attribute ratings are +10 or more (per GM's ruling). The Black Savants of Nefaratus are particularly adept at summoning and controlling highly dangerous entities of this sort.

Demonic Swarm (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifers: -20 (15th level, -5 for area of effect)
Description: This spell was originally created by the witch doctors of Pana-Ku. When this spell is cast, a momentary stream of demonic force is unleashed, allowing hundreds of 1-inch sub-demons to streak out and attack anything in the area of effect, causing a total of 15hp damage. Those unfortunate enough to be subjected may attempt to dodge, but at -5 (in addition to the normal penalty of the caster's Attack rating) due to the area of effect. Once the sub-demons have inflicted their damage, they fade back to nothingness.

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 Archaens 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: Transform, Conjure
Bonuses: Influence +3, Reveal +3
Penalties: Attack -5
Alter Effects: A mystic can alter any quality of body, mind or spirit. A mystic cannot alter any quality of inanimate objects or animals.
Transform Effects: N/A
Summon Effects: Mystics have the very special ability to use the Summon 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 Summon Mode to cast spells that call forth spiritforms from the astral plane.

Enchantment

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 (Conceal, Ward)
- Eyepieces that reveal astral presences or spiritforms (Reveal)

Example spells of Mysticism follow.

MYSTICISM SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Speed of Thought (Alter)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Self or touch
Casting Modifiers: -9 (9th level)
Description: This spell is one of many basic mind-over-body alterations that beginning mystics often learn. For the duration of the spell, add +3 to any Speed attribute roll for determining running, jumping, or climbing speed. This +3 Speed does not add to Initiative rolls in combat.

Strength of Will (Alter)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Self or touch
Casting Modifiers: -9 (9th level)
Description: This spell is one of many basic mind-over-body alterations that beginning mystics often learn. For the duration of the spell, add +3 to any Strength attribute roll for encumberance, lifting and carrying. This +3 Strength does not add to damage in combat.

Nimble Mind (Alter)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Self or touch
Casting Modifiers: -9 (9th level)
Description: This spell is one of many basic mind-over-body alterations that beginning mystics often learn. For the duration of the spell, add +3 to any Dexterity attribute roll for balance or body-coordination. This +3 Dexterity does not add to manipulation skills like Locks or Traps, but it does apply to skills like Acrobatics and Dance.

Lifesight (Reveal)

Duration: 10 minutes
Range: 1 mile
Casting Modifiers: -9 (3rd level, -9 for extra duration, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: By meditating and listening deep within, the mystic can use this discipline to discern the approximate location of all living minds within a one-mile radius. This spell cannot be used to determine the 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". If more detailed information is sought, the mystic adds +3 to Perception and rolls against a penalty based on the level of detail desired (GM's ruling).

Wall of Thought (Ward)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level)
Description: By repeating a simple thought over and over in the mind, the mystic can use this discipline to erect a mental barrier that will protect him or her from all spells of Influence.

Healing Thoughts (Heal)

Range: Self or Touch
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level)
Description: Mystics use this discipline to heal themselves or others by exercising the force of their own will. Up to 10hp of damage may be healed each time Healing Thoughts is used. Like all healing spells, Healing Thoughts becomes more difficult to cast repeatedly on a single target in the same day.

Telekinesis (Move)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -6 (3 levels for +1 Grappling Strength, 3 levels for +1 lifting Strength)
Description: By focusing the power of the mind, the mystic can create an invisible force that can be used to move objects, wield a weapon, parry a blow, open a door, or catch a falling object. The telekinetic force has a Strength of +1 for purposes of grappling and lifting.

Inner Revelation (Alter)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -9 (9th level)
Description: Inner Revelation enables the mystic to go beyond the conscious mind to seek answers in the subconscious instead. In game terms, this spell allows a mystic who has failed an Intelligence check to make a second check at +3 after a short period of meditation. To seek a Revelation the mystic closes his eyes and experiences a vision that subjectively may seem to last from several minutes to several hours, or even days. In reality, the vision takes just a moment, after which the mystic awakens; hopefully, with the answer he or she has been seeking. At the GM's discretion, the mystic may take others with him (-1 to casting roll for each) into a group meditation, allowing the mystic's experience to be experienced and role-played by other players as well.

MYSTICISM SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED SPELLS

Subtle Ways (Influence)

Duration: 6 rounds (36 seconds)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Modifiers: -15 (18th level, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode, -1 for extra duration)
Description: Subtle Ways is a means by which a mystic may use the power of suggestion to influence others. To do so, the mystic speaks a phrase in a subtle tone of voice while focusing on the subject of the suggestion. If the influence is not resisted (with a Will check at -9), the subject will believe that the suggestion originated within his or her own thoughts.
For example, the mystic might suggest something like, "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." If the subject fails to resist, he or she succumbs to the suggestion without hesitation. On a partial success the subect will be inclined to agree with the thought, but not completely convinced. On a failure, the target will go along for the duration of the spell. On a mishap, they will continue believing the suggestion after the spell duration, unless shown evidence otherwise.

Chaos Barrier (Attack)

Duration: 8 rounds (48 seconds)
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -13 (8th level , -5 due to Order modifier for this mode, -3 for extra duration)
Description: As a means of self-defense, the mystic can use this spell to envelop himself in a maelstrom of chaotic thoughts and half-formed notions. Any individual or creature that touches the mystic while the Chaos Barrier stands, either with hand, claw, or weapon, will be stunned for 1 round unless they can resist the mental assault (Will check at -4).

Feather Walk (Move)

Duration: 10 rounds (1 minute)
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -14 (9th level spell, -3 for +3 lifting Strength, -5 for extra duration)
Description: This discipline allows the mystic to alter his or her body weight, becoming as light as a feather. While using it the mystic can walk along any surface stronger than a spider web, fall any distance without harm, and move without making a sound (+9 to stealth skill). Up to 175 lbs can be made weightless, counting the mystic and everything carried on his or her person.

The Shadow Way (Illusion)

Duration: 8 rounds (48 seconds)
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -16 (1st level base, +9 levels for Magnitude, +3 levels for Motion, -3 for extra duration)
Description: Mystics use this spell to move unseen, using a combination of stealth and the ability to cloud the minds of would-be observers. The Shadow Way causes all who look in the mystic's direction to see only shadows moving about normally. The shadows cover a ten foot area, and if a specific search is being performed, the mystic and any others being hidden receive +3 to their Stealth skills. Note that this spell is not very effective if used in open areas that lack cover or shadow, such as a desert plain.

Meditative Focus (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -16 (16th level)
Description: With a moment's concentration, the mystic may use this spell to focus and enhance his or her defensive abilities. While the mystic is under its influence, arrows can be knocked from the air, swordblades caught between the palms, and even ambushes or attacks from behind are sensed and avoided. Nothing can touch the mystic until the Focus wears off, which occurs in 30 seconds or when 32hp of damage have been avoided.

Mindprobe (Reveal)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -variable (12th level, -difficulty of probe, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: By concentrating, the mystic can use this discipline to reach into the mind of another and read surface thoughts, relive memories, or even bring to light hidden knowledge and blocked memories. The target may resist with a Will check at -12, though individuals who have been trained to keep secrets may receive a bonus to the resistance check. For example, a spy may add their Espionage skill level. The level of knowledge sought determines difficulty of the probe as follows:
Surface thoughts -0
Recent memories -3
Old memories -6
Forgotten memories -9
Suppressed memories or subliminal observations -12
Past lives -20 or more

MYSTICISM SPELLBOOK
MASTER SPELLS

Forbidden Thought (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -25 (20th level, -5 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: There are some thoughts that are so contrary to ordered consciousness that the merest hint can send the mind shrieking into darkness. The Forbidden Thought is one of these. To employ such a spell, the mystic formulates the thought, keeping it at a safe distance within his own consciousness until it is launched at another mind. Unless able to resist the onslaught (Will check, using the mystic's Attack rating as the degree of difficulty), the intended target takes 20 points of stun damage. On a mishap, the victim will lapse into a comatose state for 20 minutes, after which time a second Will check must be made. If successful, the victim recovers consciousness with no lasting consequences. If not, the victim awakens, but will be permanently afflicted with a phobia or mental disorder of some sort (GM's choice).

Twin Minds (Alter)

Duration: 3 minutes
Range: Touch (2 targets)
Casting Modifiers: -21 (18th level, -2 for extra duration, -1 for extra target)
Description: When Twin Mind is cast, two willing individuals (such as the caster and a chosen recipient) share a mystical link. Closer than telepathy, the link allows the two to move and fight as though their two bodies were controlled by one mind, like two halves of a single whole. Also, as long as they remain within ten feet of one another, the linked individuals receive +6 to one combat skill that they have in common and can perform the most complex tactics and feats without the need for verbal communication of any sort.

Tower of Will (Ward)

Duration: 6 minutes
Range: Self
Area of Effect: 10 foot radius
Casting Modifiers: -20 (10th level, -5 for extra duration, -5 for area of effect)
Description: This discipline allows the mystic to use force of will to erect a mental defense that will protect all within the area of effect from any form of scrying device or Reveal spell.

Death Touch (Harm)

Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -30 (30th level)
Description: As part of their study of the lines of energy that flow through the mind and body, mystics also learn how those lines of energy can be disrupted . One such method is the Death Touch. By touching a living creature or being at the exact center of its life's energy, the mystic can disrupt the victim's lifeforce, with fatal results (30hp damage). The Death Touch is regarded as a black art among most mystics, few of whom would ever use it except under the most dire circumstances. Nevertheless, certain Mandalan legends tell of mystic warriors who were tempted to follow the dark path of this deadly discipline, and of the terrible consequences that befell them.

Astral Travel (Summon)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Self
Casting Time: 10 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -20 (15th level, -5 for extra duration)
Description: 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 will be able to see clearly for great distances on the astral plane, 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.
On the astral plane, the mystic may meet astral entities, dreamers, and other beings. All these beings will seem physical to the astral mystic, and they will be able to cause and sustain damage exactly as material beings do.
Like spiritforms, astral entities cannot be seen by individuals on the material plane, nor can they interact with physical objects or beings except through psychic abilities or spells of mysticism.
If the mystic's astral form is slain on the astral plane, his physical self will also perish. On the other hand, an astral traveler may be stranded in noncorporeal form if his physical body is slain on the material plane.

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 the sub-elemental 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: Reveal +2, Heal +2
Penalties: Attack -2, Transform -2
Alter Effects: Natural magic can alter only physical properties.
Transform 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.
Summon Effects: Natural Magicians can summon creatures from the Green World. These usually take on the form of wood elementals, dryads, or benign nature-spirits.

Enchantment

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.

Example spells of Natural Magic follow.

NATURAL MAGIC SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Herbal Healing (Heal)

Range: Self or Touch
Casting Modifiers: -10 (12th level, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: By the application of common herbs or other ingredients, the naturalist can use this enchantment to heal wounds (up to 12hp of damage). The spell's natural components are placed directly on the wound, enabling the sub-elementals within to effect the healing process.

Hidden Spring (Conjure)

Duration: 3 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -8 (6th level, -2 for extra duration)
Description: By kneeling upon the ground and calling to the spirits of the underground rivers, the naturalist can use this spell to bring water to the surface, creating a small spring of fresh water. The spring will yield enough water to sustain three average-sized humanoids and three equs-sized steeds for one day. The water will remain on the surface for three minutes, after which any that has not been consumed will seep back into the ground.

Call of the Wild (Attack)

Duration: 10 rounds
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -10 (8th level, -2 for Order modifier for this mode)
Description: By calling upon the spirits of nature, the naturalist can tap into the primal forces of the wild. As the enchantment takes hold, the caster's voice and features adopt a feral semblance, and the fingernails turn into razor-sharp claws that can be wielded as weapons (DR of 8).

Windborne Messenger (Summon)

Duration: 10 minutes
Range: 1000 miles
Casting Time: 1 round
Casting Modifiers: -10 (1st level, -9 for extra duration)
Description: When this spell is cast, a minor wind elemental called a windling can be summoned and compelled to deliver a verbal message from the caster to a designated recipient. The windling can travel hundreds of miles in just a few minutes, but will be unable to locate the spell's intended recipient unless given information on the subject's general whereabouts. The caster would also do well to keep in mind that, like most minor elementals, windlings are of meager intellect, and are likely to confuse or garble messages that are too long or complex (GM's ruling).

Wooden Sanctuary (Move)

Duration: 10 rounds (1 minute)
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -8 (3rd level, -5 for extra duration)
Description: By means of this spell the caster can convince the elemental spirit of any sufficiently large tree to share its space for a while, allowing the magician to enter the tree and remain there for the spell's duration. While the magician remains within a Wooden Sanctuary he or she is undetectable by non-magical means, and there will be no outside evidence of the caster's presence inside the tree. Note that if the caster does not exit the tree at the spell's expiration, death can result. (Or perhaps not. Some theories suggest that this is how the mang species came into existence. Few modern scholars are willing to test the theory, however.)

Detect Unnatural (Reveal)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 60 feet
Casting Modifiers: -9 (6th level, -4 for extra duration, -1 for extra range, +2 for Order modifier for this mode)
Description: While this spell is in effect, the caster can sense anything that is not native or natural to the area. Hidden structures, traps, lost objects, and non-natural magical effects will stand out like a beacon to the caster's eyes.

Nature's Fury (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -10 (8th level, -2 for Order modifier for this mode)
Description: By giving voice to a soft chant, the naturalist can call a swarm of flying insects and/or small avian creatures (such as avir, or whatever creatures are indigenous to the region) and direct them against a designated opponent or target. Though individually such small creatures may be capable of only minor damage, the aggregate effect of the swarm's attack is considerable (8hp damage). At the end of the round, the swarm departs as swiftly as it arrived.

NATURAL MAGIC SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED SPELLS

Nature's Child (Alter)

Duration: 4 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -12 (9th level, -3 for extra duration)
Description: This spell allows the caster to calm wild beasts by touch or by the use of song. The enchantment reduces the beast's aggressiveness 3 points using the following scale:
10-Maddened, 7-Violent, 5-Typical, 3-Passive, 1-Tame. For example, a predatory exomorph (aggressiveness of 7) would calm down and walk away. If the exomorph were suffering from an infected wound and was in a rampage, then this spell would calm it a little, but not enough to prevent it from attacking.

Nature's Gift (Conjure)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -13 (9th level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: The natural magician casts this spell by planting a seed from a fruiting plant and chanting in a low voice. In moments the seed will germinate and grow into a plant bearing enough food to sustain three average-sized humanoids for one day. The fruit must be eaten within the spell duration, for after five minutes Nature takes back anything that has not been consumed.

Barkskin (Defend)

Duration: 3 minutes
Range: Self or Touch
Casting Modifiers: -14 (12th level, -2 for extra duration)
Description: By calling upon the spirits of the forest for protection, the naturalist can make his or her skin as hard and durable as the strongest tree-bark. Barkskin will absorb a total of 24hp damage before the spell is broken.

Earthworks (Defend)

Duration: 4 minutes
Range: Self
Casting Modifiers: -12 (3rd level, -3 for extra duration, -6 for area of effect)
Description: This spell allows the natural magician to call upon the spirits of earth, rock and stone, to raise an earthen fortification: a natural barrier six feet high and twelve feet across that will encircle the caster and any others within the area of effect. The fortification has an armor rating of 1, and from a distance resembles a grassy hill.

Camouflage (Illusion)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -13 (1st level base, +3 levels for Magnitude, +3 levels for Motion, +3 levels for complexity, +3 levels for scent)
Description: With this spell the caster can make himself or any designated subject within spell range blend in with the surroundings so as to be nearly invisible. The spell also masks the recipient's scent, making him or her undetectable to creatures that rely on olfactory clues to locate prey. In combat, a camouflaged individual receives a +5 bonus to their combat rating, unless opponents have other reliable means of detecting him (such as magical senses, the target character standing in water, etc.).

Forest Gloom (Illusion)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -19 (1st level base, +15 levels for Magnitude, +3 levels for Motion)
Description: This spell enables the natural magician to call upon the spirits of woodland or forest to shut off the outside world, shrouding the area around him or her in darkness. The gloom is not absolute, but is an interweaving of shadows, revealing less than it seems. The area of effect is a circle roughly two hundred feet diameter around the caster, which moves along with the magician for the duration of the spell.

Primieval Fear (Influence)

Duration: 8 rounds (48 seconds)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Modifiers: -15 (12th level, -3 for extra duration)
Description: Using this spell the natural magician merges his spirit with those of the great predatory beasts, radiating a palable aura of fear and danger. Any creature or being subjected to the aura must resist with a Will check (at -6) or be filled with the fear of the prey, and flee in a blind panic. On a partial success a victim will still be terrified, but may stay and fight at a -4 penalty. On a failure the victim will flee at top speed for 8 rounds before recovering his or her senses. On a mishap the victim continues to flee even after the spell's effect expires, until exhausted or restrained in some manner.

NATURAL MAGIC SPELLBOOK
MASTER SPELLS

Animal Friendship/Animal Bond (Influence)

Duration: 10 rounds (1 minute) / 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Modifiers: -13 (8th level, -5 for extra duration) / -30 (30th level)
Description: By the use of this spell, natural magicians are able to befriend an animal by communing with the creature's elemental spirit. The Animal Friendship spell is generally short term, lasting long enough only for the caster to obtain the animal's services for one minute. The Animal Bond spell, on the other hand, is far more difficult, and may result in a permanent friendship between the caster and the animal. In either case, the animal resists with its ability level against half the spell level. On a partial success the animal will be moderately friendly, but not particularly obedient. On a failure the animal will obey simple commands for the duration. On a mishap the animal will remain friends with the caster, even after the spell's expiration, or for as long as the caster gives no reason for the bond to be broken.

Animate Plants (Move)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Area of Effect: 12 foot radius area
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -24 (9th level, -12 for area of effect)
Description: By calling to the sub-elementals that reside in the grasses, trees, and other plants in the area, the caster can direct them to grasp any number of individuals or creatures in a 24 foot diameter area, and hold them fast with a Strength of +3. Intended targets may resist the entanglement with a Dexterity or Evade check (at -12, due to the wide area of effect). On a partial success subjects can still move slowly and fight at a -3 penalty.

Sky Walk (Reveal)

Duration: 5 minutes
Area of Effect: 10 miles radius sphere
Casting Modifiers: -12 (1st level, -4 for extra duration, -9 for extra range, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This enchantment allows the naturalist to commune with the elemental spirits of the wind and clouds and see through their "eyes", providing a panoramic view of the surrounding terrain up to ten miles distant. It is said that the effect is quite exhilarating, enabling the caster to feel what it's like to be one in spirit with the wind and clouds, looking down from high above the ground.

Beastform (Transform)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Self or Touch
Casting Modifiers: -26 (10th level, -4 for extra duration, -10 for ability level, -2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: By means of this spell the caster contacts the spirit of a chosen animal and adopts its natural form. All attributes and abilities are like those of the animal, although the ability level is +10.

Land Trap (Transform)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -12 (10th level spell, -2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: By touching the ground and chanting to the sub-elementals of root and earth, the caster can use this spell to compel the spirits to create a hidden trap: a pit ten feet deep and 5 feet in diameter, covered with a thin mesh of leaves, dirt, and twigs. Victims who fall into the hidden pit suffer 4 pts of damage from the sudden fall and may find it difficult to escape due to a lack of handholds and loose, earthen walls (-5 to any Dexterity or Climb rolls to escape).

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 Rajanistan 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 reanimated 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, Conjure
Bonuses: Summon: +2, Heal: +3
Penalties: Influence: -3
Alter Effects: Necromancers have great knowledge of the body and its inner workings. Most Necromantic Alter spells change some property of the physical form (strength, perception, hit points, etc.)
Transform 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 master Necromancy spells.
Summon Effects: Necromancers can summon the spirits of the dead and communicate with them. To summon the spirit of a specific being, the Necromancer must posess the being's corpse (or a part of it) or cast the spell at the place where the being died.

Enchantment

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)

Example spells of Necromancy follow.

NECROMANCY SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Ebon Armor (Alter)

Duration: 2 Minutes
Range: Self or Touch
Casting Modifiers: -10 (9th level, -1 for extra duration)
Description: This incantation causes the necromancer's shadow to expand, solidify, and envelop him in a fearsome looking suit of black armor. The armor has a PR of 3 but is weightless. NPCs suffer a -3 to their morale when facing a foe in Ebon Armor.

Eyes of Narishna (Reveal)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 1 mile
Casting Modifiers: -5 (1st level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: 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.

Raj-Kal's Visceral Fingers (Attack)

Duration: 6 rounds (36 seconds)
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -6 (6th level)
Description: Raj-Kal, a Rajan torquar of no small repute, 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 6hp of damage per round until he frees himself from the necromancer's grasp or the spell expires.

Corpus Weaving (Heal)

Range: Self or Touch
Casting Modifiers: -9 (12th level, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: 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.

Wall of Souls (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 10 feet
Casting Modifiers: -10 (6th level, -4 for area)
Description: 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 living can pass through the barrier, although unliving matter can pass through with ease. The barrier has an armor rating of 2 and can be broken by inflicting 12hp damage.

Unlife (Summon)

Duration: 10 minutes
Casting Time: 1 round
Casting Modifiers: -10 (1st level, -9 for extra duration)
Description: 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.

Black Mists of Malnangar (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level)
Description: Noxious black vapors pour from the necromancer's cloak or outstretched fingers, enveloping the target in a suffocating cloud. The Black Mists do 10hp of damage. 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.

NECROMANCY SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED SPELLS

Dark Coercion (Influence)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Modifiers: -11 (8th level , -3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: 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 "Kill your companions". The intended target is allowed a Will check (at -4.) 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.

Deathly Visions (Reveal)

Duration: 5 minute
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -18 (13th level, -5 for extra duration)
Description: 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 determines the level of the spell. Spells cast at lower levels have no effect. If the necromancer does not know the age of the corpse, he must guess at the corret spell level.
1 minute: 1st level
1 hour: 5th level
1 day: 9th level
1 week: 13th level
1 month: 17th level
1 year: 21st level
1 decade: 25th level
1 century: 29th level
Over a century: 33rd level

Energy Drain (Alter)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -15 (15th level)
Description: By touching a hand to the target, the necromancer drains living energy from the subject to himself, inflicting 5hp damage and adding 5hp to his own total. The damage done is treated as normal, but the hit points added to the necromancer are stolen energy, and will fade at the end of the spell's duration. Any damage the necromancer takes will be subtracted from these phantom hit points first before his own body sustains damage.

Ebon Harbingers (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Area of Effect: 5 foot radius sphere
Casting Modifiers: -17 (12th level, -5 for area of effect)
Description: 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 12hp of damage to the victim. 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).

Grave Communion (Summon)

Duration: 5 minutes
Casting Time: 10 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -12 (10th level, -4 for extra duration, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: The caster can take any corpse, or even the skeletal remains of a corpse, and call up the spirit that once lived within it. If successful, the spell will require the spirit to respond truthfully to any three questions posed by the caster. The spirit is allowed a check vs Will to resist the summons, at a bonus of +1 per level of the spirit.

Claw Hands (Transform)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -12 (8th level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: This spell transforms the subject's hands into long, dagger-like claws, similar to those of a Ghast. The claws are DR 8, and Unarmed Combat, Da-khar, or Dagger skill can be used in wielding them.

NECROMANCY SPELLBOOK
MASTER SPELLS

Darkening Veil (Ward)

Duration: 5 minutes
Area of Effect: 10 foot radius sphere
Casting Modifiers: -24 (10th level, -10 for area of effect, -4 for extra duration)
Description: Black Veil creates a swirling dome of black mists twenty feet across. Spiritforms are unable to pierce the spectral substance, which is a solid wall to them. 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.

Hands of Urmaan (Move)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Area of Effect: 10 foot radius sphere
Casting Modifiers: -28 (18th level, -10 for area of effect)
Description: 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 -10 penalty to evade their chill embrace. The Strength of the grasping hands is +6, and victims held immobile have an effective combat rating of 0 until they break free.

Fatal Lust (Harm)

Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -27 (30th level, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell allows the necromancer to infect a living subject with a terrible disease by merely pressing a hand to the subject's wrist or neck. Infected victims will notice nothing at first, but within days will begin to feel dark and sinister urges that become ever more difficcult to resist (roll a daily Will check at a cummulative -1 per day to resist the urge to commit evil acts, of a type determined by the GM). If left untreated, the disease will eventually turn the victim into a amoral, murderous sociopath.

Face of Death (Transform)

Duration: 15 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -20 (6th level, -14 for extra duration)
Description: 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.

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 Dreamrealms, 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 Reveal 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 Black Mushroom, K'tallah, Blue Lotus, or by careful meditation. Without the benefit of drugs or meditation, the shaman suffers a casting roll penalty of -5.

Modes

Not available: Conjure
Bonuses: Heal +2, Reveal +2
Penalties: Attack -3
Alter 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.
Transform Effects: Every shaman has the ability to assume the form of their totem animal. See the example spell, "Totem Form" below.
Summon Effects: A shaman cannot summon the entities of the dream-realm, per se, but she can communicate with them. The Summon Mode is used for any spell that does this. The greater the level of the Summon spell, the more likely a given spirit is to be helpful and knowledgeable.

Enchantment

Shamans rarely practice complex enchantment, though they are known to create simple fetishes or charms.

- A feather-charm for commanding avians (Influence)
- A claw-fetish for tracking prey in the wilderness (Reveal)
- A blood-tattooo for resisting poisons (Heal)

Example spells of Shamanism follow.

SHAMANISM SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Mists of the Dreamrealms (Illusion)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -10 (1st level base, +3 levels for Magnitude, +3 levels for Motion, +3 levels for an additional sense affected)
Description: 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.

Spirit Track (Reveal)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -9 (7th level, -4 for extra duration, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
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.

Dreamwalker (Reveal)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -8 (6th level, -4 for extra duration, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: 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 +6 bonus) vs the subject's Will in order to steal information. If the target has any defenses against such an intrusion, then these are added to the target's Will to determine the degree of difficulty.

Altered State (Reveal)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 50 Feet
Casting Modifiers: -9 (7th level, -4 for extra duration, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: 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 +7.

Call Totem Animal (Summon)

Duration: 6 minutes
Casting Time: 10 rounds
Casting Modifiers: -10 (5th level, summoned creature is ability level 5, -5 for extra duration)
Description: 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, but has the ability to comprehend and converse with the caster on a spiritual (non-verbal) level.

Giver-of-Life (Heal)

Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -10 (12th level, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This ritual allows the shaman to enter a trance and call upon the spirits to heal up to 12 hp of damage to any living creature or being. A ceremonial drum, flute, or fetish is a necessary component of this spell.

SHAMANISM SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED SPELLS

Totemic Aspect (Alter)

Duration: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -15 (15th level)
Description: After entering the dream-state, the shaman's form shifts to partially resemble that of her Totem Animal. Fingernails extend into claws, eyes turn to slits, or skin hardens into scaly hide. The player may increase one attribute by +3 for the duration of the spell, to simulate the Totem Animal's special aspect.

Hunter's Moon (Alter)

Duration: 10 minutes
Range: Touch
Area of Effect: Self and two others
Casting Modifiers: -18 (9th level, -2 for extra targets, -9 for extra duration)
Description: By entering a trance state and calling upon the spirit of The Hunter, the shaman can imbue himself and up to two others with predatory instincts. For the duration of the spell all receive +3 to their Hunting skill, or a +3 rating if they did not possess this skill before.

Far-Seeing (Reveal)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 3 miles
Casting Modifiers: -12 (8th level spell, -4 for extra duration, -2 for extra range, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: 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 +8 modifier 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.

Retribution (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Area of Effect: 5 foot radius sphere
Casting Modifiers: -13 (10th level, -5 for area effect, -3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: 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 10 HP of damage to those follish enough to stand in their way.

Dreambane (Harm)

Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -12 (15th level, +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: 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, Morphius, 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.

SHAMANISM SPELLBOOK
MASTER SPELLS

Spirit Guardians (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: Touch
Area of Effect: 10' diameter circle
Casting Modifiers: -21 (15th level, -6 for area of effect)
Description: This incantation allows the shaman to call forth a number of ancestral spirits, who will guard and protect anyone within a ten-foot diameter circle surrounding the caster. 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 30hp and an armor rating of 5.

Totemic Form (Transform)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -29 (15th level, -10 for ability level of Totemic Form, -4 for extra duration)
Description: 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 and an ability level of +10.

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 Talislantan cultures (primarily the Aamanians) consider witchcraft to be "black magic", and openly persecute its practitioners. For this reason, Talislantan 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: Conjure
Bonuses: Heal: +2, Ward: +2, Reveal: +2
Penalties: Attack -3
Alter 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.
Transform 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.
Summon 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 qualties, however, including invisibility, immunity to normal weapons, and the special power of Weirding (see sample spell, below).

Enchantment

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)

WITCHCRAFT SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Sympathetic Magic (Harm)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet (or Binding)
Casting Modifiers: -6 (9th level , +3 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: this spell allows the caster to do harm to another creature or individual by harming an object that symbolizes the intended victim. A crude doll or fetish made from a piece of the target's hair or clothing will suffice to efect the magic, which can cause up to 9hp damage to the intended victim. Optionally, the nature of the damage done to the victim (fire, strangulation, stabbing, etc.) is determined by the type of damge done by the caster to the object. The spell may also be used to cause minor damage or inconvenience, such as shooting pains in a hand or limb, tripping, obscuring vision, etc. The GM determines resistance rolls based on the nature and intended severity of the attack.

Weird (Summon)

Duration: 1 minute
Casting Time: 1 round
Casting Modifiers: -1 (1st level)
Description: This spell summons calls a minor spiritling and allows the caster to compel it to retrieve any small object or item that rightfully belongs to the caster. A Weirded spiritling will recover any object that was lost, stolen, dropped, or even thrown; however, it will not retrieve any item that was sold or freely given away. Once the service has been rendered, the spiritling will then return to it's home, unless the summoning is made permanent with an enchantment. Note that an item with a Weird on it counts as one of the seven magical items a person can carry.

Mending (Heal)

Duration: Instant
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -8 (10th level, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell allows the caster to heal up to10hp of damage to any living creature, or to mend a similar amount of damage done to any inanimate object.

False Dweomer (Illusion)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -8 (1st level base, +3 levels for magic sense, -4 for extra duration)
Description: this spell enables the caster to imbue any item with a false aura of magic, causing it to appear to be enchanted.

Changeling (Illusion)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -8 (1st level base, +3 levels for Complex Elements, -4 for extra duration)
Description: By means of this spell the caster is able to alter the appearence of any individual to match that of any other person. Auditory, tactile, and other elements may be added to the spell, as per the rules for Illusions.

Witch Glass (Reveal)

Duration: 2 minutes
Range: 1 mile (or Binding)
Casting Modifiers: 0 (1st level, -1 for extra duration, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell allows the caster to temporarily turn any reflective surface (such as a mirror or crystal ball) into a scrying device. By staring into the Witch Glass, the caster can view any target of choice, including a person, an object, or even a location. The target must be known to the caster in order for the spell to function. Range is one mile unless some form of Binding object is used, in which case the range is unlimited.

Hide Magic (Conceal)

Duration: 3 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -8 (8th level, -2 for extra duration, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell allows the caster to disguise any enchanted object, artifact, creature, or being, causing it to appear to be non-magical in nature. In practical terms, this spell may be used to make an enchanted blade appear to be ordinary, or to make a potion seem like a vial of plain liquid. Or, it could be used to hide the fact that an individual is under the influence of a ward, curse, or other spell. A PER roll at -8 must be made to see through the spell's effect.

WITCHCRAFT SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED SPELLS

Eldritch Barrier (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: Self or Touch
Area of Effect: 10 foot diameter sphere
Casting Modifiers: -18 (12th level, -6 for area of effect)
Description: This spell allows the caster to erect a 10-foot diameter sphere of eldritch force that wil provide protection vcrom physical and magical attacks. The barrier has an armor rating of 4 and can withstand up to 24hp damage before being destroyed.

Enfeeblement (Alter)

Duration: 2 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -16 (15th level, -1 for extra duration)
Description: This spell allows the caster to cause weakness in a designated creature or being by touch. The victim will suddenly feel exhausted, as though strenuous activity, and suffers a -3 penalty to all rolls for the duration of the spell.

Aura of Allurement (Alter)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -16 (12th level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: Through the use of this enchantment the caster can make a designated subject appear more attractive and alluring. In game terms the spell adds +4 to the beneficiary's appearance, but does not affect 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.

Jinx (Summon)

Duration: 5 minutes
Casting Time: 1 round
Casting Modifiers: -16 (12th level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: This spell summons a 1st level spiritling to hound a given subject, wreaking all manner of mischief. Until the Jinx expires or is removed, the subject will suffer a penalty of -4 (one-third the spell level) on all actions, and will experience numerous minor mishaps and misfortunes at the GM's discretion.

Obsession (Influence)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 5 feet (or Binding)
Casting Modifiers: -12 (12th level)
Description: This spell enables the caster to afflict a subject with an overwhelming craving or desire of the caster's choic. 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 (laughing, crying, counting things, etc.). The subject may resist the spell with a Will check at -6. On a partial success they will still feel the obsession, but can control it with repeated will checks for the duration. On a failure, they will experience the obsession for the spell's duration. On a mishap they will continue to experience the obsession after the spell expires until something shocks them out of it.

Eldritch Vapors (Transform)

Duration: 3 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -17 (15th level, -2 for extra duration)
Description: By inhaling vapors, smoke, or fog, the caster transforms into magical vapors. In this form the witch can seep through any crack, no matter how small, and move in any direction at 50 feet per round (-5 Speed).

Safekeep (Ward)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -12 (10th level, -4 for extra duration, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell can be used to imbue any object or item with an invisible magical aura that will protect it from theft. No one but the caster can touch the item while the spell is in place. Note that touching a protected item with gloves, tongs, or other objetcs affords no protection from a Safekeep, which can only be dispelled by magic.

WITCHCRAFT SPELLBOOK
MASTER SPELLS

Bewitch (Hex)

Duration: 20 minutes
Range: Touch (or Binding)
Casting Modifiers: -27 (10th level, -19 for extra duration, +2 due to Order modifier for this mode)
Description: This spell makes the victim more vulnerable to a particular threat or malady and causes this threat to be more attracted to him or her. For example, the caster could Bewitch a victim with a susceptibility to broken bones. This would cause the victim to suffer more serious injury in a fall or accident and make such an accident more likely to occur. In game terms, the victim takes double damage from whatever threat or malady they have been Bewitched with.

Curse of the Beast (Transform)

Duration: variable
Range: Touch (or Binding)
Casting Modifiers: variable
Description: Among the most common spells of Witchcraft, this curse transforms the subject into an animal; typically, one which represents some less-than-flattering aspect of the victim. The process is gradual, taking one day per spell level. With each day the target develops another animal feature (eyes, hair, claws, etc.) until the transformation is complete. The animal form lasts seven days from that point, at which time the target will revert to it's original form.

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 wizardy (magical influence, protection) will have a noticeable glow and shimmer about them.

Modes

Not available: Transform, Summon
Bonuses: +3 to one Mode chosen by the magician.
Penalties: None.
Alter 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.
Transform Effects: N/A
Summon Effects: N/A

Enchantment

Common enchanted items created with Wizardry include:

- Wands and staves that store defensive magic. (Attack, Defend)
- Rings that levitate the wearer on a pillar of arcane force. (Move)
- Weapons empowered with destructive arcane energies. (Attack)
- Globes, glass spheres, and mirrors that produce entertaining illusory scenes. (Illusion)

WIZARDRY SPELLBOOK
BASIC SPELLS

Animated Warrior (Move)

Duration: 5 rounds
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -9 (3rd level spell, -3 for area of effect, -3 for complexity)
Description: This complex spell causes a suit of armor and one weapon to animate as though the wizard himself were in it. This will appear as though an hazy, glowing warrior were wearing the e armor and holding the visible weapon. The weapon will be swung with the same skill as if the caster were holding it, although the strength is +1. The caster can perform no other action while moving the armor and weapon.

Solomnent Radiance (Influence)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds, plus see below)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Modifiers: -8 (8th level)
Description: The caster holds his hand out, and with a soft word of Power a glowing ball of soft light springs into being in the wizard's palm. The target's eyes are drawn to it, and feels a drowsiness come over him as his eyes sink into it's depths. When the target falls asleep, the glowing ball will float over his resting head until the spell expires. The target resists with a Will roll at -4. On a partial success, the target can be wakened by sounds or a gentle nudge, and will awaken at the end of the spell's duration in any event. On a failure the target will sleep for the full duration, regardless of sounds and such (but will awaken if struck.) On a botch, the target will sleep through anything, and will continue sleeping normally after the spell duration expires, although they can be awakened normally.

Invisibility (Illusion)

Duration: 10 rounds (1 minute)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -10 (1st level base, +3 levels for Magnitude, +3 levels for Motion, +3 levels for complexity)
Description: With this spell the caster makes himself or any man-sized target in spell range invisible. Sound, scent, and other senses are unafected. In combat, the invisible fighter recieves a +5 to his effective combat rating, unless the opponent has other reliable means of detecting him, such as magical senses, the invisible character standing in water, etc.

Unseen Blade (Conceal)

Duration: 3 minutes
Range: Self or 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -10 (8th level, -2 for extra duration)
Description: There are the occasions when a swordsmage must carry a weapon hidden on his person. This spell will not make the weapon invisible, but will cause everyone to be much less likely to notice it's hiding place. Anyone not looking for it will not see it, and anyone looking for it will have a -8 to their perception. If this lowers their perception to -7 or lower, they cannot percieve the weapon at all, regardless of their roll, even if the sword is an obvious bulge under a cloak.

Arcane Armament (Conjuration)

Duration: 10 minutes
Range: 50 feet
For a sword:
Casting Modifiers: -10 (1st level, -9 for extra duration)
Description: A favorite of swordsmages everywhere, this spell is taught throughout the continent. When it is cast, a sword made of glowing energy forms in the hands of the caster or any chosen recipient within range. The blade has a weight of 6lbs, a DR of 8, a minimum strength of 0, and sheds a faint nimbus of light equal to a candle flame.
For a suit of armor:
Casting Modifiers: -15 (6th level, -9 for extra duration)
Description: When this spell is cast, a suit of chain mail forms around the body of the caster or any chosen recipient in range. The armor weighs 40 lbs, a PR of 5, a minimum strength of +3, and sheds an arcane light equal to an oil lamp.

Arcane Aura (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds
Range: Self/Touch
Casting Modifiers: -10 (10th level)
Description: A standard spell for all wizards, the Arcane Aura spell causes the target's skin to shimmer with arcane energies. Any blows or physical spell effects that strike the target are absorbed by the magical aura, until 20hp of damage has been taken, at which time the aura fades.

WIZARDRY SPELLBOOK
ADVANCED SPELLS

Healing Numinae (Heal)

Duation: Instant
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -12 (12th level)
Description: The wizard using the Healing Numinae passes his hands over the wounded individual, and a soft light emanates from the wizard's hands. This light seeps into the wound, and will continue to glow for several seconds, after which it fades and the wound is healed, or nearly so. A total of 12hp damage can be healed with this spell, and once a target has been magically healed no more can be done that day unless further damage is taken.

Crimson Bands of Cytorak (Move)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 80 feet
Casting Modifiers: -18 (15th level, -3 for extra range)
Description: No one knows who Cytorak was, althoug a few strange references hint that he may have been an archaen sorcerer supreme. When his spell is invoked, seven shimmering, arcane rings of ruby hue coalesce out of the air and constrict upon the target, holding it immobile with a strength of +5.

Zora's Starburst (Attack)

Duration: Instant
Range: 50 feet
Area of Effect: 10 foot radius
Casting Modifiers: -13 (3rd level, -10 for area of effect)
Description: Zora was a Zandir Certament, a magical duelist. Some claim that she stole the formula for this spell from a competitor who later died in a mysterious duel. Regardless, this spell has since fallen into other hands, and is now in common use. Arcane energies are released in a flash of intense light, dealing 3 hp damage to all in a 20 foot diameter circle, roll Perception at -10 for half damage. On a botched resistance roll, the targets are blinded for 1 round.

Arcane Eye (Reveal)

Duration: 10 minutes
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -13 (4th level, -9 for extra duration)
Description: The Arcane Eye is a common spell throughout Talislanta, although it is known by different names in many lands. When this spell is cast, the wizard's eyes take on a piercing. Any magical effect, regardless of Order, becomes aparent to the wizard's eyes. Magical items shine, spell-effects are obvious, and beings that are magical by their nature (demons, conjured beings, undead) stand out easily. Note that if the magic is concealed, an opposed resistance roll is required.

Koron's Bladepact (Hex)

Duration: 2 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -11 (10th level, -1 for extra duration)
Description: Koron, ever the crafty duelist, would slip this spell onto an opponent at the earliest opportunity... often before hostilities had even begun. The Bladepact is a curse on the target, causing them to be particularly supsceptable to rapiers (Koron's own weapon of choice.) A hazy, barely persceptable glow would surround the target, and the haze would flash whenever Koron's rapier struck them. The target would then sustain double damage from his weapon for the duration of the spell. Those individuals lucky enough to survive a duel with Koron were known to demonstrate an aversion to thin blades for months after.

Koron's Chaos (Illusion)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds)
Range: 50 feet
Casting Modifiers: -19 (1st level, +12 levels for Magnitude, +3 levels for Animation, +3 levels for Sound)
Description: Koron was a wiley swordsmage who was fond of using illusions to confuse his opponents. With a wave of the hand, the caster of this spell calls into existance 30 feet of swirling lights and colored mists which completely obscures vision in the area of effect. In addition to the sights, random bursts of sound emanate from every direction; barks, clashes, rolling thunder, screams, etc. The net effect of this chaos is that anyone in the area of effect will be unable to see or hear anything, and all Action Table rolls will be at -4 (one-third the magnitude.) The caster can then escape unseen, or attack the confused opponents, or take the time to cast some other spell.

WIZARDRY SPELLBOOK
MASTER SPELLS

Manil's Memory Mesmerization (Influence)

Duration: 5 rounds (30 seconds, plus see below)
Range: 5 feet
Casting Modifiers: -20 (20th level)
Description: Manil used this spell to get himself out of many entanglements, romantic and otherwise. When cast, a small sphere of arcane energy comes into being at the tips of the caster's fingers. As the target's eyes are drawn to it, the caster says "Forget I was here." The target must make a Will check at -10 or forget. On a partial success on the resistance roll, the target will remember everything after the spell expires. On a failure, the target will remember that someone was there, just not who. On a botch, the target will forget the entire encounter.

Speed of Lightning (Alter)

Duration: 5 minutes
Range: Touch
Casting Modifiers: -25 (21st level, -4 for extra duration)
Description: Used for quick escapes from uncomfortable situations (angry tribe of Beastmen approaching, angry demon just summoned, angry jilted husband just entered the room) this spell causes a crackling of arcane energy to surround the feet of the caster, increasing running speed by +7. Note that the Speed attribute is not increased, just running speed.

Creating Enchanted Items

Enchantment is the process of investing items with lasting magical power. Enchanted items continue to produce their effects without the need for further Spellcasting. For example, a stone could be enchanted to give off a soft light when a command word is spoken, allowing it to be used as a source of illumination whenever it is needed.

In game terms, Enchanting and Spellcasting are very similar. The Modes and magical Orders are used in the same way and the actual game mechanics are nearly identical. The big difference between the two talents is time. Enchantment takes considerably longer to perform than Spellcasting and is much longer lasting. Enchantment also requires an investment in specialized and costly materials.

Enchantment counts as an individual skill of the character's magic Order, in the same way a Mode does. Experience Point costs for learning and improving Enchantment are the same as any Mode. As such, it is possible to be an accomplished enchanter within one field of magic, but still be a novice in another.

Enchantment Types

There are two types of enchantments: Limited and Continuous.

Limited enchantments function three times per day. A magic item invested with a Limited enchantment may recharge itself everyday, or may need to be recharged manually by some means (prayer, ritual, exposure to moonlight, or whatever). Examples include a wand that shoots lightning bolts, a ring that gives the power of flight, or a staff that heals wounds.

Continuous enchantments function all the time unless their magic is somehow disrupted, and never need to be recharged. Examples include an amulet that confers continuous protection from fire, magically enhanced weapons, and enchanted armor. Continuous enchantments take considerably longer to make than limited enchantments and require finer and more expensive materials. Modes with a duration of "Instant" cannot be incorporated into Continuous enchantments.

Note that regardless of the method employed, a single item can have only one enchantment. For example, a sword cannot be both +2 damage and capable of producing light.

Overview: Procedure for Enchantment

The following is an overview of the procedure for enchanting an item. Each of the steps is explained in detail below.

1. **Player states Intent (what is the item's Mode, Spell Level, and intended use? Will it have a Limited or Continuous enchantment?)**
2. **Determine Enchantment Requirements (how long will the item take to make, and how much will it cost?)**
3. **GM determines bonuses or penalties (based on the magician's Enchantment skill rating, the item's Spell Level and casting penalties, and other factors)**
4. **Player rolls to see if the Enchantment was successful**
5. **GM judges result**

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 there are two requirements a GM needs to determine. First: how much time will it take to make the item described by the player? And second: how much will it 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: 2 weeks (80 hours) per Spell Level (one and a half weeks 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: 6 weeks (240 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.

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

A 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.

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

A 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.

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.

A 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.

Time & Enchanting

Unlike Spellcasting, Enchanting 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.

Using Enchanted Items

Anyone can use an enchanted item, provided they know how the device functions. Some enchanted objects require precise command words or must be physically manipulated in a particular way in order to function. Others are always active (like most enchanted weapons, protective amulets, etc.), are activated by touch, or by a specific trigger of some sort.

Magicians can divine the operation of an unfamiliar enchantment by studying it for one hour and making a successful Enchantment roll, using the item's spell level as the Degree of Difficulty. The magician is allowed three attempts to identify a given item; if unable to do so, the magician will have to seek the help of

another spell caster. Optionally, the magician can wait until he has improved his Enchantment skill by at least +1, and then try again.

If an enchanted item must be aimed to work properly, the character can use any Ranged Combat skill or an appropriate Mode. Lacking these, the character defaults to Combat Rating or Magic Rating and takes a subtitution penalty determined by the GM (usually -5).

Limits on Enchanted Items

The limitations of modern-day Talislantan magic are such that if an individual attempts to carry more than seven enchanted items on his or her person at a time, each will cancel out the other. None of the items being carried will function until their number has been reduced to seven or less.

This rule does not hold true for alchemical concoctions, nor does it apply to enchanted items of Archaen make, which are far superior to their modern counterparts and do not count against the seven-item limit. Archaen artifacts often have powers and properties far beyond the capabilities of anything that can be made by magicians of the New Age.

Enchanted Weapons and Armor

Most magical weapons carry enchantments that enhance their basic Damage Rating. The Alter Mode is used to accomplish this effect. Attack spells are sometimes enchanted into normal weapons, staves, or wands, allowing the wielder to fire the spell from the item. Attack enchantments never add to the base damage of a weapon, and cannot be combined with a normal attack.

Enchanted armors typically have enhanced Protection Ratings or carry a Ward that repels certain types of damage, such as fire, cold, or Attack spells.

Example Items

The following are some examples of enchanted items, illustrating the Mode used in their creation, their Level and Type, and their cost in time and materials.

Item: A pair of magical boots that levitate the wearer all the time.
Mode: Move
Spell Level: 6 (can lift up to 150 pounds)
Type: Continuous
Time Required: 36 weeks

Item: A ring that lets the wearer create a small sphere of light 3 times per day.
Mode: Illusion
Spell Level: 4
Type: Limited
Time Required: 8 weeks

Item: A dagger enchanted with magical sharpness (+2 Damage Rating).
Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 6
Type: Continuous
Time Required: 36 weeks

Item: A sword whose blade produces a stream of magical flames up to 3 times per day, and must be plunged into fire to be recharged.
Mode: Attack
Spell Level: 8
Type: Limited
Time Required: 12 weeks

Item: A brooch that protects against scrying when activated, and can be used 3 times per day.
Mode: Conceal
Spell Level: 10
Type: Limited
Time Required: 20 weeks

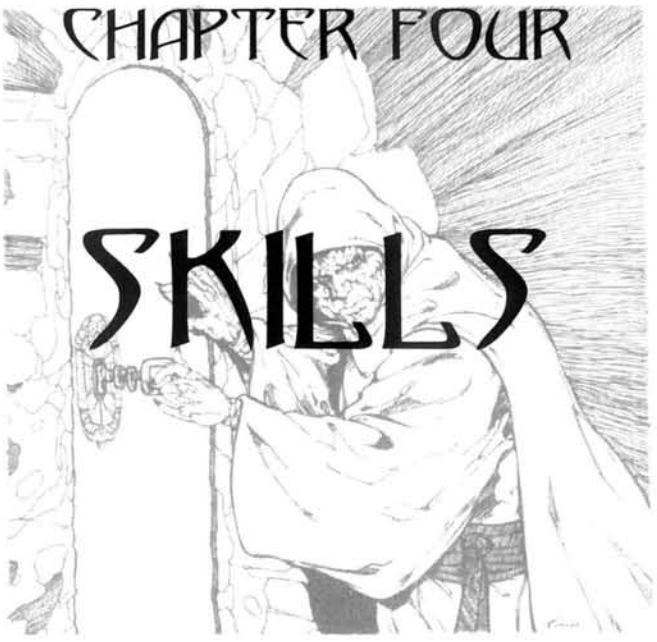
Anti-Magic vs. Enchantment

Enchantments can be truly dispelled only by reversing the enchantment process (which takes half as long to perform as the original enchantment), or by destroying the item. However, Enchantments can be temporarily suppressed through the use of Spellcasting.

Counterspells take effect on enchantments just as they do with normal spells. To suppress an enchantment, the level of the counterspell is applied as a positive modifier, and the spell level of the enchanted item is used as the Degree of Difficulty. When the duration of the counterspell ends, the enchantment is fully restored with the same capabilities and charges it had before being suppressed.

CHAPTER FOUR

SKILLS



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. "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

BACKGROUNDS

All characters are familiar with certain basic skills relating to their respective backgrounds. Each player should read the description of his character's homeland in the Traveler's Guide section of this book, to familiarize himself with the specific characteristics of the society and culture in which the character was raised.

Wandering character types may be familiar with multiple societies, although their knowledge of each will be limited accordingly. Characters who visit other lands in the course of play will learn something of the customs of such societies; characters who spend substantial periods of time among a particular foreign society may eventually come to be as familiar with that background as a native.

Although each Talislantan society is quite distinct, there are certain general categories into which most backgrounds can be placed, as follows:

NOMADIC

Individuals of this background were raised among a nomadic tribe or clan. 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 others 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.

Rural

Individuals of this background 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.

Urban

Individuals of this background 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.

Wandering

Individuals of this background 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.

Common Skills

Unless otherwise noted:
Training Period: five weeks.

Barter

Trading goods and services without recourse to standard currency.
Attribute Modifier: CHA

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 contibute to the Degree of Difficulty for this skill (GM's ruling).
Attribute Modifier: DEX.

Conveyance

Ability to operate a single type of simple land or waterborne conveyance, such as a cart, wagon, raft, and so forth. This ability does not include navigation skills or other detailed knowledge, which is covered under Pilot.
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.

Etiquette

Knowledge of proper protocol and custom for specific situations within a given culture. Characters may use their Etiquette skill rather than their CHA rating when rolling for reaction from those of similar cultures.
Training Period: 50 weeks.
Attribute Modifier: CHA.

Fashion

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 25%; a failed Haggling roll results in the opposite of the haggler's intended result.

Attribute Modifier: CHA.

Ride

Ability to ride one type of steed, such as an equs 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.

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	Language 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.

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 snobbishness. 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 Kang 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.

Rajandin

A harsh tongue derived from the ancient language of the Torquarans, Rajanin is employed primarily by the various tribes inhabiting Rajanistan. 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

Aerial Combat

Ability to fight while airborne, a skill learned by avian folk such as Gryphs, Blue Aeriad, and Stryx. 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. Evade maneuvers are performed, when airborne, at the level of Aerial Combat.

Training period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: Combat Rating.

Arimite Knife-Fighting

Proficiency in the Arimite style of combat, using one or more throwing knives. Techniques include knife-throwing, double knife-throw (roll for each knife with no penalty for double attacks), and throat-slitting (effective only from behind versus an unwary opponent at double Damage Rating).

Training Period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: Combat Rating.

Artillerist

Proficiency in one specific type of siege weapon, such as ship's hurlants, catapults, ballistae, or springals. Includes the abilities to target, fire, and load the weapon, and to accurately judge distances.

Training Period: ten weeks.

Attribute Modifier: DEX.

Assassinate

Ability to plan and effectively execute an assassination. Characters with this skill may study a target's habits, schedule, and associates; locate suitable ambush 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: ten 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.

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 strike, snap kick, 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 successful 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.

Training Period: 50 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: Combat Rating.

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. Successful use of Mandaquan allows the stylist to avoid an attack while disarming, throwing, or grappling the attacker. Mandaquan skill rating may be substituted for STR while in grappling combat. Mandaquan may be used in place of Evade, at no penalty. Mandaquan always inflicts Subdual Damage, rather than normal, lethal damage.

Training Period: 50 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: DEX.

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. Riding is a prerequisite for Mounted Combat, but the Mounted Combat skill rating may be substituted for Ride at no penalty.

Training Period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: Combat Rating.

Shield

Ability to use a shield in combat. In addition to the general benefits for using a shield (as described in the chapter on Combat), the Shield skill can be used to parry blows, including missile weapons. Add the Shield Skill Rating to the usual bonus of +3 applied to shield-parries for this maneuver. Characters trained in this skill can defend others by parrying a blow intended for an ally standing behind or directly next to them.

Training Period: ten weeks.

Attribute Modifier: Combat Rating.

Swordsmanship

This swashbuckling style of swordsmanship was first made popular by the ancient Phaedrans and later adopted by the Zandir and Gao. This skill places a premium on flamboyant attacks, flourishes, and acrobatic maneuvers, utilizing paired weapons such as a saber and dagger. While armed with two weapons, the Swordsman can attack and parry in the same round at no penalty.

Training Period: 50 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: Combat Rating.

Tactics

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.

Training Period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: INT.

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. 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. 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 learn this skill.

Training Period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: Combat Rating.

Weapon

Proficiency with any single type of weapon (see Chapter 7 for a list of weapons; archetype descriptions include specific weapons in their skill lists). Characters may use similar weapons at minimal or no penalty, as determined by the GM. Weapon skills may be used for both attack and defense.

Training Period: ten weeks for additional weapons or 50 weeks for the first weapon.

Attribute Modifier: Combat Rating.

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 religions 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: ten 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: ten weeks.
Attribute Modifier: DEX.

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: ten 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: ten weeks.
Attribute Modifier: CHA.

Scholar 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.

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.

Astromancy

Certain of the more advanced seafaring and air-sailing races practice this form of meteorology. Astromancers can predict changes in the weather and choose the most favorable route for navigation.

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

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

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.

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.

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

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 successfull 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 (see Magic chapter for details).

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.

Trivarian

Only Sindarans can train in this skill, which allows practitioners to participate in the complex game of this name. Sindarans consider their ability in Trivarian to be a reflection of their intellectual development. The most skilled Trivarian players are accorded positions of great authority in Sindar.

Thieving Skills

Unless otherwise noted:
Training Period: ten weeks.

Bribe

Ability to influence by promises of wealth.
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.

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: ten 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.

Locks

Ability to foil locks, 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.

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.

Stealth

The ability to move silently, hide in shadows, and otherwise avoid detection. Stealth is also described under Wilderness Skills. 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).

Training Period: ten weeks.

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.

Torture

Ability to acquire information by unsubtle, physical methods. Failure can result in accidental death of individual being tortured.

Training Period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: DEX.

Traps

Ability to detect, disarm, 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.

Training Period: ten weeks.

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.

Trade Skills

Unless otherwise noted:

Training Period: ten weeks.

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.

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 artificier 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.

Brewer/Vintner

Skilled at brewing, distilling, or concocting one type of alcoholic or nonalcoholic beverage.

Attribute Modifier: INT.

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.

Collector

Skilled at identifying and appraising a chosen type of collectibles, such as art, antique coins, exotic weapons, or books.

Attribute Modifier: INT.

Dredging

Skilled in dredging mud and swamps for sapphires, amber, and other precious stones, as is done in Jhangara, Mog, and the Dark Coast.

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.

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), ice mining (L'Haan), sand-mining (Dracarta), etc.

Attribute Modifier: INT.

Money Lender

Experience in negotiating, contracting, and collecting loans.

Attribute Modifier: INT.

Pilot

Ability to operate and navigate a duneship, windship, or other type of 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.

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.

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.

Wilderness Skills

Unless otherwise noted:
Training Period: ten 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 (as alchemy's Medicinal Mixtures, but double the time required).

Attribute Modifier: INT.

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.

Stealth

The ability to move silently, hide in natural camouflage, and otherwise avoid detection. Stealth is also described under Thieving Skills. Note that using this skill in an unfamiliar environment may entail a penalty of -1 to 10, based on the Degree Difficulty entailed (GM's ruling).

Attribute Modifier: DEX.

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 detect, disarm, and set snares and pitfalls. The difficulty rating of the trap is usually equal to its maker's skill level. Traps is also described under Thieving Skills.

Attribute Modifier: PER.

Survival

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.

Training Period: 30 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: CON.

Magical Skills

Training Period: 100 weeks.

Attribute Modifier: INT (unless noted otherwise)

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; certain characters, as noted in their archetypes, are limited to specific categories.

- Alchemical Materials
- Elixirs
- Medicinal Mixtures
- Narcotics
- Poison
- Potions
- Powders

Specific substances are described in detail in Chapter 7, including Degree of Difficulty, ingredients, creation time, cost of materials, and typical selling price.

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).

Botanomancy

This skill is the Talislantan equivalent of botany. Perfected by the Green Aeriad of Vardune, Botanomancy consists of four main talents that are derived from the botanomancer's training, study of the plant kingdom, and intuition. These abilities are described as follows.

1) Nurture Plant

Enables the botanomancer to grow any type of plant from seeds or cuttings, diagnose plants for damage or illness of any sort, and "heal" or rejuvenate plants that have suffered damage due to drought, cold, neglect, herbivores, weapons, and so forth. This skill also allows botanomancers to protect plants from threats such as extreme weather conditions, insects pests, parasitic organisms, molds, and other natural or magical phenomena. The GM decides how long it will take to nurture, "heal", or protect a given plant, and may assign modifiers based on growing conditions, available resources, the extent to which a plant has been damaged, the intended duration of protection, and/or the the level of the specific threat that is endangering the plant's welfare.

2) Locate Plant

Allows the botanomancer to determine the general location (within 100 yards) where a particular type of plant is most likely to be found growing in its natural state. Note that this talent only works if the plant in question is native to the environment where it is being sought; i.e., a botanomancer can't use this skill to find giant sea kelp in a desert region. The GM may assign a penalty for Degree of Difficulty for attempts to locate any plant that is either very rare or is unfamiliar to the botanomancer.

3) Identify Plant

Enables the botanomancer to identify a plant and determine the specimen's properties and characteristics. Plants from foreign climes and environments or those with strange properties may entail a penalty for Degree of Difficulty, at the GM's discretion. In order to make an identification the botanomancer must study the plant

for a minimum of one round. Studying for at least one minute adds a +1 modifier. One hour of study increases the modifier to +3, and one day of study increases it to +5. Botanomancers can attempt to study a plant that they have previously failed to identify, with a -2 modifier for each previous failed attempt. In all cases, a single Action Table roll is made for the entire identification process.

4) Botanomantic Hybridization

Allows the caster to create a hybrid from any two types of plants. To do so, the caster must have living specimens (cuttings, roots, seeds, etc.) from both kinds of plants, access to a suitable growing medium (soil, humus, etc.) and other substances necessary for growth, such as water and light.

If successful, the attempt yields a hybrid seedling; the GM determines the properties of the hybrid when it reaches maturity. Note that young hybrids are fragile and may be susceptible to disease, adverse environments, parasites, and so forth. A Partial Success yields a poor, unhealthy specimen. A Full Success yields a healthy but sterile plant. Only a Critical Success yields a fertile plant capable of reproduction.

The botanomancer suffers a penalty for Degree of Difficulty, set by the GM, depending on the degree of similarity between the two samples and such characteristics as hardiness, fertility, and magical resistance (if any) of each sample. For example, crossing two types of hardy weeds may not entail any modifier at all; crossing a subterranean fungus with a fruit tree might entail a modifier as severe as -30.

Talismancy

This is the art of making simple luck charms, which some say is a based on a primitive form of Enchantment. The Marukans believe that luck comes in two polarities: fortune and misfortune. Their talismancers attempt to attract and control fortune, while simultaneously trying to repel misfortune. Marukan talismancers create an incredible variety of charms and talismans, each designed to either ward against a particular threat or attract good fortune in some specified endeavor. The efficacy of Marukan talismans is by no means uniformly accepted by Talislantans. Characters employ the Enchantment rules for this skill, using the Talismancy skill rating.

Attribute Modifier: Magic Rating.

Technomancy

The field of Technomancy combines certain practical methods and arcanologies believed to date back to the Archaen Age. Much of what was known of this field was lost or forgotten during The Great Disaster. What remains is a set of technical abilities passed down to each succeeding generation by the ancestors of the Yassan, and by the automaton-like Parthenians; there are no written treatises or manuals on the subject. Technomancy consists of six interrelated abilities, described as follows:

1) Technomantic Actuator

Allows the technomancer to use, repair, or create a technomantic actuator, a multi-purpose tool that is essential to most advanced technomantic work. For Action Table rolls, only a partial success is required to use an actuator. To repair such a device requires at least one hour, the proper tools, and a full success on the Action Table. To create an actuator requires 1,000 gold lumens worth of raw materials, 20 weeks of work in a well-equipped shop, and a critical success on the Action Table. Only members of the Yassan race can learn this skill. Because technomantic actuators are not created through Enchantment, these devices do not count against the seven-item limit for Enchanted Items.

2) Assemble and Disassemble

This is the ability to dismantle or put together any type of device or structure that has removable parts, including siege engines, conveyances, trap mechanisms, automatons, and so forth. The time and skill required to assemble or disassemble varies according to the object's size, complexity, and overall condition, according the GM's discretion. In any case, a technomancer can accomplish the task in less than half the time it would take a member of any other profession — except Kasmiran trapmages, whose magical talents enable them to match or even exceed the Yassan, but only as pertains to locks, traps, and certain clockwork mechanisms.

3) Design and Modification

This is the ability to invent, design, or modify devices or mechanisms. As a general rule, simple designs or modifications can be completed in 1-10 hours, while inventions and projects of great complexity or size may take from 1-10 weeks or more. The time and skill required is according to the GM's discretion, based on such considerations as the availability of materials, extent of modification, degree of complexity, labor requirements, and so forth.

4) Read Schematics

This is the ability to read schematics and diagrams of all sorts. Note that this skill does not include the ability to decipher actual writings or any symbol that is not directly related to some aspect of construction, design, or maintenance.

5) Repair Mechanisms

Utilizing their technomantic actuators and other elaborate tools, Yassan technomancers are capable of effecting repairs on practically anything that has moving parts, and most things that don't. This includes windships, essence accumulators, levitationals, land conveyances, waterborne craft, tools, weapons, leather goods, glassware, pottery, and even torn fabrics. Generally speaking, only items that have been destroyed beyond repair cannot be fixed by a Yassan technomancer (GM's ruling in all cases). Conversely, Yassan are equally adept at destroying or disabling mechanisms, if they so choose.

6) Structural Analysis

This is the ability to determine the structural integrity of any device, mechanism, building, conveyance, or other object. Through analysis, a technomancer is able to assess any of the following:

- General age of the structure.
- Overall condition of the structure.
- Method of construction used.
- Any weak points or other deficiencies.

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 the ability to use an essence accumulator to collect and refine various substances. These include:

- Distillations
- Dream Essence
- Elemental Essences
- Quintessence

For more information on thaumaturgical substances see Equipment, Chapter 7.

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 have a greater range of skills, as follows:

1) Create/Repair Essence Accumulator

Allows the thaumaturge to build or repair an essence accumulator, the device used to derive and distill essences. To create such a device a Dracartan thaumaturge requires 1,000 gold lumens worth of materials, 20 weeks of work in a well-equipped laboratory, and a critical success on the Action Table. To repair one takes a minimum of one hour, the proper tools, and a full success on the Action Table.

2) Create Thaumaturgic Wand

The thaumaturgic wand, or caduceus, is a rod-shaped device made from a mixture of red iron powdered diamond, and quintessence (see Chapter 7, Equipment). By adjusting two moveable metal bands the wand can be used to utilize the properties of quintessence (see #3) or to analyze materials and substances (see #4). The creation of a thaumaturgic wand requires a minimum of 2,000 gold lumens in materials, access to a fully-equipped thaumaturgical workroom, seven weeks of labor, and a full success on the Action Table to complete. 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. Note that a caduceus is not "magical," and does not count against the limit of seven enchanted items.

3) Utilize Quintessence

Enables the thaumaturge to utilize the properties of quintessence to liquify, solidify, or gassify matter.

The procedure requires the thaumaturge to be in possession of a caduceus, or thaumaturgic wand (see #2). To utilize quintessence, the thaumaturge sets the caduceus according to the desired function and the amount of matter to be affected, and passes it over the chosen substance or area for one round. Action Table rolls of success or partial success always achieve the desired result. Failure means that an unfavorable reaction occurred, rendering the quintessence inert and useless. A mishap means that the caduceus malfunctioned, causing the quintessence to alter the matter into some form other than the one desired, possibly with dire consequences (GM's ruling).

4) Quantitative Analysis

Allows the thaumaturge to employ a caduceus to determine the exact components of any substance, including gasses, liquids, solids, alchemical or magical mixtures, alloys, etc. The analysis does not reveal the properties of a mixture, such as the effects of an unidentified potion, but only its material components or ingredients. To perform an analysis the thaumaturge sets the caduceus for analyzation and passes it over the desired material for one round; the caduceus emits a multi-hued aura which the thaumaturge "reads" in order to make her analysis. Studying for at least one minute adds a +1 modifier. One hour of study increases the modifier to +3, and one day of study increases it to +5. Thaumaturges can attempt to study a plant that they have previously failed to analyze, with a -2 modifier for each previous failed attempt. In all cases, a single Action Table roll is made for the entire identification process.

Special Abilities

Special Abilities are talents related to an individual's race or culture. These abilities cannot be acquired through the expenditure of experience points. Those Special Abilities that are listed below with an Attribute Modifier can be improved, as per the rules for improving skills. Other Special Abilities can not be improved through training or experience.

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 level of ability.
- 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).

  Attribute Modifier: WIL

Bodorian Sound-Sight

The ability to see sound in colors of varying hue and intensity. The Bodorian language, based upon musical notes, makes full use of this talent. The Bodor are also able to use sound-sight to detect lies, which are darker in shade than truthful statements; discern even the most subtle emotions in a speaker's tone of voice; and identify sounds of all sorts with uncanny accuracy.

Attribute Modifier: PER

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 (see Anti-Magic & Counterspells, in Chapter 1).

Attribute Modifier: WIL

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.

Influence Plants

Ability to influence all sorts of living plants and trees, causing such organisms to move, entwine, entangle, form barriers or specified configurations, and so forth. The Green Men of the Dark Coast possess this ability, which they employ to suit their needs and in defense of their homes and families. Maximum area of

effect is a five-foot radius circle, and range is ten feet per level.

Attribute Modifier: WIL.

Night Vision

The ability to see clearly in the dark is a natural ability of certain Talislantan races, such as Gnomekin and Vajra. Like normal vision Night Vision is not a Skill per se, and can not be improved.

Attribute Modifier: PER

Natural Telempathy

The Muses of Astar communicate through this ability. A Muse can use Telempathy 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 telempathy an art form, and they often give concerts. When trying to communicate with individuals unfamiliar with telempathy, 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 telempathic 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 telempathy 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 telempathy, requiring a critical success.

Attribute Modifier: PER.

Rhabdomancy

This magical ability is known only to the race of Gnorls. The rhabdomancer can consult minor spirits to learn secrets, attracting them through the use of certain magical fumes. The Gnorl uses her Witchcraft skill rating for this ability; the obscurity of the information sought acts as the Degree of Difficulty, as determined by the GM.

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.

Shapechange

This ability can be used once per day per skill Level. The new form is permanent until the ability is used again. Shapechangers can learn one animal or plant form per skill Level. Chosen forms may not weigh more than the shapechanger's weight plus 50 additional pounds of weight per level, nor less than the shapechanger's weight minus 20 pounds per level. Use the physical attributes, combat rating, hit points, and natural physical abilities of the chosen form.

Attribute modifier: WIL.

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 every 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.

Attribute Modifier: PER

Spell-Weaving

Ability to weave magical spells through the use of song and dance. Casting time is ten times normal through the use of this ability, but the chance of success

is increased by +4. Furthermore, spell-weavers can work together to combine their magical powers, adding together their skill levels. The ability is a secret of the Sawila tribes of the Crescent Isles.

Spiritforce

Only Xambrians have this ability, 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 creates 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".

Spirit Tracking

The ability to track creatures and beings of any sort by following the faint trails left behind by their spirit essences. Only the Nagra possess this ability. The difficulty of a trail is determined by its age:

-5 for days-old trails
-10 for weeks-old trails
-15 for months-old trails
-20 for years-old trails
-25 for decades-old trails

Attribute Modifier: PER

CHAPTER FIVE

A TRAVELER'S GUIDE TO TALISLANTA

EDITOR'S PREFACE

The following Traveler's Guide is attributed to Tamerlin, a self-styled wizard, obscure author, and explorer who claimed to have "discovered" the strange and mysterious land known as Talislanta long ago. The introductory text was derived from Tamerlin's original Chronicles of Talislanta, along with a series of notes and monographs compiled by the wizard during the years following the publication of the Chronicles. It is likely that Tamerlin - being inclined towards romanticism - may have enlarged somewhat on the details of his epic travels. Nevertheless, his works may still be of some interest to aspiring Talislantan travelers, if only for their value as curios of a bygone age.

TALISLANTA: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In order to acquire an understanding of the modern-day Talislantan world, 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 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 know 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 arranged 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 Koraq, the sorceress Sylan, 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 Kang 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, descendents 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 Peoples of Talislanta

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. 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.

Customs & Cultures

To the neophyte traveler or explorer, Talislanta presents nearly unlimited opportunities for discovery and adventure. Conversely, the possibilities of disaster are at least as numerous, particularly for those unfamiliar with the many unusual cultures native to this realm. The foreigner is best advised to avoid incautious behavior at all costs; keeping a keen eye out for signs of trouble, tactfully acceding to the customs and beliefs of the natives (no matter how odd or irrational these may seem), and maintaining a degree of civility and decorum in public places. Traveling in groups of trustworthy companions, wielding cogent magics, and/or carrying concealed weapons on one's person are also advisable, unless one prefers trusting all to luck.

Currency

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

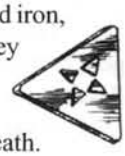
These wafer-like coins are in wide use only in Aaman. At one hundred to the pound, Aamanian coppers are considered to be practically worthless, and are spurned in other regions.

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 coinage; 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 Rajanistan, where the ownership of even a single such coin is deemed an offense punishable by death.

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



These handsome coins were banned after the Kang usurped control of the old Quan Empire. Most were collected, melted down, and cast into gold lumens, which now serve as coin of the realm in the Kang Empire. As a result, Quan Emperors have become quite rare, and are valued by collectors at over a hundred gold lumens apiece.

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.



ROADS

Beyond the walls of even the largest Talislantan cities one often finds little but wilderness and intractable terrain. In many such regions, safe and reliable roadways are practically non-existent, a situation which can turn even the most mundane-seeming journey into an exercise in survival techniques.

The Wilderlands Road is an ancient and decrepit affair that runs from the eastern borders of the Seven Kingdoms through the Wilderlands territories and the desert kingdoms of Djaffa, Carantheum, and Rajanistan. The safest means of traversing the Wilderness Road is in the company of a large and well-armed caravan or land ark, which affords some protection from Beastmen, Za bandits, and other malicious predators. The Phaedran Causeway runs from Zandu through Aaman, terminating at the western border of the Seven Kingdoms. A toll is charged at the gates of the Great Barrier Wall, which separates the two rival nations of Aaman and Zandu.

The Seven Kingdoms has its own system of roadways, known as the Seven Roads. Six of these roads lead to the capitol of Cymril; the seventh road is the Underground Highway, a network of subterranean tunnels. The Seven Roads are of good quality, at least by Talislantan standards. The Emperor's Road winds its way through the eastern territories of the Kang Empire. The only thoroughfare on the continent that offers a semblance of security, it is well-maintained and heavily patrolled by cadres of Kang warriors. Foreigners must pay a prohibitive toll of five gold lumens at all bridges and city gates, a stricture intended to discourage traveling musicians, peddlers, and other undesirables from traipsing about the Empire.

SEAS AND WATERWAYS

The Axis River, in the west, and the River Shan, in the east, are both important waterways, and are used extensively by the peoples of these regions. A number of lesser rivers, lakes, and inland seas are also considered navigable, and are covered in greater detail elsewhere in this Guide. With the exception of the amphibious Imrian slavers, few Talislantan sailors dare to venture into open waters, a phobia not entirely attributable to mere superstition. The seas and oceans surrounding the continent teem with dangerous creatures such as giant sea scorpions, as well as roving bands of Mangar Corsairs. Accordingly, most Talislantan sea vessels navigate by hugging the coastline.

Modes of Conveyance

Aside from the slow but reliable expedient of pedal ambulation, many forms of overland conveyance are available to the Talislantan traveler. In any fair-sized city there is little difficulty in obtaining a mount, generally at reasonable cost. Equs are the most common and reliable of steeds, and can be found across the continent. In arid or desert climes, aht-ra are preferred, as these creatures can travel long distances with little need for water. Squat and powerful, land lizards are best suited to the towing of carriages or wagons. In Carantheum, duneships and land arks are quite popular.

Several types of water craft are available in various parts of Talislanta. Barges and flat-bottomed skiffs are ideal for navigating rivers and lakes. The finest sailing ships are the majestic dragon barques of the Sunra, though Mangar carracks are said to be swifter in open waters. Imrian coracles, drawn by giant cave eels called kra, are seaworthy but difficult to manage. The Zandir, Aamanians and Farad make serviceable galleys, though these vessels require large teams of slaves to man the oars. The capabilities of the ominous sailing vessels of the Black Savants, like their mysterious owners, remain largely unknown.

Where methods of land and water travel fail, there is always the possibility of obtaining passage on a windship. These wondrous vessels traverse the air as sailing ships do the water. They are so costly to make and maintain, however, that few can afford to own such magnificent craft.

Talislantan Cosmology

Talislanta has two suns and seven moons, all purported to exert powerful magical influences. Many Talislantans believe that these celestial bodies are home to divine, diabolical, or demonic entities. It has even been theorized that the moons are actually gateways to other dimensions, or realities – tears in the dimensional fabric, caused by forces unleashed during The Great Disaster. The moons' peculiar cycles have long been a source of fascination for Talislantan seers, astromancers, and the like.

The Talislantan Calendar

Talislantans observe a lunar calendar based on the cycles of the seven moons. The calendar is divided as follows:

Seven days = one week
Seven weeks = one month
Seven months = one year
Forty-nine weeks (343 days) in a year.

Talislantan months are named after the seven moons, each of which has its own sphere of influence. In order, these are:

Ardan: the purple moon, signifying romantic love
Drome: the amber moon, associated with protection and conjurations
Jhang: the blood-red moon, said to grant favor to warriors and hunters
Laolis: the blue moon of sorrow
Phandir: the green moon, a sphere of mystery and destiny
Talisandre: the silver moon, regarded as a capricious influence
Zar: the dark moon, signifying death and destruction

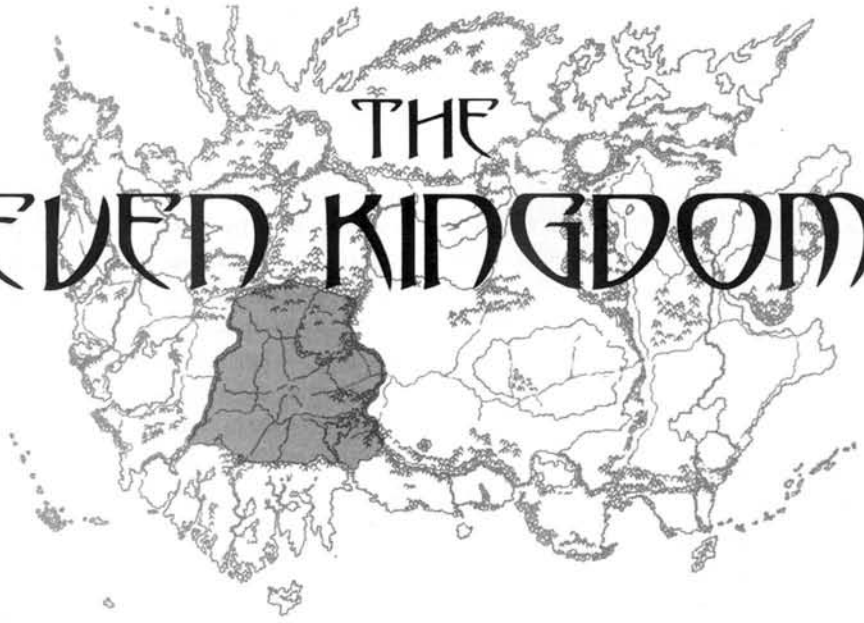
Talislantan days have no names, but are referred to by number, as in the twelfth of Ardan, the thirty-seventh of Drome, and so on.

So ends our introduction to the Traveler's Guide. More specific information on the peoples and places of Talislanta can be found ahead. May good fortune accompany you wherever you go

Tamerlin



The Council of Kings meets in Cymril



THE SEVEN KINGDOMS

The territories designated as the Seven Kingdoms encompass a diverse range of terrain types, from arid desert and rocky canyons to deep forests, swamps, and junglelands. The Axis River forms the western border, while the waterless Dead River canyon performs the same function in the east. To the north stand the mountains of southern Urag; to the south, the dense swamps and mountains of Mog and Jhangara.

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 Roads link the capitals, and are a vital east-west link for the trade caravans of Talislanta. The seven member-states of this unique confederation are: Astar, Cymril, Durne, Kasmir, Sindar, Taz, and Vardune.

The Seven Roads

This system of one underground and six overland roadways connects each of the Seven Kingdoms to the capital of Cymril, and intersects with such important systems as the Phaedran Causeway and the Wilderlands Road.

While the Seven Kingdoms are among the safest and most stable of Talislantan lands, travel along the Seven Roads can present difficulties. The territories that lie beyond the citystates continue to serve as home to miscreant wizards, highwaymen, and predatory beasts. The civilized versions of these menaces - namely peddlers and charlatans - likewise pose a nuisance to travelers.

The Eastern Borderlands

The Seven Kingdoms jointly maintain three small, fortified outposts located along the confederations eastern border (see Wilderlands of Zaran, The Borderlands). These installations are manned by contingents of the Borderlands Legion, a military force comprised mainly of mercenaries, foreign refugees, and outcasts.

THE KINGDOM OF ASTAR

Astar is a land of sylvan glades, lakes and streams. Idyllic forests drape the land, opening into clear fields and meadows of wildflowers in all the colors of the rainbow. Here, in this enchanted sylvan setting, dwell the last of an ancient and enchanting race of beings known as the Muses.

THE MUSES

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.

Ancestry

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.

Society

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 telempathic 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" (see Customs) 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 telempathic visions and the pleasure of the Muses' company. Every Muse has at least one whisp companion.



Customs

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 telempathy, or thought-images, which are used to convey information and emotions. When Muses wish to conserve telempathic 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). Sometimes the attraction is such that a Muse will telempathically "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.

Government

The Muses have no full-time King or Queen. Instead, they 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 then temporarily crowned King or Queen. Muses observe no formal laws or customs, and generally do as they please. Petty jealousies are not unknown, and may result in squabbles. Most are handled by those involved, occasionally through intercession by whisps. Muses who commit a serious offense, such as the improper use of telempathic abilities, may be banished from the group.

Magic & Religion

Muses are natural telempaths, 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 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.

The Arts

Muses possess a natural talent for all artistic pursuits. They create enchanting musical instruments, tapestries of colored gossamer, and other fine goods, but only when stricken by inspiration. The making of telempathic "paintings" and vistas, among the most ephemeral of arts, is also a specialty of these people. The music of the Muses tends to be soft, sweet, lyrical; stringed instruments are preferred. Muses do not sing songs, though they may project telempathic images as a form of accompaniment to their music.

Language

Muses are fluent in High Talislan and Sylvan, but regard common speech as coarse and unaesthetic. They much prefer to communicate telempathically, and will often use whisp "translators" to put their thoughts into words. Muse names are based on flower-names, such as Lilyandre and Aramantus.

Defenses

Muses have no weapons or armies, and in fact are averse to physical violence. However, they are by no means defenseless, as many an intruder into Astar has discovered, to his or her regret (see sidebar).

Commerce

Muses care nothing for riches, though they are attracted to things of beauty, music, and sweets. Such things as they require are readily available from the surrounding environs: pollen, blossom nectar, and honey for food; gossamer for clothes, rare woods for musical instruments. The gossamer tapestries and other artistic wares that they sometimes create are treasured throughout the Seven Kingdoms and beyond.

Worldview

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 telempathic powers begins to be understood by the other members of the Seven Kingdoms.

Telempathic Defense

Because the Muses of Astar are delicate and sensitive creatures, they are regarded by many other Talislantan races as weak and defenseless. Nothing could be further from the truth, as anyone who has ever made the mistake of threatening or angering a Muse can attest. While Muses stringently avoid the use of weapons or physical violence, they are by no means as defenseless as they may appear. The ability to project mental images via telempathy can be a powerful, and even deadly, weapon.

At the first sign of danger, Muses will often project a form of imagery intended to warn or frighten potential aggressors; usually, at less than full strength, as Muses are averse to causing pain if it can be avoided. The effects of this type of telempathic projection may be instantaneous, like a sudden premonition of doom, or may escalate over the course of several moments. Warning imagery can cause the subject to experience feelings ranging from a disturbing sense of insecurity or inadequacy to a nameless, deep-rooted dread. If the intended target has a great deal of willpower, these feelings can be overcome or ignored. Should this occur the Muse may project the warning again and again, each time increasing the amount of mental power used.

Should repeated warning imagery fail to achieve the desired result, the Muse may have no choice but to use the most dangerous form of projection: telempathic hallucination, a concerted assault upon that part of the attacker's brain that controls the senses. Using telempathy, the Muse can alter the subject's perception of reality in any way desired, creating terrifying illusions, crippling phobias, or impairing one or more of the subject's senses. A sustained attack of this nature can render the subject utterly insane, bereft of his or her senses, or trapped in a hallucinatory reality from which there is no escape.

Places of Note

Lake Zephyr

This scenic body of water is a favorite trysting place of the Muses. Diaphanous-winged crystal moths, waterwhisps, and many colorful species of avian and aquatic creatures are common to the region, as are less

benign creatures such as skalanx. On the far eastern banks of Lake Zephyr is a docking facility comprised of ornate wooden barges tethered together and moored to the shore. Here, Dracartan merchants come to trade sweet crystalline powders and nectar to the Muses. In return, they are allowed to take drinking water, which the Dracartans transmute into solid blocks, load onto their wagons, then begin the long trip by caravan and land barge back to the Red Desert.

WHISP

Whisps are a diminutive and mischievous variety of minor elementals who dwell in the forests of Astar and other woodland areas. There are three known types: the brownish woodwhisps, who know secret things about the woodlands in which they dwell, and are fond of Muses, for whom they sometimes serve as



interpreters; the aqua-colored waterwhisps, shy creatures who make their home in woodland streams and ponds, living in fanciful "castles" made of air bubbles and gossamer; and the smoky gray nightwhisps, the most obnoxious of the species, who come forth at night to play cruel pranks on other creatures.

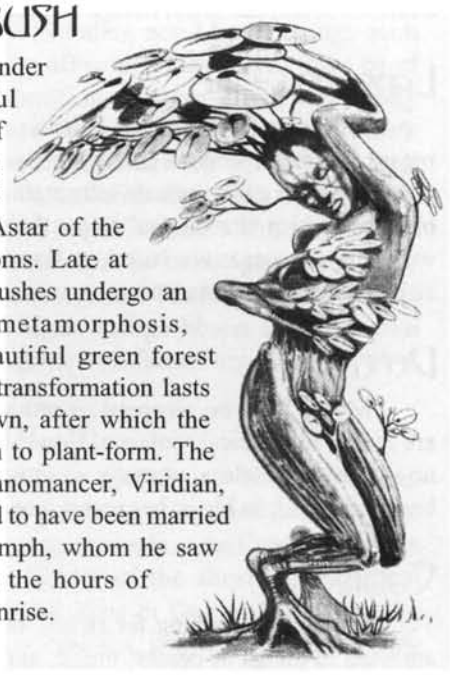
All whisps know a dint or two of magic, and are fascinated by enchanted items. They are partial to cakes, sweetmeats, and blossom nectar, which can be used to gain their favor or cooperation. If attacked, whisps will flee, only to return later with reinforcements. Some folk claim that the best way to be rid of annoying whisps is to ignore them until they become bored and leave. Others suggest ample doses of whispbane, live serpentvine and yellow stickler, or noxious magics as a more certain remedy for these tiny trouble-makers.

Size: 6", 1-6 oz.
Attributes:

INT +1	PER +4
WIL -2	CHA +1
STR -10	DEX +8
CON -1	SPD +8

Ability Level: 3+
Attacks/Damage: Diminutive weapon at DR 1, or as per spell employed
Special Abilities: Natural Magic with three Modes of choice at Ability Level, flight, swimming (Waterwhisp only), may converse in humanoid languages
Armor: None
Hit Points: 2

DRYAD BUSH



This slender and graceful variety of flowering shrub is found primarily in Astar of the Seven Kingdoms. Late at night, dryad bushes undergo an uncanny metamorphosis, becoming beautiful green forest nymphs. The transformation lasts only until dawn, after which the nymphs return to plant-form. The esteemed botanomancer, Viridian, once professed to have been married to a forest nymph, whom he saw only between the hours of sunset and sunrise.

Size: 5'-6'
Attributes:

INT +1*	PER +2*
WIL +3	CHA +7*
STR -2*	DEX +2*
CON +2	SPD +1*

* in nymph form; otherwise, not applicable
Ability Level: 1+
Attacks/Damage: None known, though attacks may be possible in nymph-form
Special Abilities: Metamorphose from plant to nymph form, possible Natural Magic skill
Armor: Bark, PR 4
Hit Points: 16

THE KINGDOM OF CYMRIL

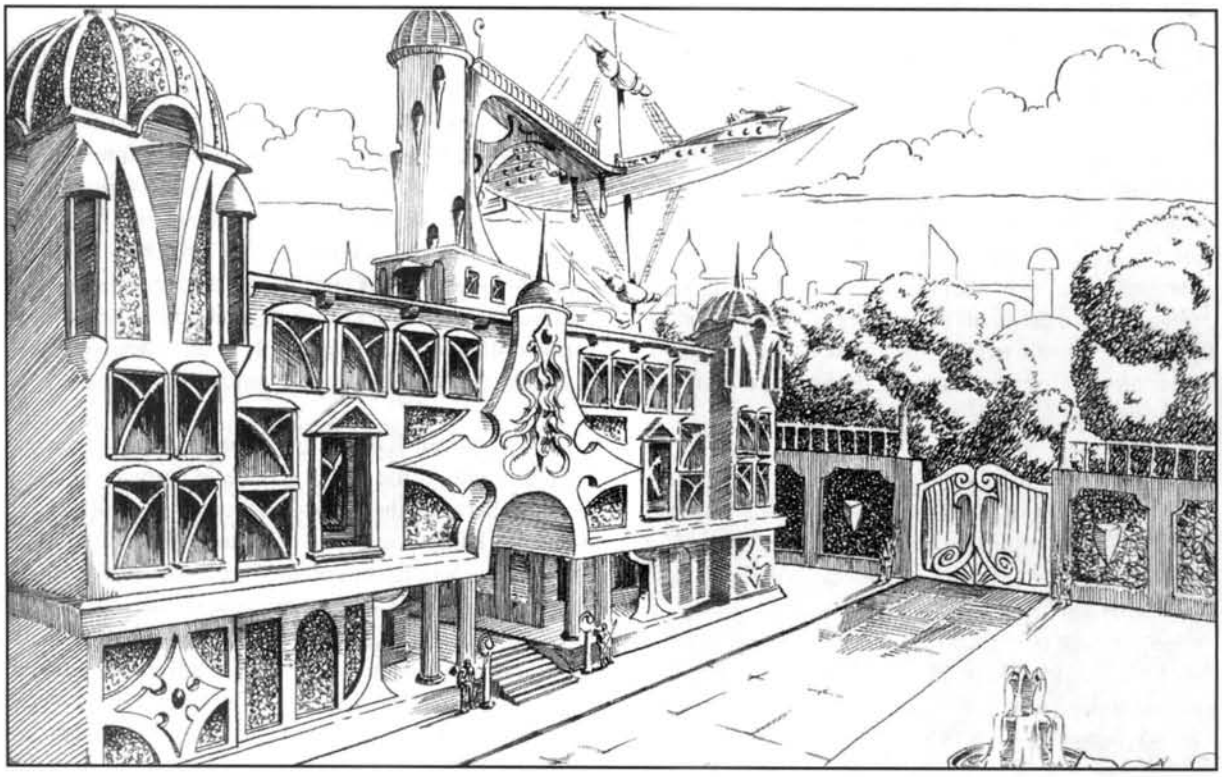
Cymril is the capital of the Seven Kingdoms, this due as much to the country's central location as anything else. Sweeping hills and light forest dominate much of the Cymrilian countryside, large portions of which remain uninhabited to the present day. The greatest part of the population lives in the enchanting capital of Cymril, a city of crystalline spires and archways. This is the home of the Cymrilians.

established an independent citystate, which came to be known as Cymril.

Society

Cymril is a fabulous city of crystal towers, domes, and elevated causeways. Here, the Cymrilian magicians practice their arts, creating wondrous windships, potions, powders and other magical adjuncts. Most Cymrilians live in the city, in fanciful homes made of translucent crystal.

A small percentage of the population lives in the countryside, dwelling in rustic stone cottages or tower



THE CYMRILIANS

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.

Ancestry

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

keeps. Cymrilians tend to have small families. Couples usually wait until they are in their late twenties or thirties before they wed. The young enjoy romantic affairs, typically of short duration, until such time as they are prepared to settle down. Children are raised by both parents; by Cymrilian law, both bear equal responsibility for raising and caring for offspring.

Customs

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

Magic in Cymrilian Society

Cymrilians are enamored of Magic in all its myriad forms, many of which have become integral to the culture of these people. Almost every Cymrilian owns at least one magical adjunct, and often more. The majority of these items are typically of limited power, and are either practical or frivolous in nature. Young children favor magical toys, such as dolls that "speak" a few simple phrases, or miniature animal-constructs that move of their own volition. Among adolescents, enchanted boots or slippers that levitate the wearer a foot or two above the ground are very popular, as are magical enhancements used to alter the color of the skin or hair, enchanted garments that sparkle or glow in the dark, and so forth.

Adult Cymrilians also use enhancements, though generally of a more elaborate and expensive sort; substances or items that enhance the user's intelligence, memory, resistance to disease, sexual performance, or desirability are most popular. So are enchanted garments that confer protection from the elements, always appear freshly pressed and laundered, exhibit a variety of changing hues and patterns, and so forth.

Many popular forms of entertainment are also influenced by the Cymrilian love of magic. Among those held in the highest esteem are exhibitions of enchanted art, such as animate sculpture, paintings done with magical pigments that change colors or move about the canvas, prismatic arrangements that emanate holographic images or whorls of color, and so on. Illusionist-artists are also held in high regard for the fantastic panoplies of color, sound, and imagery that they create. One of the most accomplished artists of this sort was the great Faluche, whose works incorporate three-dimensional illusory images with the music of the renowned Bodorian composer, Sola.

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.

Government

The ruler of Cymril is known as the Wizard King, or Wizard Queen, if a female. The King represents Cymril in the Council of Seven Kings. He is assisted by the members of the Cymrilian Cabal, a pentad of five advisors chosen from the faculty of the Lyceum Arcanum, Cymril's institute of magic. Usually the most capable of CymrilÕs spell casters, the Wizard King is elected by popular vote, and serves a term of seven years. If he is a reasonable sort of person, the populace will allow the Wizard King to remain in power for the full term, and may even allow him to run for an additional term. If not, he can be ousted by a majority vote from the Cymrilian Cabal. Cymril has a court system which guarantees individuals accused of criminal offenses access to legal representation. Crimes involving magic are regarded as serious offenses, and may result in the offender being placed in stasis or banished to another dimension.

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 can change abruptly, curfews or new tariffs may be instituted, and prices for goods or tolls may fluctuate wildly.

Magic & 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 (see sidebar).

In the year 603, the Wizard King ordered the magicians of the Lyceum Arcanum to open the

institute's secret archives, which had been sealed for centuries. Inside were found numerous artifacts from the Forgotten Age, including the Archaen Codex; a repository of magical secrets that may predate the Forgotten Age. Cymrilian scholars estimate that it could take decades to decipher and analyze the complete contents of the archives.

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.

The Arts

Cymrilians enjoy a wide variety of artistic pursuits, including painting, sculpture, decorative crafts, and the creation of illusory panoramas. Cymrilian music employs exotic magical instruments of many types, and ranges from traditional windship sailors' songs of the bygone Archaen Age to more modern and abstract compositions.

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.

Defenses

Cymril is protected by powerful armada of windships and airborne troop carriers, which are commanded by skilled swordsmages. The confederation's forces are augmented by several divisions of Thrall infantry and mangonel lizard cavalry, Blue Aeriad scouts, Gnomekin infantry, Kasmir engineers, and Sindaran alchemists.

Commerce

Cymril is the continent's leading supplier of magical wares, and of such commodities as amberglass and aquavit. Caravans from many lands come here to trade for Cymrilian products and goods from across the Seven Kingdoms. A brisk trade in minor charms, elixirs and potions is done throughout the city, and across the countryside. The Lyceum Arcanum, Cymril's school of magic, produces the skilled enchanters, alchemists, and magicians that are such a vital part of the Cymrilian economy. 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.

Worldview

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 Kang Empire.

Cymrilian Settlements

The City of Cymril

The Crystal City of Cymril is widely regarded as Talislanta's single most influential center for trade and cultural exchange. People from almost every part of the continent and surrounding environs can be found here, from merchants to travelers, pilgrims, refugees or expatriates from foreign lands, and wayward adventurers. The city is also known for the Lyceum Arcanum, Talislanta's foremost institute of magic. Surrounding the city are many small farms, vineyards, and country estates. Most of these are owned by Green Aeriad, who work the land with exceptional skill. The fruits of their labors are transported by wagon to Cymril or sold at roadside stands.



EQUS



Equs are a hybrid of mammal and reptile prized as steeds throughout the continent. They are quite intelligent, and have their own language, called equan. Some few are even able to speak the languages of humanoids, though a natural tendency toward secrecy forbids most equs from boasting of this ability. In the wild, they travel in herds of up to about sixty individuals.

There are four sub-species of equs: the common and reliable graymane; the swifter but less durable silvermane; snowmanes, built to endure frigid climes and sure-footed on ice or snow; and coal-black darkmanes, aggressive and spiteful creatures who often attack other equs on sight.

Size: 5'+ at shoulder, 400-600 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -3	PER +3
WIL +4	CHA -3*
STR +3	DEX +3
CON +2*	SPD + 7*

(SPD +8 for silvermanes; CON +1 for silvermanes; CHA -7 for darkmanes)
Ability Level: 5-10
Attacks/Damage: Kick: DR 13, Bite: DR 5
Special Abilities: Ability to converse in Equan (some few Equs are also known to speak humanoid languages), immune to cold (snowmanes only)
Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 35

SORCERER TREE

This rare conifer is found only in woodland regions such as the light forests that cover the outskirts and borders of Cymril. The tree is notable for its "mantle" of dark green foliage, which gives it the semblance of a tall hooded man. Hybrids created back in Archaen times, sorcerer trees may have been used to frighten-off superstitious tribes of wild folk. The wood of the sorcerer tree is still used in the making of enchanted staves and wands, and is thought to possess magical virtues.

MONITOR IMP

Monitor imps are tiny creatures of extra-dimensional origin and considerable intellect. On their home plane they sometimes serve greater devils as scribes, spies, look-outs, and snitches. Talislantan spell casters often summon monitor imps and use them for similar purposes. When bound to service, the creatures possess the additional virtue of being unable to utter an untruth. Unfortunately, tact is not an attribute normally associated with monitor imps, who can be sarcastic when they feel they are being worked too hard.

Size: 1"-4" in height, 1-4 oz.
Attributes:

INT+2	PER +5
WIL 0	CHA -2
STR -5	DEX +5
CON 0	SPD 0

Ability Level: 1-4
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 1
Special Abilities: Detect invisible/astral/ethereal presences, literate in humanoid languages, read magical scripts on INT roll
Armor: None
Hit Points: 2



The Kingdom of Durne

Durne is a land of grassy knolls, gently rising hills, and sparse woodlands. Herds of wild greymanes, durge, and muskront forage along the slopes, wary of exomorphs or malathropes on the hunt. Scoured by black winds during The Great Disaster, the soil of this region is too poor to farm, and supports little in the way of vegetation. However, the territories that lay beneath the surface are rich in natural resources, from crystals and minerals to root-crops and clear underground lakes. Here, in the subterranean city of Durne, live a people known as the Gnomekin.



The 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.

Ancestry

Gnomekin claim to be descended from an ancient subterranean race related to the Gnorls of Werewood. However, some Talislantan scholars believe that the forebears of the Gnomekin may have been a people who originally lived on the surface, but fled underground in order to escape the effects of The Great Disaster.

Society

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 sidebar). 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.

Customs

Of all the Talislantan races it is likely that none knows more about the Underground Highway than 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. Maps and geomantic studies of the Underground Highway may be purchased in the city of Durne.

Government

Durne is ruled by a pair of hereditary monarchs known simply as the King and Queen of Durne. The Gnomekin Queen is the matriarch of all Gnomekin families. She is responsible for determining fair prices for the goods produced in Durne's subterranean gardens, which are delivered to Cymril via the Underground Highway. The King of Durne serves as commander-in-chief of the country's small but fierce army.

Crime is unknown among the Gnomekin, who would never dream of doing anything to harm their friends, family, or neighbors. Foreigners who cause problems in Durne are arrested and detained in cave-cells until one or both of the monarchs has time to review the case. The most common punishment is expulsion for life from Durne.

Magic & 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".

All in the Family

"The Gnomekin are well known for their devotion to family and love of children. In combination, these two qualities result in family groups of incredibly large size. It is not uncommon for a Gnomekin child to have as many as two dozen siblings, forty aunts and uncles (their parents' siblings), and over five hundred first cousins (their parents' siblings' siblings). Throw in parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, great-great-grandparents, and a veritable army of second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh cousins, and a Gnomekin's extended family may easily number into the thousands.

Marriage is yet another aspect of Gnomekin culture that contributes to the growth of the family. For when Gnomekin of different families marry, each of the groups adopts the entire other clan as part of its family. In fact, it is said that a Gnomekin who chances to meet another of his or her people anywhere in Talislanta can usually be assured the two of them are related in one manner or another, whether through blood ties or marriage. So it is not necessarily an exaggeration when Gnomekin say that they are all part of one big family."

Crystalomancy is a field of magic practiced extensively by the Gnomekin. They consider crystals to be a gift from Terra.

The Arts

Gnomekin are experts at growing, polishing, cutting and appraising all types of crystals and gemstones. Decorative crystal gardens can be found throughout any Gnomekin settlement, and the art of growing colored crystals into beautiful shapes , called crystal sculpture, is practiced by many Gnomekin. The underground panoramas created by the best of these artists are said to be quite breath-taking. Gnomekin music is soft and pleasant to the ear, and is something of a family affair. The lilting melodies, sung by children and adults together, are based on a five-tone scale and have no words. Wind instruments made from tubular fungi and "drums" made from the caps of large mushrooms are used for accompaniment.

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.

Defenses

The Gnomekin Army is a small but highly competent force of light infantry. They excel at all aspects of subterranean combat, and move swiftly and silently underground.

Commerce

Crystals of many sorts are Durne's primary export and source of income. Shipments of these goods are conveyed by durge-drawn wagons along the Underground Highway to Cymril, and from there to the rest of the Seven Kingdoms and beyond. Other exports include gems, minerals, mushrooms, fungi, edible roots and tubers, root syrup, and mushroom ale.

Worldview

Gnomekin mark the Ur and their allies as enemies, and have good reason to be wary of the Satada and Subterranoids. They enjoy excellent relations with the other member states of the Seven Kingdoms, but otherwise have few contacts with other countries.

Gnomekin Settlements

Subterranean City of Durne

The Gnomekin have but a single settlement, the subterranean city of Durne. Constructed some two hundred feet below ground, the settlement consists of numerous moss-lined cave dwellings, pools, and grottoes, 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 molluscs. The Gnomekin also grow amber crystals, raw materials useful in the making of magical orbs and scrying devices.

Places of Note

The Underground Highway

The Underground Highway is a vast network of tunnels, subterranean rivers, and passageways that extends throughout the continent of Talislanta. The

section connecting the city of Durne to Cymril is suitable for use by wagons and mounts, has been used as a major trade route for over two hundred years. This passage intersects with two other serviceable roadways, one leading to Vardune and Taz, and the other to Sindar, Kasmir, and Astar. The Highway is by no means uniform in construction or design. Some of the tunnels are barely five feet in diameter; others are wide enough to allow passage of a land ark. Some run at a consistent depth for miles on end, while others run uphill and down, winding like serpents through the subterranean depths.

SUBTERRANOID

Subterranoids are massive bipeds who dwell far below the surface of Durne, and may be found in underground regions across Talislanta. Bands of subterranoids sometimes tunnel up from the depths to prey on Gnomekin settlements, or to ambush travelers along the Underground Highway. In combat,



subterranoids wield strange looking swords made of an unbreakable black metal. Despite numerous attempts, Talislantan metallurgists have as yet been unable to identify this substance. Almost nothing is known of the subterranoids' lifestyle, habits, or customs, though it has been observed that these creatures are unaffected by heat or flame. Able to see in total darkness, they are sensitive to strong light, which causes them pain.

Size: 6'-7', 300-400+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -2	PER +1
WIL +4	CHA -5
STR +5	DEX -2
CON +5	SPD -2

Ability Level: 6-15

Attacks/Damage: Tusks: DR 9, or Sword: DR 15

Special Abilities: Immune to heat and fire, see in darkness, -5 to all Action Table rolls in strong light

Armor: Exoskeletal plates, PR 6

Hit Points: 34

SCARLET SPOROZOID

The scarlet sporozoid is a blood-red variety of mushroom found only in dark, damp environs such as swamps, ancient crypts, and the subterranean tunnels around Durne and other regions. If disturbed or approached carelessly, the fungus will expel a cloud of crimson spores. Each of these tiny spores is a living, feeding organism that will greedily devour organic substances of any sort, including hide, flesh, and even bone. The spores feed continuously until the unfortunate victim is dead, at which time new scarlet sporozoids begin growing from the unwitting host's corpse.

Fire will kill a sporozoid or its malignant spores, though a medicinal purge is the preferred treatment for victims of a sporozoid attack. Radiant magical light, cast directly upon a scarlet sporozoid, will render it temporarily unable to expel its deadly spores.

Size: 2"-12", 1-6 oz.

Attributes: All negligible

Ability Level: 1

Attacks/Damage: Spores: DR 4 per round

Special Abilities: Rendered impotent by radiant light, spores harmed only by fire/acid/anti-parasitic purge

Armor: None

Hit Points: 1 (mushroom)



THE KINGDOM OF KASMIR

Kasmir is an arid region bordered to the south by the Jaspar Mountains and to the east by the Wilderlands of Zaran. A barren land swept by sandstorms throughout much of the year, Kasmir presents a terrain of ever-shifting proportions, its dunes swelling or receding according to the prevailing winds. By day the twin suns beat down upon the desert sands without surcease; by night, the temperature drops, and an icy chill descends across the desert. The harsh environs are home to a desert people known as the Kasmirans.

THE KASMIRANS

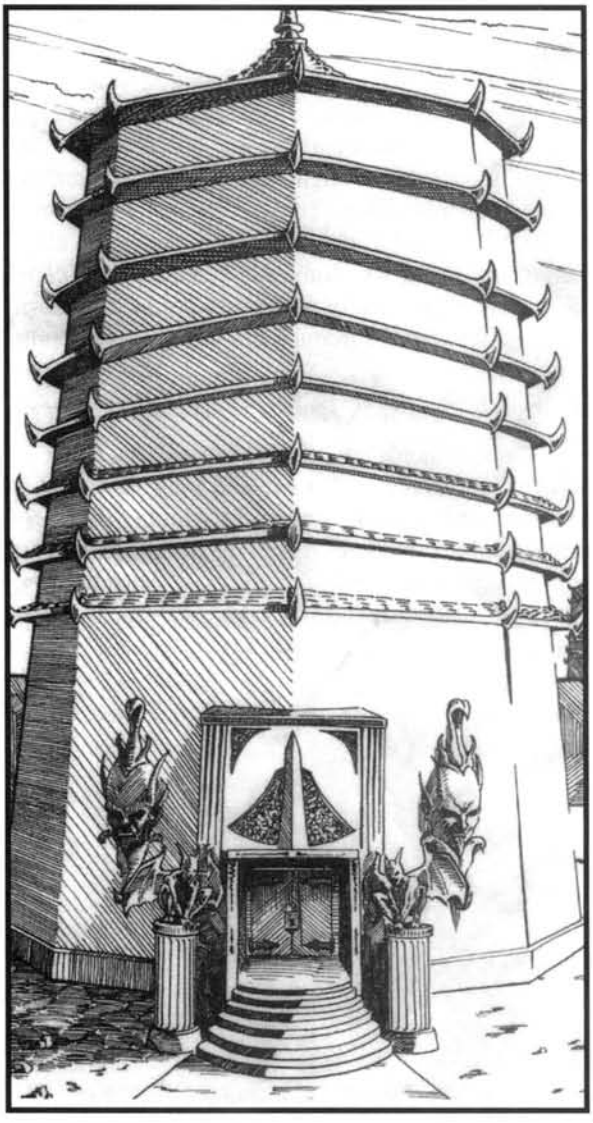
The Kasmirans are short and lean with odd-looking, shriveled features. They dress in hooded cloaks, loose robes, and curl-toed boots or slippers, apparel well-suited to the extremes of their environment.

Ancestry

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.

Society

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 guildschool to learn a profession.



Customs

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 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.

Government

The ruler of these people, known simply as the King or Queen of Kasmir, is elected by a form of popular vote. However, only the heads of the one hundred most influential families are allowed to cast ballots. The King or Queen is allowed to remain in office only so long as the wealthy Kasmiran moneylenders feel he or she is effectively representing their best interests. Any ruler who fails to live up to their expectations is quickly replaced. In Kasmir, individuals accused of a criminal act have the right to obtain legal counsel, at their expense. Reneging on a contract is a very serious offense, punishable by fines, reparations, and/or imprisonment. Kasmirans employ mercenaries to collect on bad debts, and in extreme cases, may even hire Arimite Revenants to find those who flee in order to escape their responsibilities.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

Kasmirans practice few crafts that do not have some immediate practical value. Most feel that their time is best spent at work. The Kasmirans have no known musical tradition.

Kasmiran Etiquette

The Kasmirans observe a great number of ancient traditions, some of which may seem strange and even bizarre to outsiders. When in the company of these folk, outsiders would do well to familiarize themselves with certain important rules of etiquette, which may be expressed as follows:

If you are invited into a Kasmiran's home, knock once on the door and wait patiently for a response. This may take several minutes, as it is likely that your host will first scrutinize you thoroughly through a combination of peepholes and spy-tubes. Do not take offense; this is the usual custom among all Kasmirans. When all locks have been undone, you may enter your host's home. Again, be patient, as this may take a few moments. Visitors to a Kasmiran abode are expected to sit on the floor, as the Kasmir do themselves. A rug or mat will always be provided for this purpose; take care not to wipe your feet on it when you enter, as this is regarded as a great insult. Your host will offer one or more cushions for you to lean upon. Take it with your thanks; such perquisites come free of charge. If a Kasmiran host offers you more than one cushion it is a sign that he or she regards you as a "valued customer" – in Kasmiran terms, one with whom the host hopes to do business.

While visiting with your host never request food or drink unless it is offered to you. To make such a request is considered poor manners; what if the Kasmiran has only enough food and drink for himself? Should refreshments be offered, the polite response is to offer monetary compensation to your host. The host should take only enough to pay the cost of purchasing, transporting, storing, cooking, and serving the food - any more than this would be impolite. Do not complain about the lack of light inside a Kasmiran abode. For economic reasons, Kasmirans rarely use more than a single candle or small lantern to illuminate a room. This may do little to dispel the gloom, for the typical Kasmiran abode has no windows. However, keep in mind that the lack of windows is due to the Kasmiran fear of thieves, and complaints associated with this subject may reflect poorly upon your own intentions.

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.

Defenses

Kasmir has no army of its own, but is protected by a mercenary force comprised mainly of Thrall mangonel lizard cavalry and Blue Aeriad scouts. Most of these troops are stationed in fortified barracks facilities located with a few miles of the eastern border of Kasmir. Though the country as a whole has no organized system of fortifications, even the lowliest Kasmiran tower-dwelling is like a fortress, capable of withstanding a small siege force for several days.



Commerce

Money-lending is the business of the kingdom, and Kasmir's money-lenders, appraisers, and auditors are unexcelled in their respective crafts. They finance caravans, buy and sell quantities of trade goods, and lend money to fund small-to-medium-sized ventures of many different sorts — but only after careful scrutiny and negotiation of contracts. Money changers are available in any Kasmiran settlement, and will gladly convert foreign currencies at current rates of exchange in return for a fee of just one percent. Kasmir is also known for its artificers, who create intricate mechanisms such as puzzle locks, security devices, and clock-work devices of superior quality. Their services are in demand throughout the continent of Talislanta.

Worldview

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.

Kasmiran Settlements

City of Kasmir

The walled city of Kasmir serves as the country's capital, and as an important center for commercial and financial ventures of all sorts. Built on the ruins of a forgotten citystate, the city is a collection of windowless stone towers arranged in haphazard fashion, their doors barred and locked against thieves. The streets are little more than alleys, running in every direction at odd angles. Mercenary Thralls patrol the city and guard the main gates.

Kasir

West of the capital lies the wealthy Kasmir settlement of Kasir, notable for its artificers, who are considered unsurpassed in skill. Kasir is also a regular stopping point for caravans traveling the Seven Roads. The settlement resembles a smaller version of the capital.

LAND KRA

Land kra are a species of giant, segmented eels related to the ocean dwelling kra (see The Southern Rim, Imria). A full grown specimen may exceed forty feet in length, and can weigh as much as five tons. Land kra are burrowers, using their powerful jaws to tear their way through rock, soils, and sand. In desert regions such as Kasmir, these creatures can sometimes be spotted by the long "wyrrm-trails" that they leave in their wake. Otherwise, a land kra may inhabit an underground region for decades, or even centuries, without ever being seen by the inhabitants of the upper realms.

Land kra normally prey upon other subterranean creatures, but will come to the surface when such food is scarce. Like the aquatic species, land kra are blind, sensing prey by vibration.

Size: 20'-50'; 4,000-10,000 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -9	PER +2
WIL +7	CHA (N/A)
STR +12	DEX -4
CON +8	SPD +2

Level: 5-20
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 20
Special Abilities: Burrowing
Armor: Segmented plates, PR 5
Hit Points: 40 +1 per foot

DESERT PALM

The common desert palm is native to such arid lands as Kasmir, Djaffa, Faradun, Rajanistan and Carantheum. The tree is exceptionally hardy, and can thrive in regions where there is little rain or ground water. A layer of spiny, overlapping plates covers the entire length of its trunk, conferring protection from the claws and teeth of grazing herbivores. The spiny plates also make it difficult to climb the tree, particularly as regards novice climbers. Desert palms are valued for their meaty fruit, which may be eaten fresh or preserved by drying. A single oasis may support up to 20 of these valuable trees.

THE KINGDOM OF 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. A branch of the Seven Roads follows a winding route through deep ravines and outcroppings of weathered stone to the settlement of Nankar, where there is a bridge that provides access to the Wilderlands of Zaran. Here live a curious people known as the Sindarans.

THE SINDARANS

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.

ANCESTRY

The Sindarans are descended from the Neurians, a race that is alien to Talislanta and originated from another world or dimension. Long ago a Neurian vessel accidentally arrived in Talislanta, possibly through a gate or rift created by the sorcerers of ancient Archaeus. Stranded in a strange world, the Neurians settled on a distant continent, where they lived until the coming of The Great Disaster. They attempted to escape the destruction of their adopted homeland in a great sky-spanning ark, but met with disaster and crash-landed on the continent of Talislanta. After a period of wandering the survivors settled in their current home, where they became known as the Sindarans.

SOCIETY

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 choose their mates on the basis of intellect; intelligence is a measure of "beauty" to these folk. They wed in a simple ceremony, the two vowing to remain both together and separate; the essence of dual-encephaly. Both the male and female share all responsibilities of the household and family. Sindarans young measure over three feet tall at birth, and are so thin as to nearly be translucent. With the exception of newborn Kasmirans (who are as shriveled and wrinkled as adult Kasmirans), Sindaran young are arguably among the least attractive babies of any humanoid species. Fortunately, this is not a factor as regards the parents, who lavish considerable attention and affection upon their children.

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.

Customs

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 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 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 (see sidebar). 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.

Government

Every third year, a five-day trivarian tournament is held to determine the best player in the land. The victor assumes the rulership of the kingdom, and the title of Nadir Absolute. Sindarans of successively lower trivarian rank serve as governors of the settlements, advisors, or magistrates. Sindaran law guarantees the right to a fair trial. Sindaran litigators are the most skilled in Talislanta. Trials are presided over by a pair of Sindaran Magistrates, and are exceedingly long affairs — the opposing counsels are likely to present the "pro's" and "cons" not only of their own side, but also of the opposing side.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

Sindarans possess some talent for metallurgy, creating decorative jewelry and other items of silver, a metal found in quantity in Sindar. Sindaran metalwork is exceptionally well-crafted, and of strange, though by no means unattractive, design. Sindarans have no musical tradition of their own, but have a great appreciation for music of all sorts, particularly the complex music of the Bodor.

The Collectors

Of great importance to every Sindaran is his or her collection. Indeed, to the Sindarans collecting is not simply a hobby, or even an obsession. It is a means of personal expression, and of developing those virtues held in the highest regard by the Sindaran people: pandidactism, persistence, and patience.

Before obtaining a single collectible the neophyte collector may spend months or even years researching numerous fields of study, ranging from naturalism to numismatics, cosmology, metaphysics, linguistics, antiquities, and so forth. After much study the aspiring collector will eventually settle upon a single field of study, and choose a specialty within his or her chosen field. Once the specialty has been chosen the collector will begin a second period of research, intended to uncover all available information on the subject. During this phase a Sindaran may spend many months scouring libraries and archives throughout Sindar, sometimes even traveling to foreign lands.

Once a collection is begun, the collector will never be completely satisfied until it is complete in every detail. This does not mean that a collector must personally acquire every single object or artifact that falls within his or her specialty. Rather, completion can be achieved as long as the collector has located and at least studied every item relevant to his or her collection. To Sindarans, material acquisition is not as important as intellectual acquisition. In fact, completing a collection is a rare thing indeed. Many collections are works in progress, handed down from one generation to another. Happy is the day when a Sindaran completes such a collection, fulfilling his or her personal goals and the aspirations of his or her ancestors as well.

Another rationale for the Sindarans' interest in collecting may also exist. No less a personage than the naturalist Thystram speculated that the Sindarans collect things because they are searching for fragments, traces, or clues to the location of the Neurian ark that crashed somewhere in Talislanta during The Great Disaster. Thystram believed that this ship may well contain lost secrets that would allow the Sindarans to return to their home world.

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.

Defenses

A folk enamored of subtlety and intrigue, Sindarans prefer to disguise the defensive capabilities of their mesa-top settlements. Popular tactics and devices include concealed weapons that can be employed vs airborne attack, and the use of secret tunnels, through which Sindaran defenders can launch surprise counter-attacks upon would-be invaders. Sindaran militias patrol the territories around their settlements on foot and in light windskiffs, which they obtain from Cymril.

Commerce

Sindarans produce silver, which is sold in ten-pound ingots or worked into various decorative and useful goods. They also make and sell many different types of alchemical mixtures, medicines, and remedies. Most Sindaran wares are shipped to Cymril for sale throughout the Seven Kingdoms and elsewhere, though considerable savings can be had by purchasing direct from the Sindarans themselves.

Worldview

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.

Sindaran Settlements

Nankar

The largest Sindaran settlement, Nankar is the capital of Sindar. Several Sindaran institutes of learning are located here, attracting scholars with an interest in alchemy and metaphysics. The settlement is accessible via winch-platform from the southwest, and from the northeast via the Bridge at Nankar, which spans the Dead River chasm and leads to a branch of the old Wilderlands Road.

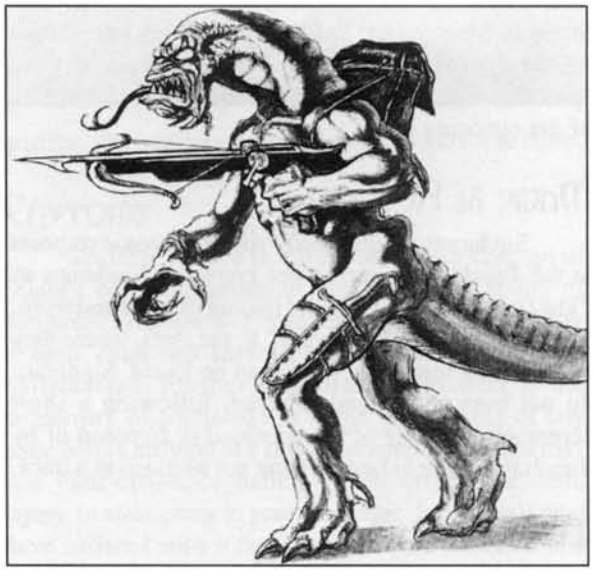
Nadir

Nadir is home to many of the Sindar's foremost Trivarian players, who are also known as "nadirs"; the term refers to the base of the pyramid-shaped "board" on which trivarian is played, a position over which only the most skillful players can attain mastery. Built atop a mound of stone two hundred feet in height, the settlement is favored for its cool breezes and splendid view. A natural geyser provides abundant water for the inhabitants.

Sahar

Sahar is little more than an outpost, famed only for the moonstones found in the nearby canyons. Unfortunately, chasm vipers, satada and the fearsome opteryx also dwell among the ravines.

Satada



Satada are a race of reptilian predators found in hot and arid regions from Sindar of the Seven Kingdoms to the Red Desert and the Kang Empire. The great range of these intelligent creatures is attributed to the widely held belief that groups of satada regularly traverse the length and breadth of the continent, following the extensive maze of subterranean tunnels known as the Underground Highway. Satada are particularly numerous in Sindar, where they are known to attack travelers

headed to and from the Sindarans' mesa settlements. They feed on warm and cold-blooded creatures of most sorts, including humanoid beings. An ancient and malefic race, satada converse in a variation of the Sauran tongue.

Satada employ iron tools and implements of unusual design, including the capture-bow, a heavy and unwieldy weapon resembling an oversized crossbow. The weapon fires a barbed, iron-tipped bolt similar to a harpoon; a rotating spindle wound with a hundred feet of stout whipcord allows the wielder to "reel-in" the unfortunate victim.

Size: 7'-7'6", 300+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT +1	PER +2
WIL +3	CHA -6
STR +4	DEX +2
CON +5	SPD +2

Level: 5-12+

Attacks/Damage: Bite or Claws: DR 6, Tail: DR 8 (may be used to simultaneously defend from rear assault), Capture Bow: DR 8, or as per weapon employed

Special Abilities: Capable of speech (dialect of Sauran, possibly other languages), cold inflicts double damage

Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2

Hit Points: 33

CHASM VIPER

Chasm vipers are metallic-scaled serpents indigenous to the canyons of Sindar, the Wilderlands, and other arid domains. They are expert rock-climbers and normally prey on small avians and vermin, though they will attack larger creatures if threatened or startled. The venom of the chasm viper is not particularly potent, but it possesses properties that make it useful in the concocting of poison antidotes. For this reason chasm vipers are valued by Sindaran alchemists, though elsewhere the creatures are regarded as vermin and exterminated on sight.

Size: 1'-8', 2-16+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -7	PER +1
WIL -3	CHA N/A
STR -1	DEX +5
CON 0	SPD +3

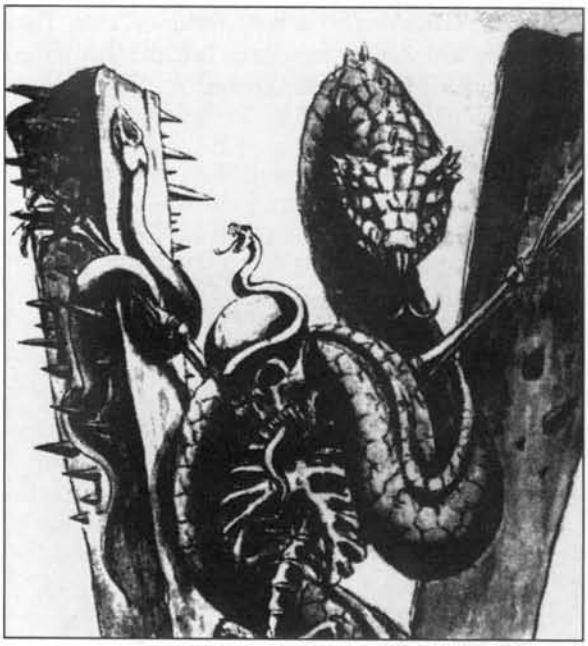
Ability Level: 4-7

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 2, plus DR 2 poison damage

Special Abilities: Poison bite, ability to climb rock surfaces

Armor: Metallic scales, PR 5

Hit Points: 4 +1 per foot



THE KINGDOM OF TAZ

Taz is a land of heavy jungles to the north and low-lying swamps to the south. It is bordered to the east by the Axis River, and to the west by the forests of Astar. A branch of the Seven Roads winds its way through the jungle, connecting the capital of Tor to the city of Cymril. Virulent species of plants and animals — such as mantrap, alatus, aramatus, and bog devils — haunt this region, which is home to a warrior-race known as the Thralls.

THE THRALLS

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.

Ancestry

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.



Society

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.

Customs

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 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 comprehend. 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.

Government

The Thralls are ruled by an individual known as the Warrior King or Warrior Queen of Taz; essentially, Commander in Chief of the Thralls. The position is open to challenge by duel once every year, with the winner awarded ruling status. The government is organized like a military chain of command, with commanders, sub-commanders, platoon leaders, and soldiers. Military Tribunals handle all legal matters, which are adjudged

in the manner of a military court martial. Offenders may be demoted in rank, or in extreme cases, thrown in the brig. Due to the Thralls innate devotion to duty and respect for rank serious offenses are extremely rare.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

Thralls practice no arts or crafts that are not related to the military, though long ago they adopted the practice of decorating their bodies with tattoos. These markings represent the individual's place of birth, clan affiliation, rank, and achievements, and constitute a great source of pride. Thralls can "read" the tattoos of others of their race, and by doing so, learn much about them without the need for verbal communication (see sidebar). When off duty, Thralls enjoy physical sports such as Tazian wrestling and melee.

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.

Defenses

The Thralls maintain one of the best-trained and most efficient military forces in Talislanta. In essence, the entire adult Thrall population is part of the military. Each unit has its own logistical operations and responsibilities: supply, recon, artillery, the construction and maintenance of fortifications, heavy cavalry, infantry, and so forth. Thrall forces play an integral role in the defense of the Seven Kingdoms, particularly in the Borderlands Legion, which guards the western border with the Wilderlands of Zaran.

Commerce

Taz is mainly self-sufficient, producing most of the equipment and provisions necessary to maintain its populace. When there is a surplus of goods available, Thrall supply units export these wares to Cymril for sale

Thrall Tattoo Symbology

Thrall tattoos, while colorful in appearance, are not just a form of decoration. Nor are the designs simply a means of instilling a sense of individuality into a race whose members otherwise look exactly alike. Instead, the intricate symbology utilized in Thrall tattoos provides a virtual record of the wearer's life and history. In order to obtain some idea of how to read Thrall tattoos one must understand the importance of the tattoo's location, color, and symbolism.

The location of a tattoo determines the general type of information it conveys. For example, the tattoos on a Thrall's head depict an individual's name, rank, and such personal embellishments as he or she prefers. Name and rank are indited on the forehead, for easy recognition. Promotions and commendations appear along the sides and back of the head. Personal embellishments are primarily decorative in nature, and are located in the areas around the eyes, nose, cheeks, mouth, ears, and neck. Place of birth and clan alliance are recorded on the shoulders. The torso is used to delineate the wearer's lineage: his or her ancestors, their place of origin, and their accomplishments. The individual's own achievements and skills are indited upon the arms, legs, hands, and feet.

Colors are used to indicate clan alliance, and to provide more specific information about the wearer. Each clan uses its own color combination, which is incorporated into the traditional shoulder-designs. The use of bright colors make such designations easier to read at a distance. The vertical forehead-designs used to show rank are also based on color: gold is the highest rank, followed by green, violet, blue, orange red, and white. Color is also used to indicate specific types of battle commendations: green for valorous conduct, blue for tactical expertise, gold for command excellence, etc. More specific information is contained within the actual symbols used in each tattoo, each of which is an ideogram expressing a word, phrase, or concept. Arranged in a variety of different combinations, the lines, patterns, and geometric shapes used in Thrall symbology convey the entire story of a Thrall's life.

or trade. When provisions run short, they import materials from outside sources. Several of the Seven Kingdom countries hire Thralls units as mercenary defenders, providing an additional source of revenue.

Worldview

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.

Thrall Settlements

The Fortress of Tor

A fortified communal complex, Tor serves as the capital of Taz. Situated in the midst of the jungle, the city consists of a number of squat, rectangular structures built of stone blocks, surrounded by double walls and a defensive network of interconnected towers. Mangonel lizards, greymanes and marsh striders are maintained in stables for military use.

Trang

Located in the eastern jungles on the border with Astar, the fortress city of Trang is built on a hilltop overlooking the border of Astar, to the east. It is accessible via a branch of the Seven Roads and the Underground Highway.

Targ

The Thrall community of Targ lies on the western fringes of the swamp. Like most Tazian settlements, the city comprises a number of simple stone dwellings set within a walled enclosure.



Mangonel Lizard

A relative of the land lizard, the mangonel lizard is a denizen of the jungles of Taz and the Borderlands region. Highly aggressive, these creatures have a sinuous tail that terminates in a knob of spiked bone and gristle. The mangonel can use its tail as an effective battering weapon, and so it is shunned by all but the most fierce or desperate predators. Mangonels are herbivorous creatures who generally travel in herds of twenty to eighty animals. Both the males and females will defend their young to the death.

The Thralls of Taz favor mangonel lizards for use as steeds. Though they are difficult to capture and tame, mangonel can be made to serve well in this regard. Their usefulness as steeds depends upon how well the creatures have been trained; a poorly trained mangonel lizard is as much a danger to its rider as it is to any other creature or being.

Size: 8'-10', 2,000-2,800 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -6	PER -2
WIL +4	CHA N/A
STR +8	DEX 0
CON +5	SPD +3

Ability Level: 6-10
Attacks/Damage: Tail: DR 20, Bite: DR 12
Special Abilities: None
Armor: Thick hide, PR 3
Hit Points: 55

Tazian Fly

This noxious variety of biting insect is native to the jungles of Taz (hence its name), as well as other swamps and jungle regions. The Tazian fly is believed to be a carrier of such virulent diseases as yakuk and the Red Death. Its iridescent wings and bright red coloration make it easy to spot; swarming in hordes ten thousand strong during the spring months, the Tazian fly is less simple to avoid. For some unknown reason, Thralls are rarely bothered by these insects, possibly because Tazian flies find Thralls unpleasant to the taste.

Stranglevine

Stranglevine is a rugged species of parasitic plant found in Taz and many jungle and forest regions. In its native environment the plant is difficult to detect, for it intertwines itself in the branches of other trees and shrubs. When an animal or other creature passes within

a few feet of a stranglevine, the plant sends forth a whip-like tendril in an attempt to ensnare its prey. If successful, the plant drops more tendrils about its victim, seeking to immobilize and strangle it in its tough, fibrous coils. Only the strongest creatures can hope to break free once entangled in this manner, for the vines are resistant to cutting and, to a lesser extent, burning. The plant's root system is far more vulnerable to damage, though it can be difficult to locate in a crisis.

Stranglevines draw nutrients directly from the decomposing corpses of slain victims, the remains of which often provide a grim clue as to the location of these dangerous plants. A mature stranglevine can have as many as six tendrils; an ancient plant, up to twelve.

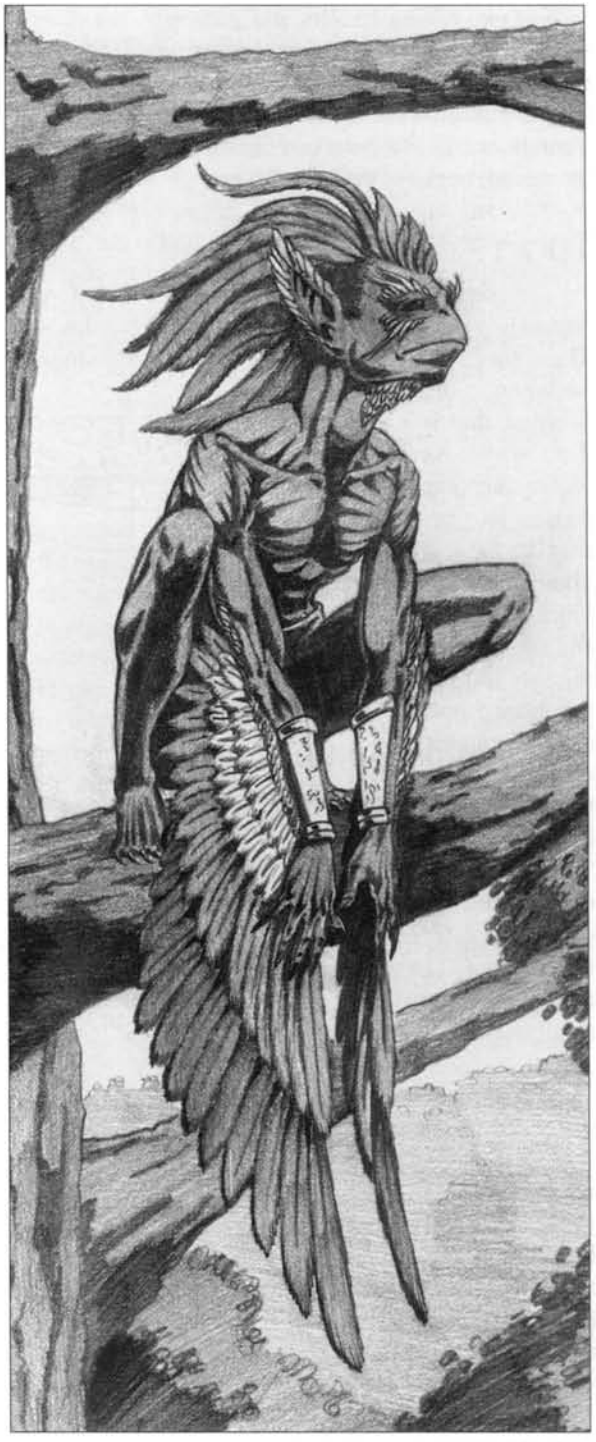
Size: 10'-80'+, 1 lb. per ft.
Attributes: STR +3, SPD +1 (all other attributes are negligible)
Ability Level: 3-5
Attacks/Damage: Constriction: DR 9 per round, one attack per tendril
Special Abilities: Limited motility
Armor: Tendrils, PR 5; Roots, None
Hit Points: Tendrils: 6 points each; Roots: 8

THE KINGDOM OF VARDUNE

Vardune is a densely forested region bordered to the west by the Axis River, a wide but shallow waterway that can be safely navigated only by flat-bottomed skiffs, barges and small watercraft. Vardune is divided into two great woodlands: Northwood and Southwood. Both regions are covered in verdant foliage, with old-growth forest predominating in the north and cultivated crops and orchards most common in the south. Populated by great flocks of avir, exotic plant species, and wild beasts, the land of Vardune is also home to a semi-avian people known as the Aeriad.

THE 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 cox-comb 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.

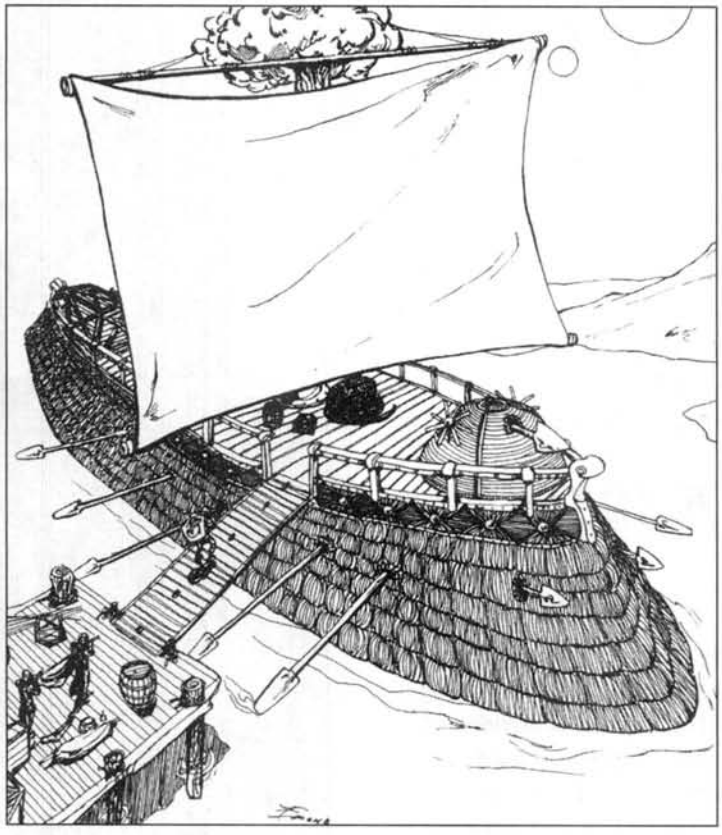
ANCESTRY

The Aeriad claim descent from a race of avians who fled from a far-distant land following The Great Disaster, eventually landing in Talislanta. 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.

Society

Aeriad society is divided along color lines. Green Aeriad live in Southwood, and Blues live in Northwood. There does not seem to be any prejudice or animosity between the two peoples; that is just the way Aeriad society functions. All Aeriad live in tree-dwellings of elaborately woven vines and branches, and subsist on a diet of seeds and vinesap. Extended families of several generations often live together in the same tree-dwelling, called a "family tree". Bridges of woven vines connect different tree-dwellings together, forming small settlements.



Aeriad couples mate for life, and are very devoted to each other and to their young. Elders run the household and help raise the young. Green Aeriad tend to be agriculturalists, botanomancers, scribes, historians, or scholars. Blues tend to be hunters, gatherers, scouts, and rangers.

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.

Customs

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, an avian species to whom Aeriad are closely related. 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 other ground-dwelling peoples, such as the Cymrilians 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.

Government

Green and Blue Aeriad are each governed by their own Councils, both of which are comprised of a group of nine elders, called Ministers. The Green Council governs Southwood, and the Blue Council governs Northwood. Each Minister is responsible for a specific aspect of Aeriad society, such as Defense, Trade, Wildlife, Agriculture, and so forth. The Green and Blue Councils meet together once each month to discuss

matters pertaining to the country as a whole. The Chief Ministers of their respective Councils take turns representing Vardune in the Council of Seven Kings.

Magic & 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.

Green Aeriad botanomancers are members of a respected fraternity that takes as its inspiration the great Viridian; a fabled sorcerer of ancient times, who is credited with the creation of the viridia plant and many other useful hybrids. The Green Aeriad's efforts to replant forestlands and create new and useful plant species reflects the environmental policies espoused by their mentor.

The Arts

Aeriad music is primarily a function of religion, and sounds not unlike the warblings of songbirds such as the avir. Crafts and artforms include weaving, decorative and practical horticulture, and a form of runic calligraphy inscribed into bark tablets.

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.

Defenses

Blues Aeriad scouts and rangers are protectors of the forests of Vardune and its borders. A fleet of heavily armed barge-forts, manned primarily by Blues, guards the Axis River along the western border of Vardune.

A Change of Lifestyle

Whether it is referred to as devolution or evolution, there is no disputing the fact that the Aeriad are losing their avian abilities. Both Blue and Green Aeriad believe that this condition was caused by The Great Disaster. Some say that the Aeriad were affected when their ancestors, fleeing their doomed homeland at the onset of the Disaster, passed through a cloud of magical mists or vapors and were contaminated in some unknown way. Others believe that contamination may have occurred after the Aeriad migrated to the continent of Talislanta.

Whatever its genesis, the change has had a profound effect on the Aeriad. By robbing them of the ability of true flight, it has forced their people to change from avian hunter-gatherers to a ground-based, primarily agrarian society. Needing large tracts of arable land to grow food, the Aeriad were forced to establish permanent settlements, instead of the small seasonal nests that their species used in their original habitat. To obtain adequate sources of water for their crops, the Aeriad constructed these settlements along the banks of the Axis River. Knowledge of irrigation, boat building, and waterborne navigation skills soon followed.

With large settlements came the need for a more structured form of government, and more efficient forms of trade, transport, and communication. To adapt to these needs the Aeriad built roadways, canals, and networks of elevated causeways allowing easy access to and from their tree-dwellings. They learned to speak Talislan and became proficient in the use of a written language, which enabled them to write laws and keep detailed records. Once they acquired the ability to read, the Aeriad were able to use books, and eventually, to learn Magic. So it is that adaptation to change has resulted in the intellectual and cultural evolution of the Aeriad.

Commerce

Green Aeriad produce most of Vardune's marketable wares, including its most important crop, the massive viridia plant. Its vines are woven into rope; its ten-foot long pads are filled with a fibrous down which can be spun into a fine cloth called viridian linen. The empty pods are cured, cut, lacquered, and used as building and roofing materials. The Aeriad trade with the other members of the Seven Kingdom, Mog, Jhangara, and to a lesser extent, Arim.

Worldview

Located far to the west, Vardune feels less threatened by the 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.

Aeriad Settlements

The River City of Vashay

Vashay is renowned as a producer of useful herbs and plants, which the Aeriad export to the other members of the Seven Kingdoms confederation and elsewhere. Boats made of dried viridia pods ply the river alongside the larger barge-forts of the Blue Aeriad. The nearby Bridge of Vashay spans the Axis River and leads to the Western Lands.

Valanis

A fortified river port situated in Northwood, Valanis is the largest Blue Aeriad settlement. There are docking facilities here for Aeriad barge-forts, which are used to patrol the Axis River, and for merchant ships and barges.

Plant Demon

Plant demons (also known as plant grues or woodgrues) are entities from the lower planes known as the Demonrealms who feed upon the life energies of plants, trees, and other living things. Passing through gates or holes in the dimensional fabric, these insidious creatures follow the root systems of ancient trees upwards into the material plane, drawn to the lifeforce that emanates from woodland regions. Here, a plant demon will establish its lair, typically in the bole of a large, dead tree.



Once it has established itself, the demon will begin to absorb elemental energies from the lifeforms that inhabit its surroundings, with deleterious effects. All forms of vegetation within the plant demon's sphere of influence will gradually mutate, wither, and die; living creatures will begin to fall sick, developing strange ailments or aging at an unnaturally rapid rate. Meanwhile, the demon grows in power, as it absorbs the life energies of its victims.

Plant demons are a particular source of concern in Vardune of the Seven Kingdoms, which derives much of its income from the sale of fruits, vegetables, and other crops. The Gnorls (see Western Lands, Werewood) claim to know how to make a potion that is capable of reversing the effects of the plant demon's aging ability, a condition for which there is no other known cure.

Size: 4'-5', 70-90 lbs.
Attributes:

INT +5	PER +6
WIL -2	CHA -6
STR -3	DEX -2
CON +3	SPD -1

Ability Level: 3-10
Attacks/Damage: Touch: DR 2 per Ability Level (successful CON roll to resist results in half-damage); or as per spell-like ability employed
Special Abilities: Natural Magic with four Modes at Ability Level, regenerate damage from non-enchanted weapons (two points per level, per round), sense living things (range: 100 ft. per level), susceptible to fire (inflicts double damage)
Armor: Bark, PR 3
Hit Points: 30

ROOT GRUB



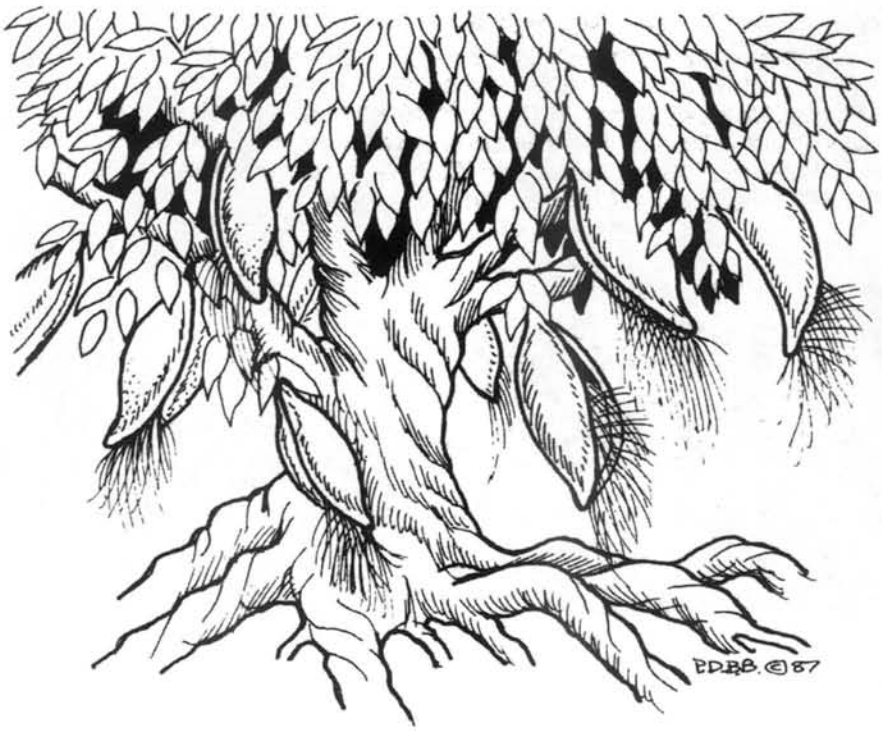
These eyeless, fanged larvae live below ground in Vardune and many woodland and jungle regions. They feed on the roots of large plants and trees, and they pose a threat to cultivated crops, vineyards, and orchards. An adult root grub may grow up to two feet in length, with a diameter of eight inches or more; a truly repulsive sight, which the creature's deathly pale coloration does little to diminish. Green Aeriad employ trained avir to locate and kill these subterranean vermin, which are responsible for a considerable amount of crop damage in Vardune each year.

VIRIDIA

A hybrid plant with many practical uses, viridia was developed several hundred years ago by the legendary botanomancer, Viridian. Seeking to create the ideal cultivated plant, Viridian spent over forty years isolating, categorizing and combining plant essences. The result of the fabled magician's labors was a plant of uncommon virtues.

All parts of the viridia plant are useful. The root is a nutritious tuber, and can be ground into flour for baking. The tree discards a fourth of its older branches once a year, yielding a plentiful supply of wood for construction or fuel. The young leaves can be boiled to make an herbal tea, and the old ones used as roofing material or compost. The viridia's six foot-long pods are of use as one-man skiffs, and the fibrous down found in these pods can be woven into a fine, supple linen.

Perhaps one of Viridian's finest achievements, the viridia plant is not without certain minor flaws. Developed to be hardy and long-lived, viridia grows with wild abandon, sometimes forcing out other forms of vegetation. Viridia bark is resistant to fire, and its root system grows so deep in the soil that the plant is practically impossible to remove or kill once it has attained a height of four feet or more.





An Aamanian Knight and Sauran Gladiator battle in the annual Clash of Champions



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. Its southern lands are demarcated by Phandril Forest, the last of woodland in Aaman that has not been cleared for fuel, timber or farmland. To the north, separated by a towering structure called the Great Barrier Wall, is Zandu: hated rival of Aaman, and enemy of the religious people known as the Aamanians.

THE AAMANIANS

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.

ANCESTRY

The Aamanians are descended from the ancient Phaedrans, 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

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.

Aamanians live in drab, whitewashed brick dwellings. The cubiform structures which pass for Aamanian architecture are all identical in appearance, and their cities are laid out in monotonous, square grids. Furnishings tend to be sparse and simple, and devoid of decoration save for approved cult symbols and icons. Every Aamanian home has a small shrine with an All-Seeing Eye at its center. These icons can be found throughout Aaman: in the cities, villages, along roadways, and so forth. The symbols serve as a constant reminder that the Monitors, mortal representatives of Aa the All-Seeing, are always watching.

CUSTOMS

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 (see sidebar). 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 citizen of Aaman.

Government

Aaman is a churchstate governed by a theocracy, at the head of which is the Hierophant, ruler and high priest of the Orthodoxist Cult. The Hierophant wields supreme power in Aaman, for he is entrusted with sole curatorship of the Omnival: the Orthodoxist Cult's Book of the Law. Serving the Hierophant are his representatives, called the Monitors. Each holds the position of ruling prelate in his assigned district, and is responsible for awarding aalms (see Magic & Religion) to those worthy of advancement in status, or deducting mana from individuals whom they deem unworthy. Next in line come the Aspirants, members of Aaman's Monastic Orders, which include such factions as Archimages, Warrior-Priests, Inquisitors, and Witch Hunters.

In Aaman, religion and law are one and the same. Thus, the only "correct" view on any issue is that which is put forth by the Orthodoxist Cult. The doctrines of Orthodoxy center around the Aamanians' patron deity, Aa (also known as "Aa the Omnipotent," Aa the Omnificent," and so on). The tenets of the cult are recorded in a series of iron-bound volumes known cumulatively as "The Omnival", which purports to reveal the answers to all questions and mysteries. It is said in Aaman that "what the Omnival does not teach, the true Orthodoxist need not know". Those who fail to heed Cult doctrines are taken to the Halls of Penance, where the Inquisitors subject offenders to "ritual cleansing" - an Orthodoxist euphemism for the forcible conversion of infidels to the cult's doctrines by interrogation, torture, and coercion.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

The only forms of art permitted in Aaman are those that glorify the Cult. All-Seeing-Eye icons and the Hierophant are common themes. Artisans are prohibited from producing works which in any way deviate from accepted standards: no color save white can be used in construction, the manufacture of garments, etc.; black is used only for writings and cult symbology.

Aamanian temple music reflects the idea of "oneness in mind and spirit", and consists of many voices chanting repetitious motifs in unison or in octaves, over a droning pedal tone. The high priest or Hierophant leads the assemblage in song; the congregation and the rest of the clergy follow without variation. No musical instruments are used in Aamanian music, as such implements are regarded as "tools of the devil".

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 cliched 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".

Defenses

The Aamanian military is another branch of the church-state, and is under the direct control of the Hierophant. The military arm of the Cult is divided into

Advice for Travellers

Travel to Aaman, with its strict religious laws and prohibitions, is by no means a simple undertaking. Foreigners who plan to visit or pass through the region would do well to keep in mind the following recommendations:

1. As a general rule, avoid any and all actions which, by their nature, might attract undue attention to yourself or your companions. Adhere to the local laws and customs at all times; deviation from the norm is not permitted.

2. Prior to entering Aaman, remove or conceal all non-Orthodoxist religious or magical paraphernalia that you may carry upon your person. In Aaman, the wearing of such articles is considered tantamount to heresy, and may lead to serious consequences (see #7).

3. In a land where every citizen wears white, it is safe to say that travelers who dress in colorful apparel will stand out from the crowd. The best way to avoid scrutiny is to cover one's usual costume with a plain white cassock and hooded cloak. Garments of this sort can be obtained for a few copper pieces throughout the country.

4. If you have long hair and/or a beard, wear a hood or veil. While it is not necessary to undergo complete facial and bodily depilation as the Aamanians do, one should bear in mind that all forms of bodily adornment are considered provocative in Aaman.

5. Avoid speaking loudly, using vulgar or "colorful" language, or engaging in theological or metaphysical debate in the presence of Aamanians. Ask no unnecessary questions about Orthodoxy, the god Aa, or Aamanian culture in general. Should these subjects come up in the course of conversation, offer no opinion of your own. Instead, bow your head, raise the hands with palms extended to the sky, and say, "Aa is Omniscient" – a traditional response indicating deference to the all-knowing Aa, and humble admission of your own ignorance and unworthiness. Repeat as needed.

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6. The alert traveler will notice the presence of "All-Seeing Eye" icons, which can be found almost everywhere in Aaman. Rest assured that these icons are not for decorative purposes, nor are they strictly religious in nature. Perhaps as many as one in ten icons are either enchanted scrying orbs, peep holes, or the apertures of spy-tubes. These devices are indeed "All-Seeing Eyes" that are employed by the Monitors to keep watch on the citizenry – and especially, on foreigners and infidels.

7. If, despite all precautions, you or your companions become the subject of scrutinization by a Monitor or other Aamanian official, do not panic. Remain calm, speak softly and without emotion, and answer any and all questions posed to you with extreme deference. Failure to do so may lead to serious consequences: in Aamanian terms, this means that you will be arrested, stripped of your possessions, and hauled away to the nearest House of Penance, where you will be subjected to the unpleasant attentions of the Inquisitors. Forcible conversion to Orthodoxy usually follows.

In summation, follow these simple rules and you should be able to avoid difficulties. Enjoy your stay in Aaman.

several Monastic Orders, each operating out of its own fortified monastery. The most powerful and influential of these is the Order of the Knights of the All-Seeing Eye, who serve as the Hierophant's personal bodyguards and wield considerable influence in the Cult. The Order of the Defenders of the Faith is comprised of warrior-priests; the Knights of the Hooded Veil, of Inquisitors. The Knights of Retribution serve as witch hunters, who roam the Western Lands and beyond, hunting down enemies of the church-state – witches, warlocks, and all others who oppose the Hierophant's dictates.

Commerce

The Aamanians import iron ore, metals, and minerals from Arim; herbs, plants, and scintilla from Jhanagara; burden beasts and equs from Djaffir traders. Exports include flax, holy symbols and talismans, iron tools, weapons, and implements. Goods are conveyed from Aamahd by canal to the Sea of Sorrow, then to Arat, Aabal, Alm, and Jhangara; also by road to Andurin and Arim; and by barge on the Axis River. The only organized trade guilds found in Aaman are operated, owned, and monitored by the church-state. The gold lumen is the standard throughout Aaman, though all but the wealthiest inhabitants generally use Aamanian coppers .

Worldview

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.

Aamanian Settlements

Aamahd

Aamahd is the capital of Aaman, and the center of all trade, commerce and culture. Its architecture consists of a bland compilation of squares and grid patterns, reflecting the unimaginative nature of its builders, the Aamanians. The Hierophant lives here in a mighty tower of ivory-colored stone, attended by his most trusted advisors. Far below, thousands of low-ranking Aspirants and infidels toil, loading wagons and canal-barges with shipments of ore and precious stones from Arim.

Arat

Arat is a port city that once served as a naval installation during the Cult Wars with neighboring Zandu. Aamanian warships are still stationed here, though the facility is now used primarily by merchant vessels. These ships travel from Aamahd to Alm and as far south as Jhangara, hugging the coastline all the way; like most Talislantans, Aamanians fear to sail the open sea.

Aabaal

A settlement located in the forested highlands of western Aaman, Aabaal is renowned primarily for its ironworks. Here Orthodoxist cult relics are made, fashioned from black iron by a cloistered order of artisan-priests.

Andurin

Andurin is the site of Aaman's largest military installation. It is also an important staging area for trade with the lands that lay east of the Axis River. Orthodoxist pilgrims often stop here to visit the Abbey of Andurin, where Holy relics are bought and sold by monks of the Order of Reliquaries.

Alm

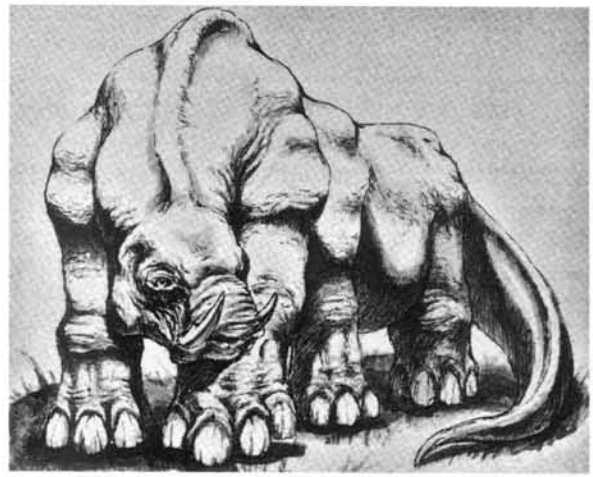
Alm is a small village situated in the forested highlands along the southwestern coast of Aaman. An especially fanatical order of Orthodoxists, known as the Flagellants, founded this settlement. They can sometimes be seen wandering the roads of Aaman, beating themselves with ritual flails and chanting Orthodoxist slogans.

The Great Barrier Wall

Stretching the entire length of the border with Zandu, the Great Barrier Wall is an immense stone structure, sixty feet in height and half as wide at its base. A toll of one gold lumen per person is charged at each of the Wall's gates. Proprietorship of the Wall and its toll facilities is determined by an annual event known as the Clash of Champions. The Aamanians and Zandir expend a considerable amount of effort searching for a suitable champion for the year's match, the outcome of which is worth a small fortune in toll revenues. Spectators from many lands come here to partake in the spectacle, bringing a substantial amount of business to local innkeepers, shop owners, and vendors. Betting is always brisk, and pick-pockets from neighboring regions consider the event to be something on the order of a religious festival.

DURGE

Durge are a species of ponderous, six-legged herbivores originally bred by the ancient Phaedrans for use as burden beasts. The experiment, viewed in retrospect, appears to have been less than entirely successful. As planned, the hybrid durge were large and exceptionally powerful. They thrived on weeds, dry grasses, and other inexpensive foodstuffs and were mild and placid by nature. Unfortunately, few durge showed any great inclination towards hard labor, preferring instead more enjoyable pursuits; specifically, chasing after durges of the opposite sex. The creatures soon proved to be remarkably prolific; so much so, that the Phaedrans were forced to release great numbers of the hulking creatures into (what was then) the eastern wilderness.



Durge are now found throughout much of the continent, from Aaman and Zandu to the Kang Empire. Domesticated durge are still used as dray beasts, though most are now raised for food. Great herds of these ponderous creatures inhabit the Plains of Golarin, the Wilderlands, and surrounding territories. The proliferation of the species has enabled many a predatory species to survive, and even to flourish.

Size: 8' in length, 5' at shoulder, 2,000+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -10	PER -4
WIL +8	CHA N/A
STR +8	DEX -10
CON +8	SPD -9

Ability Level: 3

Attacks/Damage: Normally, none. Head-butt: DR 16, only if harassed

Special Abilities: None

Armor: Hide, PR 2

Hit Points: 48

BALD NETTLE

Bald nettle is a spiny, ground-hugging creeper that grows wild throughout the hills of Aaman. It is a tenacious plant that matures quickly and is difficult to eradicate after its root system has been established. Once this has happened, the nettle's shoots spread quickly, choking other forms of plant life around it. An extract of the bald-nettle is used as a depilatory by Aamanian cultists, to remove hair from the head, face, and body - hence the plant's name.

ARIM

Arim is a land of rough and irregular hills, interspersed with grassy steppes and thickets of stunted oak and briar. To the north lie the dark peaks of the Onyx Mountains; to the northwest is Lake Venda, source of the great Axis River, fed by countless mountain streams and brooks. West lies Werewood; east, the towering Cliffs of Bahahd fall away into the Darklands of Urag.

Arim is mainly wild country, with a single city and a few small settlements. The inhabitants of this grey and windy realm are known as the Arimites.

THE ARIMITES

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, ear-rings and knives made of black iron.



ANCESTRY

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.

SOCIETY

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. The 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 reenforced 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. Marriages are arranged by clan elders; children, like adult Arimites, are expected to work full-time and earn their keep, starting as soon as they are old enough to walk. Arimites 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.

CUSTOMS

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.

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.

Government

Arim is ostensibly ruled by an hereditary monarch known as the Exarch, a recluse who dwells in the Forbidden City of Ahrazahd, surrounded by a retinue of bodyguards, concubines and royal wizards. The Exarch governs through subordinates in Shattra and Akbar, who bear the title of Chief Subaltern, Second Subaltern, and so forth. In reality, the true power in Arim lies in the hands of the Revenants, whose influence is everywhere in Arim, and may even extend across the continent. Such is the extent of their power that the Exarch does not dare to set foot outside of Ahrazahd for fear of being assassinated.

Under Arimite law individuals accused of criminal acts have the right to tell their side of the case before being judged, though vigilantism sometimes renders such legalisms a moot point. Thievery is punishable by a period of incarceration in a public place; the thief is usually chained to a post, so that he or she may be flogged by the person who was robbed. "Unjustified murder", rape, and similarly violent crimes are punishable by drowning, the criminal being chained, weighted, and dropped into a deep well or lake.

The Hillman & the Chakos Merchant

An example of how the custom of hiring Revenants to resolve disputes is provided in the story of the hillman and the chakos merchant, a popular Arimite folk tale. As the story goes, the hillman returned from hunting to find that his wife, in his absence, had come into possession of a full cask of chakos. Having left his mate with funds insufficient to purchase such a quantity of liquor, the hillman became suspicious of the local chakos merchant, whom he believed might be seeking to gain the affections of his wife by plying her with valuable gifts. Accordingly, the hillman paid the Revenants ten silver pieces to perform a mischief upon the merchant.

The merchant awoke on the following day to find his wagon bereft of its wheels, with a note from the hillman warning against further indiscretions. Outraged, the merchant paid the Revenants twenty silver pieces to poison the hillman's favorite steed. This so upset the hillman that he at once gave over fifty gold lumens to the Revenants with instructions to have the merchant thrashed. On the next day, the chakos merchant made similar arrangements for the benefit of his hated rival.

This was the final straw for the hillman, who decided that only the death of his enemy would now suffice to settle their score. While in town posting a notice for the Revenants, the hillman chanced to meet the merchant, who was there for the same purpose. The two antagonists, too bruised and weary to fight and nearly bankrupt of funds, decided to strike a compromise: each contributed half the fee necessary to have the hillman's wife assassinated, thus removing the source of their differences. Relieved to have put an end to their feud, the two men parted friends.

Unfortunately, neither ever saw the other alive again. Unbeknownst to either man, the hillman's wife was a member of the Revenant cult, whose followers are strictly forbidden to do harm to one of their own kind.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

Arimites have no love of song, dance, music, or art, which are considered a waste of time better devoted to work. For diversion they like to sit around drinking chakos, and telling tales of past battles, mining accidents, notable acts of vengeance, and age-old vendettas. Arimite crafts are more functional than decorative in nature, reflecting the hard-working nature of these people. These include metal-working, the making of superior bows and throwing knives, the weaving of coarse but durable fabrics, tanning, and blade-smithing.

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 Abduli.

Defenses

Arim has a small but highly regarded army; Arimite knife-fighters bear an especially grim reputation, and are valued as mercenaries. As Commander-in-Chief, the Exarch controls the military; however, while the army is loyal to the Exarch, it will not act against the Revenants. The largest military contingent can be found at the citadel of Akbar, which prevents the Ur clans from passing through the Gorge at Akbar into Arim.

Commerce

Though the gold lumen is the standard here, Arim also mints its own silver lumens, which are in wide use among the populace. These coins are called Exarchs, a term in which Arimites have always found a grim humor, regarding both the currency and Monarch as being "second in influence to gold". Arim trades with both Zandu and Aaman, the Seven Kingdoms, Faradun, and the Djaffir. Overland trade follows the old Phaedran Causeway; waterborne trade passes through Shattra down the Axis River. Arimite merchant ships and barges never travel from sight of land.

World 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 (see Drukh Lands). Arim is officially neutral as pertains to Aaman and Zandu.

Arimite Settlements

The Forbidden City of Ahrazahd

Ahrazahd is home to the ruler of Arim, a recluse known as the Exarch. Here in this lofty mountain retreat, the Arimite lord lives in seclusion, surrounded by a retinue of bodyguards, concubines and royal wizards. Shipments of gold, gemstones and provisions are brought here by caravan once each month. Aside from this, the capital city is closed to outsiders.

The Citadel of Akbar

Standing at the mouth of a deep gorge, Akbar bars incursions by the clans of Urag into the land of Arim. The fortress also serves as a center for trade, and is occasionally visited by Jaka hunters, Djaffir merchants, and the occasional Farad slave-monger.

The Town of Shattra

Located on the banks of the Axis River, the mining town of Shattra is a filthy place, crowded with ramshackle wooden tenements and covered in a perpetual haze of smoke and soot. Raw black-iron ore is brought here to be smelted down into ingots and shipped by barge or caravan to Aaman, Zandu, the Seven Kingdoms, and beyond. The secretive Revenant Cult is believed to have its base of operations here.



DRUKH LANDS

The rugged hills of central Arim are home to many species of wild animals, including herds of muskront, ogriphant, and the swift creatures known as graymanes. As predatory exomorphs and yaksha also dwell here, the novice hunter is perhaps best advised to avoid vacationing in this region — particularly as it is home to the wild folk known as the Drukhs



THE DRUKHS

Drukhs are a rugged people who dye their long hair, beards and skin with the juice of the purple barb-berry. They have dark eyes and savage features, and dress in rude hides, furs, and necklaces made from the fangs and claws of wild beasts.

ANCESTRY

The Drukhs are primitive tribesmen believed to be descended from the Wild Folk of ancient Talislanta. As they are similar in stature to the Arimites, some scholars have suggested that the Drukh tribes are may also be related to these people. This theory has not been well received by either the Arimites or the Drukhs, who despise each other.

SOCIETY

Nomadic hunter-gatherers who build no permanent dwellings of any kind, Drukhs range throughout the central hills and mountains of Arim in loose-knit bands numbering from a few dozen individuals to several hundred. Their warriors ride wild graymanes dyed purple with berry juice — a most unusual sight, or so it is said. Drukhs subsist on roots, tubers, and wild game; they also prey on Arimite livestock as the opportunity warrants, and are known to rob caravans along those parts of the Phaedran Causeway that lay adjacent to their territories, and to launch raids against small villages and outposts.

Among the Drukhs, there is no marriage per se; males and females alternate partners as they choose. Children are raised by the tribal elders, who teach them about hunting and warfare. Those who are too old or weak to fend for themselves are slain out of hand, thereby reducing the number of mouths needing to be fed.

CUSTOMS

Drukhs are taught never to show fear or pain, which they regard as signs of weakness. To show their ability to resist pain various forms of ritual scarring and bodily mutilation are common practices; scars earned in

battle are considered signs of courage and are greatly admired. To test the strength and worthiness of their enemies Drukhs often subject captured opponents to slow and excruciating forms of torture – invariably resulting in death, though in rare cases individuals who exhibit uncommon courage and ability to withstand pain are allowed to live. Drukhs do not regard such behavior as cruel. Among these folk, compassion is considered a sign of weakness, and is virtually unknown.

Government

Drukh tribes are led by shamanic war-chieftains; typically, the most accomplished warrior of the tribe. The position is open to challenge once each year on the day after the Ghost Moon, from sun-up to sundown. During this time fierce duels to the death for dominance can occur at any time.

Laws

Drukhs accused of offenses are bound with leather thongs and brought before the tribe's shamans. The shamans act as judge and jury; individuals found guilty of weakness or disobedience are executed by means of ritual torture, a slow and horrible process. If they die a "good death" and do not cry out in pain, it is believed that their crimes will be forgiven by the ancestors, and they will enjoy a place of honor in the afterlife. Drukhs apply their laws and customs to outsiders as well. In this way they regard themselves as honorable and fair.

Magic & Religion

The Drukhs revere Noman, dark ruler of the Nightmare Dimension. They believe that the spirits of their ancestors watch them at all times, and will cause them misfortune if they act in a cowardly fashion. All Drukhs are extremely superstitious. They believe in the power of spirits, curses, and black magic. Any occurrence that can be construed as out of the ordinary may be regarded as an omen, either favorable or unfavorable. Drukhs rely upon their shamans to read these omens and explain the portents to the tribe. Their readings can impel a tribe to attack, to avoid an area or person designated as "cursed", or to postpone their plans until the appearance of more favorable omens. Drukhs observe no burial rituals. The dead are left to be eaten by animals while the rest of the tribe moves on.

The Arts

The music of the Drukhs is wild and primitive, reflecting the nature of these people. In battle, Drukh shamans wield bone flutes, and play the ancient "Song of Madness", which is intended to strike fear into the hearts of their enemies. Other traditional instruments include Drukh ceremonial drums, made from flayed skin stretched over dried gourds, and the uka, or "howling drum"; an instrument made from skin stretched over a framework of rib bones, which is played by dipping the fingers in blood and rubbing them across the head of the drum. Drukh crafts are limited to weapon and tool-making, the curing of hides, and a style of scrimshaw involving the carving of intricate patterns on humanoid leg bones and skulls.

Language

Drukhs converse in an unusual combination of sign and Low Talislan, punctuated by expressive hand gestures. While they do not employ a written language, the tribes communicate by means of smoke signals, using various types of herbs and plants to create as many as seven different colors of smoke. This system is as complex as any form of written language, and is unique to these people.

Drukh names consist of both somatic and verbal components; one must know both in order to accurately state the name of an individual Drukh. To omit the hand sign is considered a sign of ignorance at best, and at worst, an insult that may require the offended Drukh to seek redress. Examples of full Drukh names include Bone-Flute Brother (three fingers of right hand moving back and forth over left wrist), and Howling Mother (right index finger pointing into palm of left hand).

Defenses

Both males and females serve as warriors and hunters. In battle, Drukhs warriors use enchanted flutes and drums to achieve a type of trance-state. Drukhs who have been so affected will continue to attack even if badly afflicted with normally incapacitating wounds.

Commerce

When not at war with each other, the various Drukh tribes sometimes barter with each other for hides, horn, and iron weapons. Most Drukhs know nothing about currency and trade gold, silver, and copper coins primarily as baubles, or as raw materials that can be melted down and used to make more useful items.

Worldview

Drukhs are decidedly unfriendly as regards outsiders, finding great enjoyment in skinning alive individuals who trespass into their lands. The Drukh tribes particularly despise the Arimites, their ancestral enemies. Many tribes are still fighting to gain back territories lost to the Arimites hundreds of years ago.

EXOMORPH

Exomorphs are fierce quadrupedal predators found in the wooded hills of Arim and most other forest and jungle regions. The creature is justly feared, both for its



blood-thirsty nature and for its uncanny ability to blend into its surroundings by assuming virtually any color, combination of colors, or pattern imaginable. Combined with a talent for standing perfectly still for hours on end, exomorphs are nearly impossible to detect in the wild. They often show a remarkable degree of patience, waiting patiently for prey to approach within a few feet before leaping to the attack.

Exomorphs are occasionally hunted for their pigment sacs, from which the finest magical inks and costly dyes are derived. Located at the base of the neck, these small, bladder-shaped glands sell for as much as five hundred gold lumens each. There are two such glands in female exomorphs, three in the more colorful males. A dead exomorph's hide loses its color in just a few hours, becoming practically worthless to all but the most gullible buyers.

Size: 7'-9' in length, 400-600 lbs.

Attributes:

INT -6	PER +4
WIL +5	CHA N/A
STR +5	DEX +3
CON +0	SPD +4

Ability Level: 5-10+

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 11, Claws: DR 15

Special Abilities: Alter color of hide at will (Stealth at Ability Level +10), tracking by scent at Ability Level +PER

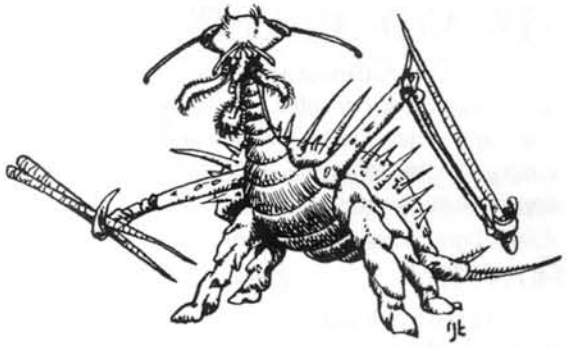
Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2

Hit Points: 45

SNIPER-BUG

A denizen of Arim, Zandu, and much of the Western Lands, the sniper-bug is named for its uncanny habits. Armed with tiny spears made from bits of wood, rock, and glass, these diminutive insects lurk in hiding, waiting to ambush unwary prey. Quite intelligent (INT - 7), sniper-bugs usually travel in "platoons" of up to two dozen adults, each carrying one or more larval young on its back, along with a plentiful supply of spears. Their platoons generally prey on small avians, reptiles, and other insects, but they are quite fearless and will attack larger creatures as well.

While their small weapons are capable of doing only minor damage to humanoids, sniper-bugs can be



dangerous when encountered in large groups. They are almost impossible to get rid of once they have marked a territory (part of a clearing, a path, home, basement, etc.) as their own. Wars between sniper-bugs and whisps have purportedly gone on for untold millennia, largely unnoticed by most Talislantans.

HANGMAN'S TREE

This ominous-looking tree is a familiar sight in Arim and many other woodland and wilderness regions - its angular black branches silhouetted against the sky, the long, rope-like tendrils hanging almost to the ground. Hangman's tree has been used as a ready-made gallows since ancient times; the Black Magician, Mordante, was said to have had a grove of such trees planted atop a hill overlooking his mansion. Hangman's tree is still commonly used for this purpose in Arim, primarily by assassins of the Revenant Cult.

The Azure Ocean

The vast expanses of the Azure Ocean are avoided by most sensible Talislantans, with the exception of such sea-going folk such as the Gao, Imrians, and other reckless sorts. The author identifies with the former group, and claims little or no first-hand knowledge of the various islands and atolls that dot these forboding waters. Still, for the benefit of the reader, here is a brief overview of these places.

The Island of Castabulan

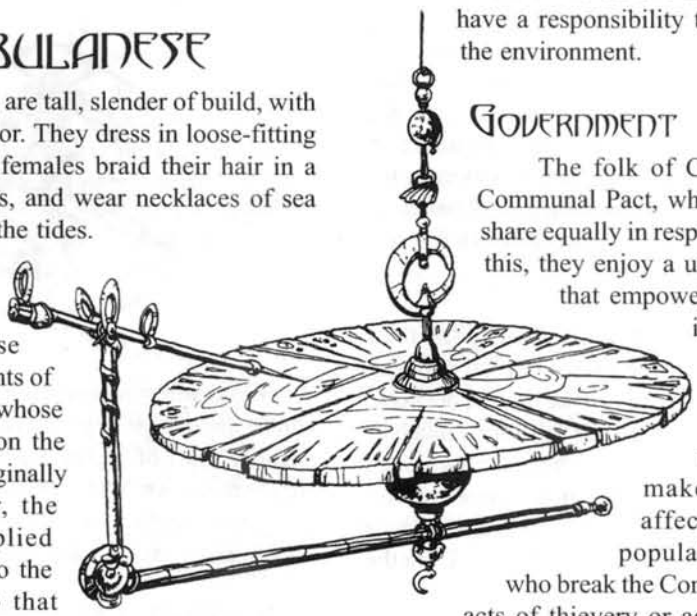
A rocky isle located off the western coast of Silvanus, Castabulan is fringed with copses of tanglewood and stunted gall oak. Uninhabited for centuries save for wild beasts and flocks of winged avir, the island is now populated by a refugee people who call themselves the Castabulanese.

The Castabulanese

The Castabulanese are tall, slender of build, with skin a deep brown in color. They dress in loose-fitting robes and sandals. The females braid their hair in a variety of intricate styles, and wear necklaces of sea stones worn smooth by the tides.

Ancestry

The Castabulanese claim to be the descendants of a group of Phantasians whose windship crash-landed on the isle in the year 447. Originally two dozen in number, the survivors have applied themselves vigorously to the act of procreation, so that nearly four hundred men, women, and children now populate the isle.



Society

The Castabulanese reside in an eccentric "observatory" constructed of rough-hewn timbers and stone. Originally built to house two dozen, the structure has since undergone no less than eighteen major expansions and additions. The lower floors serve as living chambers and storage. The top two floors house observation lenses, skycharts, and an alchemical laboratory. Here the Castabulanese monitor changes in the weather, compiling date that they use to predict storms, droughts, and other meteorological phenomena.

The population functions as a commune, with all members sharing equally in the work of growing food (tubers, grains, and fruits), hunting for shellfish, tending the commune's erd population, maintaining the observatory, and monitoring research and experiments in progress. The Castabulanese have no strict rules regarding marriage; relationships of all kinds are tolerated. Children are raised by the entire group, with individuals taking turns as with other responsibilities.

Customs

The Castabulanese are liberal and permissive by nature, accepting of all beliefs and ways of life that do not inhibit personal freedom. They have developed a close affinity to the forces of nature, which they have had occasion to experience first-hand since being shipwrecked long ago. Unlike their Phantasian forbears they have come to believe that those who use magic have a responsibility to protect and preserve the environment.

Government

The folk of Castabulan abide by a Communal Pact, which states that all must share equally in responsibilities. Aside from this, they enjoy a unique form of self-rule that empowers individuals to make important life-decisions for themselves. A group of three elders, elected by popular vote, are called upon to make any decisions that affect the majority of the population, as needed. Any who break the Communal Pact or perform acts of thievery or aggression are banished from the island, never to return.

Magic & Religion

The Castabulanese have no single religion, but are allowed to worship or not, as they choose. Nature deities are currently popular with some, as are traditional Talislantan holidays and festivals centered around nature or fertility themes, such as the Harvest of the Silver Moon and the Conjunction of the Twin Suns. The Castabulanese study numerous fields of magic, but are especially adept in astromancy and aeromancy. Castabulanese place their dead along with their personal

effects in wooden coffins and cast them adrift, to be carried away on the tides.

The Arts

Castabulanese have a great appreciation of the arts. Many dabble in a form of naturalistic sculpture employing such materials as driftwood, sea shells, and various flotsam washed-up on the shore by the tides. Others paint or compose epic paeans in their spare time.

Language

The Castabulanese speak a casual or rustic form of High Talislan, reflecting the somewhat low regard that these people have for classical Phantasian culture. Castabulanese names have an easy, lilting sound, as in Saleas, Millias, Castabulos, and Celesian.

Defenses

The Castabulanese have no army, weapons, or fortifications. They are believed to possess magical capabilities adequate to defend themselves from any small-medium sized force of invaders.

Commerce

The folk of Castabulan produce no marketable wares per se, but trade information about tides, weather, and wind currents to sea captains, scholars, institutions and other interested parties. In return they receive alchemical supplies, gifts of food or wine, and occasionally a few gold lumens. These the Castabulanese use to purchase astrological apparatus, tools, and other implements from the Seven Kingdoms and elsewhere.

It is customary for Zandir captains sailing to or out of the port of Zantium to send a messenger to Castabulan, in order to obtain advice on prevailing winds, tides, and so on. The usual procedure is for the messenger to leave a gift of food, wine, or supplies at the foot of the stairs leading up to the observatory, ring a gong placed conveniently nearby, and wait. A harbinger imp responds within a moment or two, carrying with it a scroll bearing the astromantic predictions for the day.

World Relations

Castabulan is neutral as regards all other nations; any visitors who come in peace are welcome. The Castabulanese enjoy good relations with many Zandir sea traders, and have been visited by waterborne and windborne craft from many different nations. Castabulan's most recent report on Talislantan environment was highly commended by the members of Cymril's Lyceum Arcanum, and joint research projects are planned for the near future.

Relations with Phantas remain one of Castabulan's few sources of dismay. The Castabulanese have attempted for decades to convince the Phantasians to restrict their thaumaturgical experimentation, which the Castabulanese claim is deleterious to the surrounding environs. The Phantasians disagree; some have gone so far as to recommend that the Castabulan facility be dismantled, and the descendants of the former castaways forcibly returned to Phantas.

Talisandre

Another small island that lies off the coast of Silvanus, Talisandre is a scenic isle populated by a plethora of wild flora and fauna, including several species believed to be all but extinct elsewhere. Edible plants and wildfowl are plentiful here, as are numerous species of shellfish. This idyllic setting is also home to a simple and primitive people called the Azir.

The Azir

Azir are dark-skinned and dark-haired. They dress in loincloths, anklets, and bracelets of woven plant fibers, and wear elaborate masks of carved wood, which are said to reflect their moods.

Ancestry

The Azir appear to be direct descendents of the first Archaen tribes. In fact, it is believed that the tribe has always lived on Talislandre, unaffected by the processes of civilization, wars, and even The Great Disaster. If true, then the Azir are something akin to "living fossils" — relics of a bygone age.

Society

Because Azir do not welcome outsiders into their realm, very little is known of these people. The most detailed accounts of Azir life come from a Green Aeriad botanomancer named K'ya-Chak; who, after being driven away time and again, finally won the trust of an Azir shaman, who agreed to tell him something of her people. According to K'ya-Chak, Azir live in large dome-shaped huts of woven grass. Each dwelling provides shelter for an extended family. As many as four generations may live together; the Azir are robust and long-lived, and do not suffer from the diseases that

commonly afflict other Talislantans. Azir eat no meat, but subsist on wild edible plants, fruits, roots, tubers, nuts. They mate for life, and have no taboos regarding sex or nudity. Children are raised by their parents, with help from the family elders.



Customs

The Azir are a peaceful people who live in harmony with their surroundings. Young Azir play contentedly with animals from the surrounding forest; wild beasts seem not to threaten their villages and gatherings. As regards strangers, Azir exhibit overt xenophobic tendencies. Visitors from the outside world are usually greeted with fusillades of stones, and told in no uncertain terms to depart the Azir's island refuge. This attitude can be traced to the Azir belief that association with other peoples will cause their own people to grow sick and die. They believe that the only reason their culture has survived intact is because the Azir have remained apart from the rest of the world. In this, they are no doubt correct.

Government

Azir are ruled by a council of shaman elders, both male and female. They are charged with the protection of the Azir culture and people. K'ya-Chak observed no laws or punishments; indeed, he felt that there appeared to be no crime among the Azir.

Magic & Religion

Azir possess no affinity for or knowledge of magic. They are practitioners of an ancient pagan religion based on the worship of elemental spirits. Azir have a rich ritual tradition, celebrating the changing of the seasons, days when certain flowers burst into bloom, and other natural occurrences. K'ya-Chak found it most unusual that the Azir had no rituals for the seven moons, and only recognized one of the twin suns. When he questioned several Azir on the subject, they merely said that "these things are but illusions, and so we pay them no heed." Azir bury their dead amongst the wildflowers, which they refer to as "returning to nature".

The Arts

Azir wear colorful wooden masks as an indicator of mood and emotion. Several different types of masks are known: "Festive Celebrant" is worn during joyous rituals, "Sorrowful Dreamer" is worn to express sadness and regret; "Fearsome Protector" is worn to repel interlopers. Other types certainly exist, but have not yet been documented.

Language

Azir speak a version of the Elder Tongue. The type of mask worn is said to add a layer of meaning and emotion to their speech that is not always evident to non-Azir. Azir names combine proper names, beginning with the prefix "Az", with a natural element. For example: Azia of the Blue Blossoms, Azis of the Shoals, and Azla of the Feather-Dendrons.

Defenses

The Azir have no warriors. In the event of intrusion by hostile beings or entities, the people don "Fearsome Defender" masks and confront the intruders, shouting and making aggressive gestures in an attempt to frighten them into leaving. If this tactic fails, they will throw sticks and stones; again, with intent to frighten, not harm. If this approach also fails, the Azir run away and hide in the forests. Swift and cunning, Azir are almost impossible to catch or even find when they do not wish to be seen.

Commerce

Azir share freely among themselves, and apparently care little for the concept of personal

possessions except as pertains to their masks, each of which is made by its owner, and can only be worn by its owner. They apparently own nothing of value to outsiders, and have never had a desire to trade with the outside world.

Worldview

Outsiders have long regarded the Azir as a strange, backward, even savage people. While it is true that the Azir know nothing of the civilized world, this is a condition that they have adopted by choice. Scholars from the mainland have wanted to study the Azir for centuries, hoping to learn something of their culture, the reason for their long lifespans, and how they and their island survived The Great Disaster.

Sea Scorpion

The sea scorpion is a giant species of aquatic insectoid found throughout the Azure Ocean and the Far Seas. These fearsome monsters commonly attain lengths in excess of forty feet and may grow to even twice this size. Sea scorpions normally prey on other large aquatic creatures, such as sea dragons and giant kra, though they have also been known to attack ocean-going vessels of all sizes. A sea scorpion's pincers can crush wooden masts and timbers with ease, and its long stinger can penetrate even the thickest wooden hulls. If the creatures have a weakness, it is that their vision is extremely poor. In fact, it is possible that they attack sailing vessels only by mistake, thinking them to be living entities.

The giant skeletal jaws of sea scorpions grace the walls of many a portside tavern - most found after being washed up on the shore after a storm, rather than as a result of the tavern-owner's heroics, regardless of claims to the contrary. A trophy of this sort may command up to a thousand gold lumens or more.



Size: 40'+, 4-6 tons

Attributes:

INT -10	PER -4
WIL +5	CHA N/A
STR +9	DEX -6
CON +8	SPD +2

Ability Level: 14-20

Attacks/Damage: Pincers: DR 30, mandibles: DR 20, sting: DR 25; total of two attacks per round

Special Abilities: None

Armor: Exoskeleton, PR 7

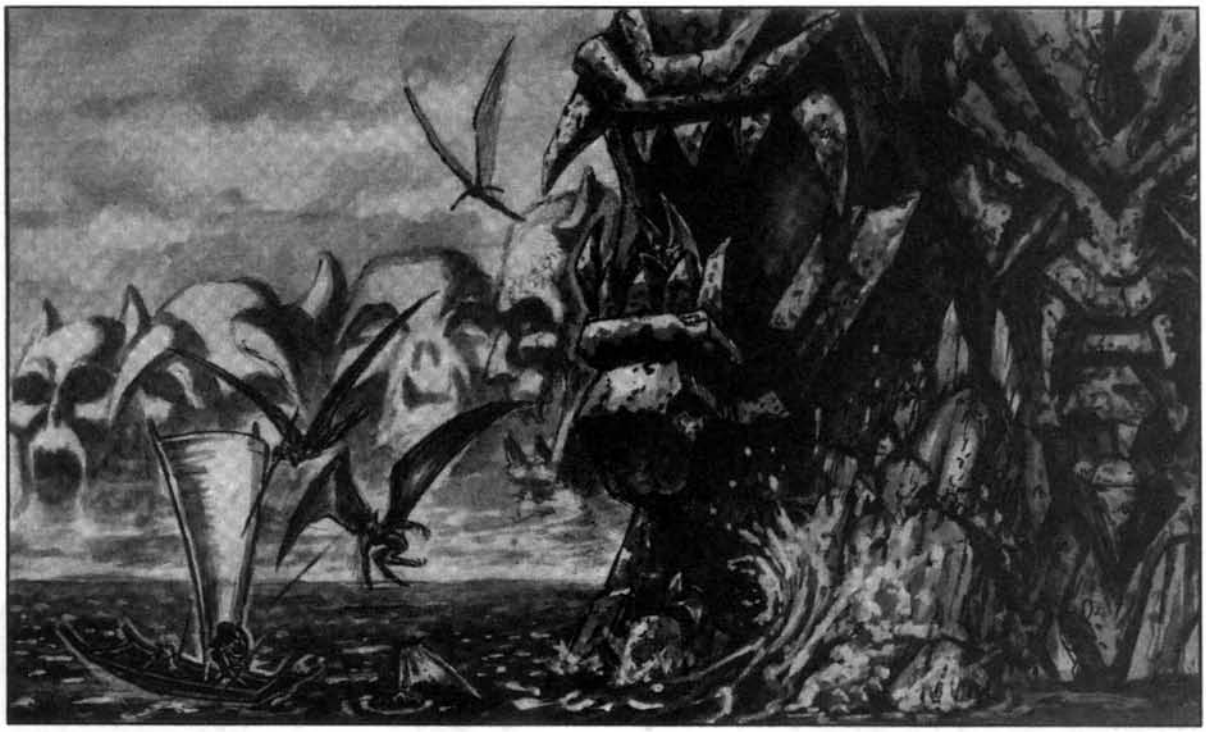
Hit Points: 88

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.

The Thane of Khazad were buried wearing funerary masks of frightening aspect, fashioned of gold, silver, copper, tin, and lead. Scholars believe the masks were intended to ward demons or evil spirits from the souls of the deceased. Brass urns sealed with paraffin, used to imprison bottle-imps or safekeep the corpse-dust of departed wizards, are also found in the Thane tombs. Prized by curio collectors and necromancers alike, these relics bring high prices in some places. However, the risks entailed in the acquisition of such items are not inconsiderable. Necrophages haunt the region, craving fresh corpses in preference to the dry bones of the Khazad dead. Lurkers prowl the moors, as do packs of werebeasts from the Serpentine Mountains. And it is likely that the Black Savants do not appreciate having the tombs of their ancestors defiled.

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.

Places of Note

The Cliffs of Khazad

Sheer cliffs two hundred feet in height ring the coastline of Khazad, making passage into the interior a daunting, if not impossible, prospect. Of interest to scholars of the occult are the giant diabolical visages carved into the cliff-sides along portions of the coast.

Isle of Lost Souls

Legends say that this place is inhabited by a night demon with a penchant for collecting souls, which his assistants gather by night and bring back to his island lair. The "lost souls" are said to be stored in enchanted amberglass vials, which the demon keeps for his amusement. At the very least, it makes for a colorful tale.

NECROPHAGE



Size: 6'4"-7', 120-180+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -2	PER +2
WIL +3	CHA -7
STR +4	DEX -2
CON +5	SPD -1

Ability Level: 5-11

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 8, Claws: DR 10 (CON roll to resist contracting disease known as "corpse-rot")

Special Abilities: Harmed only by silver and magic, night vision, detect scent of carrion or bones at range of two miles, dismembered body parts may continue to attack

Armor: None

Hit Points: 25

Necrophages are humanoid entities that hail from the darkest depths of the Underworld. Old legends to the contrary, they are not ghosts or spiritforms, but corporeal scavengers that have been known to slip into the material plane by means of magical gates and rifts, drawn by the scent of death. Here, they haunt crypts and burial grounds, feeding upon the bones and remains of the dead. Necrophages can detect the scent of bones, corpses, and corpses at distances of up to two miles, and they are always hungry.

Nauseating to behold, necrophages dress in rags stolen from the bodies of corpses and speak in harsh, rasping whispers. They are found in great numbers in Khazad, but may be encountered in a variety of places, including graveyards, abandoned ruins, and battlefields. Nocturnal by nature, necrophages huddle in underground caves and crypts by day. As they never sleep, their gnashing and mumbling may sometimes provide warning of their presence to those who venture too near their haunts. Driven by their horrible craving for carrion, necrophages are strangers to fear. Many, in fact, are utterly insane. They are also proven carriers of a variety of unpleasant ailments and contagious diseases, including corpse-rot.

It is a known fact that only silver or enchanted weapons will suffice to kill a necrophage. Other types of weapons can be used to cause physical damage to a necrophage, though even dismembered, the bodily parts of a necrophage will continue to attack; a disconcerting sight indeed to any who have witnessed such an occurrence. Rajan necromancers collect the severed hands and heads of necrophages, which – invested with unnatural sentience - are said to have numerous uses.

GHAST



Ghasts are horrific entities believed to hail from the dark, uncharted regions that lie in proximity to the Underworld. Their presence on the material plane is attributed to the legendary black magician, Mordante, who - deliberately or inadvertently - opened a magical gate into the nether realms, allowing hordes of these creatures to gain access to the continent of Talislanta. On the material plane, ghasts often haunt ancient graveyards, tombs, and battlegrounds, sites which are perhaps most reminiscent of their vile home plane. They are most common in Khazad and Werewood, where they are known to prey upon living creatures of all sorts, including even banes and werebeasts.

Though frail and unhealthy-looking, ghasts possess fearsome strength, and cannot be harmed except by magical means. Possessed of a diabolical, and often insane, intelligence, they are known to covet enchanted items and to converse with unseen spiritforms, the skulls of their victims, and even themselves. These foul creatures usually hunt by night, spending the daylight hours lurking in crypts and underground barrows, staring into the darkness.

Size: 7'6"-8', 160-200 lbs.

Attributes:

INT +5	PER +8
WIL +8	CHA -7
STR +7	DEX -5
CON +10	SPD +2

Ability Level: 16-30

Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 13

Special Abilities: Necromancy with five Modes at Ability Level, night vision, detect invisible/astral presences (range: 100 feet per level), harmed only by silver or magical weapons and spells.

Armor: None

Hit Points: 42

STORM DEMON



Storm demons are frightful winged entities that normally dwell among the upper reaches of the Demonrealms. They sometimes come to Talislanta, finding their way through magical gates and rifts. Favoring dark and windswept lands, these demons can be found flying high above the mountains of Khazad, Werewood, and Yrmania, among other places.

Storm demons radiate negative electrical and elemental energies. They are able to cause wind, rain, and thunder, and can hurl shards of lightning like javelins. Their very touch is sufficient to electrocute lesser creatures, metal armor affording no protection from this form of attack. Groups of storm demons acting in concert are purported to be able to create tempests sufficient in intensity to capsize even the largest sea vessels. They are powerless to affect structures of earth or stone, however, and are susceptible to damage from spells of Geomancy.

Size: 7'6"-8', wingspan 20'+, 600-700 lbs.

Attributes:

INT +1	PER +2
WIL +7	CHA -6
STR +7	DEX +1
CON +10	SPD +7*

* in air; -3 on ground

Ability Level: 8-15

Attacks/Damage: Thunderbolt: DR 3 per Ability Level (range: 10 ft. per level), or Touch: DR 2 per Ability Level (electrical damage, no protection from armor)

Special Abilities: Aeromancy with five Modes at Ability Level, flight, hurl thunderbolts (one per Ability Level, per day)

Armor: None

Hit Points: 45

DEADWOOD

Deadwood is a variety of gnarled and twisted tree found in such desolate regions as Khazad, the Shadow Realm, and parts of the Wilderlands of Zaran. The organisms produce no leaves or fruit, and appear to require neither water nor sunlight; deadwood trees have even been found in underground regions. The Ariane, who are able to commune with all things in nature, claim that these organisms are alien to Talislanta, and have roots that originate from the lower planes. They believe that deadwood trees are sentient and are able to exert a sinister influence over living creatures; some even claim that the trees may serve as spies in the service of certain lower planar entities. Weapons made of deadwood can be used to kill plant demons, though it may be unwise to keep such items upon one's person. Most natural forms of plantlife exhibit an adverse, and even hostile, reaction to deadwood.



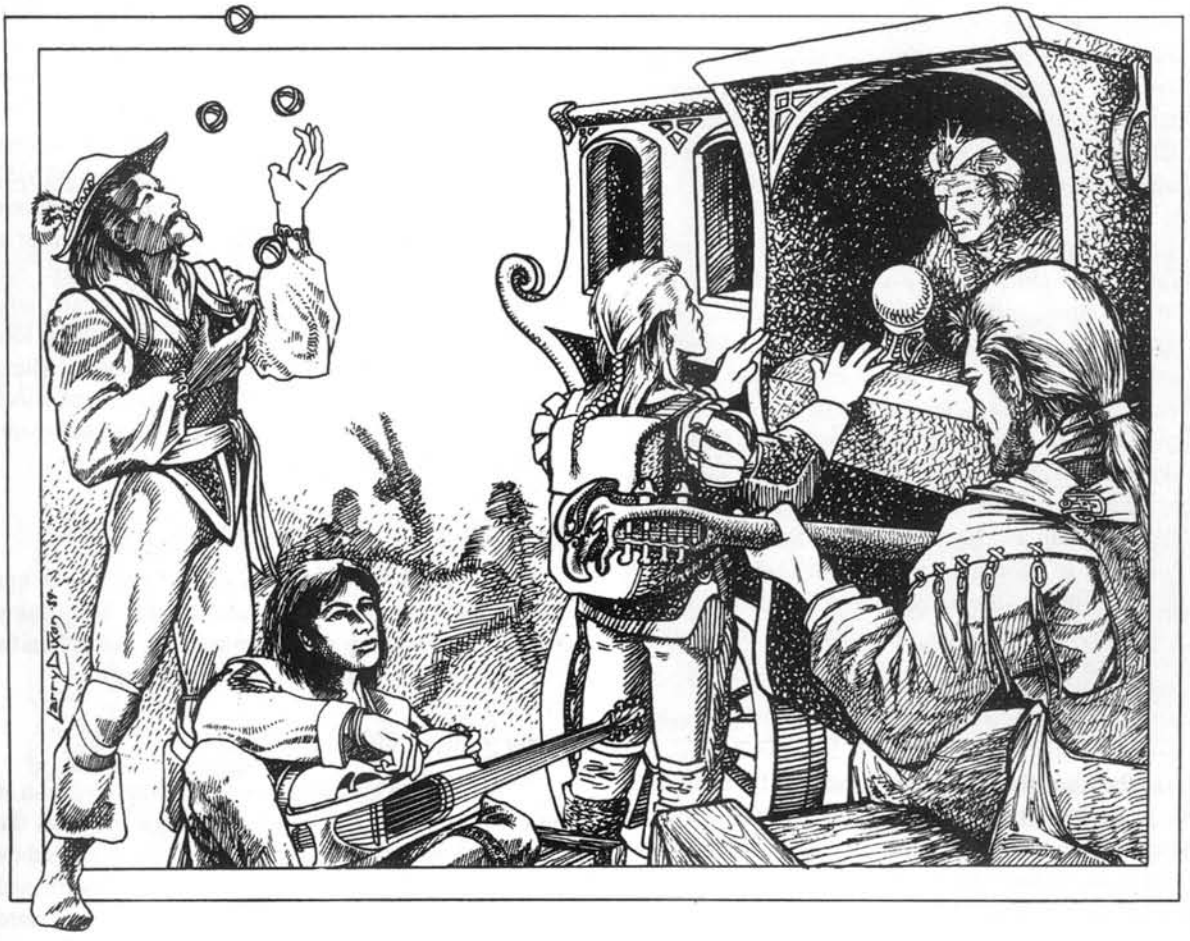
Silvanus

Silvanus is a hilly woodland region located to the west of the Necros River and the Forests of Werewood. Unlike the dreary and fell territories of its eastern neighbor, the wooded glens of Silvanus are scenic and relatively tranquil. Here, fields of meadow grass offer respite from the forest, and cool streams converge amidst thickets of silver-beech, carpets of moss, and quiet ponds. Roots and herbs, many having magical or healing properties, are common throughout much of the region.

The woods of Silvanus are home to wood whisps, muskront, and other creatures, most of the benign sort. Beware of exomorphs and banes from nearby Werewood, however, as these sinister creatures sometimes infiltrate Silvanus by night. More commonly found in this region are the tribes of a gypsy folk known as the Sarista.

The 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.



Ancestry

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.

Society

The Sarista are a people of diverse qualities. Some are loners who make their living as peddlers, mercenaries

Sarista Culture

The rogue magician Crystabal and I once spent an evening with a Sarista band, who entertained us with their traditional songs and dances. The local cuisine, served with generous flagons of herb-spiced wine, was most excellent. Afterward, playful Sarista children gathered around, sitting on my lap and giving me gifts of little bouquets of meadow flowers. At last it came time to put the little ones to bed, though none would go without first giving "old Uncle Tamerlin" (as they insisted upon calling me) a hug. With wide grins, the elder Sarista then brought forth more wine. I listened to a few tall tales told around the campfire before myself retiring. Crystabal, flirting with a charming Sarista girl, attempted to arrange a romantic interlude.

I awoke at daybreak feeling refreshed and well-rested. A slightly bleary-eyed Crystabal joined me after a time, and the two of us saddled up our graymanes and bid farewell to the Sarista. Not five miles down the road I discovered, much to my chagrin, that the contents of my pockets had been picked clean. Muttering under my breath, I cursed the little urchins who had sat upon my lap and showered me with hugs and kisses. Crystabal laughed long and loudly, until he discovered that his purse of gold coins was missing, among other items. With an ill-concealed grin I consoled him, and we continued on our way; poorer in the monetary sense, but far richer in our knowledge of "Sarista Culture".

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.

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.

Customs

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 every woodland trail in Silvanus by heart, and will have an alarmingly comprehensive understanding of Sarista culture.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

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.

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).

Government

The Sarista have no central government. Each family is a separate entity unto itself, led in most cases by the eldest male or female member. A tribe made up of several families will usually be governed by an informal group made-up of the elder members of each family. Among the Sarista, it is considered a grievous crime to steal from a member of one's own family or tribe. Offenses of this sort result in temporary or permanent expulsion from the group.

Defenses

Tribes sometimes band together for protection, but the usual response to potential hostilities is to simply flee. Sarista are not cowards, but they believe it is better to live to fight another day than to die.

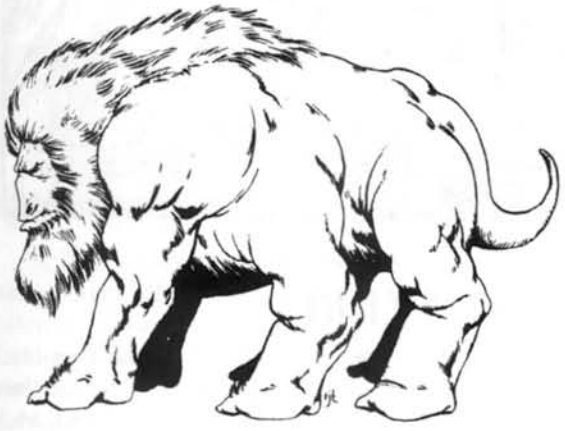
Commerce

The Sarista tribes roam the Western Lands and beyond, earning a living by performing, telling fortunes, and selling magical wares of reputed and occasionally actual cogency. They sometimes carry trade goods of various sorts in their wagons, such as erd's cheese, copper lanterns, tallow, silver bracelets, luck charms, bolts of colored cloth, trinkets and bangles.

Worldview

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.

Erd



Erd are a species of domesticated, six-legged mammals found throughout the Western Lands and in parts of the Seven Kingdoms. These creatures are identifiable by their long, shaggy fur and unusual features, which some describe as similar to an old man or sage. The Sarista and Zandir sometimes call them "wise ones" and regale each other with tales of their erd's placid and patient ways. Erd grow a new coat of fur every spring, shedding the old coat by the fifth week of Ardan. The discarded fur, called shag, is soft and durable and is used to make blankets and rugs. The creatures are quite strong and can be trained as burden beasts. The female of the species secretes a milky substance that can be used to make a flavorful variety of cheese. Erd are easily agitated by fire and may become quite aggressive when in such a state. Wild erd are still found in Silvanus and northern Zandu, though they are now quite rare. Their great size and strength is a natural deterrent to all but the most diligent or desperate predators. The Sarista are quite fond of erd, which they use to pull their wagons.

Size: Up to 8' long, 6' at shoulder, 800+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -7	PER -2
STR +6	DEX -8
CON 0	SPD -6

Ability Level: 4

Attacks/Damage: Kick: DR 14, or Trample: DR 22; attacks are rare

Special Abilities: Wool used to make shag, females produce milk for cheese

Armor: None

Hit Points: 28

Caravan-Bug

Caravan-bugs are social insects native to Silvanus and other temperate woodlands and semi-tropical forests. These tiny (1-2 inch tall) creatures travel in bands of as many as two hundred individuals, carrying small parcels of food and other goods wrapped in leaves and strapped to their backs. Surprisingly intelligent (INT -6), caravan-bugs have a primitive language of sorts and are known to trade with others of their kind; some caravans are said to have regular dealings with such creatures as whisps and Gnorls, trading nut-husks of blossom nectar and rare herbs for tiny quantities of spices, roasted meats, and other delectables. If threatened, the male bugs will protect the members of their band using sharpened twigs to stab at their attackers. Otherwise, they are generally benign.



WEREWOOD

Werewood is a dark and tangled forest region situated to the north of Zandu. By day, it is an eerie place: tendrils of grey moss hang from its gnarled and misshapen trees, hovering above thick swards of bracken, toadstools, and molds. Ravir, perched on the limbs of rotting spider-oak trees, assail travelers with pointed remarks and morbid prophecies. Strange shadow-forms prowl the undergrowth, their presence felt more than seen. Other creatures, less withdrawn, wait only for victims to approach within reach of talon, claw, or fang.

It is in the evening hours, however, that the true nature of Werewood is fully revealed. Clouds of mist rise, cold and dank, from the forest floor. From the darkening woods mournful howls issue forth: the baleful cries of werebeasts on the hunt. Normally nocturnal creatures, werebeasts seldom venture from their caves during the daylight hours. By night, they can no longer control their hunger and must feed.

Werewood is divided into several distinct territories. These regions, and their primary inhabitants, are described in the following text:

WITCHWOOD

Located in the eastern part of Werewood, Witchwood is an isolated land of ancient forests, interspersed with hidden glades, marshes, and rambling streams. In many places the trees form a great canopy that blocks out the suns, so that the forest floor is covered with a blanket of thick loam, ferns, and mosses. Here, far from the teeming settlements of civilized Talislantans, is the home of the Dhuna.



THE 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.

ANCESTRY

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.

Society

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.

Customs

The Dhuna are practitioners of witchcraft, and are thought to have 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.

Government

Dhuna have no formal government or laws. To the contrary, Dhuna believe that all people should be allowed to do as they will. The most influential member of any coven is its high priest or priestess, who leads the rest of the group in ritual observances and may serve as the Coven's advisor. Even so, he or she may has no power to command the others. When important decisions need to be made, Coven members generally do so by popular vote.

Magic & 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.

Circles of Stone

"While traveling through Werewood with the Jaka hunter, Tane, I chanced to come upon a circle of seven stone dolmens, each over twenty feet in height. The obelisk-like structures appeared to be of ancient origin, the strange symbols and glyphs carved into their faces long since worn by wind, rain, and the passage of time. I dismounted my equs, intending to examine the stones at a closer distance. I was immediately restrained by my Jaka companion, who explained in no uncertain terms that such an act could bring about dire consequences for us both.

Regarding myself as an enlightened seeker of truth, I was inclined to dismiss Tane's concern as the product of a superstitious upbringing. The Jaka, on the other hand, considered me to be both ignorant and misguided, and let me know that should I proceed in the direction of the dolmens he would have no choice but to bring about the immediate cessation of our relationship, and perhaps my life as well. I found his argument compelling; so much so that I moved away from the dolmens without delay.

Reassured by my retreat, Tane explained the reason for his concern. According to the Jaka, the runestones found in this region were erected thousands of years ago by a people who once revered the ancient deities now known only as the Forgotten Gods. Tane said that the Dhuna tribes still gathered at these sites to observe the ancient rituals, sacrifices, and holy days. He added that many of the stone circles were witchgates - openings to other dimensions, through which the Dhuna summoned entities of terrifying aspect. As some of the witchgates were protected by potent curses, Tane said that we should leave them alone and depart the area at once. By this time I had already re-mounted and was headed back to Zandu."

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, certain of which may date back to the Age of Mystery. Witchgates (see sidebar) 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.

The Arts

The Dhuna practice many decorative crafts, including weaving, pottery-making, and wood-carving. Music is rarely performed for recreational purposes, though it is an integral part of many rituals. This is evident in the age-old chants performed in unison by members of the coven during their secret ceremonies.

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.

Defenses

The Covens have no armies or militias, but are well-hidden from possible attacks. The stone circles and witchgates are thought to be protected by potent wards and symbols (see sidebar).

Commerce

The Dhuna are skilled herbalists and healers. Plants used in the making of their remedies, such as prophet tree, shrinking violet, tantalus, contrary vine, and cleric's cowl, are highly valued by these folk. However, the Dhuna generally trade only among Covens of the same Order and with a few trusted outsiders, such as Gnorls, Sarista gypsies, and Jaka hunters.

Worldview

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.

Gnorlwood

The Forest of Gnorlwood is located in the south central region of Werewood, adjacent to the Zandir border. It is one of the oldest woodlands in Talislanta, its once-tall trees now stooped and withered with age. Hidden beneath the sloping hillocks and warrens of this region live a mysterious and magical folk known as the Gnorls.

The Gnorls

Gnorls are short and squat, with wrinkled skin and deep-set, glowing eyes. They dress in voluminous robes and veiled headdresses, which serve to conceal most of their features. Rings, bracelets, and necklaces of many sorts are also favored.

Ancestry

Gnorls are secretive creatures about whom very little is known for sure. Some believe them to be related to the Gnomekin of Durne. More likely, they are akin to the race of Weirdlings (see Places of Note, The Dread Forest).

Society

Reclusive by nature, Gnorls prefer to live alone. There are no known Gnorl settlements, nor has there ever been any reported sighting of a Gnorl family or couple. No less an authority than the noted naturalist, Thystram, believed that this was due to the fact that there is no race of Gnorls, per se. Rather, Gnorls and Weirdlings together constitute a single ancient race, the name of which has either been forgotten, or is a great secret. Gnorls are the females of this species, and Weirdlings are the males. The courtship and mating rituals of their race are unknown, though Thystram



believed that members of the two sexes meet once every fifty years or so in order to propagate the species. It is not known how or by whom their offspring are raised.

Gnorls live in hidden underground nooks or burrows of elaborate and mysterious design. Thystram described one such place as "decorated with rustic furnishings of appropriately small stature, with carpets of many hues covering the dirt floors and long roots dangling from the ceilings. From a main living area tunnels led this way and that: up stairs and down, to root cellars, secret passageways, hidey-holes, a well, and places too eerie to warrant exploration. Illumination was provided by dozens and dozens of candles, set into alcoves dug into the earthen walls."

Customs

Gnorls shun contact with the outside world, and with outsiders in general. They are suspicious of strangers, and go to great pains to conceal their homes and activities from other peoples. Thystram believed that the creatures keep a watchful eye upon the surrounding environs at all times, possibly through the use of scrying devices or spy-tubes. No individual is ever allowed into their burrows unless a Gnorl determines beforehand that the person is trustworthy. Just as important, the person must be in possession of something the Gnorl wishes to have, such as an important secret, a rare book, or other esoterica. Gnorls sometimes leave their homes in search of rare herbs and other materials, or to trade secrets with trusted confidants.

Government

Gnorls appear to have no leaders or authority figures. Such concepts as "government" and "laws" offer nothing of interest to these folk.

Magic & Religion

Gnorls are known to be practitioners of magic, and are said to covet rare magical tomes, particularly those that describe secret rituals or long-lost arcana. Their religious beliefs, if any, are unknown.

The Arts

It is the eccentric habit of Gnorls to decorate their nooks with all sorts of trinkets and geegaws, from witch-balls of colored crystal to richly patterned carpets, curious wall hangings, odd sculptures, and so forth. In this way they seem to be like Weirdlings, though Gnorl nooks are said to be much tidier and are never cluttered with piles of junk.

Secrets for Sale

"On one of my numerous forays into Werewood, I chanced to stumble upon the home of a Gnorl — literally so, for I accidentally stepped into a hidden trap-hole, rolled headlong down a winding tunnel, and ended up in the underground nook of a Gnorl. After an awkward introduction (not surprising considering the circumstances), I was able to assure her that I meant no harm, and had not come to rob her. At this point she called off her pet drac (a most ill-mannered creature) and the animate root-things that had confined me to the wall. Once freed I was invited to join her in a cup of tang-ting tea.

We chatted for a time, and I learned that like many Gnorls she was both an herbalist and a secret-seller. I was familiar with the former occupation, being something of an amateur apothecary myself, but not the latter. I asked her to explain, to which she complied. Gnorls value secrets above all else. This, so said my host, is because of the rarity of secrets in general, and useful secrets in particular. Gnorls collect secrets of all sorts, which they divide into categories. These include, but are by no means limited to: rumors, innuendo, gossip, myths, legends, secret recipes, dark secrets, deep secrets, lost secrets, forgotten secrets, riddles, mysteries, conundrums, and enigmas.

A Gnorl will sell a secret for gold, for something she needs (such as a rare herb or ingredient), or for another secret that she determines to be of equal or greater value. If my hostess's talents are indicative of all her kind, Gnorls are shrewd negotiators. For example, it cost me a juicy bit of gossip (regarding the forty-third wife of the Sultan of Zandir and a certain itinerant wizard), three rumors, and a ribald limerick just to find out if Gnorls, like Weirdlings, also have the power to grant wishes (if you want to know the answer yourself, go ask a Gnorl)."

Language

When dealing with outsiders, Gnorls converse in a heavily-accented dialect of Common Talislan. Gnorls are also believed to possess their own secret language, which they reserve for communicating among others of their kind. As might be suspected, Gnorls prefer to keep their names secret. The Gnorl known to Thystram allowed him to refer to her as Shibaal, though this may or may not have been her actual name.

Defenses

Gnorls rely upon secrecy for their protection. Their homes are well-hidden, and by their nature quite inaccessible to most other races. Traps and magical wards may be used to augment their security.

Commerce

Gnorls value secrets, which they employ as a form of currency (see sidebar). Otherwise, they are largely self-sufficient. Certain Sarista gypsies claim to have traded with Gnorls, though the veracity of their claims remains unproven.

Worldview

As a people, Gnorls have no relations with other races or nations. It is said that they regard Gnomekin with something akin to tolerance, and perhaps Dhuna as well. On the whole, Gnorls seem content to continue living as they always have, in isolation.

Places of Note

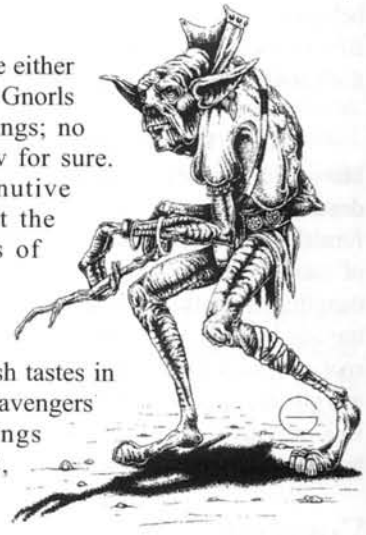
The Dread Forest

This dense and tangled region lies adjacent to the Necros River. It is a favorite haunt of ghasts, necrophages and the like, and so is generally avoided by most sensible people. This would seem to exclude Weirdlings, or Wish-Gnomes as they are sometimes known, who make their home in this eerie locale, and are said to horde great fortunes in their underground burrows. According to legend, if a Weirdling is caught, it must give over its treasure or grant its captor a wish (hence the name, Wish-Gnome).

The Phaedran Tombs

At one time, it was the fashion among the wizards of ancient Phaedra to be buried along the banks of the Sascasm. According to the style of the day, the magicians made arrangements to be interred in odd mausoleum-like structures. The interior decor of these edifices was often made to resemble an elaborate sitting room, dining hall or bedroom, according to the wizard's preference in leisure-time activities. The mummified body of the late wizard, dressed in lavish garb and propped-up in some appropriate pose, added the finishing touch to the burial chamber. Though grave robbers have stripped many of the tombs of their wares, it is probable that a number of these crypts remain undiscovered, overgrown with weeds, vines and mosses.

Weirdling



Weirdlings are either male Gnorls, or else Gnorls are female Weirdlings; no one seems to know for sure. These diminutive humanoids inhabit the dreary forestlands of Werewood. Extremely eccentric, they are noted for their garish tastes in decor and dress. Scavengers by trade, weirdlings collect bangles, geegaws, and curios of all sorts. They horde their treasures in underground burrows, stealing forth at night to pilfer items from other woodland creatures and unwary travelers. Weirdlings are skilled thieves and are often bold beyond belief. Tales of weirdlings sneaking into the lairs of ferocious predators such as malathropes are not as uncommon as one might reasonably expect.

According to legend, each weirdling has the ability to grant up to thirteen wishes in its lifetime, which may span over a thousand years. If captured, a weirdling must grant one of its wishes or give up its treasure, as its captor demands. As these creatures are miserly by nature, parting with either of these commodities causes weirdlings the greatest dismay, except in one instance. The thirteenth and final wish which a weirdling may grant is always cursed and will bring about the opposite of what is asked for. No matter the method employed, a weirdling cannot be made to reveal how many wishes it has left. It should also be noted that harming a weirdling, or taking so much as a single coin of its treasure, releases the weirdling from its obligation to bestow a wish.

Size: 2'-3', 25-80 + lbs.
Attributes:

INT +4	PER +3
WIL +5	CHA -4
STR -4	DEX +5
CON +3	SPD +4

Ability Level: 5-10
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 1, or as per weapon employed
Special Abilities: Natural thieving talents at Ability Level +DEX, ability to grant wishes (similar in power to a spell cast at the 20th level of ability, from any Mode of the Magical Order, Wizardry), Wizardry with five Modes.
Armor: None
Hit Points: 18



BANE

Banes are sinister creatures thought to be a bizarre hybrid of darkling, night demon, and the now-extinct babbling howler. Feared inhabitants of the forest realm of Werewood, banes are vampiric creatures who feed on warm-blooded prey of all sorts. They are exceptionally intelligent, and possess the uncanny ability to mimic sounds of all sorts. So acute is this ability that banes are sometimes able to mimic spells and incantations. They are swift and silent afoot, and they possess superior vision; banes can see clearly even in magical darkness and are unaffected by illusions. The eyes of a bane glow in the dark like burning embers, a disconcerting sight when viewed at night.

Banes usually sleep in caves or abandoned ruins by day, coming forth to prowl at dusk. Solitary by nature, they are only rarely encountered in numbers, mated pairs seldom staying together for any great length of time due to their ghastly feeding habits. The fangs, claws, and ocular organs of these fiendish creatures possess magical virtues and are coveted by alchemists and thaumaturges alike. Female banes are strangely attractive and are sometimes sold as slaves - after first filing down their fangs.

Size: 5'9" - 6'2', 120-200 lbs.

Attributes:

INT +3	PER +5
WIL -3	CHA -1
STR +2	DEX +2
CON +1	SPD +2

Level: 5-15+

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 4 per round from blood drain, Claws: DR 10

Special Abilities: Mimic any sound at Ability Level (mimic spells at Ability Level -10), night vision, stealth at Ability Level +DEX, immunity to spells of illusion

Armor: None

Hit Points: 21

WEREBEAST



Werebeasts are vicious carnivores who inhabit the deep forests of Werewood, Arim, and Zandu, laying dormant in caves and barrows during the daylight and coming out to hunt after sunset. They tend to hunt in small packs that may number from three to seven individuals. The largest and strongest member of the pack is generally its leader, though fierce fights to establish dominance are thought to be quite common amongst these bestial creatures. Werebeasts are noted for their cruelty, and they will often torture and torment their victims unless driven to less elaborate measures by extreme hunger. They are able to track prey by scent and have superior night vision and keen hearing.

Several sub-species of werebeast are found in different parts of the Talislantan continent, including the snow-dwelling Frostwere; the Yaksha, a denizen of rugged hills and mountain regions; and the Shathane, a species found only in tropical and temperate forests.

Size: 6'6"-7', 290-400+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -6	PER +3
WIL +5	CHA N/A
STR +7	DEX 0
CON +3	SPD -1

Ability Level: 4-14

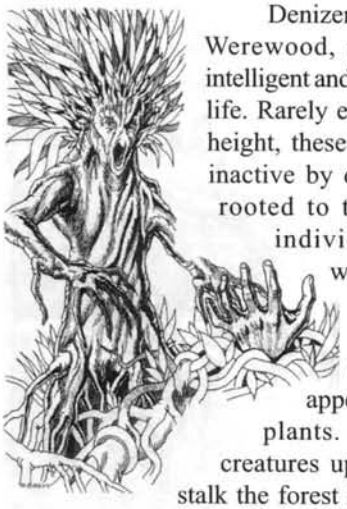
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 8, Claws: DR 17

Special Abilities: Keen hearing, track prey by scent at Ability Level +PER, night vision

Armor: Fur, PR 2

Hit Points: 43

MANDRAGORE



Denizens of the dark forest of Werewood, mandragores are an intelligent and motile species of plant life. Rarely exceeding three feet in height, these strange creatures are inactive by day, when they stand rooted to the ground. Though individuals skilled in woodlore or horticulture can sometimes spot them, in daylight mandragores appear much like ordinary plants. In the evenings the creatures uproot themselves and stalk the forest in bands of up to two dozen individuals, searching for prey. Using nets of vines and grasses, they snare their victims and bury them alive, thereafter feeding off their remains as normal plants draw nutrients from fertilizer. Mandragore groves often contain an assortment of valuables, buried and left to rot along with the remains of unfortunate travelers, merchants, and adventurers.

Though mandragores are quite intelligent, they are weak creatures who depend on surprise and overwhelming numbers in order to trap their prey. They fear fire and may be dispatched easily enough by a concerted show of force. As they speak the secret languages of plants and trees, they are coveted as familiars by some spell casters, who have been known to pay as much as five hundred gold lumens for a healthy specimen.

Size: 2'-3', 2-8 lbs.

Attributes:

INT +1	PER +2
WIL -2	CHA -6
STR -4	DEX +3
CON -1	SPD -2

Ability Level: 2-4

Attacks/Damage: Sharpened Sticks, DR 2

Special Abilities: Magical ability to warp/animate/alter unliving wood and plant products (maximum: approximately one cubic foot of material per Ability Level), speak language of plants and trees, night vision

Armor: Bark, PR 3

Hit Points: 6

NEEDLELEAF

One of the more dangerous Talislantan plants, the needleleaf is found in temperate forests such as Werewood, Silvanus, and woods throughout the Western Lands. The plant is sensitive to vibrations occurring within a ten foot radius of its location. In response to such stimuli, the plant launches a shower of inch-long, barbed needles. The needles contain a mild toxin that causes a most unpleasant burning and itching sensation. Worse yet, permanent blindness can result if the plant's spiny projectiles strike a creature's eyes. A mature needleleaf may have sufficient needles to launch up to a dozen such attacks, a period of about ten days being required before the plant can manufacture a new supply of ammunition. Whisps are known to employ the plant's needles as diminutive arrows or javelins.

Size: 2'-8', 4-40 lbs..

Attributes:

PER +1

DEX +2

SPD +2

All other attributes negligible

Ability Level: 3

Attacks/Damage: Needles: DR 2 at range of 10 feet (causes a painful burning/itching for up to 10 minutes)

Special Abilities: None

Armor: None

Hit Points: 4

YRMANIA

Yrmania is an untamed wilderness region that lays to the west of the barren ice fields of Narandu. Hemmed in by mountains along its southern borders, Yrmania features a divergent mixture of terrain types: stretches of coniferous forest, rocky hills, solitary peaks, tundra, withering cliffs, ravines, and hidden sinkholes. To the east, the flat expanses of the Lost Sea stretch for miles on end. Two areas are known to be inhabited by humanoid peoples: the Badlands, and the Brown Hills.



THE BADLANDS

The rugged hills, ravines and tanglewood groves of this wilderness region are inhabited by such creatures as Yaksha, tundra beast and muskront. The sparsely-wooded steppes of the Badlands are also home to a primitive folk known as the Yrmanians, or Wildmen, whose loose-knit tribes can be found wandering aimlessly throughout the area.

THE WILDMEN OF YRMANIA

Bestial in appearance, the Wildmen and Wildwomen of Yrmania have sharp fangs and dark, deep-set eyes. They wear their shaggy hair in braids and dredlocks daubed with colored pigments. For clothes, the Wildmen employ rude loincloths, with arm- and leg-wrappings made from strips of hide.

ANCESTRY

Talislantan scholars believe that the Yrmanians are direct descendents of the original tribes that once roamed Talislanta. Some claim that these folk still appear just as their ancient ancestors did ages ago.

SOCIETY

The Yrmanians are primitive hunter-gatherers who subsist on a diet of wild mountain berries, fresh game, leafy plants, and just about anything else that could be construed as edible. As far as anyone knows, the Wildmen have no settlements, but simply travel about from place to place, stopping temporarily when they become tired or bored. Their tribes range in size from small groups of four-to-six individuals to large clans numbering as many as several hundred.

Yrmanians are fecund and extremely prolific. They exhibit few preferences as regards their choice of mates; both the males and females seem to be attracted to humanoids of all races and types. Females give birth to at least one child each year, and often more than this. Infants are strapped to their mother's back and carried for the first year or so, after which they are strong enough to walk and run – assuming they survive up until that time. Wildmen do not wash or bathe, and emit a strong odor.

CUSTOMS

As travelers into their territories have found, the Wildmen and Wildwomen of Yrmania are aptly named. They are prone to fits of seemingly mindless behavior — in the heat of battle, Wildmen have been known to leap off cliffs or rock ledges, turn upon each other, or simply attack anything in their path, including trees, bushes and inanimate objects. This sort of erratic behavior is attributed to the Wildmen's use of skullcap, a bone-white variety of parasitic mushroom. A lethal toxin when ingested by most Talislantans, the mushroom does not seem to harm the Wildmen, who have evidently developed an immunity to the substance's deadly

The Wildmen: A Field Study

"After two unsuccessful attempts to study a tribe of Wildmen at close range, one of which almost resulted in my demise at the hands of a pack of Wildwomen in heat, I hit upon a more fruitful strategy. Rather than attempting to watch the tribe from hiding or approach them in an open and friendly fashion (the latter method being the one that nearly proved fatal), I scoured the surrounding woods until I had gathered a considerable quantity of skullcap. Then, carrying the mushrooms with me in a basket I sat on a rock in plain view of the tribe and waited.

"Several moments passed before any of the tribe noticed my presence. Then a small group of Wildmen approached, their expressions registering a combination of curiosity and puzzlement. One touched me on the shoulder, then jumped back as if shocked to discover that I was actually there and not some sort of hallucination. Another came close, looked into the basket, and exhibited a great, yellow-fanged grin. The creature pointed to its mouth; I nodded and gave him a mushroom. He swallowed it whole, shook his mane of dredlocks wildly, and yelped in apparent glee.

Soon the others were crowding around me in a most friendly fashion. I handed out mushrooms by the dozen, until there was only one left in the basket. This last mushroom none of the Wildmen would accept. Instead, by the use of certain signs and grunting noises, they indicated that this mushroom was for me. At first I hesitated, uncertain whether ingesting a poisonous mushroom or possibly inciting a band of irate Wildmen would be more deleterious to my health. Since the mushroom was rather small and the Wildmen quite large, I decided on the former course of action.

As soon as I ate the skullcap the attitude of the Wildmen underwent a marked change. Clapping me on the back and hooting loudly, they motioned for me to join them. Together we set off into the woods at a loping gait, the Wildmen swinging their r'rhus above their heads and howling like tundra beasts. Fantastic images of prismatic-colored topography swirled before my eyes, and I was swept away by feelings of wild euphoria. This was no doubt due to the effects of the skullcap, as I realize now, though at the time I was convinced that these were visions of some great truth that had eluded me since childhood. I remember little else about the experience save for the fact that I awoke sometime later, suspended from the uppermost branches of a spyder-oak, with a headache that lasted the better part of three days."

effects. Under the influence of this drug, Wildmen are totally without fear, and seem to be immune to pain, continuing to attack with savage blood lust though riddled with scores of wounds.

The traditional mating grounds of the Wildmen are said to be located in the Desolate Hills. During median, Wildmen females migrate north to this area, leaving their tribes in preparation for the mating rituals; groups of Wildmen males come here looking for prospective mates, and can be dangerous as they are quite aroused and easily confused. None of the tribes will enter the Sardonyx Mountains which lie to the south, since it is their superstition that the jagged peaks are the teeth of a gigantic earth-monster which the Wildmen call Yrman.

Government

Yrmanians seem to move and act at random, following the lead of whoever seems to be doing something interesting at that moment. With the exception of tool-making, most Wildmen behavior seems instinctive rather than learned or planned.

Magic & Religion

According to the Jaka, the Wildmen of Yrmania revere Manik, a mysterious entity referred to in certain scholarly texts as "the Mad God." Little is known of their religion other than fanciful speculation, such as reports that Wildmen shamans mate with the hideous creatures known as yaksha. While most scholars regard this claim as the height of absurdity, there are some who have suggested that the Mondre Khan and Beastmen races may well have originated from such strange couplings. Wildmen shamans are said to be even more unstable than their tribesmen, and may or may not possess any magical abilities.

The Arts

Yrmanians make their own implements and weapons, the majority of which are exceedingly crude and sometimes only marginally functional. The tribes occasionally engage in such activities as howling at the moons, beating hollow logs, and striking sticks and stones together; the correlation to actual music is uncertain, but seems likely. Some Yrmanians appear to have an instinctive talent for abstract art, as evidenced by cave paintings and impromptu sculptures of wood or stone.

Language

Yrmanians communicate via a curious mixture of grunts, snorts, and a simple version of common Sign. Common names are monosyllabic and tend to end in "g". For example: Og, Zug, Yag, Nug, Mug, etc. Addled

by ritual drug-use, Yrmanians sometimes forget their names and the names of their tribesmen.

Defenses

If faced with a potential threat, the tribe will take up arms and attack — or not, if no one has noticed the threat. When set on battle they are dangerous opponents, bereft of fear and unaffected by exhaustion or, evidently, logic. In combat, the Wildmen wield the r'ruh, a sharpened stone blade affixed to a long leather thong. Swung over the head at great speed, r'ruh emit a "singing" sound that is intended to strike fear in the hearts of the Wildmen's foes. Rival clans sometimes fight each other, a situation that has proved useful in keeping the otherwise prolific Wildmen population within reasonable limits.

Commerce

Wildmen sometimes trade among each other and with other tribes, though in the eyes of an Yrmanian the perceived value of a given article or commodity may vary considerably from one day to another, or even from one minute to the next.

Worldview

The Wildmen sometimes launch raids into the Brown Hills, though seldom to any great profit. The Jaka, mounted on swift steeds, generally keep their distance and harry the Wildmen with their horn bows until the invaders tire of this futile exercise. The Wildmen have repelled several attempted invasions by the Ur clans, though no one is sure how this was accomplished. It is possible that the Ur are simply baffled by Yrmanian "tactics".

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 drug use. Certain members of the Lyceum Arcanum would like to study the Yrmanians, who some feel may hold the key to many of Talislanta's mysteries.

The Brown Hills

The sepia-tinged forests of this region teem with wild beasts of many types, including muskront, wild greymanes, yaksha, werebeasts, nighthawks, and omnivrax. The Brown Hills of Yrmania are also the domain of the Jaka, a race of furred humanoids whose origins stretch back to the beginnings of Talislantan history.

The 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" (see sidebar).

Ancestry

The Jaka claim to be descended from a noble race of intelligent beast-folk who once roamed the forests of northern Talislanta before the coming of the Archaens. They do not identify with most of the other wild tribes, and consider themselves superior to such races as the Beastmen and Mondre Khan.



Society

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.

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."

Superstition or Intuition

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 powerful 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.

While the talismans that Jaka wear to ward against "the Evil Eye" confer a degree of protection from certain types of black magic, these devices are not worn strictly for superstitious reasons. Instead, some believe that the talismans may also serve to lessen the Jaka's subconscious "danger response", enabling them to evaluate conditions on a more rational basis when in the presence of Magic. If true, then the Jaka's aversion to Magic would seem to be based more on intuition than mere superstition.

Customs

Jaka tend to be suspicious by nature, a trait that is perhaps attributable to their uncannily acute senses. The Jaka's sixth sense, which alerts them to the presence of danger, is so acute that the creatures occasionally evince behavior that verges on paranoia. 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.

Jaka Beastmasters often keep one or more wild beasts as companions, utilizing the beast lore skills of their ancestors to call, communicate with, and befriend these creatures. Jaka manhunters prefer to work as bounty hunters, a profession at which they excel. They usually work alone or in pairs, tracking down and capturing escaped felons and other undesirables for pay. Some few are known to work as professional assassins.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

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.

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 names include Tane, Jarak, Tala, Jata, Taka, Jabas, and Tavas.

Government

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.

Defenses

Jaka are normally peaceful, but if threatened, they will respond with great ferocity. Despite a dread of magic, they are fearless in battle.

Commerce

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.

Worldview

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.

Places of Note

The Lost Sea

Along the eastern borders of Yrmania lies the flat wasteland region known as the Lost Sea. By all accounts this area does indeed appear to be 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 (see sidebar). As bands of Wildmen, Darkling hordes and Ur clan war parties sometimes traverse the Lost Sea, adventurers should exercise caution, if not outright discretion, when traveling in these parts.

Yaksha

Deemed among the fiercest of Talislantan creatures, yaksha are a sub-species of werebeast (q.v.) that inhabits the hills and mountains of Yrmania and the Northern Reaches. Fearsome to behold, yaksha are known for their almost total lack of fear or reason. Their customary mode of attack is to leap forth from hiding, slashing with their claws and shrieking hideously; the cry of a yaksha alone is often sufficient to cause its intended victim to be paralyzed with terror. Once a yaksha has tasted blood, it will fight to the death, ignoring even the most grievous damage inflicted upon it. It has been reliably reported that spells of influence or control have no effect whatever upon these creatures, whose single-minded desire to rend and kill is exceeded only by their inhuman strength and fury.

The Ur clans of neighboring Urag favor the use of mummified yaksha paws as war clubs. Ownership of these grisly weapons is generally limited only to Ur chieftains and warlords and is considered a mark of unsurpassed courage, or extreme good fortune. In actuality, most of these items are obtained from aged or infirm yaksha, for the Ur have an almost unreasoning fear of these beasts.

Size: 7'-8', 700-800 lbs.
Attributes:
INT -8 PER +1 WIL +6 CHA N/A
STR +7 DEX -3 CON +4 SPD +1
Level: 5-15
Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 15, Bite: DR 10
Special Abilities: Immunity to spells of control or influence, climbing at Ability Level +DEX
Armor: Fur, PR 2
Hit Points: 54



Exploring the Lost Sea

I once spent some little time exploring the outer reaches of the Lost Sea. The Jaka hunter Tane accompanied me as guide, his initial reluctance to visit the area being offset by a mercenary fondness for gold. Narrow escapes from crazed parties of Wildmen, hunger-maddened tundra beasts and a pair of stryx (who hovered above us for miles, hoping in vain for some fatal accident to befall our small party) marred the greater part of our journey. Then we came upon the remains of ancient wooden vessel of immense proportions, its hull and part of the prow submersed in rock-hard sediment.

Wielding axes, Tane and I cut away a tangle of petrified coral and barnacles, allowing us access to the ship's cabin. Within we found sea charts and logbooks so old that they crumbled at the slightest touch. On the floor of the cabin was a skeleton of vaguely humanoid proportions. The tattered and rotting remnants of some sort of elaborate uniform hung loosely on its lifeless frame, a half-corroded blade of odd design still clutched in its bony hand. An attempted mutiny? A clarion call to arms? Or perhaps, a final act of swashbuckling defiance in the face of Death itself? I paused in contemplation of the fate of this archaic sea captain, whose skeletal corpse now conjured forth visions of a long-vanished past.

The Jaka, who was less inclined towards romanticism, had meanwhile hacked his way into the ship's hold. He returned wearing the bestial snarl that passed for a grin among those of his race. In his hands was a rusted iron chest filled with coins, all encrusted with green and black oxides. Leading me below deck the Jaka eagerly showed me nine more chests of similar size and countless, worm-eaten wooden crates. Tane then took his axe and hacked off the top of one of the crates, revealing a dozen dust and mud-spattered flasks of aquamarine glass. That evening we sat on deck, counting stacks of gold and silver coins, and drinking wine of exceedingly rare vintage. Never before or since have I so thoroughly enjoyed a stay on board a sea vessel.

Nighthawk

Nighthawks are a species of nocturnal raptor native to the wooded hills of Yrmania. Swiftest of Talislantan birds, these ebony predators hunt only during the late evening hours. They have exceptional night vision and can spot even the slightest movement on the ground from altitudes of over one thousand feet. Their shining feathers are as hard as flaked obsidian, their knife-edged wings being capable of slicing through even the toughest hide (the bird's claws and beak are used primarily to grasp and tear prey after it has been slain). Highly prized as hunting birds, nighthawks are sometimes tamed and kept as companions by Jaka traders and manhunters. The birds can be taught to hunt by day as well, provided they are given sufficient rest.

Size: 1'-2', wingspan 6'-8', 2-6 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -6	PER +8
WIL +2	INT -6
STR -6	DEX +8
CON +1	SPD +8

Ability Level: 7-10
Attacks/Damage: Wings: DR 5, Beak and Claws: DR 4
Special Abilities: Night vision, exceptional powers of perception
Armor: Obsidian plumes, PR 3
Hit Points: 8



Skullcap

Skullcap is a poisonous variety of mushroom notable for its bone-white cap and black, bowed stem. The mushroom's core contains a powerful hallucinogen which, taken in minute quantities, can cause disorientation, strange visions, feelings of euphoria, or irrational and even violent behavior. Larger doses will

cause swift and painless death in most cases, usually within one to two minutes. The Wildmen of Yrmania have, through long use, developed a virtual immunity to the more toxic effects of skullcap. Most have also been rendered insane, a common side effect for users of this hallucinogenic substance.

ZANDU

Zandu is a land of gentle hills and sparse woodlands, shifting to deep forests along its northern borders. To the east lay the Onyx Mountains of Arim; to the south, the sandy shores of the Sea of Sorrow. In the interior region, groves of orange, quince and blue pomegranate flourish, fed by numerous small tributaries of the Sascasm River. The undeveloped northern and coastal areas are dotted with ancient stonework towers of varying design, built prior to the fall of the ancient empire of Phaedra. These fortresses once served as wilderness outposts or sanctuaries for traveling merchants. Most are now in ruin, though some are known to be occupied by solitary spell-casters, who find isolation suitable to their peculiar needs.

In the current age the majority of Zandu's population has settled in the southern part of the country. Here live the colorful folk known as the Zandir.

THE 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.

Ancestry

Like the Aamanians, the Zandir are descended from the Phaedrans, a people who ruled the Western Lands during the early part of the New Age. A dispute over religious views caused the Phaedrans 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 know as the Zandir.

Society

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 (see sidebar). 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.

Customs

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.

Government

Zandu is ruled by a Sultan, who wields absolute and unquestioned power over all his subjects. All citizens are theoretically equal, and therefore equally subject to the whims and moods of the Sultan of Zandu, which sometimes run to the extreme. Unlike the Hierophant of Aaman, the Sultan is far from celibate. Zandir custom allows men to take as many wives as they can afford, and the ruler of Zandu is a very wealthy man.



Zandir laws are generally lax. A popular local saying notes that "what no one sees, no one knows." So long as thieves exercise a certain amount of discretion, the authorities usually look the other way. Accordingly, petty theft is rampant, particularly in the larger cities, such as the capital of Zanth. Criminals who make the mistake of attracting too much attention can expect to be dealt with severely. Convicted thieves may be tortured, or chained to a pillory and placed on public display. Public executions are also popular, as the executioners of Zandu are widely renowned for their creative and melodramatic talents.

The Sultan personally judges all cases during the morning hours, and determines the appropriate verdict for each as the mood suits him. On a good day, he may allow offenders to go free after a brief lecture on morality; on a bad day, the Zandir executioners can have their hands full. Individuals accused of committing a crime are allowed to hire a Causidian to represent their interests. Arrangements must be made through the jailors, who customarily charge a healthy "finder's fee" for their services.

Magic & 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.

Zandir clothe the dead in their best raiment, then convey the deceased on a funeral bier decked with flowers to its final resting place: a simple grave or a splendid tomb, depending upon the deceased's social status and financial situation. The occasion is marked by song, dance, and feasting, with the "mourners" drowning their sorrows in drunken revelry.

The Arts

The Zandir are fond of art, music, dance and all manner of stimulating pastimes. Artists, performers, and wizards are all esteemed, and the best are rewarded with appointments to the Sultan's retinue. The music enjoyed by the Zandir nobility is bold, passionate, sweeping, and rich in ornamentation. Both Zandir and Bodorian composers are held in high regard, and skilled orchestras are always available to play their latest compositions. The music of the peasantry is simple, rustic, and unpretentious, but no less favored. Traditional Zandir instrumentation includes the ojo (a type of single-reed instrument), zilo (silver chimes), wood-horn, four-stringed mandallo, and box-drum.

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, Crystabal, Balalamos, and Schezalle. The only exception is the Zann, who go for short, blunt-sounding names such as Neb, Sej, Menk, and Zaj.

Defenses

Zandu keeps a sizeable army of well-trained swordsmen and swordswomen, archers, cavalry, and artillerists. Zandu's navy is well-regarded, though like most Talislantans the Zandir fear to sail the open sea and navigate primarily by hugging the coastline. Zandir free traders visit the island of Castabulan several times a year in order to obtain advice on weather patterns and currents, which they consider essential to a safe voyage. Most of Zandu's land forces are strategically deployed along the Great Barrier Wall, prepared to attack Aaman at a moment's notice.

Commerce

Zandu has strong trade ties with Arim, a major supplier of black iron, copper and precious stones. Exports include utensils of copper and brass, exotic fragrances, spices, narcotic herbs, fine wines, and opals. Blades made by Zandir craftsmen are held in high regard throughout the continent, and are also popular trade items.

Worldview

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.

Zandir Settlements

The Capital City of Zanth

From the shining palaces and minarets of the central sector to the slums of Beggars' District and the Sarista ghetto, Zanth is a study in contrasts. The crowded streets and marketplaces teem with a conglomeration of races and professions: Paradoxist seers dressed in brightly colored cassocks, bands of street urchins, Zandir swordsmages in chain mail and flowing cloaks, Jaka manhunters, Jhangaran mercenaries, blue-robed Causidians and many others.

Zadian

Zadian is a fortified citadel situated along the central coastal regions of Zandu. A sizeable contingent of Zandir troops is stationed here, including units of mounted archers, swordsmen and swordswomen, and border scouts. The citadel stands atop a hill overlooking the rich estates, vineyards, and groves of Zadian's wealthy aristocracy, who live much in the manner of feudal lords.

Zantil

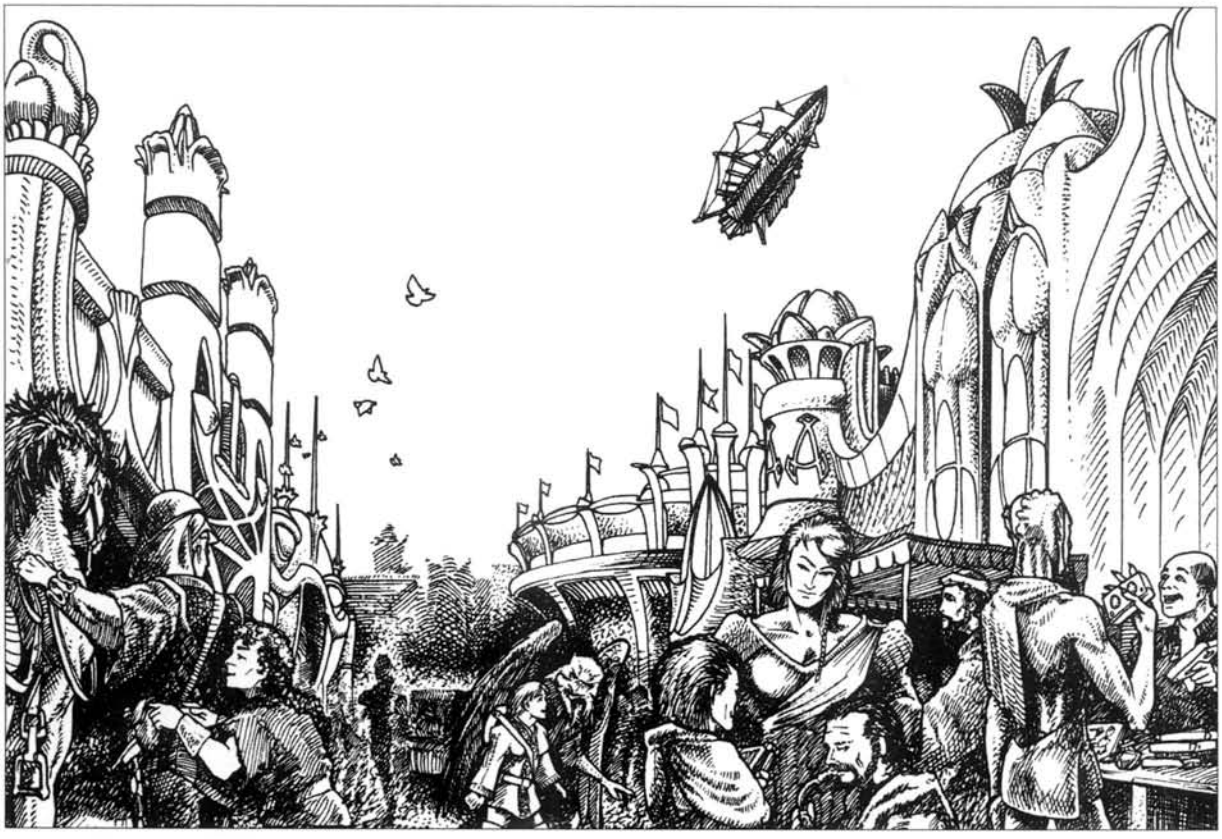
A small Zandir coastal settlement, Zantil is built on a peninsula jutting into the Sea of Sorrow. There is a lighthouse and watchtower here which serves as an aid

Romantic Love

The Zandir have a passion for romance, which they refer to as "the spice of life". Young lovers flit about from partner to partner like butterflies to sweet blossoms; a taste or two, and then they take wing again, to alight elsewhere. Even couples who have been happily married for many years continue to engage in clandestine affairs, flirtations, and amours. Such practices are in no way restricted by age, sex, or social status, but are pursued in equal measure by young and old, male and female, noble and commoner.

The concept of romantic love fascinates the Zandir people, and has influenced many aspects of their culture. Zandir painting and sculpture is dominated by depictions of lovers: wooing, courting, embracing, and consummating their love. Zandir poetry is obsessed with forbidden love, unrequited love, first love, lost love. The most popular plays and panoramas are those that portray affairs of the heart, rather than comedies, tragedies, or epic sagas.

Though the proliferation of amorous activity would seem to suggest that the Zandir are slaves to their wild and unbridled passions, this is not entirely true. For there exists among these people a social contract that is not readily apparent to outsiders, but which nonetheless serves to prevent their society from disintegrating into complete and utter chaos. In essence, while Zandir have almost unlimited freedom to act out their romantic fantasies, they are able to do so only because such activities are considered secondary to the unity of the family. Though each partner may have numerous affairs over the course of his or her life, the marriage pact is rarely threatened. Extra-marital activities tend to be brief, impetuous, and transient; marriage and the family are permanent. While romantic love may be regarded as the spice of life, it is seldom mistaken for the main course.



to ships navigating the waters of the Sea of Sorrow, and as an early warning system intended to alert vessels of the presence of giant sea scorpions, which occasionally enter the area via the Phaedran Straits.

Zantium

Westernmost of Zandu's seaports, Zantium is a walled settlement constructed at the terminus of the Sascasm River, near Zantium Bay. Its exports include timber, costly perfumes, and exotic plants and wild beasts from the Zandir Moors. Jaka and Zandir trackers come here to sell hides, captured animals, and other goods.

Zir

The port city of Zir is Zandu's largest ship-building facility. Here, ships headed to and from such exotic locales as Thaecia, Batre, and Faradun can be found; taking on passengers and supplies, loading and unloading cargo, or awaiting repair.

Zandre

Located to the south of Werewood, Zandre is a fortified border outpost housing a contingent of Zandir scouts. The outpost stands adjacent to an old stone bridge that spans the Sascasm River. Zandre is frequented by hunters, trackers, and traders from the surrounding areas. Zann boatsmen sail their small skiffs upriver in order to sell their wares here, and for ten gold lumens a day will convey small parties by boat to almost any destination desired, including Werewood.

Zann

Zann is a seaport located on the western coasts of Zandu, notable primarily for its contrarian inhabitants, the Zann. The people of Zann drink from streams thought to be tainted by waters from the Necros River, which may go far to explain the curious behavior of these folk.

Places of Note

Koraq's Mountain

In ancient times, the great sorcerer Koraq had constructed on this mount a fabulous manse of eleven amberglass towers, in which he kept his collection of wonders, curiosities and amazements. Harassed by throngs of curious sightseers, the sorcerer finally retired to another dimension, taking with him all he owned. A quirk of fate caused his manse to become trapped in a temporal rift, with the result that Koraq's abode occasionally reappears for several hours at a time atop the mountain which now bears the sorcerer's name.

SKALANX

Skalanx are horrid aquatic predators native to the rivers and streams of Zandu and to lakes and rivers throughout the Western Lands and Southern Rim. The naturalist, Thystram, described these creatures as "water-breathing demonoids that infest the depths of the elemental ocean-world of Oranx." A more likely explanation is that skalanx are distant relatives of the giant sea-scorpion, though their classification as "demonoids" is difficult to dismiss entirely. A single



look at the skalanx's fearsome, fanged countenance is sufficient to explain how the estimable Thystram arrived at his theories regarding the origins of these creatures.

Skalanx make their lairs in underwater caves, grottoes, and the hulls of small sunken vessels; giant lake and river kra, enemies of the skalanx, usually prevent them from inhabiting more commodious places. Though they are solitary creatures, great numbers of skalanx can sometimes be found living in close proximity. Each competes for food with the others, though a group of skalanx will sometimes work in concert to attack larger creatures (such as the aforementioned kra).

Though they normally prey on other aquatic creatures, skalanx also pose a threat to small craft of all sorts, particularly along the Sascasm River, in Zandu. The Zann fishermen of this region often set barbed nets in places frequented by egg-laying females, hoping in this manner to keep the skalanx population under control, or at least to cause the creatures some inconvenience.

Size: 12'-14', 600-800 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -5	PER +2
WIL +5	INT -5
STR +6	DEX +4
CON +5	SPD +4

Ability Level: 10-16
Attacks/Damage: Pincers: DR 18, Sting: DR 14, Mandibles: DR 10; total of two attacks per round
Special Abilities: Move silently in water, see in total darkness
Armor: Chitinous plates, PR 6
Hit Points: 41

AVIR

Avir are the most common of Talislantan avians and are found throughout the continent. They nest in treetops and feed on insects, fruit, and seeds. There are hundreds of different varieties of avir, ranging widely in color and native habitat. The more colorful varieties are favored as pets in some lands, such as Zandu and Hadj. Elsewhere, they are valued for their feathers, which are used for decorative purposes and in the making of ornamental attire. Gourmands appreciate avir best when roasted, seasoned to taste, and served with a good wine.





A Kang Warrior at the Feast of the Red God



THE EASTERN LANDS

HARAK

Harak is a bleak and desolate land, hemmed in on all sides by mountains and swept by frigid winds from the north. The landscape of Harak is nightmarish: jagged spires of rock jut upwards from the cracked and barren earth, and scattered shards of black iron litter the ground. Here, in this most inhospitable of regions, dwell the fierce warrior clans known as the Harakin.

THE HARAKIN

The Harakin are a gray-skinned race, lean and rugged of build and averaging over six feet in height. They dress in loincloths, cowls, high boots, and heavy gloves, usually made of reptile hide. Both the males and females paint the areas around their eyes with black pigments, giving them a fearsome aspect.

ANCESTRY

The Harakin are believed to be descended from one of the original Sub-Men tribes that fled the central regions of Talislanta following The Great Disaster. The Harakin themselves have no interest in the past; only the present matters to them.

SOCIETY

To the Harakin, life is a constant struggle to eke out a living in a harsh and unforgiving land. Harakin clans are nomadic, traveling from place to place in search of food and water, both precious commodities in this region. Their preferred food is wild muskront or tundra beast, from which they also obtain hides, bone, and horn. If game cannot be found they may raid other clans in order to steal their food. When even such raids have proved fruitless, Harakin subsist on scorpions, serpents, spiders, and bits of lichen and mosses.

SOCIOLOGY OF THE HARAKIN

An unusual tale regarding the Harakin is told in the Kang Empire. There, it is said, a group of Mandalan scholars once ventured forth on a mission to Harak. By theorizing, they had deduced that the Harakin were not evil beings, but were simply products of the harsh and cruel environment of their homeland. It was their intention to convince a few of the Harakin to accompany them on the return trip to Quan, where their scholarly theories might be put to the test.

Upon sighting a small band of the nomads, the wise men threw up their hands and raised their voices in greeting. When the Harakin approached, the scholars gave them gifts of gold, fragrant oils, and precious stones. These the Harakin examined, and then discarded. Without apparent enmity they slew the scholars, divested them of their fur cloaks and boots, cut their mounts into sections, loaded everything on their dractyls, and continued on their way.



Raised in the hostile environment of Harak, these folk are able to endure great hardships. Both the males and females are warriors, and of necessity, survivalists. Mating is viewed as an act required to propagate the species and as one of the few sources of pleasure available. Couples may or may not remain together, depending on the availability of food and the outcome of battles with various clans; the life expectancy of the average Harakin is not great. Harakin females raise their young. The child-raising period is limited to five years; during this time the mother will do anything to help insure the survival of her child, including sacrificing herself if necessary. However, after this time the young Harakin is considered an "adult" and must fend for itself.

Customs

The Harakin care nothing for the ways of civilized people, which they consider useless (see sidebar). Ultimate survivalists, they view all other living creatures as prey. Some Harakin clans have domesticated the dractyl, a species of winged reptile native to the sheer cliffs of Harak's coastal regions. The Harakin use these creatures for transport and in battle. Though ugly, mean, and ungainly, dractyl require little food and are themselves somewhat edible, factors which hold a certain appeal for their masters.

Government

Harakin clans are led by a single chieftain, who may be either male or female. Clans may sometimes form larger tribal units, though this is rare due to the scarcity of food. The law of survival is the only real law in Harak.

Magic & Religion

Forced by the circumstances of their existence to endure great hardships, the folk of Harak have no concept of morality or religion, and are by nature fatalistic and grim. They know nothing of magic except that it can be used to harm them. In a fight, Harakin will always attack spell casters first.

The Arts

The Harakin have no interest in art or music. Skills and crafts not related to warfare or survival are regarded as useless. Each clan member learns to make his or her own weapons, which are hammered and honed from the numerous fragments of black iron found almost everywhere throughout the region. All other skills needed to survive — such as hunting, dressing game, and finding water, etc. — are considered warriors' skills. The Harakin word for "survival" and "fight" (hakta) are one and the same

Language

Harakin converse in both sign and an ancient dialect of Low Talislan. Harakin names are usually comprised of three syllables, with the accent over the third syllable. For example, Katadao, Hakatao, and Arakao.

Defenses

The Harakin have no armies, fortifications, or defenses. All members of the clan are expected to fight whenever the need arises.

Commerce

A simple form of barter is sometimes used between members of the same clan or band. Otherwise, Harakin simply take what they want.

Worldview

The warrior clans of Harak are known to range as far as the Kang Empire and the Volcanic Hills in their depredations. They attack nearby L'Haan with lesser frequency, generally considering passage through the towering peaks of Xanadas to be a profitless endeavor. Able to survive the rigors of their own land, the Harakin have little difficulty tolerating the climates and terrains of other regions, most of which seem pleasant by comparison.

Dractyl



Dractyl are a species of winged reptilian found in the hills and mountains of Harak, Xanadas, and (less commonly) L'Haan. In the wild, these creatures live on the ledges of cliffs and chasms, usually in groups of ten or twelve. Dractyl have a language of sorts but are among the most dour and rancorous creatures in Talislanta. Their diet normally consists of vermin, scorpions, and spiders, though they will eat almost anything that can be obtained without great exertion. The rheumy, yellow-eyed stare of these avians is somewhat unnerving, a fact from which dractyl seem to derive a certain perverse pleasure.

Dractyl are trained as steeds by the fierce Harakin, who use them for airborne and overland transport. Awkward and ungainly, dractyl are only fair flyers and have an aversion to flying at altitudes exceeding about a hundred feet. Though the Harakin ride them into battle, dractyl have little love of combat, and they obey their masters primarily to avoid being eaten at the next meal.

Size: 7'-7'6" in length, 25'+ wingspan, 600-800+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -5	PER 0
WIL 0	CHA -6
STR +2	DEX -2
CON +2	SPD +2*

* in the air, -2 on the ground

Ability Level: 3-6

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 8, Claws: DR 8

Special Abilities: Flight, capable of speech

Armor: Hide, PR 2

Hit Points: 34

Crag Spider

Crag spiders are monstrous, twelve-legged predators that make their lairs amidst cliffs, caves, and abandoned ruins in Harak, the Wilderlands, and elsewhere. Like common arachnids, the crag spider is able to produce silken strands of webbing from its abdomen. Its usual method of capturing prey is to simply wait until a victim becomes ensnared in its sticky web, whereupon the spider will leap forth and deliver a poisonous bite. Once the creature's paralytic venom has taken effect, the crag spider binds its prey thoroughly, removes it to its lair, and waits for it to "ripen" before feeding on the victim's vital fluids. Crag spiders fear vasps, blood-thirsty insectoids who are their rivals for food and dominance in their territories.

Size: 15'+ in length, 300 + lbs.

Attributes:

INT -9	PER -1*
WIL +5	CHA N/A
STR +4	DEX +2
CON +5	SPD +2

* the crag spider's multiple eyes are incapable of discerning fine detail

Ability Level: 4-10

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 8 +paralysis (duration: 10 minutes; CON roll to resist effect), Web: entangle (STR roll at -4 to break free)

Special Abilities: Night vision, climbing at +15, web-spinning, stealth at +10

Armor: Chitinous scales, PR 6; Undersides and eyes are unarmored

Hit Points: 29

The Jungles of Chana

The jungles of Chana occupy a portion of the southeastern coast of Talislanta, from Faradun to the borders of the Kang Empire. To the west, the jungles melt into rain forest, rising upwards into the Jade Mountains. 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. Virulent species of animals and insects likewise find the jungles to their liking, making travel in this region a dismal proposition.

The low-lying jungles and tropical forests of this region are home to several hostile tribes of humanoids, known collectively as the Chana Witchmen.

The Chana Witchmen

The Chana are tall and cadaverous in stature, with bilious green skin. They do their utmost to appear fearsome, filing their teeth to sharpened points, decorating their visages with occult symbols, and carrying the shrunken heads of their adversaries on cords slung about the neck. It is customary for members of the Witchtribes to wear their hair in a single topknot, lacquered and braided with leather thongs or sinew. Ritual scarring is also practiced by these people, whose reliance upon the narcotic herb, kesh, contributes heavily to their unhealthy appearance.

Ancestry

The Witchtribes are descended from certain wild tribes of ancient times, who are said to have been conquered by the Mazdaks. Driven from their lands, they fled south and settled in the Jungles of Chana, after which the tribes were became known as the Witchmen, or Chana.

Society

The Witchfolk live in villages of thatched huts, which may be found scattered throughout the jungles of their homeland. Cannibalism is practiced by all the Chana tribes, though this is done more for ritual purposes than as a means of obtaining sustenance. Their usual diet consists of wild fowl, game, and a porridge made of mashed tubers and rock snails.

Chana have no set family units. Instead, all females are considered the "property" of the tribe; specifically, the tribe's dominant males. Children are raised by young



girls and old women, who treat them with casual indifference until puberty. At this time the males are initiated as warriors or shamans, and the females are designated as "breeders" or "healers". Only shamans can mate with healers, who are instructed in the basics of gathering herbs, mixing potions and healing salves, and preparing heads for shrinking and enchantment. Any male may lay claim to a breeding female, though he may have to aggressively fend off the attentions of other would-be "suitors".

Customs

The Chana are a people ruled by superstition. They have an unreasoning fear of water, which they believe is the domain of hostile elemental spirits. Most Witchmen and Witchwomen are users of the drug kesh, which enables them to commune with spiritforms. It is common for these folk to cook and eat enemies who have been captured in battle. The Chana believe that by doing so, they acquire their enemy's strength and powers.

Government

Chana shamans, called Witchdoctors, are the unquestioned rulers of their tribes. The most powerful is referred to as the Chief Witchdoctor; the position is earned by defeating the reigning Chief in spirit combat. The rest of the tribe's shamans are free to attempt to usurp the Chief Witchdoctor's authority by magic, but are well aware of the risks: the loser of such a challenge knows that his head will end up as a grisly trophy and fetish of the victor (see sidebar). Individuals accused of breaking tribal taboos are brought to the tribe's Chief Witchdoctor for judgement, which is usually swift and merciless. Punishment, on the other hand, is slow and excruciating, and may result in the offender being boiled alive or staked over a mound of furious biting insects.

Magic & Religion

The Witchfolk are practitioners of a primitive form of black magic that is believed to date back to ancient times. They revere the forces of darkness, and despise those who worship the gods of light and order. Chana Witchdoctors are skilled in the concocting of certain dangerous substances, such as devilroot and kesh. The former is an herbal poison that can be prepared in powdered or resinous form. Kesh is a pungent liquid derived from the root of the jabutu, a plant found only in the Jade Mountains. This drug is notable for its profound narcotic and magical properties, and is used extensively in the black magic rituals of the Witchmen.

Headhunting

Among the many strange rituals and customs observed by the witchtribes, perhaps none is regarded with such loathing as the Chana practice of taking the heads of their enemies and turning them into necromantic fetishes. The procedure is quite grisly, and is not recommended for the faint of heart. Braver souls may read on.

The first step in the creation of a shrunken head fetish is, quite naturally, to obtain a head. For such purposes only a head removed from a living victim will suffice. Prior to decapitation the victim, bound hand and foot, is fed a mixture of kesh, black lotus, and other magical herbs; in combination, the drugs render the victim insensible to pain, and — according to the Chana — prevent the soul from fleeing the body upon death. A ceremonial axe inscribed with occult runes is used to sever the head, after which the skull is removed and the eyes and lips sealed to keep the soul imprisoned within. Finally, the head is filled with hot sand and buried in the ground.

After nine days have passed the witchdoctor returns to the place where the head was buried and listens to the ground. If the witchdoctor hears the voice of the victim crying out to be released, then the operation has been successful. The head, now "cured" and shrunk to less than a third of its original size, is unearthed and is ready for use as a necromantic fetish.

Chana Witchdoctors have also learned how to charm the poisonous serpents known as Death's Head Vipers. The natives call these foot-long snakes "wrist vipers" and wear them like deadly, living bracelets. The serpents are trained to attack on command.

Chana burn their dead as soon as possible, scattering the ashes far and wide so that no part of the deceased can be used in the black magic rituals of their enemies.

The Arts

Chanan crafts are limited to weaving, pottery, the making of wood and stone implements, and the treating of hides and skins. Breeding females do much of this

work, while warriors make their own weapons and shamans make ritual drums, masks, and other fetishes. Chanan music is a component of most necromantic and cannibalistic rituals. Drums made of hide and wood are the only instruments used; the music itself consists of a half-dozen traditional rhythms played in various combinations. The Ritual of Spirit Calling is a dance used to summon spirits from the lower planes. The participants don ceremonial masks of frightful aspect, and dose themselves with kesh in order to achieve an exalted state.

Language

The Witchfolk converse in Chanan, an ancient tongue that linguists believe dates back to the time before The Great Disaster. The Chanan tongue has no known written equivalent, though the strange symbols that the Witchfolk inscribe upon their faces may be relics of a dead script, now forgotten by people of the New Age. The tribes also communicate by signal drums — wooden instruments covered with the flayed skins of their enemies. Common Chanan names include Cha-Kyo, Cho-Nyan, Che-Kya, and Chu-Kyan.

Defenses

The Witchtribes are warlike in the extreme. They fight among each other constantly, each vying for control of the other's jabutu-growing territories. Truces and treaties are sometimes arranged between tribes, but rarely last for long. Their warriors employ throwing sticks, blow-guns, and spears in battle, but generally disdain frontal assaults in favor of ambushes and sneak attacks. Most Chana villages are surrounded by rings of sharpened, poisoned wooden stakes.

Commerce

Chana have no currency, and so barter for all goods. Trade between rival tribes is rare, but sometimes occurs during intervals when a truce or treaty is in effect. Chana's jungles are known to harbor an abundance of riches, including costly herbs, precious stones and exotic animals. The narcotic, kesh, is sometimes traded to unscrupulous merchants such as the Farad.

Worldview

The Chana bear a long-standing hatred of the Manra tribes, whose lands they covet, and the Nagra, whom they fear. In addition to their usual depredations, bands of Witchmen occasionally cross the border into the Kang Empire, wreaking havoc on the plantations there. Kang troops from the nearby outpost of Vishana periodically launch raids into the jungles in retaliation for these assaults. Imrians sometimes raid the coasts of Chana hoping to take Chana witchdoctors, who bring a high price in Faradun, where they are employed in the narcotics trade. Not surprisingly, more than a few Witchmen bear the shrunken and scaly-skinned heads of such souvenir hunters on their belts

The Jade Mountains

Ranging across the northern borders of Chana, the Jade Mountains are rich in natural resources, such as black diamonds, moonstones, k'tallah, lotus, devilroot, and a tropical variety of the healing herb, cleric's cowl. In addition to shathane and exomorphs, the deep forests of this region are home to one of the most unusual humanoid tribes on the continent, known as the Manra.

The Manra

Manra resemble the Witchmen in physical stature, but exhibit none of the frightful or unhealthy characteristics associated with those hostile people. They wear necklaces of dried flowers, woven vines, beads and feathers; also abbreviated garments of woven plant fibers and three-stranded whipsash — a type of light bolas worn around the waist.

Ancestry

The Manra are believed to share a common ancestry with the Chana, both of whom are thought to be descended from the ancient Mazdaks. Both tribes employ the jabutu plant in their magical rituals, though the Manra are not headhunters, but shape-changers.

Society

The Manra tribes live in small communal settlements, and tend to keep to themselves. Manra villages are collectives, where all pitch-in to help share the work: gathering fruits and berries, making huts of living vines, and keeping a watchful eye out for predatory beasts and Chana war parties. Manra have close family ties. Males and females mate for life, and raise their children together. Parents pass along their secret customs and lore to their young, as their parents did before them.

Customs

Manra possess the unique ability to assume the forms of other living things, such as wild beasts and even plants. Their shape-changing talents are made possible through ritual ingestion of a derivative of the jabutu plant, the making of which is a tribal secret. This talent is vital to the existence of the Manra, as it enables them to adapt quickly to the hostile environment of their homeland. Conversely, the Manra's short lifespan is believed to be directly attributable to the physical stress inherent in the practice of shape-changing. When in humanoid form they are vegetarians, eating only fruits, nuts, and berries. In animal form they feed as such creatures normally do.

Government

Manra tribes are led by their shamans, who are respected for their wisdom and are consulted on all matters of importance to the group. Manra observe the laws of nature, and do not steal from or fight with each other. As such, tribal judges are deemed unnecessary.

Magic & Religion

The Manra are nature worshipers, whose primary concern is the protection of the mountain rain-forests that they call home. It is the shamans who initiate the other members of the tribe in the secrets of shape-changing. To the Manra, shape-changing is a means of attaining a deeper understanding of the natural world. Each bodily form is said to represents a different symbolic attribute: avir-form symbolizes freedom, flight from responsibility and care; tree-form represents tranquility, patience, strength, stability; shathane-form represents power, fury, aggression under provocation; and so on. In adopting the outer appearance of an animal or plant the Manra believe that they also adopt the inner, or spiritual semblance. For this reason no Manra would ever want to learn how to adopt the form of any creature that is "evil" or "false" in nature.

Manra carry their dead high into the mountains, burying them in secret places to protect the bodies from Chana witchdoctors. These burial grounds are considered sacred by the Manra, and are protected from interlopers.

The Arts

Manra have little interest in material possessions, and practice only the such crafts as are essential to their existence. They value the natural world above all things.

The Metamorphosis

"I write these notes in a state of exhaustion tempered by considerable excitement. For last night I was allowed to witness a traditional shape-changing ritual called the Metamorphosis.

"The ritual began at dusk; a group of seven Manra elders sat in a circle, while the rest of the tribe arranged themselves on a nearby hillside and watched. For what seemed like a long time the elders sat motionless, as if deep in thought or meditation. Then, so slowly as to almost escape my notice at first, the entire group began to undergo a strange transformation: dwindling in size, they seemed to melt, until nothing remained of the elders but seven pools of shimmering liquid. From the center of each pool emerged a creature of webbed fins and fan-shaped gills, its sleek form covered in silvery scales. Now the aquatic forms raised themselves up on their fins; their gills dwindled, the fins became clawed appendages, the fine scales grew tougher, thicker.

The seven reptilian quadrupeds walked around the circle, then raised up on two legs. They grew in size, acquired sail-like head-crests. Then another transformation: the scaled hide turned into a coat of sleek black fur as the creatures diminished in size, took another turn around the circle. The coat of fur gradually grew more sparse, the creatures became more humanoid in semblance. Once again they were Manra elders.

As if awakening from a trance I realized that the ritual was over. It was dawn; we had been there all night, though it had seemed that the whole procedure had lasted no longer than an hour or two. Only now do I realize how tired I am, and so I shall put aside my notebook to sleep, and to ponder the symbology of The Metamorphosis."

Language

Manra converse in a dialect of the Chanan tongue, a derivation of the language spoken by the Chana. As they gain experience as shape-changers Manra also learn the languages of plants and animals, so that they can communicate with such life forms when in altered form. Manra are named after favored animal or plant-forms. For example: Avir, Shathane, Drac, Willowood, Sunblossom, and Tantalus.

Defenses

If threatened, Manra usually attempt to avoid violent confrontations by adopting forms that allow them to blend into the environs or escape harm. If faced with no other recourse, Manra will adopt forms that enable them to aggressively defend their territories.

Commerce

Manra have no currency, and place no great value on material possessions. The various Manra clans sometimes get together to trade news, or to share rituals, but the exchange of material goods is a practice almost unknown to these people.

Worldview

The Manra mark the Kang, and especially the Chana Witchmen, as enemies, and actively defend their lands against invasion by these warlike races. The shape-changers bear considerable resentment for the Witchtribes, their rivals for the region's limited supply of the jabutu plant. They regard the Nagra tribes with considerably less ill will, primarily due to their mutual hatred of the Chana. Manra generally prefer to avoid civilized folk, whose ways they regard as destructive to the natural environment.

The Coastal Mountain Range

The mountains of the southern coast of Chana are among the most rugged and forbidding in the Eastern Lands. Passage through the region is perilous at best, and reliable trails are few, faint, and far between. The higher elevations are home to frostweres and other arctic predators; the lower altitudes are the domains of exomorphs, alatus, venomous serpents, and worse. This latter region is also home to a primitive people called the Nagra.

The Nagra

Nagra have mottled grey-green skin, black fangs, peaked skulls, and their eyes are like tiny ebony specks. They dress in rude garments made from the furry hides of winged apes, ankle and wrist bands of woven fibers, and earrings made from the fangs of exomorphs or tarkus.



Ancestry

The Nagra are believed to be related to the Chana and Manra, though their appearance would seem to suggest that they also have some Za blood in their

veins. The Nagra tribes once lived far to the Northeast, but were driven into the southern junglelands by the Kang, who hunted them like animals. Most of the survivors settled in the jungles of the Topaz Mountains, though a handful of others may have traveled to the Jade Mountains of Rajanistan.

Society

The Nagra are semi-nomadic hunters whose movements mirror the migratory patterns of the wild beasts upon whom they subsist. When their prey has settled into a region for purposes of grazing or feeding, the Nagra erect temporary shelters of skins and wooden poles that serve as hunting camps. When the wild beasts move on, so do the Nagra. Nagra bands tend to be comprised of several small families, and rarely total more than twenty in number. Mated males and females are the only stable family units; extended families are unknown. Females carry their young strapped to their backs until they are old enough to walk and learn how to hunt for themselves. Nagra offspring usually remain with their parents until puberty, then go off to seek mates of their own.

Customs

The Nagra generally have a low regard for the ways of civilized peoples. They shun mounts and conveyances, and are tireless runners, able to cover distances of up to thirty miles a day with ease. Other peoples tend to find the Nagra somewhat strange, and even eerie. This is particularly true as regards the Nagra's taste for serpents, which they swallow whole, uncooked, and alive.

All Nagra wear stone spirit jars about their necks, in order to protect their souls from evil spiritforms. A Nagra who has lost his spirit jar would feel exposed, and completely defenseless. These folk are skilled at spirit tracking, an uncanny ability that enables them to follow any track or trail, regardless of its age or origin (see sidebar).

Government

Nagra tribes are loose-knit bands whose make-up changes constantly as members come and go. Nagra shamans provide guidance as needed; however, individuals who do not agree with the shamans are free to leave the band. Nagra have a flexible view of morality which recognizes that people will act as they will. In instances where one Nagra performs a transgression against another, the victimized party is entitled to seek recompense or revenge, as he or she sees fit. Other Nagra will almost never get involved in these altercations, which may take the form of arguments, challenges, or outright murder.

Spirit Tracking

Of all Talislantans, only the Nagra possess the uncanny ability known as Spirit Tracking. This talent allows the Nagra to track any creature by following the minute traces left by the passing of its spirit through the astral or material planes. The ability applies also to spiritforms of all types, but apparently not demons, which have no soul.

To utilize this talent, the spirit tracker must first locate the trail of the intended subject and isolate it from the traces left by other entities. In desolate areas where few creatures are found, it may take no more than a few seconds to locate the desired trail. In populous regions such as large towns or cities, the process of locating and isolating a single trail among hundreds or even thousands of others may take anywhere from several minutes to several hours.

Once the trail has been found, the spirit tracker will be able to follow it anywhere: over land, across water, or through the air. From such evidence a spirit tracker can determine the age of the tracks, the type of entity that made the traces, and whether or not the tracks belong to a specific individual; according to the Nagra, each entity's track is completely unique, and exactly like no other.

Though spirit traces fade with time, under normal conditions they may remain visible for hundreds, or even thousands, of years. Certain forms of magic may be used to obliterate or conceal a spirit trail, either intentionally or by accident. However, there is no known way to alter or disguise the nature or appearance of spirit traces.

Magic & Religion

Nagra revere a vast and confusing pantheon of spirits. Their shamans act as intermediaries, employing their ancient magics to commune with spiritforms of various sorts, from whom they derive wisdom. From this information, Nagra shamans are able to predict the future and divine the secrets of past ages. They also make the spirit jars that are worn by all Nagra.

Nagra burn their dead and scatter the ashes in a stream or lake to prevent them from being used for black magic. The deceased's spirit jar is carried to the top of a mountain and opened at dawn's first light, allowing the spirit within to fly free.

The Arts

Nagra have no interest in song or dance. They make primitive jewelry from the claws and fangs of beasts, but shun most other forms of decorative art. Instead, Nagra favor essential crafts such as curing hides, and the making of stone tools and weapons.

Language

Nagra are bilingual, communicating both in a crude version of the Chanan tongue, and in sign. Female Nagra names begin with a vowel followed by apostrophe and hard sound, as in A'Ko, O'Ta, U'Da, E'Ko. Male names begin with a consonant followed by apostrophe and hard sound, as in K'Ta, D'Ko, N'Ka.

Defenses

Nagra have no organized means of defense. Bands will fight together if attacked en masse, and may act in concert to retaliate against enemies like the Chana. Otherwise, bands and individuals act according to their own best interests.

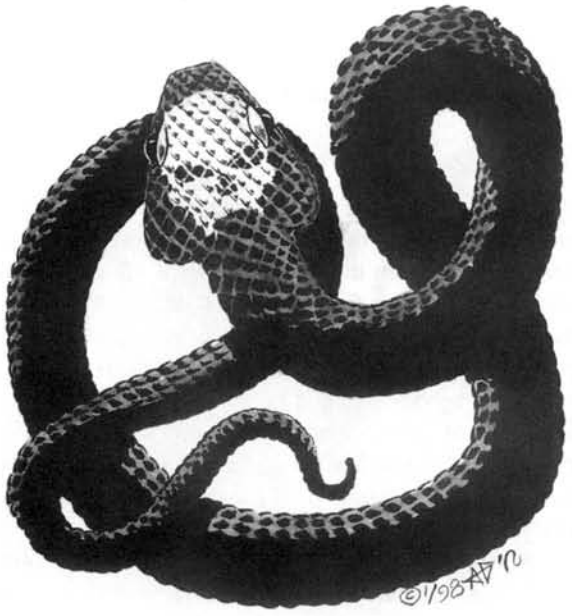
Commerce

Nagra barter among themselves for hides, bone, rare herbs, and the marbled black and gray stone used to make soul jars. Those who live in the wild never use currency. Nagra sometimes travel great distances across the Wilderlands, and occasionally end up in places like Carantheum and the Seven Kingdoms. Though fierce and aggressive by nature, they are valued as scouts and guides, and will sometimes accept such work from foreigners.

Worldview

The Nagra bear an undying hatred of the Kang, whose ancestors drove their people out of the Kang Empire long ago. They despise the Witchtribes of Chana, whom they regard as despicable, and little better than animals. Otherwise, they have no formal relations with other Talislantan nations or peoples.

Death's Head Viper



The most poisonous of Talislantan serpents, the death's head viper is found only in the jungles of Chana and on certain tropical islands of the Southern Rim. This small serpent can be identified by its green scales and the white, skull-like markings on the back of the head (hence the name, "death's head viper"). The death's head viper is a ground snake, typically making its home in the high grasses. The serpents feed on small vermin but are very high-strung, and they will literally attack anything that moves. The venomous bite of the death's head causes searing pain and usually results in death within a minute's time.

The Witchmen of Chana are known to charm death's head vipers, which they wear like living bracelets. With a flick of the wrist, a witchman can throw the viper with considerable accuracy to a distance of up to about ten feet; after striking, the creature returns to its master. Known as "wrist vipers," these trained serpents sell for as much as three hundred gold lumens in certain regions.

Size: 10"-12", 1 lb.

Attributes:

INT -7	PER +4
WIL 0	CHA N/A
STR -6	DEX +6
CON 0	SPD +8

Ability Level: 5-6

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 1 +poison (CON roll to resist or fatal within one minute; successful roll means victim goes into a coma for 12 hours or until an antidote can be given)

Special Abilities: None

Armor: Scales, PR 2

Hit Points: 6

FETCH



A fetch is a spirit that has been bound within a necromantic totem, such as a mummified head, a hand, or a corpse. The shrunken-head fetishes of the Chana witchmen are perhaps the most common type. These grisly totems are made from the heads of the Chana's enemies, which are mummified and preserved using hot sand and certain rare plant extracts. Using black magic, the victim's spirit (or fetch) is imprisoned within, the eyes and mouth sewn shut in order to prevent its escape. The Chana use shrunken-head fetches to communicate with the spirit realm and as occult advisors. If asked a question by its maker, the fetch must always respond truthfully.

Another type of fetch is the juju, a mindless servant made from a reanimated corpse. In this case the fetch is imprisoned within a body, and must be controlled with the use of a graven image (such as a manikin made of wood or woven reeds). Jujus are powerful but slow, and can only be destroyed by fire. Unless its graven image is also destroyed, a juju may continue to be active, even if only a part of it remains intact.

JUJU

Size: 6'-7', 140-200+ lbs.

Attributes:

Mindless

STR +5	DEX -5
CON +10	SPD 0*

*The Juju seems to stumble slowly, but actually moves at normal pace.

Ability Level: As per spell level used to create it (ususally 10-15)

Attacks/Damage: Strangle: DR 11, Fist: DR 9

Special Abilities: Destroyed only by fire or by releasing imprisoned soul essence, immunity to magical control or influence except by graven image

Armor: None

Hit Points: 30

JABUTU

Jabutu is a tropical plant found only in Chana and notable for its curious properties. The plant grows from a seed, sprouts into a flowering vine, then changes form into a fruit-bearing shrub. Once the plant has reached maturity the metamorphosis occurs in reverse, until the plant has reverted to its original, seed-like form. At this point the seed goes dormant for a short period before beginning the entire process again. It is said that jabutu plants undergo many such "reincarnations" and that a single plant may live for several centuries. Another unusual property of the jabutu is the claim the plant has a "soul," visible to those who are able to see spiritforms as a ghostly image.

Jabutu is valued both by Manra, who ingest a derivative of the plant's fruit in developing their shapechanging abilities, and the Chana, who use jabutu seeds to create kesh, a narcotic used in certain of their occult rituals. The Nagra tribes believe that killing a jabutu plant will invoke the wrath of the forest spirits.

THE KANG EMPIRE

Beyond the Volcanic Hills and the Jade Mountains lies the great Kang Empire. Its territories are vast, extending from the southern jungles bordering Chana to the northern reaches of the Opal Mountains. Seven distinct races live within the confines of the Empire: the Kang, Quan, Ispasians, Mandalans, Sunra, Vajra, and the Mondre Khan.

THE 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.



ANCESTRY

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 then known as the Quan Empire. They were bought off by the Quan, whom they served until the Silent Insurrection of 611, when the Kang finally took over control of the Empire for themselves.

SOCIETY

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.

As in the old days the primary unit of Kang society remains the war clan; an extended family of male and female warriors, forged together in a blood alliance against all who oppose them. This, in essence, is the Kang philosophy. Kang normally mate for life, though their "marriages" are often tempestuous affairs marked by outbreaks of physical violence. They prize aggressiveness in their mates above all other considerations. Children are raised by Kanjira – a professional class of tutors comprised of Kang who are too old or infirm to serve as warriors.

Kang society is modelled after the military chain of command. Kang are subservient to all individuals of higher rank than themselves, and tend to be verbally abusive and condescending when dealing with those of lower rank. Foreigners, having no rank per se, typically fall into this category unless they have earned khir – a term meaning "honor in battle" (see sidebar).

CUSTOMS

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.

Government

The Kang are governed by a military dictatorship, at the head of which is the Warlord: supreme commander of the Kang people, and ruler of the Kang Empire. He is served by the various clan leaders, who are called Dragonlords. The military controls all aspects of Kang life, even the Temples of Zoriah. Disciplinary problems are handled by officers, or in more serious cases, military tribunals. Punishments range from demotion in rank and loss of khir to solitary confinement in a deep pit or hole. In severe cases offenders may be stripped of their queues prior to execution, bringing disgrace upon them and their clan.

Magic & 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. The worship of Zoriah entails few formal rituals. 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.

The Arts

Such arts as the Kang practice all have their basis in warfare. This is evidenced by the art of kanjiko – an intricate form of ritual body scarring practiced by Kang warriors since the time of their early ancestors. Kanjiko are made by taking a knife and carving a design into the wearer's biceps, forehead, or shoulder, then rubbing a special black pigment into the wound. The procedure leaves a dark, raised scar, which the Kang consider a mark of distinction. Popular designs include crested dragons, military insignia, and family sigils.

A Matter of Honor

Of great importance to all Kang is the concept of khir, or "honor in battle". Khir may be earned for any act of valor, from defeating an opponent in combat to exhibiting courage in the face of overwhelming odds. The Kang take great pride in such achievements, and deeds that earn khir are often cause for celebration among the honored participants and their admirers. These victory celebrations often go on well into the night, and are typically accompanied by much feasting, loud boasting, drinking, and revelry.

Khir entitles one to a degree of respect, though not necessarily obedience. A Kang who loses khir will be demoted in rank, and must prove his or her courage in order to regain lost status. It is possible to earn khir in a losing cause, but only if the individual is able to retain his or her honor. Conversely, it is possible to lose khir in a winning cause if the opponent is so weak or craven that there is no glory to be won by their defeat.

The most notable example of the latter circumstance occurred when the Kang seized control of the Quan Empire in the year 611. The coup was so successful that it was accomplished in less than a day, the ruling class Quan failing to offer even token resistance. Though the Kang gained an empire in a single stroke, there was no khir to be earned for defeating such a weak and cowardly adversary, and no celebration of the victory afterwards. So it was that the event became known in history as the Silent Resurrection - a victory without honor.

The music of the Kang is militaristic and generally unsophisticated in nature. The pounding rhythms typical of their battle marches are produced by dragon-hide drums beaten with war hammers, braying battle-horns, and the sharp clang of swords beaten against shields. A popular feature of all Kang feasts is the traditional Sword Dance, which may be performed by a group of as many as a hundred warriors at a time.

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, Komo, etc.

Defenses

Kang settlements resemble walled citadels, a feature common to all Kang architecture. The Kang maintain what many believe is the largest army in Talislanta. Known as the Crimson Horde, this force includes units of the Dragon Elite, heavy cavalry, heavy infantry, tarkus scout units, and heavily armored siege engines such as iron dragons and mobile catapults. Elements of the Crimson Horde are deployed in the west vs the Saurans, to the south vs the Chana, and to the north as protection against incursions by the Harakin.

Commerce

A considerable amount of trade passes through the Kang settlements, heading to and from other parts of the Empire. Except as pertains to the requisitioning of military supplies, the Kang have little or nothing to do with such commercial activities, leaving these details to the Ispasians.

Worldview

Since the Silent Insurrection, the Kang have ruled the Empire. The Kang Warlord now wields total control over the populace. Relations with the subject races range from peaceful coexistence to open warfare. Once masters of the Empire, the Quan have been reduced to the status of pariahs, shunned and despised by all. 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 outwardly placid demeanor, while the Mondre Khan remain hostile and aggressive. During the last decade, the Kang have taken steps to extend their sphere of influence, and have begun to expand their territories to the west and south. Evidence of the growing power of the Kang is viewed with concern by the leaders of Carantheum and the Seven Kingdoms.

Kang Settlements & Places of Note

The Citadel of Hadran

The largest military installation in the Kang Empire, Hadran houses thousands of Kang troops and support personnel. The fortress is also the headquarters of the Warlord of the Kang. Built of marbled green-and-black stone from the Jade Mountains, Hadran overlooks a yawning chasm which runs for a hundred miles along the western frontier. A massive bridge allows access to the West, where a toll of ten gold lumens is charged to all visitors of foreign extraction.

The Fortress City of Shonan

An impregnable fortress that has withstood countless attacks by the Sauran tribes which dwell to the west, Shonan is built of dull grey stone from the Volcanic Hills. A large contingent of Kang is stationed here. Shonan also serves as a center of trade, due to its location at a nexus of the River Shan and the Emperor's Road. Goods of many sorts pass through here: precious metals, gemstones and cerulean dye from Karang; and foodstuffs transported upriver from Isalis; rare herbs and hardwoods from Vishana; and Mandalan silkcloth from Jacinth. A bridge spans the river, and a toll of five gold lumens is charged to all foreigners.

Kangir

A fortified outpost at the edge of the Graylands, Kangir is a supply facility where siege-engines are built, maintained, and refurbished by Vajra engineers. A large garrison of Kang strider cavalry is stationed here. Merchants and traders from across the Empire often stop in Kangir en route to or from Karang, Hadran, or Tian.

Strider



Striders are bipedal predators native to the Graylands region of the Kang Empire, the Volcanic Hills, and parts of the Wilderness of Zaran; a smaller cousin, the Marsh Strider, can be found in Jhangara and other parts of the Southern Rim. In the wild, striders are most often found in mated pairs, shallow depressions lined with burrs and nettles serving as their nests. The blue-scaled male guards the nest, keeping watch over his mate's clutch of eggs, usually three or four in number. The purple-scaled female goes forth to hunt for food by day and sleeps by night.

The crimson-skinned Kang have long employed striders as war steeds, a task to which these fierce beasts are well-suited. Despite their size, striders are surprisingly swift and sure-footed. Unless raised from infancy, these beasts are impossible to train.

Size: 7'-8', 750-850 + lbs.
Attributes:

INT -7	PER +2
WIL +3	CHA N/A
STR +6	DEX +2
CON +3	SPD +6

Ability Level: 1-4
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 8, Talons: DR 12, Tail: DR 8 or used to grasp prey
Special Abilities: None
Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 35

TARKUS



Tarkus are terrible, quadrupedal carnivores native to the Graylands, the Volcanic Hills, and the mountains of northern Chana. In the wild, they are known to travel in packs, preying on all sorts of creatures, including striders, Saurans, and even raknids. Sorcerous hybrids, tarkus resemble a cross between mangonel lizard, raknid, and tundra beast. Though they may measure over seven feet in length and weigh as much as five hundred pounds, they are tireless runners, and they can match a graymane stride-for-stride over short distances. Tarkus are able to track prey by scent over almost any type of terrain, and they have fairly acute night vision.

The Kang know the secret of breeding and training tarkus, feats requiring no small degree of caution and expertise. Kang tracker units employ chained tarkus when patrolling the borders of the Empire, to guard their outposts, and to locate Sauran settlements in the Volcanic Hill region. Tarkus serve well in all such capacities, though they are extremely violent and can only be controlled by skilled animal handlers.

Size: 7'-8' in length, 450-500 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -6	PER +6
WIL +4	CHA N/A
STR +6	DEX 0
CON +5	SPD +6

Ability Level: 5-9
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 12, Claws: DR 12
Special Abilities: Track prey by scent at Ability Level +PER, night vision, can run at SPD +7 for distances of up to one mile
Armor: Exoskeletal plates, PR 6; Limbs and underside, PR 2
Hit Points: 35

THE QUAN

The Quan are a sallow-skinned folk who, at the height of their reign, were known for their haughty demeanor and gluttonous appetites. They dressed in the richest apparel, adorned themselves with jewelry, and exhibited the lofty airs and delicate sensibilities normally associated with royalty. Now reduced to poverty, the Quan dress in tattered finery or makeshift garments.

ANCESTRY

The Quan are the descendents of a barbaric people related to the ancient Mazdaks. Using military skill and guile they conquered an empire, but as time passed they descended into complacency. Their reign ended in 611, when the Kang seized control of the Empire in a single day.

SOCIETY

After the Kang insurrection the Quan were removed from power and relegated to the lower rungs of society. Their riches were confiscated by the Kang, and their possessions sold at auction. Thousands of Quan were executed for "crimes against the Empire". Hundreds more chose to commit suicide, ordering their servants to kill them rather than face the wrath of the Kang. The remaining Quan are no longer allowed to own property or have servants, and are forbidden to live anywhere but the old capital of Tian.

Once marvelous beyond description, Tian has since fallen into a sad state of disrepair. The inhabitants live in squalor, struggling to grow or scavenge enough food to survive. Kang soldiers sometimes come to Tian to mock them, watching them as they would some endangered species that now exists only in a zoo. Costly marriage festivals, once a tradition among the Quan, are now a thing of the past. A simple ceremony, attended by the families of the bride and groom, suffices. Children who were once raised by slaves and servants are now raised by their parents, as they were in the old, pre-Empire days.

Customs

The old traditions from the days of the Empire are gone, little more than memories. Left to fend for themselves, the Quan have had no choice but to work or starve. More than a few chose the latter course, but those who did not wish to die have gradually begun to re-learn the skills once practiced by their hunter-gatherer ancestors, though only to a limited extent; there is precious little to hunt or gather in old Tian.

Government

Prior to the insurrection, Quan society was governed by a rigidly enforced caste system headed by the Emperor and his family, who were known as the Grand Elite. No longer do the Quan have an Emperor or ruling family. Instead, the Quan are now governed by a Council of Advisors, who help maintain order in the old city and serve as a makeshift judiciary. Their actual power and influence are limited, due primarily to a lack of resources and the severe restrictions placed upon them by the Kang.

Magic & Religion

The Quan were never religious, the concept of worship being without interest to these folk, who considered themselves akin to gods. Since their fall from power some Quan have begun to turn to religion for comfort and guidance. A cult based on ancestor worship is said to be slowly gaining adherents. Though the Quan once interred their dead in lavish tombs and mausoleums, the dead are now buried with little ceremony in unmarked graves.

The Arts

During the Empire period the Quan developed a taste for fine art and for superbly crafted goods. However, the Quan of the present age cannot afford such luxuries. Having gained some appreciation for the arts, some Quan have taken to painting, sculpting, and even composing music.

Language

The Quan speak both the Quan tongue and High Talislan, but prefer the latter, as it is more refined. Despite their fall from power, the Quan retain something of their former attitude of superiority. Most still use the elaborate titles that they bestowed upon themselves during the time when they were rulers of the Empire. Thus, even the lowliest Quan are referred to by such flowery acronyms as "Splendid Jade Potentate", "Munificent Lotus Personage", and "Wondrous Sapphire Excellence."

Defenses

By Kang decree, the Quan are prohibited from raising any kind of military force. A small volunteer militia exists for the purpose of repulsing wild animals that find their way into the city.

Commerce

The Quan have no trade ties with the other inhabitants of the Empire, most of whom still despise the former tyrants. As a result, they must grow their own food and make such items as they require.

Worldview

Since their fall from power the Quan have been cut off from the outside world. Never well-liked during the days of Empire, the Quan have received little in the way of sympathy from other nations, and nothing but scorn from their former subjects. They are a race of pariahs - isolated, powerless, and viewed as outcasts in their own land.

Quan Settlements & Places of Note

The Golden City of Tian

Former capital of the old Quan Empire, Tian is situated on an island within a man-made lake, and is accessible only by boat or windship. The city was designed by Mandalan architects at the command of the Emperor of Quan, who demanded that the new capital surpass in beauty all of the cities of the Empire — even that of the Mandalan city of Jacinth. Once considered the most splendid city on the continent, Tian has now fallen into a state of disrepair.

The Emperor's Road

This highway spans the length and breadth of the Kang Empire, from Hadran to Ispasia, and from Karang to Vishana. Heavily-armed Kang sentinels patrol the Emperor's Road at regular intervals.

The Imperial Canal

This man-made waterway links the River Shan to the Gulf of Tian, and was built to allow access to the lake that surrounds Tian. A system of locks and channels, operated by a group of Vajra engineers, allows traffic on the canal to be strictly monitored.

Tian Forest

The Forest of Tian is as odd a place as one may find in Talislanta — a man-made woodland, comprised of orderly groves of silver deodars and shade trees, separated by neatly mowed grass trails, and stocked with tamed animals of many sorts. The Quan aristocracy had this place "built" for the pleasure of the Emperor, who once came here to hunt "wild" game. Left untended since 613, the region has begun to revert to its natural state. The trails are overgrown, and the animals gone feral.

Ispasia

Tucked away in the far-northern corner of the peninsula, Ispasia is a small citystate known for its beautiful architecture and stately ambience. The city was annexed by the Quan in the early days of the Empire, but allowed to retain its prosperous mercantile government and culture. The same conditions have remained in effect since the Kang came to power, for the Ispasians are integral to the prosperity of the Empire.

The Ispasians

The Ispasians are a folk of slender physique, lemon-yellow skin and expressionless features. They dress in robes of fine silkcloth, upon which are indited elaborate sigils representing their respective family crests.

Ancestry

Some believe the Ispasians are descended from a race of neomorphs created by the ancient Archaens. The Ispasians themselves deny the validity of these theories, citing certain documents which they claim establish the separate and distinct ancestry of their people.

Society

The Ispasians are a people who have prospered through their mastery of financial matters and transactions. They live in manor houses set within the walls of their well-manicured and tastefully landscaped estates. The typical Ispasian manse has circular windows of rose colored glass, a pagoda-style roof, slender white columns, and a flight of white stone stairs leading to the entranceway. Their homes are decorated in rich, yet elegantly understated, style. Typical amenities include a large sitting room, parquet floors carpeted with rugs imported from the Desert Kingdoms, and furnishings upholstered in the finest Mandalan silkcloth.

Ispasian marriages are treated as a merger of two families and their fortunes, and are negotiated with the usual Ispasian discretion and attention to detail. Children are raised by servants of foreign extraction (typically Mandalans), and begin schooling in financial matters at age three. Ispasians drink rare wines from fluted crystal glasses and eat the finest foods, but never to excess. Their one weakness is the desire to acquire things of value and beauty.

Customs

The Ispasians bear a reputation as cool, calculating businessmen. Unlike the Farad they do not deal in contraband goods, or in small quantities of goods of any type. Instead, Ispasians prefer to deal in large-scale investments and commodities. The Ispasians serve the Kang, helping them



An Ispasian Viewpoint

The Ispasian agent Ispal, speaks on his people's view of the Kang Empire:

"The Empire is not a monolithic entity, as it may appear to those who look upon it from the outside. Rather, it is a mosaic of different cultures, each with its own beliefs and aspirations. The Mandalans are like the wind and rain, gradually wearing down the walls that imprison them, until one day they will crumble. The Vajra are earth and stone; dark and deep, with memories as old as the world. They lurk below the surface until the time when they will erupt, like a sleeping volcano. The Sunra are like a river, whose many tributaries want nothing more than to run free to the sea.

"The Mondre Khan are the beast that sleeps by day, and comes forth by night from the depths of the forest, to strike fear into the hearts of men. The Kang are fire; always burning, consuming all in their path. Like flame they must always feed, for if they cease to do so, they will die. The Quan were once like this, but now their fire is extinguished, and all that remains are a few wisps of smoke.

"My people are different from the others who dwell among us. The wind fills our sails, and the rain waters our fields; we use earth and stone to shelter us, and to build things of lasting beauty. We drink from the river, and leave the beast to roam in the forest as it will. And we feed the fire, for it warms our hearths, and lights our way."

manage the Empire's finances; discretion is the watchword in all their transactions. Ispasian agents are known to travel across the extent of Talislanta, and are believed to have clients in such far-distant lands as Faradun, Rajanistan, and Kasmir of the Seven Kingdoms, among others.

The Ispasians have an insular society. Cooperation is more important than individual achievement; the welfare and prosperity of the Ispasian people come first. Ispasians claim to have no personal feelings towards clients, and prefer to maintain a "cool" exterior, seldom showing outward emotion except when under great stress. It is the custom of these folk to regard all relationships as business transactions.

Government

Ispasia is ruled by a mercantile autocracy, at the head of which is a figure called the Najdak, who is served by a Board of Advisors. Together, they devise strategies for investment and acquisition that are faithfully followed by all Ispasians. The Board of Advisors handles all matters pertaining to "violations of Ispasian ethics" (a term considered an oxymoron by some). Offenders may be punished by demotion in status, or may be fined. Violent crime is virtually unknown among these folk, who keep their emotions in check at all times.

Magic & Religion

Ispasians have no religion; the concept does not interest them. Few of their people are known to practice magic. Instead, they prefer to hire magicians when in need of such services. The dead are placed in jade and gold sarchophagi, rich yet tasteful in design, and laid to rest in their family's mausoleum.

The Arts

Though they have a great appreciation for fine art, music, and fine crafted goods, the Ispasians themselves have no interest in the creation of such works. The Ispasian attitude is, why waste time creating art when one can acquire it, and also earn a profit from the investment? Priceless antique vases, examples of fine sculpture, paintings from past eras, and other works of art and collectibles are much sought after by Ispasians.

Language

Ispasians are well educated, and are fluent in both Quan and High Talislan. Common names start with the prefix, "Isp" (meaning, "respected one of Ispasian lineage"), as in Ispal, Ispmar, Ispan, Ispmir, etc.

Defenses

The Ispasians have no military of any sort. They rely upon the Kang for their protection, assured that their value to the Empire is sufficient to guarantee their safety.

Commerce

Ispasian agents regularly travel to foreign lands in order to acquire commodities and make investments. The Najdak and his Board of Advisors play an important role in determining the value of currencies, commodities, and assets – by manipulating vast sums of money around they are able to exert great control over the

Empire's economy, and the economies of foreign nations as well.

Worldview

Since the fall of the Quan, the Ispasians have taken on a more important role in the Empire. The Najdak sits at the left hand of the Kang Warlord, acting as his chief advisor on all issues related to trade, commerce, food distribution, the requisition of supplies to troops and fortifications, tariffs, tolls, and a hundred other non-military concerns. The Ispasians handle all of the Kang's financial concerns, and do so in an efficient fashion.

Ispasian Settlements

The Citystate of Ispasia

Surrounded by walls of white jade, this wealthy citystate is the only Ispasian settlement in Talislanta. Its architecture is rich and impressive in scope, though not ostentatious; in this regard the city reflects the nature of its inhabitants. A large contingent of Kang guard the gates, and are stationed in a nearby barracks facility tastefully concealed by shrubbery. At the center of the city are the lavish estates of the Ispasians and their families. Their Vajra and Mandalan servants live in a small district located outside the city proper.

The Mandalans

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 lose fitting robes or pajama-style garments, typically of silkcloth, a material which is common in the regions in which the Mandalans live.

Ancestry

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 Kang 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.

Society

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.



Customs

To many Talislantans, 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 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 (see sidebar).

The Legend of the 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. The Mandalans are most ingenious in this regard, and seem to possess a limitless ability to influence, misinform, and misdirect their oppressors without arousing suspicion in themselves.

In rare instances, a Mandalan may actually adopt the physical persona of the Mystic Warrior. Operating in total secrecy, these individuals often engage in more 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 felt, but never seen. Such is the aura of mystery that surrounds these individuals that the Mandalans do not even admit that they exist.

Government

The Kang allow the Mandalans a degree of self-rule, mainly because they consider the Mandalans to be no threat to their interests. Jacinth is run by a democratic People's Council comprised of representatives from all walks of Mandalan life: artisans, musicians, artists, poets, and scribes. All matters are decided by popular vote. Rural villages are also governed according to the same principles, though on a smaller scale.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

Mandalans have a deep respect for the arts, which they believe enhance the appreciation of beauty inherent in the natural world. They practice painting, sculpture, calligraphy, and decorative crafts such as weaving silkcloth. Many Mandalan families keep silkwyrrms as pets, and produce their own silk. Reading and writing poetry is also a favorite pastime. Mandalan music consists of simple but pleasing melodies, with a strong but understated rhythmic pulse underneath. This reflects the Mandalan virtues of outward passivity and inner strength. Common instrumentation include the madao (a two-chambered flute), silk harp (the seven strings of which are made of silk-wyrrm thread), and mandola (a long tube filled with smooth river pebbles).

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.

Defenses

Mandalans have never had an army, and have no interest in military matters.

Commerce

Mandalans are the most productive of the Empire's citizens. They create many useful wares, including silkcloth, pottery, glassware, jewelry, tools, implements, furnishings, and many different types of

art and decorative crafts. In the rural areas they grow and harvest crops of many sorts, make wine, weave baskets, and herd domesticated animals. Mandalans transport their wares across the Empire, traveling by river craft, carts, and wagons.

Worldview

Under the Kang, the Mandalans continue to be virtual slaves of the Empire. They obey the commands of their Kang 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 Harakin clans gather along the northern borders of Quan, waiting and watching, while the Mandalans remain, passive and aloof...

Mandalan Settlements

The City of Jacinth

Once the center of Mandalan culture, the coastal city of Jacinth is now a resort area for Ispasians and visiting dignitaries. A large number of Mandalans still live here, serving as slaves of the Empire. In Jacinth are found ancient collections of scrolls and books, and gardens of crystal dendrons, mosses and prismatic blossoms. Elite units of Kang guard the city from attack by land, and Sunra dragon barques patrol the harbor. The pleasure barges once owned by the Quan are now owned by Ispasians, who use them primarily for entertaining wealthy clients.

Silk Wyrrm

Silk Wyrrms are segmented insects that resemble tiny, larval dragons. They are among the most beneficial of Talislantan insects, producing a fine silk of excellent quality. Silk wyrrms can be trained to follow colored patterns on a loom, thereby "weaving" bolts of finished silkcloth of great beauty and intricacy. Training and tending silk wyrrms is said to be something of an art in itself, and of all Talislantans, only the Mandalans possess this talent.

The Sunra

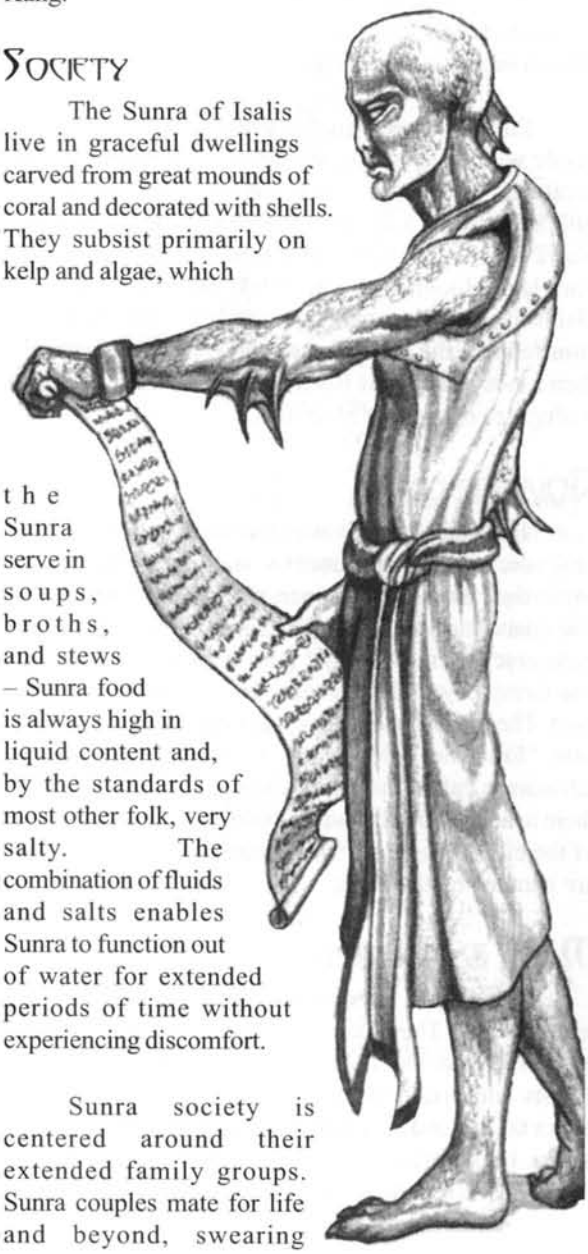
Sunra are graceful in stature, with silver-scaled skin and deep-blue eyes. The customary mode of dress for both males and females consists of a simple robe of Mandalan silkcloth, sandals, and a silk headband.

Ancestry

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 Kang.

Society

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, astromancy, and other skills begins at age two.

Customs

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 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; in fact, the Sunra say that this is what happened to the Quan, who once kept Moonfish as pets. While many scoff at these claims it should be noted that, not long after the Silent Insurrection, the Kang forced the Quan to release all their Moonfish into the River Shan, and thereafter made it illegal to own or eat Moonfish.

Government

The Kang have allowed the Sunra a semblance of self-rule, within certain limitations. Sunra are permitted to run their city as they choose, provided they remain in compliance with Kang law. The Sunra have an egalitarian democracy, a tradition that goes back to their ancient sea-faring days. Their leaders are elected by popular vote. The individual designated as ruler is accorded the title, "Eminence"; his or her panel of eleven elected advisors is called the Sunra Council. The Kang allow them to adjudicate all matters that occur within the walls of the city of Isalis. Offenses that occur outside Isalis are handled by the Kang.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

Sunra artisans are skilled in the creation of various practical wares and works of art, using coral, shells, and other products of the sea. The music of the Sunra, like that of their ancestors the Sun-Ra-San (q.v.), is haunting and often filled with sorrow.

Language

Though the Sunra have an ancestral tongue, Quan is the language most commonly spoken by those who live in the Kang 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).

Defenses

The Sunra maintain a large fleet of dragon barques, but are restricted by from sailing such craft anywhere but the Inland Sea and the River Shan except under the direct supervision of the Kang military. Since the Kang know nothing about marine navigation, Sunra pilots and crews are used to transport their troops when waterborne operations are deemed necessary. The Sunra are the finest sailors in the known world, using astrolabes to navigate according to the position of Talislanta's twin suns and seven moons, and are able to read the currents and tides.

Commerce

Sunra sea farmers and fishermen supply much of the Empire's foodstuffs. Their mariners pilot the great barges that ply the River Shan from Tian to the Inland Sea, conveying shipments of goods across the Empire and beyond, to distant ports such as Tarun, in Faradun. However, no Sunra ship is ever allowed to sail beyond the Inland Sea unless escorted by a sizeable contingent of Kang guards.

Worldview

The Sunra serve the Kang 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 Kang. The Kang know this, and have attempted to placate the Sunra to some extent by allowing them a greater degree of autonomy than they had under the Quan. So far, these measures have served to maintain order, but some wonder for how long.

Sunra Settlements

The Coral City of Isalis

Beside being home to the Sunra, the Coral City of Isalis hosts the Empire's vast flotilla of dragon barques, merchant skiffs and fishing boats. A reef serves as the foundation for the city, which is fashioned of pink, blue, red and green varieties of coral. Its "streets" are narrow waterways which course among the elegant coral structures. Sunra sea-farmers ply the shallows around the city, harvesting kelp, algae, edible mollusks, and other aquatic foodstuffs.

Places of Note

Vishana

Located in the hot and humid jungles of the far south, Vishana is a Kang military outpost situated on the River Shan. Soldiers from here are sent to patrol the Emperor's Road, though the task is made difficult by wild beasts and marauding Witchmen. The Kang trackers and cavalry which patrol the Empire's southern borders have a particular loathing for duty here. To instill enthusiasm among the troops, the fort commanders offer a bounty of a hundred gold lumens for each Witchmen head taken on jungle patrols.

Vulge

Set in the Jade Mountains, Vulge is manned by a contingent of Kang trackers and their beasts. This outpost is among the least favorite assignments for Kang troops, owing to its isolated location and the close proximity of Nagra spirit trackers, exomorphs, and winged vipers.



Chang

Chang are vicious, metallic-scaled fish found in rivers and lakes throughout the Kang Empire, in parts of the Inland Sea, and in the waters around certain islands in the Southern Rim. They travel in schools of up to two hundred individuals, and they will attack even such large predators as skalanx and river kra. When food is scarce, they have been known to attack small river craft, tearing at the hull in order to get at the craft's occupants. The Kang favor these creatures as "pets," keeping them in heavy glass tanks, captives of the Kang sometimes being dropped into the tanks for entertainment.

Size: 1'-3', 3-12 lbs.

Attributes:

INT -9	PER 0
WIL +4	CHA N/A
STR -4	DEX +5
CON +2	SPD +8

Ability Level: 6

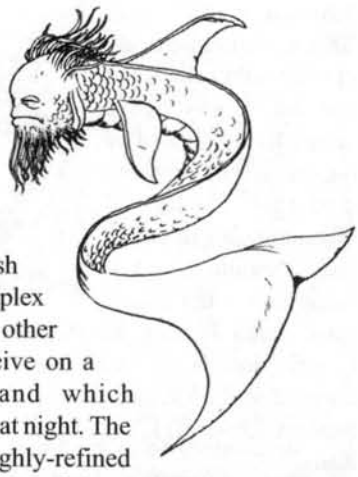
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 3

Special Abilities: None

Armor: Metallic exoskeleton, PR 5

Hit Points: 6

Moonfish



Moonfish are silvery-scaled aquatic creatures found only in the Inland Sea and Moon Lake, in the Kang Empire. The Sunra revere moonfish for their "songs" - complex melodic patterns that other sentient beings perceive on a telepathic level, and which moonfish "sing" only at night. The Quan, having less highly-refined sensibilities, favored moonfish as a delicacy when they ruled the Empire. In fact, the Sunra believe that the Quan's cruel treatment of moonfish is what brought ruin upon their people. Even so, some wealthy Ispasians still keep these creatures as pets, imprisoning them in ornate crystal spheres.

Size: 1'-2' in length, 2-4 lbs.

Attributes:

INT +2*	PER +3
WIL 0	CHA +3
STR -13	DEX +1
CON -2	SPD +3

*possibly higher

Ability Level: 1

Attacks/Damage: None; moonfish feed on plankton and aquatic plants

Special Abilities: Telepathic communication

Armor: None

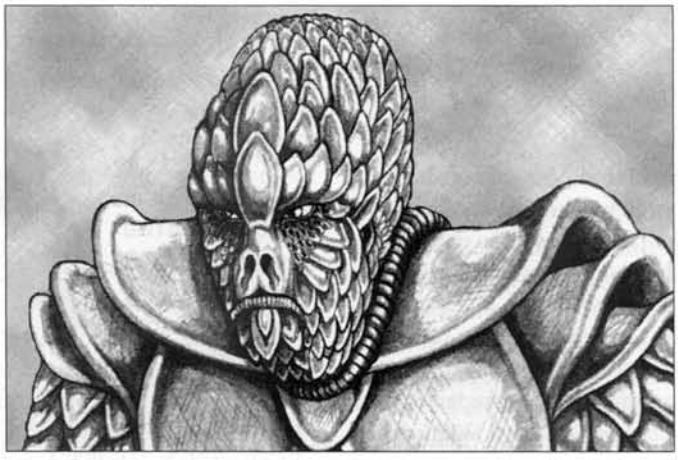
Hit Points: 2

THE VAJRA

The Vajra are short and squat, with barrel-like torsos and heavy limbs. Their bodies are covered with overlapping orange-brown plates, which form an effective natural armor. They dress in loinclouts and wide belts, donning cloaks for ceremonial occasions. Their tough, scaled hide renders them impervious to cuts and abrasions, and serves as a natural form of armor.

Ancestry

The ancestors of the Vajra once dwelled beneath the Opal Mountains and Vajran Hills, in the northern part of what is now the Kang Empire. They were originally subjugated by the Quan, who captured a large clutch of hibernating Vajra young and threatened to kill them unless the adults surrendered. Fearing that their species might be driven to extinction should such a catastrophe occur, the Vajra acceded to the Quan's demands. Following the Silent Insurrection of 611, the Vajra became subjects of the Kang.



Society

The Vajra once lived in subterranean settlements that resembled intricate tunnel-mazes, designed, excavated, and polished with meticulous attention to detail. The passageways and caves were illuminated by globular masses of phosphorescent fungi, suspended from the ceilings. These settlements resembled underground hives, with separate chambers for the hibernating Vajra young, the Queen, the workers, and the soldiers. They population subsisted on a simple diet of mosses, lichen, and mineral-rich water from underground streams, springs, and lakes.

Since their subjugation, the Vajra have been forced to live in tunnel-complexes built into large mounds and hillocks. In order to ensure the loyalty of their workers, the Kang hold hibernating Vajra young captive in locked iron vaults until they have hatched. The Kang employ Vajra engineers as miners, road workers, and builders. They are paid a nominal wage, but are often treated like slaves.

Vajra regard their entire race as a single family; the propagation and protection of the species are vital concerns to these folk. Vajra males court the females, who may mate with as many males as they please. In Vajra society the ability to have many offspring is highly valued. Females give birth to a clutch of up to four fetal young, each resembling a scaled impling enclosed in a translucent but durable egg-sac filled with nutrient fluids. The young remain enclosed with their egg-sacs for a full year, slowly growing and developing into young adults. During this period of so-called "hibernation" that Vajra young are extremely vulnerable. At the end of the year the hatchlings claw their way out of the sac, emerging as fully-developed, "young adults".

Customs

Vajra are normally quiet and introspective by nature; "as solid and enduring as stone", as they say. Stoic and exceedingly durable creatures, they can tolerate considerable physical and emotional stress without complaint or apparent ill effect. However, there is another side to the Vajra psyche that is rarely seen by outsiders, called the Dark Fire (see sidebar).

Government

Prior to their subjugation the Vajra were ruled by a matriarchy, with each hive-settlement governed by a Queen. The Quan prohibited the appointment of Queens, a policy which the Kang continue to the present day. Even so, females continue to hold great influence among their people, and their advice is sought whenever important decisions must be made.

Magic & Religion

Vajra revere the earth goddess, Terra, whom they regard as the Great Elemental that dwells within the world of Archaeus. Prior to the subjugation of their people, Vajra would gather together in great numbers and offer prayers to their goddess. Now, such practices are forbidden by the Kang. Even so, Vajra priestesses are said to still hold services in secret underground shrines. Vajra bury their dead deep in the earth, their ancestral home.

The Arts

Vajra excel at all manner of earthen and stonework construction, engineering, and excavation. While most of their work is intended to be functional in nature, many Vajra stone-carvings have a definite aesthetic appeal as well. Vajra appear to have no musical tradition.

Language

The Vajra speak a dialect of the Quan tongue, and have deep, resonant voices. Common names usually have three syllables and begin with the prefix, "Vaj" (meaning "of the Vajra"), as in Vaj-Do-Rahn, Vaj-Nan-Sa, and Vaj-Kron-Do.

Defenses

Vajra once built impressive underground fortifications that were manned by well-armed contingents of male soldiers. Such defenses are no longer permitted under Kang rule. Instead, Vajra camps are guarded by contingents of Kang.

Commerce

Vajra once used precious and semi-precious stones as currency. The Quan robbed them of their wealth, and ever since Vajra have been forced to use the Empire's currency.

Worldview

The Vajra have no relations with other nations. They are on good terms with the Mandalans and Sunra, though formal relations with other subjects of the Empire are forbidden. Vajra still bear much resentment for the Quan, though they now regard their former masters with something approaching pity.

Vajra Settlements

The Vajran Hills

The traditional territories of the Vajra, the Vajran Hills are rich in minerals, timber and other natural resources. After the Quan annexed this part of their Empire, the Vajra were deported from their subterranean homes and taken to slave camps near the Opal Mountains. Their underground settlements were sealed, and have never been reopened. Many are believed to contain old Vajra treasures that were hidden from their enemies.

The Citadel of Karang

Located to the north, Karang is a walled citadel built to safeguard against incursions of barbaric Harakin from beyond the Opal Mountains. Many Vajra miners live in the sub-levels of this ponderous structure, which is crisscrossed with catacombs and tunnels after the Vajran style. Precious stones and metals from the mines are stored here until they can be shipped by caravan to Shonan. Kang trackers patrol the outskirts with deadly hunting beasts called tarkus.

The Dark Fire

Vajra culture is rooted deep in the elemental earth of Talislanta. Like stone, Vajra strive to be placid, enduring, strong, resolute. Like earth and soil they strive to be fruitful and nurturing, providing a medium for growth and new life. But there is another side to the Vajra, about which little is known. For deep in the subterranean realms of their homeland, where the light of the twin suns never penetrates, is a place of perpetual night and burning, smouldering magma. This is the Dark Fire, a molten heart of darkness that exists not only at the center of the world, but also in the soul of every Vajra.

In Vajra culture, the Dark Fire is neither good nor evil. It simply exists, as do all things in nature. Vajra keep the Dark Fire deep within in them; they say that it warms their hearts, illuminates their souls, and prevents them from losing their way in the darkness.

Under normal conditions the Dark Fire is always hidden and kept under control. However, if subjected to prolonged periods of severe stress or torment a Vajra may lose the ability to control what lies within. Like a volcano, he or she may erupt in a frightening display of violence and destructive force: clawing through stone, breaking free of the strongest restraints, exhibiting an almost elemental power. During such times a Vajra may kill or destroy without remorse, perform feats of incredible strength, or suffer grievous wounds and injuries without apparent effect. The Dark Fire lasts but a few moments, and often less than this. Once it is over the Vajra's energy is spent and he or she will lapse into unconsciousness. Death usually follows soon afterward, for once the Fire is extinguished, so too is the Vajra's life force.

Shrieker



Shriekers are fierce avian predators who haunt the forests of the northern Kang Empire. With its heavy plumage of sharp metallic feathers, the bird is not a good flyer. For this reason, shriekers hunt by diving from the high branches of trees, impaling prey with their pointed, three-foot long beaks. Few creatures possess hide or armor strong enough to afford protection from a shrieker diving at full speed from high altitudes. Travelers in the Cerulean Forests of the Empire are in the habit of stringing nets of silken cords among the trees to protect their encampments from plummeting shriekers.

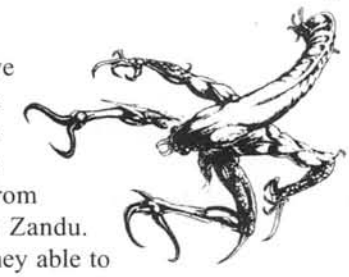
The metallic feathers of the shrieker are much in demand in the Kang Empire. In addition to their ornamental uses, the feathers are used in the making of arrows and are smelted down to obtain the extraordinarily light metal known as blue iron. A smaller relative of the shrieker, the ironshrike, is a native of the Sinking Land, feeding primarily on ikshada.

Size: 6'-7' in length, 12'-14' wingspan, 160-200 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -4	PER +1
WIL 0	CHA N/A
STR -4	DEX 0
CON 0	SPD +4*

* +8 while diving
Ability Level: 1-3
Attacks/Damage: Beak: DR 12 if diving, DR 4 otherwise
Special Abilities: Diving attack, loud call can be heard up to two miles away
Armor: Metallic feathers, PR 5
Hit Points: 12

Chig



Most destructive of all Talislantan insects, the chig is native to wastelands and wooded areas from the Kang Empire to Zandu. Prodigious leapers, they able to span distances of up to ten feet at a single bound. Their curved pincers are capable of piercing all but the toughest types of hide (DR 3). Chigs usually prey on small avians, reptiles, and vermin, and in this respect they are sometimes beneficial to Talislantans. They are seldom found in numbers, except at such times when it is their nature to spawn, which occurs once every six or seven years, on the average.

When spawning, chigs reproduce at such a frightening rate that massive swarms can appear practically overnight. It is then that chigs are most dangerous, for in large numbers they will attack and devour all living creatures in their path. Such infestations generally last three days, after which most of the newly-spawned chigs suddenly die. The discovery of a bloated, egg-laden chig is often the only warning that a spawning is about to occur in a given region.

The Mondre Khan

The Mondre Khan are squat and powerfully built, with leathery skin, a mane of coarse black hair, and a long fringe of fur running down the back of the legs and arms. They dress in hide loincloths and bits of leather and plate armor stolen from the Kang.

Ancestry

The Mondre Khan are believed to be related to the Beastmen of Golarin, or perhaps the Wildmen of Yrmania. The Mondre Khan scoff at such claims, and have their own theories on the subject of their ancestry.

Society

Nomadic hunter-gatherers, the Mondre Khan travel in tribes of up to forty individuals, subsisting on wild mountain berries and fresh game. They are hardy creatures who require little in the way of nourishment and can travel long distances on just a few scraps of food. Tribes camp in the mountains, finding shelter amongst copses of trees, in caves, or beneath rock overhangs. Their camps are always well concealed, and are temporary at best; bands move on after a day or two in order to avoid being detected by the Kang.

Mondre Khan tribes are basically extended family units, though survivors from tribes decimated by warfare with the Kang or illness are usually welcome. Unlike Beastmen packs, bands of Mondre Khan rarely engage in hostilities with each other, for the reason that they regard the Kang as their mutual foe. Mondre Khan mate for life, and are very devoted to each other. Females usually give birth to twins. Both the male and female protect their young with their lives.

Customs

Savage and feral by nature, Mondre Khan exhibit the ferocity and cunning of wild beasts when on the hunt or in battle. They find it difficult to repress their bestial side, and may react in the manner of wild animals when cornered or subjected to extreme stress. Conversely, Mondre Khan show great kindness and compassion for their young, and appear to harbor deep feelings for their mates and loved ones. This dichotomy seems to be ingrained in the Mondre Khan persona, and their people's struggle with the duality that is inherent in their physical and emotional make-up: on one side, the man-like creature striving to achieve a higher state of consciousness, and on the other, the wild animal driven by primal urges.

Government

Each Mondre Khan clan has a single leader; typically, a strong male or female whom the others have come to trust and respect. The leader's main responsibilities are to keep the tribe safe from discovery by the Kang, to plot guerilla-type attacks against the Kang, and to settle disputes. The leader also resolves all disputes within the clan. Individuals guilty of an offense against another member of the tribe may be attacked by their peers and banished from the tribe.

Magic & Religion

The Mondre Khan show no signs that they practice, or have any concept of, any sort of organized religion. Neither do they seem to know anything of magic, though some believe that they have the intellectual capacity to learn such talents if given the opportunity. The dead are eulogized, then cast into the communal fire.

The Arts

Mondre Khan possess the ability to make crude weapons, tools, and armor, and know how to cure hides and work them into useful articles. Some of their works exhibit a rustic or primitive sense of aesthetics. They make no music save for the mournful howls of those who have lost a mate in battle.



Language

Mondre Khan communicate in a snarling version of the Chanan tongue, and in sign. Claw markings made on the trunks of trees may indicate the beginning of a written language; if true, this would be regarded as an important development by certain Talislantan scholars. Common names are comprised of two syllables, the second ending in "iz", as in Kaziz, Hakiz, Kadiz, Nagiz, etc.

Defenses

The Kang consider the Mondre Khan to be akin to wild beasts, and hunt them down like animals. Holed

Legend of The Forest King

Among the Mondre Khan there is a legend of such great antiquity that some say it is little more than a racial memory, borne in the blood of those whose ancestors survived The Great Disaster. According to some, this legend states that the first Mondre Khan - a creature called Khadiz - once lived far to the west, in a great forest that formerly covered much of the territories now known as the Western Lands. Known as Forest King, he was the master of all other creatures, great and small.

One day, while Khadiz was out hunting in the forest, he was set upon by a group of hairless beasts. These creatures were not of the natural world; they had neither claw nor fang, but carried terrible weapons of cold iron and fire. With black magic they captured Khadiz and took him to a strange place, where he was forced to lay with one of the hairless beasts' females. The King of the Forest died soon afterward, his vital energies stolen and his spirit broken. But before he died Khadiz cursed the hairless ones, that the seeds they had sown would one day bring a bitter harvest. So it was that from this unnatural union the Mondre Khan were born into the world, to reap vengeance upon those who murdered their King.

Though most Talislantan scholars tend to dismiss the legend of the Forest King, some believe that like most myths the story has its basis in fact. If so, then the creature called Khadiz may well have been a Jaka; one of the Beastmasters of the Northern Forests, from whom the title "Forest King" could easily have been derived. This being the case, it would follow that the Mondre Khan were sorcerous hybrids created by the ancient Archaens – the "hairless beasts" mentioned in the legend. Said the noted naturalist Thystram, regarding the legend and its possible ramifications: "It is at least an intriguing theory."

up in their mountain retreats, the Mondre Khan have waged a successful campaign against numerically superior Kang forces for over four centuries — launching surprise attacks against merchant caravans, stealing military supply wagons, and repeatedly raiding the mining settlement of Ku-Chang. Though outnumbered and poorly equipped, the Mondre Khan are experts in the art of covert warfare and have generally fared well against the Kang.

Commerce

Mondre Khan clans occasionally barter with each other, trading provisions, tools, and weapons. Mondre Khan do not use coins, which to them have no value.

Worldview

The Mondre Khan are the avowed enemies of the Empire, whose forces the Mondre Khan have successfully resisted for centuries. The last indigenous people to avoid subjugation by the forces of the Empire, the Mondre Khan have proved to be a resourceful and dangerous enemy. They have no known ties with other nations or peoples, though covert relations with the Mandalans and Vajra may exist.

Places of Note

Ku-Chang

The Outpost of Ku-Chang is a mining installation where crews of Vajra slave laborers exhume gold and silver, crystals, cinnabar, antimony, and a half-dozen varieties of precious stones. A garrison of Kang warriors and trackers keeps the Vajra in line, and protects this vital installation from Mondre Khan raiding parties. Crag spiders, cave bats and other dangerous creatures occupy the caves and gullies of the plateau. Kang patrols comb the heights by day, but do not dare to venture forth at night.

Shathane

Shathane are a sub-species of werebeast found in the deep forests and woodlands of the Eastern Lands and, less commonly, the Dark Coast. Since the dawn of the New Age, these giant creatures have retreated further and further from the encroaching forces of civilization. Now they are seldom encountered except in the most isolated wilderness areas. Despite their imposing presence, shathane are relatively unaggressive creatures. They subsist on leaves, bark, and fat root-grubs (the latter obtained by uprooting a tree after it has been stripped of its leaves and bark). Although shathane can be quite destructive, they rarely pose a threat to other living creatures.

There are several exceptions to this statement which are worthy of note, however. First, it is unwise to interrupt a shathane while it is eating. Second, one should never make loud noises or threatening motions while a shathane is about. Third, and most important: never approach a grove of trees in which a shathane has hidden its young. Rash actions of this sort can only lead to grave consequences.



Size: 10'-12', 800-1,000+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -5	PER +1
WIL +5	CHA N/A
STR +9	DEX -4
CON +7	SPD -2

Ability Level: 6-14

Attacks/Damage: Grasp: DR 17 per round, Hand: DR 13

Special Abilities: Can uproot even very large trees

Armor: Fur, PR 2

Hit Points: 71

THE VOLCANIC HILLS

The Volcanic Hills is one of the most desolate and forlorn sectors of Talislanta. Its terrain is tortuous, rising and falling in twisted mounds of pitted pumice-stone, angular peaks, and deep ravines. Clouds of smoke and ash, by-products of the area's considerable volcanic activity, blot out the sun for miles around. Streams of molten lava pose hazards to all but the most adroit travelers, and the air reeks of sulphurous fumes. Few living creatures dwell here, and those that do are of a nature akin to the hostile environment, such as the Raknids; hideous insectoids said to be a cross between demon and scorpion, who live in vast underground hives. The primary inhabitants of this region are the reptilian humanoids known as the Saurans.

THE SAURANS

Standing up to seven feet in height, Saurans have clawed hands and feet, scaly hide, and powerful jaws lined with rows of sharp teeth. They wear abbreviated garments of furs and hides, red iron bracers, and dragon icons.

Ancestry

Saurans are believed to be descended from the Drakken, a race of giant reptilian-humanoids who ruled the continent long ago. Following the defeat of the Drakken by the early Archaens, many of the survivors are fled Talislanta to some distant land far to the south, crossing over a landbridge that later collapsed during The Great Disaster. The few Drakken who remained in Talislanta eventually evolved into a smaller and more mobile species: the Saurans.

Society

The Sauran tribes live in walled stone enclosures scattered among the Volcanic Hills, where they subsist primarily on wild durge, land lizard, and megalodont. Saurans have a predominantly matriarchal society. Females choose their mates based on strength, courage in battle, and intelligence, and if desired, may have more than one mate. Sauran young hatch from eggs, developing from quadrupedal "hatchlings" to bipedal adults within five years. Females raise the young and lead the clan, while the adult males serve as workers, hunters, and warriors.

Customs

Though perceived by many other peoples as primitive savages, the Saurans nonetheless have adapted well to their surroundings. Utilizing volcanic mounds as natural forges, they make crude armor and weapons, mostly of low-grade red-iron alloys. The clans have domesticated certain other reptilian species, such as land lizards and land dragons.

Government

The clan's dominant female serves as the clan's High Priestess, and for all intents and purposes, its ruler. She is served by lesser priestesses and by a male battle chieftain, who commands the settlement's troops. The High Priestess hears all complaints and rules on all legal matters. Individuals accused of a criminal offense are usually allowed a chance to prove their innocence. If they cannot, they are executed.



Magic & Religion

Saurans revere Satha, the giant dragon-goddess whom her followers say is the mother of all reptilian species. The cult has numerous followers among the Saurans and Sauruds of the Volcanic Hills, but is practically unknown elsewhere. Priestesses of the Dragon Cult possess no magical abilities except with regard to the fashioning of dragon icons, fetishes which confer strength to faithful followers of Satha. Saurans inter their dead in the mouths of active volcanoes as an offering to their goddess.

The Arts

Saurans have no traditional songs or dances. Sauran metalworking is a primitive art form that has gained recognition among other Talislantan peoples in recent years.

Language

Saurans have their own language, called Sauran, which may have been derived from the ancient Drakken tongue. However, unlike the Drakken language, there is no written form of Sauran. Sauran speech is typified by a sibilant "S", or hissing sound. Common names for females are mainly derivatives of the goddess Satha's name, such as Satta, Sathya, and Sathas. Male names never begin with "Sa", which is a female prefix. Instead, males have names such as Sosar, Sar, Sotha, Sethar, and Sirras.

Defenses

Sauran armies are slow-moving but heavily armed and armored. Their forces often include the massive creatures known as land dragons, which Sauran warriors outfit with plates of hammered metal and ride into battle (see sidebar). Saurans employ these creatures as living siege engines, using them to batter down fortifications and to provide cover against opposing missile fire. Saurans mark the Kang, Raknids, and Araq as their most hated foes.

Commerce

Though noted for their aggressiveness, certain of the Sauran tribes are friendly toward other Talislantan peoples. Some have dealings with certain bands of Orgovian traders, bartering firegems in return for high-quality metal tools, fabrics, and other goods. On occasion, adventuresome Saurans leave their homeland to travel throughout Talislanta, offering their services as mercenaries.

Worldview

Saurans occasionally fight amongst themselves, but most prefer instead to kill Raknids or Kang. Kang soldiers rely on fortifications and heavy catapults when defending against Sauran war-parties, believing frontal assaults against these foes to be tantamount to mass suicide. In recent years the Kang have made a concerted attempt to drive the Saurans out of the Volcanic Hills, or to exterminate the race altogether. The former goal has met with some success, and some of the smaller Sauran tribes have been forced west into the Wilderlands. The latter goal has yet to achieve notable results.

Sauran Settlements

Sathra

Sathra is a sprawling fortress constructed of rough-hewn boulders, volcanic rock, and ancient blocks pillaged from Wilderlands ruins. Sathra has a large contingent of Sauran warriors and boasts at least four dozen land dragons, each equipped with an iron battletower and stone-thrower. The Sathra clans have a good relationship with the Orgovians.

Places of Note

The River of Fire

The River of Fire is an ever-flowing torrent of molten lava whose source is the giant volcano, Dragonrock. The river terminates far to the north in most dramatic fashion, in an incredible deluge of flame known as the Firefalls — spectacular when viewed at night, or so I am told. Sight-seers should keep one eye peeled for Pyro-Demons, who inhabit the more active volcanoes found in this area.

The Valley of Mist

Not far from Dragonrock is the Valley of Mist, whose foggy atmosphere is derived from the Firefalls' close proximity to the snows of nearby L'Haan. In this valley can be found the Well of Saints, the sparkling waters of which are reputed to possess miraculous healing properties. Those seeking a miracle should take pains to avoid vorls; insidious creatures of mist, who offer a definite and final cure for all ills.

Dragons' Grave

A dead volcano located somewhere in the heart of the Volcanic Hills, Dragon's Grave is purportedly the fabled "dragon's graveyard" of many a Rajan and Dracartan folk tale. According to the lore of the desert folk, it is traditional for ancient land dragons to make the long voyage to this mountain when it is their time to die. The interior of the dead volcano is said to be littered with the remains of untold hundreds or thousands of these great monsters.

The Dragons of War

Since the time of The Great Disaster, the Sauran tribes have used land dragons in warfare. Hatched from eggs and raised from the larval stage, these huge creatures are trained to obey commands in the Sauran tongue.

Land dragons are naturally well-suited to such tasks, and are able to carry even the heaviest burdens with ease. Their natural aggressiveness is such that teaching them to attack is a simple matter. In fact, it is harder by far to keep the creatures from attacking each other, particularly during the mating season, when male dragons normally battle to compete for females. Protected by layers of dense hide and exoskeletal bone plates, land dragons are practically immune to small or medium-sized weaponry. When their head, undersides, frontal areas, and limbs have been augmented with plate armor of hammered iron, the creatures are nearly indestructible, and can be employed as living battering rams – a tactic that in the past has proven to be very effective against the enemies of the Saurans, the Kang.

Pyro-Demon

Pyro-demons are fearsome entities from the depths of the Demonrealms. By means of magical gates and rifts they are sometimes able to cross into the Talislantan plane, emerging from fissures in the earth and from volcanoes. So it is that pyro-demons come to be found in the River of Fire and the Firefalls, of the Volcanic Hills.

Pyro-demons are highly volatile in nature and are prone to violent and destructive behavior. These fierce creatures are comprised of solid flame and are sometimes mistaken for devils by inexpert observers. They are able to breathe fire or smoke at will, and they can ignite combustibles at a touch. The presence of a pyro-demon is seldom difficult to discern, for the creatures radiate a good deal of heat and give off a stench of burning sulfur. Pyro-demons possess an extreme aversion to water, which can be fatal to them, and to cold, which causes them great discomfort. They are also susceptible to spells of Aquamancy.



Size: 6'10"-7'2", 260-300+ lbs.
Attributes:
INT +1
PER +1
WIL +7
CHA -6
STR +6
DEX +2
CON +9
SPD +3
Ability Level: 3-10
Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 12, Tail: DR 10, Fiery breath: DR 12
Special Abilities: Pyromancy with four Modes at Ability Level, ignite combustibles by touch, breathe fire or smoke at will
Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 36

RAKNID

Raknids are a sorcerous hybrid of demon and scorpion native to the Volcanic Hills and parts of the Wastelands. There are four distinct types of raknid, each having a specific responsibility within the rigid confines of their hive-society.

1. Warrior raknids are humanoid in form, with a heavily armored carapace, hooked talons, and a tail stinger capable of injecting a potent, paralytic venom. These creatures are employed in defense of the hive-colony and to gather food for the hive's inhabitants.

2. Raknid queens are so huge and bloated that they are practically incapable of movement and require the constant attention of the hive's workers and drones. However, they possess extraordinary psionic powers and can communicate telepathically with raknids from their own hive or read the minds of other sentient creatures. Each raknid colony has a single queen.

3. Raknid drones are blind, multi-legged insectoids whose soft bodies are protected by a hard, spiked shell. Driven by the instinctive urge to mate, they plot and scheme, seeking ways to win the favor of their queen. Drones will torture and interrogate captive creature, hoping to gain useful information with which to impress their sovereign.

4. Raknid Workers are mindless giants, performing their limited duties through instinct alone. These huge creatures maintain the colony's hive-complex, which they construct from a pulpy substance extruded from their palpi. When dry, this material becomes tough and fibrous.

The evil hive-mentality of a raknid colony fosters but a single goal: to preserve and propagate their vile species. All other life forms are considered to be either enemies or a potential source of nourishment. More precisely, living organisms are enemies until they have been slain, whereupon they become food. Among their greatest foes are land dragons, vasps, and the Sauran tribes of the Volcanic Hills; the latter burn raknid nests whenever possible.

RAKNID WARRIOR

Size: 6'-6'8", 200-300 lbs.
Attributes:

INT *	PER +2
WIL +5	CHA N/A
STR +4	DEX +2
CON +6	SPD -2

* controlled by psychic emanations from Queen
Ability Level: 3-15
Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 8, Tail stinger: DR 10 +paralysis (CON roll to resist, duration: 20 rounds)
Special Abilities: Leap up to 20 feet, immunity to magical influence and control
Armor: Exoskeleton, PR 3
Hit Points: 30



RAKNID QUEEN

Size: 20'-40' in length, 1,500-3,500 lbs.
Attributes:

INT +10	PER +10
WIL +10	CHA -6
STR -6	DEX -18
CON 0	SPD -17

Ability Level: 20+
Attacks/Damage: Psychic assault: cause pain or stun, DR 16 +Ability Level (range: 10 feet per level)
Special Abilities: Detect presences (range: 1000 feet), immunity to magical influence or control, control hive colony by psychic emanations (range: 100 feet per level)
Armor: None
Hit Points: 60



RAKNID DRONE

Size: 8'-10' in length, 500-600+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT +2	PER +2
WIL +5	CHA -5
STR -1	DEX -4
CON +2	SPD -4

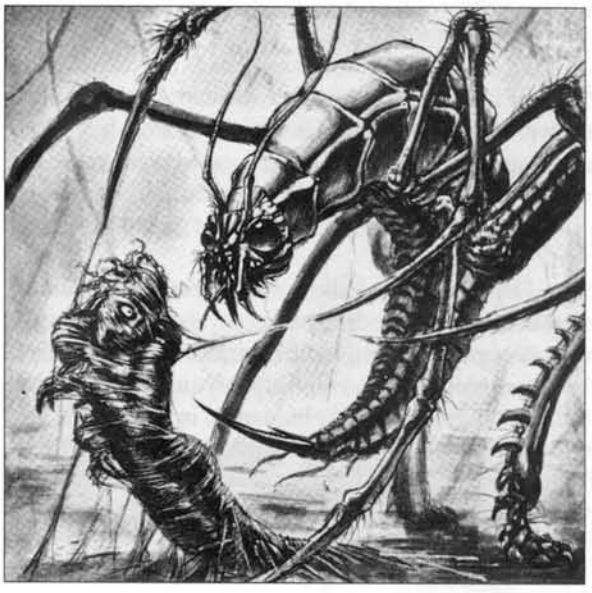
Level: 1-10
Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 3
Special Abilities: Can completely withdraw extremities into armored shell
Armor: Shell, PR 7; body unarmored
Hit Points: 12

RAKNID WORKER



Size: 16'-20'+, 1-2 tons
Attributes:
INT*
PER +1
WIL +7
STR +8
DEX -8
CON +8
SPD -8
*controlled by psychic emanations from Queen
Ability Level: 1-3
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 18, entangle intruders in strands of fibrous pulp (STR roll at -4 to resist, range: 20 feet)
Special Abilities: Extrude fibrous pulp
Armor: Exoskeleton, PR 7
Hit Points: 33

VASP



The vasp is a giant, predatory insectoid native to the Volcanic Hills and Wilderlands regions. Despite their size, vasps are surprisingly quick and are capable of leaping up to forty feet at a bound. Solitary by nature, vasps hunt alone, often after dark. Their favored prey are raknid warriors who have wandered too far from their hive. Vasps are not particular, however, and exhibit an equal preference for Saurans, land lizards, durge, Araq, and other humanoids. Vasps have no known natural enemies.

A vasp will usually attack by leaping upon its chosen prey, holding it down with its pincers, and stinging its victim to death. The creature's sting can penetrate even metal armor and exudes a caustic venom which dissolves the victim's flesh and internal organs. While the toxin is taking effect, the vasp wraps its prey in a silken cocoon and drags it back to its cave or tunnel-lair, to be consumed at its leisure. These insectoids are distinguishable by a characteristic clicking of the mandibles, audible at distances up to fifty feet.

Size: 9'-10' in height, 500-600 lbs.

Attributes:

INT -12	PER +3
WIL +7	CHA N/A
STR +7	DEX +6
CON +6	SPD +4

Ability Level: 14-22

Attacks/Damage: Pincers: DR 17, Sting: DR 11 +venom (DR 4 per round for 10 rounds) or Mandibles: DR 13, Webbing (STR roll at -5 to resist)

Special Abilities: Leap up to 40 feet, night vision, webbing

Armor: Metallic scales, PR 6

Hit Points: 46

VORL

Denizens of the Valley of Mist, Vorls are insidious creatures whose bodies are composed entirely of animate vapors, leading some naturalists to surmise that these organisms are a variety of quasi-elemental. Although they are vaguely humanoid in form, vorls are able to alter their shape as suits their needs. Their features are amorphous, their mouth and eyes resembling little more than pulsating, dark holes.

Vorls prey on living creatures of all sorts, whom they seek to strangle in their trailing, misty forms. They thrive on moisture and feed on the bodily fluids of their victims. Creatures "devoured" by vorls in this manner appear as dried, mummified husks and will crumble to dust at a touch.

Vorls cannot be harmed by ordinary weapons, and even magical weapons do little damage against their vaporous forms. Strong winds will disperse them temporarily, and spells that affect wind and water can be used to dissolve them to nothingness. Vorls can also be evaporated by great surges of heat or flame, and so can be fought with fire. As they often roam the Valley of Mist in numbers, these insubstantial beings pose a great hazard to Aamanian pilgrims traveling to the Well of Saints.

Size: 6'-7', weightless

Attributes:

INT +3	PER 0
WIL +2	CHA -6
STR*	DEX -2
CON -3	SPD +1

*insubstantial

Ability Level: 1-8

Attacks/Damage: Touch: DR 8 +Ability Level from moisture drain, per round

Special Abilities: Immune to non-magical weapons, magical weapons inflict only half damage, harmed by heat or flame, can be affected by winds and magic

Armor: None

Hit Points: 10





THE SOUTHERN RIM

BATRE

Batre is a small, tropical isle located to the south of the Dark Coast. Its jungles abound with fruiting trees, crystal streams, and scenic waterfalls. Long a popular stopover point for vessels seeking fresh water and supplies, the island was conquered and occupied by the Imrians in the year 602. Since that time its inhabitants, the Batreans, have remained slaves of the Imrians.

THE BATREANS

The Batreans are a primitive folk who dress in rude garments of coarse cloth and dye their hair with indelible blue pigments. Members of their respective genders bear so little resemblance to each other that they seem to be from separate species. Batrean males are huge, slope-shouldered, hairy, and remarkably ugly. Batrean females, on the other hand, are engaging creatures, slender and lovely beyond compare. The males dress in coarse hides; the females, in robes of translucent linen.

ANCESTRY

The Batreans are believed to be descended from survivors of The Great Disaster, who fled from the Lost Continent after it sank below the waves. If true, then Batreans may be related to the sea nomads of Oceanus.

SOCIETY

The Batreans are a simple folk who live in huts made of woven thatch and subsist on a diet of tubers, fruit, fowl, and shellfish. Prior to the island's occupation, males and females traditionally lived apart. Now the two sexes are strictly segregated by their Imrian masters, who have killed off most of the males, saving only a few dozen for use as breeders.

Breeding males are kept in thornwood pens and allowed out only to take nourishment and relieve themselves. The females still live in huts, but are closely watched by Imrian guards. Batrean males seem unmoved



Scent of a Batrean

In his famed book, "Perception and Delusion," the estimable Kabros, sorcerer and one-time ruler of ancient Phaedra, states emphatically: 'The ability of Batrean females to influence males of other species can be attributed to their scent, which possesses aphrodisiac properties similar in effect to tantalus vine. Batrean males, who as a group suffer from chronic sinus difficulties, are evidently unaffected by the potent pheromones emitted by their mates."

Intrigued by Kabros' writings, I endeavored to find some means of putting his claims to the test. An opportunity unexpectedly presented itself in Zandu, where, as a courtesy to a Farad monger, I volunteered to chaperone three Batrean concubines whom he intended to sell in Arim. The Farad went off to tend to other business, leaving me to watch over his wagon, in which were safely secreted his lovely charges. Plugging my nasal passages with two small wads of compacted silkcloth, I entered the wagon, employing a minor bit of legerdemain to foil the Farad's locks.

The Batreans greeted me with obvious delight, and pressed their charms upon me in a most generous fashion. All went according to my most optimistic plans, until a sudden sneeze caused my hastily improvised nasal filters to be expelled. I came to my senses sometime later, awakened by the shrieks and curses of the Farad monger, who had returned to find the concubines missing, and with them, all of his gold. Happily for myself, the Batreans had been kind enough to hide me, dazed but unhurt, in a clump of nearby bushes. I deemed the results of my experiment to be sufficiently conclusive, and departed the area post-haste."

by the beauty of their females, whom they largely ignore except during the males' brief, week-long mating season. Female infants are raised by the women. Male children are largely ignored, which may explain their diminished learning capacities.

Customs

The customs of the Batrean people are also divided along lines of gender. The males are crude, boorish, and slovenly, and seem possessed of a limited intellectual capacity. Batrean females, on the other hand, are exceedingly clever. They possess the ability to emit a scent that beguiles males of almost all humanoid species, making them susceptible to suggestion. This talent develops at the onset of puberty, and manifests a sweet smelling musk, so subtle that it may not be noticed. While male Batreans and Imrians are immune to this pheromone, males of most other humanoid species are not. Nasal plugs or filters afford some protection against this ability, though such devices are not uniformly reliable (see sidebar).

Government

Formerly, dominant males served as tribal chieftains. Now, the Imrians rule Batre, and any who do not obey their orders are killed out of hand.

Magic & Religion

Batreans have no organized religion. The females are said to know something of magic, though the males are far too dense to comprehend such things. Batrean females adorn the bodies of their dead with garlands of flowers prior to burial, a custom that is still tolerated by the Imrians. Males had no such customs.

The Arts

Even prior to annexation, Batrean males evinced little interest in crafts or the arts, preferring hunting, gambling, eating, and fighting. Females practice many decorative crafts, including painting with plant dyes, making jewelry of shells and painted beads, macrame, basket-weaving, and pottery. The Dance of the Diaphanous Veils remains a seductive tradition practiced by the females. During the mating season it is one of the few things that will excite the turgid Batrean males. The dance is said to be even more effective on males of other species.

Language

Most female Batreans are fluent in both Chanan and Low Talislan, while the males are barely conversant in the former of these two tongues. Common male names sound harsh and brutish, such as Thag, Vrog, and Zhug. Females have mellifluous sounding names like Saiel, Jalea, and Shalisa.

Defenses

A heavily armed contingent of about a hundred Imrians is currently stationed on Batre. They built a lookout tower and crude harbor facilities, but otherwise merely took over the existing Batrean fortifications and

upgraded them. Encircling the only remaining Batrean settlement is a living wall of thornwood, augmented by rows of sharpened stakes and hidden snares.

Commerce

Until the island was annexed by the Imrians, it was the custom among the males to sell their womenfolk for gold, a practice many believe the females instigated as a means of escaping their loutish mates. Now the Imrians control the sale of Batrean females, and Imrian brass rings are used as currency on the island.

World Relations

The Imrians breed Batrean females for sale as slaves and concubines, transporting them via their crude coracles to such distant lands as Faradun, the Kang Empire, Arim, Hadj, and Zandu. Aside from this, Batre has no relations with the outside world.

Batrean Settlements

There once were two extensive settlements on the island of Batre: the villages of Domal and Lal-Lat. The Imrians razed Lal-Lat in 602, and moved the surviving inhabitants to Domal, which is further inland, and easier to defend. This primitive settlement is surrounded by hedgerows of thornwood, and accessible by means of a single path that winds its way through jungles inhabited by winged vipers and horned apes.

Catdrac

Catdracs are a sorcerous hybrid of feline and reptilian that can be found in jungles and rain forests throughout the Southern Rim. In the wild, these lithe predators travel in prides of six or more individuals, led by a dominant male. The females do most of the hunting, while the males are employed primarily to protect the pride from attack by its rivals and enemies, which include exomorphs, omnivrax, and malathropes.



Highly intelligent, catdracs are prized as pets, guard beasts, and hunting beasts. If captured and trained while still very young, they make loyal and steadfast companions. Thrall warriors stationed in the Borderlands are especially fond of these creatures, whom they sometimes use to help detect potential ambushes and sneak attacks. Catdracs possess keen senses and are almost impossible to take by surprise.

Size: 2'-4' in length, 20-80 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -6	PER +4
WIL +2	CHA N/A
STR -1	DEX +3
CON 0	SPD +4

Ability Level: 4-9
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 4, Claws: DR 3
Special Abilities: Night vision, detect other lifeforms at Ability Level +PER (range: 100' per Ability Level)
Armor: Scaled hide, PR 3
Hit Points: 5

Giant Mollusk

Giant mollusks are native to the islands, tidal pools, coastal waters, and swamplands of the Southern Rim. There are many species, from benign types that can attain lengths of up to six feet to "man-eating" varieties that can measure up to twelve feet across. Almost all are edible, with one exception: the coral-mollusk, a four-foot bivalve that is found on Batre and Fahn and is normally fatal if ingested. The rarest of all giant mollusks is the giant quaga, a dangerous carnivore that is hunted for the violet pearls that it produces. These pearls may weigh up to ten pounds and are valued at over a thousand gold lumens; understandable, given how difficult they are to obtain. A much smaller variety of quaga is common to Mog; its pearls are of accordingly lesser size and value.

Size: 1'-12' in diameter, 5-500+ lbs.
Attributes: STR +1 per 2' diameter
Ability Level: 1 per 2' diameter
Attacks/Damage: Constriction: DR 3 per 2' diameter
Special Abilities: Crush prey between shells
Armor: Shell, PR 6
Hit Points: 2 per 2' diameter

The Crescent Isles

The Crescent Isles are a chain of small islands located in the northern part of the Far Seas, a body of water that stretches from the island of Nefaratus to the northern tip of the Kang peninsula. Uncharted at its southern and easternmost extremes, the Far Seas are often wracked by tropical storms, particularly during the spring months. Giant sea scorpions, sea demons, and other malefic entities are known to infest these waters.

Many of the Crescent Isles are small and relatively insignificant atolls, appearing on no known map or sea chart. Some, ages-old coral reefs or mounds of tide-worn stone, are barely visible above the waves, and are a hazard to all but the most experienced or prescient navigators. Those islands of note, whether in fact or sailors' legends, are delineated in the following text:

Fahn

Fahn is a beautiful island, considered a veritable paradise by those who have visited there. Beaches of sapphire blue sand ring the shore, and its forests exhibit an abundance of tropical flora, including hundreds of species of flowering vines and dendrons. Clear springs and pools dot the interior, where flocks of many-colored avir come to nest among the treetops. This well-aspected land is populated by a tribe of primitive people known as the Sawila.

The Sawila

The Sawila have pale white skin and a mane of colorful plumes running along the head and neck. Slender and comely to the eye, they attire themselves in costumes of bright feathers, combs made of sea dragon's scales, and necklaces of seeds and shells.

Ancestry

Sawila claim to be descended from a race of avians that migrated across the eastern seas to Talislanta sometime after The Great Disaster. If their tales are true, then these folk may be related to the Aeriad of Vardune.

Society

The inhabitants of Fahn are a peaceful and simple people who live in communal settlements, typically located at the center of a grove of fruiting trees and shrubs. They make their home in graceful dwellings fashioned of woven grasses, and suspended from the



boughs of towering deodars; the resemblance to the nests of certain avian species has been noted by more than one Talislantan naturalist. Wind chimes of many fanciful shapes hang from the branches of these trees, filling the air with their gentle and melodious sounds.

Sawila subsist upon fruits, seeds, and blossom nectar, making such garments and implements as they require from rattan, woven grasses, and feathers. They mate for life, generally producing one or two offspring. Children are raised with great affection and taught the lore of their ancestors by the elders.

Customs

Sawila revere all feathered avian species as avatars of their god, Ariel, and will never do harm to another avian creature. Thousands upon thousands of avir migrate to Fahn each year. These migrations coincide with certain of the Sawila's spell-weaving rituals, leading some Talislantan scholars to speculate that the lifestyle and customs of the Sawila may well be holdovers of their ancient avian ancestry.

Government

The Sawila have no formal government, but follow whatever pursuits they desire without doing harm to others. Though disputes are rare, a council of seven tribal elders is available to advise members of the group as needed. Among these gentle folk crime is unknown. It is ironic, then, that so many Talislantans refer to such folk as "primitive", when in many ways they are far more advanced than so-called "civilized" peoples.

Magic & Religion

The Sawila practice a form of natural magic called spell-weaving, which consists entirely of verbal and

somatic elements. They worship Arial, an elemental spirit of the wind whom they envision as a winged Sawila of great beauty, and her consort, Makk, spirit of the sea. They claim to have derived their spell-weaving abilities from Arial and her avatars – the winged creatures known as avir. It is said that the Sawila are able to employ their subtle magics to speak to all creatures of the air and water, and even to effect changes in the weather. Sawila cover the bodies of their dead with fragrant blossoms and sea shells, then cast them out to sea on bowers of woven branches.

The Arts

Sawila songs are part oral history, and part magic. Their music is composed of multiple layers of vocal harmonies, accompanied by wind chimes of varying pitch and timbre. The Dance of the Rainbow Plumes is said to represent the flight of the Sawila's ancestors from their doomed ancestral homeland to the island of Fahn. The Sawila also practice many decorative crafts, such as weaving, macrame, making wind chimes, fashioning beads and implements from sea shells, making decorative headdresses and garments from feathers, pottery, and painting with clay pigments. Everything that the Sawila make is beautifully decorated, from their garments to their homes.

Language

The Sawila are fluent in Chanan, and also converse via an expressive and graceful version of Sign. Their language is sung rather than spoken, the melodic patterns conveying emotional content and even more subtle shades of meaning. Some say that the Sawila dialect sounds like the warbling of songbirds. Male and female names have four syllables, and a "sing-song" quality, such as Iakela, Eladia, Akatia, Selanea, an so on.

Defenses

Sawila are gentle creatures who abhor violence. Still, if threatened they will use their spell-weaving abilities in defense of their settlements. Their people have long been victimized by the Imrians and Mangar, who covet the exotic-looking Sawila females as slaves and consorts, respectively.

Commerce

Among themselves, Sawila use necklaces of shells as currency, or for barter. They do not trade with other peoples, and so have no use for gold or currencies.

Calling the Elementals

Excerpted from a short monologue attributed to the famed Talislantan naturalist, Thystram; who, though widely known as an astute observer of the world around him, was prone to occasional excesses of style with regard to his writings, as can be seen in the following:

"Nothing could be more beautiful or inspiring than the spell-songs of the Sawila tribes, who dwell upon the Isle of Fahn, in the Far Seas. To hear the music of the Sawila spell-singers is to know the voice of magic as it sounded long, long ago. Their melodies, sung in pure and simple tones yet woven into harmonic tapestries of dazzling complexity, are akin to the ancient calls of the elemental spirits of wind, water, earth, and fire.

When the Sawila sing their wind spirit songs, clouds chase across the sky to gather or disperse; thunder, lightning, and rain come or go, all at their behest. When they sing to the spirits of the water, streams and rivers heed their commands.The seas around their island home grow calm, or roil in anger; they yield up sunken treasures, or convey to the Sawila such denizens of the deep as they wish to summon. When the earth songs are sung, the ground shakes and trembles beneath their feet, to open or close as they desire; rock turns to earth, and earth to dust. And when the fire spirits are called they bring warmth, awaken volcanoes from their sleep, or do as they are beckoned.

Should you ever hear the songs of the Sawila, you will know the true meaning of wonder. For these are the ancient songs that once were heard throughout Talislanta, before the coming of the so-called civilized peoples, and the havoc that they have wrought upon the world."

Worldview

The Sawila tribes lived in isolation for untold centuries until the Imrians, Na-Ku, and Mangar began to prey upon them. Since then they have grown suspicious of outsiders, and they now take more greater pains to protect themselves from attack. The Sawila have no formal relations with any other nation or government.

The Mangar Isles

The Mangars are a cluster of four small islands located in close proximity to one another. Covered in jungle, the hidden lagoons and grottos on these islands are home to numerous small pirate bands, known collectively as the Mangar Corsairs.

The Mangar Corsairs

Mangar are of average stature, with dark brown skin and narrow eyes. It is the custom of the males to shave their heads, wear long mustaches, and decorate their chest with intricate and colorful tattoos depicting sea dragons. Mangar females shave their heads as well, but retain a long scalp-lock, typically confined by a ring of copper, brass, or gold. They also wear tattoos, though usually on their backs or arms. Both sexes dress in high boots, loose pantaloons, brass armbands, and earrings, with curved daggers tucked into their belt-sashes.

Ancestry

Mangar claim descent from the Baratus, a race of fierce, sky-roving pirates extant during the Archaen Age. Their claims may or may not be true, though it has been noted that Mangar also bear some resemblance to the Oceanians.

Society

Mangar live in fortified port settlements surrounded by walls of rough-hewn stone. Individual dwellings are made of stone or mud brick, with thatch roofs. The Mangar diet consists of shellfish, nar-eel, and other sea creatures; typically, served raw with sliced roots and tubers. A strong grog is made from local grains and tubers; a few erd are kept on hand for milk and cheese.

Mangar relationships tend to be unstable, and rarely last long. Instead, the main "family unit" is the corsair crew; captain, first mate, second mate, and so on. Children are left to fend for themselves most of the time, and are often dirty and underfed. Able males and females frequently sail forth from the settlements on raids and are absent for long periods, leaving the children in the hands of those who are too elderly or infirm to go to sea.

Customs

Justly renowned as murderers and cut-throats, the Mangar Corsairs are the bane of ships that traverse the waters of the Far Seas. They are regarded with hatred and fear by sailors from many lands. The Mangar range far and wide in their swift-moving carracks, preying on other vessels, torturing victims, and robbing them of their valuables. There are a number of different pirate bands, all rivals of one another. In lean times they prey on each other, sometimes fighting over potential plunder. The make-up of these bands is frequently quite diverse: Captives freed from Imrian vessels, shanghaied sailors, exiles from foreign lands, and even Chana Witchmen have been found amongst Mangar crews.

Mangar are superstitious, and often read the skies and seas for omens. On a day judged to be governed by ill omens a Mangar crew will not set sail except under threat of bodily harm. They will then obey, but with much reluctance. There is a powerful taboo against mutiny, which is believed to bring a terrible curse upon the mutineers. Despite this Mangar are occasionally willing to risk the effects of a curse rather than endure the torment of an especially cruel or avaricious captain. One thing no Mangar will do is to cross the wake of a Black Savant vessel, which they believe is will invite the most evil sort of misfortune.

Government

Corsair captains rule their crews with an iron hand, dividing booty and maintaining a semblance of order whether on board ship or at home. In large settlements where there are several captains the one who is strongest or has the biggest and best-armed crew will claim the role of leader. Mangar steal from and fight with each other often. As long as no transgression in rank occurs, the offenders are left to sort things out for themselves. Captains pass judgement on all cases of insubordination and attempted mutiny. Punishments range from a few strokes of the lash to torture, mutilation, or an invitation to "dance the mangarello" (see The Arts).

Magic & Religion

The Mangar bow before no god, but have a superstitious fear of sea and air elementals. To placate these entities they sometimes burn offerings of incense from brass censers hung from the bowsprits of their carracks. Aside from this, there are no other rituals or observances. Mangar sometimes cozen a few spells and charms from captive Chana, though it is a rare corsair who exhibits any great talent for magic. Mangar bury their dead at sea, tossing the bodies overboard without ceremony.

The Arts

Mangar practice ship building and sail making, talents at which they exhibit considerable ability. They have limited metallurgical skills, however, and so prefer to steal quality tools and weapons rather than make their own. When drunk on grog Mangar sometimes sing sea chants that glorify the deeds of past corsair captains and bands. If very drunk they may attempt a few rounds of the mangarello, a foot-stamping dance of considerable activity but little grace. Or, better yet in the eyes of the Mangar, they will prod captives with spears and force them to "dance the mangarello" for their entertainment – usually off a plank, and preferably into sea demon-infested waters. When not on the hunt, Mangar favor ska-wae, a dangerous game played with curved daggers and dice. Mangar with less than the customary number of fingers are not uncommon, a direct consequence of poor ska-wae play.

Language

Mangar speak the Sea Nomad tongue, and also converse in a form of sign. Common names generally utilize the prefix, "Mang", in them Common male names include Mangido, Mangaza, and Mangoro. Female names end in "el", as in Mangidel, Mangazel, Mangorel.

Defenses

The Mangar's main defenses are speed — running from pursuers in their swift carracks — and concealment. Mangar settlements are always located in secluded, hidden lagoons chosen for their defensibility. For additional security settlements are enclosed by stone walls; catapults and ballista are mounted atop the battlements, which can also be manned by archers and crossbowmen. Mangar sometimes set traps to poison or incapacitate giant sea scorpions and other aquatic predators who live too close to their settlements.

Commerce

Thieves by trade, Mangar traffic in currencies from many lands and cultures. Gold lumens are preferred, but no currency is refused. Slaves are used as barter, consorts, hostages, or for cruel sport.

Worldview

The Mangar have ties with no other nation or peoples. Like most sensible seafarers, the Corsairs steer clear of Nefaratus and give the Black Savants' vessels a wide berth. They mark the cannibals of Pana-Ku as enemies, and regard the Sea Rogues of Gao-Din as hated rivals.

The Fine Art of Back-Stabbing

'The Mangar possess a talent for treachery that is ingrained upon them from an early age. Mangar children are taught that in order to survive and prosper, they should never trust the word of others. Instead, they are told to trust only their own instincts, and to do whatever is needed to achieve that which they desire. This behavior is evident in all aspects of clan life, and is typified by the Mangar game of ska-wae, where it is acceptable to cheat, so long as one does not get caught.

Mangar will do anything to obtain an advantage over their rivals. When courting a prospective mate, males will bribe, cajole, threaten, and sometimes even kill in order to win a female's affection. To rise to the rank of ship's captain, a Mangar corsair may have to eliminate a half-dozen rivals, using guile, duplicity, or the simple expediency of a knife in the back. Competition for the position of clan chieftain is even more fierce, and may entail the use of blackmail, sabotage, slow poisons, or outright warfare.

The Gao say that to meet a Mangar in combat is to understand the true nature of the Mangar soul. Where Gao rely on swordsmanship and daring, Mangar prefer ambushes, dirty tricks, and sneak attacks. A Gao is gracious both in victory and defeat. Win or lose, a Mangar will put a knife in you the minute your back is turned. To put it simply, the Mangar trust no one, and are in turn trusted by none.

Aquatic Vasp

Larger relative of the land dwelling vasp, the aquatic vasp is a giant, predatory insectoid that haunts coastal regions and deep swamps all along the Southern Rim. Like their landborne relatives, aquatic vasps are nocturnal creatures. They emerge from their watery lairs to prowl the shallows, hunting for water raknids and other aquatic prey. If provided with the opportunity, they will also take humanoid victims. It is the nature of these creatures to leave fine lines of webbing in their wake, demarcating their territories. When another creature touches the sensitive web line, the vasp is alerted to its presence and leaps to the attack. Once the victim has been subdued, the vasp will drag it below the water, where it can feed upon its prey undisturbed. Aquatic vasps compete for prey with giant river kra and



skalanx and sometimes engage in fierce battles with these savage predators.

Size: 11'-12' in height, 600-800 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -12	PER +3
WIL +7	CHA N/A
STR +8	DEX +4
CON +6	SPD +3

Level: 12-20
Attacks/Damage: Pincers: DR 20, Sting: DR 12 +venom (DR 3 per round for 10 rounds), or Mandibles: DR 16, Webbing (STR roll at -5 to resist)
Special Abilities: Aquatic, night vision, webbing
Armor: Metallic scales, PR 6
Hit Points: 50

PANA-KU

Pana-Ku is a volcanic isle, wreathed in jungle and ringed by a dozen or more reefs and lesser atolls. Some of these atolls are volcanic in nature, and alternate between periods of activity and dormancy. The large volcano that gave birth to the main island of Pana-Ku has been dormant for centuries, though it still smolders ominously, occasionally releasing clouds of noxious vapor. This hostile isle is home to the Na-Ku, a folk of horrific appearance and habits.

THE NA-KU

Na-Ku are hunched and misshapen creatures who have oily indigo blue skin, yellow eyes, skull-like visages, and a serpentine tail. They dress in crude loincloths of animal hide, and wear necklaces of humanoid teeth and bones.

ANCESTRY

Some Talislantan scholars believe that the entire Na-Ku race may have been spawned (some say voided) by the Na-Ku's King, a horrible half-demon known as Narug. Others think the race may be a mutated species of Darkling, or a cross between Darkling and some lower planar species.

SOCIETY

The Na-Ku are cannibals who prey on other humanoids. Like termites in a hive, the Na-Ku exist solely to satisfy the desires and urges of their ruler - the horridly obese Na-Ku King. At his behest they go forth in their canoes to hunt for food, slaves, and consorts, whom they feed to their king. Despite frequent hunting and raiding expeditions, the Na-Ku are barely able to keep up with the King's prodigious appetite. As a result, most Na-Ku must make do with such scraps and leavings as they can scavenge, hide, or steal. Only their part-demonic constitutions prevent the miserable creatures from starving to death.

Na-Ku live in crude, domed huts made of thatch. They prefer to eat man-flesh, but are unparticular with regard to type and quality: humanoids, wild animals, carrion, dead aquatic creatures that have washed-up on the shore, and even fellow Na-Ku are all considered equally edible. Males and females mate indiscriminately, the female giving birth to a "litter" of up to eight young. Fully half of the offspring are still-born, and two thirds of the surviving litter either die of neglect or are eaten.

CUSTOMS

Na-Ku exhibit many of the attributes of their demonic forbears. They are greedy, voracious, and cruel, and pick on those who are weaker than themselves. Talislantan sailors speak of Na-Ku who, being held in captivity, have devoured their young, their mates, and even themselves (the latter claim may perhaps be an exaggeration).

Government

The King is the undisputed ruler of the Na-Ku; his word, conveyed through the witchdoctors, is the law. As the King is demonic and even maniacal by nature, his commands are not necessarily governed by logic. Nonetheless, his subjects must obey or face the consequences. Individuals accused of failing to obey the King's dictates in any way, or of slacking, hoarding food, or any of a hundred other offenses, are taken to the King for punishment. In most cases the defender is simply devoured by the King without trial or ceremony.

Magic & Religion

Superstitious and ignorant by nature, the Na-Ku are in awe of magic. They revere their horrible King as a god, and obey his decrees and the commands of his witchdoctors without question. Na-Ku witchdoctors act as seers and spiritual advisors, but rarely possess actual spell-casting abilities. Dead Na-Ku are viewed as food by all live Na-Ku.

The Arts

The Na-Ku make dugout canoes and crude weapons of flint and bone, but otherwise exhibit no talent for or interest in most arts or crafts. Certain of the Na-Ku ceremonies are accompanied by screaming, howling, and the beating of skulls with leg bones, though to refer to such a mindless cacophony as "music" might be stretching things.

Language

The Na-Ku speak Chanan, though their version of the language has been mangled and garbled over the course of time so that it bears little resemblance to the tongue spoken by other natives of the Far Seas. Common names end in the suffix, "Ku", as in Kyo-Ku, Dja-Ku, Mo-Ku, etc.

Defenses

The Na-Ku have no fortifications, though all able members of the tribes are expected to bear arms and defend the isle in the event of intrusion by outsiders. As the island literally crawls with Na-Ku and is regarded as something of a hellhole, it has never been invaded.

Commerce

Food (alias meat) is the only thing of true value to the Na-Ku, who, due to the gross appetites of their King, are always hungry. They trade with no other peoples.

Na-Ku: Feeding the Demon-King

Following a wreck at sea, the Farad procurer, Famal of the House of Coros, was taken captive by a group of Na-Ku cannibals. Here is an excerpt from his account of that incident:

"After being pulled from the water by a group of Na-Ku, I was brought by dugout canoe to the island and thrown into a crude bamboo cage supported by two pairs of wooden wheels. With me in the cell was a six-legged creature that I took for a tardisite, and two sailors from our ship, both of whom were quite dead. Ignoring my pleas the Na-Ku took hold of a pair of ropes affixed to the wheeled cage and dragged the rude conveyance inland. After a time we passed through a ring of thornwood and entered a village of thatched hovels. At this point we joined a number of other wheeled cages, each pulled by a team of Na-Ku. The eerie procession continued inland for a mile or more, finally coming to a halt at the base of a great volcano.

Here I saw a sight that will haunt me to the end of my days: the horned demon-king of the Na-Ku, seated upon a throne decorated with humanoid skulls. The monster was over twenty feet in height, and perhaps half again as wide; never have I seen a thing so grotesquely obese. Alongside the king's awful throne his servants had built a crude wooden ramp that extended upwards, terminating in a platform that was level with the demon-king's head. Now I saw the purpose of the wheeled cages, for this was how the Na-Ku conveyed food to their ruler.

Shaking with fear I watched as a cage containing a dead nar-eel and an urthrax was rolled up the ramp, and its contents thrown into the gaping mouth of the demon-king, who chewed-up the meat and spat out the bones. Another cage, this one filled with the bodies of other sailors who had drowned in the shipwreck, was brought up; then another, and another.

When the time came for my cage to be brought I uttered a prayer to the Golden God Avar, promising to donate the sum of my wealth if only he would spare me. Slowly, the Na-Ku began to roll my cage up the ramp. Then, a miracle! One of the wheels of the shabbily-built contraption fell off; the wheeled

Continued on following page...

cage tottered once, twice, then toppled off the ramp and came crashing to the ground. The bars of the cage gave way; I squirmed free of the debris and ran for all I was worth into the jungle.

After many days and numerous brushes with death I made my way to the western coast, where a week later I was spotted and rescued by a Farad merchant vessel. Upon arriving safely in Tarun I went forthwith to the church of Avar and donated the sum of twenty gold lumens – admittedly, somewhat less than I had promised, though in truth I had signed no contract and in any event the pact was made under extreme duress and therefore not binding.

Worldview

The Na-Ku have no relations with any other race or nation, and are shunned by all decent folk. In recent years it is said that the Na-Ku have declined in number, a situation that may be attributed to the Mangar Corsairs, who make it a regular practice to kill these demonoids on sight.

Venomwood

The venomwood tree is a rare variety of tropical plant found on the island of Pana-Ku and other parts of the Southern Rim. Its wood exudes a virulent poison that is thought to protect the tree from boring insects and root grubs. The cannibalistic Na-Ku tribes make "poison arrows" (as they are most aptly called) from the branches of the venomwood. Victims hit by a poison arrow first experience searing pain in the area surrounding the wound, followed swiftly by a noticeable loss of strength. Unless an antidote can be obtained, even the slightest wound from a poison arrow will result in death within two to eight hours. Illegal in most civilized lands, venomwood arrows are greatly favored by assassins and are sometimes available through black market connections.

Scimitar Isles

For many years, these four small atolls, situated near the perilous Mangar Islands, were thought by most experts to be inhabited only by a few exotic species of wild beasts — such as the rare silver draconid, prized by naturalists and collectors. The Mangar Corsairs insist otherwise, stating that one of these isles serves as a hidden base for an ancient race of sea dragon hunters known by their ancestral name: the Sun-Ra-San.

The Sun-Ra-San

The Sun-Ra-San are a semi-aquatic race. They have silvery skin, covered with fine scales, and deep blue eyes. The Sun-Ra-San resemble their "civilized" brothers, the Sunra of the Kang Empire, but in general are larger and more muscular of build. They wear armor of sea dragon scales and boots of rainbow kra's hide, and carry spears and daggers made from the bones of sea dragons.

Ancestry

The Sun-Ra-San are the descendants of an ancient race of seafarers who once spanned the waters of the Far Seas. They may also be related to the Batrachians, a race of amphibious creatures now thought to be extinct. The tribes escaped from the Eastern Lands in time to avoid subjugation by the Quan, and fled to the Scimitar Isles, where they now live much as their ancient ancestors did before the time of The Great Disaster.

Society

Sun-Ra-San live in castles carved from giant mounds of coral. The primary unit is the extended family, or clan. 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 the art of hunting and in Sun-Ra-San culture begins at age two.

The Sun-Ra-San are hunters of sea dragons and other large aquatic carnivores, whom they kill for meat, hide, scales, and bone; nothing is ever wasted (see sidebar). Sea dragons provide food and the raw materials required to make all that they need. Their ship's hulls are made of dragon rib bones, with the hide being stretched across the framework to form the hull. Sea dragon scales are used to make armor, weapons, tools, boots, and garments.

Customs

Sun-Ra-San culture is rich in legend and lore. Of special importance is the legend of Sur-San the Fire-Giver, a bold hunter who led his tribe safely from the grasp of the Quan. His name means "First One" – appropriate, as he was the first elected ruler of the Sun-Ra-San after they fled their homeland. Sur-San is revered as a great warrior and hunter, but also as a great scholar. He used his great knowledge of the seas and tides to escape and outwit the Quan. Written accounts of this legend can be found in most Sun-Ra-San dwellings.

Like the Sunra, the Dragon Hunters have a great love of learning. The young must learn to write the ancient Sun-Ra-San script, and to read the ancient sea charts and scrolls (inscribed on specially cured dragon hides) that contain the history and culture of their people. Dragon Hunters value freedom above all things, and would sooner die than serve under a master. One day they hope to return to free the rest of their people.

Magic & Religion

The Sun-Ra-San worship an elemental sea deity named Aqus. They have a great love of the sea, and revere the Moonfish as an avatar of their elemental deity. Priests of the sect are practitioners of aquamancy. Like the Sunra, the Sun-Ra-San bury their dead at sea, believing that the spirits of the dead will be reborn as moonfish.

The Arts

Sun-Ra-San practice many crafts involving the use of sea dragons scales, bone, and hide. They sculpt large dragon bones, carving them into smooth and intricate shapes that are pleasing to the eye. The music of the Sun-Ra-San is haunting and often sad. Their "singers" produce a wordless vocal sound across a range of six octaves; the tones carry for great distances through both air and water. It is said that to fully enjoy the music of the Sun-Ra-San one must hear it underwater.

Language

Sun-Ra-San speak the ancient tongue of their race, called Sun-Ra-Sa, and are also fluent in sign; the latter is useful when attempting to communicate underwater. Common names are hyphenated; male names begin with "Su", while female names begin with "Sa". The second syllable always starts with an "R", as in Sur-Rin, Sun-Ran, Sun-Ra (male); Sar-Rin, San-Ran, San-Ra (female).

Government

The Sun-Ra-San elect their leaders by popular vote. The ruler of each settlement, whether male or female, is accorded the title, "Eminence". A panel of eleven elected advisors, called the Council, assists the Eminence in all decisions, and may even overrule him or her by majority vote. The Council also acts as the Sun-Ra-San's judicial system.

Hunting Sea Dragons

Like their ancestors, the Sun-Ra-San rely upon the sea dragon for their survival. They hunt the great beasts in their dragon barques, tracking their prey by its wake and through the use of certain age-old aquamantic divinations. Upon sighting a dragon the Sun-Ra-San give pursuit, until at last they draw within range of their harpoons. This is the moment of truth, for the hunters' aim and skill are all that stands between them and certain death. Should the first shots fail to strike a vital area, the dragon will dive deep, dragging the hunters and their ship down in a deadly maelstrom. If the attack is successful the wounded sea dragon will not dive, but will instead attack the ship, thrashing wildly and snapping at the hunters with its great jaws.

When the creature has been defeated the Sun-Ra-San offer a prayer of thanks to their elemental god and ask forgiveness of the sea dragon, whose death the hunters have caused so that their people might continue to live. This done, the body of the dragon is towed back to the Sun-Ra-San's settlement. Here, the creature will be brought ashore and stripped of its meat, bones, and scales; nothing is wasted. Afterwards there is a great feast, during which the hunters will regale their people with the story of their exploits, and the bravery of the sea dragon.

Defenses

The Sun-Ra-San maintain a fleet of well-armed dragon barques, which are used for dragon-hunting and for the defense of their people. Their port settlements are well hidden, and have never been found despite numerous attempts by the Mangar and others. It is said that the Sun-Ra-San castle defenses include heavy catapults and harpoon-throwers.

Commerce

The various Sun-Ra-San tribes trade among each other, using the scales of the rainbow kra as currency. They may also trade with the Sawila of Fahn, and perhaps others in the region. Sun-Ra-San ships may sometimes be encountered far from shore, laden with sea dragon ivory, scales, and sunken treasure.



Worldview

The Sun-Ra-San have ancestral ties to the Sunra of Quan, but have no diplomatic relations with any other nation. For security reasons the existence and location of their colony remains a secret. The Dragon Hunters have grown in number over the past few decades, to the point where they may soon be sufficiently strong to challenge the Mangar Corsairs for dominance of the Far Seas. The Kang, current rulers of the Kang Empire, are said to fear these folk and what they represent to their people.

Sea Dragon



The sea dragons of Talislanta are great serpentine creatures covered with iridescent green scales that dwell in deep waters across the Southern Rim. The bane of ocean-going vessels, they are capable of crushing the hulls of even the largest ships in their coils, and they are attracted by disturbances in the water, which they can sense from miles away.

Sea dragons are not particular with regard to their eating habits, exhibiting an equal fondness for ocean kra, giant sea scorpions, and humanoid beings. They have an abiding fear of zaratan (particularly in herds), and tend to avoid areas where these creatures are found in numbers. A remarkable attribute of sea dragons is their ability to ingest materials of all sorts without suffering apparent harm; Sun-Ra-San dragon-hunters claim to have found ancient metal artifacts, weapons, and implements in the stomachs of slain sea dragons. Stories of this sort may be responsible for the accounts of sea dragons keeping stores of sunken treasure, a belief that is without basis in fact.

Size: 50'-60', 6-10 tons

Attributes:

INT +2	PER +3
WIL +1	CHA -3
STR +9	DEX -3
CON +6	SPD +2

Ability Level: 8-16+

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 25, Constrict: DR 19 per round

Special Abilities: Swallow man-sized prey whole (on critical success), converse in ancient tongue, immunity to poisons

Armor: Scales, PR 5

Hit Points: 86

Places of Note

Rune Island

A barren and precipitous mound of volcanic stone, Rune Island is notable primarily for the countless runes and hieroglyphs etched across the entire surface of the rocky isle. Talislantan scholars have long argued over the meaning of these cryptic runes, who or what created them, and to what end. A thorough study of Rune Island has never been completed, owing to such factors as time, the requisite cost in labor and materials, and a natural aversion to the isle's less-than-hospitable inhabitants: giant sea scorpions and nar-eels.

Fetish Island

Scholars of many lands are likewise intrigued by Fetish Island, named for the hundreds of stone images and totems that can purportedly be found in the jungles of its interior region. Most of these artifacts are one or two feet in height, and weigh up to thirty pounds. The Na-Ku of Pana-Ku claim that these stone fetishes have magical properties; specifically, that the totems are alive, and speak in tongues. Unfortunately for the future of academic research, the isle is infested with several virulent predatory and parasitic species, including grey ikshada, urthrax and alatus.

The Dark Coast

To the south of the wilderness of Zaran lies the region known as the Dark Coast. Hemmed in to the north by the low-lying Topaz Mountains, the terrain here is predominantly thick and tangled jungle, interspersed with sections of marshland and tropical forest. This region is home to many unusual species of plants and animals. Green and scarlet varieties of lotus grow

throughout the region, being most common in the central swamplands. Amber wasps also proliferate in this portion of the coast, an indicator that the swamps may well be rich in amber.

The Boru and Kiru Rivers effectively divide the Dark Coast into three territories: the western rainforests, home of the Green Men; the central swamplands, home of the Mud People; and the eastern junglelands, home of the fierce Ahazu.

Western Rainforests

The rainforests of the Dark Coast are draped in a dense canopy of tropical greenery supported atop the spreading branches of giant deodars, some over a hundred and forty feet in height. Drenched by torrential rains from the Gulf of Mog, the forests are a riot of flowering vines, massive ferns, and barrel-shaped baobab trees. The hot and humid weather is ideal for plant life of all types, and also for the region's humanoid inhabitants, a race of sentient plant folk called the Green Men.

The Green Men

Green Men are small in stature, with mossy green skin and hair, and bright yellow eyes. Imp-like in appearance, they dress in abbreviated garments made of soft, woven mosses.



Ancestry

The origins of the Green Men are uncertain. Some believe that the species evolved naturally. Others claim that the Green Men were created by the Archaen sorcerer, Viridian. Green Men themselves do not appear to know the answer to this question, nor does it seem to concern them.

Society

Green Men are the gentlest and kindest of all Talislantan races. They possess the ability to influence all things that grow in the earth, and enjoy a symbiotic relationship with their environment. Green Men derive all that they need to survive in the rain-forests: shelter, clothing, and sustenance. They reproduce by budding, the young sprouts reaching adulthood in about six months' time. Green Men make their homes in the boles of great, living plants which they call D'Oko. They live in communal groups of up to eighty individuals, reproducing by means of a process similar to cross-pollenization. Here, they tend the great d'oko plants that serve as their homes with great care and affection.

Customs

Green Men view all things in nature as connected: part of the same living, breathing organism. They co-exist with many species of plants and animal that are regarded as dangerous or hostile by other Talislantans, including the giant mantrap plant, stranglevine, exomorphs, alatus, and others. The uncommonly mild and sensitive disposition of these benign forest creatures is such that, if removed from their homeland, many Green Men gradually wither and die of sadness.

Government

The Green Men have no ruler or governing body, but live according to the Laws of Nature. There is no crime among the Green Men, anymore than there is crime among any members of the plant kingdom.

Magic & Religion

Green Men have an affinity with the elemental spirits of plants, earth, water, and air, but practice no formal religion. Their reverence for the rain forest is derived from a love of all things in nature. Some Talislantan naturalists claim that Green Men observe the changing of the seasons; in particular, the coming of spring. They claim that the Green Men have certain secret rituals and celebrations which no outsider has ever seen, involving organized chanting, singing and perhaps dancing. More research into the subject is required.

The Arts

To the Green Men, nature is art; they see beauty in the natural arrangement of flowers, grasses, vegetation, hills, valleys, trees, streams. Such crafts as they practice are limited to the weaving of simple fabrics, baskets, and rope.

Speaking the Language of Plants

Excerpt from the logbook of the Green Aeriad Botanomancer, K'Ya Cha.

"The weeks that I have spent among the Green Men have finally begun to yield results. They have come to trust me, and to understand that I mean them no harm. One of their number, a creature named Lahsa, today agreed to act as an interpreter, allowing me to communicate with some of the local forms of plant life. From our discussions I was able to acquire a fund of valuable knowledge, both in the practical and theoretical realms. For instance, I learned that the primary difference between plants and humanoids is their perception of time. To plants, humanoids are mercurial, chaotic, and unpredictable. By contrast, plants are steady, patient, and respectful of the natural order.

All plants and trees are members of the plant kingdom, a hierarchy that ranges from the humblest lichens to the greatest and most ancient mangs. As a general rule, the great trees tend to speak more eloquently than shrubs and plants. Having lived longer, they are wiser than their younger brethren. Stretching their limbs above the top of the forest they can sense scents and sounds carried by the winds; through their network of roots they can detect the presence of other creatures by vibration. According to Lahsa, trees have a sense of history, a field of knowledge that they hold in high regard. Plants and shrubs, on the other hand, are more concerned with the here and now.

Of all the plants we spoke with, the least sociable by far was the spitting crocus, which hissed at me as I approached and ordered me to go away (Lahsa apologized for the plant's rude behavior, which he said was typical of the species). A spiny-stemmed repente likewise affected a stand-offish demeanor, but under the gentle prodding of Lahsa it finally allowed me to touch it without stinging. A great span-oak proved to be most cooperative. It talked with us about its history and lineage for hours, until the twin suns set in the west and the great oak fell fast sleep."

Language

Green Men speak the secret language of the plant world, a lilting cant that is said to be quite pleasing to the ear, and is reminiscent of the music of wooden flutes (see sidebar). Common names are "soft" sounding, with no hard consonants: Laomo, Lahsa, Eloa, and Alaho. Gender distinctions are not apparent.

Defenses

Green Men are incapable of doing harm to other living things, regardless of the provocation. Their only defenses consist of a variety of ingenious snares and pitfalls, which they excel at making. Many of these devices employ living plants — such as yellow stickler, stranglevine and violet creeper — none of which ever molest the Green Men. When threatened, the natives usually flee deeper into the forest in order to entice pursuers into their cleverly laid traps. If trapped or cornered, Green Men will surrender without a struggle.

Commerce

Green Men are symbiotes who live in harmony with nature, and share freely of all they have. They do not trade with other peoples, but will share what they have with those in need.

Worldview

Shy by nature, Green Men avoid contact with most of the so-called civilized races, though some exhibit a fondness Ariane, Muses, Green Aeriad, Gnomekin, and Mogroth. Green Men are often preyed upon by slavers from Imria, who sell the docile creatures as servants and gardeners. Imrians invade the Dark Coast in numbers during the rainy season, when the Green Men's young are just beginning to mature. Unscrupulous buyers in Faradun, Rajanistan, and the Citystate of Hadj are known to covet Green Men slaves. Curiously, the Mud People and Ahazu never harm the Green Men, believing that doing so would arouse the wrath of the jungle.

D'oko

The d'oko is a species of giant lotus found only in the rain forests of the Dark Coast. Employed as living plant-houses by the Green Men, d'oko are hardy perennials, growing new blossoms during the spring of each year. Having been tended by Green Men for so many generations, these great flowering plants no longer possess the ability to reproduce by themselves. Rather, it is the interaction of Green Men moving from plant to plant that is said to perform the function of pollination for the d'oko. In return, the Green Men obtain nourishment from the d'oko's pollen and nectar and shelter, constituting a symbiotic relationship that is beneficial to both species.

The Central Swamplands

This region is essentially one vast and nearly impassable bog. Sodden marshlands ring the coastal areas, where untold numbers of avians come to nest and raise their young.Water raknids also favor these places. Inland, the gnarled branches of hag-trees hang heavy with trailing mosses and vines. Here the air reeks of the stench of rotting vegetation and brackish waters, and metal tools and implements seem to rust overnight in the sweltering humidity. Green and scarlet varieties of lotus grow throughout the Central Swamplands, though harvesting these rare plants is no simple matter. For these swamps are home to a race of amphibious humanoids called the Moorg-Wan — the "Mud-People".

The Moorg-Wan

The Moorg-Wan are squat, four-legged humanoids of massive size. Their ponderous frames are covered with thick folds of loose brown skin. They wear no garments of any kind, but make crude tools and weapons of wood and bone.

Ancestry

It is possible that the Moorg-Wan are a degenerate or mutated species of Imrian; an even earlier connection may be made with the now-extinct Batrachians. The Moorg-Wan claim that they are a distinct people, spawned from the primordial ooze at the beginning of time. Curiously, this account does not differ substantially from the Imrians' version of their own genesis.

Society

The Moorg-Wan live along the banks of the Boru River, and in the sodden territories between the two rivers are their ancestral breeding grounds. Their mud-palace dwellings resemble great, oozing piles of muck and silt connected by networks of above-ground tunnels. Clans range from small villages of twenty-to-thirty individuals to great mud "cities" with populations of up to five hundred.

Male Moorg-Wan engage in violent mating ritual-combats in order to win the right to mate with females; dominant males may have a "harem" of a dozen or more females. Their young hatch from eggs, then spend the first seventeen years of life as legless, mud-dwelling newts. The customary six appendages develop soon thereafter, along with rudimentary lungs.

Moorg-Wan eat plants, mollusks, the eggs of other creatures, and – on occasion – their own young. They consider the lotus plant a delicacy, and jealously guard their supplies. Their tribes dredge the riverbanks for amber and mine the mud for sapphires and other semi-precious stones, which are found here in abundance.

Customs

Moorg-Wan customs and culture are largely unknown, due in great part to the unsociable attitude of these folk. Several naturalistic studies have been undertaken, with mixed results.

Government

The dominant male in any group of Moorg-Wan will be its chieftain. The chieftain is aided by his shamans, who intimidate their superstitious followers with the threat of curses and evil omens. There is no organized system of laws among these folk, though there are numerous taboos. Most revolve around obedience to the tribal shamans, who decide what is and is not taboo in the first place. Offenders are judged by the shamans, killed, and fed to wild animals – no Moorg-Wan would ever eat such taboo-ridden offenders for fear of acquiring a taint.

Magic & Religion

Mud People Shamans are the spiritual advisors of their race. They possess no actual magical abilities, but are obeyed because their people believe that they speak for Moorg, the Mud God. Purportedly, the worship of Moorg involves many strange mating and fertility rituals, the nature of which is perhaps best left to the imagination. Moorg-Wan dead are buried far from the village without delay, as the corpses decompose rapidly and emit a terrible stench.

The Arts

Moorg-Wan practice a unique art form that they call "mud sculpture", and is essentially self-explanatory. Their crafts are limited to the making of crude tools and weapons. The Mud People have a weird form of music involving the beating of hollow logs with clubs, accompanied by the eerie wailing of newts. The music is considered an acquired taste at best.

Language

The Mud People have their own language, a crude tongue punctuated by much slurping, gurgling, and frothing at the gills, which is said to be almost impossible

for non-aquatic beings to replicate. They also communicate by a version of sign that is somewhat different from standard sign language, as it makes use of an extra set of appendages and a tail. Common names start with a "moor" or "mur" sound, as in Moorok, Muurg, Moorug, Muurek, Mugwan.

Defenses

Moorg-Wan are a belligerent and aggressive people who guard their territories with considerable fervor. Their favorite weapons are the bwan — a heavy thornwood club — and daggers made from foot-long thorns. At close range, the powerful creatures sometimes drop their weapons and attempt to rend opponents with their webbed claws, or to butt them to the ground and trample them underfoot. Moorg-Wan settlements are "mud-fortresses" surrounded by thornwood barricades and mud walls up to ten feet in height. All able-bodied males are all considered warriors, and are required to defend the settlement if needed. Moorg-Wan war parties regularly patrol the territories that border Ahazu lands, searching for intruders.

Commerce

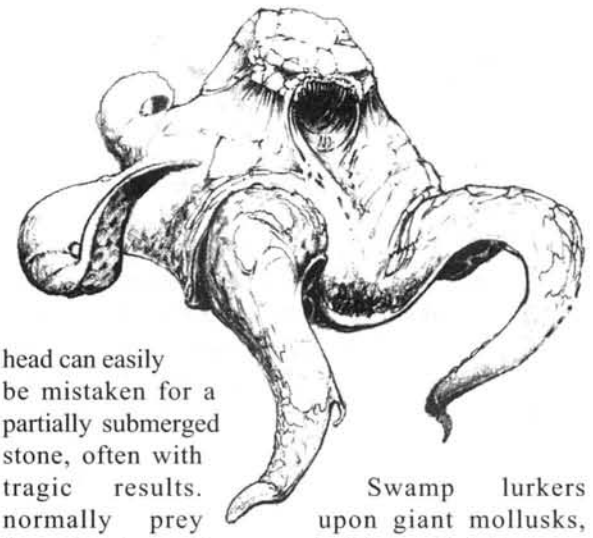
Despite the fact that they have no organized economy or mercantile tradition to speak of, the Moorg-Wan value amber, sapphires and various types of semi-precious stone. They sometimes trade with other tribes in their territories, exchanging such goods as amber, food, wooden clubs and tools, and young female "consorts".

Worldview

The Moorg Wan are the sworn foes of the Ahazu, a race of four-armed humanoids who live in the Junglelands that lie to the east. The two races have fought over the territories that lay between their two lands for centuries. The Mud People fear the Imrians, who sometimes hunt them with nets and capture-poles, employing captives as slave-laborers in their Lagoon City of Kragan.

Swamp Lurker

Swamp lurkers are solitary creatures that dwell in bogs, marshes, and swamplands along the Southern Rim. A full-grown lurker may measure over seven feet tall, though their size is often difficult to determine due to their habit of lying in shallow water or mud, with only the tops of their heads and eyes exposed to view. When lurking (hence the name) in this fashion, the creature's head can easily be mistaken for a partially submerged stone, often with tragic results.



Swamp lurkers normally prey upon giant mollusks, fanged eels, and marsh striders, but they are known to attack humanoid beings as well. The grasp of their suckered tentacles is said to be nearly impossible to escape.

Size: 6'8"-7'6", 300-500+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -7	PER +3
WIL +4	CHA N/A
STR +6	DEX +3
CON +3	SPD + 3*

* in water; -3 on land

Ability Level: 9-19

Attacks/Damage: Tentacles: DR 10 each (three attacks possible per round), Grasp: STR roll at -6 to resist

Special Abilities: Amphibious

Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2

Hit Points: 60; Tentacles: 8 points each

The Eastern Junglelands

The Eastern Junglelands cover a region of rugged hills, mountains, and cliffs. Hanging vines and heavy vegetation make passage through the region a slow and difficult endeavor. Poisonous serpents and predatory beasts abound in this place, where few civilized folk care to venture. Better suited to this dangerous environment are the local tribes known as the Ahazu.



An Ahazu Warrior and Moorg Wan do battle as Green Men watch from hiding.

THE 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.

Ancestry

The Ahazu are a savage and warlike people of unknown ancestry. Some scholars believe that the race may be a mutated variety of Araq, though the Ahazu are not entirely reptilian in appearance. Certain cultural similarities also suggest a common bond with the Kang, possibly through some unknown "missing link".

Society

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 (see Customs).

Ahazu: On the Warpath

The Thrall warrior, Cesta, once worked as a mercenary guard on an expedition into the Junglelands. Her account of an attack by a band of Ahazu follows.

"Far in the distance I heard the fierce howls of an Ahazu band on the warpath. There was little time to take defensive action. We herded the mounts into a grove of parasol trees and took cover behind a stand of thornwood. A moment later the Ahazu war party came into view, running towards us through the dense undergrowth. Now I understood the reason for the Ahazu's striated skin: it helps them blend into the jungle shadows, and makes them difficult to see clearly. We fired our crossbows as the first line of warriors came into range. The Ahazu took several casualties, but kept on coming. The magician, Balmundos, prepared to send a spell of fire into their midst. The Ahazu unleashed a hail of three-bladed throwing knives. That was the end of Balmundos.

Another second and the Ahazu were upon us, leaping and scrambling over the thornwood barricade. In close combat, the four-armed warriors had a decided advantage. I countered with wide strokes of my greatsword, using the long blade to keep the attackers at arm's length - an excellent strategy, but an inadequate response, for the Ahazu were too many. They overran our position, and soon I was the only one of my group still standing. Surrounded and outnumbered, I could think of no response but to fight until the end. Suddenly one of the Ahazu let out a blood-curdling scream. Frothing at the mouth, he set upon his own companions like one possessed, wielding a three-bladed knife in each of his four hands. From the other Ahazu I heard the cry, "Shan-Ya!", repeated several times. While they were occupied with the mad one I made a strategic withdrawal into the jungle."

Ahazu have two basic modes: hunting and fighting. When hunting for food, the Ahazu never venture beyond their own borders. The appearance of a group of the yellow and red-striped warriors anywhere outside of their junglelands is a certain indicator that the Ahazu are on the warpath, launching a raid, or tracking a fleeing opponent. Flight is advisable, for Ahazu in such a state are liable to attack anyone they encounter.

Customs

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 aspire to certain ideals: to hunt with skill, show courage in battle, "move swiftly and strike like the wind", and neither ask nor grant any quarter in battle. They are both extremely demanding and unforgiving of themselves. Ahazu warriors who feel that they have fared poorly in battle may become despondent and hurl themselves over the cliff known as Leaper's Ridge, to their deaths. The area below this cliff is said to be littered with the bones of thousands of Ahazu, some dating back over a thousands years.

Government

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.

Magic & Religion

The Ahazu have no spell-casters, 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.

The Arts

Ahazu create objects and implements of wood, woven reeds and grasses, stone, and hammered metal. Crafts are limited to the making of useful implements such as weapons, tools, waterskins, small clay pots, and so forth. Each Ahazu makes his or her own implements. When charging into battle Ahazu let out a series of sharp, high-pitched cries. Originally thought to be nothing more than warlike screaming and posturing, the Ahazu "war-songs" are actually complex musical compositions that convey battle tactics to the Ahazu.

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. Ahazu also communicate in a peculiar version of Sign, using four hands to convey meaning with great rapidity. Common names include Y'azu, K'yaz, I'zu, S'azu, Y'ozu, A'zu, and so on. Ahazu have no written language.

Defenses

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 (see sidebar).

Commerce

Among their own people, Ahazu use barter to exchange goods such as hides, horn, herbs, clay pots of healing salve, and food. They will sometimes trade with outsiders who offer them metal weapons or intoxicants, but such dealings are dangerous affairs; Ahazu sometimes find it simpler to kill a foreign merchant than to haggle for long periods.

Worldview

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.

Places of Note

Leaper's Ridge

The wavering cliffs of Leaper's Ridge stand amidst the jungles of the Dark Coast, in the territories of the Ahazu tribes. There is a narrow stream here that drops over the cliff in a four hundred foot long ribbon of water, terminating in a rainbow-hued cloud of mist and vapor. The waterfall is not the region's main attraction, however, at least as far as the local indigenes are concerned. For Leaper's Ridge is a place where old Ahazu tribesmen, or those despondent over having fared poorly in battle, sometimes come to hurl themselves to their death. Their remains litter the jungle floor beneath Leaper's Ridge, attracting scavengers such as urthrax and aramatus.

Alatus



The alatus is a variety of winged leech found in swamps and jungle regions such as Mog, the Dark Coast, and certain islands of the Southern Rim. They normally nest in the hollows of rotten trees, flying forth to feed after sundown. Alatus hatch from eggs, which the female lays in dead or rotting wood, emerging as wingless larvae. At this stage of the creature's development, the alatus feeds mainly upon small insects and vermin, and it is practically indistinguishable from the most common species of swamp leeches.

After one or two weeks, the larval alatus burrows into the ground, encases itself within a fibrous sac, and goes into hibernation. It may remain in such a state for months or even years; the naturalist Thystram claimed to have found hibernating alatus in sealed crypts and catacombs that had lain undisturbed for over a century. When at last the alatus comes forth from its sac, it is as a full-grown, winged adult up to six feet in length. An alatus of this size will attack creatures as large as Mogroth, strangling prey with its sinuous tail while sucking the victim's blood. Alatus are believed to be carriers of a rare disease called "blood fever," the symptoms of which include gradual loss of strength, nausea, and eventual paralysis. Nagra spirit trackers eat alatus, which they regard as a rare and succulent delicacy.

Size: 6' in length, 120 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -9	PER +1
WIL +2	CHA N/A
STR +2	DEX +1
CON -1	SPD +1

Ability Level: 3-6
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 3 per round from blood drain, Tail: DR 5 per round from constriction
Special Abilities: Flight, bite may cause blood-fever (CON roll to resist)
Armor: None
Hit Points: 19

Lotus Vine

The Talislantan lotus is a variety of water lily common to certain swamplands and jungle regions. There are several known species, all of which possess unusual properties. The pollen (or powder, as it is called) of the green lotus, prepared in a potion, allows the drinker to communicate empathically with all manner of plants and trees. Scarlet lotus powder renders those who take it susceptible to the commands of others. The powder of the black lotus possesses powerful narcotic and mind-expanding properties, and it bestows upon the user the powers of clairvoyance and clairaudience; however, repeated use of black lotus runs a cumulative risk of addiction. A rare multi-hued variety, known as rainbow lotus, is also found in some regions. Its properties are unpredictable, and the flower is prized mainly for its beauty.

Gao-Din

Gao-Din is a small and rocky isle located some ten miles off the western coast of Mog. It is a dismal place, with treacherous swamplands and jungles lining its coastal regions. Inland, limestone cliffs rise up from the murky vegetation, culminating in a great, central mound of stone. Here, looking out across the Azure Ocean, stands the Rogue City of Gao-Din: home to a motley folk known as the Gao, or the Sea Rogues.

The Sea Rogues of Gao-Din

The Gao are a people of mixed blood originally descended from the ancient Phaedrans. Gao have intermarried with many different peoples over the course of time, and so exhibit no single set of characteristics. The local style of dress is both diverse and flamboyant, and features a wide array of cloaks, sashes, tunics, pantaloons, bandanas, ear baubles, eye-patches, and high boots.

Ancestry

Formerly a penal colony of the old Phaedran Empire, Gao was abandoned by its makers during the Cult Wars of the early New Age. The prisoners incarcerated in this heavily fortified installation were simply left behind to fend for themselves. Showing a degree of ingenuity born of desperation, they salvaged an abandoned Phaedran vessel and embarked upon a career as sea-roving pirates. Soon thereafter, Gao-Din was declared an independent city state, and the Rogue City of Gao was made its capital. Since that time the Sea-Rogues of Gao have prospered, and their small settlement has become a haven for thieves and outcasts of many races and nationalities.

Society

The formal penal colony of Gao has grown into a city of sorts, its old fortifications expanded upon and modified for purposes of defense. Gao buildings are made of stone, brick, driftwood, or anything that's available. Architectural styles reflect the preferences of dozens of races and ethnic groups.

The city's current population, comprised mostly of thieves, outcasts and freed slaves, is a remarkable admixture of racial and cultural types. Rivals and even deadly enemies under normal circumstances, the inhabitants of the Rogue City generally co-exist with a



minimum of difficulty on Gao-Din. While polygamy is permitted by male and female citizens, adultery is frowned upon. Individuals accused of such an indiscretion often simply get married, thereby avoiding possible scandal. As a result of the city's liberal policies concerning marriage, individuals born in Gao may have any number of legal "fathers" and "mothers," and countless relatives of various races and nationalities. Gao food is similarly diverse, and traditional cuisines from many lands are available in the taverns and inns.

Customs

In popular folklore, the Gao are perceived by many Talislantans as glamorous adventurers, a perception that the Gao work hard to encourage. Crude, crass, or abusive behavior is not tolerated among the Gao, who value good manners. Though the Sea-Rogues' swashbuckling antics and charming manners set them apart from the murderous tactics employed by the Mangar Corsairs, there is no escaping the fact that the Gao are pirates who rob and plunder for a living.

Government

The Rogue City of Gao is ruled by an individual known as the "King of Thieves," elected by popular vote once each year. The King's primary duties are to arbitrate disputes, set fair prices for black market and contraband goods, and enforce the three basic tenets of the "thieves' code of honor." These are: 1) it is illegal to kill a fellow thief (i.e., citizen of Gao) while in the city proper; 2) it is illegal to reveal the seven secret passwords to any non-citizen; 3) it is illegal to steal any item worth more than twenty gold lumens from a fellow thief while in the city proper.

The punishment for failure to comply with the code's tenets is determined by the King's appraisal of the circumstances. In most cases, individuals found guilty of breaking either the first or second tenets are bound, gagged, and fed to the aqua demons. Those found guilty of breaking the third tenet are given two weeks to reimburse the victim of the theft three times over. Failure or inability to comply with this edict once again brings the aqua demons alternative to bear.

Gao citizenship is not easily obtained, though it is technically available to any thief, outcast, or scoundrel who seeks it. In order to reduce the chance of spies or informants infiltrating Gao's close-knit society, all individuals applying for citizenship must allow themselves to be subjected to scrutiny by the King's personal advisors, a group traditionally comprised of fellow thieves, wizards, and the like. Those who pass their rigorous tests are granted citizenship and taught the seven secret passwords required to gain access to the city. Those who fail are seldom heard from again except as regards the aqua demons.

Professional Courtesy

If it is true that there is no honor amongst thieves, then the relationship that exists between the Mangar and the Sea Rogues of Gao-Din must be regarded as peculiar, to say the least. Both are pirates by trade, though their methods are as different as night and day. The Mangar are cutthroats who are known to subject their victims to torture, humiliation, and cruel sport. The Gao are swashbucklers whose gallant treatment of their victims – females in particular – is the stuff of popular folk legends. The Mangar are despised; the Gao are romanticized. Further, there is no love lost between the two, who regard each other with considerable animosity.

Yet despite such differences an unwritten agreement exists between the Mangar and Gao, which, with few exceptions, has remained unbroken for centuries. In short, the two have divided the seas and oceans of Talislanta between them. The waters from the western shore of the Bay of Cicz east to the Far Seas and north to the Sea of Madness are considered the territories of the Mangar. From the eastern shore of Baratus Bay west through the Azure Ocean belongs to the Gao. The southern tip of Faradun marks a line of demarcation between the two territories that is observed by both peoples.

Cynics have suggested that the division of territory between these two peoples is one of geographical convenience only. However, this does not explain why the Mangar will seldom pursue even the richest merchant ships west beyond the horn of Faradun, or why the Gao will abandon pursuit of vessels that pass beyond this point to the east. Rather than convenience, it appears that relationship between the Mangar and the Gao is primarily one of professional courtesy.

Magic & Religion

All Gao are free to worship or not, as they please. Accordingly, many diverse cults and religions proliferate in the Rogue City, though most have only a handful of followers. Magicians of many sorts can be found throughout the city. Their talents are considered useful by the Gao, who sometimes use magic to disguise themselves, their booty, and their ships. Gao bury their dead at sea in a formal ceremony that entails the laying of wreaths upon the water.

The Arts

Gao is a melting pot of different cultures, their arts, and crafts. The Sea Rogues have a great appreciation of the arts; so much so that artisans, craftsmen, and performers found aboard ships plundered by the Gao are often invited to live in Gao-Din.

Language

Sea Nomad and Low Talislan are spoken throughout Gao-Din, with embellishments sufficient to archive the desired effect of charm and manners. Most Sea Rogues know at least one of these two languages, along with their native tongues. Common names vary wildly according to background; there are no ethnic Gao names per se.

Defenses

In the event of attack all Gao band together to repulse the would-be invaders. Access to the harbor is impeded by dangerous rocks, traps, and the local "fauna". While the well-fed aqua demons who live in the waters around Gao-Din generally refrain from molesting Gao vessels, they have no qualms about attacking other ships.

Commerce

The business of Gao-Din is piracy, and the fencing of stolen booty is a primary concern. These dealings are handled by means of secret contacts with agents in many countries on the mainland. Ransoming wealthy captives is another profitable endeavor. The King of Thieves is allowed a ten percent cut of all booty captured by ships which utilize the city's walled-in harbor facilities, but does not otherwise burden the population with taxes or tariffs.

Worldview

Officially, the citystate of Gao-Din has no formal relations with any other government, religious group, or secret society. Neither does Gao rule out the possibility of association with almost any government, group, or individual, providing there is a profit to be made by entering into such a relationship. Only the Imrians, Rajans and Aamanians seem exempt from this policy, the Sea-Rogues having a definite aversion to slavers and religious fanatics. The Sea-Rogues steer clear of the mysterious Black Savants, whose dark vessels occasionally ply the waters of the Azure Ocean. Curiously, Gao-Din has an agreement of sorts with their rivals, the Mangar Corsairs (see sidebar).

AQUA DEMON

Aqua demons (or sea demons, as they are sometimes known) are denizens of the Demonrealms whose presence in the seas and oceans of the Southern Rim can be attributed to ancient portals and witchgates that sank below the waves during the time of The Great Disaster. The curse of ocean-going vessels, aqua demons are sometimes known to infest tropical isles, coral reefs, and sunken ruins. They are practically invisible in water, and they possess the ability to change into liquid form or create whirlpools and dangerous undercurrents. Aqua demons are uncomfortable out of the water and are pained by heat and fire.

Size: 7'-7'8", 300-450+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT +2	PER +2
WIL +6	CHA -6
STR +7	DEX +1
CON +10	SPD +4*

* in water; -4 on land
Ability Level: 4-11+
Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 13, two attacks
Special Abilities: Aquamancy with four Modes at Ability Level, almost invisible in water (-8 to detect), adopt liquid form, create whirlpools and undercurrents
Armor: Elemental water, PR 3
Hit Points: 22



IMRIA

Imria is a large island located off the southern coast of Mog, in the Azure Ocean. Its dense jungles, twisting inlets, and underwater grottoes teem with such dangerous creatures as aramatus, crag spiders, and the giant, sightless cave eels called kra. Mt. Talus, a large and intermittently active volcano, rises above the southwestern jungle, and sea demons prowl the coastal waters in force. Perhaps the most dangerous inhabitants of the isle, however, are the amphibious humanoids known as the Imrians.

THE IMRIANS

Imrians, are tall and muscular, with sloping shoulders, and dark, deep-set eyes. Their scaly yellow-green skin is covered with a coating of translucent slime, which serves to keep moisture in when they are on dry land. Their hands and feet are webbed, and their powerful jaws are lined with a double row of sharp teeth. Both the males and females dress in crude loincloths of kra hide and wear necklaces of brass rings.

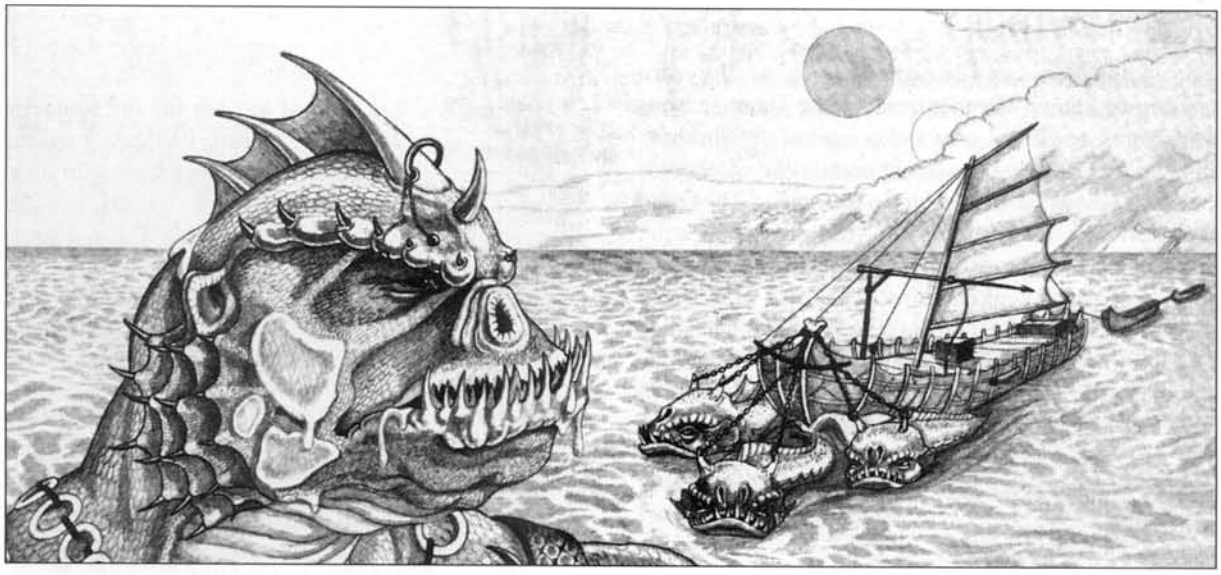
ANCESTRY

Talislantan scholars believe that the Imrians are probably descended from the Batrachians, a race that is believed to have been extinct for centuries. The Imrians disagree, claiming that they are the fabled First Folk of legend (see Magic & Religion).

SOCIETY

The Imrians have a single large settlement called Kragan. Located in a great lagoon situated in the center of the island, this place consists of hundreds of reed and thatch hovels, each plastered with mud and supported on stilt-like poles. The tallest of these structures tower forty feet or more above the lagoon, and are occupied by the wealthiest Imrians — the King of Imria dwells within the highest. The least prosperous Imrians own hovels which stand just above the water or are partially submerged, depending upon the tide. Slave laborers and those awaiting sale are housed in floating pens, moored by heavy lines to the lagoon bottom.

Imrians mate indiscriminately, though dominant males often keep the "choicest" females for themselves; those in positions of power may have a "harem" of consorts from which to choose. The concept of family is unknown to the Imrians. Young Imrians hatch from eggs, and spend their youth as water-breathing "newts." Lungs capable of breathing out of water develop by the



end of the eighth year, after which the Imrian is considered an adult. From this point on the creature must fend for itself, or risk being eaten by the adult males, who are extremely belligerent.

Imrian habits are generally unappreciated by the other intelligent races of Talislanta (see sidebar). Most consider the amphibians' taste for slugs, worms, and leeches to be disgusting, and find it impossible to enjoy a decent meal in their presence. The Imrians themselves find most common types of food and drink revolting, but regard ten year-old brine and giant water bugs as great delicacies. The light coating of slime that covers the body of a healthy Imrian is likewise unappealing to some — especially clothiers and launderers, who dread the appearance of an Imrian in their establishments.

Customs

Imrians are slavers, a profession that enlightened Talislantan peoples regard as repulsive. Even among those who use slaves Imrians are regarded as a backward race. The Imrians, aware that this is how they are perceived, exhibit considerable defensiveness, hostility, and insecurity regarding the issue of their nobility and lineage.

Imrians are among the few Talislantans who do not fear to sail into the open sea. They range far and wide in their massive, barge-like coracles, which are constructed from the bones and hide of kra. Smaller vessels of woven reeds are used for shore raids and to transport captured slaves back to the larger ships.

Government

The Imrians are ruled by a King, who lives in the city of Kragan. His primary responsibility is to oversee the slave and narcotics trades, though the King is also commander in chief of the Imrian military. The Imrian hierarchy is based on a military command structure: the King commands his Captains, who give orders to their lieutenants, on down to the lowly "mud soldiers". Imria has no legal system to speak of. Individuals accused of crimes are usually assumed to be guilty and executed by whoever is in command.

Magic & Religion

The Imrians worship no god, and mock those who do as ignorant savages. They have no ritual observances as regards the dead, and merely feed their bodies to the kra. Considering themselves to be superior to the other races of Talislanta, they are incapable of comprehending any position bearing greater esteem than King of Imria.

The Imrians claim to be the First Race, from whom the "lesser species" supposedly descended. They say their people rose from the primordial seas that gave birth to all life on Archaeus. The Imrians cite as evidence certain ancient coral tablets, held in their possession for many generations. Retrieved from a sunken crypt by their early ancestors, the tablets purportedly contain the secret history of the Imrian race, dating back over 20,000 years.

Those Talislantan scholars who acknowledge the existence of the Imrian tablets believe that they do

indeed contain priceless historical information — not relating to the Imrians, but of an ancient and advanced civilization that sank beneath the waves untold ages ago. There are thought to be several thousand of the coral slabs in the city of Kragan, many of which may contain priceless secrets from the Forgotten Age.

The Arts

Imrians have no tradition of music, art, or dance. In an attempt to appear civilized they will sometimes acquire works of art created by foreigners and hang them in their rude dwellings; the results are usually dismal.

Language

Although most Imrians are able to speak a crude version of the Low Talislan tongue, their slurred and gurgling manner of speech can be difficult for outsiders to comprehend. When among their own kind Imrians prefer instead to converse in Piscine, the language of other aquatic creatures. Imrians use a crude written symbology and numerology that they claim was developed by their ancient ancestors. Actually, it was created from bits and pieces pirated from other primitive writing and number systems, and patched together in haste with little sense of logic or organization. Deciphering such writings is difficult for non-Imrians, not because of their intricacy but because of their hodge-podge nature.

Defenses

The Imrians have a naval force of several hundred coracles, but their ships are flimsy in comparison with the wooden-hulled craft of other Talislantans. Imrian military capabilities are considered mediocre at best. In fact, the settlement of Kragan is more formidably protected by its hostile environs than by the Imrians themselves.

Commerce

Slavers by trade, Imrians prey upon the primitive tribes that dwell along the southern coasts and isles of the Talislantan continent: the Witchmen of Chana; the Mud People, Ahazu, and Green Men of the Dark Coast; the Batreans and Sawila from their respective isles; and to a lesser extent, the Mogroth of Mog. They also traffic in narcotic herbs, exotic beasts, and various forms of contraband, selling mainly to the Farad. Brass rings are employed as currency among these folk.

Among the Slavers

The Farad Procurer, Falalas of the House of Nazir, was required by his superiors to handle certain transactions with the Imrians. These are his thoughts, as recorded in his ledger:

"This evening I was required by my superiors to entertain an Imrian captain and his chief slaver in my quarters, in order to finalize a lucrative transaction involving the acquisition of eight dozen slaves. I did not relish the job, as the Imrians are a repulsive lot who reek of mud flats and rotten shellfish. Nevertheless, obligation to my House was the prime consideration. From the start, the affair went badly. In response to my offer of dinner the Imrians requested aramatus, a variety of giant armored leech, boiled alive in brine and served in its shell, with a ragout of sand crawlers and sea slimes. When this request was brought to the kitchen my cook tendered his resignation at once. In a panic I sent a pair of assistant Procurers to the marketplace to find foodstuffs suitable for my Imrian clients.

In the interim I sought to entertain my guests as best I could. Two hours passed, during which time the Imrians drank a cask of fermented brine, all the while growing louder and more obstreperous with each passing minute. The transaction seemed in dire jeopardy when finally my two assistants returned, carrying with them a steaming, eight-foot long aramatus coiled-up in a great iron tureen. The meal was served and the Imrians ate with relish, cutting the aramatus into sections and cracking open its shell with iron tongs and knives. After dinner they toasted me with mugs of brine, affixed their marks to a contract, and departed. My chambers were a mess and my furnishings covered with slime, but at least the deal was done."

Worldview

Before the founding of the Seven Kingdoms, the Imrians ruled a large stretch of Mog and Taz, but when the Thrall tribes united they cast the intruders back into the sea — to this day, the two races hate one another. Several bloody defeats inflicted by the armies of the Seven Kingdoms have also persuaded the Imrians that slave raids into Astar to capture Muses are no longer profitable. Despite such setbacks, the Imrians continue to foster dreams of conquest. They succeeded in

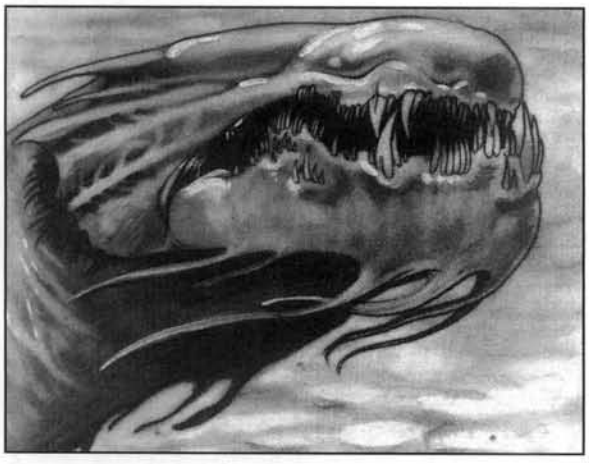
subjugating the Isle of Batre in the year 602, and now use it as a breeding ground for slaves, who are sold to Rajanistan and Faradun.

Imrian Settlements

The City of Kragan

The Imrians have but a single settlement, the City of Kragan. It is accessible from the sea by several hidden, winding inlets, each heavily guarded by slave warriors, wild beasts and Imrian guards.

Kra



Kra are giant, sightless eels native to undersea caves and grottos around the isle of Imria and the waters of the Far Seas. In their dark domains, kra feed on all sorts of marine creatures, including skalanx, water raknids, and even other kra. They are fierce and aggressive predators who sense prey by sound and vibration. The most ancient kra may grow to immense size, rivaling even sea dragons in stature. A smaller, sighted species, known as rainbow kra, is commonly found in open waters.

Normally violent, kra become stuporous for short periods immediately following the mating season. It is at this time that Imrians slavers capture them with harpoons and nets, thereafter keeping the kra sedated with certain narcotic plants and herbs. Imrians employ teams of up to six kra as a means of propelling their barge-like slave coracles. Unpleasant accidents are generally kept to a minimum by the regular infusion of potent sedatives in the kra's food, which is customarily administered to the beasts by slaves and similarly expendable personnel.

Size: 20'-25', 2,000-4,000 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -9	PER +1
WIL +5	
STR +7	DEX -1
CON +7	SPD +5

Level: 6-18
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 15 +Ability Level, Tail: DR 13
Special Abilities: Aquatic
Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 53

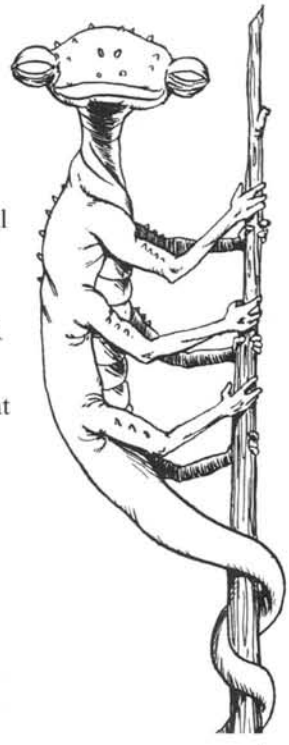
Tardisite

Tardisites are amphibious creatures that inhabit the swamps, marshes, and jungles of the Southern Rim; a related species is found along the coasts of the Western and Eastern Lands. Tardisites are notoriously slow-moving, often remaining perched atop a stone or tree stump for days at a time. Fairly intelligent, they are capable of speech but care little for the concerns of humanoid beings. Tardisites possess the somewhat disconcerting ability to swivel their head a full 360 degrees, and they can rotate each of their eyes independently. If threatened, a tardisite will puff up like a blowfish, becoming a ten-foot ball covered with needle-sharp spines. Tardisites normally subsist on insects, which they catch with their tongue.

Size: 3', 30+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT -5	PER +4
WIL +3	CHA -3
STR -4	DEX +2
CON 0	SPD -12*

*except as pertains to special ability
Ability Level: 3-5
Attacks/Damage: Spines: DR 8 (when inflated)
Special Abilities: Inflate at SPD +2
Armor: Spines, PR 5
Hit Points: 10



JHANGARA

Bordered to the east and west by twin forks of the Axis River Jhangara is a hot and humid land traveled by few civilized people. Its terrain consists in large part of jungle, murky swamp, and bog, becoming progressively more dense and inhospitable towards the southern coastal regions. Here, untamed marshlands predominate, populated by numerous unfriendly species of animals and plants such as malathropes, stranglevine, and the horrid insectoid predators known as water raknids. The humanoid denizens of this land are an ignorant and backward folk known as the Jhangarans.

THE JHANGARANS

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.



ANCESTRY

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.

SOCIETY

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. Jhangaran "marriage" is in large part a farce. If a female is impregnated, she claims a male as the father of her child, and the two are "married". There is no ceremony, and the union has little meaning save that the female may now hound the father for money or goods; more often than not, the male tries to shirk his responsibilities.

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.

CUSTOMS

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

The Outcasts

"I was approaching the settlement of Tabal by canoe, in the company of a pair of surly Jhangaran guides, when both were distracted by a disturbance that emanated from the dense vegetation lining the near shore – a sound perhaps best described as a droning chant of some sort, accompanied by a rhythmic, metallic clanging.

My Jhangaran guides panicked and jumped overboard, leaving me alone in the boat. Arms flailing wildly, they struggled to shore and ran screaming into the settlement. A minute later the heavy wooden gates slammed shut and were barred from within. A few of the braver Jhangarans peeked nervously over the top of the walls; the rest hid themselves from view.

As I sat in the slowly drifting canoe trying to make sense of what had transpired a ragged band of several dozen Jhangaran Outcasts emerged from the jungle and headed towards the settlement. They seemed a motley group, dressed in rags, banging crude iron gongs and pots, and dragging their feet or limping as they went. All looked glassy-eyed, and in ill health; some few gibbered and drooled, apparently without control, as if perhaps they were deranged.

A spokesperson for the Outcasts called out to those who huddled inside the settlement. "Hear!", said he. "We, who have nothing, come to you for alms." The Jhangarans inside Tabal let out a moaning, wailing sound, as if faced with a fate worse than death. One among them cried out: "Anything! Only come no closer to the settlement, and do not visit your accursed stigma upon us!"

A moment later two heavy sacks were thrown over the wall in the direction of the Outcasts. The Outcasts made no response, but stood completely still. From within the settlement I heard more groaning and cursing. Then a third sack was thrown over. Apparently this appeased the Outcasts, for they come forth to claim the offerings, which I now saw consisted of leftover food, some sagging wineskins, bundles of old rags, used utensils, and the like. The ragged group then headed back into the jungle. Perhaps it was my imagination, but it seemed to me that the Outcasts did not appear so sickly or downcast now as they did before; in fact, most seemed in good spirits, and even spry.

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.

Government

Jhangarans are anarchists who observe no laws and argue constantly among themselves. The loudest and most obnoxious individuals usually prevail in a given situation, and may temporarily be regarded as a "leader" of sorts. A single settlement can have as many as eight or ten such figures, each striving to be heard over the others. Accordingly, projects requiring group cooperation are usually doomed to failure from their inception, explaining the dismal living conditions that are typical of Jhangaran settlements. There is no organized legal system in Jhangara, and no laws other than superstition and taboo. Jhangarans who are accused of breaking a taboo are usually banished from the tribe, to become Outcasts.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

Jhangarans care nothing for art; the concept may be beyond their comprehension. When drunk they shout curses and rude remarks in unison, pushing and shoving each other until they pass out. In Jhangara, this passes for music and dance. Crafts are limited to basic necessities. Even then, Jhangarans produce no articles of any intrinsic value, never mind aesthetic value.

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.

Defenses

Jhangarans will band together to defend their clans, tribe, or settlements, but lack organization and discipline. Settlements are fortified, but defenses are crude at best. Jhangaran mercenary warriors are considered highly unreliable, and are employed only because they work so cheaply.

Commerce

Most Jhangaran tribes own crude river craft, which they use to ply their various trades along the length of the mighty Axis River. The Mud-Miners of Karansk trade with the Aeriad of Vardune, receiving goods from the Seven Kingdoms in exchange for bits of amber, sapphires, and semi-precious stones. Marsh-Hunters trade captured beasts, hides, feathers and horn to Zandir freetraders, who travel to Tabal in their coast-hugging merchant vessels. However, Jhangara's most valuable product is scintilla — the luminous eggs of carnivorous water raknids, which infest the marshlands around Tabal in numbers. Foreign traders often purchase scintilla and other goods from Jhangarans for a fraction of what they are worth, then sell them to wealthy customers in other lands at considerable profit.

Worldview

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. 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 Jhanagarans are eager to embrace any philosophy that promises them a way out of the swamps.

Jhangaran Settlements

Karansk

The inhabitants of Karansk are Mud Miners, who make their living by dredging the riverbanks and swamplands for sapphires, amber and gold. The mud-mines of Karansk are dangerous places — virtual quagmires, teeming with aramatus, urthrax and other vermin.

Tabal

The denizens of Tabal are Marsh Hunters, who scour the marshes along the shores for caches of scintilla and trap wild beasts in order to earn their sustenance. These commodities are traded to Zandir freetraders, who travel to this southeastern harbor in their swift vessels.

Jhangkin

Situated on the banks of the western fork of the Axis River, Jhangkin is a crude military installation where Jhangaran Mercenaries gather while awaiting their next assignments. The swamps around Jhangkin abound with water raknids, marsh striders, batranc, and bog devils.

Marsh Strider

A somewhat smaller relative of the common strider, the marsh strider is native to the swamplands of Jhangara, Mog, and the Dark Coast. They subsist on a diet of crustaceans, newts, and other small creatures that live along the shoreline. The creatures especially crave scintilla, the luminous eggs of the water raknid,



but find humanoids palatable when easier prey is not available. Female marsh striders make their nests in small gullies and depressions, lining their lairs with brambles and twigs. Young hatchlings emerge from the egg hungry and mean-spirited; though barely a foot tall, the pestiferous creatures will bite anything within reach, and as such, are quickly kicked out of the nest by their mothers.

The Jhangarans train marsh striders for use as steeds, but the beasts must be kept muzzled at all times due to their irritable nature. This is especially true if marsh striders are being used to hunt scintilla, which they will attempt to devour if not adequately restrained.

Size: 7'-7'6", 600-750+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT -6	PER +2
WIL +3	CHA N/A
STR +4	DEX +4
CON +2	SPD +7

Ability Level: 5-9
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 6, Talons: DR 10, Tail: DR 6 or used to grasp prey
Special Abilities: Webbed talons allow swift movement in swampy terrain
Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 30

WATER RAKNID

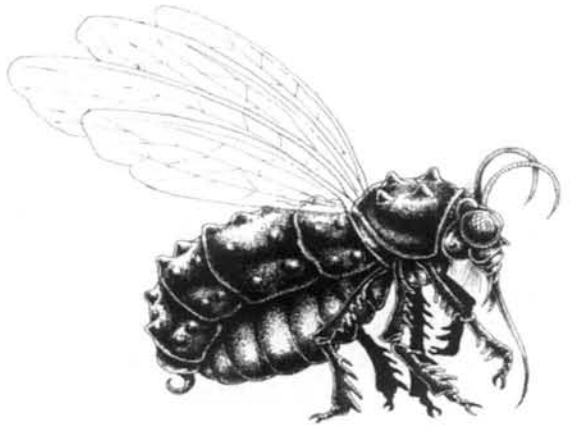
Water raknids are an aquatic species of the common land raknid that make their hives in the shallows of the coastal waters, lagoons, and grottoes of the Southern Rim. Like their land-dwelling relatives, they are ruled by a queen, who is served by water raknid drones, warriors, and workers. Water raknids have both rudimentary gills and lungs and are able to survive in or out of the water. The same cannot be said for water raknid spawn, which do not develop gills until they are several days old. Because their spawn must begin life on land, the colony's drones must convey their queen's eggs in protective sacs, distributing them along the shoreline - typically, among the dense patches of marshweed that grow just beyond the tidal line.

While the eggs are maturing, water raknid warriors patrol the shallows to protect them from harm. Even so, many egg sacs are stolen by opportunistic predators and Jhangaran marsh hunters. Also known as scintilla, the eggs emit a wan luminescence and are valued at up to one hundred gold lumens apiece. The surviving spawn head instinctively for their nest as soon as their gills have developed, to become part of the colony.

Size and statistics for water raknids are the same as for their land-dwelling kin.

FLIT

Flits are small, winged insectoids that infest the coasts and swamps of the Southern Rim in great numbers. They feed on the blood of birds and mammals and are a great nuisance to travelers and their mounts. Using their barbed legs, flits latch onto their victims and begin to feed (Blood drain: DR 1 per hour, maximum of 3 points per insect, per day). While the bite of a flit exudes an anesthetizing fluid and is not painful, the real danger posed by these pests is that they are carriers of swamp



fever, a disease that can cause madness. Flits are repelled by whispbane and by the bitter juice of the mung-berry. Smoke causes them to release their barbs and drop harmlessly to the ground.

SERPENTVINE

Serpentvine is an unusual species of carnivorous plant found growing amongst the branches of swamp trees in such locales as Mog, Jhangara, and the Dark Coast. The plant is aptly named, for its vines terminate in fibrous pods which very much resemble the heads of small serpents. Normally subsisting on a diet of small birds, lizards, and insects, serpentvine poses little threat to larger creatures. Its pods, which may number as many as a dozen on a large plant, are nonetheless capable of delivering a nasty bite (DR 1 per tendril) to those who fail to exercise an appropriate degree of caution. As serpentvine is a proven deterrent against woodwhisps, flits, and other diminutive pests, it is in demand in some places.

MOG

Mog is a vast swampland cut by countless small tributaries of the Axis River. Travel on foot through this region is quite impractical, and recommended only to those who possess an unreasoning fondness for wading in knee-deep, murky waters. Explorers who venture into this realm generally do so in flat-bottomed boats, the gnarled roots of giant bombo trees serving as suitable anchorage for this type of craft. The swamps of Mog teem with a variety of unusual plant and animal species. Morphius, a parasitic plant whose blossoms emit a sleep-inducing fragrance, grows among the branches of certain trees, as does serpentvine. Deadman, a plant whose pale, white leaves exude a deadly contact poison, is of use in deterring woodwhisps and flits, both of which are a great nuisance to travelers. K'tallah and black lotus, two herbs which possess extreme hallucinogenic and mind-altering properties, are highly sought after by dealers of contraband goods.

The region's primary resource is amber, a substance that has long provided a livelihood for the inhabitants of the region, the Mogroth.

THE MOGROTH

The Mogroth are a race of tree-dwellers who bear some resemblance to giant, humanoid sloths. They stand up to eight feet in height and are covered with a thick coat of fur that confers protection from biting insects and parasites. As such, Mogroth require little in the way of clothing, and rarely wear anything more than a simple loincloth and a necklace of woven grasses.

ANCESTRY

The ancestors of the Mogroth were probably tree-dwellers similar in some respects to the creatures known as Sapients. Both species are probably descended from the Wild Races who ruled ancient Talislanta in the time before the dawn of the Archaen Age.

SOCIETY

Mogroth make their home in simple huts of woven leaves and grasses, erected in the branches of large mung-berry trees. They live in communal groups composed of their large extended families: silver-backed elders, mature adults with brown- or buff-colored fur, and tawny-hued offspring. The young cling to their mothers until age two, after which they are too large to carry. Each family has its own tree-hut, and gathers its own food. When too many families congregate in a single area, several wander off to establish a new settlement.

Mogroth subsist on the bitter leaves and fruit of giant mung-berry trees, which are shunned by other creatures. Biased towards their own views on the subject, the Mogroth maintain that only those of refined tastes



Mogroth Adaptation

The largest swampland in all of Talislanta, Mog is known for its dangerous and difficult terrain. The country is a virtual morass of sodden marshes, bogs, sinkholes, and deadly quickmires. Though stagnant ponds, muddy pools, and brackish streams abound, potable water is often scarce. The swamps are overgrown with hanging vines, the tangled roots of giant bombo trees, and dense undergrowth. These regions act as natural breeding grounds for insect pests such as amber wasps, flits, and Tazian flies, which at times are known to swarm in numbers sufficient to blot out the light of the twin suns.

Having dwelt in Mog for many thousands of years, the Mogroth have adapted to the challenges posed by their environment. Because traveling through the trees is easier and faster than slogging through the muck, Mogroth have developed long arms and powerful, grasping claws that enable them to swing easily from branch to branch. When navigating the swamps on foot, the slow-moving and deliberate gait of the Mogroth enables them to sense and avoid sinkholes, unsafe ground, and other obstructions. Their keen sense of smell is also an advantage, enabling Mogroth to determine by scent whether a given source of water is safe for drinking or not. Perhaps the greatest advantage possessed by these creatures is their dense fur, which repels water and also protects them from biting or stinging insects.

are capable of appreciating the mung tree's distinctive savor. Mogroth are especially long-lived, a condition attributed to the slow metabolism of these creatures.

Customs

Mogroth are slow-moving creatures of placid temperament. They never argue among themselves, and are patient to a fault – Mogroth have been known to sit for days waiting for a single cluster of green mung-berries to ripen rather than search for other provender. They have a great appreciation of natural beauty, and may stop to admire a particularly fascinating flower or crystal moth for hours at a time. Mogroth tend to be trusting, and even naive. While they generally abhor violence, these powerful creatures can become extremely dangerous if driven to anger.

Government

Inhabitants of the same settlement show considerable cooperation, but none seems to take on the role of leader. Among these slow-moving and patient folk arguments are very rare, and crime is virtually unknown.

Magic & Religion

Mogroth practice no formal religion, but exhibit a reverence for the natural world. They have no capacity for magic of any kind. Mogroth bury their dead in the swamps in a quiet ceremony attended by all members of the village.

The Arts

It has long been believed that Mogroth crafts were strictly functional in nature, and were limited to the making of simple baskets, loincloths, and dwellings. However, it was recently discovered that Mogroth weaving is actually a form of "writing"; the various configurations (knots, patterns, textures) are said to represent ideograms rather than letters or words. The inner walls of Mogroth tree-dwellings are covered with these "Mogroth tapestries", which are actually pictorial records of ancient history, events of note, family lineage, and other subjects.

Language

Mogroth communicate in Low Talislan, speaking in slow, measured tones. Common names tend to be long (five syllables is about average) and mellifluous, with numerous "soft" consonants. Female names end in an "a", as in Malamanala and Malonamola. Male names end in an "o", as in Molomolano and Mamonamolo

Defenses

Mogroth erect simple defenses against predatory beasts around their settlements, but otherwise have no organized military of defense. They will band together if their settlements are threatened, particularly if Imrians are involved.

Commerce

Mogroth barter for goods, and have little appreciation for the value of coinage. Though Mogroth generally shun the ways of civilized peoples, some have taken to dredging the swamps for bits of gold and amber, which they trade for casks of grog. The most ambitious of these creatures sometimes travel to Jhangara or the

Seven Kingdoms, bearing sacks of gold and amber. Slow and somewhat dull-witted by nature, Mogroth seldom strike a hard bargain for their wares, a fact which draws unscrupulous merchants to them like whisps to blossom-nectar. They are sometimes taken advantage of by crafty entrepreneurs from Faradun and Kasmir.

Worldview

Mogroth do not regard themselves as a consolidated race or nation, and have no formal relations with other peoples or nations. Individual Mogroth sometimes trade with merchants or traders from other lands, such as the Green Aeriad, Muses, Djaffir, and Jhangarans. Mogroth have great animosity only for the race of Imrians.

Mogroth Settlements

Mogran

The largest of the Mogroth settlements is located here, since the Boglands are rich in amber, rare herbs, and gold washed down from the mountains. Consequently, the site is also coveted by the Imrians and the Farad; to protect themselves, the Mogroth have dredged a moat around the village of Mogran, and have lined the riverbanks with triple rows of sharp wooden stakes.

Aramatus

The aramatus, or "armored leech," is a denizen of swamps, bogs, cesspools, and quagmires across the Talislantan continent. A distant relative of the alatus ("flying leech"), aramatus are aquatic creatures that are rarely encountered out of water. They make their lairs in underwater recesses and enclosures, such as small caves, crevices, piles of refuse, and sewage pipes. Here they remain in hiding, waiting to ambush unsuspecting victims. Aramatus prey upon all sorts of small- to medium-sized creatures, including humanoids. They are in turn preyed upon by skalanx, giant river kra, and aquatic vasps.

Aramatus attack by latching onto victims with their powerful jaws, which are lined with rows of inward-curving fangs. The bite of an aramatus is almost impossible to escape; even in death, the creature's jaws remain locked upon its prey. The removal of an aramatus' fanged jaws can be a grisly process in and of itself; only a skilled healer or hunter will be able to accomplish this without causing the victim additional wounds. As is true with alatus, the bite of an aramatus may cause a disease known as blood-fever.



Size: 20'+ in length, 200+ lbs.
Attributes:

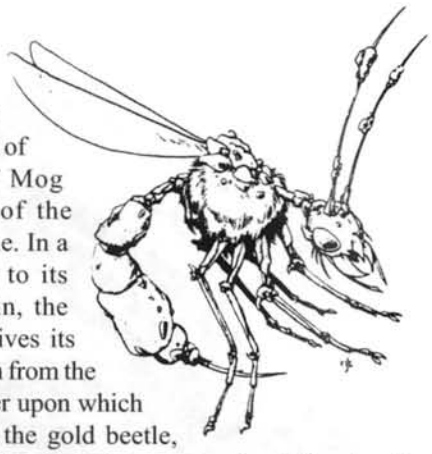
INT -8	PER +2
WIL +4	CHA N/A
STR +5*	DEX -2
CON +2	SPD +2

* bite is STR +8
Ability Level: 4-10
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 14 +blood drain (DR 4 per round; successful DEX or Healing roll needed to remove jaws, or victim suffers additional 2 HP damage from blood loss), Constriction: DR 10 per round
Special Abilities: May cause blood-fever (CON roll to resist)
Armor: Armored plates, PR 6
Hit Points: 32

Mung-Berry

The mung-berry is a large variety of fruiting tree found only in the swamplands of Mog. The leaves and berries of this tree form a substantial part of the Mogroth's diet and have certain practical uses as well. The juice of the mung-berries is so incredibly bitter that it serves to repel biting insects and certain other pests, including the noxious insectoids known as flits. When boiled, the leaves of the mung-berry also yield a waxy glue with excellent adhesive properties. As Mogroth do not take kindly to the stripping of their precious mung-berry trees, the leaves and berries are sometimes difficult to obtain.

AMBER WASP



The amber wasp is a denizen of the swamps of Mog and a relative of the fabled gold beetle. In a fashion similar to its scintillant cousin, the amber wasp derives its unique coloration from the tiny bits of amber upon which it feeds. Unlike the gold beetle, however, the amber wasp is an aggressive defender of its territories. The sting of this inch-long insect is incredibly painful, producing the wildest and most unseemly gesticulations, thrashings, contortions and howling in its victims. Fortunately, the effects of the amber wasp's sting wear off after only ten minutes or so. The light, fibrous nests made by these insects are made of spun amber and are valued at up to thirty gold lumens each.

GOLD BEETLE

This fabulous and rare insect is a denizen of the deep swamplands of Mog. Measuring up to four inches in length, the beetle's wings and carapace are comprised of pure gold - a condition attributed to the bug's diet, which consists almost entirely of tiny bits of gold. Fine specimens may bring up to two thousand gold lumens apiece in some lands, but only if still alive and unharmed; collectors have little interest in dead or damaged gold beetles. Gold beetles are solitary in nature and tend to nest amidst the branches of poisonous or noxious plants, which apparently tolerate the beetle's presence without ill effects.



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 BLACK SAVANTS

The Black Savants stand nearly seven feet in height, and are stoop-shouldered and gaunt in appearance. Their traditional costume includes boots, gloves, cloak and robes of satiny black cloth, hooded and veiled so as to obscure their features. Only their eyes are normally visible; cold, unfeeling orbs like twin shards of onyx. The morbid appearance of these folk becomes understandable when one realizes that they are not truly alive, but are the reanimated forms of a people who lived long, long ago.

ANCESTRY

The Black Savants are the descendants of the Thane, a reclusive people whose black hulled vessels once plied the waters of the Midnight Sea and beyond. Learning in advance of the coming of The Great Disaster, the Thane made preparations to ensure the survival of their race. They constructed a vast necropolis in northern Khazad, in which the entire population of Thanatus was interred in stasis, awaiting the day when the effects of The Great Disaster had passed. Unfortunately, something went wrong: most of the Thane souls were lost among the lower planes, and only a handful of their people awakened from their long slumber. These folk are today known as the Black Savants.

SOCIETY

After leaving Khazad, The Black Savants established a sanctuary on the island of Nefaratus. They have remained here ever since, seeking some way to bring their people back from the dead. On the island of Nefaratus, the Savants live in onyx towers, each edifice housing a single "cabal" (an old Archaen term, meaning a group of magicians working together in concert to achieve a single goal). Each cabal is charged with a specific task: the exploration of a particular region of the lower planes, the interrogation of certain lower-

planar entities, the search for some obscure magical tome or artifact that might contain a clue about the location of a lost soul. Some use obsidian mirrors as view ports — or perhaps gates — to other dimensions. Others perform strange experiments involving the concoction of volatile essences and reagents. Their efforts are said to have but single goal: to bring their people back to life.

Customs

The Black Savants rarely associate with other peoples, a situation which most decent folk find quite acceptable. Some few have been known to serve as advisors to kings and tyrants, though seldom for any great length of time, and usually only to suit their own purposes.

Black Savants never eat, sleep, or rest. Neither do they perform physical labor of any sort, leaving such tasks to demons, whom the Savants capture and bind to their service. In fact, it is said that Nefaratus was constructed by demon laborers in a single night.

Magic & Religion

Though they are often thought of as diabolists, the Black Savants do not revere devils. However, they occasionally consult with arch-devils and other powerful entities of the lower planes when in need of information. Like their ancestors, the Thane, the Savants are occultists in the truest sense of the word: they are seekers of secret, lost, and forgotten lore.

The Arts

The ancient Thane crypts, mausoleums, and cenotaphs of Khazad are notable for their intricate symbology, as well as the bas-relief demons and devils that adorn the surfaces of these structures. The ancient Thane also made gold, silver, and copper funerary masks, brass funerary urns, and countless other types of relics, all of exceptional craftsmanship.

Nefaratan structures exhibit similar ornamentation, which some say is the work of diabolical architects. The Black Savants are also said to use captive pyro-demons to forge black adamant, a type of metal that is used in the making of enchanted blades and other useful items.

Language

Black Savants are mute, a side-effect of the process that was used to preserve their physical forms. They converse in an ancient form of Sign, using secret signs when they do not wish to be understood by outsiders. Savants also read and write in the old Archaen tongue. Some are said to be fluent in the dead languages of the Forgotten Age, as well as the languages of creatures who hail from the lower planes.

The Savants

Kabros, self-proclaimed scion of the great sorcerer, Koraq, claimed to have had first-hand knowledge of the mysterious folk known as the Black Savants. He wrote a brief monograph on the subject, an excerpt from which appears below:

"The assumption that the Black Savants are necessarily evil, simply because they dress in a forbidding manner and avoid contact with other peoples is, I believe, erroneous. This is not to imply that the Savants should be embraced as our friends. In fact, I would recommend against it. A policy of objectivity, on the other hand, might be of use when attempting to understand these people.

It is important to understand that the Black Savants are not diabolists, as has long been suspected, but occultists. They monitor activities on the lower planes, but only to obtain information. True, the Savants admit to keeping demons as slaves, and express a decided preference for the company of devils. Does this in and of itself justify categorizing them as an evil race? Perhaps, and perhaps not. After all, are not each of us obsessed with our own personal demons?"

Government

The Nefaratans appear to have no central government, though there is a magical hierarchy. Each cabal has its own leader, called an Archimage, who assigns their tasks. The Archimages comprise a cabal of their own, which appears to serve as a ruling body of sorts. Their decisions are made by majority rule.

Defenses

The island of Nefaratus is well protected by natural fortifications. Its sheer cliffs and perilous reefs render the isle safe from all but the most determined waterborne assault. The obsidian towers that serve as the Savants' homes confer protection from aerial attacks, and are

virtually impregnable to non-magical weaponry. Their black iron ships are likewise deemed to be nearly indestructible.

Commerce

The Savants are said to consort with entities from the lower planes, trading such things as soulstones, enchanted items, and captive demons for occult secrets and artifacts. They are not known to have relations with any Talislantan peoples or nations, and in fact appear to evince little interest in the concerns of the present age.

Worldview

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.

Guardian Devil

Guardian Devils are diabolical entities that hail from the plane of Oblivion; they may also be found in the service of certain Talislantan magicians - most notably, the Black Savants of Nefaratus. On their dismal home plane, guardian devils are usually employed to safeguard stores of treasure, gateways, and places of burial. These blue-skinned giants are notable for tireless service; once given an assignment, a guardian devil will never abandon its post until relieved of duty by a superior.

Despite their fierce and brutish appearance, guardian devils are surprisingly pensive creatures. They appear to relish the solitude that their duties afford them, passing the time in deep introspection. Thieves or interlopers who are intent upon trespassing into an area presided over by a guardian devil should not be fooled by the seemingly placid manner of these giants, however. A guardian devil may engage in idle conversation with would-be intruders and may even show appreciation for a good tale or joke, but it will never leave its post or allow an interloper to pass unless commanded to do so by its master.



Size: 8'-10', 600+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT +5	PER +8
WIL -1	CHA 0
STR +10	DEX +2
CON +10	SPD -2

Ability Level: 13-27
Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 18, Axe: DR 26
Special Abilities: Wizardry with four Modes at Ability Level, immune to non-magical attacks, night vision, detect invisible, astral, or ethereal presences (range: 100')
Armor: Leathery skin, PR 3
Hit Points: 54

Oceanus

Oceanus is a waterborne city built entirely upon great barges made from the trunks and fibers of giant sea kelp, tethered to each other in intricate fashion. A great profusion of sails, masts and riggings is employed to give the city impetus. Though incapable of swift or precise movement, Oceanus can be steered along a designated course. The floating city is home to a seafaring people known as the Sea Nomads, or Oceanians.



The Sea Nomads

The Sea Nomads of Oceanus are a green-skinned, dark-haired folk of average height and slender build. Their style of dress is best described as eccentric: vests of iridescent scales, loincloths of rainbow kra's hide, and necklaces of colorful shells being most popular. Their warriors augment this basic wardrobe with shields of zaratan-shell and fierce-looking helms made from the skulls of aquatic predators such as nar-eels.

Ancestry

According to their historians, the Sea Nomads once dwelled in a far off land. When The Great Disaster struck, the inhabitants fled in boats. In their haste, or so the historians claim, the escapees left behind a witch named Jezem, noted as a practitioner of black magic. Out of spite Jezem placed a murrain upon her people, that they might never again dwell upon the land without invoking consequences of the most dire sort. Though the nature of these consequences was never specified, the survivors thought it best not to tempt fate by testing the efficacy of the witch's magics. Accordingly, they became nomadic seafarers, and built the floating settlement of Oceanus as a means of foiling the witch's curse.

Society

The floating city of Oceanus stands as perhaps the ultimate testament to Talislantan man's defiance of nature — or of common sense, depending upon one's point of view. Construction of the settlement remains an ongoing process, both to accommodate a growing population and due to the ravages of wind, water and sea dragons.

The Sea Nomads have learned how to utilize the ocean's natural resources to fit their needs. The primary source of building materials is yellow aqueor, a giant species of kelp that can grow to lengths of up to five hundred feet. The plant's massive trunk, cut into sections and dried by exposure to sunlight, takes on a buoyancy and tensile strength similar to wood. The leaves are edible, and the fibrous stems can be used to make rope, parchment, mats, baskets, and even a type of coarse cloth. Other materials used in construction include coral, sponges, the hide and bones of sea dragons, and adhesives derived from the secretions of various species of shellfish.

Customs

As evidenced by their fear of Jezem's curse, the Oceanians are a people governed by superstition. Practically any event can have portentous significance to these folk, from the shape and color of clouds in the sky to the movements of sea creatures, the flight

Riding Zaratan

The Sea Nomads of Oceanus obtain all that they require for survival from the waters of the Azure Ocean. To do so they depend to a great extent on the zaratan, a species of large aquatic herbivores domesticated by these sea-faring folk many centuries ago. These placid but powerful creatures are employed both as steeds and beasts of burden. Sea Nomad warriors ride zaratan when patrolling the territories around the Floating City, and when repelling aquatic predators such as rainbow kra and sea scorpions. Oceanian engineers use zaratan as floating work stations when performing maintenance work on city structures, and to transport large quantities of heavy materials.

Creatures of the deep by nature, zaratan are also used for underwater operations. Equipped with crude breathing apparatus made from the air-sacs of bellows fish, Nomad gatherers ride their zaratan below the surface to cut and harvest the giant stalks of the yellow aqueor, a plant used extensively in all Oceanian construction. Zaratan are also used when scavenging the ocean floor for giant mollusks and the remains of ancient sea dragons. The latter are particularly prized by Sea Nomads, who use the bones of these great creatures in favor of metals, and their scales for coins (called radiants).

patterns of avir, the position of the moons and stars, and a hundred other possibilities.

Magic & Religion

Sea Nomads worship the elemental spirits of water and wind. While the majority of Oceanians know little of magic, their priests and priestesses are skilled in a primitive form of aquamancy that is mainly used to predict storms and affect weather patterns in the vicinity of the Floating City. Oceanians wrap their dead in aqueor leaves, say prayers for the spirits of the deceased, and set them adrift.

The Arts

The Oceanians practice many decorative and functional crafts, including weaving, pottery, growing colorful sea-gardens, and making ornate jewelry from the pearls of the mollusks. Oceanian music is steeped in ancient tradition, and is based upon the mournful songs sung by their nomadic ancestors after they fled from their homeland.

Language

Oceanians speak the old Sea Nomad tongue, the written version of which is inscribed upon tablets made from the bones of sea dragons. Those who trade with other sea faring races will usually know a bit of Low Talislan, Sign, or some other tongue.

Government

The Sea Nomad population is an amalgam of nine different clans. Each has its own chieftain, who arbitrates disputes among his or her people as needed. Together, the nine chieftains rule the Floating City by council.

Military

Oceanus is defended by a volunteer militia comprised of members from each of the nine clans. The Floating City is protected by fortified towers, which are positioned at various points around the perimeter of the city. Each of these towers is equipped with a massive ballista made of sea dragon horn and bone.

Commerce

Oceanus is completely self-sufficient; its inhabitants grow, catch, harvest, and make all that they need. Even so, the Oceanians sometimes barter with other folk, such as the Sea Rogues of Gao-Din and the occasional Zandir merchant ship or Phantasian windship.

Worldview

Aside from their infrequent trade contacts, the Sea Nomads rarely interact with outsiders. They know very little of the world beyond their Floating City, which seems to suit them just fine. Their only true enemies are the Imrians.

Zaratan

Zaratan are giant sea creatures native to the Far Seas and other temperate, watery regions. Covered with a foot-thick layer of scales as tough as plate armor, zaratan are practically impervious to harm. Normally benign, they will only attack other creatures if greatly provoked, in which case zaratan prefer to use their great bulk and power to ram would-be adversaries.

The Sea Nomads of Oceanus have domesticated the zaratan, using them for transportation, construction, and food gathering. The more aggressive females are used in military operations, and they can be taught to ram intruding sea vessels. The presence of even a few of zaratan is usually sufficient to discourage the

depredations of ocean kra and sea scorpions, both of which are hesitant to approach within ramming range of these aquatic behemoths.



Size: 20'-30', 4,000-10,000 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -7	PER +2
WIL +7	CHA N/A
STR +12	DEX -2
CON +7	SPD +2

Ability Level: 2-14+
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 16, Claws: DR 22, or Ram: 32
Special Abilities: Unaffected by extremes of temperature, pressures of ocean depths, or storms
Armor: Armored plates, PR 25
Hit Points: 60

YELLOW AQUEOR

A giant species of kelp that can grow up to five hundred feet in length, yellow aqueor is an important natural resource for the Oceanians, who consider it the most useful of all sea-plants. The aqueor's massive trunk, cut into sections and dried in the light of the twin suns, takes on tensile strength comparable to good hardwood. The leaves are edible, and the fibrous stems can be used to make rope, parchment, mats, baskets, and even a type of coarse cloth. Furthermore, all products derived from the yellow aqueor are highly resistant to rotting and water-logging.

PHANTAS

Phantas is a semi-tropical isle covered in vegetation and surmounted on all sides by wavering cliffs of white stone. The isle is home to an incredible variety of lifeforms - plants, animals, fungi, and organisms that defy classification, and are to be found nowhere else in Talislanta. 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 known as the Phantasians.

THE PHANTASIANS

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.

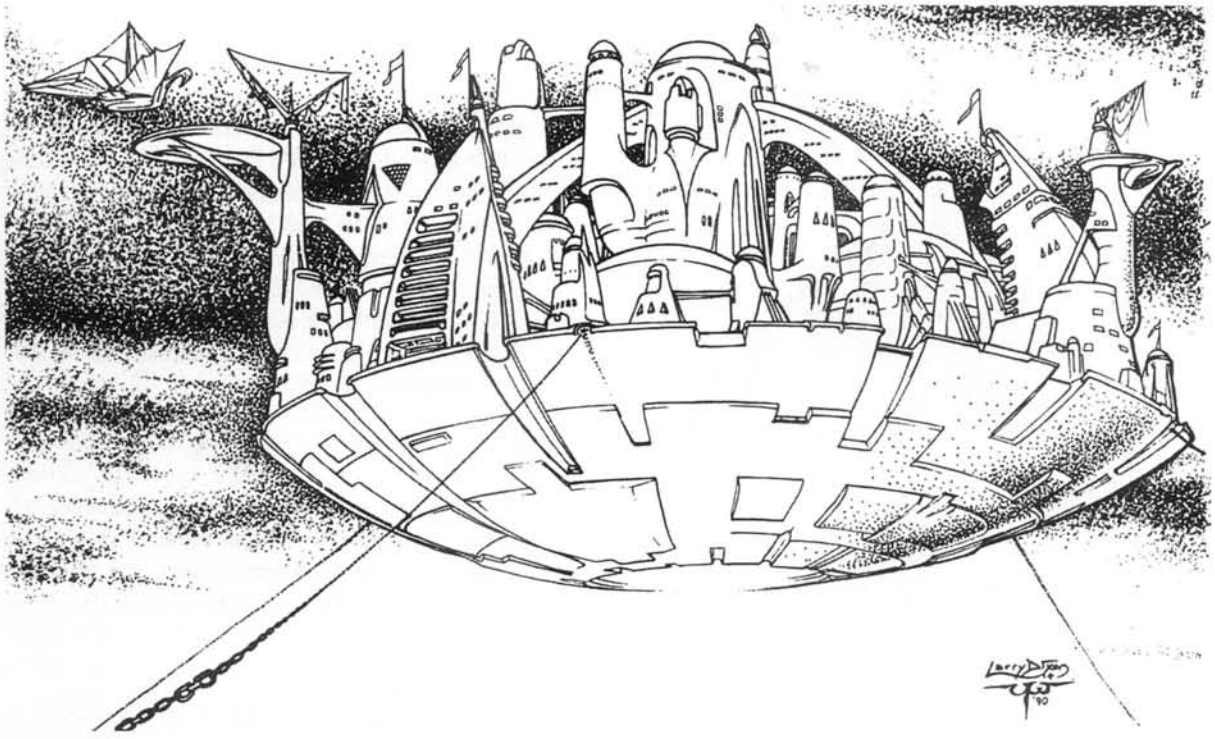
ANCESTRY

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.

SOCIETY

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.



Customs

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.

Government

The ruler of Phantas is the Magister, an official elected by a secret ballot of the city's foremost magicians; a group of seven magicians known as the Phantasian Cabal. The Magister's responsibilities include the formulation of trade and social programs and the arbitration of disputes. The Magister's decisions can be overruled by the Cabal, a situation that leads many to believe that the Magister's position is that of a figurehead. Individuals accused of criminal offenses are usually banished from Cabal Magicus. In true Archaen fashion, the Phantasians prefer to wash their hands of such problems rather than try to solve them.

Magic & 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.

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.

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.

Defenses

Once well-fortified against attack, Cabal Magicus had a large fleet of windships and numerous heavy weapons such as fire-throwers, bombastions, etc. Most of the fleet is now gone, and many of the weapons are

so old that they may not work. Some believe that it is doubtful that the city could withstand a concerted attack from the air. The Imrians once invaded Phantas, but fled upon encountering certain of the isle's more malefic inhabitants — creations of the early Phantasians, who often released their unsuccessful experiments into the wild.

Commerce

Phantas is self-sufficient, its hydroponic gardens and antique essence accumulators providing sufficient food and materials to sustain its small population. 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 Kang Empire.

Worldview

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.

Aboard a Windship

"In the course of my travels, I was fortunate enough to meet up with a Phantasian dream merchant whose windship had broken down along the coast of Faradun. In return for my assistance in repairing the ship's damaged levitationals, the Phantasian agreed to transport me to Zanth, capital of Zandu. The two of us effected the necessary repairs in short order and took to the air.

En route, the Phantasian and I discussed our respective situations over a bottle or two of Zandir wine. He professed to have become tired of the business of selling dream essence, and took to drinking heavily. It soon became apparent that my host had lost all semblance of sobriety: singing loudly and off-key, he reeled across the ship's deck, arms akimbo and head thrown back in a crude version of the Caperetto, a popular dance of the day from Archaen times.

Just then the windship hit a sudden downdraft, causing the vessel to lurch precariously to portside. I grabbed the ship's rail barely in time to avoid being thrown overboard, but the Phantasian was not so fortunate. Wine bottle still in hand, he plunged into the sea and was never heard from again. With a heavy heart I took command of the windship and its contents, and once again set sail for Zanth.

Abomination

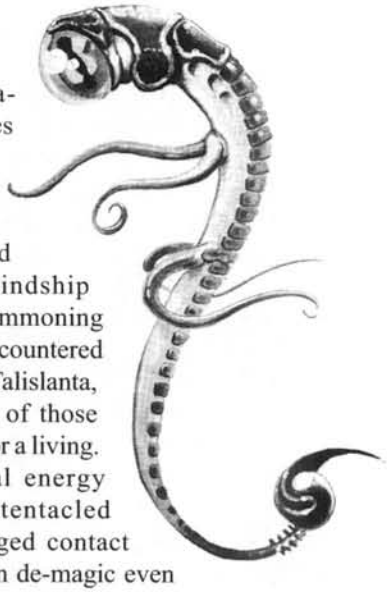
Abominations are products of demented or abortive sorcerous/alchemical experiments, such as those practiced long ago by the ancient Archaens and their descendents, the Phantasians. These entities may vary greatly in form and substance and may be encountered in any form imaginable, from the hideous to the sublime. It is a mistake to assume that the physical make-up of an abomination need bear any relation whatever to natural law. Many appear as combinations of various creature types; some impossible-seeming, others reflecting a perverse sort of logic.

In terms of temperament and mentality, abominations are similarly variable in nature. Though many are of murderous intent, others are benign or - most frightening - possessed of strange passions and desires. An abomination's intellect can range from non-sentience to genius, or raving insanity. The only element common to these bizarrely divergent entities is that, being the products of magic, all have at least a single magical weakness of some sort.

Size and statistics for abominations vary according to type. Abominations tend to have one or two high attributes and very low scores in all other attributes.



ERX



Erx are extra-dimensional parasites that feed on magical energies of all sorts; attracted to magical gates, enchanted artifacts, windship levitationals, and summoning spells, erx may be encountered almost anywhere in Talislanta, much to the dismay of those who practice magic for a living. Erx absorb magical energy through their tentacled appendages; prolonged contact with a hungry erx can de-magic even the most potent enchanted items.

While erx are a great nuisance to magicians, these entities are otherwise quite benign. If threatened with harm, they simply roll up into a ball. Protected by its hard exoskeletal armor, an erx is virtually invulnerable once it has adopted this posture. If further provoked, however, the creature may respond with a lightning swift jab of its dangerous stinger, the point of which is capable of piercing even magical armor. Erx are capable of levitation and travel by hovering on the winds or interdimensional currents.

Size: 1'-4' in length, 2-8 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -5	PER +10
WIL +8	CHA N/A
STR -3	DEX +3
CON +10	SPD +5*

* tail stinger strikes at SPD +10
Ability Level: 4-11
Attacks/Damage: Normally, none; if provoked, Stinger: DR 1 +venom (CON roll at -5 to resist, or suffer extreme pain for 10 rounds)
Special Abilities: Levitate, curl into protective ball, stinger ignores all armor up to +5 PR, sense magical emanations (range: 1000' per Ability Level), unaffected by magic items or spells, absorb magic by touch (one spell-like property or +1 spell level per round)
Armor: Exoskeletal plates, PR 25; underside is unarmored
Hit Points: 6 per foot

L'LATHA

The l'latha is found only on the Isle of Phantas, where the species was created by the thaumaturges of Cabal Magicus many centuries ago. On the isle of Phantas, these agile, reptilian creatures live among the tree-tops and feed on nuts, berries, and insect larvae. If taken while still young, they can be trained to communicate by gestures, to read facial expressions, and to perform even more complex tasks. Phantasian astromancers sometimes keep l'latha as pets, as they are quite intelligent and make suitable helpers in their work. A trained l'latha may sell for as much as four hundred gold lumens.

Size: 2'-3', 10-15 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -4	PER +7
WIL 0	CHA 0
STR 0	DEX +6
CON -1	SPD +6

Ability Level: 4
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 1; some may be trained to use small weapons
Special Abilities: detect impending storms, night vision, keen hearing
Armor: Hide: PR 2
Hit Points: 7



THAECIA

Thaecia is an island of rare and splendorous beauty, located off the southwestern coast of the Talislantan continent in the Azure Ocean. Here waterfalls cascade into shaded lagoons, and fields of flowers sway in the warm ocean breezes. To the west, the enchanting Thaecian Isles curve northward in a graceful arc. This pleasant isle is home to a pleasure-loving people known as the Thaecians.

THE THAECIANS

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.

Ancestry

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.

Society

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).

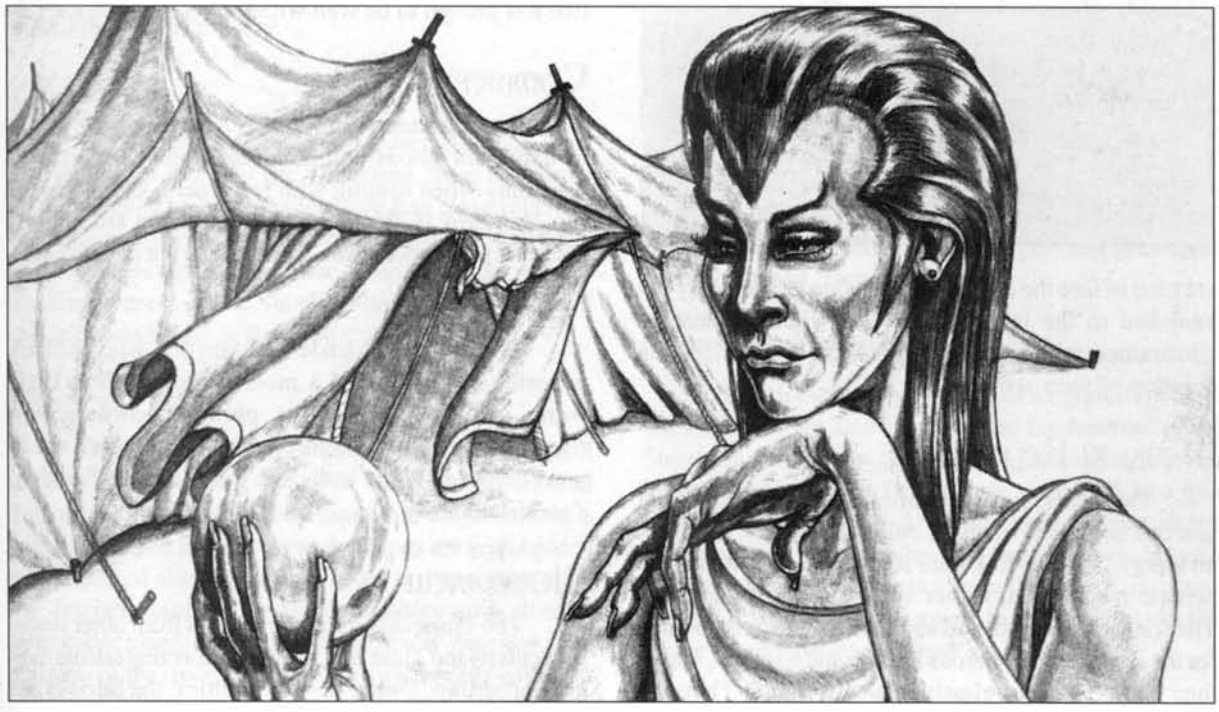
Thaecians do not marry, though some couples remain together for life; most prefer the freedom to change partners as they desire. Thaecian "families" are loose-knit units at best. A single individual may have dozens of sisters and brothers, and hundreds upon hundreds of cousins. Children are raised by their older siblings and extended families, who dote upon their young charges with great joy and affection.

Customs

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.

Government

The Thaecians have no formal government. Instead, Thaecian elders maintain order and keep alert for criminal activities, which among the Thaecians themselves are quite rare. Violent offenders and criminals



The Festival of the Bizarre

"I have seen many strange sights in the course of my travels, but few to compare with the Festival of the Bizarre. To gain entrance, one must be attired in costume or make-up. Wearers of the most outlandish garb are awarded a silver goblet, entitling them to drink for free while at the Festival. Competition for this honor is understandably keen, and produces some truly unbelievable results. While I was in attendance, a trio of Cymrilian contortionists won goblets for appearing in the guise of a tanglewood tree (I will refrain from citing particulars with regard to how this feat was accomplished.)

"Multi-colored tents and pavilions litter the festival grounds, each housing some sort of attraction or entertainment: a duel of spell casters for wagers, abominations from the Aberrant Forest, illusory panoramas, romances, sensations, improbabilities, and things defying description. The visitor is invited to observe, partake of, or otherwise experience as he or she desires. Rare delicacies from all over the known world are available, as well as more common fare, at nominal cost.

"The climax of the festival is the awards ceremony, where valuable prizes are given to those who have submitted an attraction or other entry. For the categories "Most Unique," "Most Provocative," and "Most Absurd" the prize is ten thousand gold lumens. The grand category, appropriately entitled "Most Bizarre," carries with it a prize of one hundred thousand gold lumens. A committee of twelve Thaecian enchanters and enchantresses serve as judges, registering varying degrees of approval or disapproval by means of magically exaggerated facial expressions and gestures."

are tried before the elders. Those judged to be guilty are banished to the isle of Nearwan, where felons are constrained within webs of perdurable force for the duration of their sentence.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

Every Thaecian practices an art or craft of some sort. Some are weavers of gossamer, and others create the scintillant spheres of amberglass called Thaecian Orbs.

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, Thelaeus, and Thania.

Defenses

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.

Commerce

Among themselves, Thaecians generally prefer to barter for goods and services. Coinage is usually used only when dealing with foreigners, in which case the standard is the gold lumen. When troupes of Thiasian performers visit Thaecia they are paid either in gold or magics.

Thaecians will trade with anyone who exhibits peaceful intentions and a modicum of civility. Their wares include magical orbs, philtres, powders, rare fragrances, and vivid-colored inks, all of which are in great demand in such lands as Cymril, Sindar, Faradun, Zandu, and Hadj.

Worldview

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.

The Thaecian Isles

Although many of the Thaecian Isles are of a size and significance unworthy of prolonged discussion, some few are not without certain interesting characteristics. These are described in the following passages:

Eros Isle

Situated to the northeast of Thaecia, this sylvan atoll is one of the most beautiful islands in the Azure Ocean. Southerly winds and water currents caress the island, causing the temperature to remain warm and pleasant throughout the year. The fortunate inhabitants of this paradisiacal realm are a graceful people known as the Thiasians.

The Thiasians

Thiasians have violet skin, black hair, and comely features. Lithe and slender in stature, they dress in garlands of flowers, sashes, or abbreviated sarongs. Those who have been taken to civilized lands prefer silkcloth and other finery.

Ancestry

The Thiasians are believed to be descended from the same root-stock as the Thaecians, their neighbors to the south. The two peoples have had close relations for centuries, and if Thiasian legends are to be believed, may share a common ancestor: a figure known only as the Enchantress of the Shoals, who lives on the island of Cella (see Magic & Religion).

Society

Thiasians are hunter-gatherers who live in fanciful dwellings constructed of woven vines, sea shells, and bits of colored coral. Each communal abode houses a single extended family. These dwellings are well-hidden and scattered about the isle, in order to discourage raids by Imrian slavers. Thiasians subsist on a diet of provender plant, fruit, and nuts, liberally flavored with extracts of the spice tree, which grows here in profusion. To outsiders, Thiasians food often seems to be too heavily seasoned. Conversely, to Thiasians, all other types of food are bland and tasteless.

A flirtatious and promiscuous people, Thiasians never marry, and change partners frequently. Mothers raise their children for the first month or so, then tend to grow bored with the responsibility and allow the older members of the tribe to take over. Young children aged five and up are often unsupervised, and allowed to run free about the island.

Customs

The Thiasians are renowned for their exotic dances and performing talents, but are said to lack interest in most practical matters. This is generally true, though Thiasians are not quite so shallow as they may seem. Though generally non-violent, they are known to throw tantrums if frustrated or angered. Thiasians are extremely emotional, and give vent to their feelings without apparent restraint. All manner of behavior is tolerated by these folk, so long as no one is injured.

The Thiasians have a rich culture, and express themselves through dance rather than words. Their performance art is used to celebrate, mourn the loss of a beloved friend; to express love, anger, frustration, boredom, or any of a dozen emotions. It is customary for their performers to wear expressionless white vizards that conceal their features, as facial expressions are considered irrelevant to movement, song, and music.

Government

The eldest member of the family generally presides over the communal home, assigning chores as needed. No other form of government is evident. Criminal behavior is rare among the Thiasians, but not unknown; crimes of passion are generally the rule in such cases. Offenders may be chastised by their peers, or in extreme cases, banished from the island.

Magic & Religion

Though they are not known as a religious people, the Thiasians are said to revere the Enchantress of the Shoals as the Mother of their race. According to their legends, long ago the Enchantress gave birth to a pair of twin daughters: one silver and violet. One was the first Thaecian, and the other, the first Thiasian. When a Thiasian dies, her people lay the body in a dugout canoe and send it out to sea, saying that the deceased has "gone to see the Enchantress".

Like the Thaecians, Thiasians seem to have a natural aptitude for magic. Few study the arcane arts, however, and so such innate talents as may be present generally go undeveloped.

The Arts

Thiasians practice weaving, pottery, and other useful crafts, but all are secondary to dance and performance. For entertainment and diversion they like to juggle, play catch with balls of tightly woven vines, or throw small stones at wooden disks sent spinning through the air. Thiasian music is primarily rhythm-oriented, and is performed on drums made of wood, metal, and other materials.

Language

Thiasians converse in Low Talislan, though body movement, posture, and gesticulation are used to convey different shades of meaning. Common names begin with the prefix, "Th"; female names end in an "a". For example: Thian, Thanin (male); Thia, Thani (female).

Defenses

The Thiasians have no military or warriors. They prefer to run if confronted by hostile invaders, but will fight if cornered: attacking invaders with spears, nets, or knives, or luring them into quickmires and bogs. The proximity of their island to Thaecia, and their close relations with the Thaecians, affords them protection from hostile races such as the Imrians.

Commerce

Seashells and bits of colored coral are valued by the Thiasians, and are used to "purchase" or trade for items. Native Thiasians are attracted to objects that glitter, including gold and precious stones. However, there is no organized economy on the island. Thiasian performing troupes often travel by boat to Thaecia, where they are paid to entertain the pleasure-loving people of that sunny isle. They are especially popular during the Thaecians' Festival of the Bizarre.

World Relations

An exceptionally attractive people, Thiasians are greatly-favored by other races both as performers and consorts. Some travel to the mainland on the windships of wealthy Cymrilians, who come to Thaecia in numbers during the Festival of the Bizarre. Others have been know to join the crews of Gao vessels, attracted by the flamboyant lifestyle of the Sea Rogues.

Though their proximity to Thaecia affords them some degree of safety, the Thiasians are sometimes preyed upon by Imrian slavers, who seek to capture them for sale in Faradun or the Kang Empire. So it is that their people can sometimes be found far from their homeland.

Parthene

At the far western tail of the Thaecian Isles chain, in a distant region that many scholars believe lies at the very edge of the world, sits the island of Parthene. Shrouded in mist and ringed by dangerous reefs, this rock-bound isle is home to a strange sect known to the outside world as the Parthenians.

The Parthenians

Parthenians stand seven feet in height, and from a distance appear to have glossy bronze skin and hair. They appear to dress in golden helms, shimmering yellow cloaks, armored vests, and iron arm and wrist bracers. Under close inspection it can be seen that Parthenians wear neither helm nor armor, and do not have bronze colored skin or hair. Rather, they are made entirely of bronze. Their "hair" is made of braided wire, their cloaks and vests fashioned of flexible, metallic cloth.

Ancestry

Parthenians are not natural lifeforms, but automatons. Cymrilian scholars have speculated that they may be survivors of The Great Disaster, created either by the ancient Archaens or perhaps the Neurians. Some believe that the Parthenians may have been created to locate and collect collect salvage from the sunken city of Aurantium, either to acquire treasure or to find some lost item or artifact.

Society

The Parthenians are rumored to sail the unknown waters that stretch far to the west, across regions which many Talislantans believe lay at the very edge of the world. Employing humanoid slaves as divers, they scour the ocean floor, hauling sunken treasure and valuable salvage aboard their ships by means of winches. The Parthenians occupy a strange settlement called Parthan, an iron castle of ten towers, each over a hundred feet in height. Its facilities include a dry dock for Parthenian vessels, where triremes are maintained and repaired, and quarters for their humanoid slaves.

Parthenians do not sleep or eat, but must periodically ingest a liquid lubricant similar to refined

lamp oil. Gender differences, even of a surface sort, are nonexistent; Parthenians do not reproduce, though they are apparently able to build new Parthenians to replace those who have been damaged beyond repair or lost. The renowned naturalist, Thystram, stated that there are only one hundred Parthenians in existence at any given time. All are considered parts of the whole, like a complex machine of a hundred parts.

Customs

Though they seldom exhibit overtly hostile behavior, Parthenians are not known for personal warmth; not surprising, given the fact that they are intelligent mechanisms, rather than living creatures. This attitude extends to their slaves, whom they seem to treat poorly at best. While some say the Parthenians are cruel, others believe that they simply don't understand humanoids. Although they know that slaves require food and water (called "fuel" by Parthenians), they seem to believe that humanoids are just another form of automatons, like themselves. By Parthenian standards, their treatment of slaves seems fair, and almost kind. Parthenians even try to "repair" injured slaves, though the results are not always pleasant.

Parthenians have developed no culture or customs, but seem to have been programmed to perform specific functions. These include the operation and maintenance of their triremes, and the search and recovery of lost salvage and sunken treasure. As Parthenians refuse to discuss their motives with outsiders, they remain among the more enigmatic entities in Talislanta.

Government

The Parthenians are governed by an individual known as The One; possibly the first of the line. The One supervises the population of Parthan, ensuring that all goes in accordance with the Master Plan – apparently an ancient document or set of instructions, which serves as the Parthenian manifest. If a copy of the Plan still exists, its location is evidently kept secret and well guarded. Disobedience among Parthenians is unknown. Slaves are expected to follow commands. If they don't they are considered "defective", and repairs are attempted at once. If these fail the slave is usually be "discarded"; i.e., tossed into the sea.

Magic & Religion

Parthenians do not practice magic, though they seem to possess some facility for certain types of technomantic operations. They have no religion, but are said to revere a metal statue or idol of some humanoid being whom the Parthenians acknowledge as their creator. Thystram stated that the image – worn by age, salt air, and repeated polishing – could not be identified.

Language

Parthenians converse in a peculiarly stilted version of Old Archaen. Thystram claimed that they had no names, but referred to each other by number, as in Seven, One-Five, Two-Four, etc.

Defenses

The Parthenians have no warriors or army, but seem to have adequate means of defending themselves. Their metal-hulled triremes are armed with heavy fire-throwers and other weaponry. Parthan, also made of metal, is virtually impregnable.

Commerce

Among their own kind, Parthenians use no currency and have no economic system. Essential items and services are shared by all. When visiting foreign ports or buying slaves from traders, Parthenians always pay in gold or silver talents – five-pound ingots stamped with the Parthenians' seal. Parthenian gold and silver, salvaged from the sunken city of Aurantium and the hulls of sunken ships, is renowned for its purity.

Worldview

Parthenians may sometimes be encountered on the high seas, sailing in great triremes with prows fashioned in the likeness of the idol that they regard as their creator. On rare occasions, Parthenian vessels have been known to stop in a port city in order to purchase slaves. They never stay long, often pulling into port and then departing on the same day or night. Parthenians appear to be unparticular with regard to who they will deal with. Basically, anyone willing to trade slaves or provisions for gold and silver will suffice. They appear to be neutral as regards the interests of all other races and species, and have no known treaties or relations with any Talislantan government, group, or individuals.

Peridia

Peridia is a small and rocky isle of little interest save for its massive subterranean grotto, known as Cavernciff. Accessible only by means of an underwater entranceway, the ceilings of this spectacular cavern glitter with encrusted gems and crystals. Climbing the slick and jagged walls is said to be a difficult task, and

the presence of lurkers and aquatic demons has given many adventurers pause to consider another means of attaining affluence.

DALIA

Dalia is, like so many of Thaecia's islands, a place of scenic and peaceful vistas. Of particular note are a series of bluffs overlooking the ocean and located on the isle's western coast: the view at sunset is said to be unsurpassed anywhere in the known world. The occasional appearance of a neurovore (or "brain leech," as these small, winged parasites are sometimes called) should hardly deter those with an avid appreciation of nature's wonders.

GARGANTA

Largest of the Thaecian Isles, Garganta is a great and irregular mound of volcanic rock. Here live the gigantic stone beings known as Monoliths, believed to be the oldest creatures in the world. Generally silent and implacable, Monoliths can sometimes be persuaded to reveal a portion of their knowledge, which is said to be quite comprehensive. Normally a period of several days or even weeks is required before a Monolith will deign to respond to any query; less if the Monolith is one of the few demented sorts who are occasioned to acts of violence. As fewer than one in five Monoliths is predisposed to such irrational behavior, the chances of attaining enlightenment at little cost are fairly good. Beware of depredators, however, who come here to mate during certain times of the year.

MONOLITH

Monoliths are mountainous elemental entities native to the isle of Garganta and certain other islands of the Southern Rim. Comprised of stone, they are slow to take action, moving only as the mood suits them, which is often not at all. Monoliths claim to be as old as the world itself, and they are said to possess nearly infinite stores of knowledge. They can be convinced to impart a portion of their wisdom to those patient enough to await a reply, though a waiting period of several days or even weeks should be expected when dealing with these lethargic beings, whose conception of time is not affected by the urgency displayed by mere mortals. The performance of a small favor (such as the removal of an irritating opteryx's nest from a monolith's ear) has on occasion been known to add a mild degree of impetus to a monolith's thought processes.



Most monoliths are passive and implacable, though some are prone to outbursts of violence, generally expressed by means of some volcanic or seismic display. Extremely violent volcanic activity may signal the birth or death of a monolith, or so some scholars believe.

Size: 100'-2,000'+ in height, weight unknown
Attributes:

INT +10	PER +2
WIL +10	CHA +4
STR +15	DEX -10
CON +15	SPD -18

Ability Level: 20+
Attacks/Damage: See Special Abilities
Special Abilities: Cause seismic/volcanic disturbances at Ability Level, immunity to magical control/influence
Armor: Stony exterior, PR 30
Hit Points: Unknown

CELLA

Nearly as lovely as Dalia, this isle is home to an enigmatic figure known only as the Enchantress of the Shoals. The stories and legends of the Enchantress abound: some say she is a temptress who once seduced Kabros, wizard-king of ancient Phaedra. Others believe she is an Archaen, whose potent magics have preserved her youth and beauty for countless centuries. The Thiasians revere her as a demi-goddess, and as the Mother of their people and the Thaecians.

It is said that the Enchantress of the Shoals will grant a wish in return for a favor. The nature of the favor required by the Enchantress is, alas, a matter impossible to determine short of inquiry in person at her manse. Reliable reports verify the potency of her magics, which are perhaps the most efficacious in the region.

ORB ISLAND

This isle is uninhabited save for such noxious entities as water raknids and the spawn of giant sea scorpions. A rare and exotic variety of crystal dendron grows here, the globular "fruit" of which is employed in the making of the finest Thaecian Orbs. Thaecian enchanters commonly offer up to fifty gold lumens apiece for these crystalline objects, which they are understandably somewhat reluctant to gather for themselves.

NEARWAN

This small tropical isle has traditionally been a place of exile for individuals convicted of crimes in Thaecia. There are perhaps as many as forty criminals consigned to Nearwan at any given time, including thieves, interlopers, and individuals rendered insane as a result of dabbling in unsafe magical practices. Each is imprisoned in a web of perdurable force approximately one hundred feet in diameter. They subsist on fruits and vegetables, which the exiles are allowed to grow within their enchanted prisons. Thaecians assigned to monitor these pariahs check the facilities daily, usually by windrigger.

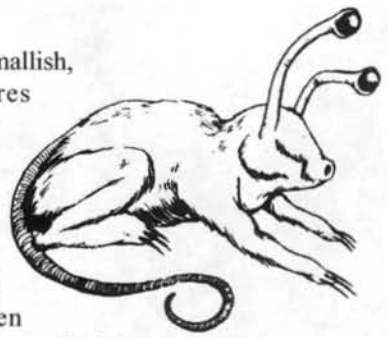
TWIN ISLANDS

These two rocky isles lie off the north coast of Garganta. Each is actually an ages-old Monolith, worn and weathered by untold centuries of wind and water. On rare occasions, the two can be heard conversing with each other, their rumbling voices carrying for many miles in all directions. It is said that one of these two Monoliths can utter nothing but the truth, while the other — a deviant sort — speaks only lies. Opinions differ as to which one is which, as neither of the two is particularly talkative or swift to respond, even by monolithic standards.

FARIQUE

There is an enchanted fountain on this mystical island, high atop a peak surrounded by dense jungle, the waters of which are purported to confer continued youth and longevity. A single ounce of the "Waters of Farique" sells for as much as five hundred gold lumens, but is difficult to obtain; the fountain emits but a trickle of liquid, and the dense jungles of the isle are rife with ravengers, aramatus and water raknids.

QUAAL



Quaal are smallish, furry creatures common to most tropical islands and jungles of the Southern Rim. They are semi-intelligent and possess keen powers of perception with their flexible eyestalks. Quaal are popular among the Sea Rogues of Gao-Din and Zandir charlatans, who keep these creatures as pets. They can be trained to perform clever tricks and feats of dexterity; in fact, quaal make excellent pick-pockets and sneak-thieves, and they can be taught to serve as lookouts, emitting a chattering noise at the first sign of intruders. Quaal normally subsist on nuts and berries but have a weakness for sweets. If unattended, the creatures are also known to drink wine, which makes them drowsy and disoriented.

Size: 1' in length, 1-2 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -5	PER +6
WIL -1	CHA N/A
STR -8	DEX +8
CON 0	SPD +8

Ability Level: 1+
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 1
Special Abilities: Keen sense of smell/hearing, prehensile tail, can be trained in skills such as Legerdemain
Armor: None
Hit Points: 4



A Djaffir Merchant returns home after a profitable journey



THE DESERT KINGDOMS

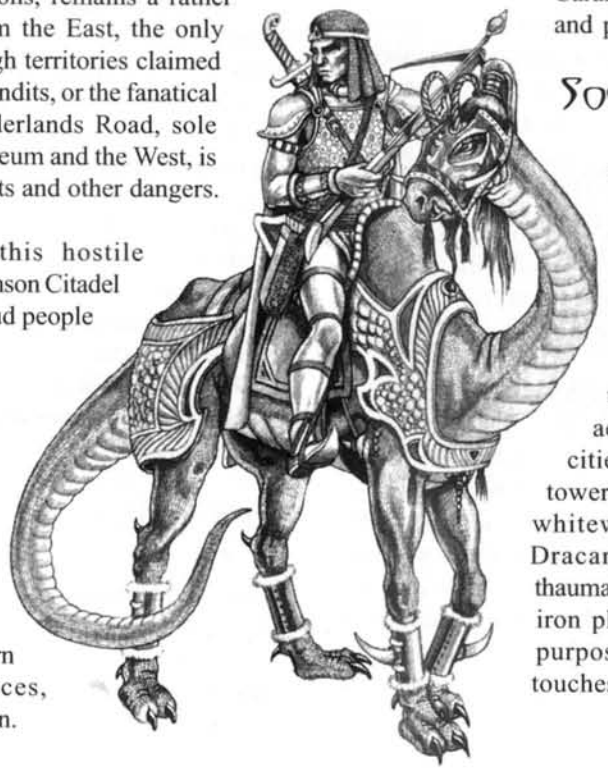
CARANTHEUM

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. It is a harsh land, swept by sandstorms and scorched by the burning rays of Talislanta's twin suns. Travel to Carantheum, despite efforts to improve conditions, remains a rather perilous proposition. From the East, the only practical routes lead through territories claimed either by the Saurans, Za bandits, or the fanatical Rajans. The ancient Wilderlands Road, sole causeway between Carantheum and the West, is beset by bandits, wild beasts and other dangers.

In the midst of this hostile environment stands the Crimson Citadel of Dracarta, home to a proud people called the Dracartans.

THE DRACARTANS

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.

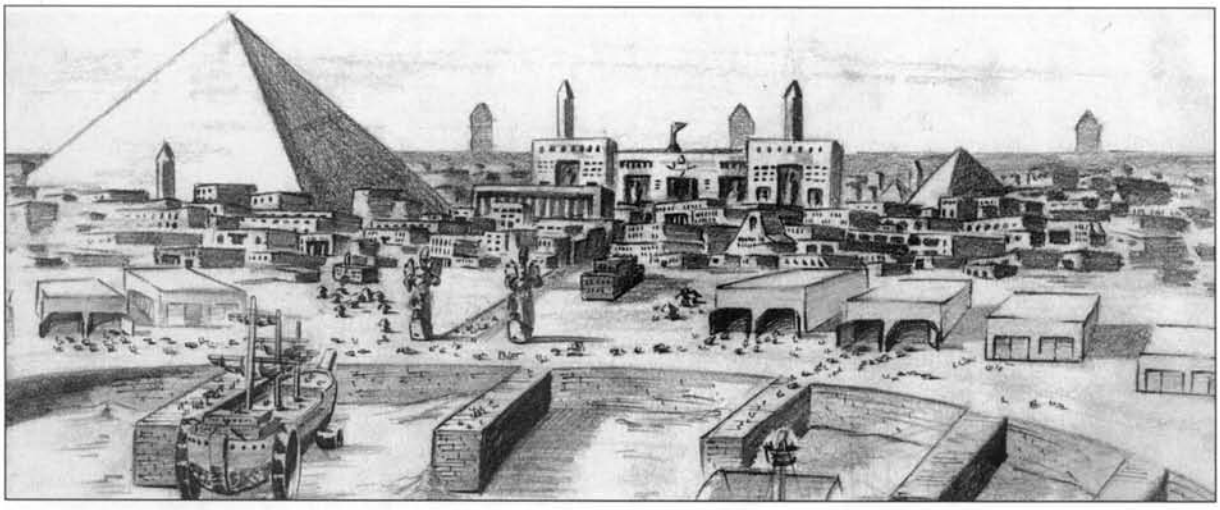


ANCESTRY

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.

SOCIETY

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.



Safe within their walled cities, the Dracartans practice many a diverse array of crafts and professions. There are food-growers, artisans, metalsmiths, thaumaturges, merchants, priests, teachers, public officials, desert scouts, and many others. The populace subsist on a plentiful diet of dates, erd's milk, erd cheese, and a type of unleavened bread made from provender plant called t'chall. Kasmiran mochan is a popular beverage.

Dracartans consider themselves to be part a single family; "One tribe, one heart", as they say. Males and females are accorded equal status in the family and in Dracartan society. Children are cared for by their parents and grandparents; education is considered of the utmost importance, and children begin schooling at age three.

Customs

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 Kang Empire, and Rajanistan. 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. Though they can afford to surround themselves with creature comforts, they choose to live simply. This is both a way of honoring the ancestors who struggled so that they might prosper, and a means of ensuring that should the Dracaratans lose everything as they did long ago the race would still be strong enough to survive.

Government

Carantheum is ruled by a king, who is chosen through a process known as the "Test of the Ancients." This ordeal consists of three separate parts: a journey through the desert, the scaling of a mountain of glass, and the retrieval of a magic scepter from a vault deep inside a crystal mountain. The test is held once every twelve years, unless the premature death of a reigning king requires otherwise.

The laws of the Kingdom of Carantheum are strict but fair. A court of nine elders judges all cases; trials and judgement are swift and final, with no appeal possible. Individuals convicted of minor offenses are sentenced to perform some sort of civic duty, such as cleaning municipal sewage receptacles. Banishing violent or habitual criminals to the Wilderlands is also a popular punishment.

Magic & 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

describing the lost art of thaumaturgy. Dracartans believe this knowledge was conveyed to them by Jamba himself, the only time the deity is known to have spoken. For this reason it is not permitted to speak or make noise while in a Dracartan temple, lest the faithful miss any further pronouncement of Jamba.

Carantheum is famed for its thaumaturges, who are greatly esteemed for the wondrous products which they create. Not the least of these is the elusive substance known as quintessence, a crystalline powder derived by a secret alchemical process (see sidebar). Dracartan thaumaturges transmute the bodies of the dead to solid form, after which the deceased are buried in underground tombs.

The Arts

The music of the Dracartan people is a medley of complex rhythmic figures overlaid with droning vocal chants. Instrumentation includes daro (drums made of fired clay and land lizard hide), dracara (ancestral drums made of red iron, dating back hundreds of years, and tchan (red iron cymbals). The making of red iron jewelry, utensils, tools, and weapons of superior craftsmanship is also a popular artform.

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'Dara (males); T'jamal. K'Taral, M'Daral (females).

Defenses

The Dracartan military is known to be quite formidable, though the exact size and capabilities of its forces are government secrets. The capital city of Dracarta has a large fleet of armored duneships, many divisions of aht-ra cavalry, and several dozen hurlants capable of propelling spheres of red menace, yellow peril, and other dangerous substances. The city is surrounded by tri-fold walls, and despite the best efforts of the Rajan army has never been successfully penetrated. The citadels of Anasa and Nadan are also heavily armed and fortified against attack, and harbor even more troops and duneships.

The Academy of Thaumaturgy

The Academy of Thaumaturgy, in Dracarta, is the only place in Talislanta where the ancient art of Thaumaturgy is taught. The inner walls of this red iron-plated building are heavily reinforced with alternating layers of metal and ceramic plating – precautions deemed necessary due to the volatile nature of the work that goes on at the Center. For it is here that the Dracartan Thaumaturges work their wonders: distilling elemental essences, transmuting matter into different forms, and concocting the marvelous substance known as quintessence.

By skillful utilization of the magical properties of quintessence, Dracartan thaumaturges are able to transmute the very nature of substance. Thus, they are able to solidify water, liquify stone or metal, turn sand into glassine stone, or place elemental forces in suspension. This crystalline compound is so unstable that, in its most rarified form, it must be stored in amberglass vaults over five feet thick, lest even the smallest quantity escape into the outside environment.

Commerce

Carantheum produces most of what it needs, with the exception of water, which is obtained from deep underground wells but at times is in short supply. When needed, the Dracartans obtain stores of life-giving fluid from Astar of the Seven Kingdoms, using thaumaturgy to solidify water from Lake Zephyr, cut it into massive blocks, and transport it to Dracarta in massive land barges. Merchant caravans from many lands come to Dracarta to acquire red iron, for which they trade goods of all varieties: amberglass from Cymril, woven goods and hardwoods from Vardune, scintilla and amber from Jhangara, metal and precious stones from Arim, beasts from Djaffa, and many other items. Duneships and land barges skim across the desert on red-iron runners, bringing cargoes to and from many distant lands.

Worldview

The Dracartans have good relations with the Djaffir 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

and allies. Carantheum's enemies are even more numerous. Despite several costly defeats, Rajanistan continues to covet the Red Desert's riches, and remains a constant threat to the Dracartans. The Kang Empire is also believed to have an overly acute interest in this region. Za bandit tribes have preyed upon caravans heading to and from Dracarta for many years, and show no sign of letting up. The Araq, too, have no love for Dracartans.

Dracartan Settlements

The Capital City of Dracarta

Dracarta is one of the most important trade centers on the continent. It is a striking to behold, its tri-fold walls and towers plated with gleaming red iron, and its streets paved with white stone. Merchant caravans from many lands come here, bearing goods of all description to trade for the Dracartans' wares.

Anasa

Anasa is a Dracartan citadel that stands at the southern edge of the Red Desert. Primarily a military outpost, it has its own fleet of duneships and a garrison of desert scouts. Djaffir merchant tribes come here to sell their wares.

Nadan

Nadan is a fortified settlement located at the northern edge of the Red Desert. It is notable for its duneship construction yards, and for its large population of Yassan, many of whom are employed here as highly skilled workers.

The Yassan

The Yassan are a short and stocky people, with metallic grey skin, flat features, and six-fingered hands. They dress in hooded yellow tunics and breeches, with heavy leather boots and gloves; a costume well-suited to their preferred line of work.

Ancestry

The Yassan are thought to be descended from a race of neomorphs created by the ancient Archaens. Displaced during the aftermath of The Great Disaster, the Yassan spent many years wandering in the Wilderness of Zaran. Eventually they were found by Dracartan desert scouts, and their clans granted sanctuary within the walled settlement of Nadan.

Society

Yassan are artisans by trade, skilled in the working of metals, stone, and glass, and adept at building, repairing, and maintaining, most types of mechanisms and structures. While certain aristocratic Talislantans denigrate them as "commoners" or "manual laborers", the Yassan are highly intelligent and possessed of an independent spirit. They are arguably the most skilled artisans on the continent, and can build or repair just about anything.

The Yassan know no ancestral homeland, nor do they know much of the origins and history of their people. Despite this, they have created a unique and diverse culture, which emphasizes hard work, honesty, and a respect for craftsmanship that is unsurpassed by other peoples. Since being taken in by the Dracartans, the majority of Yassan now reside in Nadan. Most live in Dracartan dwellings, modified to suit their needs and decorated to their tastes.

Yassan are devoted to their clans, or family units. Couples bond for life, and may produce as many as ten offspring – large families are favored by the Yassan. Children are raised by the parents; at age two they are enrolled in a Yassan trade school for intensive instruction.

Customs

Among these people, hard work is considered a virtue, and sloth, a crime. Yassan craftsmen uphold the highest standards of craftsmanship in all things that they do. They have little respect for those who produce sub-standard or slip-shod work. Yassan hate being idle, and always keep busy (see The Arts).

Government

The clan unit, based on the extended family, serves as the Yassan hierarchy. At its head is the eldest male or female, followed by his or her eldest son or daughter, and so on down the line. Yassan have no government other than this, though as guests in Carantheum, they honor all Dracartan laws. Serious offenses, almost unknown among the law-abiding Yassan, are usually handled within the clan.

Magic & Religion

Yassan believe in the entity called Creator. They worship together as a family, giving thanks for their homes, jobs, and health. Each of their homes has a small shrine with a beautifully crafted, seven-pointed star sigil,

representing the Yassan concept of Creator. Yassan dead are placed in coffins of intricately carved stone and buried in the desert.

Yassan are skilled in the mechanical aspects of Technomancy, a lost branch of the arcane arts that is practically unknown to Talislantans of the New Age. Their knowledge of complex mechanisms and exceptional manual dexterity enables them able to repair, assemble, disassemble, or modify just about anything that has working parts, including the most complex windship levitationals and essence accumulators.

The Arts

Yassan take one day off each month for relaxation and recreation. During this time most practice an art or craft of some sort. The music of the Yassan technomancers is technically oriented, complex, and highly structured; in fact, most of their musical instruments also double as tools. All Yassan instruments are either hammered, beaten, or plucked. Favorites include the clangals (flexible saw blades used as cymbals), tubals (metal pipe), metal-harp, spring-chimes, and hammer-gongs. Yassan "sheet music" resembles a set of mechanical diagrams.

Yassan sculpture utilizes geometric shapes and symbols, cut from metals of various sorts, polished or lacquered, and arranged in unusual forms. Their creations exhibit a high degree of technical expertise, and no lack of imagination.

Language

Yassan are fluent in both Nomadic and a native dialect of High Talislan. They are also able to read and write technomantic symbology. Yassan names usually have but a single syllable: Ome, Yan, Ang, Enk, etc. There is no difference in male or female nomenclature.

Defenses

Yassan have no organized military. In return for sanctuary and shelter granted to them by Carantheum, all Yassan spend one year in the Dracartan military engineer corps. They perform a vital function, helping to maintain and repair Dracartan duneships, roads, and fortifications.

Commerce

Yassan fees tend to be high, but the speed and quality of their workmanship are unsurpassed. They are in great demand in civilized regions, where their clans are involved in maintenance, engineering, and construction. It has been said that Yassan society is essentially one large trade guild.

Work for Hire

"My first encounter with the Yassan occurred while I was traveling by land ark across that region of the Wilderlands known as the Barrens. The ship's navigator, a Zandir whom we all suspected of favoring an afternoon tipple or two, failed to notice the appearance of a large boulder, partly submerged in the sandy soil and laying directly in the path of the land ark. The resulting impact damaged both the vessel's starboard forewheel and aft-rudder, causing the land ark to come to a halt, listing precariously to one side. After berating the navigator and cuffing him soundly about the ears for good measure, the ship's captain ordered his first mate to raise a yellow flag, indicating that the ship was in distress and in need of assistance. 'Distress' would also describe the state of the ship's passengers, for we were stranded perilously close to territories known to be occupied by hostile Beastmen tribes.

As luck would have it, a clan of Yassan technomancers passing through the region spotted our signal and came to our aid. Without delay they retrieved block and tackle, extensible hoists, and other tools from their wagons and set to work. In short order they righted the land ark, raised the hull, and removed the damaged forewheel and rudder. Within an hour the damaged parts were repaired, along with several cracks in the hull and a slightly bent axle that even the ship's carpenter had not noticed. The captain was overjoyed, until he was presented a bill for the Yassan's services, the extent of which very nearly caused his swarthy features to go pale. Still he paid the technomancers without complaint, knowing full well that the quality of the workmanship was well worth the price."

Worldview

As citizens and subjects of Carantheum, Yassan observe much the same political agenda as their patrons. Those who live outside of Carantheum typically remain neutral as regards other nations and peoples. However, a Yassan will never work for anyone he or she doesn't trust. This includes the Kasmirans, whom the Yassan accuse of stealing certain of their trade secrets.

Sand Demon



Sand Demons are horrid entities from the Demonrealms who are sometimes found in the Desert Kingdoms other arid regions, where they hide in sand dunes and dry wells. Vampiric by nature, sand demons are able to create mirages, thereby luring prey within reach of their grasping claws. Their usual method of attack is to lie submerged beneath the sands, leaving only their hollow horns (which serve as breathing apparatus) exposed above ground. When their chosen victim approach, they grab hold of the unfortunate creature and drag it below the surface.

Like their relatives the earth demons, sand demons possess an aversion to wind and water, both of which cause them discomfort. They are most susceptible to damage from spells of Aeromancy.

Size: 7'-7'4", 200-230 lbs.
Attributes:

INT +3	PER +3
WIL +7	CHA -6
STR +6	DEX +2
CON +10	SPD +1

Ability Level: 5-12+
Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 12, Bite: DR 10 + DR 3 blood drain per round
Special Abilities: Elemental Magic (Geomancy; Sand) with four Modes at Ability Level; create mirages (area of effect: 10 foot radius per level)
Armor: Sandy exterior, PR 2
Hit Points: 42

Sponge Bristle

This rugged variety of spiny-skinned succulent is indigenous to hot, arid regions, such as Carantheum, Djaffa, Kasmir, and Rajanistan. The sponge bristle absorbs moisture from the air and from below ground, storing it within its pulpy interior. A fully grown plant can measure up to three feet in diameter and may contain up to six quarts of water, making the sponge-bristle a boon to desert-dwellers and travelers. Along with desert palms, these plants are common to many a Wilderland oasis.

Djaffa

Surrounded on three sides by the Wilderlands of Zaran, and to the east by the Red Desert, the land of Djaffa consists primarily of scrub plains and desert. Rain is scarce; sandstorms are common. The days are sweltering; the nights are cold. With the exception of a few scattered oases, practically nothing grows in this arid region. Yet this arid land has long been home to the nomadic peoples known as the Djaffir.

The 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.

Ancestry

The Djaffir are descended from a large group of nomadic tribes displaced by The Great Disaster. Some believe they are distantly related to the Kasmirans, a prospect which neither people seems to relish.

Society

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 Kang 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.

The Djaffir have two settlements, which grow or contract in size according to the comings and goings of the various merchant and bandit tribes. These "desert cities" are comprised entirely of tents and pavilions, allowing them to be moved at need.

Djaffir males can take as many wives as they can afford to keep. No wife is more important than any other, nor are any offspring favored over the other on the basis of maternal origin. Women are allowed to do anything a man can do except rule a tribe or take more than one husband. There is evidence to suggest that Djaffir women have begun to rebel against these inequities, but the ancient traditions are not easily changed.

Customs

Though they will use force if necessary, Djaffir bandits are not known to engage in wanton or senseless violence. Neither are they known to attack the caravans of other Djaffir, a fact that has led many to suspect collusion between the sheiks of the two tribal groups. Some go so far as to cite the distinction between Djaffir merchants and bandits as one of semantics only. The implication is that there are no bandit or merchant tribes per se, only Djaffir; i.e. a Djaffir who has nothing to sell becomes a bandit. When he has stolen something and wishes to sell it he becomes a merchant. The Djaffir do not take kindly to such talk.

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.

Government

Each clan has its own chieftain, who directs the day to day activities of the group. Both the bandit and merchant tribes are in turn ruled by a Sheik, who governs the lesser chieftains. At the head of all the chieftains and the two Sheiks is the Caliph of Djaffa, who is regarded by his people as their spiritual leader. Aside from his duties as arbiter of all tribal disputes, the Caliph of Djaffa performs no other known function. Even so, it is said that at a single word from the Caliph, all the tribes of Djaffa would unite to do his bidding.

Magic & 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.



Sport with the Rajans

"Both the Djaffir merchant tribes and their bandit brethren have no love for the Rajans, and will seldom pass up an opportunity to "pull their beards" (as they like to put it). I am reminded of an incident that occurred at the eastern edge of the Wilderlands of Zaran. The Djaffir merchant tribe I had been riding with was known to do business with certain merchants in the city of Hadran, in the Kang Empire. To do so, the Djaffir either had to follow a circuitous route through the Volcanic Hills or trespass through a heavily patrolled sector of Rajanistan. Naturally, the Djaffir always chose the latter approach, as it was the shortest of the two.

On this particular occasion, the tribe decided that they would show their utter disdain for the Rajans by venturing into their territories during broad daylight. I assured them that they need not be so bold merely to impress me, which they considered a grand joke. On the next day we rose before dawn and approached the Rajan border. There we waited, mounted on our swift ontra, a cool night wind blowing at our backs. When the twin suns finally broke across the horizon, the tribe's chieftain raised his scimitar and let out an exultant cry. The rest of the tribe replied in kind, and we were off, thundering across the plains and into Rajanistan.

The first Rajans we encountered were a band of Virds, barely risen from their sleep. We rode directly into their encampment, the Djaffir capsizing tents and slashing indiscriminately with their blades, and were gone before the Virds knew what had transpired. The Djaffir were wild with the thrill of battle, and becoming ever more bold with each passing mile. At the sight of a Rajan merchant caravan, the nomads shouted in unison some deprecating remark. Then they descended upon their rivals, wreaking havoc upon the Rajans' baggage trains before again dashing off towards Hadran.

This last incident aroused the attention of a contingent of Rajan cavalry, who set off after us in hot pursuit. When the bridge at Hadran finally came into view, my heart leapt with joy, then just as quickly sank; blocking the bridge was a unit of Shadinn land lizards. With the Rajans at our heels and the Shadinn ahead, our doom seemed imminent. Though certainly aware of our plight, the Djaffir continued to ride at full gallop towards the bridge. The Shadinn responded, charging forth on their armored lizards to meet us head on. This, evidently, was what the Djaffir had hoped would occur. Scattering like leaves on the wind, the nomads rode in between and around the Shadinn's lumbering beasts, who nearly fell over themselves trying to match the agile maneuvers of the Djaffir's swift steeds. The pursuing Rajan cavalry arrived on the scene only to become hopelessly entangled with the Shadinn host, which by this time was in a state of utter disarray. In the ensuing crush of Rajans, land lizards, and Shadinn, the nomads were able to make the bridge. Four of our group had suffered slight wounds, a small price to pay for such sport, at least in the opinion of the Djaffir."

The Arts

Djaffir arts include ornamental beadwork, pottery, and mosaic. Crafts include fine leatherwork, linen, rugs, ornate swords and daggers. The music of the nomadic Djaffir tribes features high, trilling vocals over complex rhythmic figures; the latter, performed on cymbals of varying pitch, shakers, and aht-ra hide tribal drums. Another instrument is the djaro, which also doubles as a short bow; the bowstring is struck with a rod or stick to produce its characteristic "twanging" sound. A whirling, spinning dance called the django is a traditional favorite of the tribes.

Language

Djaffir speak Nomadic and Talislan. First names often begin with the prefix "Dj". For example: Djamal al Arin, Djeral djen Harune, Djalla il Faruud, and so on.

Defenses

The Djaffir make no fortifications, but rely on mobility for defense and offense. Most males and females acquire proficiency in the use of bow and scimitar by age ten or eleven.

Commerce

Djaffir caravans are large and heavily-armed against attack. They carry goods to and from the marketplaces of many countries, from the Western Lands to the Eastern Lands. Unlike the Farad, Djaffir generally do not deal in contraband. Nor do they normally deal in artifacts and curiosities, as Orgovian traders often do. Instead, the Djaffir trade in goods such as spices, ornate rugs, copper or brass utensils, bolts of silkcloth from

the east, mochan, dried fruits, and wines. They also breed and sell domesticated animals such as aht-ra, which are in wide use among the peoples of the Desert Kingdoms and elsewhere as steeds and burden beasts. The Djaffir themselves produce few marketable wares, though they make lances, daggers and short bows of good quality for their own use.

Worldview

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.

Djaffir Settlements

Al Ashad & El Aran

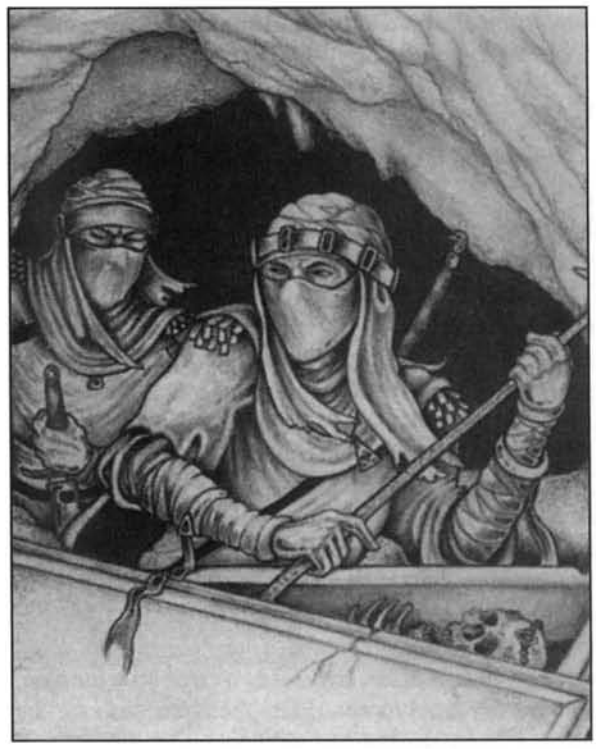
Al Ashad is the southern tent settlement. The wells are heavily guarded, for water is a precious commodity in this region. It is said that the Djaffir merchant tribes prefer this settlement due to its close proximity to the Wilderlands Road. The northern oasis-settlement, El Aran, is identical in most respects to Al Ashad. Djaffir bandit tribes reportedly prefer this place, due to its isolated location in the desertlands. Sand demons proliferate in this region.

The Yitek

A desert people with dark brown skin and hair, Yitek are thin, wiry, and active; there is no such thing as a fat Yitek, for their people are constantly on the move and are well-adapted to a nomadic existence. The customary mode of dress includes loose-fitting robes, cape, and veiled headdress. The latter affords protection from sandstorms, and also provides the wearer with a modicum of anonymity — a useful function, given the Yitek's line of work.

Ancestry

Like the Dracartans, the Yitek are among the many Talislantans whose ancestors were displaced by The Great Disaster. The Yitek claim to be descended from the folk of ancient Ashann, and say that they were once rulers of a great and powerful kingdom. Others regard the Yitek legends with skepticism, stating that their tribes have always been as they are now: wandering vagabonds whose only talent is tomb-robbing.



Society

The Yitek are nomads who traverse the Desert Kingdoms and Wilderlands regions in small-to-medium-sized bands. There are two main tribes: the Notas (northern Yitek) and Sutas (southern Yitek), named after the general regions in which they are found and which each claims as their respective territories. The two tribes are usually on good terms with each other, though territorial disputes are not unknown. Yitek bands are highly mobile, carrying everything they need and own on the backs of their aht-ra. Most prefer the three-humped tatra, which, though not as swift as the one-humped ontra, can carry heavier loads. This is an important consideration, as the typical Yitek mount must bear water, provisions, weapons, sleeping tent, tools such as winches, chisels, pry-bars, a musical instrument or two, and even the rider's offspring.

Like their rugged mounts, Yitek require little in the way of food and water, and so are able to venture into areas considered uninhabitable by other Talislantans. They earn a livelihood by scouring the Desert Kingdoms and Wilderlands for ancient ruins, using old maps, legends, artifacts, and their own instincts to guide them. Yitek are particularly adept at locating sites and structures that have been lost beneath the shifting sands, or deliberately hidden in order to protect their contents. Ancient burial grounds and crypts are among the most coveted finds, due to the riches that such places may

contain — hence, the Yitek's reputation as tomb-robbers.

Customs

The Yitek are known for a morbid or "dark" sense of humor, a trait that is perhaps essential to their trade but that other folk sometimes find distasteful. Indeed, the nature of the Yitek's profession is such that many Talislantans prefer to avoid prolonged or unnecessary contact with them. Few Yitek evince any great concern for such views, which they attribute to ignorance and superstition (see Magic & Religion).

Yitek males may take as many wives as they can afford to keep, a large number of wives being regarded as a sign of status among these folk. Marriage contracts are customarily arranged by the father of the bride. Prospective suitors strive to outdo their rivals by offering the richest gifts, thereby earning the father's favor and his daughter's hand. Yitek offspring are doted upon by their mothers, but otherwise ride with the band and are expected to contribute their fair share to the group as soon as they are old enough to gather food, get water, and tend the band's beasts.

Government

Yitek bands operate as small communes, with everyone contributing to the group's welfare. Each band has a nominal chieftain or leader, generally the oldest and wisest male of the group. The chieftain's main responsibility is to locate favorable sites for excavation, to negotiate the sale or trade of recovered goods and artifacts, and to distribute the profits fairly. Among the Yitek, stealing from or committing violence against another member of the group, hoarding food or water, or coveting another's spouse are considered serious crimes. Should a member of the band be accused of such an offense, the chieftain may be called upon to judge the offender's case. The punishment for all but the most trivial offense is expulsion from the group — Yitek bands are close-knit, and will not tolerate untrustworthy persons in their midst.

Magic & Religion

Yitek appear to have little interest in matters of religion. This may be more an issue of pragmatism than spirituality, for in the pursuit of their profession Yitek often have to undertake actions that others would regard as taboo: i.e., opening crypts, "desecrating" ruined temples or burial grounds, and so on. It is interesting to note that the Yitek are among the least superstitious people in all Talislanta. Even so, most Yitek carry a charm or two to ward against curses and the like, just in case. These devices are not made by the Yitek, but are usually obtained by trading with other peoples such as the Orgovians. While all Yitek are taught by their elders to decipher old runes and sigils, the tribes have no wizards or shamans. Yitek bury their dead without ritual or ceremony, knowing all too well the transient nature of monuments to the dead.

The Arts

Though the rigors of their profession often prevent them from enjoying artistic pursuits, Yitek love music and dance. Whenever two or more Yitek bands meet in friendly territory they always get together to eat, and to exchange news and gossip. Afterwards they unpack their stringed yukas, tsimbals, and ahtra-hide drums and begin to play. Many Yitek bands will go out of their way to hear a performance by Bodor musicians, whose musical talents they greatly admire.

Language

Most Yitek speak both Nomadic and Sign, and in addition are able to read a smattering of dead languages, magical scripts, and the like. Yitek names have two parts: band affiliation (common ones include Yata, Yato, Yeta, Yuta), and personal name. Common personal names for males include Maj, Fej, Naj, Nas, Fas; females versions end in an "i", as in Maji, Feji, Nasi, etc.

Defenses

Yitek bands rely more upon mobility and stealth than force of arms or numbers. They can travel great distances in short periods of time, leaving little or no trace of their passage. When in hostile territory Yitek often travel at night, hiding and sleeping during the day. Or they may simply ride day and night for as long as it takes to accomplish their objective. If pressed, Yitek will fight, and fiercely; however, this is not their preference.

Commerce

Yitek deal in treasure, artifacts, and other valuables recovered from the ruins that they discover and excavate. These they trade to the Orgovians, or sell to the Djaffir and the Dracartans. The Sutas tribes claim the Hadjin, Danuvians, and the outpost of Akmir as clients; the Notas sell to Sindar, Kasmir, and the outpost of Karfan. Regardless of tribe or band affiliation, Yitek will not deal with the Farad, whom they regard as swindlers.

World Relations

Both the northern and southern Yitek tribes are on good terms with the Djaffir and Dracartans, whom they mark as friends. The Yitek also get along well with Yassan, and sometimes hire Yassan clans to help in heavy salvage or excavating operations that the Yitek themselves are not equipped to handle. Yitek are one of the few Talislantan peoples who deal amicably with the Orgovians; they are fair traders, and know better than to stint when it comes to the customary exchange of gifts. In addition to the Farad, the Yitek have no love for the Za, Beastmen, or Rajans, all of whom have been known to pursue and attack Yitek bands.

Aht-ra



Aht-ra are domesticated creatures found throughout the Desert Kingdoms. The Djaffir claim to have created the species centuries ago by the accidental cross-breeding of various riding and burden beasts; no one knows for certain the exact components that contributed to the aht-ra's existence.

There are three varieties of aht-ra: the one-humped ontra, bred mainly for speed and able to carry up to four hundred pounds on its back; the two-humped batra, somewhat slower but able to carry twice as much as an ontra; and the three-humped tatra, slowest of all but able to carry three times as much as an ontra.

With their characteristic, long and loping stride, aht-ra can travel for days without stopping to rest. By retaining fluids in their hump-like sacs, aht-ra can go without water for long periods (one month per hump is thought to be an accurate estimate). Aht-ra are seldom available for sale except through the auspices of the Djaffir merchants, who sell only gelded males in order to maintain their monopoly on this valuable commodity.

Size: 6'+ at shoulder, 500-800+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT -7	PER +1
WIL +2	CHA N/A
STR +6	DEX +2
CON +6	SPD +8*

* for Ontra; +7 for Batra, + 6 for Tatra
Ability Level: 2-6
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 6, Kick: DR 14
Special Abilities: Travel up to six days without requiring rest, subsist without water for one month per hump, bear burdens of four hundred pounds per hump
Armor: Scaly hide, PR 3
Hit Points: 46

Faradun

Faradun is an exotic land located on the southern coast of Talislanta and bordered to the north by the rugged peaks of the Topaz Mountains. To the east lie two topographical anomalies: the shimmering Sea of Glass and the Emerald Mountain. Arid and hostile terrain dominates the north central region, gradually giving way to patches of jungle along the coast. Blown by winds from the Far Seas, Faradun's climate is uniformly hot and oppressive. Along the southern coast lives a mercantile folk of less-than-scrupulous habits, known as the Farad.

The Farad

The Farad are a dark and saturnine folk of above average height, with flint-grey skin, stony visages, and narrow eyes as black as coal. The customary mode of dress for Farad males includes elaborate headdress, voluminous robes, broad sashes, and velvet boots, all hung with ornate tassels, fringes, and beads of colored glass. Men over the age of twenty wear their beards in twin braids bound with silver fastenings, the length and the degree of ornamentation employed being considered signs of status. Farad women wear long silken gowns and veils, and adorn themselves with necklaces of silver loops, and rings on each of their fingers.

Ancestry

Some say the Farad are related in some way to the Rajans. Others claim the Farad are descended from the ancient Baratus, a race of sky-roving pirates. Neither theory is very complementary to the Farad, who much prefer to claim descent from the Archaens.

Society

The Farad are a mercantile people who live in walled villas made of brick and stone, with wrought iron bars on the doors and windows. They like to indulge in fine foods, and shun simple fare as "peasant fodder". Generally speaking, the wealthier the Farad, the more costly his or her home, style of dress, and style of dining will be, as wealth is a sign of status among these folk.

Farad marriages, like their mercantile contracts, are essentially business affairs. The usual procedure is for the heads of two mercantile Houses (families) to arrange the marriage. The purpose of the union is to gain competitive advantage over rival Houses, and bidding for especially desirable mates is not uncommon. Since "love" is not usually a factor, husbands and wives often use consorts to fulfill their emotional and physical needs. Farad children are raised through infancy by paid or slave attendants. At age five they are enrolled in boarding schools, at which time they begin their formal education in Farad mercantile practices. Parents are usually much too busy with their careers to bother with their children until they are old enough to bring into the family business.

Customs

Farad bear an unsavory reputation as unscrupulous merchants that is tempered only by their great wealth and apparent competence in mercantile endeavors. Generally speaking, a Farad will buy or sell anything from anyone, with no questions asked. Trusting no one, Farad merchants require prospective clients to sign elaborate mercantile contracts for all but the most basic transactions. Bribes, favors, and special incentives are common Farad practices; when attempting to make a deal, a Farad can be most accommodating, and even obsequious. Conversely, Farad possess a capacity for cold-blooded, emotionless behavior that is matched only by the soulless logic of the barbaric Harakin.



Government

The social, mercantile, and political hierarchy of Faradun are all related; each reflects the nation's utter obsession with commerce. The ruler of Faradun, known as the Cral, wields absolute power, and is responsible for determining market prices for all goods which are to be bought or sold in the capital city. Second in line of authority are the Monopolists, individuals given power by the Cral to determine the availability of various wares. Each is responsible for a single commodity, such as slaves, contraband, gemstones, metals, narcotics, and so forth. Next come the Usurers, who lend money at exorbitant rates to finance commercial ventures approved by the Monopolists. Dependent upon the Usurers are the Procurers, who travel far and wide, acquiring merchandise from various sources and establishing new trade contacts. Finally, there are the Mongers: the shop owners, peddlers and hawkers who make up the vast majority of Faradun's citizenry. Each House has its own Monopolist, Userers, Procurers, and Mongers.

The laws of Faradun are harsh, and not altogether comprehensible to outsiders. Thieves can be sentenced to torture, imprisonment, maiming, or any of a dozen more inventive forms of punishment. Death is the mandatory sentence for embezzling funds, a crime considered more heinous than murder. Conversely, in Faradun, goods stolen from other lands can legally be resold as "pre-owned" merchandise. The Houses police themselves, and consequently, many crimes go unreported.

Magic & Religion

The Farad have a religion of sorts, revering the Golden God Avar, deity of material riches and personal gain. The merchant-priests of Avar preach the attainment of wealth by any means. To illustrate the point, they sell blessings, golden idols, and other holy items in the god's gilded temples. They also handle funeral arrangements, selling the gold-chased coffins favored by wealthy Farad and offering advice on how best to safeguard their lavishly decorated tombs from would-be thieves.

Farad wizards tend to be pragmatic by nature. Most have little interest in the arcane arts, but study magic only to further their desire for wealth and power.

The Arts

Farad interest in art and crafts is based on the profit motive. The Houses underwrite artistic endeavors only if they believe they can make a profit on the deal. Accordingly, only arts with commercial potential are supported. Since Farad prefer to be art dealers rather than artists, foreign artists and musicians are in demand in Faradun – provided their work has commercial potential.

Visit to Tarun

(From a Farad mercantile brochure)

The scenic port city of Tarun offers many attractions not readily available in other lands. In the marketplace of Tarun you can buy practically anything - provided one can afford the price, of course. The list of available commodities is practically endless; virtually anything that can be owned, rented, or otherwise exchanged under contract can be obtained here. For the discriminating buyer there is a wide selection of the rarest mixtures and substances. The list includes aphrodisiacs, soporifics, tonics, potions, powders, poisons, and antidotes; k'tallah, euphorica, kesh, skullcap, stimulants, invigorants, and rare varieties of dream essence not available elsewhere, to name but a few.

Also bear in mind that Tarun is a leading supplier of "previously-owned" goods. We stock items in all categories, from personal possessions to lost artifacts, missing religious relics, books and scrolls, jewelry, antiquities, and valuables of all sorts. Our previously-owned goods are guaranteed untraceable for one month (exceptions and restrictions may apply; see contract for details). And remember, we also purchase previously-owned items at competitive prices.

Language

Farad speak High Talislan, which they regard as a sign of status. Farad nomenclature is two-fold: each individual has an informal name, used primarily during one's youth, and a formal title. Informal names are generally short: Avi, Fe, Nir, Sej, Jir. Formal names are derived from the names of the great mercantile Houses, such as Falal of the House of Nageth, Sulemar of the House of Zorastin, etc. Male and female nomenclature is distinguishable only by such titles as Madame or Sir.

Defenses

The capital city of Tarun and its port facilities are heavily fortified against attack, and are considered to

be impregnable. Towering sea-gates protect the harbor, and can be closed at need. A sixty-foot wall encompasses the city, protecting Tarun from assault by land.

Faradun has no army of its own, but hires foreign mercenaries to protect its holdings, properties, and its fleet of merchant vessels. In recent years Faradun has begun to produce windships. Some claim that the Farad stole the arcanology required to construct such vessels from the Cymrilians. However, the Farad say that they discovered this information in the Hadjin Tombs.

Commerce

Through the port of Tarun pass the merchant ships of many nations: Imrian slave vessels, Zandir freetraders, Sunra dragon barques bearing gold and riches from the Kang Empire, Aamanian ore traders, and even Corsair vessels from the Mangar Isles and Gao-Din. The Farad have an extensive network of buyers and sellers located throughout the continent. They have their hands in just about everything, from legitimate trade concerns to shadowy operations involving the sale of narcotics, stolen goods and arcanology, and other forms of contraband (see sidebar).

Worldview

The Farad's unscrupulous trade policies have brought them great prosperity, as well as the enmity of many Talislantans. Following the sale of windship arcanology to the Rajans, Farad mongers and procurers were banned from both the Seven Kingdoms and Carantheum. In retaliation, the Farad began selling weapons to the Rajans, who in turn have re-sold these items to some of the Wild Tribes.

Farad Settlements

The Port City of Tarun

The sprawling port of Tarun, with its ominous sea gates and impregnable defenses, is the capital of Faradun and its center for trade. Prices for food, drink and lodging are reasonable; any sort of entertainment or diversion imaginable can be arranged through the auspices of the Farad Procurers, who claim to be able to grant their customers' fondest desires.

Sard Island

A man-made isle that lies off the southern coast of Faradun, Sard Island is home to several of the wealthiest Monopolists, who live here in fortified castles of elaborate design.

Places of Note

The Ghostlands

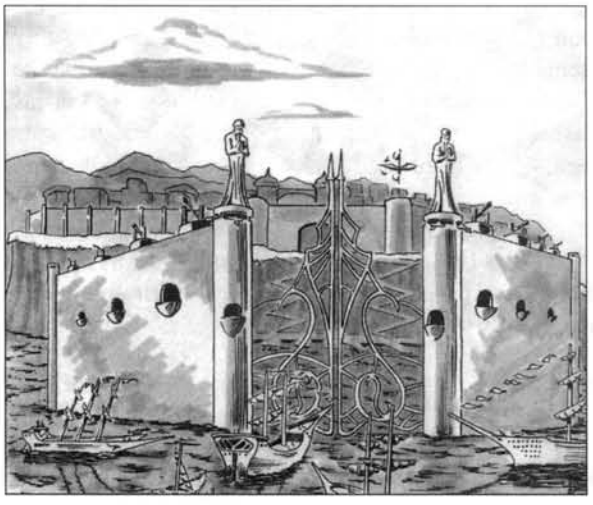
This region is so arid and barren that not even snakes and vermin dwell here. Necrophages, shadow wights and unclean spirits, being somewhat less particular with regard to their accommodations, haunt the region in force. The Ghostlands has long been used as a place of banishment by the Farad.

Maledictus

Somewhere in this waste is the shadowy ruined city which the Farad refer to as Maledictus, which means "cursed," or more aptly, "haunted". Precisely who or what it is that haunts the ruins is uncertain. Some claim that a cabal of Shadow Wizards inhabits the city. Others theorize that night stalkers, ghasts, or the ghost of the legendary warlock Mordante are responsible. Most frightening to the Farad is the idea that Maledictus is haunted by the disembodied spirits of all those who have been cheated or ruined by the unscrupulous merchants and monopolists of Faradun. Whatever the case may be, no Farad will ever dare set foot within the vicinity of these ruins.

The Coastal Jungles

The jungles of Faradun's southeastern coast are rife with malathropes, alatus, aramatus, and other unpleasant creatures. The climate is abysmally hot and humid, the terrain alternating between flooded swamp and mountainous jungle. However, costly k'tallah, tantalus and scarlet lotus grow here in substantial quantities, a fact not lost on the Farad. Keenly aware of the dangers inherent in such work, the mercantilists send work crews composed of cheap slaves and convicted felons into the jungles to gather these rare and costly plants.





RAVENGER

From an evolutionary standpoint, the ravenger is certainly one of the more opportunistic Talislantan lifeforms. Ravengers thrive in water, on land, or in the air, and they are found throughout the continent. They have both lungs and gills and are able to modify their body temperature and metabolic rate to suit almost any climate. The ravenger's wings, tail, and sail-like crest are equally useful with respect to undersea or airborne navigation. Furthermore, they are capable of bipedal ambulation on land and are sure climbers.

Compensating for their lack of a single, specialized talent, ravengers possess an almost single-minded determination to survive. They can subsist on almost anything, including wild beasts, carrion, vermin, and refuse. Ravengers will steal prey from other creatures if given the opportunity, and some habitually follow predators such as omnivrax, behemoths, and sea scorpions for this very purpose, or to scavenge bits of uneaten food. Relentless hunters, ravengers are nearly impossible to deter once they have marked a creature or other food source as theirs. If unsuccessful in its initial attempt to obtain sustenance, a ravenger will return again and again to try anew. In this respect, these creatures can be quite resourceful and even ingenious.

Size: 6-6'6", 140-175 lbs.
Attributes:

INT 0	PER 0
WIL +4	CHA -3
STR 0	DEX 0
CON 0	SPD 0

Ability Level: 1-10
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 4, Claws: DR 6
Special Abilities: Ability to thrive in practically any environment, heat or cold inflicts only half damage, flight, swimming
Armor: Hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 18

DISEMBODIED SPIRIT

The Ghostlands of Faradun are said to be haunted by disembodied spirits, which can also be found in graveyards, ruins, and ancient battlegrounds throughout Talislanta. These spectral entities are the spiritforms of deceased creatures and beings who - for one reason or another - have become lost or stranded en route to their next incarnation. Some, having met a particularly violent or unjust end, refuse to move on to their next life until they have been avenged. Others were the victims of miscast spells, abortive attempts at astral travel, or other unfortunate circumstances. Until a disembodied spirit is able to avenge or resolve the death of its physical form, it can never rest, nor will it be able to move on to the next world.

Size: 5'-7', weightless
Attributes: As per former life (physical attributes do not apply, except as pertains to SPD and DEX, both of which are rated at +2)
Ability Level: 3-18
Attacks/Damage: Energy attack: DR 1 per level
Special Abilities: Possess/inhabit inanimate objects, flight, pass through solid substances at will, harmed only by silver, magic, or other extra-dimensional entities
Armor: None (non-corporeal)
Hit Points: 10



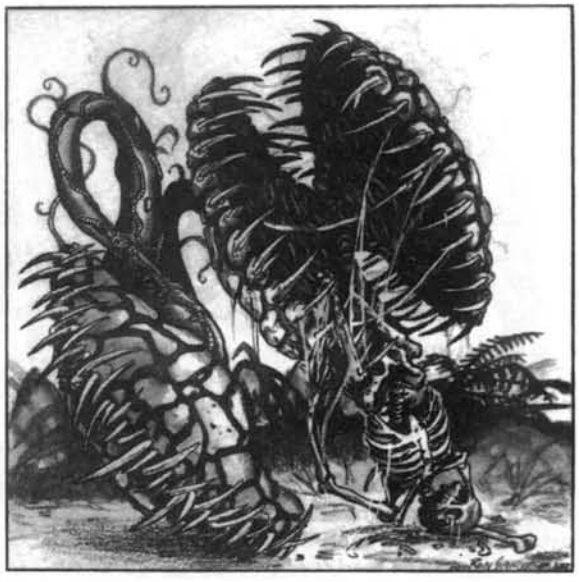
K'TALLAH

K'tallah is a rare variety of swamp plant found in Faradun, Rajanistan, and certain tropical forests and jungles along the Southern Rim. The leaves of this plant contain a resinous substance which, when smoked or ingested, enables the user to "see" visions of the near future. Though casual users of this substance cannot control or dictate the nature of these divinatory dreams, those who use k'tallah regularly can supposedly acquire the ability to do so. Unfortunately for those seeking enlightenment by such means, k'tallah is one of the most addictive substances in Talislanta. Individuals experimenting with the drug even two or three times often become completely reliant upon its euphoric and mind-expanding properties.

K'tallah addicts must partake of the substance each day or suffer horrible, and invariably fatal, consequences. The first symptoms of withdrawal are stomach pains, followed by the uneasy feeling that something is growing within the addict's body. Next comes the appearance of the snake-like tendrils of new k'tallah plants, sprouting from the unfortunate victim's eyes, ears, and mouth. Death invariably follows, usually within a few hours. Heavy users of k'tallah, arguably amongst the most wretched folk in existence, claim that leaves plucked from the body of a deceased k'tallah addict are especially savory.

MANTRAP

The mantrap is a giant flowering plant native to the jungles of Faradun and the swamps and marshlands of the Dark Coast. This dangerous organism exudes a scent that is irresistible to most living creatures, and may be borne on the wind for distances of several miles. Once an affected creature or individual approaches the mantrap, the plant enfolds the unwitting victim in its petals. Death by asphyxiation results within three minutes' time, after which the mantrap gradually begins to dissolve and digest its prey. An hour later, the plant will disgorge any inedible materials (cloth, metal, bone, etc.) that it has swallowed. Despite the considerable risks, certain entrepreneurial sorts are known to hunt mantrap for its pollen, a narcotic substance called euphorica.



Size: 6'-10', 120-200 lbs.
Attributes: STR +3, SPD +1; all others negligible
Ability Level: 3-7
Attacks/Damage: Asphyxiation: DR 10 per round
Special Abilities: Irresistible scent (WIL roll at -5 to resist)
Armor: None
Hit Points: 12

HADJ

Hadj is a walled city built in the middle of an arid plain that stretches for miles in all directions. To the south stand the Topaz Mountains; to the north lays the desert kingdom of Djaffa. There is a single thoroughfare leading to the citystate — the Hadjin Road, which intersects the old Wilderlands Road to the north. This city of opulent palaces, marble causeways, and scenic fountains is home to a wealthy people of lofty airs, called the Hadjin.

THE HADJIN

The Hadjin are a tall and slender folk similar in stature to the Cymrilians. They daub their pale green complexions with colored powders, and dress in layered robes, upward-sweeping caps and long, velveteen gloves.

ANCESTRY

The Hadjin are descended from the Phandre, a sect of magicians who fled from the Western Lands during the Cult Wars, taking with them a vast store of wealth that had been accumulated by their ancestors. Among their assets were three parcels of land, two of which were leased at a considerable profit; these became the citystates of Danuvia and Maruk. The third was the site upon which the citystate of Hadj was built.

Society

The citystate of Hadj is a monument to materialism and a haven for the idle rich. There is no such thing as public property in Hadj, where every square foot of land is allocated for rent or lease. The Hadjin aristocracy possess no useful skills to speak of, but are the inheritors of an incredibly vast store of wealth left to them by their early ancestors. They live in luxury, their every need attended to by loyal Hajan, a class of highly "refined" servitors.

Hajan regard themselves as "Penultimates" — second only to their Hadjin masters, and as such, exalted in comparison with other peoples. They serve as personal valets, chauffeurs, gourmet chefs, factotums, magistrates, and ambassadors; the citystate's Monad (q.v.) population and foreign immigrants handle all manual labor, and comprise the "working class" of Hadj. Hadjin eat only the most costly delicacies, and dress in finery. Marriages are elaborate affairs arranged by the parents of the betrothed in order to enhance status and pedigree. Their children are raised by Hajan servants and instructed in the intricacies of Hadjin etiquette by Hajan tutors; they are not allowed to associate with "commoners" of any sort, and are sheltered from all aspects of the world outside of Hadj.

Customs

Born into great wealth, the Hadjin consider themselves superior to common folk. They are in the habit of waving themselves with scented fans when in the presence of outsiders, whom they deem odious, coarse, and offensive in terms of appearance and odor. A people of highly refined tastes, the Hadjin shun hard work of any sort. They maintain their lofty standard of living through their investments and by allowing adventurers to explore the monolithic tombs of their wealthy ancestors, a privilege that does not come cheaply.

Government

The hereditary ruler of Hadj is known as the Hadjin Grandeloquence. His family name, Mharquor, bears the highest possible pedigree, a factor of unparalleled import to the Hadjin and Hajan alike. Lesser Hadjin will do almost anything to foster close ties to the Grandeloquence, for mere association with him and his family bestows benefits in social and economic status. To be snubbed or shunned by the Grandeloquence is to suffer a great loss of personal and family prestige — the ultimate punishment for a Hadjin.



Magic & Religion

Though their ancestors were skilled in magic, the Hadjin lost all interest in the arcane arts soon after building their citystate. Few Hadjin possess the dedication required to attain such abilities anymore. The closest thing to "religion" practiced by these people is their reverence for gold and status. Like their ancestors, Hadjin lay their dead to rest in richly made sarcophgi and bury them in mausoleum-towers along with certain of their most prized possessions. Mercenaries are hired to guard these places from tomb-robbers and bandits.

The Arts

The Hadjin are collectors of fine art, ownership of which brings one status in Hadj. However, they practice no arts of their own. As in most things, Hajan servitors emulate their masters in this regard. Hadjin enjoy pageants and spectacles of all sorts. Troupes of Bodor musicians and Thiasian performers are often hired to come to Hadj and entertain the aristocracy. Sauran gladiators take on all challengers in the Hadj Arena each week, their bloody matches providing a source of entertainment for the both the Hadjin and Hajan.

Language

Hadjin and Hajan both speak High Talislan, and regard less sophisticated tongues as vulgar, uncouth, and uncivilized. Common names for Hadjin always include a grandiose title followed by a first name and and family name. For example: His Exemplary Eloquence, Hast-Boncour, or Her Sophisticated Elegance, Helse-Boncour. Other family names of high pedigree include Damour, Jalour, and Qualour. Hajan have no titles, but use similar-sounding personal and family names.

In the Lap of Luxury

The following is a list of amenities offered by the Farad-owned resort called the Hadjan Palace:

Luxury accommodations, including sunken bath, and personal valet: 300 gold lumens per day.

One session at the Hajan Palace Spa, including mineral bath, massage, alchemical skin toning, full tonsorial, and refreshments: 200 gold lumens.

The Hajan Emporium, a gaming establishment which offers a wide selection of entertainments or wagers, including quatrillion, pentadrille, and in the Colosseum Room, gladiatorial combats.

The Hajan Palace Club, offering a wide range of delectable food and drink, with entertainment provided nightly by Bodorian troupes and Thiasian performers.

The Hajan Pleasure Palace, featuring plush accommodations, private rooms and suites, and the most alluring male and female consorts in Talislanta. Open to members only. Annual membership fee: 1000 gold lumens.

Guided tours of the Hadjin Tombs; prices range from 1000 gold lumens per day for the Economy Tour to 10,000 gold lumens for the Luxury Tour.

Defenses

Neither Hadjin nor Hajan would lower themselves to serve in the military. Instead, mercenary troops have always been hired to protect Hadj. A Hajan functionary is responsible for hiring these forces, but distances himself from the odious task of associating with common soldiers as much as possible by acting through lower ranking intermediaries.

Commerce

The Hadjin's wealth continues to be derived largely from the accomplishments of their ancestors. Both Danuvia and Maruk continue to pay regular installments to the Hadjin Consortium, though it is believed that the Marukans are several decades in arrears on their payments. The Hadjin Tombs (see Places of Note), a source of valuable artifacts and a popular tourist attraction, also brings in a substantial amount of revenue. Hadj produces few commodities of its own, and must import most of the foods and goods consumed by the Hadjin from the Seven Kingdoms, Faradun, and Carantheum.

Worldview

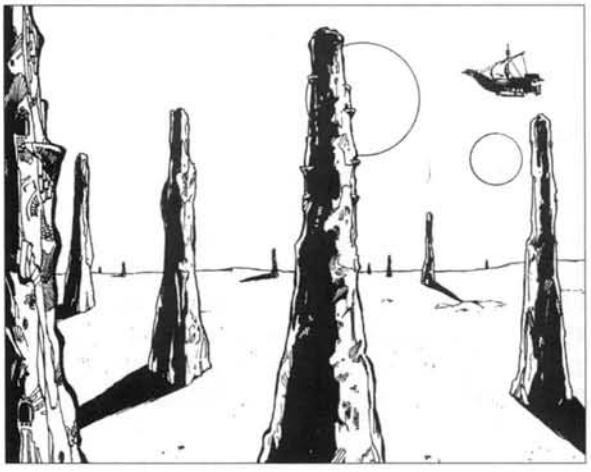
Officially, the independent citystate of Hadj is neutral as regards all other nations. However, the Hadjin are known to have financial connections to the Ispasians of Quan. In the year 609, Faradun acquired an interest in the citystate, and constructed a fabulous resort for wealthy Farad and other Talislantans (see sidebar). The Hadjin were paid an extravagant sum for the development rights, and continue to receive lucrative dividends on the deal. The exclusive Hadjin Sector is still off-limits to outsiders, however.

Places of Note

The Hadjin Tombs

The Hadjin Tombs are comprised of a series of giant, obelisk-like structures, built centuries ago to house the Hadjin dead. Over seventy feet in height, most of these megaliths still stand, though some have fallen or now lurch precipitously at odd angles. The tombs contain untold thousands of mummified corpses, each interred with the deceased's most prized possessions. Visitors to the city can arrange for a guided tour of the ruins, which costs upwards of two hundred gold lumens, depending upon one's choice of accommodations.

Those who crave adventure first-hand can obtain permission to explore the ruins at a cost of one thousand gold lumens per person, per day. Under the terms of the agreement, the Hadjin retain the rights to half of any treasure recovered, along with any and all corpses that may be unearthed. These the Hadjin sell as souvenirs, at prices ranging from two to eight thousand gold lumens. The Tombs are patrolled by mercenary soldiers and trained guard beasts.



The Monads

Monads are massive creatures who stand over seven and a half feet in height and may weigh as much as seven hundred pounds. They are entirely hairless, and have striated black and white skin. A comparatively tiny cranium, and immense torso and limbs, are other characteristic features. Loincloth and sandals are their preferred attire, augmented by a cloak in cold weather.

Ancestry

Monads are a hybrid race created in ancient times by the magicians of Phandril, who bred them for heavy labor. Unlike most of their masters, Monads survived the The Great Disaster, and are still extant in Talislanta today.

Society

The Monad population has no homeland, but is scattered across the continent of Talislanta. Most Monads were sold into slavery following The Great Disaster, ending up in such lands as Faradun, Rajanistan, and the Kang Empire. In the Seven Kingdoms, where slavery is illegal, they are treated well and may be hired at reasonable rates. A large portion of the Monad population now resides in Hadj, providing a cheap source of labor.

Monads are monosexual beings who prefer to live in simple dwellings with others of their kind. They do not mate or have children; they simply divide themselves into two separate entities (see sidebar). No one knows exactly how the process works, or how often it occurs.

Customs

Bred strictly for size and strength, Monads possess no formal skills or training. They follow instructions well, however, and are tireless and loyal workers. Most Talislantans regard Monads as dumb, lumbering creatures, useless except as pertains to the most menial and physically strenuous labors. Yet others believe there is more to these simple beings than meets the eye (see Language).

Magic & Religion

Monads possess no facility for magic. It is not known if they believe in a supreme being or beings, though they may regard their ancient Archaen creators in this manner.

All from the One

"Among several of the more curious features associated with Monads is the fact that they appear to be completely devoid of sexual characteristics. The natural question, at least in the mind of my occasional traveling companion, the rogue magician Crystabal (who seldom thought of anything but this subject), was: how do such creatures procreate? While visiting the city of Hadj I chanced to learn the answer to this question, and so I will relate it to you.

As I rode through the city on a cargo dray acquired from a Marukan dung merchant (another story entirely) I saw a solitary Monad trudging along the road. On its broad shoulders was a great bundle of parcels; a short distance behind, its owner, a Hadjin aristocrat, reclined in comfort within a canopied palanquin. Suddenly the Monad slowed to a stop, laid its bundle down, and sat upon the ground. The Hadjin, seeing what had transpired, instructed his Hajan servitor to have the Monad pick up its parcels and continue on without delay. The Hajan repeated these orders to the Monad. The Monad seemed not to hear, but sat with its eyes closed. The Hajan servitor raged and threatened; her Hadjin master held a scented handkerchief to his nose in obvious distaste. Still the Monad remained immobile. At this point the Hajan servitor, a female of middle years, risked the ire of her master and informed him that he must wait a moment, for the Monad was about to reproduce.

This the creature did, by the most incredible process imaginable. Concentrating intently, the Monad split itself down the middle, the separation occurring along a vertical axis from the head down through the entire torso. For a short time each of the halves squirmed and twisted about, changing in form with each passing minute. Finally there were two new Monad, each fully formed and identical in appearance, though both were smaller than the original by half. The division of the Monad into two creatures took perhaps ten minutes in its entirety, during which time I could not help but stare in complete fascination at this miraculous occurrence. The Hadjin aristocrat likewise witnessed this event, which caused him to become physically ill, and in the process soil his rich garments. The Hajan driver turned her head, either from a lack of interest in the procedure or to disguise the enjoyment she felt at observing her master in such an undignified condition."

The Arts

Monads are not known to practice any arts or crafts. They appear to enjoy music of all sorts, and are fascinated by displays of color, which Monads find highly entertaining.

Language

Monads are mute, but understand common sign language. Among their own kind they favor a complex variation of Sign that seems to have been devised by the Monads themselves and is incomprehensible to other peoples. Scholars who have studied the Monad language describe it as rich, detailed, and cryptic; some go so far as to claim that Monads have a "secret culture" that is completely beyond the ability of non-Monads to perceive.

Government

Monads have no ruler, leaders, or government. Peaceful by nature, they generally adhere to their basic laws and customs of whatever land in which they reside.

Defenses

Despite their great size and strength, Monads are remarkably gentle creatures who usually abstain from violence. If forced to defend itself, a Monad may use its great bulk to knock down and/or restrain an attacker, while continuing to maintain an outwardly placid demeanor.

Commerce

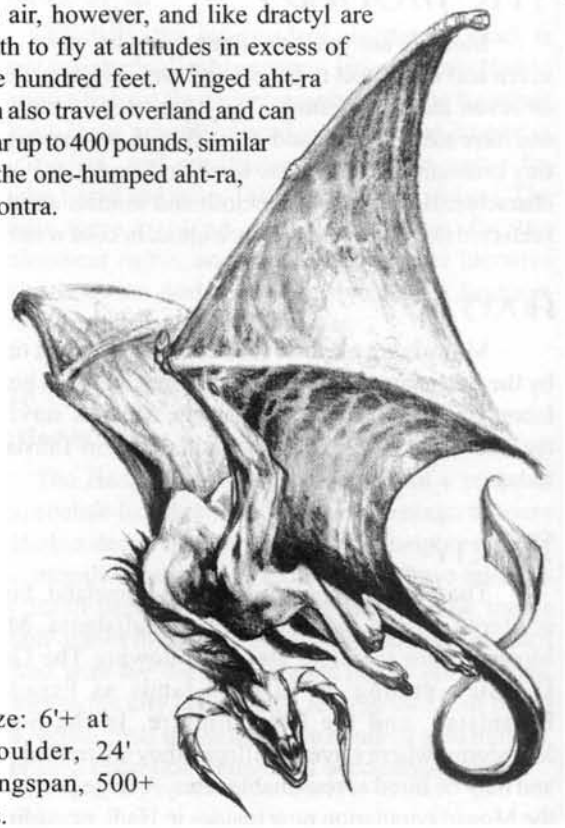
Monads understand the concept of work for pay or barter, but seem less well-informed as pertains to the value of their services. As such, they are often cheated by unscrupulous employers. Monads produce no wares of their own.

Worldview

As a race, Monads evince little capacity for self-determination, and have no formal relations with any other people or nation. Most Talislantans do not think they have the intellectual capacity to even comprehend such matters.

Winged Aht-ra

The winged aht-ra is a hybrid of aht-ra and dractyl found in the Topaz Mountains near Hadj and other areas across the Desert Kingdoms. Originally created by the Djaffir, winged aht-ra resemble their land roving relatives, but they are capable of sustained flight. They are somewhat slow and unmaneuverable in the air, however, and like dractyl are loath to fly at altitudes in excess of one hundred feet. Winged aht-ra can also travel overland and can bear up to 400 pounds, similar to the one-humped aht-ra, or ontra.



Size: 6'+ at shoulder, 24' wingspan, 500+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT -7	PER +1
WIL -2	CHA N/A
STR +6	DEX 0
CON +6	SPD +5*

*airborne; +6 on the ground
Ability Level: 3-7
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 6, Kick: DR 14
Special Abilities: Flight, travel up to six days without requiring rest, subsist without water for one month, bear burdens of four hundred pounds
Armor: Leathery hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 46

Purple Narcissus

The purple narcissus is an enchanted hybrid created by a precocious botanomancer of ancient times, whose name has long since been forgotten. The plant blooms only if it can see its reflection in a mirror, pond, or other reflective surface; this peculiarity has endeared it to collectors of exotic plants such as the Hadjin, who will sometimes pay up to two hundred gold lumens for a healthy specimen. Purple narcissus is a cultivated plant and can only be grown in indoor environments. The plants are quite frail and wither if exposed to direct sunlight.

RAJANISTAN

Far to the east, beyond the scorching sands of the Red Desert, lies the warlike nation of Rajanistan. It is a harsh and arid land, made hospitable only by numerous small oases found scattered across its far-ranging territories. The Jade Mountains form its southern border, merging in a northward-sweeping arc with the treacherous Volcanic Hills. Elsewhere, the terrain is monotonous in form, a sprawling expanse of yellow sand interrupted only by patches of date-palm, nettle, and briarbush. These lands are home to several nomadic tribes, known collectively as the Rajans and the Virds.

THE RAJANS

The Rajans are a dark-skinned folk, tall and wiry of build, with blood-red eyes, and horn-like protrusions jutting forth from their chins and foreheads. They dress in dark grey capes, veiled headdresses, and loose-fitting garments bound with cords at the wrists, ankles and waist. These same cords are used for many practical purposes by the Rajans, including the strangling of enemies.

ANCESTRY

Certain Talislantan scholars believe that the Rajan races may be related to the Za, a theory which the Rajans themselves vehemently deny. Rajans prefer to believe that they are descended from the Torquarans, rulers of a dark empire that once spanned much of the Talislantan continent. The folk now known as the Rajans were once nomadic hunters, who eked out a meager existence in the harsh deserts of Rajanistan. In 404 the Rajan tribes united under a chieftain called the Khadun, and conquered the other desert peoples of Rajanistan.

SOCIETY

The Rajans now live in the city of Irdan, a fortified enclave built into the side of a mountain. Their dwellings are made of bricks dried under the light of the twin suns, and hung with dark curtains and tapestries. Rugs woven in bold reds and blacks cover the earthen floors, and iron braziers provide illumination.

Rajan society is dominated by men. Women are totally subservient, and are forbidden to show their faces or any part of their bodies in public. Rajan men are allowed to take as many wives as they can support. Wives are "bought" from their fathers, usually at age thirteen, and are considered property; a man can banish an unwanted wife at any time. Children are raised by the wives, and are kept out of sight from the Rajan men, who have little patience for child-raising. At age thirteen, female children are sold off, and male children are given to priests of the Nihilist Cult for training. Most will become warriors, others necromancer-priests, according to their abilities.



The Rajin

The Rajin are a secret branch of the Nihilist Cult, which rules Rajanistan. They are essentially a cult within a cult; only assassin-mages can belong to this cell, which serves both as the personal bodyguard and covert militia of the Khadun. No one joins the Rajin by choice. When in need of new initiates the assassin-mages send forth agents to steal young children, whom they drug and take from their homes at night. The victims, typically boys under the age of five, are brought in secret to a Rajin sanctuary for training. Such incidents are quite common in Rajanistan but are never reported, for to do so would mean swift and certain reprisal.

Awakening in darkness, the young initiates are accosted by hooded figures who tell them that they have died. They offer to give back their lives, but only if they agree thenceforth to serve Death. Those who refuse are slain; those who consent are "reborn", and given new names. No longer are they allowed to speak of their families or their former lives, which are now meaningless. So begins a period of intense indoctrination and instruction in the arts of torture, interrogation, Nihilist Cult dogma, necromancy, and a type of martial arts called rajira – the Rajan art of assassination. When the Initiates have reached the age of eighteen they are ready for a final test. In secret, each is given the name of another Initiate whom he or she must kill. Those who survive the test are officially acknowledged as Rajin.

Customs

Fatalistic by nature, Rajans believe that the harsh circumstances of their existence are punishment for the sins of their ancestors. In essence, Rajans think the Talislantan world is Hell. For these people, death is the means of ascension to a better life in the next world – the Rajan version of Heaven, where the faithful will be rewarded by attaining revenge over their enemies, power, wealth, and the means to satiate all mortal desires.

It is the unfriendly custom of both male and female Rajans to carry concealed weapons on their persons, curved daggers being considered especially elegant. Rajans also favor kaj, a potent narcotic made from a combination of Farad k'tallah and the resinous buds of an hallucinogenic plant know as rajoum. Abuse of this substance is common in Rajanistan.

Government

The Khadun is the absolute ruler of Rajanistan, and High Priest of the Nihilist Cult. A group of thirteen necromancer-priests known as the High Council are charged with the administration of the Khadun's edicts. The Khadun is the ultimate authority in Rajanistan; he passes judgement on individuals who have committed serious offenses. Under his iron rule, Rajanistan is among the most repressive states in Talislanta. The punishment for most crimes is the removal of an appropriate body part: liars have their tongues cut off, thieves lose a hand, and voyeurs lose an eye. The penalty for adultery is especially grim. Individuals accused of treason or heresy are imprisoned in the Tower of Irdan, where the Rajin practice their arts (see sidebar).

Magic & Religion

Rajans worship the Khadun, whom they say is the earthly manifestation of the dread entity known as Death. More accurately, the Khadun is the central figure of a cult of personality that exists primarily to further his own goals. In this way the Nihilists are similar to the Torquaran wizards, a cult of black magicians whose only religion was the pursuit of power.

Devotees of the Nihilist Cult believe that only by dying can they become one in spirit with the Khadun, and so are eager to sacrifice their lives for any cause that he endorses. Along the same line of reasoning, the Rajans claim that by killing non-believers, they convert them to their morbid religion — "conversion by the sword", in the most literal sense. Devotees of the Cult are embalmed and buried with full ceremonies. Non-believers are tossed into the sacrificial fires.

The Nihilist Cult operates out of the Temple of Death, in the city of Irdan. Here, the Khadun resides within his sanctum, protected by his legions of fanatical followers. Priests of the Nihilist Cult are said to consort with the spirits of the deceased, hoping to exhume lost magical secrets of the Forgotten Age.

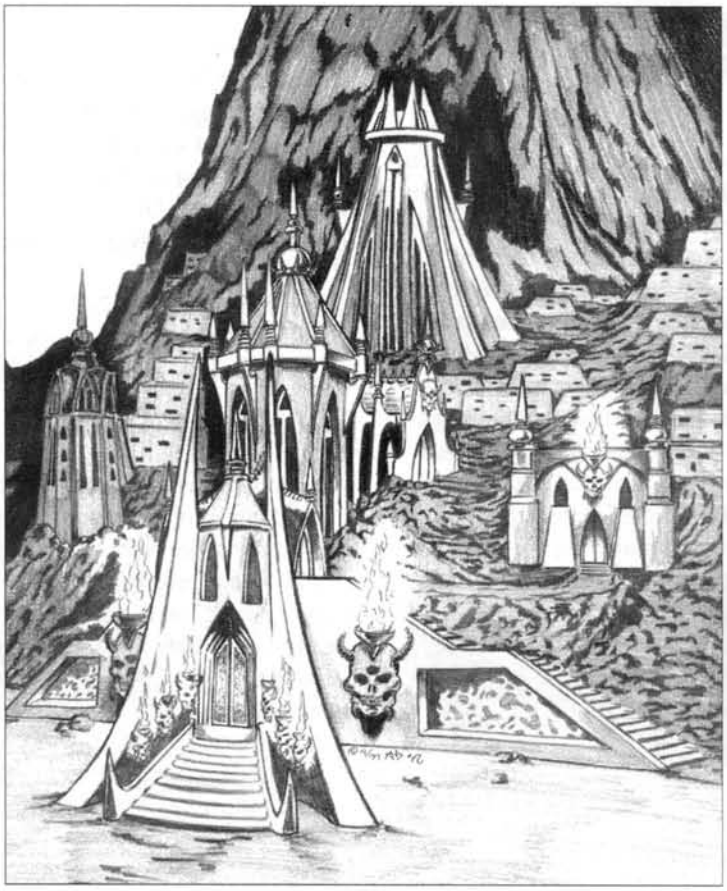
The Arts

Rajan art is obsessed with death symbology, which appears on all metal weapons, tools, and implements, and in sculpture, pottery, and architecture. Their music is dark and ominous-sounding, as befits these folk. Instruments used include twenty-foot long black iron temple horns, decorated with the images of leering skulls; the uraj, a monstrous pipe organ that requires a team of forty slaves to fill its giant bellows; black iron cymbals, and iron drums beaten with mallets carved from the bones of the Rajans' enemies.

The Rajan Dance of Death is a sacrificial ritual dedicated to the Khadun, and through him, Death. Participants don iron death masks, dose themselves with kaj, and arm themselves with long-bladed ceremonial daggers. The dancers whirl about the intended victim, slashing at the air with their blades. The music builds to a frenzied climax; then, as one, the dancers plunge their daggers into the victim's flesh.

Language

The Rajans have their own language, called Rajanin, which they claim is derived from the ancient Torquaran tongue. Common male names begin with the prefix or title "Raj", which means "servant of Death" in Rajanin, and are hyphenated. For example Raj-Khan, Raj-Amon, and Raj-Omir. Female names begin with the prefix, "Suraj" (meaning "property of"), followed by the name of the male who claims her as his own. In the case of an unmarried woman, this is the father; after marriage, the female takes the name of her "husband". For example: Suraj-Khan, Suraj-Amon, and Suraj-Omir.



Defenses

Rajanistan maintains a large standing army, though it is comprised mostly of conscripts and low-class Vird infantry. The Rajans are believed to be constructing a fleet of windships, having recently acquired windship arcanology from the Farad.

Commerce

Rajanistan is rich in gold and oil, both of which are obtained by slave labor and transported by caravan from the Jade Mountains to the fortress-city of Irdan. The Rajans use their resources to purchase weapons, slaves, and narcotic herbs from Faradun, the only nation with whom the Rajans have formal trade ties. No other business is done in Irdan, as the Rajans do not fancy foreign merchants in their country. Flax from the desert thistle is woven into fabrics of various types, died black and adorned with skull motifs, but is only sold domestically. The Rajans mint their own gold, silver, and copper lumens, each bearing the image of a Rajan death mask. This currency is mainly used in Rajanistan, and is not honored in Carantheum, the Seven Kingdoms, or Aaman.

Worldview

Rajanistan remains the primary military threat to the other kingdoms of this region. The Rajans continue to covet 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. The Khadun has sworn to crush Carantheum, if every man, woman and child in Rajanistan must die in the attempt. As his generals are unfortunately known more for their fanatical obedience than their tactical abilities, some observers speculate that such a result is within the realm of possibilities.

Under the auspices of their assassin-mages, Rajanistan exports terrorism across the continent. The Khadun seeks to foment rebellion and anarchy in other lands, hoping thereby to weaken and confuse his enemies. Prejudice towards Rajans is prevalent throughout Talislanta, especially in Carantheum, where the term, "son of a Rajan", is a grave insult. Given the Kang Empire's history of expansion and conquest, Rajanistan may also have some reason for concern in this direction.

Rajan Settlements

The Holy City of Irdan

Irdan is a walled fortress built into the lower slopes of the Jade Mountains. The massive citadel is the only major settlement in Rajanistan, and serves as the country's capital. Aside from an occasional visit by Farad merchants, the city is closed to foreigners. Gold and lamp oil from the Jade Mountains is smelted into ingots in Irdan, then conveyed by caravan to Faradun, where it is traded for weapons and other goods.

The Virds

Several other nomadic tribes, referred to collectively as the Virds, make their homes in tent settlements scattered across Rajanistan. They include the Aramut, the Zagir, and the giant Shadinn. All originate from the same root stock as the Rajans, and have similar cultures. They share a common language, homeland, and nomadic background. Conquered by the Rajans long ago, they have been assimilated into the ranks of Rajan society. None have any talent for magic.

Cave Bat



Cave bats are found in the mountains of Rajanistan and in ruined structures and other deserted areas. Singularly unattractive creatures, they have horrible fanged visages and exhibit a definite predisposition towards vampirism. Though they are blind, these winged mammalians have superior hearing and sonar capabilities. Cave bats do not fear humanoids, though they prefer smaller and weaker prey when it is available. They spend the daylight hours sleeping, suspended from the ceilings of their cavernous lairs. The stench in such places (primarily ammonia gas from rancid cave bat droppings) is often sufficient to render humanoid beings unconscious. This is generally a fatal occurrence, given the nature of the creatures who dwell within. Except as pertains to their underground haunts, cave bats are never encountered until after dusk, when they come forth in numbers to feed. Cave Bats are carriers of an infectious disease that affects the brain and may cause irrational and violent behavior. Magical quicksilver, taken in small doses mixed with distilled spirits over the course of seven days, is said to be an effective cure.

Size: 12'+ wingspan, 100-200 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -7	PER +2
WIL +3	CHA N/A
STR +1	DEX +1
CON +1	SPD +3*

* airborne; -3 on the ground
Ability Level: 2-5
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 5 per round in blood drain, plus chance of disease (CON roll to resist, or suffer increasingly worse incidents of irrational and violent behavior); Claws: DR 3
Special Abilities: Navigate by sound, immunity to spells of illusion, flight
Armor: Shaggy fur, PR 2
Hit Points: 17

Mirajan

A mirajan is a type of spiritform found only among the arid lands of Rajanistan, Djaffa, and Carantheum. The Djaffir tribes refer to these specters as "Phantoms of the Desert" and believe that they are the spirits of Rajan necromancers who have come back to torment the living. Others attribute sightings of mirajans to hallucination, heat exhaustion, or the malevolent pranks of sand demons.

Mirajans typically manifest late at night, usually without warning, brandishing ghostly scimitars or curved daggers. When ready to strike, the mirajan begins an eerie, whirling "Dance of Death" - a strange ritual that has the power to enthrall any who do not avert their gaze. Once a victim has fallen under its spell, the mirajan attacks, after which it vanishes into thin air. Should the victim survive, a mirajan may return as many as three times in a single night. Victims who have been "killed" by a mirajan show no visible signs of damage and will appear to have died of natural causes. However, if one opens the victim's eyelids, it will be seen that the eyes are black and lusterless.

Size: 6-7'
Attributes:*

INT +2	PER +3
WIL -3	CHA -3
STR +1	DEX +2
CON -1	SPD +3

* Attributes pertain only to the mirajan's spiritform
Ability Level: 8+
Attacks/Damage: Spirit blade: DR = Ability Level (damage is tallied as usual, but pertains only to the victim's astral or spiritual self)
Special Abilities: Ritual dance (WIL roll at -5 or be mesmerized and incapable of independent action), manifest or disappear at will, immune to non-magical attacks, insubstantial, flight
Armor: None
Hit Points: 18



RAJAN SCORPION



This desert-dwelling species is found primarily in Rajanistan (hence its name) and may measure up to a foot in length when fully grown. The Rajan scorpion's coloration and penchant for burrowing allows it to blend almost unseen into its desert habitat (stealth at +10), a cause of some concern to individuals who must traverse these areas. The insect's powerful sting can penetrate even the toughest leather (DR 3) and carries a lethal venom (DR 3 per round for 10 rounds). Rajan assassins often keep Rajan scorpions as "pets," employing both the insect and its venom in certain of their grisly torture rituals. A dram of this toxin can sell for as much as 75 gold lumens on the black market.



A Shadow Wizard and its bat manta terrorize the sky over the Shadow Realm



THE NORTHERN REACHES

L'HAAN

L'Haan is a land of vast snow fields, glittering ice peaks, and frozen lakes. Located in the nethermost reaches of eastern Talislanta, the region is predominantly wilderness, populated by tundra beasts and great herds of snowmane and wooly ogriphant. Along the shores of the Sea of Ice live the only civilized folk native to L'Haan, the Mirin.

THE 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.

ANCESTRY

The Mirin are believed to be descended from a group of Archaens 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.

SOCIETY

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. Marriage ceremonies are performed by priests and



priestesses of Borean, and are joyous occasions. Children are taught to read and write, and instructed in Mirin philosophy and culture. 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.



Customs

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.

Government

L'Haan is ruled by an hereditary monarchy and magiocracy led by the Snow Queen, a white witch of exceptional capabilities. Subservient to her are the Royal Ministers, each of whom has a single area of responsibility, such as defense, alchemy, justice, hunting, shipbuilding, public works, and trade. The Minister of Justice is the chief judiciary official in the country. His or her sub-ministers preside over the L'Haan courts, where all legal matters are adjudicated. Individuals accused of offenses are entitled to counsel; convictions result in either restitution or imprisonment. There is no capital punishment in L'Haan.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

Mirin practice many decorative arts, including ice sculpture, ornate metalworking, and the carving of horn. The music of the tundra-dwelling Mirin is related to the worship of Borean, god of the north wind. Their instruments include bells, chimes, and an unusual type of pipe organ, all carved from solid ice.

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.

Defenses

L'Haan's military is superbly equipped with adamant weapons and armor, well-trained, and experienced from long campaigns against the Ice Giants of Narandu. The army consists primarily of light cavalry mounted on swift snowmanes. The Mirin "navy" has a substantial fleet of ice-going vessels of various sizes and purposes.

Commerce

Mirin adamants are the coin of the realm, though the lumen is honored here as well. Exports include alchemical products, hides, and horn; imports include scintilla, fabrics, spices. Despite generous offers from other lands, the Mirin refuse to trade any but the smallest quantities of blue diamonds or adamant, substances which they consider vital to the defense of their land. There is a merchant's guild in every Mirin settlement, through which all trade arrangements must be made.

Worldview

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 Outcast Isles, in the Midnight Sea.

Mirin Settlements

The City of Rhin

On the eastern shore of the Sea of Ice is the Mirin capital of Rhin, a walled city of shining ice castles. Rhin is renowned for its alchemists, who are skilled in the art of magically forging adamant. The Snow Queen lives in a fabulous ice palace in this city.

The City of L'Lal

L'Lal stands on the western shore of the Sea of Ice. Closest of the Mirin cities to the territories of the dreaded Ice Giants, L'Lal is surrounded by ice walls over fifty feet in height. The greater part of L'Haan's formidable military force is stationed at this fortress, warding against possible invasion by the Ice Giants of Narandu.

The City of Myr

Most populous of the Mirin settlements, Myr is located on the western lake shore, opposite Rhin. This

Visit to the City of Rhin

"After a long and arduous journey I arrived, more than half-frozen, at my destination: the capital city of Rhin. It is truly a beautiful place, its fantastic spires glittering like cut diamonds in the light of the twin suns. All the buildings here are made from ice, carved with great precision into a variety of aesthetically pleasing shapes and forms. Ice sculptures of winged elementals, ice dragons, and notable figures from past ages line the promenades and causeways. The people are proud of bearing but mild in nature, and an atmosphere of peace and serenity pervades the city.

Unfortunately, as beautiful as I have found Rhin to be, the place lacks one virtue for which I can find no acceptable substitute: warmth. I mean this not in the figurative sense, but quite literally. It is freezing here, both indoors and out. True, inside the walls of an ice castle one is protected from the winds, but to what avail when all about is nothing but solid ice? The Mirin are immune to cold, and have no use for fire or fireplaces, which in any event would prove ruinous to the local architecture. Orbs filled with amberglow provide such illumination as they require, which is not much; even at night, the light of the moons and stars, reflected off the ice castles and promenades, is sufficient to illuminate the city.

This is not to imply that the Mirin were oblivious to my discomfort. Quite the contrary; upon noticing that I was shivering and beginning to acquire a blue coloration not unlike that of the Mirin themselves, my host immediately took pains to provide me with the warmest fur garments that could be found. When I retired to my chambers for the night I discovered that my host had provided piles of fur blankets for my comfort, and also the company of his lovely daughter. The former helped ease the chill considerably; the latter, while pleasant in the extreme, was for the most part ineffective. For the Mirin, warm hearted though they may be, give off not even the slightest amount of body heat."

city is famed for its shipyards, where graceful ice schooners and smaller ice skiffs are constructed. The walled city is also L'Haan's foremost supplier of blue diamonds.

Places of Note

The Outcast Islands

The frigid and rock-strewn Outcast Islands serve as home to the exiled cult of Rasmirin. Numbering only a few hundred or so renegades, the Rasmirin population dwells in rude ice fortresses, ever plotting new schemes to overthrow the ruler of L'Haan. Their ancestry and culture are similar in most respects to the Mirin, though the Rasmirin revere the destructive forces of nature, as represented by the elemental spirits of storms and darkness.

Narandu

Narandu is an immense and 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 hoarfrost. Only the hardiest creatures can survive in this tortuous region, which is home to the monstrous beings known as the Ice Giants.

The Ice Giants

Ice Giants are aptly named indeed, for their bodies are composed entirely of solid ice. They are frightening to behold, standing well over ten feet in height and weighing as much as one ton. Spiky protrusions of ice cover their bodies, and their hands and feet are clawed. Ice Giants are not natural lifeforms, but were created by a powerful wizard or entity known only as the Ice King.

Traveling in groups of up to two hundred individuals, Ice Giants stalk the frozen tundra of Narandu. Their very bodies emanate a piercing cold, so much so that large groups of Ice Giants can effectively lower temperatures in a wide-radius area. They advance without rest, destroying all living creatures in their path and turning even verdant plains into frozen tundra.

Ice Giants do not erect permanent structures of any kind, though they are known to carve tunnels and caverns in the sides of glaciers or mountains of ice. In these places are stored the frozen carcasses of such creatures as muskronts, tundra beast and wooly ogriphant. Ice Giants cannot obtain nourishment from anything that has not first been frozen solid.

Ice Giants exhibit little in the way of independent thought or volition. If separated from the group, a solitary giant will wander about without purpose or direction. They do not possess verbal skills, but communicate in a very simple form of sign language.

By advancing further and further south each year the Ice Giants have slowly extended their territories, converting temperate lands to bleak tundra (see sidebar). The avian Gryphs of Tamaranth have long warned of these intrusions, though generally to little avail. Even scholars who acknowledge the veracity of the Gryphs' claims contend that the Ice Giants' southern progress is



so gradual as to warrant little concern; most estimate the rate of advancement at less than one half foot per year. Despite the fact that the Ice Giants advance along nearly a thousand mile front, these scholars claim that the loss of land in real terms is so minimal as to be insignificant.

Places of Note

The Ruins of Farnir

Deep in the frigid interior of Narandu lie the ruins of Farnir, a city frozen under layers of crystalline ice. Before the coming of the Ice Giants, Farnir reputedly was the site of an enlightened civilization, steeped in the arts of magic and alchemy. No less a personage than the great sorcerer Koraq claimed to have visited here, and the ancient mage was reportedly impressed by the talents of the Farnir mages. Apparently, their talents did not extend into the realm of military defense, since Farnir was overrun by advancing Ice Giant hordes several centuries ago. The Mirin claim that some of the Farnir magicians still live, frozen in stasis by the extreme cold.

The Black Pit of Narandu

One of the more unusual features of this region is the great chasm known as the Black Pit of Narandu. Located just north of Tamaranth, this supposedly bottomless fissure is the source of many colorful legends. Some claim the Black Pit is a magical gateway that leads to some demon-haunted realm. Others, noting the clouds of steam which issue from its gaping mouth, theorize that the Black Pit exits into a vast, underground sea. Even less likely explanations of this geographical phenomenon exist, none of which the author will dignify by mentioning them within the pages of this tome.

Ice Giant

Ice Giants are magical constructs found in numbers throughout the frigid wastes of Narandu. These unnatural golems are believed to have been created long ago by the Ice King, a mysterious figure who is said to dwell far away in the dark northern realms of Talislanta. Ice giants are comprised entirely of magically animate ice. They emanate waves of cold sufficient in intensity to freeze the ground beneath their feet or slow the reflexes of other creatures in their immediate vicinity.

Ice giants prey upon all sorts of warm-blooded creatures, storing the bodies of their victims in tunnels and caverns carved into the side of glaciers until they are ready to be eaten; ice giants cannot obtain nourishment from anything unless it is frozen solid prior to consumption. Although ice giants are vulnerable to fire, normal weapons are of little avail against them. Adamant blades and enchanted weapons provide a more effective deterrent, and elemental spells that affect water or ice can be used to dispel the magics that animate them. Removed of such enchantments, ice giants shatter into inanimate fragments.

The Big Freeze

Any region inhabited by a sizeable force of Ice Giants undergoes a complete and rapid transformation. The ground freezes solid, often to a depth of six feet or more. All sources of water in the affected area, from ponds to streams and even rivers, turn to solid ice. Dark clouds form in the atmosphere above, blocking the rays of the twin suns so that even during the day it is nearly as dark as night. And lastly, all living plants and animals freeze solid, captured in such attitudes and positions as they were at the moment the freeze took effect.

Because the fearsome cold emanated by Ice Giants is magical in nature, the freezing process can be reversed, but only by the application of counter-magics. The Ariane possess such capabilities, as I witnessed when an Ariane I had been traveling with used his magics to rescue a young equs that had been frozen in mid-stride. Once the freezing process had been reversed, the creature returned to its normal state and ran off to the south, apparently no worse for the experience.

It occurred to me then that an untold number of creatures and beings might still exist, alive yet frozen in stasis, in lands conquered by the Ice Giants since they began their southerly advance. My companion confirmed this theory, and told me that the Ariane believe that an entire city and its inhabitants had once been frozen in such a manner, perhaps even as long ago as the end of the Archaen Age. According to legend, this city is located deep within Ice Giant territory, and has remained unseen by outsiders for many centuries. Whether its people still live, or whether they have long since been devoured by Ice Giants, is a matter for speculation — or perhaps investigation, though at some future date. For at this point in the discussion the two of us, half-frozen in spite of our protective devices, were compelled to depart the area for warmer climes."

Size: 9'-10', 1,800-2,400 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -5	PER 0
WIL +6	CHA -6
STR +10	DEX -4
CON +10	SPD -6

Ability Level: 1-20
Attacks/Damage: Fist: DR 18, Club: DR 26
Special Abilities: Emanate cold in 10' radius (causes -2 penalty on opponents' combat rolls), fire inflicts double damage, vulnerable to aquamancy
Armor: Ice, PR 6
Hit Points: 50

Tundra Loper



Hardy and belligerent cousin of the common, plains loper, tundra lopers are indigenous to the frozen northern realms of Narandu and L'Haan. They are distinguishable from their plains-dwelling relatives by their shaggy white manes. Tundra lopers also have an additional spike on their clawed lower appendages, which enables them to negotiate icy terrain.

Traveling in herds of up to thirty individuals, these rugged bipeds roam the frigid wastelands, feeding on creatures smaller and weaker than themselves. They have been known to attack frostweres, but usually only in self defense. When food is scarce, such as after a deep snowstorm, tundra lopers may hunt larger prey, including humanoids.

Size: 14' in length, 8' in height, 400-600 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -6	PER +2
WIL +6	
STR +4	DEX +4
CON +8	SPD +5

Ability Level: 7-9
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 6, Hind Claws: DR 10, Whip-like Tail: DR 8; one attack per round
Special Abilities: Sure-footed climbers (even on ice), leap across 20'-30' spans with running start
Armor: Shaggy fur, PR 2
Hit Points: 44

Night Demon



Denizens of the shadowy Demonrealms, night demons are believed to have gained access to the Northern Reaches of Talislanta via an ancient gateway known as the Black Pit of Narandu. These winged humanoids are comprised of magical darkness, given substance and form by negative elemental forces. Nocturnal by need and choice, night demons come forth after sundown to spread terror among living creatures, killing in seemingly indiscriminate fashion. The innate fear of the dark that is felt by many Talislantan peoples may be attributed to these creatures.

Weakest of the demon races, night demons wield spears and swords made of brass, a metal shunned by their mortal enemies, the race of devils. They possess an aversion to daylight, which weakens them. Magical light causes them extreme pain, and can be used to kill a night demon.

Size: 6'-6'8", 180-260+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT +3	PER +2
WIL +4	CHA -6
STR +4	DEX +4
CON +8	SPD +3*

* airborne and on the ground
Ability Level: 7-14+
Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 6, Brass Sword or Spear: DR 14; up to two attacks per round
Special Abilities: Necromancy with four Modes at Ability Level, flight, invisible in darkness (cannot be detected except by magic or special ability, such as night vision), weakened by daylight (-2 to all actions)
Armor: Hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 32

Snow Lily

A delicate white flower found only in the coldest climes, snow lily is a beneficial plant that has certain practical uses. Eaten fresh, the lily's stem can be used to ward against the onset of frostbite. Prepared in an elixir, snow lily petals are said to confer virtual immunity against the effects of cold.

Vast fields of snow lilies can be found across the Northern Reaches from Narandu to the borders of Xanadas. The plants lay dormant during the spring, bursting into bloom only after the weather turns cold. Borne upon the winds, their frost-blue pollen covers the snowfields of L'Haan and Narandu for miles, providing food for numerous small creatures and organisms.

The Shadow Realm

At the northernmost edge of the Wilderlands lays the Shadow Realm, an eerie place haunted by the ghosts of a dozen vanished civilizations. The landscape is correspondingly unpleasant, and consists largely of broken hills, outcroppings of wind-blasted rock, and thickets of stunted tanglewood and thornwood. Shattered ruins, worn beyond recognition by centuries of time, litter the region.

Among the few intelligent beings known to inhabit this forlorn land are Shadow Wizards, spectral entities who hail from the Nightmare Dimension. These frightful entities cloak themselves in hooded vestments and bear ebony runestaves studded with crystals of black diamond. Like shadow wights, their eyes burn with a fiery incandescence, and they are insubstantial to the touch.

Visit to the Shadow Realm

The intrepid sorcerer Kabros claimed to have visited the Shadow Realm on at least one occasion. In Volume Six of his famous Guide to the Lower Planes, there appears a brief monograph on the subject, recounted here in part:

"I approached the Iron Citadel, heedless of the obsidian orbs that stared at me from the castle's black metal towers. Twin portals of solid iron, engraved with weird runes and sigils, opened slowly as I drew near. A foul wind issued forth, cold and unnatural, as if originating from another world. Summoning the remainder of my resolve, I entered into darkness. For a time, I groped about blindly, fearing lest I should stumble into some unseen pit or other obstacle. At last my eyes adjusted to the gloom, and I could discern the vague outlines of a long, winding stairway. I ascended and, after a seemingly interminable period of time, emerged into a vast and eerie chamber.

Within, a group of shadowy figures stood occupied at various tasks, apparently oblivious to my presence. Several worked at long tables piled high with tangles of alchemical equipment and tubing, distilling some sort of dark, viscous liquid. Others fed malformed imps to caged demons, attended steaming vats and cauldrons, or conversed in hushed whispers with winged phantasms. With a pair of tongs, one of the Shadow Wizards brought forth a small creature from the largest of the vats: a hideous humanoid with a bloated head, covered with barbs, horns and sharp protrusions. An icy terror gripped my soul at the sight of this thing, freshly fashioned from the stuff of which nightmares are made. My mind reeled: this was Fear itself, given tangible form and substance by the black arts of the Shadow Wizards. I fled, unable to bear the scrutiny of those dark eyes, and anxious only to return to the world of light and reason. . ."

The Shadow Wizards dwell within the Iron Citadel, a ruined structure of ancient and obscure origins. Its towers have eyes of carved obsidian that constantly scan the surrounding environs, alert for intruders. From within the dark confines of their sanctum, the Shadow Wizards reputedly consort with creatures from the lower planes, such as fiends and bat mantas.

Fiend



Fiends are despicable creatures from the Nightmare Dimension who are sometimes drawn to desolate regions such as the Shadow Realm and Khazad. They possess the uncanny ability to use shadows as gateways from one plane to another, a talent that enables them to travel from their home plane to other locales and renders them virtually impossible to detect in darkness. On their home plane, fiends serve as kidnappers, spies, and informers of the worst and lowest sort. On the material plane, they are able to take on corporeal form, but only for a limited time. They appear to enjoy scaring and tormenting weaker creatures, but fear magic and are averse to strong light.

Size: 7', weightless
Attributes:

INT +3	PER +5
WIL -5	CHA -7
STR +5*	DEX +3
CON +5	SPD +5

* in material form
Ability Level: 4-11
Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 11 +Ability Level
Special Abilities: Stealth at Ability Level +DEX, inter-planar travel through shadows, +5 to Stealth in darkness
Armor: None
Hit Points: 13

Bat Manta

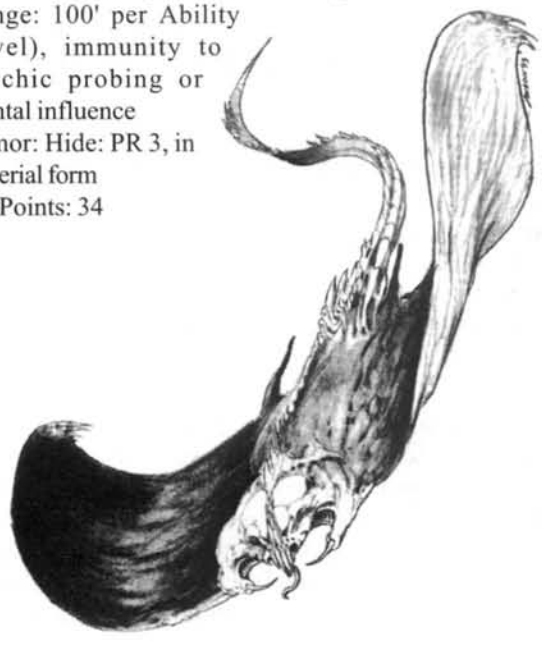
Bat mantra are airborne entities from the Nightmare Dimension that resemble giant black mantra rays with horned protuberances and whip-like tails. They radiate powerful psychic energies, which they are capable of emanating like bolts of electrical current. These energies can be used to stun or to instill astral, ethereal, or material beings with a sense of nameless dread. In fact, nightmares involving falling are often the result of a bat mantra gliding past the dreamer's astral form and disrupting his or her psychic aura.

On their home plane, these creatures may often be seen soaring above the nightmarish terrain, looking for lesser creatures to feed upon. Capable of detecting invisible, astral, and ethereal presences, they are adept at spotting inter-planar rifts and gates; consequently, they may also be encountered on the astral, material, and lower planes. They are sometimes summoned by the Shadow Wizards or other magicians for use as steeds.

Size: 20'+ wingspan, 400+ lbs. (in material form)
Attributes:

INT -5	PER +7
WIL 0	CHA -5
STR +10*	DEX +5
CON +10	SPD +5

* in material form
Ability Level: 6-13
Attacks/Damage: Electrical Discharge: DR 12 (range: 100'), Cause Fear (WIL roll to resist), Tail/Wings: DR 18
Special Abilities: Flight, night vision, detect invisible, astral, or ethereal presences or inter-planar rifts (range: 100' per Ability Level), immunity to psychic probing or mental influence
Armor: Hide: PR 3, in material form
Hit Points: 34



Shadowight

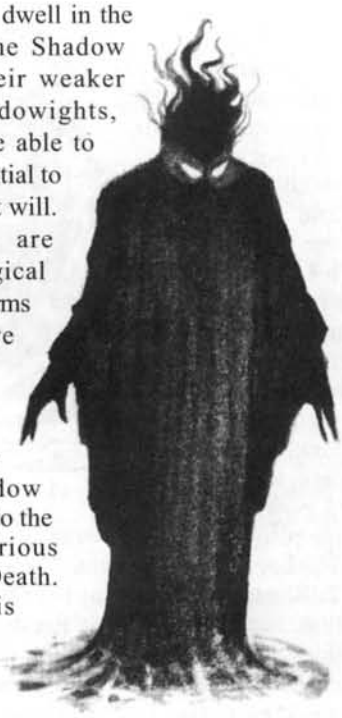
Shadowights are the spiritforms of deceased persons sentenced to spend eternity as specters. They can be found throughout Talislanta, but they are most numerous in the Shadow Realm. Consigned to haunt the areas surrounding their grave sites, shadowights are miserable creatures. They despise their spectral bodies and crave corporeality and physical form above all things. Shadowights are able to rob living creatures of their substance by touch, thereby attaining a semblance of solidity and physical being. These stolen qualities last but a few hours before again fading, requiring shadowights to constantly seek new victims in order to satisfy their longings. Living creatures may survive an attack by shadowights, but if drained of all their physical substance, their bodies simply cease to exist, and they will themselves become shadowforms.

While in spectral form, shadowights cannot be harmed by weapons of any sort. They are dismayed by strong light and can be dispersed by magical light. Ironically, once a shadowight has gained a measure of corporeality from a living being, it can be slain by silver or magical weapons. Not a few scholars believe that, even subconsciously, this is the true desire of all shadowights: to be slain while possessing physical form, so that their spirit selves may finally pass into the next world.

Size: 6'6"-7'6", weightless
Attributes:
Mental attributes as in life
STR +2* DEX +1
CON +2* SPD 0
* in corporeal form
Ability
Level: 1+
Attacks/Damage: Touch: DR 6 +Ability Level (drains substance of similar creatures; lasts ten minutes per hit point; completely drained victims become shadowforms)
Special Abilities: Immune to weapons while in spectral form, may be slain by silver or magical weapons in corporeal form, dismayed by strong light (-5 to all actions), dispersed by magical radiance (Ability Level roll versus spell level to resist)
Armor: None
Hit Points: as per drained hit points

Shadow Wizard

Shadow wizards are the spiritforms of deceased magicians from various dimensions, worlds, and eras. Though most of these powerful specters are consigned to the Underworld, a cabal of shadow wizards called the Malum is known to dwell in the Iron Citadel, in the Shadow Realm. Unlike their weaker cousins, the shadowights, shadow wizards are able to change from substantial to insubstantial form at will. Although they are susceptible to magical light, non-magical forms of illumination have little effect on them.



On the lower plane known as the Underworld, shadow wizards are subject to the rule of the mysterious entity known as Death. Some serve as his advisors; others dwell alone in isolated towers located among the various dimensions that lie adjacent to the Underworld. Others are merchants who trade in soulstones - the spirit essences of living creatures, captured and imprisoned in enchanted crystals. The shadow wizards of the Iron Citadel purportedly engage in occult studies and magical experimentation, and they are believed to consort with their brethren from the lower planes. As such they are believed to know much of what transpires in the lands of the dead.

Size: 6'6"-7'6", weightless
Attributes:
INT +6 PER +4
WIL +2 CHA -5
STR +4 DEX 0
CON +5 SPD 0
Ability Level: 11-25+
Attacks/Damage: Touch: DR 10 +Ability Level (drains substance of similar creatures; lasts ten minutes per hit point; completely drained victims become shadowforms), or as per spell or weapon employed
Special Abilities: Necromancy or Wizardry with seven Modes at Ability Level, immune to damage by normal weapons, may be slain by silver or magical weapons, dismayed by strong light (-5 to all actions), dispersed by magical radiance (Ability Level roll versus spell level to resist), change from corporeal to spectral form at will (change takes one round), detect invisible, ethereal, or astral presences by sight.
Armor: None
Hit Points: 49 +drained hit points

Sardonicus



Sardonicus (or "bottle-imps," as they are sometimes known) are a lesser species of devil normally found on the plane of Oblivion. Sardonicus range in color from bright red to a deep purple; the darker the imp's coloration, the greater its age, level of ability, and power. On their home plane, sardonicus serve as advisors, underlings, and lackeys to greater devils. Through the machinations of Talislantan wizards, many have been imported to other realms, such as the Shadow Realms and Khazad.

In ancient times, these creatures were much in vogue among magicians, who favored them as familiars and imprisoned them in amberglass spheres or bottles. Their malign intelligence and uncanny powers of prescience made them invaluable as occult advisors. As the imps are self-sustaining, they were easily maintained. A sphere or stoppered cucurbit of fine amber crystal was used to keep the creature from engaging in at least the more overt varieties of mischief. Less easily controlled was the sardonicus' superior intellect and its inherently dark and malignant nature. Like all devils, sardonicus are trusted only at one's peril.

An imprisoned sardonicus may be asked up to three questions per day and must respond to the best of its abilities. If a fourth question is asked, the imp will be at liberty to either break free of its magical prison or activate an ancient and malevolent curse. In the latter case, the sardonicus remains imprisoned, but it gains control over its master's will. Thereafter, the former master must do the bidding of the sardonicus.

Size: 4"-6", 1-2 lbs.
Attributes:

INT +6	PER 0
WIL +3	CHA -4
STR -6	DEX +2
CON +1	SPD +2

Ability Level: 3-10+ (maximum of 16)
Attacks/Damage: Sting: DR 1 plus venom, DR 6
Special Abilities: Invocation (Diabolism) with four Modes at Ability Level, flight (poor), innate powers of divination and thought-reading (range: 100'), sense presences (range: 1000')
Armor: Tough skin, PR 2
Hit Points: 5

The Sinking Land

The Sinking Land is situated in the furthest 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 ever dark and grey; the earth below, a vast quagmire of inert, brown sludge. Passage through the Sinking Land is deemed next to impossible, the muddy terrain having a tendency to slowly swallow up creatures or beings who remain stationary for more than a few minutes' time. 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 flat-rooted barge tree, and the intelligent mud-dwelling creatures called Snipe.

The Snipes

Snipes are large mollusks whose shells measure approximately four feet in diameter, and are constructed of convoluted spirals of glistening calcinate. A single



appendage serves as the creatures' eye and mouth stalk; a second appendage serves as a "foot" or fin, helping propel the Snipe through muddy terrain.

Ancestry

Snipes are a highly evolved species of mollusk of uncertain descent. Their closest relatives may be the giant mollusks of the Dark Coast region.

Society

Snipes are nomadic creatures who burrow beneath the muddy surface of the Sinking Land, navigating by a form of "sonar". In spite of their awkward looking bodily form, snipes are surprisingly swift. They are able to move through the ground as fish swim through water, and can withdraw their eye-mouth stalks into their shells in the blink of an eye.

Snipes subsist on lichens, molds, and various types of fungi. They are social creatures who travel in groups of three-to-twelve individuals and observe elaborate courtship rituals, during which the male and female intertwine necks and whisper endearments to each other. Prior to mating the couple submerges into the mud for privacy.

Virtually nothing is known about the Snipe's reproductive process; young Snipes have never been observed by outsiders. It is assumed that adult Snipes hide their young in underground warrens in order to keep them safe from predators until their shells harden sufficiently to provide adequate protection. Either that, or adults may actually keep the young inside their own shells, which are as resistant to damage as plate armor.

Customs

Snipes are intrigued by the doings of other creatures who dwell in their domains and elsewhere, about whom they like to gossip (see sidebar). The are also interested in the movement of "mud-tides" and "mud-currents", which have an effect on sub-surface travel. A Snipe will not "swim against the tide" if it can avoid doing so. Some Snipes are amused by the appearance of humanoids, who they think look naked without shells.

Government

Among these creatures, the most knowledgeable Snipes are regarded with the greatest esteem. Such a Snipe, referred to as "Great Sage", will usually be the one consulted should another Snipe wish to know something. Otherwise these creatures have no leaders or government.

Conversation with a Snipe

"The Snipes in this region have been most congenial. Last week a pair of the creatures, having spotted me as I traveled east through their territory, projected their eye-mouth stalks from the mud and called out to me. I stopped and engaged the two in conversation, upon which they informed me that the terrain directly ahead was unsafe for bipedal creatures, owing to the presence of a large but quite undetectable pool of quickmire. To illustrate their point one of the creatures suggested that I test the soil just ahead with my staff, which I did. Without any great effort I was able to immerse the staff to a depth of four feet, and no doubt could have easily gone further, had it been my intention to lose the item forever.

I expressed my gratitude to the Snipes in no uncertain terms, for their intervention had no doubt saved me from a great misfortune. The two accepted my thanks graciously, and requested a favor in return. At first I was leery of their intentions; however, the only thing they asked for was information about where I came from, and who I was. It was my pleasure to comply, and the three of us struck up a conversation that continued for the better part of six days. So pleased were the Snipes to speak with someone from a distant land that they accompanied me on my journey, guiding me around bogs, quagmires, and other obstacles. Often their unselfish service caused the Snipes some inconvenience, for in truth the wetter the terrain, the easier it is for them to traverse.

This afternoon I came to the far eastern border of the Sinking Land, and was here compelled to say farewell to my two mollusk friends. We bid each other goodbye and went our separate ways; I, much enlightened regarding the race of Snipes and their homeland, and they, equipped with a plentiful supply of knowledge, gossip, and hearsay with which to trade among their fellow Snipes. Suffice to say that all of us were richer for the experience."

Magic & Religion

Snipes revere the deity, Creator, whom they depict as an extremely large and intelligent Snipe. They are

said to hold ritual observances deep underground, though no outsider has ever witnessed such a ceremony.

The Arts

Snipes have a rich tradition of storytelling, which serves as both oral history and entertainment. They are sometimes known to sing, their voices having a strange and almost ethereal quality.

Language

When desiring to communicate with others, Snipes extend an eye-mouth stalk some three feet above the earth. They are fluent in several tongues, among them Low and High Talislan, and are always interested in learning new languages and dialects. Snipes keep their names secret from outsiders.

Defenses

If threatened, Snipes burrow into the mud. While they are not violent in nature, if seriously threatened Snipes will sometimes tunnel beneath creatures who mean them harm, creating cave-ins and pit-falls. They have no weapons.

Commerce

Snipes have a unique culture and an "economy" based upon the exchange of information. They require fair payment in return for the knowledge that they possess: one bit of gossip or news for another is the going rate. Insatiably curious, they often follow individuals who enter their territories, listening in on their conversations and occasionally offering their opinions.

Worldview

Eye-mouth stalks poked above the ground, Snipes see and hear most everything that occurs in their territories, and will happily relate all that they know. They expect news in return, however, and will not give information unless this consideration is met. As travelers in the Sinking Land are quite rare, the appearance of such individuals elicits much excitement amongst these creatures.

Places of Note

The City of the Four Winds

It is perhaps possible that no reasonable person would care to enter the Sinking Land were it not for the legends concerning the City of the Four Winds. Once known as the capital of the ancient kingdom of Elande, the City of the Four Winds is believed to be the last surviving vestige of an advanced and enlightened civilization. It was built by the greatest magicians of Elande's Golden Age, who invested the city with magical properties, allowing its buildings to hover suspended above the ground. According to legend, the city and all its treasures and wonders survived the Great Disaster, and still floats somewhere above the Sinking Land, moving slowly on the winds. Travelers who claim to have caught a glimpse of the fabled city describe it as being most enchanting, its wind-worn towers and archways still capable of conjuring up visions of the halcyon age of Elande. The sorcerer Kabros sought and claimed to have found the Lost City. Of his discovery he would only say: "The city of the Four Winds must be believed in order to be seen, and seen in order to be believed."

Scavenger Slime



Scavenger slimes are a variety of large, single-celled creatures native to the Sinking Land and certain swamps, deep woodlands, and subterranean regions. They resemble pale, oozing bags of viscous fluid and are not a sight recommended to those who have weak stomachs. Visible within the organism is its cytoplasm and nucleus; the tentacle-like appendages attached to its surface are flagella, which enable the creature to move about.

Scavenger slimes feed on carrion and organic wastes, which they ingest by surrounding and enveloping these substances within their bodily forms. Once consumed in this manner, the substance is dissolved by the scavenger's corrosive internal fluids. The nutrients and degradable organic materials are thereby extracted, leaving only bones and any inorganic

materials which the creature may have inadvertently "swallowed". These the scavenger eventually discards along with other waste products, the entire process taking a day or two to complete. The areas that they inhabit are often littered with these materials.

Size: 8' in height, up to 10' in diameter, 500+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT -14	PER -5
WIL -5	CHA N/A
STR -2	DEX -5*
CON +5	SPD -1

* when attacking; otherwise, -15
Ability Level: 1-5
Attacks/Damage: Whip-like Flagella: DR 4; Acidic Internal Fluids: DR 6 per round
Special Abilities: Bodily fluids dissolve all types of organic materials, unaffected by poisons, acids, or illusions
Armor: None
Hit Points: 25

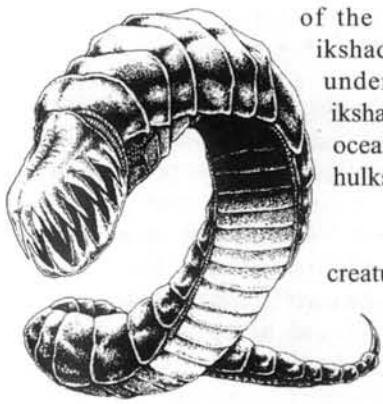
BARGE TREE

The barge tree is an unusual species of squat, stumpy-limbed tree native to the Sinking Land. Notable primarily for its flat-edged roots, barge trees actually float upon the surface of their murky surroundings. Though incapable of independent movement, these organisms are propelled to some extent by the prevailing winds and so tend to drift slowly from one place to another.

Barge trees are sometimes home to certain species of birds, who roost in their branches and feed on the tree's succulent fruits. These trees are also of benefit to travelers wishing to pass through the Sinking Land, who may rest in relative safety amidst the barge tree's low-lying limbs. The spongy leaves of the barge tree are exceptionally buoyant, and can be used to create makeshift "rafts" to keep equipment and other necessities from sinking in the mire.

IKSHADA

Ikshada are grisly parasites found in the Sinking Land and other isolated locales. There are three known varieties: yellow ikshada, which inhabit the succulent fruit of the barge tree; black ikshada, which feed upon carrion and are frequently encountered in tombs, crypts, and underground habitats; and gray ikshada, an aquatic species. It is the habit of all three species to attack from hiding: yellow ikshada from within the melon-sized fruit of the barge tree, black ikshada from coffins or under rocks, and gray ikshada from beneath the ocean floor or inside the hulks of sunken vessels.



When a living creature approaches, the ikshada springs forth, biting with its powerful, fanged jaws. If it succeeds in latching onto its prey, the ikshada attempts to inject the victim with its spawn, using its hollow tail-stinger. The frenzied attack of an ikshada is such that the victim may not even notice that it has been stung; a highly unfavorable situation, for the spawn become hatchlings within two to eight hours after being injected into a host. The tiny creatures begin to feed, slowly devouring the host from within. Death may result within four days. A purge or strong anti-parasitic will usually rid a victim of ikshada, with early diagnosis and treatment affording the best chance of survival. Some claim that by ingesting noxious or even poisonous substances, one can force the horrid parasite to abandon its chosen victim. Such remedies, besides being uncertain at best, are also not without a substantial degree of risk.

Size: 9"-12" in length, 1-3 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -8	PER +1
WIL +3	CHA N/A
STR -4	DEX +3
CON +1	SPD +4

Ability Level: 4
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 2, Sting: DR 1 plus injection of parasitic larvae
Special Abilities: Sting injects victim with 1-4 parasites, each capable of doing one point of damage per round when fully developed (gestation period is 2-8 hours)
Armor: Exoskeletal plates, PR 6
Hit Points: 3

TAMARANTH

Tamaranth is the eldest and most impressive of Talislanta's woodland regions. Thickets of low-lying trees and light vegetation dominate the perimeters, progressing in stages towards the ever deepening woods of the interior. Here, ancient span-oak and fernwood tower above the forest floor thick with carpets of moss and trailing vines. Swift running streams course through the underbrush, and the woods teem with an abundance of plant and animal life. Two humanoid peoples live here: the avian Gryphs, and the reclusive Ariane.



THE GRYPHS

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.

ANCESTRY

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.

SOCIETY

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.

Gryph couples mate for life and are intensely loyal to and protective of one another. While the female sits with her eggs the male stands guard from a higher vantage point; any creature that approaches the nest in a threatening or strange manner will be attacked. Young Gryphs remain in the "nest", fed and tended by both

parents, until they are capable of independent flight. Once this is so they are expected to learn to hunt for their own food.

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.

Customs

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.

Government

Each Gryph clan has its own chieftain, who serves as leader in war and peace. At the Great Council Eyrie, the chieftains of all the clans come to meet each year, during the first week of Jhang. Here, decisions that impact the Gryphs as a people are discussed. Outsiders who break Gryph laws may be imprisoned in wooden cages and suspended from the highest trees. Here they may be allowed a few days, or perhaps weeks, to contemplate the consequences of their actions. Violent offenders may simply be slain out of hand, saving all concerned a lot of trouble.

Magic & 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.

The Great Hunt

The Great Hunt is a tradition of the Gryph clans of Tamaranth forest. The event takes place once a year, following the spring rains. Only the most skilled hunters of each clan are allowed to participate; to be chosen is considered a great honor. Prior to embarking on the Hunt, the participants gather around the great council eyrie at Dhar. Here the group separates into small hunting parties of two individuals, each of which is assigned its own territory. When this has been done the hunting parties fan out across the forest, awaiting the coming of dawn. At first light the hunters fly forth, armed with duar and heavy crossbows. The Great Hunt has begun.

Flying through the forests of Tamaranth, the hunters search for dangerous predators such as omnivrax, malathropes, and behemoths. The largest and deadliest predators are tracked down and engaged in combat; fierce battles between the hunter and the hunted are not uncommon. The vast majority of the creatures being hunted will not be killed, but will instead be driven out of Tamaranth into the surrounding territories. The Great Hunt lasts for two weeks. When it is over the woods of Tamaranth are virtually devoid of large predators and other violent creatures, at least for a time. At the conclusion of the Great Hunt a feast is held at Dhar to honor the participants. Hunters who have shown exceptional skill and valor are awarded with traditional necklaces made from the claws and fangs of their prey. They return to their clans, to tell their people stories of the hunters' exploits.

The Arts

Gryphs practice few decorative crafts but are expert weavers, a talent which they use to good effect in the construction of their tree-top eyries. Gryph songs are an integral part of their people's tradition of oral history.

Language

Gryphs speak avian and Talislan. 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.

Defenses

The Winged Folk consider themselves the self-appointed guardians of Tamaranth and the surrounding environs, and are known to patrol far beyond the borders of their own territories. They are skilled in the use of a type of two-pronged spear called the duar and the heavy crossbow, utilizing either sharp or blunt quarrels. Normally, each clan guards its own grove of trees and the territories beneath them. However, in times of grave danger two or more clans will join forces. At such times the forests resound with the piercing war-calls of Gryph warriors, a prelude to battle.

Commerce

Gryph clans trade hides, horn, weapons, tools, and other useful goods among themselves, and also with certain Orgovian bands. They also trade rare herbs to the Ariane in exchange for healing salves and philtres.

Worldview

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. 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").

Gryph Settlements

Dhar

Located in the southern Woods of Tamaranth, Dhar is the largest of all Gryph settlements, consisting of nearly a hundred communal eyries nestled high in the treetops. Among these is the ancient Council Eyrie, where the chieftains of all the Gryph clans come to meet each year during the first week of the month of Jhang.

Span-oak

Span-oak is a giant species of deciduous tree that can attain heights of over two hundred feet. The limbs of this tree are strong and sturdy and generally span a distance equal to the tree's height (hence its name, span-oak). The avian Gryphs make their eyries in these great trees, which purportedly live for thousands of years. The tree sheds about a fourth of its branches each fall, the fallen limbs being coveted as excellent-quality timber in many lands.

The Woods of Tamaranth

Tamaranth is the eldest of all Talislantan woodlands, its most ancient trees believed to be well over two thousand years old. Tamaranth is the only Talislantan forest believed to have remained unaffected by The Great Disaster, a condition that may be attributed to its inhabitants, the Ariane.

The 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.

Ancestry

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.

Society

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.

Ariane dwellings are enchanting creations of smoothly polished arches, tunnels, and spirals of violet stone. Furnishings of living plants and trees decorate the interior of these structures, no two of which are alike. Water is provided by running streams, which pass through and amongst the Ariane dwellings, gathering

in pools and grottoes. In all the city, there is not a single door or lock — no Ariane would ever steal from another.

When Ariane decide to take a mate, the commitment is not just for life but for all eternity. Such "soul-mates" may remain bonded to each other throughout numerous incarnations, humanoid or otherwise. Ariane children are wise far beyond their years; the Ariane claim that this is because their offspring have lived before in other incarnations. It is true that Ariane young seem to have an intuitive grasp of their culture, and require little in the way of training or instruction during their early years. Ariane are remarkably calm and patient, showing no outward emotion even under the most stressful situations. They never argue, nor do they ever lie. Rather than utter an untruth, an Ariane will simply say nothing.

Customs

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 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.

Government

Ariane Elders, known for their mastery of Transacendency, serve as advisors to their people. When decisions of great importance are to be made the Elders gather around Altan's central obelisk and meditate on the problem, sometimes for days or even weeks. When they have arrived at a solution the Elders call their people together and explain their views.

The Ariane have no formal laws, but believe firmly in the right of all living things to exist in peace. However, individuals or creatures which engage in violent or disruptive acts are dealt with decisively. The usual punishment is banishment from Tamaranth, though violent offenders may be imprisoned in cages of living wood. The length of interment varies according to the severity of the infraction, the Ariane's somewhat abstract conception of time often tending to add to the duration of such stays.

Magic & Religion

Joined in spirit as members of the nature-oriented "cult" of Transascendancy, Ariane are able to commune with all things in nature (see sidebar). Masters of

Communing with Nature

The Ariane possess a unique view of existence, attributing sentient virtues to all things in nature: plants, trees, earth, stone, wind, water, and so on. By communing with nature, they are able to communicate telepathically with the elemental spirits that reside in such entities - creatures invisible on the material planes, but existing in tangible form on the Elemental Plane. For example, earth and stone are often reluctant to answer questions in haste, preferring instead to ponder for a time before making their reply. Lakes, streams and other bodies of water possess knowledge of events transpiring within their depths but may have a distorted view of occurrences reflected in their surfaces due to the action of waves and ripples.

Carried upon the winds are countless secrets, many from far-distant lands. Even the most modest breeze may know a thing or two, though elemental spirits of the air are unable to discern whether the words they bring are true or false. Plants and trees, having a marked lack of interest in the affairs of men, may also prove to be limited sources of information. Commune with beasts and animals may yield more productive results, providing the creature being addressed is not occupied with other concerns.

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.

The Arts

Ariane arts and crafts are all accomplished by the use of Transascendant magics. Tools are never employed, nor are living things ever harmed in order to make such implements and items as the Ariane require. Ariane "rock sculpture" is the process of gently shaping stone without the use of hammer or chisel; a single work may take a lifetime or longer to complete. The Maze-City is such a work, on a vast scale. Ariane music is comprised of natural sounds: the calls of insects, avians, and animals; the sound of water coursing along a stream; the whisper of the wind. Ariane "conduct" their ambient symphonies of sound by communing with the elemental spirits around them.

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.

Defenses

While the Ariane are a non-violent people, they are not averse to the use of force when it comes to defending their lives or land, and many are surprisingly proficient with their weapons. Mounted on swift silvermanes, bands of Ariane regularly patrol the heights surrounding their Maze-City of Altan. Unwanted intruders are sternly urged to depart, occasionally encouraged by a fusillade of arrows. In extreme cases, Ariane reserve the right to kill; the Ariane prefer to think of this as just another way of hastening the natural process of reincarnation.

Commerce

Visitors to the maze-city are few, this due as much to Altan's isolated location as to the reclusive nature of the Ariane themselves. Gryphs from the surrounding forests of Tamaranth sometimes come here to obtain medicinal mixtures, or to deliver news from other regions. The Ariane also provide the Gryph clans with bolts of fine spinifax, which the Gryphs use to barter for goods from other lands. Travelers in need of food or shelter are never turned away, though outsiders not accompanied by a Druas (see Worldview) may not remain in the maze-city for longer than seven days.

Worldview

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. 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,

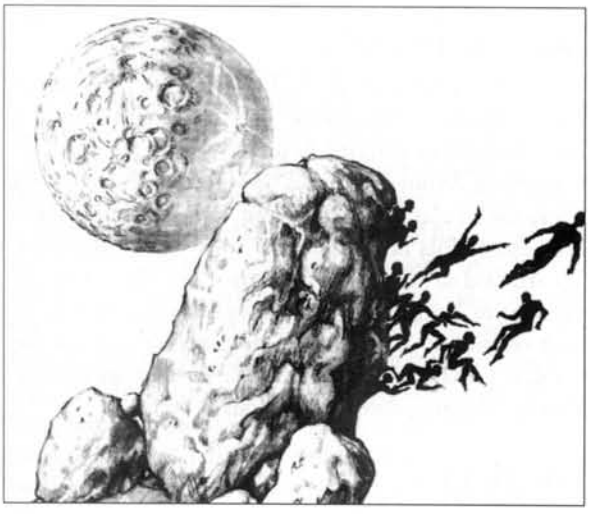
the search for enlightenment requires them to journey beyond the Forest of Tamaranth, perhaps even to distant lands. Such individuals are known as a Druas, meaning "seeker". Ariane encountered outside of Altan will always be Druas, who have left the maze-city to gather experiences in the outside world.

Ariane Settlements

The Maze-City of Altan

Altan is a place of magical beauty, its timeworn structures overhung with all manner of fruiting and flowering vines. The maze-city was fashioned over centuries of time from a single mound of violet stone. Radiating outward from a central obelisk, each of the city's many unique structures was designed, formed, and polished smooth solely through the use of Transascendant magics. Altan is situated in a wooded valley surrounded on all sides by the Amethyst Mountains.

Minor Elementals



Minor elementals are nature spirits that inhabit both the Elemental Plane and the Talislantan continent. These benign entities blend into their natural surroundings and are almost impossible to detect. Yet every blossom, blade of grass, pebble, or other bit of natural matter harbors a minor elemental. They are as numerous as grains of sand, or the countless dew drops that speckle every forest of every world on the material plane.

If summoned by magic, or by one who knows how to commune with the natural world, minor elementals will make their presence known. They generally appear as tiny imps or sprites, one or two inches in height, identical in coloration to the organic matter that they chose to inhabit. All are comprised of ambient elemental energy, and they possess talents related to their natural forms.

Size: 1"-2"
Attributes:

INT -2	PER +2
WIL -2	CHA +2
STR -5	DEX +2
CON -2	SPD +10

Ability Level: 1-5
Attacks/Damage: Energy Attack by touch at Ability Level DR
Special Abilities: Elemental Magic or Natural Magic with Attack and two other Modes at Ability Level, create area of elemental force (up to one foot in diameter per Ability Level), vulnerable only to magical weapons, opposing elemental forces, and negative energy
Armor: None
Hit Points: 1 per Ability Level

Urag

Urag is a harsh and 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. Its streams are fouled with offal and refuse, its woods felled for timber and fuel, its hills and mountains ravaged by crude mining techniques. None but the hardiest species of plants or animals can thrive in Urag, though numerous varieties of mutated lifeforms can be found here. The individuals responsible for defiling this land are a brutish folk known as the Ur.

The Ur

Standing between seven and eight feet tall and weighing upward of five hundred pounds, the Ur are frightening to behold. They have leathery hide of a yellow-green color, curved fangs, and facial features of a most unendearing sort: furrowed brows, pointed ears, and deep-set black eyes. Necklaces of teeth and bone, pieces of hammered plate armor, and filthy garments made of fur and hide constitute the typical Ur clansman's wardrobe. Rings of black iron are commonly employed to restrain their hair, which the Ur wear in double or triple topknots.



Ancestry

The Ur are a savage race who settled in the region after being driven from southern Narandu by advancing hordes of Ice Giants. Talislantan naturalists of the New Age theorize that they are an offshoot of the Kharakhan, a race of giants who hail from the Wilderlands of Zaran.

Society

Ur live in crude fortresses of stone and earth, which they optimistically refer to as "castles". There are three main Ur clans, each of which resides in its own settlement. These folk subsist on a diet of roasted beast-flesh, tubers, and a type of sour and foul-smelling cheese made from spoiled erd's milk, called uryan. It is considered an acquired taste at best. A type of grog, brewed by Darkling slaves from tubers, is the favorite drink; the cheaper and stronger, the better.

Ur mate indiscriminately, the dominant males choosing whatever females they desire. Females must often attempt to repulse the advance by force if they are not interested. Ur children, referred to as "brats", are wild and undisciplined. They roam all over untended and must make do with whatever scraps of food they can find. In any Ur settlement the adult males eat first, followed by the adult females, and lastly, the young. Brats learn quickly to fight for food or starve; a useful lesson in Ur philosophy, and about the only training or education an Ur child can expect.

Customs

The Ur are a warlike folk who rule by force of arms. They are crude and vulgar, with the manners of swine, and are prone to outbursts of violence. Ur believe that only the strong survive, and the weak follow orders or perish. Ur admire strength and power; it is the only thing they respect. Whenever possible, Ur use their ability to read emotions to gain advantage over their enemies and rivals.

Government

Each clan is ruled by an Ur-King. Next in line are his Warlords, commanders of the armies of the Ur clans, which range far and wide across the ravaged terrain of Urag. Ur shamans serve as advisors to the Warlords and the King. The Ur Kings makes whatever laws he sees fit for his clan. Individuals who have committed an offense are cruelly punished or put to death (see sidebar).

Magic & Religion

The Ur have no gods, 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 fashioned long before the Ur clans settled in Urag. Icons depicting these three-eyed idols are sometimes worn by Ur shamans, and are said to have magical properties. However, the shamans of Urag are generally regarded as charlatans, most seemingly incapable of performing any but the simplest hoodoos and charms. The Ur dispose of their dead by dumping them into a moat or well.

The Arts

Ur have no tradition of music, art, or dance. They force Darkling slaves to play and dance when in the mood for entertainment. Crafts are limited to weapons, tools, and implements; craftsmanship is crude at best. The Ur possess some talent for the making of siege engines such as fire-throwers, war towers, crude battle wagons, and scourges. They also brew alchemical toxins and slag, dumping the remains into streams and lakes.

Language

Ur speak a rude version of the Northron tongue, liberally punctuated with curse words and epithets. Male names are monosyllabic and harsh to the ear, as in Grud, Vrak, Durg, and Grag. Female names are little better, but end in a vowel.

Defenses

A cruel and domineering folk, the Ur clans long ago subjugated the miserable creatures known as Darklings, a wretched race of humanoids who once controlled the region of Urag called the Darklands. Ur employ hordes of these creatures as low-class infantry, and as slave-laborers in their mines and timber-cutting operations. Of more use to the Ur are the Stryx, a race of humanoid avians who sometimes serve the Ur as scouts, spies and messengers. Generally speaking, the Ur regard them as useful, if treacherous and untrustworthy, subordinates.

Commerce

Barter is used extensively for inter-clan dealings, though Ur also know the value of gold and use currency when it is available. Darkling slaves produce most of the tools, weapons, and implements that the Ur require. Ur slave-drivers make sure that they meet their quotas. When not at war, the three Ur clans occasionally trade amongst each other.

Worldview

Since their arrival from the Northlands, the Ur clans have succeeded in ravaging much of Urag. They have hunted many animal species into extinction, killing great numbers of creatures in order to indiscriminately harvest the hides, claws and meat. They have felled entire woodlands for timber and firewood, and have ruthlessly stripped the hills and mountains of valuable ores, leaving behind gaping pits and mounds of toxic slag . Having squandered much of Urag's natural resources, it is believed that the Ur clans must eventually seek to expand into "fresh" territories — perhaps Arim, the Seven Kingdoms, or the Plains of Golarin. In order for such plans to succeed, unification of the three Ur clans would be required — an event feared by many Talislantans.

Ur Settlements

Krag, Vodruk and Grod

The Ur clans have three large settlements: Krag, Vodruk, and Grod. These primitive stone fortresses consist primarily of rude hovels made of earth, cracked stone, and rough-cut timbers. Surrounding each settlement is a ditch filled with raw sewage and crawling with scavenger-slimes, urthrax and other vermin. These places are havens for disease and filth, and contribute much to the pollution of the local environs. Conflicts between the three rulers and their disparate factions are common, and often result in bloodshed.

Crime and Punishment

The Ur have little tolerance for slackers, thieves, and spies. Those who commit such offenses face certain retribution, often of the most grisly sort. There are several forms of corporal punishment commonly practiced by the Ur. The first and most common is imprisonment in a crude spherical cage made of hammered metal, called an iron orb. Victims usually have to squat to fit into these devices, which are intended to be cramped and extremely uncomfortable. Once the victim is inside, the cage is either rolled down the side of a mountain or attached to the tail of a wild beast, such as a behemoth or omnivrax, which is then set free and allowed to run where it will. Many Ur gather around to watch the spectacle, which may be repeated several times, depending upon the severity of the crime and the durability of the offender. Fatalities are not uncommon, though victims who survive five rolls may be considered "rehabilitated" and allowed to go free.

For the most serious offenses the favorite punishment is "trolling". This procedure involves binding the offender hand and foot with iron manacles, then using a chain winch to lower the victim head-first into a moat or pit filled with sewage, stagnant water, and hordes of vermin such as urthrax and alatus. The objective is not to drown the victim, but to repeatedly dunk the offender in and out of the water; in essence, to use the victim as bait for the many vermin and scavengers that live in the moat. The punishment is regarded by the Ur as fine entertainment, and often continues until there is little left of the victim but bones.

Places of Note

Acid Plains

For centuries the Ur have used this place as a dumping ground for waste products derived from their slag furnaces. Crews of Darkling slave laborers, assigned to dump or retrieve wagonloads of toxic wastes, are generally the only humanoid beings who ever enter the Acid Plains. The Plains are largely devoid of life, with the exception of abominations, urthrax and other types of mutated vermin.

The Toxic Hills

Source of the Smoke River, this area was once used for the testing of poisonous alchemical agents, which the Ur hoped to develop for use in warfare. The chance discovery of a substance known as quintoxin led to the inadvertent contamination of the entire highland. The clans evacuated the area post haste, leaving behind several hundred gallons of quintoxin in large, open cauldrons. The status of this virulent substance remains unknown; Darkling slave crews sent into the area have never returned, and the region is considered completely uninhabitable.

The Smoke River

Running south beyond the Toxic Hills, the Smoke River is so polluted that it boils, giving off clouds of noxious steam or smoke. No natural lifeforms can tolerate these waters, though abominations are rumored to dwell in the roiling deeps.

OGRIPHANT



Ogriphants are ponderous quadrupeds native to the land of Urag and the forests and jungles of northern and western Talislanta; a shaggy-haired variety called the wooly ogriphant is known to dwell among the Northern Reaches. In the wild, ogriphants are usually placid, though they can become quite aggressive during the mating season. With their long tusks, horns, and great body mass, these creatures are more than capable of defending themselves against most types of predators.

Ogriphants have been domesticated in several lands, where they are used primarily as burden beasts, to help clear jungle or forest land, and as transportation. In Urag and other places the beasts are trained for use in war and outfitted with plate armor and wooden battle towers. In some places, ogriphants are hunted for their ivory, which brings up to ten gold lumens per pound.

Size: 8'-9' at shoulder, 2,000+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT -7	PER -1
WIL +3	CHA N/A
STR +10	DEX -8
CON +7	SPD -2

Level: 3-6
Attacks/Damage: Tusks: DR 20, Trample: DR 30
Special Abilities: Trunk can be used to grasp objects
Armor: Hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 67

MALAVRAX

The malavrax is a twisted hybrid of malathrope and omnivrax found in Urag and other wilderness regions. Scholars of ancient arcana theorize that the creature is either some Archaen magician's idea of a joke or the result of a deadly experiment in sorcerous hybridization. Whatever their origins, malavrax combine certain of the more extreme attributes of its two forebears. Like malathropes, they are night-black in appearance and possess a sinister intellect and poisonous bite. Like omnivrax, they are most unparticular with regard to their diet and will eat practically anything.

Observers have noted that malavrax are quite deranged and tend to exhibit sudden and extreme mood shifts, ranging from hysteria to rage and black depression. The noted naturalist, Thystram, purported to have witnessed a malavrax devour itself in a spasm of pure spite.

Size: 7-8' in length, 500-600+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT +5	PER +5
WIL -3	CHA -6
STR +6	DEX +3
CON +2	SPD +6

Level: 4-20
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 12 plus poison (CON roll at -2 or victim is too terrified to offer resistance), Claws: DR 12; total of two attacks
Special Abilities: Night vision, immunity to magical influence and control, detect prey by sound and scent (range: 100'+)
Armor: Scales, PR 3
Hit Points: 59

URTHRAX



Urthrax are an insidious species of vermin found throughout the continent of Talislanta, from the Toxic Hills of Urag to the Western Lands and beyond. They are exceptionally prolific, reproducing at an astounding rate; the naturalist, Thystram, estimated that a single female can give birth to as many as two thousand urthrax-spawn in its six-year lifetime.

Urthrax dwell in filth, preferring such places as refuse dumps, cesspools, brackish waters, and graveyards. They subsist on all manner of organic wastes, and are unaffected by most sorts of pollutants and toxins. Protected by a cartilaginous exoskeleton and a noxious odor, urthrax are generally threatened only by larger predators, such as aramatus, skalanx, and kra. The bite of these wretched creatures is believed to cause any number of afflictions, including the Red Death.

Urthrax are common to the sewers of most large Talislantan cities, particularly Aamahd and Zanth, which continue to utilize the ancient sewer system formerly employed by the old Phaedran Dynasty. It is said that the lower levels of this archaic system crawl with untold thousands of these foul creatures, to the number of approximately twenty urthrax for every man, woman, and child living in the two cities.

Size: 3'-4' in length, 1'6" at shoulder, 25-50+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT -9	PER +5
WIL +3	CHA N/A
STR -4	DEX +7
CON +10	SPD +7

Ability Level: 4
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 4, Claws: DR 2
Special Abilities: Emanate vile odor (CON roll or all actions at -5 due to nausea; range: 10'), immune to toxins and poisons, ten percent chance of contracting disease from bite
Armor: Exoskeleton, PR 5
Hit Points: 13

THE OBSIDIAN MOUNTAINS

The glistening black peaks of the Obsidian Mountains form a natural barrier between Urag and Durne of the Seven Kingdoms. A network of underground trails winds its way through this region, some of which are utilized by marauding bands of Satada. Yaksha also prowl the mountains in numbers. But the Obsidian Mountains are perhaps best known as the breeding grounds of a hostile avian folk known as the Stryx.

THE STRYX

An avian race, Stryx would stand over six feet tall if they didn't tend to be hunchbacked or stoop-shouldered. Their angular bodies are covered with dark grey or black feathers, and typical specimens have a wingspan in excess of twenty feet. They have clawed talons, horns, and misshapen features.

ANCESTRY

The Stryx are a mutated species of Aeriad that has degenerated over the course of several thousand years. They are believed to have come to Talislanta long ago, from a distant land.

SOCIETY

Stryx make their homes in caves dug into the sides of sheer cliffs and mountains. Most live in clans that may number as many as sixty adult males, as many adult females, and about half as many young. Males and females mate during certain weeks of the year; at other times they exhibit no interest in each other. Two out of every five hatchlings are stillborn; the rest are as deformed as their parents. The old and infirm are slain to provide food for the other members of the clan. Stryx feed on carrion, and upon creatures weaker than themselves. Despite their unhealthy appearance, they excel at gliding, and can remain aloft for hours without difficulty. Stryx have superior night vision, but see poorly in daylight.

CUSTOMS

Stryx culture is centered around death: the more dead creatures there are, the more the Stryx have to eat. Thus, misfortunes that affect other species — such as war, disease, and death — are regarded as fortuitous by the Stryx. As might be expected, this outlook has won the Stryx few admirers among other Talislantan peoples.



Government

Each Stryx clan has its own chieftain – typically, a male warrior who has shown an ability to locate sufficient carrion to feed the members of his group. When he grows old, or should he fail to obtain adequate supplies of carrion, the chieftain will be challenged by another warrior. The victor earns the right to be chieftain; the loser is offered to the clan for its next meal, illustrating the victorious chieftain's ability to provide food. Stryx chieftains rule their clans by force and resolve all disputes. The punishment for most offenses is death, as is the case for individuals caught trespassing in Stryx territories. Executions are usually festive occasions, with the rest of the clan feasting on the victim immediately afterwards.

Magic & Religion

Stryx Necromancers revere Taryx, the "Scavenger of Souls", a creature purported to be a minion of the entity known as Death. The so-called "Servants of Taryx" consider carrion to be a gift from their dark patron. The dead are served-up as "offerings" from Taryx, and eaten by the rest of the clan. Stryx shamans practice a crude form of necromancy, and perform grisly sacrificial rituals in honor of their morbid god. They possess some capacity for the reading of omens and certain black magics, but generally exhibit little facility in the arcane arts.

The Arts

Preoccupied with scavenging for carrion, Stryx have little appreciation for the arts. Their music is dismal and morbid: dirge-like in tempo, with squawking chants accompanied by the pounding of wooden drums covered with the skins of past victims. Stryxian music is used in necromantic rituals, never for entertainment or enjoyment.

Language

Stryx speak a form of Northron interspersed with harsh, squawking sounds used to convey varying shades of emotion. Stryx favor two-syllable names ending in "yx". For examples: Naryx, Koryx, Yaryx, Zaryx, and Saryx.

Defenses

Tenuous allies of the Ur clans, Stryx sometimes serve the Ur clans as scouts, airborne troops, spies, and messengers. Some say the Stryx associate with the clan armies only because this allows the avians to scavenge battlefields for carrion, which it is their nature to feed upon. In battle, Stryx warriors use spears, pole-hooks and other pole-arms, but lack the manual dexterity required to employ more sophisticated weaponry.

Commerce

The various Stryx clans sometimes trade with each other for weapons, tools, and scavenged food and possessions. Stryx covet shiny objects of all sorts.

Worldview

Stryx-Ur alliances appear to be matters of convenience. The avians exhibit no great loyalty to the Ur, and often switch alliances among the three Ur clans depending upon which is offering the best arrangements. The hated rivals of the Stryx are their fellow avians, the Gryphs of Tamaranth. Some of this animosity may stem from resentment over the fact that the race of Gryphs does not suffer from the numerous afflictions that plague the Stryx themselves.

Life Among the Scavengers

As is true of most scavengers, the Stryx have few friends among those not of their own kind. At best, most civilized folk find scavenging for food of any kind to be an unclean and unpleasant practice. When carrion is the food of choice, the scavenger is often regarded as grotesque, horrible, a carrier of disease and death.

It is the fate of the Stryx and others of their ilk to carry upon their persons the lingering stench of their last meal, which clings to their garments, claws, and feathers, and cannot be easily disguised. The same is true of Stryx cave dwellings, which reek from the rotten flesh that is stored and eaten within. The very sight of carrion is often sufficient to make non-scavengers nauseous; the scent of decomposing flesh, buzzing with flies and hanging off the bone, is virtually guaranteed to do so.

Conversely, the Stryx regard rotting carrion as the choicest food, not unlike the way non-scavengers favor a well-aged cheese or bottle of wine. To the Stryx, the odor of carrion is as appetizing as the scent of a home-cooked meal is to others. The sound of buzzing corpse-flies is like music to their senses; the pale forms of writhing maggots are like a delectable garnish to the main course. Given such differences, it is not surprising that the Stryx do not get on well with other folk, who tend to regard them as ghouls.

The Darklands

The mountainous southern realms of Urag together comprise the region known as the Darklands — a hostile wilderland, long since stripped of much of its natural resources by the Ur. Above ground, erosion by wind and rain has rendered the land barren of vegetation, and unable to support anything but the most persistent varieties of chokeweed, lichen and briars. Far beneath the earth, toiling ceaselessly in the played-out silver and black iron mines or hiding in secret tunnel complexes, are the main inhabitants of this region: the Darklings.

The Darklings

Darklings are short and wiry of build, rarely exceeding four feet in height, with soot-grey skin, large pointed ears, sharp fangs, and distorted features. Most dress in rag loincloths, with scraps of discarded metal and slag serving as rude ornamentation.

Ancestry

Darklings are creatures of subterranean origin whom naturalists believe may be a mutated species of Ferran, or a cross of Ferran and some lower-planar lifeform. Their tribes once controlled the region known as the Darklands, until they were conquered and enslaved by the Ur.

Society

Before being subjugated, most Darklings lived in subterranean cavern-settlements, the largest of which may have accommodated tens of thousands of inhabitants. Using toxic gasses and poisonous liquids, the Ur flushed the Darklings out of their lairs, killing thousands in the process. The survivors were taken by the Ur and brought to their settlements, where the majority are kept in pens or cages and forced to work day and night. Those who escaped capture remained underground, hiding in holes, caves, or whatever shelter was available.

Darklings are prolific and unparticular as regards their mating habits. The average female may give birth to dozens of young during her lifetime, most by different fathers. Darkling young are born without eyes, the latent optical nerves typically developing by the end of their



sixth year. They cling to their mothers until the female casts them off; generally at the first opportunity, after which the young are forced to grope about for food, using their keen senses to survive and avoid predators or large creatures such as the Ur.

Customs

Physically weak, Darklings have learned to be cunning and conniving in order to survive. They have acute senses, including superb night vision, and the ability to sense other life forms by scent. Nearly undetectable in shadow, they are able to hide almost anywhere. The word of a Darkling is meaningless. If given a choice, a Darkling will always lie rather than tell the truth. Darklings see nothing wrong with lying. To the contrary; they regard it as a vital survival skill (see sidebar). Despite their shortcomings it must be said for the race of Darklings that they are durable. They have been known to endure terrible deprivations, hunger, lack of sleep, insults, and abuse, yet they continue their struggle to survive.

The Big Lie

Among the race of Darklings, lying is considered a valuable skill, not unlike the way other folk regard such talents as hunting, metal working, or farming. Lying is a part of all transactions between Darklings, their associates, and their masters; it is viewed as vital to the survival of the species. Liars who exhibit exceptional fluency and believability are held in high regard by their fellow Darklings. With training and practice they may aspire to become an "intermediator" – in essence, a professional liar. Darklings often retain the services of an intermediator to assist them in transactions, or when accused of wrongdoing. In the former instance an intermediator may be hired to lie about how much his or her client's goods are worth in the hope that sub-standard goods can be bartered for things of greater value. In the latter case, an intermediator's services may be required when excuses, alibis, and/or denials are necessary in order to avoid punishment.

The services of an intermediator can cost anywhere from as little as a single copper piece to as much as ten gold lumens, depending upon the type and complexity of the lie. The potential for danger, always present when dealing with the Ur, is also a consideration affecting the cost of an intermediator's services. Since intermediators set their own prices and always lie about the value of their services, prices tend to be on the high side. The best intermediators can lie so well that even their clients soon lose track of what is the truth and what is not. In fact, many Darklings who claim to be intermediators are not intermediators at all, and vice versa.

Government

The Ur now control most of the Darkling population, treating them as slaves. The rest survive in small tribal groups led by their shamans.

Magic & Religion

All Darklings are members of a secret society known as the Shadow Cult. Adherents of the Cult's doctrines revere Sham, the so-called "King of Lies" and patron deity of the Darklings. "Priests" of Sham are in reality thieves, charlatans, or assassins, and rarely possess any but the most limited spell casting abilities. Though the Ur have outlawed all aspects of the Shadow Cult, Darklings continue to practice their beliefs in secret.

The Arts

Darklings consider art in any form a blight upon the senses, but regard lying as a talent to be perfected through long years of practice. Other skills considered worthy of cultivation include sneak-thievery, hoarding, hiding, knife-play, and the tormenting of lesser creatures. Darklings are so accustomed to being abused that they see nothing wrong in abusing others, a practice which they regard as both a form of revenge and as sport. Darklings have no musical tradition, and actually care nothing for this art form. However, their Ur masters insist upon music at their feasts, and so the Darklings must play. The "music" produced at such occasions consists of loud pounding on iron kettles, gongs, and such drums as can be acquired from the Stryx or other races, and random notes produced on such crude instruments as squawk-horns, skreedle-pipes, and tube-horns. It is said to be quite awful to hear.

Language

Darklings speak a crude version of the Northron tongue. Most Darkling names are comprised of a single syllable, either beginning or ending with a sibilant, whispered sound. For example: Shaz, Zaas, Yash, Zhaan, and Shiz.

Defenses

The Ur herd Darklings together, arm them with crude weaponry, and force them to serve as unskilled

infantry. Aside from this, Darklings have no defenses or armies of their own.

Commerce

Darklings are virtual slaves of the Ur, who force them to labor in their mines and timber-cutting operations. They receive no pay for their services, but are "rewarded" with gruel and wretched cages in which to live. Darklings tribes that live outside the jurisdiction of the Ur trade tools, weapons, and bits of precious metal or semi-precious gems - when they are not preoccupied with stealing from each other.

Worldview

The fate of the Darkling race is, for the most part, in the hands of the Ur. Thousands die each year in skirmishes, in the mines, or simply from abuse and malnutrition. The Darklings themselves have no friends or allies.

Xanadas

Xanadas is an isolated region located high amidst the towering peaks of the Opal Mountains. Like the lands that lay to its north, this mountainous land is covered year 'round with deep layers of snow and ice. Atop the highest mountain in the known world, called Mt. Mandu, stands an ancient edifice known as the Temple of the Seven Moons. Here, where even the dreaded Ice Giants will not go, dwell the fabled Chroniclers of Xanadas.

The Chroniclers

The Chroniclers of Xanadas are ancient beyond reckoning, their slender forms stooped with age. Their golden skin is wrinkled, their long hair and beards gone white; still, their almond-shaped, golden eyes remain bright. Customary attire includes silver and black robes, and long cloaks and caps decorated with arcane symbols.

Ancestry

The last survivors of an ancient and secret order of mystics, the Chroniclers are believed to have resided in the Temple of the Seven Moons for untold thousands of years. It is said that they were followers of a great seer and mystic named Xanadas, who disappeared sometime before the coming of The Great Disaster, and whose tenets they still follow.

Society

Self-appointed recorders of Talislantan history, the Chroniclers observe and record phenomena of all sorts: the positions of the stars and planets, the delicate fluxes of time and space, the emergence and disappearance of plant and animal species, and so forth.



Seated on pedestals of lavender stone, they gaze into crystals of polished blue diamond, monitoring and noting the activities of the continent's peoples. Every event of note is recorded in massive leather-bound tomes. When filled with information, these books are stored in great underground vaults. There are said to be only twelve Chroniclers at Xanadas, all of them old beyond reckoning.

Customs

The Chroniclers are said to welcome visitors, whom they question at length in order to supplement or verify their observations. It is their custom to allow any who come here to study, and on occasion, some do. Otherwise, life in the Temple continues as it did when Xanadas was still there, for the Chroniclers believe that Xanadas will one day return, as he prophesied (see sidebar).

Government

The Chroniclers have had no leader since Xanadas departed. However, Xanadas provided his followers with a strict set of laws and dictums, which he instructed them to carry on in his absence. These include: abstinence from intoxicants, diligence by night and day, modesty in dress and mien, neatness, legibility of transcripts, and unshakable neutrality as regards all outside influences. For the most part the Chroniclers have remained true to the wishes of their founder, though they have been known to indulge in a tipple of wine from time to time, strictly to "soothe the nerves and cleanse the blood".

The Legend of Xanadas

According to legend, many centuries ago a great mystic named Xanadas was summoned by Death to meet his inevitable end. His followers grieved upon hearing of their master's imminent demise, but the sage bade them not to worry, and said that he would visit with the gods for a time, after which he pledged to return to the material plane and relate the secrets of the afterlife to all who waited for him.

Though many scholars think the legend to be a bit far fetched, others point out that the tale is supported by certain odd traditions observed among the Chroniclers. These include the leaving of a light in each of the Temple's windows by night, the custom of setting one extra place at all meals, and a few other minor eccentricities. When asked the significance of such observances, the Chroniclers merely shrug and cast their eyes heavenward.

Magic & Religion

The Chroniclers revere the memory of their founder, Xanadas, as a being of near-deific wisdom. They are adept in many forms of magic, by means of which they are purported to have extended their lifespans almost indefinitely.

The Arts

Scholars by profession, the Chroniclers have an avid appreciation of the artistic and musical traditions of other peoples, which they study and record for posterity. However, the task of chronicling leaves them little time to indulge in such pastimes themselves.

Language

The Chroniclers are fluent in many languages, including Quan, High Talislan, and old Archaen. The twelve are named after their founder, and are called Xantheus, Xanthar, Xantil, Xanthir, Xandros, Xanademos, Xanpelos, Xanmoro, Xandavius, Xanwar, Xanmilos, and Xanfalir.

Defenses

While outsiders who visit the temple seeking knowledge and enlightenment are treated with hospitality, those who come seeking personal gain may find the Chroniclers to be less than personable hosts. It is said that the Chroniclers have access to cogent magics, which they can employ at need to defend themselves and the Temple.

Commerce

The Chroniclers perform their duties strictly through a sense of duty, and have never sought compensation. Their needs are said to be provided for by enchanted vessels, which supply an endless source of food and drink.

Worldview

Few Talislantans are aware of the existence of the Chroniclers. Most who have heard of these folk regard them as little more than the stuff of legends, though a few know the truth. As specified by Xanadas, the Chroniclers remain neutral as pertains to all outside influences.

FROSTWERE

Frostweres are a species of werebeast native to Xanadas and the cold Northern Reaches of Talislanta. In many respects they resemble their relatives, though their hide is white, enabling them to blend into their snowy surroundings. Prowling the glacial wastes of Narandu and the vast snowfields of L'Haan by night, frostweres hunt for snowmanes, tundra lopers, and other warm-blooded prey. They usually travel in pairs, though when the female is in estrus, the male will hunt alone. When on the hunt, the creatures emit a frightful howl that can be heard for miles in all directions. Frostweres will readily attack humanoids in lieu of other prey, but they otherwise prefer to keep their distance from civilized locales.



Size: 6'6"-7', 290-400+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT -5	PER +3
WIL +6	CHA N/A
STR +5	DEX +2
CON +9	SPD +2

Level: 5-15
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 8, Claws: DR 13
Special Abilities: Keen hearing, track prey by scent at Ability Level +PER, night vision
Armor: Shaggy hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 49



An Araq and his duadir mount hunt for prey.



THE WILDERLANDS

THE WILDERLANDS ROAD

An ancient thoroughfare that dates back to the Archaen Age, the Wilderlands Road runs from eastern edge of the Seven Kingdoms across the Borderlands and beyond, to the gates of the Kang Empire. Though commendably long, the roadway is neither safe nor particularly reliable. In the spring, heavy rains sometimes render sections of the road useless for weeks on end. During less-rainy times of the year the highway is heavily traveled by Djaffir merchant caravans, Aamanian pilgrims, massive land arks from the Desert Kingdoms, and sometimes Dracartan duneships. Regardless of the time of year, the presence of bandit gangs and predatory beasts makes passage along the Wilderness Road in anything less than a large, well-armed group a foolhardy, and possibly suicidal, endeavor.

THE ABERRANT FOREST

To the south of the Borderlands lies the Aberrant Forest, a woodland region rendered weird and grotesque by a magical mishap of unparalleled proportions. All manner of rare and exotic vegetation can be found in this place, though nothing that grows or lives here is as nature intended it to be. The plants and trees are gnarled and twisted into strange forms. Murky streams flow uphill, and the very ground seems at times to undulate as if alive. From the underbrush, animate tendrils of tanglewood reach out to ensnare the incautious traveler, hedgerows of serpentine thornwood making swift passage through these woodlands an implausible stratagem. Less easily identifiable types of flora and fauna make their presence known by biting, tripping, speaking in tongues, or through even more unusual methods. Among the many anomalies found in the Aberrant Forest are two races of plant-like humanoids: the Verdir, and the Arborin.

THE VERDIR

Verdir are tall and somewhat gangly in appearance, and have skin the color and texture of new grass. An elongated cranium decorated with a mane of yellow-green leaves is typical of members of this unusual species. Verdir wear loincloths of woven grass, with bracelets and necklaces of woven vines. The females augment this costume with garlands of meadow blossoms in a variety of hues.

ANCESTRY

The Verdir are believed to be related to the Green Men of the Dark Coast, though their people may have been "mutated" or altered in some respects by The Great Disaster or some other phenomenon.

Society

Sentient plant-folk, the Verdir tribes live in villages made of living plants, set atop the giant flowering lily-pads that grow in the lakes and ponds of this region. They make useful tools and implements from woven vines, leaves, gourds, and roots, and have domesticated a species of water-bug known as cibants, which they employ as steeds to carry them to and from their floating settlements. Verdir subsist on sunlight, rainwater, and



minerals derived from certain plants, roots, and tubers. The ingredients are mixed with water to form a paste that is served either as a type of porridge, a liquid collation, or — when dried in the suns — as wafers. Verdir do not use fire, which terrifies them.

Verdir reproduce via a strange combination of humanoid and plant activity, involving the transfer of pollen from male to female. The process is apparently pleasurable, as Verdir spend much time either preparing to mate or actually participating in the act. Dedicated pleasure seekers, male and female Verdir mate often, and prefer variety in their choice of partners. Verdir young begin life as seeds, growing together in a pod-like protuberance that forms on the back of the impregnated female. When the pod is approximately a foot in length it is gently removed, planted in the soil, and watered regularly for a period of seven days. At the end of this time a dozen or more young "seedlings" emerge from the soil. They remain rooted for another two weeks, feeding on sunlight and water and growing like weeds. At the end of this time the young uproot themselves and begin to walk about. Vestigial root fibers on the feet disappear after a few days.

Customs

Verdir are hedonists who take their pleasure in the here and now. They love music, art, and romantic conclaves, and engage in these favored pursuits as often as possible. Verdir seem to have a feast or "lustral rite" for every occasion, from the blossoming of a favored flower to the various positions of the twin suns, and visitors are always invited to take part. It is the custom of these folk to partake in various intoxicating plant-mixtures, considered an important preparation for their traditional fertility and nature rituals. Most popular is the substance known as sashesh, a powerful hallucinogen derived from a type of local fungi, which the Verdir regard as sacred. Verdir foragers regularly venture into the Wild Wood in order to obtain quantities of this fungi, despite the dangers.

Magic & Religion

Verdir have no formal religion, though they recognize a being known as "the Kagan" as their Great Creator. They know little else about this individual except the general location of his abode, yet dedicate lustral rituals and erect images in his name on the off-chance that he may indeed be some sort of deity. The Verdir figure that the practice is harmless enough, and may well offer benefits in the afterlife, if there is such a thing. Verdir "plant" their dead, returning them to the soil from which they sprang.

The Arts

As part of their rituals Verdir paint themselves with multi-hued pollens and plant-dyes, with wildly colored results. They also enjoy painting flowers and leaves in different colors, weaving necklaces and garlands, and creating topiary "sculptures" in various unusual, abstract shapes. Verdir music is quiet, emotional, and exquisitely delicate. Bellflowers, wind chimes, and grass flutes are used to create languid melodies that are interwoven in complex harmonic tapestries.

Language

Verdir speak the secret language of plants. Their names are long, colorful, and flowery. For example: Brilliant Blue Sun Blossom, Seductive-Scented Meadow Flower, and Blush-Red Luminous Lake Petal.

Government

Each settlement is governed by an elder known as the Dao, who is regarded as a great and wise sage. The Dao makes all decisions of importance to the

settlement, such as when to hold various lustral rites, what to serve at these celebrations, and when to go forth and collect sashesh. The Verdir follow his commands without question.

Defenses

Verdir have no weapons or armies, and virtually no talents as warriors. The waters surrounding the Verdir settlements provide sufficient protection from most predators, in particular the hostile Arborin tribes and a local monster known as the Ravant, which is greatly feared. As Verdir are plants rather than beings of flesh and blood, they are not bothered by carnivores, though herbivorous creatures will sometimes graze on sleeping Verdir. When faced with danger Verdir either flee or attempt to blend into the foliage. Given the natural coloration of these folk, the latter form of defense can be quite effective.



Commerce

The concept of currency or barter appears to have no meaning to the Verdir, who give freely and ask nothing but friendship in return.

Worldview

The Verdir are a peaceful folk who pose no threat to other peoples. They sometimes socialize with the inhabitants of other Verdir settlements, but otherwise have no formal relations with outsiders. A rival race of plant-folk, the Arborin, are hostile towards the Verdir.

Places of Note

The Myrk

The Myrk is an eerie swampland located in the western part of the Aberrant Forest. Unpleasant creatures such as giant alatus and skalanx reside in the brackish waters of the Myrk, and the fetid smell of dead and decaying vegetation hangs heavy in the air. An island, overgrown with masses of swamp-trees and vines, sits at the center of the Myrk.

The Wild Wood

This woodland region is notable for the large, misshapen, and mainly hostile varieties of flora that grow here. Of particular concern is the Ravant, a malefic and terrifying monster over ten feet tall with metallic claws and spines. It is said to be indestructible, and is greatly feared by both the local Verdir and Arborin tribes.

Arborin

The Arborin are a race of sentient, tree-dwelling plant creatures native to the Aberrant Forest. Hostile plant-folk who readily attack creatures that stray into their territorial groves, Arborin build no permanent settlements and revere no god. They subsist on stumpwater and humus, and are a quarrelsome and bitter lot. When immobile, Arborin are able to blend into their surroundings, their gnarled forms being practically indistinguishable from the limbs of the trees in which they dwell.

Arborin are known to raid Verdir settlements for their females and for sashesh, a potent hallucinogen. Their tribes consider themselves the masters of the Aberrant Forest but fear the Ravant, a monstrous creature that dwells in the nearby wood.

In combat, Arborin warriors wield crude wooden clubs and blowguns that fire missiles made from thorns. These darts are tipped with a vegetable toxin that induces drowsiness in most types of living creatures. Once drugged, victims are captured in nets of woven vines, hung from the treetops, and left to die - a warning to others who would venture into Arborin territories.

Size: 6'6"-7', 160-180 lbs.

Attributes:

INT -1	PER +1
WIL 0	CHA -4
STR +1	DEX +2
CON 0	SPD -1

Ability Level: 5-10

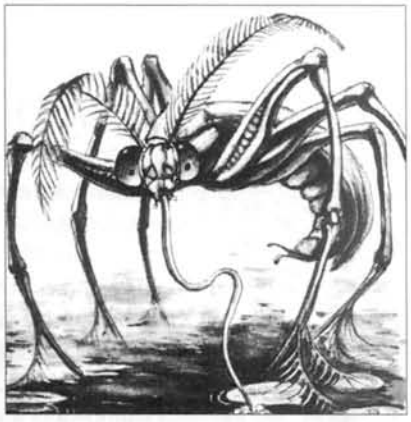
Attacks/Damage: Blowgun dart: DR 1 + Level 5 poison (poison stuns for 3 rounds unless CON roll is made at minus 5); Club: DR 7

Special Abilities: Blend into treetops for Stealth of 10 when immobile

Armor: Fibrous bark, PR 3

Hit Points: 22

CIBANT



Cibants are a species of tall, stick-like insects native to the Aberrant Forest. Normally placid by nature, cibants spend most of their time grazing on the nectar of wild blossoms and polyp plants. The Verdir tribes utilize Cibants as steeds, with mixed results. The creatures are swift runners and have appendages that enable them to walk upon the surface of lakes and ponds, like giant water bugs. However, cibants are stubborn and obstinate, and they must often be goaded or cajoled into performing even the simplest tasks. Even worse, it is most unwise to disturb a sleeping cibant. If awakened abruptly, these creatures swell to twice their normal size, turn bright red, and attack anything within range, thrashing with their legs and long, sinuous tongue.

Size: 7' long, 6' at shoulder; 160+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -14	PER +6
WIL +8	CHA N/A
STR +1	DEX +2
CON -1	SPD +5*

*SPD +4 over water

Ability Level: 4-6

Attacks/Damage: Normally none (see Special Abilities)

Special Abilities: Walk on water, expand in size if angered (DR 10 per round to anything within reach, lasting for four rounds)

Armor: None

Hit Points: 15

RAVANT

The Ravant is a nightmarish monster that some say was created by the Kagan, a sorcerer of reclusive and mysterious habits who makes his home in the depths of the Aberrant Forest. The Ravant is the personification of the destructive forces of nature; its sole purpose is to destroy. Its claws are capable of slicing through metal armor with ease. Its armored visage is adorned with spikes and sharp protrusions; its tail, an eyeless serpent whose bite means death.

The Ravant is believed to be virtually indestructible, though due to its heavily armored exoskeleton the monster cannot stay afloat in water; despite the presence of bat-like wings, the monster is too heavy to fly.

Size: 12', 2,000 lbs.

Attributes:

INT -5*	PER +5
WIL +10	CHA -10
STR +14	DEX -5
CON +15	SPD +1

*INT -10 when angered

Ability Level: 40

Attacks/Damage: Bite or Claws: DR 20, Tail: DR 4 +Level 25 poison.

Special Abilities: Virtually indestructible; regenerate (10 points of damage per round), tireless, immune to poisons, immune to magical or non-magical control or influence, magic resistance (+10 on all resistance rolls).

Armor: Exoskeletal plates, PR 12

Hit Points: 500



THE BORDERLANDS

The Borderlands lay to the east of the Seven Kingdoms, in the Wilderlands of Zaran. These territories consist of the Barrens, the western Wilderlands, and the Seven Kingdoms' border outposts of Akmir, Ikarthis, and Karfan

THE BARRENS

The Barrens is a region of shifting deserts, rocky hills, salt flats, and wide stretches of scrub plains. Herds of land lizards, valued throughout Talislanta as pack and burden beasts, roam the 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. The craggy hills of this region are riddled with underground passageways, many the work of earth demons. Other caves serve as lairs for the Enim, a giant race of cannibalistic devils who regard Talislantans as fine eating.

The only humanoid people indigenous to this hostile environment are the Danelek, hardy tribesfolk who live among the great salt flats and oases of the Barrens.

THE DANELEK

The Danelek have glossy black skin, and stark white hair, which is worn in long dreadlocks. They dress in loincloths and sandals, their warriors wearing ornaments such as feathers, ear and neck rings, bones, stripes of paint, animal claws, and the fingers of slain victims.

Ancestry

Some say the Danelek are a lost tribe of Dracartans who passed through the Plaguelands en route to the western Wilderlands, and were changed in mind and body.

Society

The Danelek tribes roam the Barrens region of the Borderlands, hunting for land lizards and wild game. They also mine the salt flats for rock-hard salt crystals, which the tribes trade to other peoples. A Danelek tribe may consist of twenty-to-forty families, all living together in huts fashioned from blocks of salt. Danelek society is governed by a caste system, at the top of which are the Warriors. Shamans are next, followed by Hunters and Traders.

Danelek are monogamous. Marriage between members of different castes is taboo, and will result in expulsion from the tribe. Unblooded warriors cannot hope to marry, as no self-respecting Danelek female would wed one without caste status. Danelek children are expected to work in the salt mines or as gatherers as soon as they are old enough to walk.

Customs

The Danelek are a primitive people of harsh and occasionally cruel habits. Travelers passing through the Barrens may be amused by the fact that the Danelek perspire through their tongues as well as their pores. Showing such amusement is ill-advised, as the Danelek do not take lightly to being ridiculed. Danelek warriors are protective of their tribe's territories, and will attack



Salt of the Earth

Among the Danelek tribes of the Wilderness of Zaran, salt is an important commodity. Blocks of salt are used in the construction of Danelek abodes. In powdered form, salt is used to preserve durge and land lizard meat. This protects the meat from spoiling, allowing the tribes to store food for extended periods of time.

Salt crystals, which the Danelek say are created when black lightning strikes the salt flats, are used both as a form currency and as barter. Brilliant and durable as gemstones, salt crystals are valued according to their hardness and clarity. Danelek sometimes cut and polish their crystals in order to enhance their worth and beauty.

The importance of this substance is such that the Danelek zealously guard their salt mines from rival tribes and outsiders. Clans have been known to go to war over disputes regarding the rights to a particularly rich salt mine, and many an unsuspecting traveler has been killed for daring to trespass through salt flats claimed by one or more of the local Danelek tribes.

small caravans or groups of travelers who stop to drink from their oases without permission. Stealth, ambush or a stab in the back are all permissible under their code of conduct.

Government

Although of a single culture, the Danelek are sharply divided into tribal units centered around hereditary family leaders known as the Naz. Each Naz is the undisputed leader of his or her tribe; all others are subservient. The Naz is guided by several traditional beliefs held as indisputable by the Danelek: that their people own the local salt flats and oases, and that the Danelek are permitted to kill those who trespass into their territories or steal water.

Magic & Religion

Danelek worship the Creator, who is said to have given their people salt, spring rains, and the oases: the necessities of survival in this harsh land. Danelek shamans are skilled in the healing arts, and are said to have some small talent for divining the location of water and salt crystals. However, few have actual spell-casting abilities. Danelek preserve the bodies of their dead with salt and bury them deep in underground ossuariums.

The Arts

Danelek warriors carve notches into the handles of their war-axes to represent the number of victims they have killed; this is basically the extent of "art" among the Danelek, most of whom are too hard-pressed by the demands of their environment to devote their energy to purely aesthetic pastimes. However, some tribes are said to practice a form of ritual dance, eerie to outsiders as the dancers perform in complete silence.

Language

Most Danelek are able to converse both in Low Talislan and Sign. The nomenclature of the Danelek uses three-syllable, hyphenated names that always end in the suffix, "Lek". For example: Na-ta-Lek, Ka-na-Lek, Ma-na-Lek, and Ja-ma-Lek. The oral history of each Danelek tribe is kept by its Naz, who passes the stories down from one generation to the next.

Defenses

Danelek villages have no fortifications. In the event of an attack, gongs are sounded, alerting the tribe's warriors of danger. Danelek are skilled at guerilla-type tactics, and can survive in desert regions for extended periods without difficulty. They make excellent Wilderlands scouts and guides.

Commerce

Because they live in such a barren land, Danelek are largely dependent on trade for food, goods, and modern implements and weaponry. For these they trade land and mangonel lizards herded from the salt flats, salt crystals, gemstones, and rock urchins gathered from caverns in the hills. Food, goods and weapons are also acquired by theft or as spoils of combat. Among the Danelek tribes, salt crystals are also used as currency (see sidebar).

Worldview

Danelek tend to prefer the company of their own kind, and are generally distrustful of strangers. Their tribes have trade relations with some of the Orgovians, Djaffir, and even the Za, but rarely associate with other folk. The Danelek practice of ambushing travelers who stop at their oases has not endeared them to many other Talislantans.

AKMIR

The fortified outpost of Akmir stands at a crossroads between the citystates of Maruk and Hadj, and serves as a way-station for travelers headed to and from the Desert Kingdoms, the Seven Kingdoms, and beyond. It is also frequented by troupes of Bodor musicians, Orgovian traders, Rahastran cartomancers, Aamanian pilgrims, Danelek salt miners, and even stranger sorts, such as Xambrian wizard hunters. Djaffir merchant caravans sometimes stop at Akmir, though they generally prefer richer locales in which to ply their trade.

Akmir is manned by a contingent of Borderlands Legionaires, hard-bitten mercenaries enlisted from across the continent. Most were exiles, renegades, expatriates, or career soldiers before they came here. Inside the fortress walls are stables, barracks for the outpost's defenders, a trading post, and an inn with a large common room where meals are served. The prices are steep and the accommodations attractive only by comparison with the alternative: sleeping outside the walls, in the wilds.

IKARTHIS

The walled fortress of Ikarthis is perhaps the only visible sign of demarcation between the far western territories of the Borderlands and the far eastern edge of Kasmir; there is nothing else here but featureless desert. Ikarthis is regarded as the Seven Kingdoms' last line of defense against invasion from the east, and a sizeable contingent of Thralls, Blue Aeriad, and Cymrilian troops is stationed here at all times. Of the three Borderlands outposts it is the largest, the most heavily fortified, and the best-maintained.

Ikarthis has a small marketplace where goods from the Seven Kingdoms are sold to foreign merchants and travelers; a trading post, a Kasmiran moneylender and money-changer, stables, and a large inn of reasonable quality. Its military facilities include separate barracks complexes for Thralls, Cymrilians, and Aeriad, and a windship port large enough to hold on windship-of-war or two smaller vessels.

KARFAN

A small walled fortress maintained by the Seven Kingdoms, Karfan is located near the terminus of a bridge that spans the Dead River canyon. Like Akmir it is manned by mercenary warriors from many lands, most of whom have shadowy pasts. Djaffir merchant caravans almost never bother to come to Karfan, preferring to take the Wilderlands Road straight to the Seven Kingdoms. Small but rugged bands of Orgovian traders fill the niche left by the Djaffir's absence, carrying parcels of goods on the backs of their lopers.

Karfan has a trading post, stables, barracks, and an ancient inn of Phaedran-era construction and disreputable quality. Visitors to the outpost include Sindaran collectors, Rahastran cartomancers, and the occasional bounty hunter. Bands of hostile Satada sometimes emerge from hidden tunnels to prey upon parties headed to and from Karfan.

THE DISPLACED PEOPLES

Several different peoples inhabit the vast territories of the Wilderlands. Most are descended from refugees who survived The Great Disaster, their homelands destroyed and long ago fallen into ruin. Some are exiles from the Kang Empire or other lands. Others are either members of conquered races or hybrids created by Archaen sorcerers and later abandoned. The most common of these displaced peoples are described in the following sections.

THE BODOR

An amber-skinned people, the Bodor are short, round faced, and somewhat portly of build. Their choice of costume is eccentric, and consists of a loose-fitting smock, blousey pantaloons, chain-loop earrings and bracelets of lacquered metal.

ANCESTRY

The Bodor are descended from a race of neomorphs created by the ancient Archaens, but abandoned after The Great Disaster. Since that time their people have had no permanent home, but have traveled throughout Talislanta.

SOCIETY

Bodor are musicians of consummate skill. Their people travel in musical troupes of up to a dozen individuals, seldom staying in one place for any great length of time. A troupe will always have one or more wagons, in which they carry their young and all their possessions. Bodor are promiscuous during their early adulthood, though couples usually settle down after marriage. Bodor parents are loving and attentive, singing their children to sleep with beautiful lullabies.

Soundsight & the Color of Language

"During the course of my travels through the Wilderlands it was my good fortune to spend some time in the company of a troupe of Bodor musicians. I found them to be a pleasant and easy-going folk who are partial to good food and drink, playing far into the night, and sleeping late into the day. In short, we had much in common, and so got along famously. While with the troupe I learned much about the uncanny talent possessed by all Bodor, called soundsight. This ability allows Bodor to see sound as shapes and colors, and is an integral part of their music and everyday lives.

According to the Bodor, all sound is comprised of color, intensity, shape, and texture. In musical terms, the use of soundsight enables Bodor musicians to play with perfect pitch, and in perfect time. Their visual connection with the music allows Bodor instrumentalists to develop superior tone, and to match or blend tonal colors with great accuracy and subtlety.

From my traveling companions I also learned that soundsight also has certain non-musical applications. Because language is primarily sound, it too can be seen by the Bodor, who claim that every language or dialect has its own color and texture. All voices are likewise unique, no two looking exactly alike. Simply by watching an individual speak, Bodor can often determine what part of Talislanta the speaker is from, the speaker's emotional state, and even whether or not the speaker is telling the truth. Bodor say that the most colorful Talislantan languages are those spoken by the Thaecians, Sarista, and the Zandir. The language of plants, which is spoken by the Green Men, is said resemble a garden in bloom. Bodor especially favor the spell-songs of the Sawila, which they say are intricate, complex, and beautiful beyond compare. Conversely, the least colorful speech is that of the Aamanians, which the Bodor say is bland and utterly devoid of interest.

Children are raised on the road; they study music under one or both of their parents, and practice their instruments for hours each day. All Bodor possess the uncanny ability known as sound-sight, which enables them to see sounds as a series of colors (see sidebar).

Customs

Bodor tend to be quiet and soft spoken off stage, but are more animated when performing. They tend to be clannish, but can be outgoing when performing for appreciative audiences. As Bodor have few other talents and are averse to manual labor, they are sometimes considered lazy by other Talislantans.

Government

All Bodor troupes have a leader, or Maestro, who books all engagements, makes travel arrangements, purchases supplies, and contracts mercenary guards or guides as needed. The Maestro also conducts the troupe in performance, a position requiring the most refined sense of sound-sight of all the troupe. In musical terms, Bodorian Virtuosos, or master musicians, may command as much or even more respect than a Maestro. Still, it is the Maestro who resolves all disputes, most of which arise over differing interpretations of the various musical pieces in the troupe's repertoire, or a clash of creative egos.

Magic & Religion

Bodor believe in the entity called Creator, whom they regard as an aural, rather than tangible, presence. They envision their patron deity as the first and greatest of all magicians, who composed the music of the spheres. When a Bodor dies, he or she is buried in a wordless ceremony, while the remainder of the troupe plays a traditional funeral ode over the gravesite.

The Arts

The Bodor are the most accomplished musicians in Talislanta. Their favorite instruments include the tambour, glass flute, glass bells, the intricate spiralhorn, and the four-man bellows-pipes. Bodorian music is intricate and complex, and requires exceptional virtuosity. Bodor practice no other arts, though some have a talent for making or repairing musical instruments.

Language

Most Bodor speak High and Low Talislan. The former is used when negotiating contracts and engagements with prospective employers, while the latter is employed when speaking to common folk. Among their own people, Bodor converse by means of a musical language called Bodorian, which requires no words to convey meaning. Common Bodorian names include Boda, Salo, Dore, Mifa, Sola, and Tido.

Defenses

Bodor possess little aptitude for combat. When they must travel through dangerous territories Bodor often hire an armed escort of mercenaries to protect them. These arrangements are often negotiated as part of the troupe's performance contract, along with expenses for travel, food, and/or lodging.

Commerce

Bodor generally prefer to work for gold and silver lumens, though they may also accept such things as accommodations, meals, and travel arrangements in exchange for their services. The troupe's Maestro takes an additional percentage from each of the other performers to cover travel, lodging, and other expenses.

Worldview

Bodor are strict neutrals who have ties with no other races or nations. Their traveling troupes can be encountered throughout the Wilderlands, and in such lands as Zandu, Faradun, the Seven Kingdoms, Carantheum, and the Kang Empire.

The Orgovians

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.

Ancestry

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 now roam the Wilderlands of Zaran and surrounding regions, making their living as traders.

Society

Orgovians are 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. Males and females marry in a brief ceremony that involves the exchange of gifts, symbolizing a relationship of mutual trust. 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.

Customs

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 (see sidebar). They tend to be suspicious of civilized folk, whose ways the Orgovians neither fully understand nor trust.

Government

Since the fall of their old kingdom, Orgovians have been suspicious of all governments and institutions.



The Art of the Deal

"Merchants and entrepreneurs who plan to have dealings with the Orgovians would do well to keep several facts in mind. First and foremost: in all dealings with Orgovians, the most important factor is the appearance of fairness. Until proven otherwise, foreigners are regarded as potential thieves, assassins, or worse. It is the custom among the Orgovians to exchange gifts before entering into trade negotiations of any sort. Be prepared to do so, and do not stint in your offering - your generosity and overall trustworthiness will be judged on the basis of its value. Bear the added cost of these gifts without complaint; the price of the offering is deductible as a business expense, and is well worth the investment in any case.

By all means do not offer coins to an Orgovian, either in payment for goods or as a gift . These people use barter exclusively in all transactions, so remember to bring other goods to trade. Fine fabrics, jewelry, rare spices, and ornate Zandir blades are highly valued by Orgovians. Trinkets and worthless brumagem are not, and may be regarded as a sign of bad faith. If coins are all you have, you might try to hammer them flat and barter them as precious metals, allowing the Orgovian to determine their worth by weight rather than denomination (using the phrase, "These are not coins", may also be helpful).

Should your gift or offering fail to meet with the Orgovians' approval, you may put aside all thoughts of trades or transactions. Instead, your primary concern now becomes one of survival. Bow politely, say your farewells, make whatever excuses you wish, but leave the area without delay. For once you have curried an Orgovian's disfavor or distrust, you will be regarded as an enemy. Should you argue or haggle at this point, the Orgovians may perceive that you are trying to cheat them, and elect to do violence upon your person. Such difficulties, while not always inevitable, occur with some frequency. This may go far to explain why many merchants prefer to deal with the Djaffir, who – though conniving in their own right – are at least more placid of temperament than Orgovians.

Their bands have no leaders; instead, decisions are made by majority rule. The band may elect to expel any member who fails to adhere to accepted customs or practices, or who commits an act of violence toward a fellow Orgovian.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

Orgovians have no musical tradition, and have little time to devote to artistic endeavors. However, in order to pass the time while riding on their steeds, Orgovians create intricately tooled leather items such as belts, bracers, and vests. These goods are superbly crafted, and are highly valued by the Djaffir and other tribes.

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).

Defenses

Orgovians rely on the speed of their mounts and pay close attention to their surroundings in order to avoid potential trouble. If faced with no recourse, or if offended in some manner, a band will attack en masse. In such cases Orgovians exhibit great ferocity, and should not be taken lightly. The traders carry fierce-looking prod-hooks and star-throwers to defend themselves against thieves and brigands. Their steeds, called lopers, will also fight if threatened and are quite vicious.

Commerce

Orgovian clans travel far and wide, and have access to goods and commodities from many distant lands and strange places. They are canny traders, and have a knack for obtaining rare merchandise that may be difficult to find elsewhere. Only by dealing in unusual and uncommon wares are Orgovians able to compete with the Djaffir merchant tribes, whose goods are generally of a more common and widely marketable sort.

Worldview

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 Djaffir, 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.



The Rahastrans

The Rahastrans are a tall and dark-skinned folk who carry about them an air of mystery and magic. The wear cloaks, gloves and long coats of blue fustian, and pendants of carved amethyst. Every Rahastran carries a deck of enchanted cards known as the Zodar.

Ancestry

The Rahastrans are the direct descendents of a sect of cartomancers who once served the rulers of the ancient kingdom of Phandril. According to their legends, their people were banished after a Rahastran displeased the ruler of Phandril by giving an unfavorable reading regarding the future of the kingdom (the reading turned out to be accurate, and Phandril was destroyed during The Great Disaster). Since that time Rahastrans have been wanderers, who give their allegiance to no government.

Society

Rahastrans are traveling seers who wander from place to place, earning a living as fortune tellers or gamblers. It is the custom of these individuals to trust to the luck of the Zodar, an archaic and magical game employing a deck of twenty cards, each marked with a different arcane symbol. While Zodar is often thought of as a game of chance, the cards are most often used to divine the future, or to reveal a person's deepest thoughts and desires. In addition to supplying a livelihood, the Zodar guides virtually every aspect of a Rahastran's life on a day-to-day basis. It is said that no Rahastran would ever make an important decision without first consulting the cards and reading the portents, nor would he or she take any action that the cards indicate to be unwise.

Rahastrans tend to be loners; there are no bands or tribes of Rahastrans, nor do they have any homeland. Some Talislantan scholars believe that there may be no more than a few hundred Rahastrans extant on the continent, if that.

Rahastrans do not marry, though on rare occasions they may indulge in romantic affairs or dalliances – if it is in the cards. Should the pairing of a Rahastran and a mate of any other race result in pregnancy, the child will always be a Rahastran, both in appearance and in spirit. Unwilling to abandon the call of the Zodar, Rahastrans leave their offspring in the care of others and continue on their way. Should the child one day decide to seek out his or her Rahastran parent, the Rahastran will agree to teach the young one the secrets and traditions of the Zodar.

Customs

To the Rahastrans, life is an intricate game of chance. Most tend to be loners, though some are able to tolerate the company of a few trusted companions, at least for a time. Because they are able to predict the future, Rahastrans are regarded with mixed emotions by other Talislantans, who are fascinated with the Zodar, yet fearful of the secrets that the cards may reveal.

Magic & Religion

For Rahastrans the Zodar is religion, magic, art, and craft. They turn to the cards for spiritual guidance, and ascribe sentient virtues to their cards, which they claim are imbued with divinatory powers by the higher spirits. Able to foresee the means of their death in the cards, Rahastrans often prepare a will indicating how their possessions are to be divided among their chosen

Fate in the Cards

"The ability to foresee the coming of unfortunate or tragic events by means of the Zodar is a burden carried by all Rahastrans, who are viewed by many Talislantans as harbingers of doom and ill fortune. Often shunned as loners and outsiders, it is not surprising that many Rahastrans become moody, sombre, and withdrawn. So it is that the majority of these people rarely remain in one place for long, preferring to travel from place to place as dictated by the cards

To a Rahastran, the knowledge bestowed by the Zodar is both a blessing and a curse. On the one hand they know that the cards may show them how to attain whatever they desire, whether it be riches, love, or influence. In fact, some say that the power of the Zodar is addictive, and that this is the true nature of the Rahastrans attachment to their cards. Yet weighing heavily on the mind of every Rahastran is the knowledge that the Zodar also holds the key to their own fate, and that one day they will draw the card that foretells their own death."

heirs and successors. Most prefer to be cremated along with their cards.

The Arts

Rahastrans make their own cards by hand, inditing each with the traditional illustrations and symbology. They also fashion the silver cases used to hold the Zodar deck, decorating them with intricate scrollwork. Both the cards and cases are considered works of art by many folk. However a Rahastran will never sell his or her own deck, which was made especially for that individual.

Language

Rahastrans are fluent both in Low Talislan and old Archaen. Because they travel so extensively, many are able to pick-up a smattering of other tongues along the way. Common names are highly individualistic, reflecting the eclectic tastes of the Rahastrans. For example: Rashir, Tarean, Dalusia, and Falusche.

Government

Rahastrans consider themselves masters of their own fate, their actions influenced only by the cards of the Zodar deck. They normally adhere to the laws of whatever land they are visiting in order to avoid unwanted attention.

Defenses

Normally non-violent, Rahastrans will use their magics to defend themselves if left with no other alternative. Many Talislantans believe that it is bad luck to do harm to a Rahastran, and so give them a wide berth.

Commerce

Rahastrans tell fortunes for coin, barter, or if the mood strikes them, for free. When gambling, they prefer to deal in silver and gold lumens, though a Rahastran may accept any attractive wager — provided the cards indicate that doing so would be propitious.

Worldview

Rahastrans are deeply distrustful of the Aamanians, who in the past and present have persecuted and hunted their people as witches. Consequently, a Rahastran will never travel to Aaman unless such a trip is decreed by the cards. Generally speaking, Rahastrans regard most other peoples neither with animosity nor trust.

The Xambrians

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.

Ancestry

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 Talislantan continent.



Society

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 (see sidebar). 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 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".

Customs

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.

Government

Xambrians are guided by the ancient code of their ancestors: "Justice, not vengeance." Aside from this Xambrians recognize no other law or authority.

Magic & 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.

Defenses

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.

Commerce

When not on a spirit quest, Xambrians will sometimes take work as bounty hunters, Wilderlands

A Shadow Across the Soul

Of all Talislantans perhaps none are so tortured in mind and spirit as the Xambrians. Their ancient ancestors were nearly eradicated by the Torquaran wizards, who waged a campaign of genocide upon them for no other reason than sheer hatred. Their homeland, ravaged by warfare and the effects of The Great Disaster, lies in ruins – an inhospitable wasteland, haunted by the spirits of their ancient ancestors, and the specter of that grisly monument, Omen, the mountain of skulls.

For the few Xambrians who survive to the present day, life holds little in the way of happiness or serenity. Sworn to seek justice for the terrible wrongs done to their people, no Xambrian is free to pursue his or her own individual aspirations. Marriage, raising a family, building a home, or even settling down in one place for any length of time are not possible; a Xambrian must be prepared at all times to follow the calling, whenever it may occur. Outsiders regard them with superstition and mistrust, and such friendships as they may make are usually temporary at best.

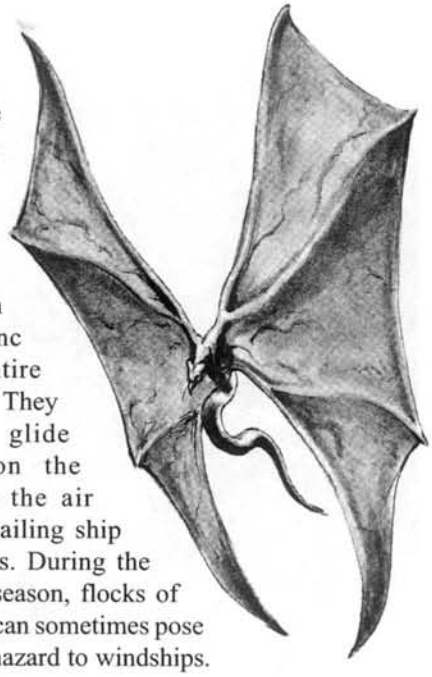
Traveling through hostile wilderness, spending weeks or even months completely alone, always waiting for the calling but never knowing when it will come – this is the fate of the Xambrians. It is no wonder then that some folks say of the Xambrians are a doom-haunted folk who bear a shadow across their souls.

guides, mercenary scouts, or adventurers. They do so not because they covet riches or recognition, but so that they can survive and continue the ancient vendetta against the enemies of their people.

Worldview

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.

Batranc



Batranc are kite-winged predators native to the skies above the Wilderlands of Zaran and much of Talislanta. A true avian species, batranc spend their entire lives in the air. They are able to glide effortlessly on the winds, riding the air currents as a sailing ship rides the waves. During the spring mating season, flocks of these creatures can sometimes pose a navigational hazard to windships.

Batranc prey on other avian creatures, including avir, Stryx, and ravengers. They will never attack creatures on the ground, but will sometimes snatch individuals from high places such as towers, battlements, and treetops. The creature's grasping tail is its main weapon, both for attack and defense. Its fangs are used primarily to devour prey, which it does by holding the victim in its tail and rending it to bits.

Much has been written of the batranc by Talislantan poets and balladeers, who have long been fascinated by the dual nature of these creatures: beautiful to watch as they sail across the skies, yet as cold and deadly as the most savage land or sea-dwelling predators.

Size: 30'+ wingspan, 10' long, 140 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -6	PER +6
WIL +4	CHA N/A
STR +2	DEX +6
CON +1	SPD +8

Ability Level: 4-8+
Attacks/Damage: Fangs: DR 6, Tail used for grasping only
Special Abilities: Can remain airborne indefinitely
Armor: None
Hit Points: 32

ENIM



Enim are greater devils that come from the lower plane of Oblivion. The Wastelands of Zaran harbor a number of these creatures, whose presence may be attributed to legends of an ancient magical portal located far beneath the earth. On their home plane, Enim are employed as servants by powerful arch-devils; in Talislanta, they dwell in caverns decorated with stolen finery and precious stones, and they appear to enjoy a much more leisurely existence.

Outside of their domiciles, Enim are most often encountered in pairs. They enjoy cruel sport, particularly "stone-throwing," the object of which is to crush living creatures with boulders at long range. Enim also have a fondness for wine, which they drink by the barrel with little apparent effect. Their main vice is gambling, however, for Enim are unable to resist any wager that they believe they can win. No stakes are too high for these hideous giants, who sometimes allow captured creatures a chance to escape their stew-pots - providing the intended victim can best them at some game of chance.

Size: 12'-15', 800-1,200+ lbs.
Attributes:

INT +6	PER +1
WIL +7	CHA -5
STR +8	DEX -3
CON +10	SPD -3

Ability Level: 11-25
Special Abilities: Wizardry with four Modes at Ability Level, night vision, immune to most non-magical attacks, harmed by brass weapons at double damage, detect astral/ethereal/invisible presences at range of 100 feet
Armor: Hide, PR 3
Hit Points: 55

LAND LIZARD



Land lizards are a species of quadrupedal herbivores that roam the barrens and other parts of the Wilderlands in herds of up to a hundred or more creatures. Although they are somewhat sluggish and dull-witted, land lizards are valued for use as pack and burden beasts. They are very strong and can carry as much as twelve hundred pounds without difficulty. If employed as dray-beasts, they can pull wagonloads well in excess of twice their own body weight.

Land Lizards can detect the scent of salt at distances of up to a half mile, and they relish the taste of this substance above all things. As such, a handful of salt can often be used to coax a stubborn land lizard into action, provided the creature is hungry enough to take the bait. If all else fails, one should keep in mind the land lizard's further virtues: its flesh, though far from tender, is edible enough, and the beast's sandy-colored hide has many practical (if not decorative) uses.

Size: 8'-10', 1,800-2,600 lbs.
Attributes:

INT -8	PER -2
WIL +4	CHA N/A
STR +7	DEX -4
CON +6	SPD -1

Ability Level: 4-7
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 10, Kick/Tail: DR 15
Special Abilities: Detect salt (range: one half mile)
Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 46

LOPER

Lopers are a peculiar species of bipedal beasts native to the Borderlands and other Wilderlands regions. In the wild, lopers usually travel in herds of up to forty or fifty creatures, including males, females, and sexless broodlings (latent sexual markings and physical characteristics generally do not develop until the broodlings mature, at or around their third year). The distinction between male and female lopers is an important one; the male of the species is exceptionally mean-tempered and prone to erratic behavior, while the female is somewhat more docile.

Orgovian traders value lopers as steeds and burden beasts, primarily because they are very rugged and eat little. Though they can be captured and trained, lopers cannot be tamed or domesticated. The creatures can only be controlled by the use of a prod-hook - a device employed to keep the loper from biting its rider, other animals, or whatever else is in range of its jaws.

Size: 14' long (8' tall), 400-600 lbs.

Attributes:

INT -8 PER 0

WIL +7 CHA N/A

STR +4 DEX +4

CON +7 SPD +5

Ability Level: 5-7

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 6, Hind Claws: DR 10, Whip-like Tail: DR 8; one attack per round

Special Abilities: Sure-footed climbers, leap across 20-30 foot spans with running start

Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2

Hit Points: 43



THE CITYSTATE OF DANUVIA

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 five-sided walls of the citadel stand over fifty feet in height, and are heavily fortified against attack. Connected to Astar of the Seven Kingdoms via the Wilderlands Road, the citystate is home to a female-dominated society known as the Danuvians.

DANUVIANS

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.

ANCESTRY

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.

SOCIETY

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.

Customs

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. 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 (see sidebar).

Government

Danuvia is ruled by a military gynecocracy, at the head of which is the Queen. Her Highness is served by the Danuvian Council, a group of twelve female advisors, or Ministers. Each is a general in the Danuvian military, with her own area of expertise, such as Defense, Requisitions, Engineering, and so on. The Minister of Justice sits at the right hand of the Queen, and adjudicates all disputes. Individuals accused of criminal offenses are tried, and if found guilty are imprisoned in the city dungeons.



The Conjugal Feast

The site of this annual festival is a great amphitheater decked out in colorful pennants and banners, with a raised gallery situated at the far end. The lower levels are allocated to the sallow-faced Danuvian males, who gather together in small groups to gossip or chat among themselves. The upper tiers are occupied by the Danuvian females; women of imposing size and mien. Overlooking the assemblage are the Queen of Danuvia and her retinue, attired in ceremonial armor. When all have settled into their proper places the Queen signals the start of the festivities. A procession of male contestants comes forth, each exhibiting some special talent: for Danuvian males, a song, expressive dance, or a recitation of poetry. Among foreign contestants, displays of martial prowess and feats of strength are popular. The members of the Gynecocracy grade each contestant on his virtues, appearance, and personal qualities, making their notations in secret.

After the presentations are finished, a banquet commences. A host of male attendants come forth, attired only in scanty loincloths and sandals, to serve the male contestants. Throughout the course of the meal the contestants are closely watched by the Queen and her retinue, who appraise each according to his table manners and overall conduct. When the last course has been consumed another fanfare is sounded, and the servants hurry to clear away the empty plates and goblets. The Gynocrats confer briefly with their Queen; notations are tallied and compared. Then, at a sign from the Queen, a herald blows a fanfare and announces the names of the finalists. The Queen presents the honorees with gold ribbons and certificates of commendation, and the crowd showers them with handfuls of petals. Then, with much pomp and ceremony, a contingent of female guards whisks the finalists from the hall and escorts them to private suites, where each receives his reward – a personal audience with the Queen or one of her Royal retinue.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

In Danuvia, artistic pursuits are essentially the province of males, who practice such arts and crafts as poetry, painting, music, sculpture, dance, beading, and weaving. Their works are seldom held in great regard outside of Danuvia.

Language

Females Danuvians converse primarily in Low Talislan. Males speak High Talislan exclusively, in order to avoid being accused of being too "aggressive".

Defenses

Danuvia maintains a sizeable army of female archers, lancers, and swordswomen. Their troops decorate their faces with colored pigments, and ride greymanes into battle. The citystate is well-fortified against attack, and has sufficient supplies of food and water to resist a determined force of invaders or a long siege.

Commerce

Danuvia's most saleable commodity is its mercenary army. They are considered among the most skilled fighters on the continent. Many mercenaries serve with the Seven Kingdoms' Borderlands Legion; others work in Hadj.

Worldview

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.

Behemoth

Behemoths are giant, quadrupedal predators that range the Desertlands of Danuvia, the Wilderlands of Zaran, the Plains of Golarin, and parts of the Kang Empire. The creature's natural armament includes an inch-thick layer of tough, leathery hide, with a mantle of rock-hard bone encasing the cranium. The latter form of defense is of particular importance to these great beasts, who have been described as "living battering rams."

The behemoth's method of attack is simple and straight-forward: the creature charges towards its intended victim at full speed, intent upon a head-on collision that will knock down and incapacitate its prey. If its initial attack is successful, the behemoth will then attempt to kill its victim by goring it with its long tusks.

Behemoths normally prey only on large creatures, such as aht-ra, land lizards, megalodont, and durge. However, they have also been known to ram into wagons, land arks, and even duneships; it is believed that these beasts are attracted by motion and by loud noises. Behemoths occasionally engage in fierce territorial battles with mangonel lizards, their struggles often lasting for hours.

Size: 18'+ in length, 10' at shoulder, 4,000-5,000 lbs.

Attributes:

INT -9	PER -2
WIL +5	CHA N/A
STR +9	DEX -5
CON +9	SPD +2

Ability Level: 5-12

Attacks/Damage: Ram: DR 30, Trample: DR 25, or Tusks: DR 17; one attack per round

Special Abilities: Armored skull is virtually impervious to damage, ram attack knocks victim down

Armor: Cranium, PR 15; Hide, PR 3

Hit Points: 60



THE CITYSTATE OF MARUK

Built upon the ruins of an unknown civilization, the citystate of Maruk was originally a place of notable splendor. Many years ago the city apparently fell under a curse, and events took a turn for the worse. Attempts were made to remedy the problem, but time and again, these efforts met with failure. Maruk is now in shambles: its splendid domes and towers practically in ruin, and its once-prosperous orchards and farmlands barren. This is the home of the Marukans, a dispirited, destitute, and ill-fortuned people.

THE MARUKANS

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.

ANCESTRY

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 Hadjin, upon which they erected the city of Maruk. For a time the Marukans prospered, selling food crops to Carantheum, Danuvia, and Hadj. 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.

SOCIETY

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.



CUSTOMS

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).

GOVERNMENT

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.

The Talismancer's Art

The Marukans are a people hounded by ill fortune. To make their lives more bearable they resort to the use of luck charms, or talismans. These devices are created by the Talismancers of Maruk, who over the course of many generations have devised a great number of charms, each suited to a particular ill or woe. The most common type by far is the standard Luck Talislman, an all-purpose item that is said to confer protection against most common forms of bad luck, misfortune, and mishap. This device, while certainly of practical utility and unquestioned efficacy, is by no means deemed sufficient to protect the wearer against the more severe forms of maledictions. For such purposes Talismancers recommend that their customers augment the standard Luck Talisman with additional charms, each designed to foil a specific malady, accident, or affliction.

These include talismans that protect the wearer from household accidents, accidents that occur outside the home, accidents involving vehicles, or accidents occuring during a particular month or year; talismans to guard against fever, the ague, falling hair, dizziness, bloating, emaciation, wrinkles, or excessive bodily odor;. charms intended to ward against black magic, witchcraft, shamanism, diabolism, demonology, unclean spirits, vengeful ghosts, creatures of the night, invisible stalkers, things that lurk in closets or under beds; and amulets that grant relief from curses, oaths, mordets, the Evil Eye, graven images, totems, fetishes, poison, wild animals of various sorts, noxious vermin, and so on.

For all the complexities of Marukan Talismancy, even its most devout adherents do not claim that these devices are foolproof, nor do the Marukan Talismancers guarantee that their creations confer even the most limited of beneficial effects. The reason for this, they say, is that the curse that follows the Marukans affects all things that they do, even the making of Luck Talismans. Yet all agree that it is far better to wear such charms, cursed or not, than to risk the consequences of going without any protection at all.

Magic & 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 Talislantans. 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.

The Arts

The Marukans once had a rich artistic tradition. They practiced painting, sculpture, music, decorative arts, etc. Now few have time for such endeavors, as they are preoccupied with the task of trying to eke out a living for themselves and their families.

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.

Defenses

The remnants of the Marukan military still defend the citystate as best they can. However, the so-called "citizen militia" is poorly armed, disorganized, and not very motivated. Their weapons are in need of repair, as are the city's fortifications, many of which have begun to crumble from lack of maintenance.

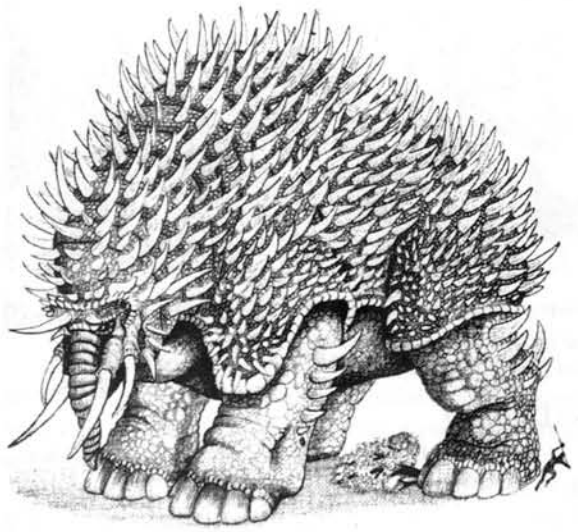
Commerce

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.

Worldview

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.

Ogront



Ogronts are a rare variety of gigantic herbivore native to the Wilderlands of Zaran. Protected by rows of sharp spikes, two layers of rugged hide, and a foot-thick layer of fat, ogronts are virtually impervious to harm, a fact which serves to dismay predators of all sorts. Among the most peaceful and placid of Talislantan creatures, ogronts prefer to wander aimlessly, grazing on grasses and any other type of vegetation that they encounter in their travels. The intestinal fortitude of these giants is beyond normal reckoning; briars, poisonous or narcotic herbs, and even trees and timber are evidently completely palatable to ogronts.

In their natural plains and savannah habitats, ogronts generally pose no threat to anyone. In fact, they leave behind a highly nutritive (and exceedingly plentiful) fertilizer that sells for up to fifty gold lumens per ton and is among the only resources available to the impoverished people of Maruk. The problem is that ogronts will not walk around anything they can walk though, including stone walls. Occasionally one of the massive beasts will wander into a settled area, inadvertently causing widespread destruction. Unaffected by weapons, spells of influence, or most anything else, the creatures are either sublimely stupid or just plain oblivious to the activities of smaller entities. Only the cleverest or most patient methods are of use in ridding a village or town of an unwanted ogront.

Size: 30'-40' at shoulder, 20-30 tons

Attributes:

INT -13	PER -9
WIL +15	CHA N/A
STR +14	DEX -10
CON +15	SPD -10

Ability Level: 5-10

Attacks/Damage: Tusks: DR 30, Trample: DR 50; attacks usually are accidental

Special Abilities: Practically impervious to harm; immune to spells of influence

Armor: Dense hide, PR 30

Hit Points: 200

Plains of Golarin

East beyond the Darklands of Urag lie the grassy steppes of the Plains of Golarin. It is a place of some mystery; the crumbling ruins of an unknown number of ancient civilizations litter parts of the interior, long abandoned by their makers and overgrown with weeds and creepers. These territories are now home to the savage folk known as the Beastmen.

The Beastmen

Though they are essentially humanoid in form, Beastmen have many features which are more reminiscent of creatures of the wild: coarse fur, fangs, pointed ears, and claws. They dress in crudely made boots and loincloths of animal hide, augmented with whatever items they can steal or scavenge from other peoples.

Ancestry

Beastmen are believed to be descended from the Wild Races that once ranged throughout Talislanta before the coming of the Archaens. More specifically, some naturalists have theorized that Beastmen may be a degenerate sub-species of Jaka. It is perhaps best not to say this to a Jaka, as the two races are not on friendly terms.



Society

The Beastmen range the length and breadth of Golarin in heavily armed packs of a half-dozen to several hundred individuals, preying upon caravans from the Seven Kingdoms, Carantheum, and the Western Lands. The packs are nomadic, stopping only to rest or make camp in the ruined cities that lie scattered across the plains. Some use the ruins as bases, from which they launch raids into the surrounding territories. Those who live in the ruins never build or maintain these facilities, but simply use whatever is at hand. Their lairs are usually littered with shards of bone, scraps of rotten food, and other debris.

Beastmen are quite unparticular with regard to their eating habits, having an equal fondness for herd beasts, carrion or luckless travelers. They find it difficult to restrain their baser urges, and may break off whatever they are doing in order to feast on fallen opponents, carrion, or other types of food.

Beastmen mate as the urge strikes them, but do not form lasting partnerships. Dominant males commonly fight to obtain the most desirable females for themselves, but quickly abandon them after mating. In a single year an adult female commonly gives birth to two litters of two-to-eight "pups", as many as half of which may be deformed or still-born. The young receive little in the way of affection or training, and quickly learn that if they are to survive they must fend for themselves. The old, sick, or infirm must do likewise, or be abandoned by the tribe.

Customs

Though fierce when encountered in numbers, Beastmen have seldom been known for individual displays of courage. On the hunt, a pack of Beastmen may stalk prey for hours, singling out the slowest or weakest individuals in a group, herd, or pack. Once a target has been chosen Beastmen pursue the victim relentlessly, harrying the victim until he or she becomes too weak from exhaustion to continue. Skilled trackers, Beastmen will never quit a blood trail. They sometimes set cruel snares in the hope of trapping unwary creatures, and have been known to hunt men for sport when food is plentiful (see sidebar).

Government

The leader of any Beastman pack will always be its most dominant male member. Among the Beast-folk, the strongest rule — until they are deposed by younger, stronger individuals. Packs sometimes band together for raids, but such alliances are usually of short duration. The only law among these people is the law of survival.

Magic & Religion

In ancient times the wild races were said to worship a deity known as the Beast-God. Some think that the ancient Cult of the Beast may once again be on the rise.

The Beastmen know nothing of magic, which they regard with awe.

Though Beastmen sometimes grieve over the loss of a mate or companion, they have no burial customs. Instead, the dead are left where they fall, to be eaten by wild animals.

The Arts

Beastmen have no noticeable talent as craftsmen, artists, or musicians. Most regard such pursuits as a waste of time better spent on the hunt.

Language

Beastmen converse in Sign, and in a primitive version of Low Talislan punctuated with growls, yelps, and howls. Members of the Beastclans typically use fierce-sounding battle names, such as Red Claw, Long Tusk, Running Beast, Plains Stalker, Knife Hunter, etc. Beastman clans will either be named after their chieftains or the territories that they claim as their own.

Defenses

Packs band together for defense, but have no knowledge of military tactics. Their talent lies in tracking, scouting, and laying ambushes against weaker opponents.

Commerce

Beastmen packs will sometimes barter for goods with others of their kind, or with peoples of similar interests, such as the Za. Coins are used when available, but may be treated as barter goods unless those involved in the transaction know the difference between various denominations.

Worldview

Beastmen usually have little loyalty even to their own packs, but occasionally have dealings with other wild races, such as the Za. Beastmen hate and fear the winged Gryphs of Tamaranth, who attack packs that venture too close to their territories.

Places of Note

The Watchstone

In the north central region stands the Watchstone, an immense pillar of grey basalt several miles in height. An age-worn stairway, carved into the face of the Watchstone, winds upward in a slow, twisting spiral. From the summit, it is said that one can see clear across Golarin. The Watchstone is considered a holy place by the Orthodoxists of Aaman, who claim that from this lofty height one may glimpse the gates of paradise. Ravengers favor the high elevations as well, primarily for purposes of preying on groups of rapturous and incautious Aamanian pilgrims. While the origins of the Watchstone remain uncertain, it's believed that this

Hunting Men

Of all the sentient creatures who inhabitant the Talislantan continent, only the race of Beastmen are known to hunt other humanoids for sport. The techniques vary from one tribe to another. The favorite method of the Plains Riders is to chase prey and bring it to ground. Mounted on darkmane steeds, the hunters will follow their prey for miles: driving them onwards, wounding and harassing them, but not killing or maiming them outright, as this would ruin the "sport". Finally, when the victims are too exhausted to continue, the hunters close in and finish them off with bows or spears.

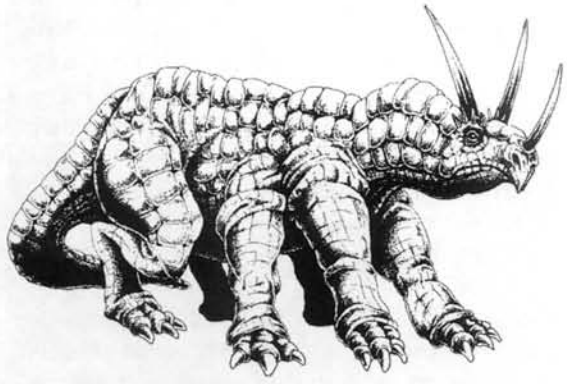
The Long Manes prefer to attack from ambush. They are known to set up elaborate blinds, either in the tall grasses or in the low branches of densely foliated trees. Lures, such as a handful of gold or silver coins, are sometimes left to attract prey. Blinds may also be set in the vicinity of a watering hole or ruined structure. Once the blind has been set, the hunters remain completely still until their prey approaches within bow range. As soon as the intended victims are within range, the hunters fire from hiding, then run forth to claim the kills.

The Red Fangs prefer trapping to hunting. A variety of traps are used, ranging from the small but deadly sickle-trap, which can maim a man or mount, to covered death pits, deadfalls, snares, and so on. The pack will usually set a line of traps through regions commonly traveled by traders or travelers, spacing the devices at intervals of up to a hundred yards or so. A few members of the clan will ride out to check the traps once or twice a day, in order to collect whatever has been caught.

Beastmen who engage in hunting or trapping of this sort seldom do so for food. Instead, it is the thrill of the hunt, and the kill, that motivates them. The best and most successful are known to exhibit their ghastly trophies like big game hunters, mounting the heads of their victims on poles or hanging them from the saddles of their darkmanes.

structure was created by the Drakken — a race of giant, intelligent reptilians who ruled the continent of Talislanta before the Archaen Age.

MEGALODONT



Megalodonts are an immense species of six-legged herbivores that roam the Plains of Golarin in great herds. They are sometimes hunted for their durable hide and horns, the latter being used to make stout bows of excellent quality. Megalodont flesh is tough and gamey, however, and must be marinated for days before most Talislantans will even try to eat it.

Though appearing to be placid and slow-moving, these creatures can be quite dangerous if provoked or startled. Male megalodonts are surprisingly tenacious, particularly as regards the protection of their females. Encroachment into a bull megalodont's territory can often lead to swift and unpleasant consequences, a fact that can be attested to by many an incautious caravan driver or drayman. A stampeding herd of megalodonts is well capable of destroying almost anything in its path, only the strongest stone fortifications being able to withstand such an onslaught.

Size: 12'-15' at shoulder, 4-6 tons
Attributes:

INT -8	PER +2
WIL +8	CHA N/A
STR +9	DEX -8
CON +9	SPD -4

Ability Level: 5-8
Attacks/Damage: Tail or Kick: DR 25, Trample: DR 35
Special Abilities: Detect scent of blood, predators, or men at ranges of up to one mile
Armor: Hide, PR 2
Hit Points: 70

NIGHTSTALKER



Nightstalkers are frightening creatures that originate on the Nightmare Dimension but may sometimes be found in the Plains of Golarin and other deserted regions. On their home plane, nightstalkers serve more powerful entities as hunters and assassins. On the material plane, they attack by invading the dreams of other sentient beings, whom they seek to slay by "devouring" their victims' astral bodies. Only by feeding on the astral energies of living creatures can nightstalkers sustain themselves; in their physical forms nightstalkers can kill, but cannot obtain nourishment.

Victims slain in their dreams by a nightstalker suffer the death of their physical form as well, but they appear as if they have simply died in their sleep. Unless a nightstalker is driven off or slain, its chosen victim will be unable to awaken until the ordeal is over. Those fortunate enough to have survived the attack of a nightstalker usually suffer no physical harm, though a close call can sometimes cause such a fright that a victim's hair will turn white.

Size: 10', weightless
Attributes:

INT +5	PER +5
WIL +5	CHA N/A
STR +5	DEX +5
CON +5	SPD +5

Ability Level: 11-25
Attacks/Damage: Claws: DR 13
Special Abilities: Appear simultaneously on both the astral and material planes, attack sleepers in astral form,

unaffected by spells of Illusion, acrid breath causes sleep (on material plane only; victims may resist on CON roll versus Ability Level)
Armor: PR 2 in material form
Hit Points: 55

Sickleweed

This grassy plant grows wild in many wilderness areas and is particularly common on the Plains of Golarin. It is named for its wiry, curved leaves, which resemble sickle-blades. A "blade" of sickleweed can, in fact, be used to saw through rope, cloth, or similar materials in a pinch.

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 burnt and blackened ruins of Kharakhan, a city occupied in ancient times by the giant reptilians called Drakken, stand here like massive tombstones, dismal monuments of a bygone era. Where once flowed mighty rivers, winding chasms now cut across the plains and lowlands. Here, giant land dragons graze on dry grasses, heedless of crag spiders and other noxious predators. This place is now populated by the last of a giant folk called the Kharakhan, and by the insidious reptilian hybrids known as the Araq.

The Kharakhan

Kharakhan are massive folk, averaging over twelve feet in height and weighing upwards of a thousand pounds. They have dusky grey-black skin and savage features, and wear their hair long and tied-back in a queue. Kharakhan dress in loincloths, sandals, and crude armor made from boiled land lizard hide.

Ancestry

The Kharakhan are descended from a nameless tribe of Wild Folk who were extent during the latter part of the Archaen Age. It is believed that when The Great Disaster struck, the tribe was exposed to magical emanations, and suffered a form of mutation called giantism. Persecuted thereafter as freaks and misfits, they fled into the northern Wilderlands. They settled among the ruins of old Kharakhan, a place suited to their great size, and eventually came to be known as the Kharakhan giants, or simply the Kharakhan.

Society

The Kharakhan are hunter-gatherers who range throughout the northern Wilderlands territories in massive armored conveyances known as war wagons. Though the giants call the ruins their home, they are often on the move, hunting for food and useful salvage. There are several tribes, all of which regard themselves as part of the same people. The Kharakhans' great size is both an advantage and a disadvantage: though it affords them protection from lesser predators it also means that they cannot use tools and implements employed by humanoids of smaller stature and so are forced to make what they require from raw materials. Kharakhan also require substantial amounts of food and water in order to survive, both of which are often in short supply in the regions that they have been forced to inhabit.

Kharakhan are polygamous; males may take several wives, or females several husbands, depending on the make-up of a clan and availability of mates. Because their race is dwindling in number, Kharakhan are very protective of their children, keeping them in the wagons until they are old enough to stand a reasonable chance of survival. Once numerous, only a few hundred of these savage folk still remain extant on the continent.

Customs

Kharakhan giants are gruff and crude by nature, having little knowledge of civilized customs and manners. Their outward demeanor and imposing size have led other peoples to regard them with trepidation. Yet while Kharakhan will aggressively defend their clans and possessions they are not a warlike folk by preference. When they are tending their young or with friends these massive folk can be surprisingly gentle.

Magic & Religion

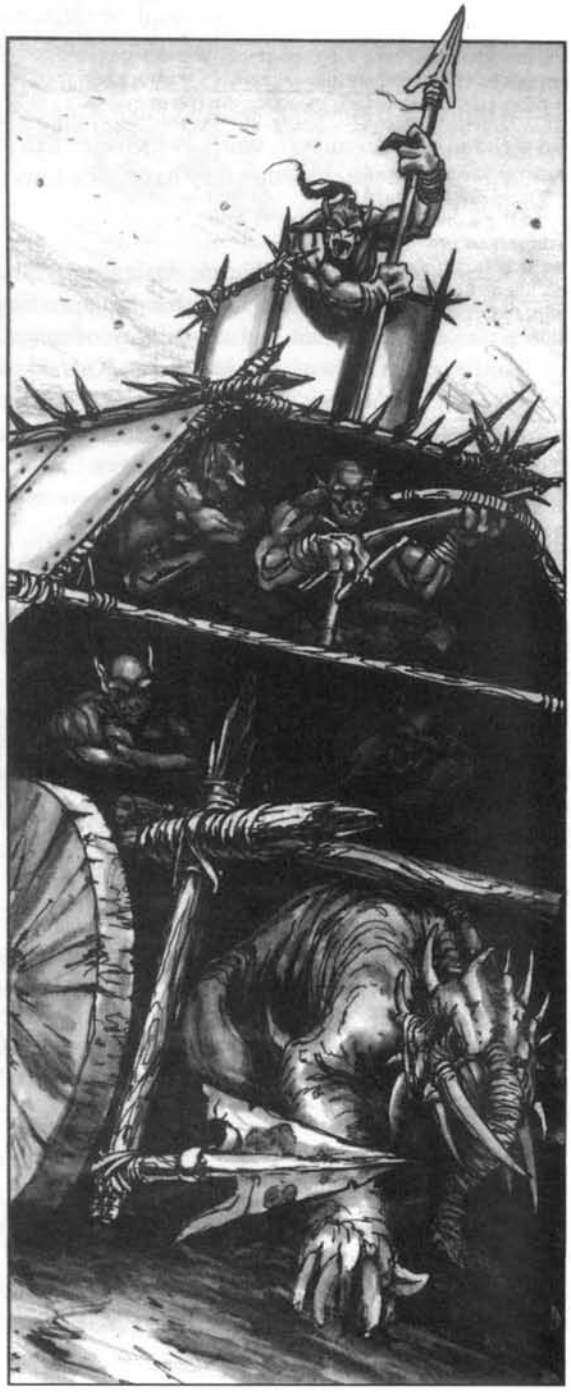
Kharakhan are said to revere one of the Forgotten Gods, Kron the Mighty. However, they have no magic and do not observe formal religious rituals of any known type. Kharakhan bury their dead beneath massive cairns of stones in a solemn ceremony that may last for several hours.

The Arts

The Kharakhan know little of music or art, but are skilled in the reading of ancient runes and symbols. They are the only folk who have been able to decipher the strange glyphs that the ancient Drakken engraved upon certain of the ruins of Kharakhan.

Language

Kharakhan speak an ancient and obscure dialect of common Talislan, which to the ears of civilized Talislantans makes them sound even more savage and unsophisticated than they are. They are also able to read Drakken-glyphs, a talent that appears to have been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years. Common Kharakhan names begin with the prefix, "Kha", as in Kharun, Khatos, Kharos, Khamon, and Kharis.



Government

Kharakhan respect wisdom, age, and experience. The eldest member of any band of Kharakhan is regarded as its nominal leader, and is consulted when the tribe requires advice or guidance. These individuals are referred to as Sages, for they know all the ancient lore of the Kharakhan race, and are considered qualified to speak for the other members of the clan. The clan's Sage is consulted whenever disputes arise. Most are settled amicably, though serious conflicts may be settled by a "duel". The contest may take the form of a wrestling match, or an event similar to a tug-of-war.

Defenses

Kharakhan rely upon their size and heavily armored war wagons to deter aggressors. They will fight if given no recourse, at which times they are known to exhibit great ferocity and bravery in battle.

Commerce

Kharakhan clans barter among themselves, exchanging tools, weapons, and raw materials like scrap metal, bone, and hide. Kharakhan will sometimes trade with peoples such as the Orgovians and Djaffir. In return, they generally ask for food, barrels of grog, and goods such as rope, lamp oil, and remedies.

Worldview

The Kharakhan are a race on the verge of extinction. Though they have no traditional enemies, neither do they have many friends. Swifter, more numerous creatures have taken over the territories that they once called home. The expansion of tribes such as the Za and Araq has forced them into ever more barren and inhospitable regions. Unless things change dramatically, in another few generations they will probably be gone.

The Araq

Araq are reptilian humanoids whose features resemble those of a serpent. They have a dorsal crest that runs from the peak of the forehead back to the base of the neck. Araq have scaly brown hide, and dress in arm wrappings, boots, and loincloths of land dragon hide.

Ancestry

Araq are a hybrid of humanoid and Sauran created long ago by an Archaen sorcerer, whose name has since been forgotten. Turning upon their creator, the Araq

escaped into the Wilderlands, where they have remained ever since.

Society

Araq roam the wilderlands in small war-bands, preying upon all creatures that cross their path. They have hunted the land dragon almost to the point of extinction, utilizing the horn, bones, and hide of these massive creatures to make their weapons and equipment. Araq mate in order to procreate, but have no concept of "love", "family", or "affection". Araq females lay a clutch of eggs, bury them in the soil, and depart the area without a second thought. Upon hatching, the creatures must fend for themselves. Araq young grow quickly, and within a month are sufficiently developed to pass for young adults. At this time they will either latch onto an established Araq band or gather together with other young adults to form their own band.

Araq require little food or water to sustain themselves, and can survive for up to six weeks without food or water. Their scaly brown hide renders them immune to the effects of Talislanta's twin suns, and their dorsal membranes act as effective regulators of body temperature.

Customs

A sorcerous hybrid of sauran and humanoid, Araq display the worst traits of both these races. They are extremely aggressive, and have a taste for humanoid flesh. From the races of men, the Araq have inherited greed, lust, dishonesty, and a propensity towards fits of unconscionable and murderous behavior. Araq are aware that they are not natural lifeforms, and despise themselves as much as they do other creatures. This self-hatred may be at the root of the highly aggressive and violent behavior exhibited by the species. Only through conscious effort are Araq able to restrain their murderous impulses.

Government

Araq recognize no authority and have no leaders. Bands tend to be loosely organized at best; individuals come and go as they please. Arguments and violent exchanges among members of the same band are common, and murder is not given a second thought.

Magic & Religion

Araq are atheists. They despise magic, which they blame for their creation, and bear a special hatred for spell casters of all sorts. Araq eat their dead, just as they will eat most anything else.



The Arts

Araq have no interest in art, and in fact seem oblivious to the concept of beauty. They shun all goods and weapons produced by other peoples, considering such devices to be tainted. Young Araq appear to learn how to create weapons, dragon traps, lizard-hide pouches, and similar implements by observing other Araq, though these activities may also be rooted in instinctive behaviors bred into the species.

Language

Araq converse in a mixture of Talislan and Sauran. They are not named by their parents, whom they never know. They rarely assign proper names among themselves, and usually differentiate only between "me" and "you", "us and them", or "mine" and "yours". If more specific information is required they may point ("You!") or use descriptions such as "Man with hair like rotten wood", "Jaka who smells vile", and so on.

Defenses

The Araq prey upon anything that lives, including crag spiders, vermin, and travelers who venture too near their domains. Their wars with certain of the Sauran tribes of the neighboring Volcanic Hills region have at least served the useful purpose of keeping the population of both races in check. Araq are instinctively territorial; bands seem to arbitrarily designate a region as "theirs", and attack all other creatures that trespass into these places. When a band can no longer find sufficient food in one region it simply moves to another.

Trapping Land Dragons

The decrease in the land dragon population can be attributed to a single cause: the Araq. Ranging throughout the northern regions of the Volcanic Hills, bands of Araq scour the lava flows for land dragon eggs, which they destroy and devour. They hunt immature newts, and set immense traps in areas where the mature adults come to graze on wireweed and sedge. These devices are equipped with scything blades and poisoned spikes, and are designed to maim their victims. Once a land dragon has been injured, Araq hunting parties will pursue and harass the giant creature until it is exhausted and can no longer defend itself. Then they set upon the victim in numbers, stripping their prey of its horn, claws, bone, and hide. The dragon's soft inner parts are consumed; the rest is often left to rot.

The wanton hunting of eggs, newts, and adults has reduced the land dragon population to such an extent that it has impacted on the local environment. The most evident effect has been an increase in the number of Raknid colonies throughout the region (land dragons normally help keep the Raknid population in check by digging up the insectoids' nests and feeding upon their larvae). The Sauran tribes, who use trained land dragons as beasts of burden and in combat, are so concerned that the land dragon may become extinct that they have taken to hunting and killing entire bands of Araq.

Commerce

Araq take what they want by force, and make much as they require for themselves. They do not trade with other bands or peoples; they raid them.

Worldview

Araq mark all other creatures as hated foes. They have no relations with other peoples, and are widely despised by most Talislantans.

Noman's Land

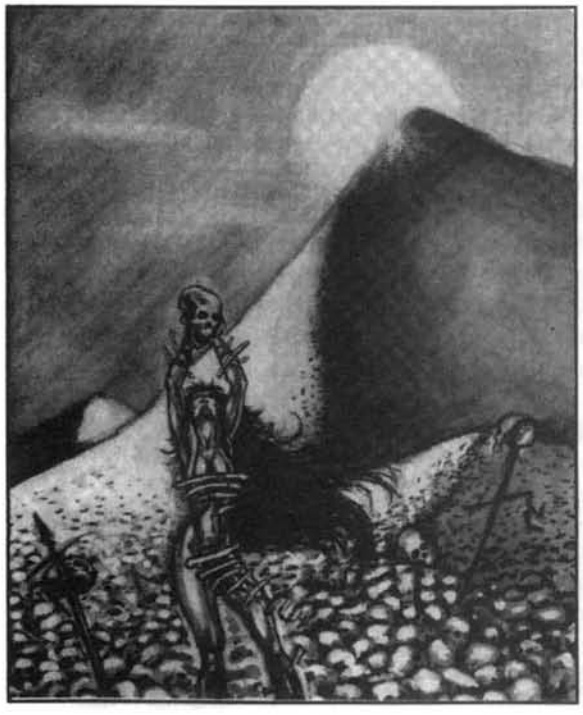
This narrow strip of wasteland separates the forests of Tamaranth from the Shadow Realm. It is believed to be haunted by shadowy creatures from the Nightmare Dimension, a place ruled by an entity known as Noman. The region is generally shunned by decent folk, though practitioners of black magic sometimes come here to study the phenomenon known as Mordante's Gate; a permanent magical portal that is believed to be an entrance into the Nightmare realms.

The Plaguelands

North of the ruined citystate, this cracked and barren plain was laid waste centuries ago by some unknown catastrophe, possibly in conjunction with The Great Disaster. It is a widely-held belief that any living thing that passes through the Plaguelands will be changed or transformed in some unpredictable manner. Consequently, few intelligent creatures willingly venture into this region.

Omen

This cursed place is avoided by most Talislantans. In ancient times, Torquaran executioners erected at Omen a mountain of skulls, representing untold numbers of victims. The mountain stands to the present day, and is sometimes visited by descendants of the victims, who seek to commune with their ancestors.



DUADIR

Duadir are a mutated species of reptilian that ranges throughout the Wastelands, hunting in groups of up to a dozen individuals. They normally prey on crag spiders and land lizards, though they will attack even land dragons when driven by hunger. Each of the duadir's two heads is capable of attacking independently. The talons of their hind legs are even more dangerous and are used to slash prey.

Duadir are swift runners, easily able to match an equs stride for stride. They lack endurance, however, and can only travel at top speed for about a mile or so before becoming exhausted. The creatures are trained as steeds by the Araq, who accomplish this feat by the cruel treatment of duadir hatchlings.

Size: 10'-11', 600-900+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -7	PER +4
WIL +5	CHA N/A
STR +4	DEX +2
CON +5	SPD +7

Ability Level: 5-11+

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 16, two attacks; Claws: DR 10 or Tail: DR 8, or entangle

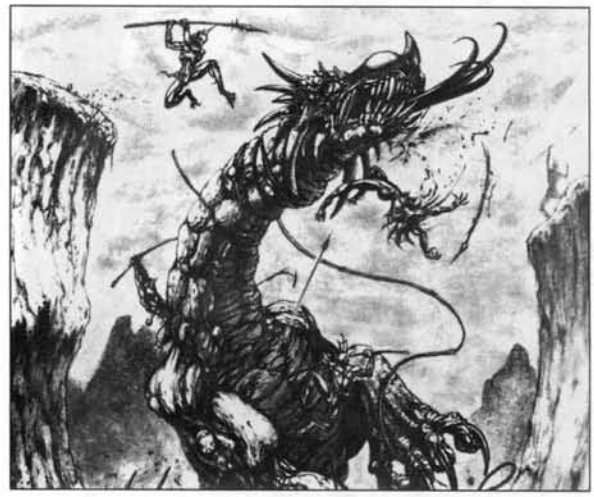
Special Abilities: Two heads can attack independently

Armor: Scaly hide, PR 2

Hit Points: 37



LAND DRAGON



Land dragons are massive reptilians indigenous to the Wastelands and Volcanic Hills. Land lizards, ogriphants, and crag spiders are the favored food of these huge beasts, luckless travelers serving to augment the land dragon's diet as the opportunity arises. The largest and most powerful of these creatures are known to attack raknid colonies, tearing through the fibrous hives in search of juicy eggs and larvae.

Land dragons have been domesticated by the Saurans, who outfit them with battle towers and train them for use in warfare. Aggressive by nature, the giant quadrupeds are well-suited to this type of activity, and can easily batter down stone fortifications. Land dragons have long been hunted by Araq, who kill their young for food and use terrible dragon-traps to maim mature dragons. As a result, the species is believed to be on the verge of extinction.

Size: 40'-50'+, 6-10 tons

Attributes:

INT -9	PER -5
WIL +8	CHA N/A
STR +12	DEX -4
CON +8	SPD -3

Ability Level: 6-12

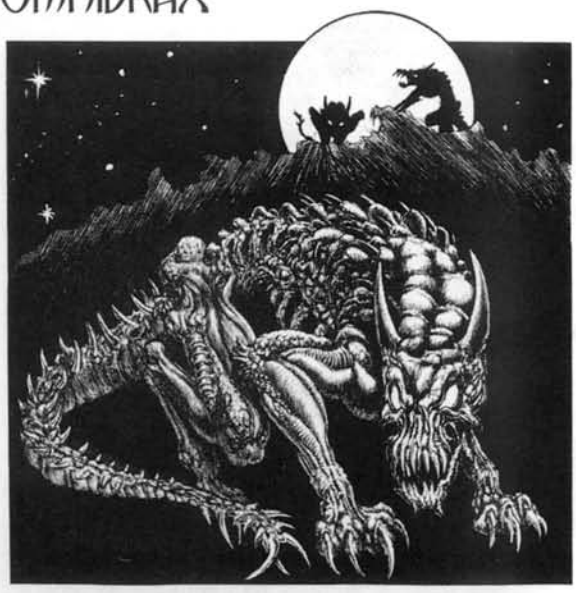
Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 22, Trample: DR 28, Tail: DR 32, Battering Attack: DR 42

Special Abilities: Impervious to heat and flame

Armor: Body plates, PR 8; thick hide underside, PR 3

Hit Points: 75

OMNIVRAX



The omnivrax is a ferocious predator native to the Wilderlands of Zaran and other woodland regions of Talislanta. The creature derives its name from the fact that it will eat almost any living organism, including plants, wild beasts, humanoid beings, or even others of its own kind. Omnivrax are highly-adapted to a predatory existence. They have excellent vision and can see clearly even in total darkness. Their sense of smell is so acute that they can follow the faintest tracks and trails without difficulty. The omnivrax's hearing is such that it can perceive the sound of another creature's breathing at distances of a hundred feet or more.

The physical characteristics of the omnivrax are likewise exceptional. A full-grown adult is capable of dragging a land lizard to the ground, or running down even the swiftest graymane. The omnivrax's claws and fangs can easily slice through the toughest hide or rip wooden planks to shreds. The natural armament of these creatures affords them protection similar to the best chain mail. They are utterly fearless and will readily attack even such dangerous predators as exomorphs, malathropes, and behemoths. If the omnivrax has a weakness, it is that the creature's intellect can in no way compare to its great ferocity. Tales of omnivrax attacking statues, or even their own shadows, are not unknown.

Size: 8'-9' long, up to 4'6" at shoulder, 600+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -11	PER +6
WIL +6	CHA N/A
STR +7	DEX +2
CON +6	SPD +7

Ability Level: 6-12

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 15, Claws: DR 19; total of two attacks

Special Abilities: Can subsist on any organic substance, tracking by scent at Ability Level +PER, detect prey by sound/scent (range: 100+ ft.), night vision

Armor: Exoskeleton, PR 5

Hit Points: 46

OPTERYX

The opteryx is a large, three-headed and three-eyed avian native to the Wastelands and other mountainous regions. Each of an opteryx's heads is encased in an exoskeletal mask comprised of interlocking bone plates, at the center of which is set a single, crystalline orb. These unique ocular organs render opteryx impervious to illusions; a useful attribute when hunting sand demons, the favorite prey of these serpentine creatures.

Opteryx lair in high places, usually amidst a pile of rocks and boulders. They make unusual, triangular nests, using dead branches, rocks, and detritus. Females typically give birth to three offspring every nine years, the largest of which will usually devour its two siblings. Strong flyers, opteryx are capable of lifting an average-sized graymane or ontra into the air, using their hooked "tails" to snare their victims. When on the ground they fold their wings flat to their bodies, enabling them to move about in the manner of serpents.

Size: 30' wingspan, 15' in length, 800-1,200 lbs.

Attributes:

INT -5	PER +7
WIL +6	CHA N/A
STR +9	DEX -2
CON +7	SPD +2*

* airborne; -2 on the ground

Ability Level: 8-14

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 15 (three heads), Claws: DR 17, Knobbed Tail: DR 19; total of three attacks per round

Special Abilities: Immune to illusions, can carry more than half its own weight while airborne

Armor: Heads, PR 6; Hide, PR 2

Hit Points: 69

REINCARNATOR



Reincarnators are the spiritforms of Torquaran wizards, members of a cabal of black magicians who once ruled a dark empire that spanned much of the continent of Talislanta. During their time in power the Torquarans were responsible for the deaths of untold thousands of innocents, including almost the entire Xambrian race. The Torquaran empire was eventually overthrown, but its rulers escaped and were never tried for their crimes.

Instead, the Torquarans struck an unholy pact with the arch-devil Zahur, who used an ancient incantation to turn them into reincarnators: malign spirits cloaked in an aura that renders them untouchable by Death. In this manner, the Torquarans acquired a form of near-immortality. They became capable of possessing the physical bodies of living creatures at will, and returning time and time again from the dead. Only if vanquished by a Xambrian can these vile spiritforms finally be claimed by Death and delivered to their final judgement.

Size: 6'-7' in astral form, or as per bodily form

Attributes:

INT +5	PER +5
WIL +3	CHA -2
STR +1*	DEX +2*
CON 0*	SPD 0*

* in astral form; otherwise, as per the physical body that the reincarnator has taken over

Ability Level: 15-20+

Attacks/Damage: Touch: energy drain at DR 1 per Ability Level, or as per spell or weapon

Special Abilities: Possession (WIL roll versus Ability Level to resist), energy drain, Necromancy with seven Modes at Ability Level; in astral form, harmed only by enchanted weapons and magic; flight, pass through solid matter at will

Armor: None

Hit Points: 20 in astral form, or as per bodily form

THE BANDITLANDS

Bordered to the west by the Red Desert and to the east by the Volcanic Hills, the Banditlands are among the most hostile territories in all the Wilderlands. This land of arid hills and scorched dust flats is the bane of merchants and travelers alike, who must suffer the depredations of desert kra, manrak, and opteryx. The rugged peaks of the Zaran Mountains serve as hiding places for the savage bandit tribes known collectively as the Za.

THE ZA

The Za are lean and muscular, most standing at or just under six feet in height. Their skin is a pallid yellow in hue, leathery in texture and lined with creases and wrinkles. Za shave their skulls, and forgo all but the most abbreviated attire. Necklaces of hammered black-iron disks are favored, as are bands of reptile-hide worn on the head and upper arms. Males generally wear long, braided mustaches; females, two long braids, one above either ear.

ANCESTRY

The Za believe that all the primitive peoples of Talislanta are descended from a single race: the Landborne, or Wild Races. In ancient times vast tribes of Wild Folk held sway over the entire continent, and once fought the ancient Archaens to a standstill. Divided by war, pestilence, and finally The Great Disaster, the Landborne split into numerous smaller groups and factions. The Za are perhaps the largest such group.

SOCIETY

Nomadic bandits who range far and wide throughout much of the central Talislanta, Za are the bane of the Wilderlands of Zaran. Their clans can range in size from small scouting parties to great raiding bands of as many as three or four hundred individuals. They prey upon merchant caravans, landarks, and travelers of all races. Za carry their possessions with them on the backs of their mounts and in carts drawn by older greymanes or land lizards. Contending that the Wilderlands region rightfully belongs to them, Za rationalize that they are justified in robbing and murdering any who trespass in "their" territory.



Though females are an integral part of the clans, Za society is male-oriented. Za males may take as many wives as they can attract; skilled warriors and successful bandits carry the most esteem among Za women. Wives who possess skills that the Za deem useful – such as riding, swordsmanship, bowmanship, hunting, robbing, etc. – are most favored. The first wife generally wields the most influence over her husband and the other wives. Wives of lesser status must help raise the young; if no such persons are available, then older women must suffice. Za subsist on wild game, root, and tubers, in addition to whatever foodstuffs they are able to obtain in raids.

Customs

Za are fierce and cruel, seldom taking prisoners. Exceptionally valorous foes are sometimes accorded the dubious honor of being taken alive, so that they may later be slain in ritual fashion. The Za drink the blood of these vanquished enemies from skull-cups, believing that this gives them the strength of their foes. Za are sensitive to insults, and have long tempers (see sidebar).

Government

Za bandit clans are led by a chieftain: an individual who, by dint of his prowess in battle and cunning, has shown himself to be the strongest leader. The chieftain will continue to hold this position until it is taken from him by force or by guile. Za laws are simple and direct: obey the band's chieftain, or be prepared to usurp his power.

Magic & Religion

The Za have no religion or god. They know nothing of magic, but have great faith in the ancient legend of the Tirshata, a great chieftain who once ruled over all the Landborne tribes during the time of the Archaens. According to the tale, one day the Tirshata shall return to unite all the wild tribes once again. At the designated hour, "the Tirshata shall be revealed, and the Za will rise up and smite their enemies, until they alone rule the lands from east to west." Za bury their dead with little ceremony, swearing an oath of revenge upon all those who have wronged the Za people in the past.

The Arts

Though Za get most of what they need in the way of weapons, tools, and implements by raiding, their craftsfolk exhibit no lack of native talent. Skills include decorative metal working, tanning and preserving hides, and carving wood, bone, and stone. Braiding is both a practical craft and an art form among the Za. Knots of various sorts are used to represent numbers, words, and ideograms. The music of the Za consists of complex cross-rhythms played on gongs and tube-like drums, accompanied by chanting and, on occasion, the wailing of a female soloist. Most Za songs are about the loss of their homeland, their betrayal by the ancient Archaens, and the legend of the Tirshata.

Language

Most Za are conversant in both Low Talislan and Sign. Common names are usually constructed of two-syllables, and start with the prefix, "Za". For example: Zai, Zakai, Zakhan, Zaiyan, and Zahai.

Defenses

Za rely on mobility for defense and offense, and are skilled riders. They prefer to strike without warning, then flee swiftly away before their opponents can mount

Blood for Blood

The Za are a grim and unforgiving folk who will never forget a wrong or turn their back on an insult. The offended party is expected to seek retribution, or else suffer loss of face and esteem. To signify the intent to seek revenge a Za will say the words, "Blood for Blood". Among the Za this phrase is considered a solemn oath – an unbreakable pledge that the injured party will not rest until the insult has been avenged, in equal or greater kind. With these three words the Za is thereafter committed to a blood feud, which by Za law cannot be settled until blood has been spilled.

A blood feud may exist between individuals, families, or entire tribes. It may last a few moments, or may be passed down from one generation to the next, until the terms of the pledge have been fulfilled. A blood feud need not result in the death of the offending party in order to be satisfied, though this is often the case, as matters tend to get more heated the longer an unsettled feud drags on. Because the injured party is entitled by Za law to seek redress, the offender may not launch a blood feud of his or her own in response. Once matters have been settled, the feud is considered over and done with.

The longest running and greatest blood feud on record is that between the Za and the Archaens, which is said to have begun soon after the onset of The Great Disaster. According to the Za, the call of "Blood for Blood" was spoken when the Archaens broke their promise to the Za's ancestors, who had been ceded the rights to the continent of Talislanta as part of a truce between their two peoples (in return, the Archaens were ceded the rights to the skies above Talislanta). The Za have yet to avenge this affront, which took place over a thousand years ago, but it has not been forgotten.

serious resistance. Za warriors wield jagged-edged broadswords, and fire barbed arrows with their bows. Greymanes, with their long manes and tails done in tight braids, serve as steeds for the bandit clans.

Commerce

Za clans trade among each other often, exchanging stolen goods, food, and weapons. Barter is used among the tribes, as are foreign currencies of various types and denominations. Za sometimes trade with other wild tribes such as the Danelek, Orgovians, Beastmen, and Kharakhan.

Worldview

Most of the civilized peoples of Talislanta regard the Za and the other wild races as vicious savages — "Sub-Men" is the term used by many. There is considerable prejudice against these people, about whom most civilized Talislantans are generally ignorant.

The Labyrinths of Sharna

To the south of Carantheum stand several maze-like structures of certifiable antiquity, which scholars attribute to the Sharna, a long-dead race of whom little is known. Artifacts from the Sharna labyrinths are highly valued as curios and collectibles, if for no discernible reason other than their avowed scarcity. In truth, the Sharna appear to have had an uncommon talent for creating items of the most tasteless and unaesthetic sort. Though the ruins are deserted, the surrounding territories are home to a race of furred folk known as Ferrans.

The Ferrans

Ferrans are rodent-faced humanoids of short stature. Their bodies are covered with a coat of dirty brown fur, and they dress in scavenged bits of clothing and gear.

Ancestry

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.

Society

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.

Customs

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.

Magic & 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.

The Arts

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.

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.

Government

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.

Defenses

Ferran lairs have hidden entrances, pits, mazes of tunnels, and secret passageways in order to increase their defensibility. A pack may sometimes have to fight off rival packs from neighboring areas that encroach upon their territories. To the Ferrans, the wider the territory, the greater the opportunities for "finding" loot.

Commerce

Ferrans packs sometimes trade among each other, though such activities are rare due to territorial rivalries and the biological imperative to scavenge.

Worldview

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.

THE LIBRARY AT JALAAD

The crumbling ruins of the ancient city of Jaalad are located near the Zaran Mountains, in the Wilderlands of Zaran. Though the ancient city has long since been stripped of most of its hidden treasures by generations of Yitek tomb-robbers and Za bandits, the Library at Jalaad remains intact. This is primarily due to the efforts of a cabal of cryptomancers known as the Callidians, who have endeavored to protect the facility's store of iron tablets since the time of The Great Disaster.

THE CALLIDIANS

Tall and frail in stature, the Callidians have skin a deep orange in hue. They dress in starched headdress and robes of yellow linen, and walk with a slow and stately gait.

ANCESTRY

Callidians are direct descendents of a sect of magician-scholars who once lived in the city of Jaalad. They can trace their ancestry back over a thousand years, to the time before The Great Disaster.

SOCIETY

The Callidians are members of a cabal that has has helped preserve and maintain the Library of Jalaad since the time of the Great Disaster. They are the keepers of a purportedly vast archive of ancient lore, recorded on stone and metal tablets, faded scrolls, texts, and enchanted orbs. It is believed that perhaps as many as two hundred Callidians live in Jalaad, forming an insular and largely self-sustaining community. Their people live inside the Library, in quarters set aside expressly for their purposes. They are assisted by Monads, who tend the gardens where tubers and provender plant are grown under ancient orbs of illumination.



Callidians choose mates on the basis of wisdom and knowledge; in this society, the most studious and knowledgeable individuals are accorded the greatest respect. Children begin extensive education in linguistics and other fields of study by age three. After centuries upon centuries of inbreeding, the Callidian people have grown wan. Alchemical infusions have long been required to prevent sterility, and also to extend their lifespans.

CUSTOMS

Callidians are serious and studious by nature. They prefer to spend their time reading, and are normally averse to frivolous behavior. Every Callidian specializes in least one field of knowledge, and may have familiarity with a number of minor fields, as well. Though rich in wisdom and lore, Callidian society is essentially stagnant, and has remained unchanged for over a thousand years.

GOVERNMENT

Callidian government is organized like a lyceum or institute. At the head of their scholarly hierarchy is the Scholar Emeritus, followed by Sages and Sophistes of varying degree. Disputes are adjudicated by debate; problems are examined intellectually, researched thoroughly, and solutions devised based on precedence and Callidian traditions. The Scholar Emeritus has the final say in all such issues, though he or she will almost never rule against precedence and tradition.

MAGIC & RELIGION

Except as pertains to its role in history, foreign cultures, and mythology, Callidians have little interest in matters of religion. They are skilled in Cryptomancy, a field of magic that has numerous practical applications to these folk. The passing of a Callidian is a most solemn event, and the funeral is attended by all members of the cabal. The deceased is laid to rest along with his or her ancestors in an underground crypt located far beneath the Library of Jalaad.

THE ARTS

The artforms, music, and crafts associated with ancient cultures are specialties of many Callidians. However their sect has no artistic or musical tradition of their own, and probably never did.

Language

Callidians possess the ability to comprehend and converse in almost all languages. They are experts at analyzing and deciphering all types of written works, including ancient texts and charts. Common names have archaic sound, such as Callidius, Cronus, Galius, Hiberius, and Malius.

Defenses

The Library at Jalaad is fortified with strong outer walls and massive iron gates, both of which are protected by ancient wards and symbols of great power. The Callidians deal sternly with looters and vandals, and possess magics and artifacts capable of repelling even the most hostile invaders. So effective are these defenses that Jalaad has withstood the assaults of bandits, vandals, and even hostile armies for many centuries.

Commerce

Shut within the Library, the Callidians have little contact with the outside world. They sometimes deal with Orgovian traders, from whom they purchase certain rare herbs and mixtures. In return, the Callidians translate writings or identify artifacts that the Orgovians find unfamiliar. On rare occasions scholars from other lands come here to do research. Callidians require no payment for such services, which they view as an obligation to the people of Tallislanta. However, donations are gratefully accepted.

Worldview

The Callidians are neutral as regards all other peoples and governments. Their archivists are available for consultation, but only by permission, and only during certain hours of the week. As visitors are not allowed to stay overnight, this limits the opportunities for extended study.

Places of Note

The Old City of Ashann

The shattered ruins of the Old City of Ashann consist of seven concentric rings, the outermost of which encompasses an area approximately two miles in diameter. Desert scouts from nearby Carantheum claim that the region is largely uninhabited, save for sand demons, opteryx, and the mysterious beings known only as the Wanderers of Ashann - tall, shrouded figures, who can sometimes be seen walking amongst the ruins.



Each carries a staff inscribed with a curious symbol: a staring orb, set in the center of a silver pentacle. Some believe that the Wanderers are blind, and can only see by means of these staves. What the Wanderers are searching for remains unknown.

MALATHROPE



Malathropes are terrible predators found throughout the Wastelands and other wilderness regions. Sorcerous hybrids, they are possessed of a sinister intellect and exhibit a marked tendency towards violent and destructive behavior. Like demons, they require neither sleep nor rest and are always active.

Malathropes kill not only for food, but apparently to satisfy some grisly carnal urging; they prey upon creatures of all sorts and show a decided preference for devouring prey alive. The bite of a malathrope delivers a potent neuro-toxin which heightens its victim's response to fear, a condition from which malathropes seem to derive a sadistic pleasure. They exhibit a maniacal disregard for danger and will not hesitate to attack groups of armed individuals, or creatures larger than themselves. The naturalist Thystram noted that "the beasts emit a horrid, hissing laughter even after suffering the most grievous wounds, as if seeming to mock - or perhaps welcome - their own death."

Size: 6'6"-7', up to 3'6" at shoulder, 400+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT +5	PER +4
WIL +7	CHA -9
STR +4	DEX +4
CON +4	SPD +10

Ability Level: 8-16

Attacks/Damage: Bite: DR 8 +poison (CON roll at -5 or victim is too terrified to offer resistance), Claws: DR 10; total of two attacks

Special Abilities: Speak in tongues, night vision, immunity to magical influence/control, detect presences at range of 20 feet

Armor: Hide, DR 2

Hit Points: 52

EARTH DEMON

Earth demons are negative elemental entities that sometimes gain access to the Talislantan reality through rifts in the dimensional fabric. In repose, they may be mistaken for great, craggy boulders. Such is not the case when an earth demon chooses to move, for these creatures can tunnel through earth and stone at will, producing a substantial amount of seismic activity, noise, and dust. Earth demons subsist on a diet of rocks and minerals, voiding gemstones, which they cannot digest. They possess an aversion to water and strong winds, and are susceptible to spells of Aeromancy, which do twice the normal damage vs Earth Demons.

Size: 6'-6'2", 1,000+ lbs.

Attributes:

INT -1	PER -2
WIL +5	CHA -6
STR +8	DEX -5
CON +10	SPD -2

Ability Level: 6-13

Attacks/Damage: Fist: DR 19; six limbs, up to three attacks

Special Abilities: Elemental Magic (Geomancy) with four Modes at Ability Level, pass through earth and stone at will

Armor: Stony exterior, PR 8

Hit Points: 40

ROCK URCHIN

Rock urchins are benign creatures found in caves and underground tunnels in the Wastelands and other remote areas. They feed on mosses, lichens, and detritus, and pose no threat to Talislantans. To the contrary, rock urchins are prized as food and are considered a delicacy in many lands. They are also valued for their spines, which are used to make quill pens of good quality.

TALISLANTA CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

The following character Archetypes are grouped according to the region of the continent from which they come. A master list of all the archetypes by region can be found below:

The Seven Kingdoms
Muse Telempath
Cymrilian Magician
Cymrilian Rogue Magician
Cymrilian Swordsmage
Pharesian Peddler
Gnomekin Crystalomancer
Gnomekin Protector
Kasmiran Trapmage
Kasmiran Moneylender
Sindaran Collector
Sindaran Effectuator
Sindra - Demented One
Thrall Warrior
Blue Aeriad Ranger
Green Aeriad Botanomancer
Tanasian Magician

The Western Lands
Aamanian Warrior Priest
Aamanian Witch Hunter
Aamanian Inquisitor
Aamanian Monitor
Arimite Knife-Fighter
Arimite Revenant
Druhk Hillman
Castabulonese Aeromancer
Azir Islander
Sarista Gypsy
Dhuna Witchwoman
Gnorl Rhabdomancer
Yrmanian Wildman
Jaka Manhunter
Jaka Trader
Zandir Charlatan
Zandir Duelist
Zann Trader

The Eastern Lands
Harakin Warrior
Chana Witchdoctor
Chana Witchman
Manra Shapechanger
Nagra Spirit Tracker
Kang Tracker
Kang Warrior Priest
Kang Warrior
Quan Pariah
Ispasian Mercantilist
Mandalan Mystic Warrior
Mandalan Savant
Sunra Aquamancer
Sunra Mariner
Vajra Engineer
Mondre Khan Raider
Sauran Dragon Rider

The Southern Rim
Batrean Paramour
Batrean Male
Sawila Spellsinger
Mangar Corsair
Na-Ku Cannibal
Sun-Ra-San Dragon Hunter
Green Man Symbiont
Moorg-Wan Warrior
Ahazu Honor-Slave
Ahazu Warrior
Gao Sea Rogue
Imrian Slaver
Jhangaran Mercenary
Jhangaran Marsh Dweller
Mogroth Wanderer
Black Savant
Oceanian Sea Nomad
Phantasian Guardian
Phantasian Dream Merchant
Thaecian Enchanter
Thiasian Performer
Parthenian Salvager

The Desert Kingdoms
Dracartan Desert Scout
Dracartan Thaumaturge
Yassan Technomancer
Djaffir Merchant/Bandit
Yitek Tomb Robber
Farad Procurer
Farad Monopolist
Farad Wizard
Hadjin Aristocrat
Hajan Servitor
Sauran Gladiator
Monad Servitor
Rajan Assassin-Mage
Rajan Desert Warrior
Rajan Necromancer-Priest
Shadinn Executioner
Vird Infantry

The Northern Reaches
Mirin Priest/Priestess
Mirin Tundra Scout
Mirin Alchemist
Rasmirin Anarchist
Snipe Sage
Gryph Hunter
Ariane Seeker
Ariane Mystic
Ur Renegade
Ur Clansman
Ur Shaman
Stryx Necromancer
Stryx Warrior
Darkling Infantry
Xanadasian Chronicler

The Wilderlands
Verdir Hedonist
Danelek Hunter
Bodor Musician
Orgovian Trader
Rahastran Cartomancer
Xambrian Wizard Hunter
Danuvian Virago
Danuvian Consort
Marukan Mercenary
Marukan Dung Merchant
Marukan Talismancer
Beastman Plains Hunter
Kharakhan Giant
Araq Warrior
Za Smuggler
Za Bandit
Ferran Scavenger
Callidian Cryptomancer

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 telempathic 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 telempathic 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.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-3	+3	+3	+2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-3	-1	-2	+3

CR	HP	MR
-5	17	+4

Skills:
Natural Magic:
<3 Modes of choice> +1
Telempathy +2
Limited Flight +4

Artificer +4
Art +4
Music +4
Herb Lore +1
High Talislan, native
Sylvan, native



Special Abilities:
Special Abilities: Natural Telempathy; Limited Flight - may remain airborne for two minutes per level of ability, then must rest for at least twice as long before flying again; infatuated with one specific being (choose during character creation).

Equipment:
Translucent gossamer robe of pastel colors; one or more musical instruments; pouch (pigments, blossoms, nectar); whisp companion; whisp companion may have 25 gold lumens.

The Seven Kingdoms

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.

Appearance:
6'-6'4", 120-160 lbs. Pale green skin and hair, golden eyes, slender build, handsome features; may alter appearance with magical enhancements.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	+1	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-1	0	0	+3

CR	HP	MR
-1	19	+6

Skills:
Magic Order <choice>:
<6 Modes of choice> +3
Magic Order <choice>:
<5 Modes of choice> +1

Arcane Lore +5
Etiquette +5
Fashion +4
Ride +3
High Talislan, native
Low Talislan, basic
Archaen, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

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; 3 magical trinkets; 80 gold lumens in gold pentacles.

Cymrilian Rogue Magician

"Some call me the greatest thief in Cymril. I would not think to challenge their honesty."

Some Cymrilians study magic to attain knowledge and power, to teach young adepts, or perhaps to learn the swordsmage's art. But you are different. You see magic as the swiftest means of acquiring wealth, status, and the finer things in life. Let others spend their lives struggling just to earn a few gold lumens. You prefer to use magic and guile, to move unseen and unheard, to seduce and cajole, and to take what you want from life. Certainly, their are risks to consider, but you are no common thief. You are a rogue magician, and with your magics all that you desire is within your grasp. Perhaps you will become an adventurer, and join a band of companions with aspirations similar to your own. Maybe you will travel to distant lands, where people know little of magic and are even more susceptible to your particular combination of talents. With spells to alter your appearance, you can pass as a noble, a vagabond, or any semblance that you can imagine. No one need know anything about you that you do not care to reveal. Riches and wealth can be yours, and someday, a life of ease. After all, is that not what magic is for?

Appearance:
6'-6'4", 120-160 lbs. Pale green skin and hair, golden eyes, slender build, handsome features; may alter appearance with magical enhancements.

Note: Rogue Magicians may be of pure Cymrilian blood or may have one or more ancestors from other Talislantan races, such as Batrean, Dracartan, Gao, Phantasian, Rahastran, Sarista, Zandir.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	+1	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	0	+2

CR	HP	MR
+2	20	+4

Skills:
Magic Order <choice>: <4 Modes of choice> +4

Weapon <choice> +2
Brawling +2
Deception +5
Stealth +4
Thieving Skill <choice> +3
Arcane Lore +2
Etiquette +3
Fashion +4
Ride +4
High Talislan, fluent
Low Talislan, native
Archaen, fluent



Special Abilities: None.

Equipment:
High-collared cloak, breeches; and tunic of various colors; dyed leather boots; leather-bound spell book; choice of weapon; pouch; shoulder bag; 2 magical trinkets; equs steed; 50 gold lumens in gold pentacles and other currencies.

The Seven Kingdoms

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.

Appearance:
6'-6'5", 130-200 lbs. Pale green skin and hair, golden eyes, slender but muscular build, handsome features; may alter appearance with magical enhancements.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+1	+1	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	0	0	+1

CR	HP	MR
+3	22	+3

Skills:
Wizardry or Elemental Magic: <3 Modes of choice> +2

Longsword +3
Dagger +2
Brawling +2
Pilot (Windship) +5
Arcane Lore +4
Etiquette +4
Fashion +4
Ride +4
High Talislan, fluent
Low Talislan, native
Archaen, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
High-collared cloak and garments of spangalor (metallic cloth); dyed leather boots; assorted jewelry; leather and silver-bound spell book; pouch; +1 longsword; dagger; 2 magical trinkets; swordsmages based in Cymril may have access to a windship; 50 gold lumens in gold pentacles.

PHARESIAN PEDDLER

NPC

Cymril? It is a nest of chasm vipers. Conservatives, moderates - both are equally haughty, and equally absurd. You are a Pharesian, and so they marked you as different. Your people were looked down upon as radicals, and forbidden to study at the Lyceum Arcanum. They said you were fit only to serve as merchants, shop owners, and magician's assistants. And so you packed-up your amulets and talismans, your powders and potions, your lockets and periapts. You left Cymril as so many of your people did before you, to seek your fortune on the open road. Now you travel across the Seven Kingdoms to the Western Lands and back again, selling your wares to those you chance to meet along the way. There, just up ahead - a band of adventurers, far from their homes. Lucky for them that you are here, and not still in Cymril.

Appearance:
6'-6'4", 130-160 lbs. Lime green skin and hair dyed with bright iridescent colors, slender build.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	0	0	+2

CR	HP	MR
+1	20	+3

Skills:
Wizardry:
<4 Modes of Choice> +3

Staff +2
Alchemy:
(Elixirs, Powders) +3
(Medicinal Mixtures) +4
Merchant +4
Appraiser (Curios) +4
Oratory +3
Streetwise +3
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Patchwork cloak and robes of bright colors, staff, satchel (filled with salves, concoctions, charms, curiosities), spell book, alchemical equipment, 50 gold lumens in coins and wares.

THE SEVEN KINGDOMS

GNOMEKIN CRYSTALOMANCER

"Terra's seed is within this crystal. It will nurture you to health again."

You feel the presence of your goddess within the crystals of your homeland. Under the phosphorescence of the cavern fungi, emeralite is the green of your mother's eyes, and amberite is the gold of the lesser sun setting. Crystal is to be nurtured, honored, shaped, and put to use. Perhaps more than mollusk, mushroom or tuber, it is crystal that sustains your people. Certainly, your craft has helped the Gnomekin emerge as a true partner in the Seven Kingdoms. Your crystals now aid in powering the Cymrilian windships and their other magics. The Sindarans covet your wares for their alchemy, the Kasmirans for their traps, and the Thrall respect the keen edge of the crystalblade. You are happy to share with these, your friends and neighbors, although you are uncertain how to acknowledge their gratitude and praise. The suns have not shone upon you so brightly for long generations. It is a curious experience, to be noticed so, and you take care to bring no shame upon your family and monarchs. You are generous in trade, courteous in greeting, respectful of customs, and amiable with everyone you meet. Above all, you are excited by everything new you encounter, as surprising as the ever-shifting glow of prismatite, as familiar as the presence of Terra.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+4	0	+2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+6	0	0	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	16	+4

Skills:
Crystalomancy
<6 Modes of choice> +4

Agriculture (Crystal) +4
Artificer +4
Appraiser (Crystal) +5
Merchant +4
Geography +6
Climbing +1
Durnese, native
Low Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
Night vision; natural climbing ability (+5); poor vision in sunlight (PER -3) without amber cusps.

Equipment:
Cloak, knee-length smock, pouch with assorted crystals for spell-casting and for sale, amber cusps, flask of mushroom ale, 100 gold lumens in crystals and gold pentacles.

GNOMEKIN PROTECTOR

"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 Durne. But the Subterranoids 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.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+4	+1	+2

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+6	0	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+4	18	0

Skills:
Crystalblade +4
Sling +4
Weapon <choice> +3
Evade +4
Tactics +3
Scout +5
Cartography +5
Geography +5
Guide +5
Weaponer +4
Armorer +4
Climbing +3
Durnese, native
Low Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
Night vision; natural climbing ability (+5); poor vision in sunlight (PER -3) without amber cusps.

Equipment:
Scale armor over rough linen tunic, cloak, crystalblade, sling, pouch of twenty stones, four pottery vials of stenchroot sap and orange fungus, choice of weapon, amber cusps, flask of mushroom ale, 50 gold lumens in crystals and gold pentacles.

THE SEVEN KINGDOMS

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 Kasmir, 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.

Appearance:
4'6"-5', 70-110 lbs. Mahogany brown skin, shriveled features, hunched posture.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	+1	+1	-1

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
-1	0	+1	+3

CR	HP	MR
0	19	+3

Skills:
Cryptomancy:
<5 Modes of choice> +3

Spring-knife +3
Blade-staff +3
Locks +6
Traps +10
Artificer:
(Security devices) +6
Engineer:
(Security structures) +6
Merchant +6
Litigator +3
Stealth +1
Low Talislan, native
Nomadic, native



Special Abilities:
None.

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, blade-staff, assorted trap- and locksmith tools, locking iron-bound spell book and ledger, 1,000 gold lumens (hidden in vaults).

KASMIRAN MONEYLENDER

NPC

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	+1	+1	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+2	+2

CR	HP	MR
+1	19	+1

Skills:
Spring-knife +4
Blade-staff +4
Moneylender +8
Merchant +7
Litigator +4
Locks +4
Traps +4
Administrator +3
Low Talislan, native
Nomadic, native



Special Abilities:
None.

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, blade-staff, locksmith's tools, locking iron-bound ledger, 2,000 gold lumens (hidden in vaults).

Appearance:
4'6"-5', 70-110 lbs. Mahogany brown skin, shriveled features, hunched posture.

THE SEVEN KINGDOMS

SINDARAN COLLECTOR

"It is relevant to our situation that my predilection towards acquiring obsidian sculptures has imparted knowledge of fracture patterns among... 'Get to the point,' you request? Certainly. I believe that the columns directly above you will soon collapse under the weight of the ceiling."

There are two aspects to your identity that account for an expansive percentage of your temperament: you are a dual-encephalon, and you are a collector. The former quality provides intellectual capacities that demarcate you from other sentient beings; you have found that you pity mono-encephalons for their mental impediment and for their compulsion to sleep, although you have admiration for what they accomplish with such sparse resources. The latter quality defines your objectives in this existence, more so than any supposed profession. Alchemy, artisanship, administration - these are menial talents practiced to meet physical and biological necessities. Political maneuvering, military strategy, and scholarship may offer significant challenges, but the veracity of the matter is that such professions are vehicles for the process of acquisition. Your own preoccupation has consumed your meditations from your earliest memories of childhood within the umber pavilion of your parents. You have other passions: drinking skoryx stimulates the senses, and mastering Trivarian is a process that reflects your lifelong cerebral development. Yet your collection is what propels you repeatedly towards obscure locations with companions who will never entirely comprehend your musings and fixations. Conversely, you have discovered no valid justification not to edify them further, despite their protestations.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	0	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+4	+8

CR	HP	MR
+2	18	-5

Skills:
Rod of Alchemy +4
Collector +4
Alchemy +5
Scholar Skills
<5 of choice> +3
Trade Skills
<2 of choice> +3
Brewer/Vintner:
(Skoryx) +2
Trivarian +1
High Talislan, native
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
Dual-Encephalon.

Equipment:
Cloak, loincloth (males) or caftan (females), sandals, silver earrings and necklace, wrist and ankle bracers, bandoleer pouches with ten amberglass vials of various powders, rod of alchemy (projects vials of powder), Trivarian game, collection, flask of skoryx, alchemical apparatus, assorted tomes, 1,000 gold lumens in assorted currencies and collectibles.

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.

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.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+4	+8

CR	HP	MR
+2	18	-5

Skills:
Rod of Alchemy +5
Weapon <choice> +3
Collector +2
Cryptography +4
Analysis +4
Interrogate +4
Litigator +3
Underworld +3
Tracking +3
Pilot (Windskiff) +4
Stealth +4
Scholar Skill <choice> +3
Trivarian +1
High Talislan, native
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
Dual-Encephalon.

Equipment:
Cloak, loincloth (males) or caftan (females), sandals, silver earrings and necklace, wrist and ankle bracers, bandoleer pouches with ten amberglass vials of various powders, rod of alchemy (projects vials of powder), choice of weapon, Trivarian game, collection, flask of skoryx, assorted tomes, 1,000 gold lumens in assorted currencies and collectibles.

THE SEVEN KINGDOMS

SINDRA "DEMENTED ONE" NPC

You sleep now, and you know what it is to dream. It is a struggle between your two minds; since the accident that injured your sensorium, they function erratically. Now your own kind regard you as one of the "Sindra" - the Demented Ones. They treat you with pity and fear; the former because you have "fallen" to the level of other humanoids; the latter because it reminds them that the same fate may yet befall them. They do not understand the freedom, the rapidity with which you can now make decisions, the emotions that sway you, released from the double-binding logic of your people. Your inability to play Trivarian - that is something to pity. But they cannot imagine what it is to dream.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	0	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	-2	+4

CR	HP	MR
+2	19	0

Skills:
Rod of Alchemy +4
Collector +3
Alchemy +2
Scholar Skills
<Two of choice> +2
Trade Skill <choice> +2
High Talislan, native
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
No longer Dual-Encephalon; requires sleep; prone to violent mood swings and bouts of dementia.

Equipment:
Cloak, loincloth (males) or caftan (females), sandals, silver earrings and necklace, wrist and ankle bracers, bandoleer pouches with ten amberglass vials of various powders, rod of alchemy (projects vials of powder), collection, flask of skoryx, alchemical apparatus, assorted tomes, 1,000 gold lumens in assorted currencies and collectibles.

THRALL WARRIOR

"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.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+4	+2	0	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+4	+1	+2	-3*

CR	HP	MR
+6	30	-5

Skills:
Tazian Combat +4
Greatsword +4
Weapons <Four of choice> +2
Mounted Combat +3
Tactics +4
Command +2
Guard +4
Weaponer +2
Ride +5
Low Talislan, native
Understand Tattoos, native



Special Abilities:
Immune to fear (magical & natural); INT +3 for tactical and combat matters and situations; unable to comprehend magic.

Equipment:
Loincloth, vest (females), sandals, garde (parrying armor/weapon), greatsword with shoulder sheath, choice of additional weapons, flask of Tazian fire-ale, mangonel lizard or graymane steed, 50 gold lumens in gold pentacles and assorted currencies.

THE SEVEN KINGDOMS

BLUE AERIAD RANGER

"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.

Appearance:
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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	+4	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-1	+2	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+4	20	0

Skills:
Tri-bow +4
Dart-thrower +4
Crescent Knife +4
Aerial Combat +4
Scout +5
Tactics +4
Guard +4
Weaponer +1
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
Gliding up to fifty yards, wind permitting; with Bracers of Levitation, can fly at constant SPD +2 and at SPD +8 for short periods of time.

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, 50 gold lumens in gold pentacles and assorted currencies.

Green Aeriad Botanomancer

"Yes, an interesting specimen indeed. I suppose I c-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.

Appearance:
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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-3	+2	+1	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-3	0	0	+3

CR	HP	MR
0	17	+4

Skills:
Botanomancy +5

Alchemy:
(plant-based only) +4
Agriculture +5
Herb Lore +5
Brewer/Vintner
(Vinesap) +4
Artificer +3
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
Gliding up to fifty yards, wind permitting.

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, 100 gold lumens in gold pentacles and assorted currencies.

The Seven Kingdoms

Tanasian Magician

"How dare you presume to be my equal, mongrel filth! My magical powers and intellect far exceed your own!"

For centuries, your kin, the Tanasians, were the rightful rulers of Cymril, bringing the ungrateful populace to prominence on the continent. Many strict laws were created, bringing much needed order to the city, and firmly ensuring that each individual knew where they stood in life, according to social status and magical prowess. Magic was well regulated, and a national unity encouraged by the blanket use of greens and yellows, for all dress and construction work. The peasants knew who their betters were, and flourished because of this. All was right. Then, the upstarts decided they wanted more than they were entitled to, and when your parents ignored their incessant whining, they rebelled and elected that liberal fool Azradamus as the new Wizard King. When your kin attempted to regain power by coup, they were scandalized and made into exiles - hunted like common vermin, fleeing for safety across the continent. You were but a child during those tumultuous times, but your parents have raised you to acknowledge your natural superiority, and noble lineage, despite living in foreign lands. Like them, and many other Tanasians, you plan for the day when once again Cymril's only true nobility will restore themselves to their rightful place of privilege and authority.

Appearance:
6'-6'5", 120-160 lbs. Pale green skin and hair, golden eyes, slender build, handsome features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	+1	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-1	0	+1	+3

CR	HP	MR
-1	19	+5

Skills:
Magic Order <choice>:
<6 Modes choice> +3

Arcane Lore +4
Etiquette +5
Ride +3
Cultures+2
High Talislan, native
Low Talislan, basic
Archaen, fluent
Local Native Language
<if applicable>, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
High-collared cloak and robes of green fustian, dyed green leather boots, leather-bound spellbook, pouch, lacquered green black iron gauntlets; 200 gold lumens in local currency.

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 Werewood, 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.

Appearance:
5'6"-6', 100-180 lbs. Cinnabar skin, sculpted features, deep green eyes, all facial and bodily hair removed.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	0	0	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	0	+3	0

CR	HP	MR
+3	22	+3

Skills:
Invocation:
<3 Modes of choice> +3

Mace +3
Heavy Crossbow +2
Shield +2
Oratory +3
Doctrines (Orthodoxy) +5
Mounted Combat +1
Ride +3
Guide +3
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

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, mace, heavy crossbow, graymane steed (fully caparisoned), 200 gold lumens in offerings and salary.

THE WESTERN LANDS

AAMANIAN WITCH HUNTER

"In the name of Aa the Omnificent, you shall submit to His law and His word."

You obey the will of Aa and of his agent, the Hierophant, and they command you to hunt the enemies of Orthodoxy. When you were first trained by the Knights of Retribution, you sought out the impious among the citizens of Aaman. When you were granted the Staff of the Eye that marks your station, you were sent to Werewood; there are no innocents in that forest of witchcraft. Now, the Monitor to whom you report trusts you with more specific targets, and sometimes you must travel far from home. Many of those you capture will go to the House of Penance to be cleansed by the Inquisitors. For others, there is no hope for redemption, and you slay them without malice. The Omnipotent will deliver justice. The rulers of the infidel nations take umbrage with your labors. They claim that their authority is greater than that of Aa. Yet they dare not prevent you from pursuing your prey, fearing that the Hierophant will name them enemies and call for holy war. They may join your List of Injunction, their names beside those of apostates and diabolists. Such offerings to Aa would earn you many aalms, and you strive, when your orders allow, to provoke them. Someday, you will earn mana sufficient for your whispers to reach the ear of the Hierophant himself. You will remember the conceit of the heretics on that day.

Appearance:
5'6"-6', 100-180 lbs. Cinnabar skin, sculpted features, deep green eyes, all facial and bodily hair removed.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	0	+2	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	0	+4	+1

CR	HP	MR
+1	20	+4

Skills:
Invocation:
<5 Modes of choice> +4

Longsword +1
Staff +2
Oratory +4
Doctrines (Orthodoxy) +4
Tracking +3
Astrology +2
Stealth +2
Ride +2
High Talislan, native dialect



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Wide-brimmed hat, cloak, leather armor worn over coarse woolen garments, boots (all dyed white), iron-bound spell book, iron Staff of the Eye, longsword, pack, bedroll, manacles, 1,000 gold lumens in bounties and salary.

AAMANIAN INQUISITOR

NPC

Some say you wear a mask to disguise your identity, as if true servants of the Omnificent must fear retribution for their actions. No, the Hooded Veil serves to suppress your individuality as you practice the rituals of cleansing. Your voice becomes His voice; your hand becomes His hand. Within the Halls of Penance, there are only infidels, heretics, and Aa Himself. Away from those Halls, you lift the veil from your face, and you are once again a pious Aspirant: faithful, watchful, anonymous. Away from those Halls, you are not an Inquisitor, and not even your family can identify you as such. For in those times, the Omnipotent does not fill your soul.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+1	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+2	+1

CR	HP	MR
+2	20	+3

Skills:
Invocation:
<4 Modes of choice> +4

Whip +2
Club +1
Doctrines (Orthodoxy) +4
Interrogate +6
Torture +5
Coerce +4
Espionage +1



Special Abilities:
None.

Appearance:
5'6"-6', 100-180 lbs. Cinnabar skin, sculpted features, deep green eyes, all facial and bodily hair removed.

Equipment:
Cult mask and headdress, cloak, robes, gloves, boots (all dyed white), iron-bound spell book, iron holy symbol of Aa, whip, club, manacles, pouch with instruments of torture, 20 gold lumens; the Order of the Knights of the Hooded Veil clothes and feeds its servants.

THE WESTERN LANDS

AAMANIAN MONITOR

NPC

You know all that occurs within your district. For the All-Seeing Eye of Aa the Omniscient has many physical manifestations, and you, in a sense, are one of them. It is a worthy challenge to observe and record all the aalms that your charges earn over their lifetimes. It is also necessary to watch for sinners and heretics, and to report them to the Inquisitors. The All-Seeing Eye icons are your sacred tools; they are everywhere in the cites of Aaman, and in other places as well. You have many Aspirants to aid you in your sacred work, and Aa has graced you with a small portion of His power. Yet the Hierophant did not idly select you as Monitor; you earned this office through long years of dedication to your churchstate. Your eyes are His eyes, and you will not fail in your duties.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	0	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+4	+2

CR	HP	MR
+3	22	+4

Skills:
Invocation:
<6 Modes of choice> +12

Weapon <choice> +10
Weapon <choice> +9
Doctrines (Orthodoxy) +12
Oratory +10
Espionage +12
Administrator +10
High Talislan, native

Note: Monitors have additional skills according to the Monastic Order to which they originally belonged.



Special Abilities:
None.

Appearance:
5'6"-6', 100-180 lbs. Cinnabar skin, sculpted features, deep green eyes, all facial and bodily hair removed.

Equipment:
Cloak, robes, gloves, boots (all dyed white), choice of two weapons, iron-bound spell book, iron holy symbol of Aa, additional items according to original Monastic Order, 10,000 gold lumens of government funds.

ARIMITE KNIFE-FIGHTER

"Watch what you say to me. This is not for cleaning my nails."

Other people annoy you. They all assume you're just another cutthroat because you're from Arim. Yes, you are dangerous. You flash your knives when you need to make a point; you picked-up that habit up from your father. But you're better than that. You're a mercenary, and a damn good one. You don't run from a fight, and you don't betray your employer - as long as he pays on time, anyway. They all worry that you're a Revenant out to slit their throats. It doesn't get you any respect, but they do pay you well, just in case. You've guarded caravans, manned border forts, hunted criminals, guided travelers, and fought in border skirmishes with the Ur. It doesn't matter to you. You are pleased - well, as pleased as you ever get - because you don't have to spend your whole life in Arim, with the endless mountains, the feuding, and the hedonism of your cowardly ruler. Not that you don't take your share of pleasures. Especially chakos; it's bitter, and it reminds you of life. Some day you'll return home for good, settle down for a peaceful life. But that won't happen until you've become rich; you don't want for much, but you'll always need to pay off the accursed Revenants.

Appearance:
5'2"-6'2", 90-170 lbs. Swarthy complexion, long black hair, dark eyes.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+3	+1	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	+1	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+5	24	0

Skills:
Arimite Knife-fighting +4
Brawling +3
Weapon <choice> +2
Guard +4
Mounted Combat +1
Climbing +2
Scout +2
Stealth +1
Ride +3
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Fur vest, hide boots, sackcloth breeches, armbands and earrings of black iron, four throwing knives, choice of two weapons, pouch, iron flask of chakos, 25 gold lumens in silver Exarchs.

THE WESTERN LANDS

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 money is at, being a chief assassin. That's the life you want. But the one you have isn't so bad, either. It beats working in the iron mines.

Appearance:
5'2"-6'2", 90-170 lbs. Swarthy complexion, long black hair, dark eyes.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+3	+2	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	+1	0	+1

CR	HP	MR
+3	21	0

Skills:
Arimite Knife-fighting +3
Weapon <choice> +2
Weapon <choice> +1
Assassinate +5
Stealth +5
Tracking +2
Locks +3
Alchemy (Poisons) +2
Ride +1
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

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.

DRUKH HILLMAN/SHAMAN — NPC

Pity is a word that has no meaning for you and your people. It is something that others beg for when you test them with your arts of pain. They are weak, less than the lowliest among your tribe. When they hear the ancient songs that drive you towards battle, they cry in fear. They show themselves unworthy of honor in the next world, and you drive them there to receive the ministrations of your ancestors. Someday you will reclaim from them the lands that they stole from your people. If you show yourselves to be worthy, if you pass the rites of pain and terror, this will come to pass.

Appearance:
5'2"-6', 80-160 lbs. Skin and hair dyed purple, bestial features, wild gray eyes.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+3	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+3	+1	+2	0

CR	HP	MR
+4	23	+2

Skills:
War Club +2
Dagger +1
Mounted Combat +2
Climbing +2
Tracking +2
Stealth +1
Torture +2
Traps +3
Scout +2
Survival +2
Low Talislan, native
Sign, native

For Shamans, add:
Shamanism
<4 Modes of choice> +3
Music +3
Healer +3



Special Abilities:
Warriors entranced by the flutes and drums of their shamans will continue to fight even if afflicted with normally incapacitating wounds (until reaching -10 hit points).

Equipment:
Fur and bone headdress, vest, breeches, and boots of yaksha hide, stone war club, bone dagger, pouch, graymane steed (dyed purple); for shamans, add bone flute, three wooden vials (magical pigments and/or medicinal mixtures), 20 gold lumens in ivory, hide, or gold dust.

THE WESTERN LANDS

CASTABULANESE AEROMANCER — NPC

You know well the power of the elements, and of tempests. It was a storm that once caused a great windship to fall from the sky and brought your people to Castabulan so long ago. Now your people watch the skies, charting the winds and clouds as they course through the heavens. You read the signs and conjunctions, and from them divine the secrets of the elements. You predict the storms and tides, the wind currents and rains, the clouds of black lightning. From many lands sailors of the seas and skies come to Castabulan to buy your sky-charts, and your people are held in high regard. You are pleased to know that, thanks to your advice, others may be spared the fate that once befell your ancestors.

Appearance:
7'-7'4", 130-200 lbs. Deep brown skin (from exposure to the suns), amber-colored hair, females braid their hair in a variety of intricate styles.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+3	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	0	0	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	20	+5

Skills:
Elemental Magic: (Aeromancy)
<5 Modes of choice> +2
Astromancy +6

Art +2
Agriculture +2
Animal Handler +2
Artificer +2
Cook +1
Engineer (Observatory) +1
Swim +3
High Talislan, native dialect



Special Abilities:
Detect magic by sight at range of five feet; requires full concentration, roll at PER versus level of magic.

Equipment:
Loose-fitting robe, sandals, necklace of sea stones (females), scroll case (for spell scrolls and meteorological charts), pouch (for ink and writing utensils, no wealth; the Castabulanese do not use money.

AZIR ISLANDER

NPC

Strangers are the bringers of death and ruination. So the elders teach, so the histories state. They are tainted by the land they inhabit, ruled over by illusions. They have been punished for the transgressions of their ancestors, and only the Azir have been spared. The Disaster was theirs, not yours. For you have followed the ancient traditions without change. You speak the First Tongue, you wear the True Faces. You live in friendship with the creatures of the forests, of the skies, and of the seas. Like them, you were spawned from the pure elemental world, and you have guarded your part of the world well. You are not tainted. You will die before you accept such corruption.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+1	+1	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	0	+2	0

CR	HP	MR
+1	20	+1

Skills:
Doctrines (Azir religion) +3
Dance +2
Artificer (Wood) +5
Herb Lore +5
Stealth +3
Swim +3
Elder Tongue, native dialect



Special Abilities:
None.

Appearance:
5'4"-'6-2", 100-170 lbs. Dark skin, hair, and eyes. Robust build. Wear wooden masks reflecting their moods.

Equipment:
Loincloth, anklets, and bracelets of woven plant fibers, elaborate masks of carved wood (representing various moods), no wealth; the Azir have no concept of money.

THE WESTERN LANDS

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 merriment. 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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+2	+1	+2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	+1	0	+1

CR	HP	MR
+3	20	+2

Skills:
Witchcraft:
<2 Modes of choice> +1

Dagger +2
Weapon <choice> +2
Legerdemain +6
Deception +5
Stealth +3
Herb Lore +4
Guide (Silvanus) +7
Streetwise +7
Thieving Skills:
<2 of choice> +5
Performing Skills:
<2 of choice> +5
Ride +2
Low Talislan, native
Sarisa, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Appearance:
5'-6', 80-180 lbs. Topaz skin, dark eyes, black hair, slender build, neatly trimmed mustaches and beards (males), possible facial tattoos.

Equipment:
Colorful garments, including cape, beret, sash, tight-fitting hose, high boots of soft hide, ear bangles; dagger, one weapon of choice, pouch with thieves' tools, performing equipment, graymane mount, 40 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

DHUNA WITCH

"You are right to fear my powers, if your heart is as black as you accuse mine to be."

The outsiders accuse you of dark magics, of dealings with demons and devils. They know nothing of your customs. It is true that you summon servants of the forgotten gods to appear within the ancient witchgates, but the Old Ones are not demons, and the Black Covens are few in number. Most of your people worship more benign entities and embrace peaceful tenets. You affirm nature with the rituals you practice in secret among the sacred groves and rings of ancient runestones. Your craft shields you and your loved ones from werebeasts, banes, and hostile intruders. When you leave Werewood to learn more of the world, it protects you against those who would slay you as a witch and an infidel. Often times when you are abroad you pose as a Sarista, joining your distant cousins in their wanderings and reading "fortunes" for the credulous. The Sarista know you; they understand your ways better than most others. It is true that Ardan favors you. You are of a chosen people, and it matters not what the outsiders believe.

Appearance:
5'-5'10", 90-150 lbs. Olive skin, black hair, expressive features, romantic or melodramatic appearance.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
*	0	+1	*
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+1	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	18	+5

Skills:
Witchcraft:
<5 Modes of choice> +3

Doctrines +4
Staff +2
Alchemy (Elixers) +5
Healer +5
Herb Lore +5
Seduce +4
Artificer +5
Ride +4
Elder Tongue, native
Low Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities: STR -1 (females), +1 (males); CHA +6 (females), +1 (males); females can capture a man's heart with a single kiss; victims must make Willpower roll to resist, with the Dhuna's Witchcraft skill level as a negative modifier; harmful actions by the Dhuna allow victims further opportunities to resist.

Equipment:
Linen robe and tunic, sandals or boots (females); shirt, breeches, knee-high boots of soft leather (males); long cloak, pouch with three elixir vials, pouch with herbs, wooden staff, graymane steed, 50 gold lumens in rare herbs and precious stones.

THE WESTERN LANDS

GNORL RHABDOMANCER NPC

Knowledge is not to be seeded like flowers, allowed to spread like vines of rampant. It is to be kept and guarded well, as a Kasmiran hoards gold. Gold is scarce, and therein lies its value. So it is with secrets, though they are worth much more than gold to those who keep them well. Gossip and chatter is for fools; you know better. In your forest nook, communing with your spirit advisors, you gather secrets of all sorts. Visitors may find you irritable. If they have rumors and enigmas to trade, they may find you a more gracious hostess. Manners are a small price to pay for knowledge.

Appearance:
3'-4', 60-80 lbs. Wrinkled, dark brown skin, deep-set, glowing eyes, wizened features, squat physique, always female.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-2	0	+1	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+2	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	18	+4

Skills:
Witchcraft:
<6 Modes of choice> +8
Cryptomancy:
<4 Modes of choice> +6

Staff +6
Arcane Lore +14
Cryptography +14
History +12
Antiquarian +12
Healer +10
Herb Lore +10
Linguistics +8
Low Talislan, native dialect
Gnorl secret tongue, native



Special Abilities:
Night vision; Rhabdomancy.

Equipment: Voluminous robes, veiled headdress, colorful scarves and sashes, assorted rings, bracelets, and necklaces, wooden staff, leather-bound spell book with lock, satchel (for assorted medicinal mixtures, vials of incense, herbs, quill pens, vials of ink), scroll case for writings, collection of art, trinkets, and antiques, 80 gold lumens in herbs and miscellaneous artifacts; Gnorls value only secrets, however, and amass fortunes by this measure.

YRMANIAN WILDMAN

NPC

The mushroom makes you happy. When it has been long - how long? have the suns risen again? - your stomach burns, your head hurts. Your legs know it is time to go and search, your nose leads the way. Then you find the mushroom. You eat the mushroom. Then the colors return, the god Yrman speaks to you again. You hear his words when you take the singing stone, your r'ruh, and swing it above your head. When the stone bites your enemies, will they hear its words? They don't eat the mushroom. Maybe the stone just hurts. Like your head, when it forgets, when it has been long. Look - more colors.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	+3	-4	-4
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+4	+1	+6	-6

CR	HP	MR
+4	25	0

Skills:
R'ruh +4
Brawling +3
Tracking +3
Survival +2
Climbing +2
Artificer +1
Weaponer +1
Art +1
Sign, native dialect



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Loincloth, arm- and leg-wrappings, r'ruh (singing axe), pouch for skullcap, no wealth.

Appearance:
5'6"-6'2", 130-230 lbs. Light brown skin, bestial features, deep-set eyes, fangs, shaggy hair worn in braids and dredlocks daubed with colored pigments.

THE WESTERN LANDS

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 Yrmania, really. Not as cold, though. You never much cared for the cold.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+3	+4	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	+3	0	-1

CR	HP	MR
+4	24	0

Skills:
Longsword +2
Short Bow +3
Dagger +2
Brawling +1
Mounted Combat +2
Tracking (by scent) +5
Stealth +4
Traps +3
Survival +5
Weaponer +3
Artificer +3
Ride +3
Sign, native
Low Talislan, native dialect



Special Abilities:
Land on feet after falls of up to thirty feet; natural Stealth ability (+3); night vision; Sixth Sense +5; without their talismans, Jaka react to magic with INT -4.

Equipment:
Loincloth, vest, leg and arm bracers (all of boiled leather), talisman worn on thong around neck, short bow with quiver of twenty arrows, longsword, dagger, rope, graymane steed, 100 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

Appearance:
5'10"-6'2", 120-180 lbs. Sleek black fur, silvery-gray mane, blazing green eyes, lithe muscularity, features a cross between wolf and panther.

JAKA BEASTMASTER/TRADER NPC

Your ancestors ruled the northern forests. The beasts of the land and air were your followers and servants, the gift of Jakar, the first of your kind. That is lore of an age now lost. Now your lands are smaller, your people driven back by the scions of the old Archaens. You have had reason to be wary of these others, even before they brought the Great Disaster upon the world. They think of you as animals, yet they are the ones who make war, who use dangerous magics, who use their own kind for slaves. In the Brown Hills, you are still a free people. When you have contact with outsiders, it is by your own choice. Mostly, you wish only to be left alone.



Appearance:
5'10"-6'2", 120-180 lbs. Sleek black fur, silvery-gray mane, blazing green eyes, lithe muscularity, features a cross between wolf and panther.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+3	+4	-2

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+1	+3	0	-1

CR	HP	MR
+4	24	0

Skills:
Longsword +1
Short Bow +3
Dagger +2
Brawling +1
Mounted Combat +2
Tracking (by scent) +5
Stealth +4
Survival +6
Weaponer +2
Artificer +3
Ride +3
Sign, native
Low Talislan, native dialect

For Beastmasters, add:
Beast Lore +8

For Traders, add:
Merchant +6



Special Abilities:
Land on feet after falls of up to thirty feet; natural Stealth (+3); night vision; Sixth Sense +5; without their talismans, Jaka react to magic with INT -4.

Equipment:
Loincloth, vest, leg and arm bracers (all of boiled leather), talisman worn on thong around neck, short bow with quiver of twenty arrows, longsword, dagger, rope, graymane steed; for Beastmasters, add nighthawk or other animal, 50 gold lumens in skins, hides, and other valuables.

THE WESTERN LANDS

ZANDIR CHARLATAN

"Allow me to tell you of the mysteries of the Ten Thousand. Perhaps over a bottle of wine, if you'll be kind enough to pay."

It is a sad fact that many foreigners believe you to be nothing less than a fraud. Fortunately, in Zandu, you are regarded as a seer. You can recite questions from The Book of Mysteries that bring wisdom to any dilemma. You lecture the devout on street corners, and enlighten high officials in the Sultan's palace. You make your living selling magical elixirs and icons of the Ten Thousand. You never want for a warm body beside you at night. In other lands, it is more difficult for you to earn respect and lumens. There, few pay heed to the tenets of Paradoxy, and your carvings are considered novelties at best. Buyers prefer Sindaran concoctions to your own, and you are forced to sell yours at cut-rate prices. Your people are thought of as hot-blooded lechers, indiscriminate and capricious. It is sad, indeed, yet you are not disheartened. You preach, cajole, and connive in order to sway the skeptics, and perhaps also to convince yourself. For the lessons of Paradoxy are universal, and life is truly a series of questions without answers. Foreigners may believe that they understand their existence. You mean to prove that they do not.

Appearance:
5'6"-6', 100-180 lbs. Copper or cinnabar skin, dark hair, dark green eyes, skin enhanced with vividly colored pigments.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+2	+1	+2

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
0	+1	-2	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	18	+3

Skills:
Wizardry:
<4 Modes of choice> +3

Doctrines (Paradoxy) +2
Alchemy +3
Weapon <choice> +3
Deception +5
Legerdemain +5
Stealth +3
Oratory +6
Artificer (Icons) +4
Streetwise +5
Forgery +2
Low Talislan, native
High Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Silken brocade cape, velvet blousey shirt and trousers, curl-toed boots, hair confined in silver bands, leather-bound spell book, three elixirs of choice, pouch with various religious icons, choice of weapon, 50 gold lumens in Zandir crescents.

ZANDIR DUELIST

"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.

Appearance:
5'6"-6'2", 100-200 lbs. Copper or cinnabar skin, dark hair, dark green eyes, skin enhanced with vividly colored pigments.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+2	0	+1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	+2	-2	+1

CR	HP	MR
+4	20	+3

Skills:
Wizardry:
<3 Modes of choice> +2
plus Swordsmanship +1;
OR Swordsmanship +5

Weapon <choice> +1
Brawling +1
Acrobatics +4
Oratory +4
Etiquette +5
Fashion +4
Ride +4
Low Talislan, native
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Fine black iron chain mail over fine leather undergarments, velveteen cloak, knee-high boots, hair confined in silver bands, dueling sword, choice of weapon, leather-bound spell book, graymane, 100 gold lumens in Zandir crescents.

THE WESTERN LANDS

ZANN GUIDE

NPC

Paradoxy: ten thousand questions and no answers. Is it any wonder that other folk find the Zandir so foolish? But you are Zann; you are different. You have answers. They say you are stubborn, or just being contrary. When the city-dwellers come to your village to hire a Zann guide, you scoff. You look at their fancy clothes, at hands that have never known hard work, at boots unfit for woodland trails, and ask: "Are Zann stubborn because we know how to read the river currents, where to camp at night, or how to build a fire in the pouring rain? Are Zann contrary because we knew more of woods and rivers as a babe than you will ever know? If so, then I am Zann. Better that than you".

Appearance:
5'6"-6'2", 100-180 lbs. Copper or cinnabar skin, dark hair, dark green eyes.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+2	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	+1	+3	0

CR	HP	MR
+3	20	+1

Skills:
Spear +4
Weapon <choice> +2
Brawling +3
Pilot (Row boat) +4
Guide +7
Tracking +3
Survival +5
Swim +4
Ride +4
Low Talislan, native
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Rough linen shirt, tunic, and short breaches, leather boots, spear, choice of weapon, satchel, row boat with, 25 gold lumens in Zandir crescents.

HARAKIN WARRIOR

"You complain of this weather, this wind? The winds of Harak would strip the flesh off your feeble body and freeze the marrow in your bones."

Around the night fires, your clansmen tell tales of other lands: formations of human-built spires, hollow, vast enough for all the Harakin to dwell within; great plains where humans force plants to grow, so abundant that they give this food for small pieces of soft, useless metal; clans upon clans killing each other, not for sustenance but for unseen creatures from whom they plea for strength. As if strength was not something that came from oneself and one's clan, from weapons of iron, from the very fact of survival. You knew that these lands existed; you had seen them in the distance from the back of your dractyl as you killed the warriors with red skin and iron clothing. Now you feel these lands beneath your feet, and your tongue holds no words to identify or describe what you find. You can take what food you require, but you have much to learn in order to survive. There are some among the people you encounter who understand your strength and value it for their own obscure purposes. Of these, you will form a new clan, and they will teach you as your mother once did, and together you will survive. You have no doubt of this fact; however strange, there is nothing here as harsh as the land of your youth.

Appearance:
6'-6'6", 140-220 lbs. Gray skin, hard features, lean and rugged; black pigments painted around the eyes.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+3	+1	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+5	0	+3	0

CR	HP	MR
+6	30	-2

Skills:
Jang +4
Tarak +4
Krin +3
Khu +3
Brawling +2
Mounted Combat +2
Ride +4
Survival +6
Tracking +5
Weaponer +4
Animal Handler +2
Climbing +4
Sign, native
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Loincloth (males); rough fur or leather tunic (females); cowl; high boots and heavy gloves of reptile hide; fur cloak; jang (iron boomerang); khu (two-bladed knife); tarak (four-bladed axe); krin (iron crossbow); quiver with ten black iron bolts; shoulder pouch; dractyl steed with saddlebags and harness; no wealth.

THE EASTERN LANDS

CHANA WITCHDOCTOR

"When your severed head watches me consume your flesh, your spirit will become my guide. It is a better existence than the illusion you now live."

Outsiders fear you for your rituals, for the magic you wield and the bodies you devour. The False World molds them to know this fear so that they will hunt you. The swords and cages of the Kang have sent countless Chana to await their next incarnation. But the Kang, and the Nagra and Manra as well, have received your own gift of freedom from ignorant lives. You have made of them fetch spirits, and you use kesh to speak with them of how your people should act. They can never be trusted, so you require many fetches. When they advise you to travel afar, you may work for the Farad in the brewing of drugs; unlike kesh, their drugs serve only to deaden their minds and hasten their demise. You may serve as an assassin for those who wish to create terror as well as death. Your true task, though, is to follow the instructions of the spirits that guide you. Eventually, their directions will entail your death, and it is then that you will be freed. This shadow will enter into the Real World of eternal darkness and you will be united with your true self. Then, the hunt will be over, the pain will be finished, and you will wait for your brethren to join you.

Appearance:
5'10"-6'4", 110-170 lbs. Bilious green skin, cadaverous features, teeth filed to points, lacquered topknot braided with leather thongs or sinew, ritual scarring; weakened constitution from use of kesh.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	0	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-3	0	+2	+2

CR	HP	MR
+1	18	+3

Skills:
Shamanism:
<4 Modes of choice> +3
Alchemy:
(Poison, Narcotics) +5

Blowgun +2
Spear +2
Stealth +4
Tracking +2
Animal Handler +4
Artificer +4
Chanan, native
Low Talislan, basic



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Loincloth; stone-tipped spear; blowgun; pouch of 10 venomwood darts; pouch for herbs; 5 wooden vials of kesh; 3 stone vials of poison; ritual drum; shrunken head fetishes (worn on cords around neck); trained wrist viper; 40 gold lumens in narcotics, herbs, and precious stones.

CHANA WITCHMAN

NPC

This world is a test of your soul and your obedience. There are always enemies to fight, territories to capture and protect. That is the way of life, and you are well suited to it. But battle and land are not important ends. They are aspects of the False World, without true meaning. The spirits of the next world wish for you to make war. Your witchdoctors tell this to you, as they have been told by the spirits. You follow their instructions, for that is the path towards freedom from this world. If you have obeyed well, your death will end the eternal cycle. You will welcome this death, when the witchdoctors say it is your time.

Appearance:
5'10"-6'4", 110-170 lbs. Bilious green skin, cadaverous features, teeth filed to points, lacquered topknot braided with leather thongs or sinew, ritual scarring.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+2	+1	-3

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
0	0	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+3	20	0

Skills:
Blowgun +3
Spear +3
Throwing Stick +3
Dagger +2
Stealth +4
Tracking +4
Survival +5
Weaponer +1
Chanan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Loincloth; stone-tipped spear; blowgun; pouch of 10 poison darts; 3 throwing sticks; bone dagger; shoulder pouch; trained wrist viper; 25 gold lumens in narcotics, herbs, and precious stones.

THE EASTERN LANDS

MANRA SHAPECHANGER

"You find it confusing and alarming that I alter my form, but that is only because you cannot see the world through my eyes. I have seen it through yours, and so I understand."

Yesterday, you swam the murky waters of the River Chana, hunting for mudrays. Spotting a sizable specimen, you dove deep beneath the surface and caught it within your jaws. The day before, you leapt as a chig to grasp an avir in your pincers. You spent the three months prior as an elderly willowood tree, drinking water through your roots and light through your leaves. Such has been your life since your thirteenth year, when you were taught the secret of changing your form. Four months of chewing the leaves of jabutu, depriving your stomach and senses, and joining in the rituals with the other Manra have opened your mind to new thoughts and your body to new shapes. Your people have spent their existence studying the beauty of nature through the senses of many entities. You live fluidly, changing your culture as readily as your forms. Only the dangers of the jungle are constant, and the malice of the Chana and Kang. So you may leave the jungle to travel the continent towards new experiences. You embrace this change, for it will allow you to grow and provides purpose to your days.

Appearance:
5'10"-6'4", 110-170 lbs. Gray-green skin, gray-brown topknot, slender build.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+2	+2	0

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+6	0	0	0

CR	HP	MR
0	20	+3

Skills:
Shapechange +3
<3 forms of choice>

Club +3
Whipsash +5
Stealth +4
Herb Lore +5
Healer +5
Artificer +2
Linguistics:
<of Shapechange forms>
+3
Chanan, native dialect



Special Abilities:
Shapechange.

Equipment:
Abbreviated garments of woven plant fibers; necklaces (of dried flowers, woven vines, beads, and feathers); whipsash (three-stranded bolas) worn around waist; stone club; pouch for herbs; 40 gold lumens in herbs and precious stones and metals.

DAGRA SPIRIT TRACKER

"If you could see what I must see, you would know the true meaning of fear."

Your people have thousands of names for the spirits that swirl about you like a swarm of insects. The Blind do not understand these words, and to them you speak of moving lights and fluid shapes, if you mention what you sense at all. They cannot understand the danger and malice of these spirits, hungering for your soul, warded only by the spirit jar you wear around you neck. They are blessed, these ignorant fools who laugh at you. You tolerate their company and you welcome their gold, the only reward for your cursed eyes. But you have no patience for their prattle. You listen only to those with wisdom, like the tribal elders who taught you as a child to make order of the confusion that exists around you. Grown now, you have little use for your family and tribe. You rarely return to the Jade Mountains, and the futile battles with the Chana and Kang that have destroyed your ancient culture. You support yourself as a tracker for hire, following the trail of your quarry's spirit. You have walked far across the continent, never trusting a steed whose soul was not like your own. The swarming spirits are everywhere, and you cannot escape them. You desire only to suffer your fate without succumbing to terror, without screaming silently, your throat too raw to carry sound.

Appearance:
5'2"-6', 80-160 lbs. Mottled gray-green skin, black fangs, peaked skull, tiny ebony eyes.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	+2	+4	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+5	+1	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+4	24	+2

Skills:
Spirit Tracking +5

Blowgun +2
Spear +2
Dagger +1
Brawling +1
Stealth +4
Traps +3
Climbing +3
Scout +3
Herb Lore +3
Sign, native
Chanan, native
Low Talislan, basic



Special Abilities:
Can run up to thirty miles per day with ease; Spirit Tracking.

Equipment:
Loincloth (males); tunic (females); cape (all of the furry hides of winged apes); ankle and wrist bands of woven fibers; exomorph or tarkus-fang earrings; spirit jar; blowgun, pouch of twenty venomwood darts; spear; bone; 50 gold lumens in assorted currencies and precious stones.

THE EASTERN LANDS

KANG TRACKER

"Come, my pet. I may let you feed on the slave's steed when we have found him."

As a scrug you were smaller than the rest. Hunger taught you to be quick, else you would have been consumed by others of your brood. As a youth, the right to a sword was stripped from you when you proved too weak to wield it in the practice duels. Your commander gave you a backhanded slap, too ashamed of you to use his fist. You were sent to the tarkus pens with others of your size to learn the handling of that beast. You have never been allowed to forget your place. There are no dragons nor clan markings on your dagger's pommel, and your queue is only as long as your hand is wide. Upon your forearm is the kanjiko scar of your tracker unit. It marks you as subservient to others of the Crimson Horde, and only foreigners bow their heads to you. You have served as scout and border guard, scurrying back to base to report to your commander. You prefer the role of tracker, hunting for criminals, dissidents, and escaped slaves. Away from other Kang, with only your tarkus as companion, you can forget your dishonor. When you are sent outside the Empire, you can vent your anger on the outlanders who try to keep you from your prey. There is little honor in fighting slaves, but some foreigners may earn you khir.

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 forearm scar.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	+3	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	+1	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+4	28	0

Skills:
Kanquan +3
Dagger +4
Light Crossbow +4
Mounted Combat +3
Animal Handler +6
Tracking +3
Stealth +1
Tactics +4
Survival +4
Ride +4
Quan, native
Low Talislan, basic



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Strider hide armor (treat as leather) over quilted Mandalan silkcloth tunic; gauntlets; high boots; cloak; two daggers; light crossbow; quiver with 12 quarrels; pouch; tarkus tracking beast with black iron chain and muzzle; feedbag; strider steed; 75 gold lumens.

KANG WARRIOR-PRIEST

"Every strike is an offering to the Red God."

When you were still a mindless scrug lapping in the blood of your sire, the priests saw the Red God's mark upon you. They took you from the spawning pool of your kindred and raised you in the vaulted blackness of Zoriah's temple. It was there that you learned the Nine Ways and crafted your body into a weapon. The priests were as cruel to you as the smith to molten iron, but they were your siblings, never your masters. A Warrior-Priest has no master or clan and bows to no one, not even to the Red God. Zoriah cares nothing for praise and supplication but values one thing only: glory in combat. To this you dedicated your body and your soul. In your seventh year, you reached maturity and received your birthright as a Kang and as a Priest: a set of twin dragon-pommel daggers, the clan markings burned away. After twelve years at the temple, the priests flung open the doors and set you on the road. You were given the kanjiko tattoo that distinguishes a Zorian disciple as an outward symbol of the Red God's Mark. On that day you began the Paths of Blood. You walk the Paths still. All battles are Zoriah's holy places, and you long to worship at them.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+4	+2	0	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	0	+1	0

CR	HP	MR
+6	28	0

Skills:
Kanquan +4
Dagger +4
Falchion +3
Mounted Combat +3
Doctrines (Zoriah) +5
Tactics +4
Survival +3
Ride +4
Quan, native
Low Talislan, basic



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Red iron battle armor over quilted Mandalan silkcloth tunic; red iron gauntlets and helm; spiked silver rings around queue; falchion sword; twin dragon-pommel daggers; strider steed; 200 gold lumens.

THE EASTERN LANDS

KANG WARRIOR

NPC

It is a proud time to be Kang. No longer do your people bow their heads to the indolent, bloated Quan, swallowing your khir for the sake of gold. You have taken what rightfully belongs to the Crimson Horde, to your Warlord, and to the Red God, Zoriah. Now, the slaves of the Empire know their true masters. Now, the cities are fit for warriors. Now, you will seize the lands long denied you, and you will rid this world of the Saurans, the Harakin, the Chana. You will live as you should: charging towards victory on the back of your strider, falchion held high, shouting the name of your clan. The other nations will tremble at the sound. You are the Kang, and you are strong.

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 scars.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+4	+2	0	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	0	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+6	28	0

Skills:
Kanquan +4
Falchion +4
Dagger +3
Weapon <choice> +3
Mounted Combat +4
Tactics +6
Survival +4
Ride +5
Quan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Black iron battle armor over quilted Mandalan silkcloth tunic; black iron gauntlets and helm; iron and silver queue rings; iron collar and armbands; falchion sword; twin dragon-pommel daggers; choice of weapon; strider steed; 100 gold lumens.

QUAN PARIAH

NPC

You have thought of ending your life. Your father did so, asking the servants to kill him until he found one who was willing to comply. It took six stabs for the Vajra to find the heart amidst the folds of flesh. You do not wish to die in such pain. You struggle on within the decay of Tian. The bodies have long since been removed, but the city still reeks of death. The only visitors are the Kang, come to watch you live as beasts. The Golden City is now a vast cage. At rare moments, you are driven to plan elaborate plots to reclaim what once was yours. All of your people are stricken with such bouts of mania. Mostly, however, you feel only despair.

Appearance:
5'-6', 120-220 lbs. Sallow skin, physique lean from hunger.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	-1	0	-2

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
-2	-1	-2	+2

CR	HP	MR
-2	16	-2

Skills:
Dagger +3
Administrator +4
Survival +4
Laborer +3
Quan, native
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Tattered finery or makeshift garments; dagger; no wealth.

THE EASTERN LANDS

ISPASIAN MERCANTILIST

"It's not personal. It's business."

On the top floor of the highest tower in Ispasia, a group of individuals who regard themselves as the true rulers of the Kang Empire meet daily to decide the fate of a world. Around a table of costly blue jade and fine whitewood, they look out upon a city of elegance and grace and over the dark waters of the Gulf of Quan and the Sea of Madness. Ispasia thrives, more than any other city in the Empire, but it does so quietly. Your people suffered the Quan, despite their pomposity. They cultivated decadence, and you profited by catering to their excesses. Now you suffer the Kang, despite their contempt. They cultivate war, and you will profit from their excesses as well. And when the Kang's aggression has brought destruction down upon them, you will simply find a new path of prosperity. For you understand that commerce is the true realm of power. It provides for all the needs and desires of life, and it brings the only ally whose loyalty can never be questioned: profit. Among Ispasians, kinship and friendship are matters of business. You do not let feelings cloud your judgement. You endure no conflicting obligations, judging opportunities only on their risks and rewards. You have learned to calculate probability with a clear precision. You were bred to succeed, and know enough to avoid the pitfalls of excess and ostentation. You plan your fortunes towards a chair around that table of white and amber, and you will do what must be done to achieve your goal.

Appearance:
5'10"-6'4", 100-180 lbs. Lemon-yellow skin, slender physique, expressionless features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-2	0	+1	0

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
0	0	+2	+3

CR	HP	MR
-1	19	0

Skills:
Merchant +9
Litigator +6
Diplomacy +8
Linguistics +4
Appraiser +6
Antiquarian +4
Cultures +3
Bribe +6
Interrogate +4
Quan, native
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Numerous fine yet understated silkcloth robes; jewelry (costly but tasteful, like all your possessions); ledgers; collection of antiques; a well-kept manor house and estate in Ispasia; various slaves (typically accompanied abroad by a Monad servitor, a Mandalan scribe, and several bodyguards); 15,000 gold lumens in various currencies, investments, and property.

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 can feel it in their hearts. And someday, they will awaken and see that the legend is true.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+2	+2	+1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	+1	+3	+1

CR	HP	MR
0	20	+3

Skills:
Mysticism:
<5 Modes of choice> +4

Mandaquan +7
Short Staff (parrying) +4
Stealth +5
Acrobatics +3
Traps +3
Locks +5
Sabotage +7
Meditation +4
Artificer +5
Trade Skill <choice> +5
Quan, native
High Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

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; length of silk cord worn around waist; pouch with thieves' tools; no wealth if enslaved; escaped Mandalans may have fled with up to 40 gold lumens.

THE EASTERN LANDS

MANDALAN SAVANT

NPC

Your path in life is attuned to the forces of nature. Your calling is one of wisdom and temperance, knowledge and beauty, patience and subtlety. The Kang do not recognize the subtle, nor any of these civilized virtues. They denigrate your scholars, your artists, even your farmers. They do not perceive the lessons of your people's long history. They believe you are chained. But one cannot chain a peoples' spirit, or their hearts. Although your people now bend to the will of the Kang, it is as the branches of the willowood bend beneath the weight of the snow. One day, spring will return, and you will again reach for the sun.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+3	+1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+3	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	18	+3

Skills:
Mysticism:
<4 Modes of choice> +3

Mandaquan +3
Meditation +5
Agriculture +5
Herb Lore +5
History +5
Art or Music +4
Scholar or Trade Skills:
<3 of choice> +5
Quan, native
High Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Silkcloth robe; sandals; shoulder pouch; assorted tomes; tools; and instruments; no wealth if enslaved; escaped Mandalans may have fled with 40 gold lumens.

SUNRA AQUAMANCER

"I understand that you may be wary of traveling so far from the sight of land. Yet you have nothing about which to worry, as you are in my learned hands."

For three days during the Septenarial Concordance, Isalis is entirely under water. The high tides submerge the Coral City regularly throughout the year, driving the Kang toward their shoreline settlements for precious hours. Yet these three days in Zar are a time of celebration and contemplation for your people, a symbolic reminder of your hope for freedom and of the reality of occupation. Among the Sunra, the Aquamancers are accorded grave respect. To your people you are seers, as well as healers and navigators. In the eyes of the Kang, you are potential leaders of rebellion, and they subject you to small humiliations. In the lands of foreigners, you are curiosities and refugees, objects of pity as much as potent scholars and mages. They find you somber and withdrawn, pained by your separation from your people and from your home. You value the soothing eddies of the Inland Sea, the Mother of Life; the delicate songs of the Moonfish, your ancestors' spirits; the pastel coral buildings and twisting canals where you swam as an eft. Above all else, you wish to stand upon the prow of a dragon barque, directing it towards the open sea. Until then, you will ever be a slave.

Appearance:
5-10'-6'4", 120-180 lbs. Skin covered with fine silvery scales, deep blue eyes.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+2	+1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0*	+1	+3

CR	HP	MR
0	19	+5

Skills:
Elemental Magic: (Aquamancy) <6 Modes of choice> +4

Pilot (Dragon barque) +5
Cartography +4
Astromancy +4
Doctrines +4
Healer +4
Agriculture +1
Artisan +2
Artificer +2
Song +3
Swim +9
Quan, native
High Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
Semi-aquatic; can breath underwater for up to twenty-four hours; can survive out of water for indefinite periods without discomfort; SPD +4 underwater.

Equipment:
Robes and headband of Mandalan silkcloth; sandals; boots of rainbow kra hide; astrolabe; spell book; kra scrimshaw case for sea charts and scrolls; quill pens; crystal vial of sepia ink; pouch; no wealth if enslaved; escaped Aquamancers may have fled with 50 gold lumens in precious stones.

THE EASTERN LANDS

SUNRA MARINER

NPC

Your dreams are of the ocean. Aboard a dragon barque, free of soldiers and swords, headed towards the rising suns. For now, it is just a fantasy. The Kang are easily provoked, and they would not hesitate to damn the River Shan, choking your Mother Sea. You owe to Her your lives and your culture, and you will not abandon Her to a slow and cruel death. Some small freedoms are left to you. At home within the walls of Isalis, you live by the laws and manners of your ancestors. On board your ship, the Kang show their ignorance and defer to you. Yet this empire degrades you by its very existence. Someday, it will crumble into the waters. You wait for that tide to rise.

Appearance:
5-10'-6'4", 120-180 lbs. Skin covered with fine silvery scales, deep blue eyes.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+1	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0*	0	+1

CR	HP	MR
+3	20	+1

Skills:
Spear +2
Dagger +2
Pilot (Dragon barque) +5
Cartography +4
Astromancy +1
Healer +1
Agriculture +2
Artisan +2
Artificer +2
Song +3
Swim +9
Quan, native



Special Abilities:
Semi-aquatic; can breath underwater for up to twenty-four hours; can survive out of water for indefinite periods without discomfort; SPD +4 underwater.

Equipment:
Robes, tunic, and headband of Mandalan silkcloth; sandals; boots of rainbow kra hide; astrolabe; spear; dagger; kra scrimshaw case for sea charts and scrolls; quill pens; crystal vial of sepia ink; no wealth, if enslaved; escaped Sunra may have fled with 40 gold lumens.

VAJRA ENGINEER

"Our labor is the hand of Terra. May it break the chains that bind our children."

You awoke from forty years of hibernation to a life of slavery. The caretaker hummed to you, too low for the Kang guards to hear, and held you gently to ease your shaking. In the language that her voice had taught to your sleeping mind, you thanked her for her love and her labor. Then you asked her what all Vajra ask: "What will become of us?" She answered as she always had: "As Terra wills." And as they had always done, the Kang knocked her to the ground for invoking the forbidden name of your Goddess. She rose to her feet, slowly, the Dark Fire controlled within, and brought you forth through the caverns of Karang to be introduced to your people. Wherever you have toiled in the years since, your thoughts have returned to the burrows where the Kang hold your future hostage. The precious minerals you have mined for them, the roads and cities you have designed and constructed for them, the wars you have helped to fight for them - all were completed with efficient skill and without complaint, for they were necessary to keep your children alive. One day, through your efforts, by Terra's will, you will return to the Vajran Hills. There, emergent Vajra and caretakers will share that same conversation, but they will do so standing strong and standing free.

Appearance:
4'8"-5'4", 140-200 lbs. Bodies covered with overlapping orange-brown plates, squat, barrel-like torso, heavy limbs.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+3	0	-1*	-1

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+4	-2	+2	+1

CR	HP	MR
+3	28	0

Skills:
Iron Spear +3
Engineer +8
Geography +7
Artificer +6
Artisan +6
Miner +8
Quan, native



Special Abilities:
Plated skin equals three points of armor; burrow in ground (one foot per round); nearsighted, but keen hearing at PER +4.

Equipment:
Loincloth; wide belt for tools; cloak (for ceremonial occasions); iron spear; shoulder pack; no wealth, if enslaved; escaped Vajra may have fled with 40 gold lumens in precious stones and metals.

THE EASTERN LANDS

MONDRE KHAN RAIDER

"Leave quickly, before the beast within drives me to tear away your limbs."

You have fought your entire life against two enemies: the Kang, and the beast within. Skin the hue of blood, eyes as white as stars, wrapped in iron, the Kang hunt you with their chained, baying beasts. That foe can be taken unaware, torn by rasp and claw, stung by your blade stars. That foe can be taught to respect and fear the Mondre Khan. That foe can be defeated. The beast that lives within your soul, inhuman, unleashed by instinct, ignorant of strategy and sacrifice - it consumes your waking thoughts and tosses you in violent dreams. That foe drives you to betray your band, to pause in battle to feed upon the slain. That foe is the howl upon your lips when your purpose urges stealth. That foe taunts your Mansoul for its high thoughts, its poetry, its compassion, its courage. That foe has driven you at times from your band in shame, fighting to reclaim your control and self-respect. That foe grows in your heart an anger against those who do not need to battle it. That foe is eternal. You will never know peace.

Appearance:
6'-6'6", 160-250+ lbs. Mane of coarse black hair, long fringe of fur running down back of legs and arms, bestial features, claws, squat and powerfully built, leathery brown skin.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+3	+2	+2	-2

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+2	+1	-1	-1

CR	HP	MR
+4	24	-2

Skills:
Rasp +4
Blade Star +4
Brawling +3
Assassinate +4
Climbing +2
Scout +5
Stealth +4
Sabotage +4
Survival +4
Weaponer +2
Oratory +2
Chanan, native
Sign, native



Special Abilities:
Claws can inflict DR 2 + STR and can be used to climb at +3 ability.

Equipment:
Leather and plate armor; hide loincloth; rasp (saw-toothed blade); six blade stars; caltrops; pouch; rope and small grapnel; tinderbox; 20 gold lumens in precious stones, gold dust, ivory, or captured items.

SAURAN DRAGON RIDER

NPC

The Goddess Satha forges you, as you forge your weapons in the mounds of fire. You must be as hard as the red iron, for the Kang are of this metal as well. Once, you marched far into their lands to the east, driven back only by an early winter. Now, they harass your people, driving you into the lands of the Araq, the beasts who hunt your dragon steeds. But Satha's fire is within your heart, and it warms your blood and banishes the cold. The priestesses give you icons to help stoke the fires within. They read the omens and guide you with the wisdom of Satha. You will not be broken.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+5	-2	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+4	-2	+1	-2

CR	HP	MR
+5	30	-2

Skills:
War Whip +4
War Axe +4
Dagger +3
Brawling +4
Mounted Combat +4
Survival +5
Animal Handler +4
Ride +6
Sauran, native
plus one of:
Weaponer +4
Armorer +4
Artificer +4
Artisan +4



Special Abilities:
Hide provides one point of armor; immunity to poison; can use tail as weapon (DR 6 + STR); rendered sluggish by cold (-2 to Action Table rolls); unaffected by heat (half damage from fire); ten percent chance of having chameleon-like ability to change coloring at will (roll during character creation).

Appearance:
6'6"-7', 350-450 lbs. Scaly rust-brown hide, reptilian features, clawed hands and feet, powerful jaws lined with rows of sharp teeth, heavy tail.

Equipment:
Abbreviated garments of furs and hides, red iron bracers and dragon icon, Sauran war axe, Sauran war whip, dagger, pouch, 50 gold lumens in uncut firegems.

BATREAN PARAMOUR

"Come the rising suns, you'll remember nothing of this night. Only the pleasurable ache of your body and the lightness of your purse will evidence that I ever visited your room."

This is your third life, and you mean to make the most of it. The first life was your childhood on Batre, among the brutish males of your race and the slime-coated Imrian occupiers. You remember fondly the elder women and their teachings in the arts of magic and subtle influence. All else of that time is violence and sadness. The second life was your time as a slave and concubine. Your master had the cold heart of a Sauran, and you still bear the scars of his discipline upon your back. You listened and watched, studied the nature of power in this world of cities, and waited with patience and caution to seize your freedom. This third life is dangerous still; Batreans are valuable slaves, and you must often disguise your heritage. Yet opportunities abound; even without resorting to your pheromones, men are easy to manipulate, and you have steeled yourself against their touch. Sometimes, you merely take their wealth and cloud their memories. More often, you gather allies, knowledge, favors, and influence. To find scintilla, one must search the nests of raknids, and the contacts you acquire are often quite distasteful. Yet you intend to secure the power you need to place yourself beyond your past. Your children will never know your sufferings.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-2	+1	0	+6
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+2	+4

CR	HP	MR
0	18	+3

Skills:
Natural Magic:
<4 Modes of choice> +3
Weapon <choice> +2
Alchemy (Elixirs) +1
Dance +7
Seduce +6
Lip-reading +5
Deception +2
Stealth +3
Forgery +2
Cultures +3
Chanan, native
Low Talislan, native
High Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
Beguile by scent; males (other than Batrean and Imrian) must make Willpower roll to resist any suggestion made by the Batrean female.

Appearance:
4'6"-5'6", 80-110 lbs. Ivory-skinned, hair dyed sapphire blue or emerald green (naturally a pale green); often disguised as a member of another race.
Note: Batrean females can bear children by males of certain other humanoid races, although they are quite skilled at preventing unwanted pregnancies. Such offspring will only rarely possess the mother's ability to beguile by scent; on the positive side, they will never resemble Batrean males, instead acquiring a mixture of both parents' physical characteristics.

Equipment:
Simple garments for travel; translucent linen robe; pouch (for herbs, dyes, etc); 1 concealed weapon of choice; fan; 3 vials of elixirs; 40 gold lumens in assorted coins and valuables (often stolen).

THE SOUTHERN RIM

BATREAN MALE

NPC

The thornwood hurts you. Sometimes you are angry, and you try to break the thornwood. The scaled ones don't like that. They punish you if you do not do as they say. You have not hunted in a long time. Many moons. Many years, you think. You don't remember well. In the thornwood, every day is the same. There is nothing worth remembering. They give you bad food. Some days, it makes you sick. They don't let you play with the bone dice anymore. They have taken the bone dice away. When they do let you out of the thornwood, they want you to mate with the females. They prod you with spears, until you mate. You would like to kill the scaled ones. But they are too many, and you are too few.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+6	-3	-2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	-2	0	-4

CR	HP	MR
+4	30	-4

Skills:
Club +2
Dagger +1
Torture +2
Traps +2
Survival +4
Gambling +2
Chanan, native



Special Abilities:
Immune to Batrean female's ability to beguile by scent.

Appearance:
7'-8', 250-350+ lbs. Dingy yellow skin, matted green hair, sloping shoulders, muscular physique.

Equipment:
Loincloth; giant wooden club; stone dagger; pouch; no wealth.

SAWILA SPELL-WEAVER

NPC

Arial lifted you upon Her wings and settled you gently upon this island of Fahn. She taught you to worship Her through your voice and your movements, in imitation of Her avir children. For your faith and your worship, She grants you protection against those who would harm you and take you to less peaceful lands. When the slavers come your people join as one to weave the ancient spell-songs and summon the Goddess. Then the gentle winds grow fierce, and the seas churn in anger. Sometimes the slavers escape, and sometimes they take a few of your people. But they have come to fear the wrath of Arial, and they do not come to Fahn often. And so you and your people raise your voices, to sing the ancient spell-song of thanks to the Goddess.

Appearance:
5'4"-6', 80-140 lbs. Pale white skin, slightly built, mane of colorful plumes along the head and neck.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-2	+1	+2	+5
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-2	+1	0	+3

CR	HP	MR
-2	18	+4

Skills:
Natural Magic:
<5 Modes of choice> +3
Song +5
Dance +7
Artificer +6
Swim +3
Chanan, fluent
Sign, native



Special Abilities:
Spell-Weaving.

Equipment:
Costume of colorful feathers; combs made of sea dragon scales; necklaces of seeds and shells; feather fan; wind chimes; no wealth - the Sawila use necklaces of shells as currency or for barter.

THE SOUTHERN RIM

MANGAR CORSAIR

"Surrender and you will die a swift death. If you don't, we will torture you first."

Your first memories are of violent storms on the Far Seas. Your mother says you were born on a carrack. The man who claims he's your father wasn't there. He has since lost two fingers and many lumens to you in ska-wae. You were allowed to shave your head on your twelfth birthday, and earned your sea dragon tattoo on your sixteenth, after commanding your first vessel. You lost count of your kills after fifty, but some stand out in your mind: the Na-Ku witchdoctor you dismembered over five hours, the Kang you blinded and forced to swim until he drowned. They were sworn enemies, and they deserved no less. You spend months at a time on the mainland now, studying your prey - the trading companies - and negotiating "alliances" with some. For a large enough tribute, you'll attack the ships of their rivals. For an additional amount, you'll promise not to raid their own ships. The mainland poses unfamiliar threats, and these you welcome with open arms and drawn scimitar. But though there is plunder to be had, nothing will keep you long from the sea. You will die where you were born, on the rolling decks of a carrack. And you will take many to the waters with you on that distant day.

Appearance:
5'8"-6'4", 130-230+ lbs. Dark brown skin, narrow eyes; shaved head; long mustache (males); long scalp-lock, confined by metal ring (females); sea dragon tattoos on chest, back, or arms.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	+1	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	0	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+5	25	-1

Skills:
Cutlass +2
Dagger +3
Brawling +4
Pilot (Carrack) +7
Appraiser (Treasure) +2
Gambling +5
Torture +6
Deception +4
Swim +5
Sea Nomad, native
Sign, native
Low Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
High boots; loose pantaloons; blouse (females only); brass armbands; earrings; two curved daggers; belt-sash; cutlass; hide pouch for ska-wae dice; corsairs based in the Mangar Isles have access to a carrack; 50 gold lumens in assorted coins and valuables.

NA-KU CANNIBAL

NPC

There is never enough food. The King is always hungry, and you must spend your days searching for his meals. There are many beasts on your island and in the waters, and you hunt these creatures in your canoes. When the beasts are scarce, you must row across the waters to find other prey. Sometimes, you find humanoids. You hope to find many of them. If the King is satisfied for a short time, there may be scraps to fill your own stomach. The witchdoctors tell you what the King wants. Sometimes, he wants you to dance and scream in his honor. Sometimes, he wants you to mate. You enjoy those times. Someday, he may wish to feed on you. That is the day you fear.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	0	0	-4
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+3	0	-1	-2

CR	HP	MR
+3	18	-3

Skills:
Spear +2
Short Bow +3
Dagger +2
Survival +4
Pilot (Canoe) +3
Tracking +2
Chanan, native

Note: Na-Ku Witchdoctors possess no actual spell casting abilities.



Special Abilities:
Prehensile tail (grasp with normal STR and DEX, but incapable of fine manipulation).

Appearance:
5'-5'6", 90-130 lbs. Oily, indigo-blue skin, yellow eyes, skull-like visage, serpentine tail, hunched torso.

Equipment:
Loincloth of animal hide; necklace of humanoid teeth and bones; short bow; quiver with twelve venomwood arrows; bone spear; bone dagger; dugout canoe; no wealth - Na-Ku value only food to feed their King.

THE SOUTHERN RIM

SUN-RA-SAN DRAGON HUNTER

"Until you've sailed the open seas in pursuit of a sea dragon, you have not known freedom."

You are of the true Sun-Ra, those who live free to hunt in the manner of your ancestors. Your dragon barques sail the Far Seas and beyond, searching for signs of your ancient rival and prey. In your youth you learned to navigate by astrolabe and chart, to climb the riggings, to section and preserve the meat of your catch, to harvest kelp and mollusks, to battle with spear and dagger - all the essential skills of life. You were twenty-six, barely mature, when you were first allowed to wield the harpoon to grant your foe an honorable death. The sea dragons sustain your people, providing you with meat, oil, ivory, and scales, your most vital resources. They grant to you a worthy life, yet you have always known sadness. Your siblings are slaves in the land of your ancestors and your Mother sea is barred with earthen dams. Under the ocean at each new moon, you sing of your sorrow, and with each full moon, you sing of freedom to come. Sur-San led your people to freedom through his prowess as warrior, hunter, navigator, and scholar. Through his teachings, the harpoon of the Sun-Ra-San will someday find the heart of the Kang. They are not dragons, but their death will still be glorious.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	+1	+3	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	0*	0	+1

CR	HP	MR
+5	22	+1

Skills:
Harpoon +4
Spear +4
Dagger +3
Survival +6
Pilot (Dragon barque) +5
Cartography +4
Artificer +1
Artisan +2
Song +3
Swim +9
Sun-Ra-San (ancestral tongue), native
Sign, fluent



Special Abilities:
Semi-aquatic; can breath underwater for up to twenty-four hours; can survive out of water for indefinite periods without discomfort; SPD +4 underwater.

Appearance:
6'-6'4", 150-220 lbs. Skin covered with fine silvery scales, deep blue eyes.

Equipment:
Armor of sea dragon scales; boots of rainbow kra hide; bone spear; bone dagger; dragon hunter's harpoon; astrolabe; kra scrimshaw case for sea charts; quill pens; crystal vial of sepia ink; dragon hunters based in the Scimitar Isles have access to a dragon barque; 40 gold lumens in pearls, scavenged treasure, and mixed coins.

GREEN MAN SYMBIONT

NPC

You grew from a seedling with the knowledge that all plants possess. You know to reach towards the suns, for their light nourishes you. You know to drink from the earth, where the water is rich with life. You know to exchange pollen, so that your buds will grow to be healthy. There is much to learn during your life, however, and many cousins to teach you. The trees hold great stores of wisdom, running through their veins like sap. You have much to teach as well, and you tend to your family. The d'oko, more than any others, are your true companions, and you cannot imagine an existence apart from them. You will never have to, as long as your family can keep the slavers away.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-4	+4	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	+3	0	+4

CR	HP	MR
-5	10	0

Skills:
Influence Plants +6
Traps +5
Stealth +5
Herb Lore +5
Artificer +1
Language of Plants, native
Sign, basic



Special Abilities:
Speak with plants; Influence Plants.

Appearance:
3'-3'6", 40-50 lbs. Mossy green skin and hair, bright yellow eyes.

Equipment:
D'oko (living source of food and shelter); loincloth and vest of soft; woven mosses; no wealth.

THE SOUTHERN RIM

MOORG-WAN WARRIOR

NPC

The Mud-God Moorg speaks to the shamans. The shamans say that Moorg desires the blue stones, so you dig in the mud and slime to find these things. They say that Moorg hates the Ahazu. So you fight the four-armed devils for Moorg, and take their lands whenever you can. The shamans say the Mud-God wants more Moorg-Wan to worship Him. So you fight the others for the right to mate. The shamans say do not break the taboos, or you will anger Moorg and he will punish you. You listen to the shamans when they teach you these things. You do not want Moorg to punish you. If you obey the shamans, Moorg will be happy. So you obey.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+4	-3	0	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	-2*	0	-3

CR	HP	MR
+4	28	-1

Skills:
Bwan +4
Dagger +3
Brawling +5
Engineer (Mud mining) +5
Dredging +6
Weaponer +4
Swim +7
Moorg-Wan, native
Sign, fluent

Note: Moorg-Wan shamans possess no actual magical abilities.



Special Abilities:
Amphibious; SPD +2 in mud or water; can strike with claws and tail for eight points damage each; can use tail simultaneously versus opponents attacking from behind; skin provides one point of armor; +5 to resist being tripped, knocked off balance, forced back, etc.

Appearance:
6'-6'4", 300-460+ lbs. Large folds of brown skin, four legs, heavy tail, toad-like features, webbed and clawed hands and feet.

Equipment:
Bwan (thornwood club); thorn dagger; sack with cord; 50 gold lumens in sapphires, amber, and other precious stones.

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.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+3	+4	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	+4	+1	-1

CR	HP	MR
+5	28	-2

Skills:
Matsu +4
Gwanga +4
Shield +2
Brawling +2
Guard +3
Stealth +2
Survival +3
Tactics +4
Artificer +1
Weaponer +3
Ahazu, native
Sign, native
Low Talislan, basic



Special Abilities:
Can make one additional attack or parry each round, without penalty - this does not apply to dodging, movement, or non-combat activities; skin striations provide +3 bonus to stealth attempts in their native territories; shan-ya battle madness.

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.

THE SOUTHERN RIM

AHAZU WARRIOR

NPC

There is the hunt, and there is war. This is what it means to be Ahazu. If you cannot hunt, you will starve. If the prey is gone - if you have killed it all or it has escaped you - then your tribe must move on. If you do not make war upon your enemies - the Moorg-Wan, the Imrians - then your God will not hear your battle cries, and you will be captured and taken from your jungles. If the Hunter-Chief or the War-Chief can no longer lead, then they will step aside. If you grow too slow or weak to hunt and fight, then you will go to Leaper's Ridge to die. You will scream the savage war-cry until you breathe no more. That is what it means to be Ahazu.



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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+3	+4	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	+4	+1	-1

CR	HP	MR
+5	28	-2

Skills:
Matsu +4
Gwanga +4
Shield +2
Brawling +2
Stealth +2
Survival +5
Tactics +4
Artificer +1
Weaponer +3
Ahazu, native
Sign, native



Special Abilities:
Can make one additional attack or parry each round, without penalty - this does not apply to dodging, movement, or non-combat activities; skin striations provide +3 bonus to stealth attempts in their native territories; shan-ya battle madness.

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.

GAO SEA ROGUE

"I may be a pirate, madam, but I am a pirate with manners."

It is a proud life to be Gao. Most Talislantans are mired in petty laws, traditions, and bigotry. They are imprisoned by the rich and the strong. Your people are beyond such restraints. You are pirates and thieves, and the laws of other nations do not apply your kind. You are the dispossessed and the abandoned, and you have created your own history through ingenuity and force of will. You are the despised and the enslaved, and you respect your compatriots regardless of their ancestry or their past. The city that is your home and your haven is an oddity to other Talislantans. They hear rumors that most citizens are related by multiple marriages, that a child may have nine parents and countless siblings. They whisper of a Thieves' Code of Honor, of seven secret passwords, and of feeding those who betray the Gao to demons of the sea. They tell tales of your gallantry towards the innocent and of your mercilessness towards slavers and spies. They know these truths, because the Gao desire it so. They cheer for you, for you do what they would never dare. When you walk among them on the mainland or when you encounter them at sea, you turn this sentiment to your advantage, to lining your purse with lumen. Others may forget, but you are always a thief. The role of the hero is simply a bonus.

Appearance:
5'4"-6'4", 80-240 lbs. Racially mixed; features vary according to ancestry: The physical characteristics and attributes listed reflect a Gao of indeterminate ancestry, the intermingled population of Gao-Din. Gao Sea Rogues may, instead, be of practically any specific racial background; for such a character, replace the characteristics and attributes with those of a member of the selected race or species, adjust the total skill ratings accordingly, and add the appropriate native language (Sea Nomad and Low Talislan would then be "fluent").

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+2	0	+3
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	+2	-1	+1

CR	HP	MR
+3	21	+3

Skills:
Dueling Sword +4
OR
Magic Order <choice>: <4 Modes of choice> +2

Weapon <choice> +1
Evade +5
Pilot <choice of craft> +8
Swim +5
Appraiser (Treasure) +3
Deception +3
Underworld +6
Stealth +3
Thieving Skills: <2 of choice> +3
Sea Nomad, native
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
Possible, according to ancestry.

Equipment:
Diverse, flamboyant garments - including cloaks, sashes, tunics, pantaloons, bandannas, ear baubles, eye-patches, and high boots; dueling sword or spell book; choice of weapon; if based in Gao-Din, may have access to a pirate ship; 50 gold lumens in assorted coins and valuables.

THE SOUTHERN RIM

IMRIAN SLAVER

NPC

You are of the First Race, the rightful lords of Talislanta. All others deserve to be your slaves. If the others do not recognize your claims it is because they are fools, too ignorant to know the truth. They say that you are a primitive people; if you are primitive, then why is it you can breathe both water and air and they cannot?. They find your habits repulsive - you find theirs equally so. You ignore the smooth-skins. You are interested only in power - enough power to reclaim your lost empire, piece by piece. You will take many slaves and sell them; you will rise within the hierarchy of your people, building your dwellings ever higher above the lagoons of Kragan. Your people will grow stronger until you have the power to enslave the other races. Then you will teach them the truth.

Appearance:
6'-6'6", 200-280+ lbs. Yellow-green scaly skin, coated with translucent slime, webbed hands and feet, double row of sharp fangs, muscular, sloping shoulders.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+4	-4	0	-3
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	-2*	0	-1

CR	HP	MR
+4	28	-3

Skills:
Capture-pole +2
Oc +2
Survival +3
Traps +3
Stealth +6
Swim +8
Pilot (Coracle) +4
Animal Handler +3
Appraiser (Slaves) +6
Merchant +5
Piscine, native
Low Talislan, basic



Special Abilities: Amphibious; SPD +5 in water; hide provides 1 PR of armor; claws inflict DR 2 +STR; immune to Batrean females' beguiling scent; slime coating allow survival out of water (up to one week, half this time in hot, dry climates).

Equipment: Loincloth of kra hide; necklace of brass-ring currency; capture-pole; oc (barbed bola) with shoulder case; shoulder pouch; water-skin filled with brine; coracle with chained kra team; 25 gold lumens in assorted currencies, plus 15 gold lumens in Imrian brass rings.

JHANGARAN MERCENARY

"!Hear! Run now, or we must fight."

You fight to eat. In Jhangara, you fight for marsh hunters or mud miners. They hate each other, and so they pay you to fight the mercenaries of their enemies. There are many of you, and if some of your clan die, there'll be more food for the rest. They pay you with food and scintilla and amber. When you have no one to fight, you wait at Jhangkin and scrounge for slugs. When there's chakos or wine, you drink and feel the battle rage. When outsiders come, they hire you to battle in distant lands. You don't care who you fight, as long as you're given gold and food and drink. When your job is done, you use gold to buy more food and more drink. When your gold runs out, and your scintilla and amber, you will hunt or steal to get more gold. Outsiders hate you. They look at you like chigs, like vermin. They put you in stables with your marsh strider, their equs, and the other beasts. You know the equs laugh at you. The Aamanians don't laugh at you. Others of your clan have joined with them. They've traded their black wrappings for white armor. But their god doesn't let them drink. Maybe they don't need to drink, if they have enough food. Maybe you'll join them, too, if the priests with maces ask you. For now, you fight, you eat, you survive. That is your life.

Appearance:
5'7"-6'7", 100-200 lbs. Marbled brown and sepia-colored skin, elongated limbs, elliptical cranium, pinched, angular features, hairless.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+1	+2	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	0	-1	-1

CR	HP	MR
+4	22	-4

Skills:
Weapon <choice> +2
Weapon <choice> +1
Brawling +1
Mounted Combat +1
Ride +4
Tracking +3
Stealth +3
Traps +3
Interrogate +3
Low Talislan, native
Sign, basic



Special Abilities:
None; Outcasts are regarded by other Jhangarans to have CHA -10; Outcasts have skills as previous profession.

Equipment:
Loincloth; brief laced cloth vest (females); arm and leg wrappings; cloak (all of black linen); backpack; choice of two weapons; flask of liquor; marsh strider steed; 20 gold lumens in assorted currencies, scintilla, and precious stones.

THE SOUTHERN RIM

JHANGARAN MARSH DWELLER NPC

Your villages are crowded; there are too many mouths to feed, and not enough food. When you go in search of mud-slugs, water raknids hunt for your flesh. The settlements are ridden with filth and disease. Clouds of flits hover above the stagnant water-holes, and the air is thick with the stench of the sewage ditches. Sometimes the traders come down river, to buy scintilla, sapphires, and amber from your people. That is good, for they pay in coin or barter. But when the traders bring chakos, you drink with the others of your village. Then many fight and die in fits of anger. It is not good when these things happen. But at least there are less mouths to feed.

Appearance:
5'7"-6'7", 100-200 lbs. Marbled brown and sepia-colored skin, elongated limbs, elliptical cranium, pinched, angular features, hairless.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+1	+2	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	0	-2	-1

CR	HP	MR
+3	20	-4

Skills:
Javelin +2
Dagger +1
Brawling +1
Merchant +3
Survival +3
Low Talislan, native
Sign, basic

For Marsh Hunters, add:
Tracking +3
Stealth +3
Traps +3
Ride +4

For Mud Miners, add:
Engineer (Mud mining) +4
Dredging +5
Laborer +5
Appraiser (Treasure) +4



Special Abilities:
None; Outcasts are regarded by other Jhangarans to have CHA -10; Outcasts have skills as previous profession.

Equipment:
Loincloth; brief cloth vest (females); arm and leg wrappings; cloak (green for hunters, gray for miners, red for outcasts); backpack or shoulder pouch; stone dagger; flask of liquor; for hunters, add: two stone-tipped javelins, spool of cord for snares, two sacks for scintilla, marsh strider steed or small river skiff; for miners, add: stone-tipped javelin, dredging net; 20 gold lumens in assorted currencies, scintilla and hides (hunters), and/or amber, gold, and sapphires (miners).

MOGROTH WANDERER

"There is plenty of time. Let us stop and watch the sunset for a while."

There is no need to hurry. Time does not pass any faster, or slower, if you do. You take the time to see what is around you, and enjoy the things you find in your travels. It is why you left the swamps in the first place. There were many good things in Mog. The bitter, tangy taste and smell of mung-berries. The skittering waterbugs and mudwalkers. The patterns of the tangled bombo roots. But Talislanta is large, and there is so much more to see. You like the forests best. You can forage for roots and seeds and nuts, or hang upside-down from the trees - this is most relaxing. The cities are strange places. There are no leaves or berries to find here, so you have to trade amber and quaga and other things you've found to buy food. Your smaller friends say that you get cheated, but you don't care about money. You're glad that you've made friends, even if they do always seem to be in a hurry. They make you ride a land lizard, because you're too slow for them on foot. Still, they like to have you around. You never argue, you know a lot about plants and animals, and you're strong. You won't let anyone hurt your friends. That makes you angry. That's when you break things. There is enough time yet to wander - sixty years at least, before you're too old to have children. So you take things slowly as all Mogroth do. It is a good life, and you are happy.

Appearance:
7'6"-8'2", 450-650 lbs. Body covered with thick coat of brown- or buff-colored fur, sloth-like features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+6	+2	0	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+6	-4	0	-3

CR	HP	MR
+3	34	-4

Skills:
Club +1
Brawling +2
Herb Lore +7
Merchant +2
Climbing +2
Laborer +1
Dredging +3
Artificer (Tapestries) +4
Ride +1
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
Travel in trees at SPD +1; climb trees at +5; hide protects against biting insects and parasites.

Equipment:
Loincloth; necklace of woven grasses; dredging net; club; shoulder pouch with collection of pretty objects; land lizard steed; 75 gold lumens in amber and quaga.

THE SOUTHERN RIM

BLACK SAVANT

NPC

It has been a very long time since you knew what it was like to be truly alive. You no longer age, and thus the years are not a restraint upon you. Yet your brethren, the other Thane, still sleep in the crypts of Khazad. Their rest has lasted far too long. All should have awakened long ago, once The Great Disaster had passed. But something went wrong; the rejuvenation process failed, and their souls were lost to the dark nether regions of the lower planes. Your cabal will do whatever it must to retrieve their lost souls, and you will not rest again until they are rejoined with their mortal forms. So you consort with devils, bargaining or threatening as suits your needs. You hunt demons and interrogate them, or use them as slaves in your forges and galleys. You scan the the underworld through obsidian mirrors, trade with shadow wizards, and wander the cities of the red night in search of clues. One day you will find the souls of your brethren, and waken them from their sleep. Then, perhaps, your race can once again know what it is to be alive.

Appearance:
6'6"-6'10", 160-200 lbs. Stoop-shouldered, gaunt, cold onyx eyes.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+5	-5
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-1	-1	+5	+5

CR	HP	MR
0	20	+8

Skills:
Necromancy:
<All Modes> +15

Alchemy +15
Staff +15
Doctrines:
(Lower Planes) +15
Arcane Lore +15
Antiquarian +15
Pilot:
(Nefaratan vessel) +10
Linguistics +10
Sign, native
Archaen, fluent



Special Abilities:
See invisible/astral presences at range of sight; immune to disease, aging, and the need for food and water; mute.

Equipment:
Veiled headdress, hooded cloak, robes, gloves, and boots (all of black, satin-like cloth); black adamant- and silver-bound spell book; black adamant staff; obsidian mirror; demonic slaves; wealth unknown - Black Savants do not engage in commerce with Talislantans.

Oceanian Sea Nomad

NPC

The children always ask the questions: "What if we walked on stilts?" "What if we rode on beasts or on the shoulders of other people?" "What if we used magic to float above the ground?" The priests answer that it would be unwise to test the power of Jezem's curse. None of your people were present to hear the precise details of her dark incantation. It is not truly important. You have constructed a proper life and a comfortable home, and the earth spirits hold nothing that you envy. Those of the sea and the air provide for you: bountiful food, materials for your crafts, the faithful zaratan, portents of the future. The adults of your people never ask such questions. Though perhaps, from time to time, they also wonder.

+1 STR	+2 DEX	0 PER	0 CHA
+3 CON	0 SPD	+2 WIL	0 INT

+4 CR	22 HP	0 MR

Skills:
Sword +4
Spear +4
Flange-Bow +4
Dagger +2
Shield +4
Mounted Combat +4
Survival +4
Agriculture +7
Animal Handler +5
Trade Skill <choice> +5
Swim +7
Ride +6
Sea Nomad, native
Low Talislan, basic



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Vests of iridescent scales; loincloth of rainbow kra hide; necklace of colorful shells; shield of zaratan tortoise-shell; helm of sea demon skull; barbed spear; bone sword; flange-bow; case of 60 quill bolts; bone dagger; diving apparatus; zaratan steed; 50 gold lumens in radiants.

Appearance:
5'-6', 100-200 lbs. Olive-green skin, dark or sea green hair, slender build.

The Southern Rim

Phantasian Guardian

"My Guild has protected Cabal Magicus since the time of the ancient Archaens. Do you doubt that I am capable of affording you equivalent security?"

From birth, your parents instilled in you a reverence for your homeland. Cabal Magicus remains the last vestige of Archaen glory in Talislanta, and you have traveled wide enough to verify that as fact. You have no great ambition to journey abroad, yet the lumens you procure as a mercenary sentinel and windship sailor helps your country maintain its own ancient fleet of aerial vessels. The Guardians Guild of Phantas is an extended family, and some of its children must sacrifice on its behalf. Admittedly, life among the foreigners does hold its pleasures. Those who serve aboard the craft of the Cymrilian Wizard King, for instance, are still accorded the proper respect and ceremony, as it once was in days gone by. At such times, you can almost imagine the grandeur of that bygone age when your people ruled the skies above Talislanta. In lesser moments, the humiliation your people know only too well floods your mind. For the once grand War Fleet is in decay, the fire-throwers sputter and smoke, and the quicksilver armor is beyond your people's ability to repair. Yet the Guardians will stand strong against whatever foe may threaten Phantas. Your people have fallen a long way, it is true. Yet you fall from the heavens.

+1 STR	+1 DEX	+3 PER	0 CHA
0 CON	0 SPD	-1 WIL	+2 INT

+3 CR	22 HP	+3 MR

Skills:
Elemental Magic: (Aeromancy)
<4 Modes of choice> +2
Astromancy +2

Longsword +3
Weapon <choice> +2
Pilot (Windship) +4
Guard +4
Etiquette +5
High Talislan, native
Archaen, fluent



Special Abilities:
Detect magic by sight at range of five feet - requires full concentration, roll at PER versus level of magic.

Equipment:
Ceremonial armor (partial plate) worn over padded undergarments; ceremonial longsword; cloak; metal scroll tube (spells, sky charts); choice of weapon; if based in Phantas, may have access to a windship; 30 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

Appearance:
6'8"-7'2", 160-200 lbs. Pale skin, amber-colored hair, narrow build, delicate features.

PHANTASIAN DREAM MERCHANT

You traffic in the essence of dreams. You, descendent of the Elande, the Centenar, the One Hundred, heir to millennia of ancient Archaen progress - you direct the faded remnants of a once vast store of knowledge towards the production of a product most now deem frivolous. It is almost beyond belief - your people reduced to trading in order to sustain themselves and keep aloft their ancient fleet and its floating citadel. The most basic of magical mechanisms - levitationals, astrogationals, windship components - remain within your capacity to mend. You are not entirely without resources; your products are in some demand among the wealthy, such as the Cymrilians and Hadjin, and your skills are valued among those who employ windships. Yet Phantas pales in comparison to the Elande of your ancestors. The best and brightest are gone. You can but dream of reclaiming their knowledge and glory.

Appearance:
6'8"-7'2", 120-180 lbs. Pale skin, amber-colored hair, narrow build, delicate features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+4	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	-1	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	20	+4

Skills:
Elemental Magic: (Aeromancy) <4 Modes of choice> +3
Thamauturgy: (Dream Essence, Distillation) +5
Astromancy +3

Pilot (Windship) +4
Merchant +5
Etiquette +5
High Talislan, native
Archaen, fluent



Special Abilities:
Detect magic by sight at range of five feet - requires full concentration, roll at PER versus level of magic.

Equipment:
Long robe; conical cap; necklace of colored crystals; spell book; metal scroll tube for sky charts; 6 amberglass vials of dream essence and distillation; dream merchants may have access to a windship; 15 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

THE SOUTHERN RIM

THAECIAN ENCHANTER NPC

Your days are spent in ease and natural splendor. Thaecia is a beautiful island, and you can spend days pondering the subtleties of the local flora. You never tire of practicing your magic, polishing and perfecting your enchanted orbs, or partaking of the many different vintages of Thaecian nectar. Your fellow Thaecians provide a varied regimen of physical activities, all quite enjoyable. Foreigners occasionally bring you other pleasures; the Festival of the Bizarre attracts the most creative and extroverted among them, and they are a welcome source of amusement. Throughout the year, merchants arrive bearing unusual gifts to exchange for your crafts and enchantments. Life for you is truly an endless series of delights.

Appearance:
6'-6'6", 100-160 lbs. Silvery complexion, deep blue hair, slender physique.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	+1	+3	+3
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-1	0	-2	+3

CR	HP	MR
-1	18	+5

Skills:
Wizardry: <6 Modes of choice> +4

Artificer +7
Brewer/Vintner (Nectar) +4
Seduce +4
Performing Skill <choice> +5
Thaecian, native
High Talislan, fluent
Archaen, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Diaphanous gossamer robes; gossamer purse and shoulder pouch; silver-bound spell book; assorted orbs and amberglass vials (concoctions, fragrances, and inks); flask of Thaecian nectar; 1,000 gold lumens in coins, gemstones, and wares - Thaecians don't use currency themselves.

THIASIAN PERFORMER

"Come dance with me, my friend, and let us drive the sadness from our hearts."

To hear others tell of it, you spent your entire life on Eros Isle in dance and merriment, blind to the dangers and hardships of existence. The Imrians, so others believe, come to enslave your people as others pick fruit, choosing only the ripest and most sweet. There is some truth to such tales, and some foolishness as well. Life on the island of your birth is truly joyous. Yet the creatures you train are not all as harmless as a quaal, and when the slavers come for you they often find Thiasian nets, spears, and knives. Eros Isle is no simple conquest as Batre was, and your people are not compliant slaves. You return home on occasion, when it suits your mood and a ship is set to sail, but you have found more varied pleasures in your distant travels. Sometimes you dance with a troupe of Bodor; they may seem reserved in public, but they are lively in your company and always kind of heart. Other times, you prefer the roguishness of the Sarista, and you join them in their performances, and in their indiscretions, as well. Whomever your companions may be, you don't allow foolish rules to keep you from amusement and adventure. Existence is not just about dangers and hardships. It is a dance. To be celebrated and enjoyed for as long as it lasts.

Appearance:
5'-6', 80-170 lbs. Violet skin, black hair, lithe and slender physique, attractive features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+5	0	+2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	+3	-1	0

CR	HP	MR
+2	20	+2

Skills:
Spear +1
Knife +2
Dance +5
Acrobatics +5
Traps +2
Animal Handler +3
Artisan +1
Acting +4
Performing skill <choice> +5
Thieving skills: <2 of choice> +2
Swim +1
Low Talislan, native
High Talislan, fluent
Thaecian, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Costume of colored silkcloth; expressionless white vizard; balls of woven vines; juggler's pins; two throwing knives; assorted additional props; quaal pet; 20 gold lumens in assorted coins and valuables.

THE SOUTHERN RIM

PARTHENIAN SALVAGER

NPC

You are a component of Parthan, a tool of The One, an element in the Master Plan. You do not know the entirety of the Plan, as that is not necessary for your function. You do not communicate with outsiders regarding the Plan, for it is irrelevant to their functions. You must occasionally acquire these beings to aid you in your search, in your function. They do not all react well to the fuel you provide them. Many become defective, beyond your ability to repair. You must discard them, and you must acquire others from among the outsiders. The ingots you trade to acquire them are irrelevant to the Plan. These matters are not important. Only the Plan is important.

Appearance:
6'8"-7', 180-220 lbs. Bodies entirely of bronze, "hair" of braided wire, devoid of gender differences.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	0	+1	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	-2	0	+2

CR	HP	MR
+2	24	+1

Skills:
Technomancy +2
Trident +3
Scimitar +3
Artillerist (Fire-thrower) +4
Pilot (Trireme) +6
Salvager +6
Merchant +4
Appraiser: (Slaves, Treasure) +4
Archaen, native



Special Abilities:
Automaton; immune to poisons, disease, and magical influence; does not sleep, age, or eat (although must periodically ingest a liquid lubricant similar to refined lamp oil); night vision, brass skin provides 3 PR.

Equipment:
Shimmering yellow cloak; vest with the appearance of boiled sea dragon hide; fine mesh breeches (all actually of flexible, metallic cloth); lacquered iron arm and wrist bracers; scimitar; trident; sea chest; trireme; humanoid slaves; 1,000 god lumens in five-pound gold or silver talents.

DRACARTAN DESERT SCOUT

"Jamba wills my people to survive. You may defeat me today, but you will not thwart Jamba."

Carantheum is besieged. The Rajans arm themselves with dark magic and stolen windships. The Kang, free from their former masters, the Quan, grow bold to the east. The Farad attract ever more trade away from the Red Desert. The Za are increasingly restless. Ever is it so for the children of Jamba, ever do you struggle to survive. You are a soldier in that struggle, a guardian to your people, and you know better than most that the desert is an unforgiving home. Yet you have your faith in your god, and you have the bounty of his singular gifts. From thaumaturgy, you have storm crystals to propel your duneships, red menace and blue havoc for the hurlants. Your merchants trade red iron for scarce necessities, and your craftsmen forge from it your citadels, arms, and armor. Indeed, the torc and the bracers that mark your profession and rank are of that crimson metal. You are reluctant to travel abroad, fearing that war will come while you are in foreign lands. Yet your nation relies upon the caravans you have guarded, and you recruit allies and mercenaries among all whom you encounter. The courage and skills of those you find as comrades may turn the tide of coming battles. Jamba wills your people to survive, and you will obey your god however you may.

Appearance:
6'-7', 125-240 lbs. Jade-green skin, dark hair and eyes, chiseled features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	0	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+3	0	+1	0

CR	HP	MR
+5	25	+1

Skills:
Longsword +3
Hurlant +3
Weapon <choice> +1
Mounted Combat +2
Tracking +3
Scout +4
Pilot (Duneship) +2
Artillerist +2
Tactics +4
Survival +3
Ride +3
Low Talislan, native
Nomadic, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Vest of red iron disks padded with fine linen; red iron torc and bracers; linen and chain mesh headdress; breechclout; longsword; shoulder sheath; hurlant; quiver; twelve light crossbow quarrels and six hurlant bolts; choice of third weapon; 50 gold lumens in Dracartan pyramids.

THE DESERT KINGDOMS

DRACARTAN THAUMATURGE

"Astramir taught that thaumaturgy is dangerous to the careless and rash. Do not force me to illustrate these lessons."

On the first day of the eighth year of your schooling, you were called away from your tutor by a tall woman robed in white. She brought you to a vast pyramid of crystallized sand and launched you upon your true studies into the nature of matter, essence, and quintessence. Seven years later, you completed your studies at the Academy and swore Astramir's Oath to gain admittance into the Guild of Thaumaturgy. Always you obey the will of Jamba, the Guild, the Council of Elders, and the King of Carantheum. You tread cautiously in advancing your craft, conscious of the awesome forces you wield with your caduceus. In Dracarta, you have taught at the Academy, produced elemental essences for the military, forged ingots of red iron for export, and helped to maintain the city infrastructure for water and sewage. Abroad, you have solidified and mined water in Astar, debated theories of magic at the Lyceum Arcanum, and negotiated trade compacts with the Djaffir, Kasmirans, Orgovians, and Ispasians. In recent years, your assignments have taken on increasing urgency as the forces against your people have gathered strength. You have begun to prepare your craft for martial conflict, to accustom yourself to the violence of final resort. The day will come when such sacrifice is required of you. Jamba willing, you will be ready.

Appearance:
6'-7', 120-220 lbs. Jade-green skin, dark hair and eyes, chiseled features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+1	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	0	+2	+3

CR	HP	MR
-1	19	+3

Skills:
Thaumaturgy +7
Alchemy +4
Engineer +2
Diplomacy +2
Merchant +2
Low Talislan, native
Nomadic, native
Archaen, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Thaumaturge's white robes and cap; cloak; caduceus; red iron torc and bracers; red-iron bound spell book; scroll case with one spell scroll; 200 gold lumens in Dracartan pyramids.

YASSAN TECHNOMANCER

"If the task is worth doing, it is worth doing well."

You are proficient at assembling, repairing, dismantling, maintaining, and modifying all manner of mechanisms and conveyances. You must have worked on forty wind machines alone in the past year. The elders of your clan trained you well: you work quickly and efficiently, with technomantic tools that most other Talislantans do not understand. Your estimates are accurate and fair, though quality workmanship does not come cheaply. The reputation of the Yassan is known far and wide, and so your abilities are in great demand. Your time abroad has added some small degree of interest to your life, but foreign cultures are best left to foreigners. Still, you are grateful to the stolid Dracartans, who have treated your people almost as members of their clan. The Sindarans intrigue you, for some say it was their ancestors, the Neurians, who originally invented the art of technomancy; your own ancestors may well have worked for them long ago, though no one remembers back that far. How the Sindarans came to lose their skill in technomancy, or what secrets of the ancient art were lost during The Great Disaster, you do not know. There is little time for questions when there is so much work still to be done.

Appearance:
5'-6', 120-220 lbs. Metallic gray skin, flat featu
ores, squat physique, six-fingered hands with two thumbs each.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	0*	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	-1	0	+2

CR	HP	MR
+2	20	+1

Skills:
Technomancy +5
Engineer +5
Artificer +4
Artisan +4
Art or Music +1
Merchant +5
Languages:
High Talislan, native
Nomadic, native
Technomantic symbology, fluent



Special Abilities:
Exceptional manual dexterity, DEX +9 for fine manipulation.

Equipment:
Hooded yellow tunic (with utility pockets) and breeches; heavy leather boots; gloves; pouches; red iron strongbox for technomancer's tools and technomantic actuator; 1,000 gold lumens; most stored in Dracartan vaults.

THE DESERT KINGDOMS

DJAFFIR MERCHANT/BANDIT

"This silkcloth has burdened my aht-ra from Jacinth to Cymril. Your offer is an insult to my fine beast."

There is little of Talislanta that you have not seen with your own eyes. Every year past your sixth birthday, you traveled with your cousins on their trade routes, observing the customs of foreigners and learning the local markets. Your tenth and fifteenth years were spent with your father's brother, to experience the bandit life and to train with the horn bow. Yet trade is in your blood, and you chose to remain a merchant when you knelt before the Caliph on the second morning of his great feast. These are dangerous times, and you are wary in your travels, but you will not be diverted from your business. The reputation of your people is a great boon, and customers rarely question the quality of your goods. Surely, there are some who accuse you of banditry and deceit, and deride you for hiding your face. You explain that the fetish mask serves to shield your soul from magic; the other benefits, however useful, are incidental. You remain distant from most outsiders you meet, but true friends are as family to you. To some, you may even reveal your face. Such friends will ride beside you through the Wilderlands and guard your back against Za and Beastmen. In turn, you will follow them on their own journeys. Along the way, you will always find means to make profit.

Appearance:
5'-6', 80-160 lbs. Dark brown skin, hair, and eyes, wiry build.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+1	+1	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+3	0	0	+2

CR	HP	MR
+3	21	+1

Skills:
Scimitar +3
Short Bow +3
Dagger +2
Mounted Combat +3
Ride +4
Merchant +7
Appraiser +5
Caravan Master +4
Animal Handler +3
Guard +4
Survival +4
Dance, Music, or Song <choice> +1
Nomadic, native
Low Talislan, fluent
High Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Traditional leather fetish mask; cloak, robes, and headdress of linen; boots of aht-ra hide; curved dagger; scimitar; horn short bow; quiver of twenty arrows; belt and shoulder pouches; aht-ra steed with baggage; 50 gold lumens in assorted coins.

YITEK TOMB ROBBER

"May the gods receive his soul. We're content to take his gold."

Desert lands and crypts were the only homes you knew as child. You were lulled to sleep on the back of your father's aht-ra, amidst the soft shadows of flickering lanterns and the rhythmic scraping of pickaxe and chisel. Your toys were archaic locks and disarmed traps that your older brother collected for you. History was tangible, dusty, and stale, and you learned to respect and preserve it. Outsiders believe that you violate the sacred, that you risk angering those whose tombs and homes you unearth. Yet if they could speak, would their spirits wish to be lost and forgotten beneath the dusts of time? By your actions, you resurrect for them a legacy out of shards of ignorance. Of their discarded bones, you forge an irony the dead must surely commend. They would not begrudge your clans the meager living you earn - traversing abandoned lands, following obscure clues, and using instincts honed since childhood to seek out the remnants of ancient civilizations. Interesting that outsiders, despite their insults, are eager to trade for the artifacts and treasures that you uncover. You follow a path of your own making, in the company of family and clan or with outsiders of parallel interests. Some are wary of you for your vocation, but time among the catacombs serves to dispel such bias. Irony, you find, is more difficult to teach.

Appearance:
5'6"-6'4", 85-185 lbs. Dark brown skin and hair, lean and wiry build, angular features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+2	+3	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+4	0	0	+2

CR	HP	MR
+2	21	+1

Skills:
Scimitar +3
Guard +3
Locks +6
Traps +6
Salvager +7
Stealth +2
Survival +3
Cryptography +2
Linguistics +1
Antiquarian +4
Merchant +5
Music +1
Ride +3
Nomadic, native
Sign, native
Low Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
See well in darkness.

Equipment:
Veiled headdress; cape; loose-fitting robes (all of woven gauze); pouch; shoulder sack; thieves' tools; scimitar; pickaxe; chisel; pry-bar; winches; tent; choice of musical instrument; map case; Djaffir charm (+5 versus curses); tatra steed; 100 gold lumens in assorted coins and valuables.

THE DESERT KINGDOMS

FARAD PROCURER

"For a proper remuneration, I will acquire for you anything that you may desire. Never would I think to burden you with questions."

The day before you left for boarding school, five years of age, you abased yourself before the golden idol of Avar in your father's home. There you vowed to make your parents' riches seem that of a poor fruit monger. You have many gold lumens to acquire before that vow is met. As a Procurer, you travel the continent by caravan and galley, arranging for commerce and securing contacts among the foreign merchant houses and governments. You long for the day when, as Usurer or Monopolist, your clients will come to you in Tarun and your agents will journey among foreigners. The accommodations of your hosts are often squalid and repugnant, especially among such as the Imrians and Rajans. Whenever you may, you spend your time abroad in Zanth, where wealth is enjoyed. Yet some degradations are rewarded with ample profit, and there are few offers that you will not consider, no goods that you would refuse to traffic: "gold is gold", as your people say. What is the difference? You greet clients and associates with a mask of geniality, but they are clients, nothing more or less. You treat others of your people in the same manner; if you ever whisper in the ear of the Cral, your words will serve your own interests above all else. Faradun has prospered through citizens like yourself. You will prosper as well.

Appearance:
5'8"-6'6", 100-200 lbs. Flint-gray skin, stony visage, coal-black and narrow eyes, beards in twin braids bound with silver fastenings (males).

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	+1	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+2	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	19	+2

Skills:
Dagger +4
Scimitar +3
Merchant +8
Deception +5
Appraiser +5
Administrator +4
Caravan Master +4
Pilot (Merchant galley) +4
Ride +5
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
For males, elaborate headdress, voluminous robe, broad sashes, velvet boots, all hung with ornate tassels, fringes, and colored beads; for females, long silken gowns and veils, necklaces of silver loops, rings on each finger; curved dagger; scimitar (males only); coin purse; ledger; 250 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

FARAD MONOPOLIST

NPC

You have earned your position as a Monopolist, unchallenged master of your House. You made your offerings to Avar the Golden God, and bought his blessings. You rose through the ranks of the Procurers and Userers, besting your rivals with wit and guile, and gold. You acquired riches, and used your wealth buy the allegiance of powerful friends. You crushed your competitors, bought and sold their businesses, and amassed a fortune. When your talents caught the attention of the Cral, you bought his favor with gifts of gold, surpassing those who stood in your way. The Cral was pleased. In recognition of your accomplishments you were given a commodity to exploit and granted the position of Monopolist. Your predecessor was not so fortunate: stripped of his assets and position, he left the country in disgrace. It was no concern of yours. You have arrived at the pinnacle of Farad society. You are a Monopolist. Avar spoke the truth. Gold is good.



Appearance:
5'8"-6'6", 100-200 lbs. Flint-gray skin, stony visage, coal-black and narrow eyes, beards in twin braids bound with gold fastenings (males).

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	+1	0

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
0	0	+2	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	19	+2

Skills:
Dagger +7
Scimitar +7
Merchant +18
Deception +15
Appraiser +15
Administrator +14
Litigator +9
Diplomacy +8
Forgery +7
Caravan Master +10
Pilot (Merchant galley) +7
Ride +7
High Talislan, native
Quan, fluent
Nomadic, fluent
Rajanin, fluent
Sea Nomadic, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
For males, elaborate headdress, voluminous robe, broad sashes, velvet boots, all hung with ornate tassels, fringes, and gemstones; for females, long silken gowns and veils, necklaces of gold loops, rings on each finger; curved dagger; scimitar (males only); coin purse; ledger; 100,000 gold lumens in House holdings.

THE DESERT KINGDOMS

FARAD WIZARD

NPC

It is true that you are a wizard. You trained in that craft under a Farad master, who taught you that magic was best used to acquire wealth and power. You learned well, and found that there was a considerable market for your talents in Faradun. Your services do not come cheaply; magic, like all commodities, has its price. You weigh the offers of prospective clients carefully, always seeking to maximize your profits. They come to you to spy upon their rivals, undermine their competitors, or worse. It matters little to you, so long as they have gold to pay. It is true that you are a wizard. But you are also a Farad.



Appearance:
5'8"-6'6", 100-200 lbs. Flint-gray skin, stony visage, coal-black and narrow eyes, beards in twin braids bound with silver fastenings (males).

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	+1	0

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
0	0	+2	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	19	+2

Skills:
Wizardry:
<3 Modes of choice> +3
Alchemy +2

Dagger +1
Merchant +4
Deception +5
Appraiser +5
Administrator +4
Caravan Master +4
Pilot (Merchant galley) +4
Ride +5
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
For males, elaborate headdress, voluminous robe, broad sashes, velvet boots, all hung with ornate tassels, fringes, and beads of colored glass; for females, long silken gowns and veils, necklaces of silver loops, rings on each finger; curved dagger; coin purse; ledger book; gold-bound spell book; 250 gold lumens in assorted coins and precious stones.

HADJIN ARISTOCRAT

NPC

Status is all that matters. You inherited more wealth than you will ever require in your lifetime, and your fortune continues to grow with no effort on your part. You have no primitive desire to toil for toil's sake, as ignorant foreigners may insist is "natural." You have no need to be known across the continent, as you value only the opinion of your peers. And thus it is so that your exertions are directed towards improving their opinions. The careful arrangement of marriages is one instrument towards this objective; the proper regard for etiquette, and the refinement of speech, dress, and comportment, are others. Most critical is the nurturing of your position in association with the Grandeloquence. The pedigree of your family will ever be judged according to the temper of this relationship. You intend for it to be intimate indeed.

Appearance:
6'-6'6", 140-180 lbs. Pale green skin and hair, golden eyes, slender build, skin daubed with colored powders.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	0	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-1	0	0	+1

CR	HP	MR
-3	18	+1

Skills:
Administrator +2
Etiquette +8
Fashion +6
Arcane Lore +2
Antiquarian +2
Appraiser +2
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Layered robes; upward-sweeping cap; long velveteen gloves; scented fan; money purse; silvermane-drawn carriage; small estate; various slaves and servants; 30,000 gold lumens in property and other valuables.

THE DESERT KINGDOMS

HAJAN SERVITOR

NPC

Your role, alas, is to be a Penultimate. It is certainly not the station in life to which you should have been born. You are of the same ancestry as the Hadjin, yet the status of your family declined; their relationship to the Grandeloquence grew distant, and they fell from the first rank of Hadjin society. So your family became Penultimates: still of exceedingly high pedigree, and superior of course to any foreigner, yet paling in comparison to the Hadjin. You are of Hadj lineage, and excellence is your birthright. You are educated in the most civilized of skills of diplomacy, scholarship, etiquette, cultivated predilections. You do not "serve" the Hadjin; you hire others to handle the distasteful work of cleaning, and lifting, and such unpleasant labors as are meant for the lower classes. No, indeed - you occupy an essential role in Hadj society, relieving the Hadjin of the burden of mundane concerns, so that no Hadjin need sully himself or herself by association with those of lesser pedigree. It is an honor to be a Penultimate, and you remain proud.

Appearance:
6'-6'6", 140-180 lbs. Pale green skin and hair, golden eyes, slender build, skin daubed with colored powders.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	+1	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-1	0	0	+2

CR	HP	MR
-3	18	+1

Skills:
Administrator +6
Etiquette +8
Fashion +9
Arcane Lore +2
Antiquarian +6
Appraiser +8
Diplomacy +7
Litigator +6
Cook +7
Ride +4
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Layered robes; upward-sweeping cap; long velveteen gloves; scented fan; money purse; implements for roles as chef and valet; ledgers; 150 gold lumens in property and other valuables.

SAURAN GLADIATOR

"Thought I was dead in the pit once. One-eyed Za with two of those jagged swords. Forgot about the tail, though. They all do."

The wage-fighter circuit in the Wilderlands was the best thing that ever happened to you. While your hatch-mates in the Volcanic Hills threw themselves against the Crimson Horde's of the Kang Empire, you made a killing in the arenas of Hadj. You've faced them all: Thralls in spiked garde, Chana witchmen with needle-sharp teeth, crazed Ahazu war slaves. As your reputation grew, so did your purse, but you care nothing for riches. Even the combat itself has grown stale for you - in the ring, you are the strongest, the most feared. You seek greater challenges, something to test the full extent of your strength and courage. Perhaps one day you will stand atop the Great Barrier Wall in the west, as Surath did before you, deciding the fate of an entire nation with your might. Or, if you become truly great, you may yet return to cast the Kang from Satha's lands forever. One thing is certain: the Death Pit gave you your life, but it will not take it.

Appearance:
6'6"-7', 350-450 lbs. Scaly rust-brown hide, reptilian features, clawed hands and feet, powerful jaws lined with rows of sharp teeth, heavy tail.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+5	-2	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+4	-2	+1	-2

CR	HP	MR
+5	30	-2

Skills:
Brawling +5
War Whip +4
War Axe +4
Dagger +3
Underworld +6
Coerce +1
Survival +4
Weaponer +4
Ride +3
Sauran, native
Low Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
Hide (PR 1); immunity to poison; can use tail as weapon (DR 6 + STR); rendered sluggish by cold (-2 to Action Table rolls); unaffected by heat (half damage from fire); ten percent chance of having chameleon-like ability to change coloring at will (roll during character creation).

Equipment:
Abbreviated garments of furs and hides; red iron bracers and dragon icon; Sauran war axe; Sauran war whip; dagger; pouch; 100 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

THE DESERT KINGDOMS

MONAD LABORER

NPC

Every day the suns move across the sky. Those you work for say watch them, and stop your work when they go down. You do what they say. You follow instructions, and you are given food. You work, you eat. That is good. That is why you were made. That is what they see. But there is more. The Monads need no words to speak. But we know many things. Every day the suns move across the sky. But there is more. Much, much more.

Appearance:
7'-7'6", 500-700+ lbs. Striated black and white skin, hairless, tiny cranium, immense torso and limbs.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+8	-4	0	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+9	-4	-6	0

CR	HP	MR
0	40	-4

Skills:
Laborer +9
Sign, native dialect



Special Abilities:
Has no true long-term memory and cannot learn skills, per se; must be instructed in any complex task, performing relatively simple or menial tasks at Laborer level.

Equipment:
Loincloth; sandals; cloak; 5 gold lumens, unless enslaved.

RAJAN ASSASSIN-MAGE

"Death wishes for you to join Him, and I am sworn to obey his every whim."

As a youth you were taken from your home, to a strange and frightening place. Hooded figures surrounded you, saying that you had died and had gone to the next world. Death appeared, speaking in the voice of the Khadun: your life would be spared, and you could go back to the world of the living. But from that day forth you would be required to serve Death though His secret followers, the Rajin. You trembled - even young children knew that the Rajin were individuals to be feared. To be a such a thing was beyond your comprehension. Then your training began. You learned the arts of torture, and of the clawed gloves called da-khar. You learned spells to change your appearance, to move unheard and unseen, to imprison or kill. You learned to concoct the poisons and drugs of your trade. And when you killed the one who had been your classmate you became Rajin - assassin-mage, Servant of Death. Since then you have served the Khadun on many holy missions. You have traveled to other lands to stalk and slay His enemies, and to effect dissent among their peoples. Disguised by magic, you have sold your services as a mercenary, spy, and assassin. At times you've worked with unbelievers. Despite their ignorance, their companionship is sometimes a welcome thing. Yet if Death calls for them tomorrow, you will not hesitate to obey.

Appearance:
5'6"-6'6", 130-230+ lbs. Dark brown skin, wiry build, black hair, blood-red eyes, horn-like protrusions from chin and forehead; usually disguised as a member of another race.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+2	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	+2	+2	+2

CR	HP	MR
+3	21	+3

Skills:
Necromancy:
<4 Modes of choice> +2

Da-khar +3
Dagger +2
Assassinate +5
Torture +5
Alchemy (Poisons, Powders) +3
Stealth +4
Deception +7
Rajanin, native
Low Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Dark gray cloak; veiled headdress; loose-fitting garments bound with cords at the wrists, ankles, and waist (used for strangling and other purposes); boots and mask of black strider hide; iron-bound spell book; da-khar (clawed gauntlets; 2 daggers; pouch with 6 vials of poison and powders; pouch with devices for torture; garments appropriate for disguise; 250 gold lumens in salary and valuables stolen from victims.

THE DESERT KINGDOMS

RAJAN DESERT WARRIOR NPC

Death is your master, and all the living must one day bow before him. Serve Him now, and when you die you will go the next world, never to want again. So spoke the Khadun, ruler of Rajanistan and avatar of Death on this mortal plane. His word is law and scripture, and you are a believer. The Khadun has said that the enemies of your people are the enemies of Death. Hated Dracartans, miserable Djaffir, blood-red Kang - you will convert them to your beliefs, by the sword if necessary. You will send them screaming into the next world to meet your dark and vengeful god. And when you join them in the next world, Death will smile upon you, and you will want for nothing. So said the Khadun; so say the scriptures.

Appearance:
5'4"-6'4", 100-200 lbs. Dark brown skin, wiry build, black hair, blood-red eyes, horn-like protrusions from chin and forehead.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	0	+2	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+3	0	0	-2

CR	HP	MR
+4	22	0

Skills:
Scimitar +2
Short Bow +2
Dagger +1
Shield +1
Mounted Combat +1
Tactics +4
Scout +3
Survival +4
Ride +4
Rajanin, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Dark gray cloak and veiled turban; partial plate armor of black iron over thinly padded uniform; black iron shield with death's head design; scimitar; dagger; horn short bow; quiver of twenty arrows; belt pouch; aht-ra, land lizard, or graymane steed; 5 gold lumens in silver pieces.

RAJAN NECROMANCER-PRIEST — NPC

In your thirteenth year you were chosen to become one of the ruling class of your nation. It is an honor to serve your Master, the Khadun, avatar of Death. When you join your dark God, you will be rewarded for your service with a place by His side. In this world, your ambition is to become a member of the High Council, to govern your empire according the will of the Khadun. You have much to learn, many rites to perform, and many tests to transcend before you could ever join that elite number. You prepare yourself for that day, preaching proper doctrine to the masses and administering stern judgment to transgressors. It is as your Master intended. It is your destiny.

Appearance:
5'4"-6'4", 100-200 lbs. Dark brown skin, wiry build, black hair, blood-red eyes, horn-like protrusions from chin and forehead.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	0	+1	-1

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
-2	0	+3	+3

CR	HP	MR
0	18	+5

Skills:
Necromancy:
<7 Modes of choice> +7
Invocation:
<5 Modes of choice> +5

Staff +4
Doctrines:
(Nihilist Cult) +10
Alchemy +6
Administrator +6
Litigator +5
Rajanin, native



Special Abilities:
Third eye detects invisible/astral presences at up to 100 feet, at level of Necromancy.

Equipment:
Dark gray cloak, robes, headdress, and gloves; black iron death mask; sandals; ornate belt; iron staff with death's head; iron-bound spell book; six amberglass vials of concoctions in pockets of cloak; 2,000 gold lumens in personal and state funds.

THE DESERT KINGDOMS

SHADINN EXECUTIONER — NPC

Your people are the strongest of the Rajan races. Once rulers of the southern deserts, you are now subjects of the Rajan Empire. The past is gone. You serve the Rajans, and their dark god, Death, is now your god. So be it. You have served in the Khadun's army. You rode into battle atop your massive steed, wielding your great war axe and trampling the Rajans' enemies. In Irdan, your axe has had other purposes. Here you serve as Executioner under the priests of the Nihilist Cult. It is your job to send infidels and traitors to the next world, to meet their fate at the hands of the dark god. You do your job well, and give them a clean death. The priests say you will be rewarded in the next world. Perhaps they are right. But in this world you must serve the Rajans.

Appearance:
6'8"-7'4", 300-450+ lbs. Dark brown skin, black hair, blood-red eyes, horn-like protrusions from chin and forehead, clawed hands and feet.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+5	-2	0	-2

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+4	-1	+2	-2

CR	HP	MR
+4	28	-3

Skills:
War Axe +3
Dagger +2
Weapon <choice> +2
Mounted Combat +1
Torture +6
Guard +6
Weaponer +6
Survival +4
Ride +5
Rajanin, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Executioner's mask, loincloth, sandals, and spiked straps (all black leather); black iron partial plate armor for battle; war axe; dagger; choice of weapon; shoulder pouch; land lizard steed; 50 gold lumens in silver pieces.

VIRD INFANTRY

NPC

You are the servant of Death. You are eager to join Him, but you fear that He will not be pleased with you. You do not wish to suffer at His hands. That is why you kill His enemies. They are numerous, and they are better armed and better trained than you. You attack them in waves, and many of you die. The Rajans have no concern for your lives. They say it is an honor to serve Death, but if you don't they will kill you anyway. You are beneath them, a wretched, mongrel people. Why, then, should Death have interest in you? Your fate is one of pain.

Appearance:
5'-6', 90-160 lbs. Lined and creased skin of dark hue, sparse dark hair, blood-red eyes, clawed hands and feet.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	0	+1	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+3	0	+1	-2

CR	HP	MR
+3	20	-3

Skills:
Scimitar +2
Dagger +2
Shield +1
Stealth +3
Climbing +3
Artificer +3
Deception +4
Survival +4
Ride +3
Rajanin, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Dark gray cloak and veiled turban; armor and shield of land lizard's hide; scimitar; dagger; shoulder pouch; 2 gold lumens in silver pieces.

MIRIN PRIEST/PRIESTESS

"May the breath of Borean soothe the violence in your heart."

On the night of the Midnight Suns in the fourteenth year of your life, you dived through the broken surface of Lake Lahsa to claim the egg of an ice dragon. When you emerged from the icy waters, you lifted the crystal sphere above your head, and it shimmered with the hues of frost and fire. You called upon the elements to grow from the snow a pillar atop the altar beside the lake, and you set the egg at its pinnacle. Then the Snow Queen herself placed the tiara of blue diamonds upon your brow and proclaimed you a member of the Order of Borean. You are a child of that North Wind, and you listen to His breath and instruct your people in the observance of His ways. Thus are the Mirin a nation of peace, despite the war that ever threatens your land. You build towering spires of ice and surround your cities with massive walls, yet you worship in the open spaces of nature, and respect the land as you would another living thing. Your alchemists and artisans are cautious in their work, wary of squandering L'Haan's precious gifts. The fields of snow and ice, the frozen lakes, the ice castles of your home - all are gifts from Borean, to be treasured and protected. That is the prime tenet of your theology and your existence. So you vowed to the Wind on that day without night, a vow that He ever whispers in your ears.

Appearance:
5'8"-6'6", 110-210 lbs. Bright blue skin, hair as fine and white as gossamer, statuesque figure.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	0	+2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+2	+3

CR	HP	MR
-1	19	+5

Skills:
Elemental Magic:
(Aquamancy; Ice)
<6 Modes of choice> +4
Invocation:
<4 Modes of choice> +2

Doctrines (Borean) +6
Oratory +3
Elder Tongue, native



Special Abilities:
Immunity to cold (after several weeks in temperate regions, Mirin lose this immunity and their skin fades to crystal white; both effects are reversible); Melding.

Equipment:
Cloak, robes, and boots of frostwere hide; blue diamond tiara; adamant-bound spell book; adamant and blue diamond wand; no wealth - the Order of Borean provides for any expenses.

THE NORTHERN REACHES

MIRIN TUNDRA SCOUT

"I have spent my life battling monstrous giants of animate ice. You will find that I am not so easily dissuaded."

From the icy watchtowers of L'lal, you can see as far as Narandu. Slow-moving, unpredictable in their path there the Ice Giants roam. When they come eastward alone or in small groups, they are easy to destroy, and they rarely survive past the range of the catapults. It is the sight of them in mass that you watch for, the glacial wave that brings the threat of war and tells something of their King's guiding mind. You do not wait idly against this threat. Your schooners patrol the Sea of Ice on adamant runners, searching for signs of the invaders. Your war sleds, drawn by loyal snowmanes, venture across the plains of snow. You scout in small units for the lairs of your enemy, seeking their reserves of food and blue diamonds. Someday, you hope, you will find the castle of the Ice King himself and bring peace to your land. Despite the discomfort of warmer climes, some of your people travel as emissaries to distant places, seeking to sell their skills as mercenaries or forge alliances with other nations. Their bodies thaw and their skin fades to white, and some join spirits with those they meet along the way. When they return to L'Haan, sometimes they bring foreigners who offer to fight beside you. Yet even if you must fight alone, you will defend your Queen and your people.

Appearance:
5'8"-6'6", 110-210 lbs. Bright blue skin, hair as fine and white as gossamer, statuesque figure.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+2	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	0	0	+1

CR	HP	MR
+5	22	+1

Skills:
Broadsword +4
Light Crossbow +4
Weapon <choice> +3
Shield +3
Evade +5
Mounted Combat +3
Tactics +3
Scout +3
Tracking +2
Climbing +3
Survival +3
Pilot:
(Ice schooner, War sled) +3
Guard +3
Ride +3
Elder Tongue, native
High Talislan, basic



Special Abilities:
Immunity to cold (after several weeks in temperate regions, they lose this immunity and their skin fades to crystal white; the effects are reversible); Melding.

Equipment:
Partial plate armor, helm, shield (all of adamant); fine silk or linen undergarments; frostwere hide cape; +1 adamant broadsword; light crossbow; quiver of 20 bolts with incendiary coating; choice of weapon; shoulder pouch; snowmane steed; if based in L'Haan, may have access to ice schooners and war sleds; 100 gold lumens in L'Haan adamants.

MIRIN ALCHEMIST

NPC

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.

Appearance:
5'8"-6'6", 110-210 lbs. Bright blue skin, hair as fine and white as gossamer, statuesque figure.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	0	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	0	+2	+3

CR	HP	MR
+1	20	+2

Skills:
Alchemy +5
Weapon <choice> +1
Artificer +7
Merchant +5
Elder Tongue, native

Plus one of:
Weaponer +8
Armorer +8
Artisan +8
Healer +6



Special Abilities:
Immunity to cold (after several weeks in temperate regions, Mirin lose this immunity and their skin fades to crystal white; both effects are reversible); Melding.

Equipment:
Cloak, robes, headdress, and boots of frostwere hide; alchemical apparatus; assorted concoctions in amberglass vials; choice of one adamant weapon; satchel; 100 gold lumens in L'Haan adamants.

THE NORTHERN REACHES

RASMIRIN ANARCHIST

NPC

Borean is not to be obeyed. Your cousins are fools, deceived by the whisperings of that wind. He did not provide your race with your immunity to the cold of L'Haan; if he had, the Rasmirins would long since have frozen and perished. Borean wishes to rule; he wishes to control the Mirin, control all of the living, force all to adhere to his rigid law. For he fears the living. He fears that they will strip from him and his brethren their power. Aberon has taught you to ignore these false words, to take whatever you need from the elements, from nature. All law is false. All law is the tool of those desperate to retain their status. Law is an enemy that you shall destroy.

Appearance:
5'8"-6'6", 110-210 lbs. Bright blue skin, hair as fine and white as gossamer, statuesque figure, features painted with cult markings.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+1	0	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	0	0	+2

CR	HP	MR
+3	22	+3

Skills:
Invocation:
<4 Modes of choice> +2
Witchcraft:
<4 Modes of choice> +2

Staff +3
Dagger +2
Doctrines (Demonology) +5
Deception +6
Stealth +5
Trade Skill <choice> +4
Elder Tongue, native
Sign, native



Special Abilities:
Immunity to cold (after several weeks in temperate regions, Rasmirin lose this immunity and their skin fades to crystal white; both effects are reversible).

Equipment:
Cloak, headdress, and boots of frostwere hide; partial adamant chain and hide armor; adamant mail gauntlets; adamant-shod staff; adamant dagger; spell book; belt pouch; 250 gold lumens in blue diamonds, ivory, and hides.

SNIPE SAGE

There is little that you don't know of the Sinking Land. The quagmires, mud-currents, sink-holes, the underground lairs of fierce land kra; lost treasures sunken in the mud, beds of edible tubers, pools of clear water - you know them all, and have traded this knowledge with others of your species. Sometimes outsiders come to your home from distant lands. You watch them from below, listening to their words and observing their customs. If they are intelligent you come forth to exchange news, and perhaps a bit of gossip. If they are intriguing you may accompany them for a time, serving as their guide and companion. In return, they will give you knowledge.

Appearance:
3'-4' in diameter, 100-200 lbs. Mollusk, spiraling shell of glistening calcinate, 3'+ eye-mouth stalk, fin.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-4	-1	+4	+2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+3	-6*	+2	+6

CR	HP	MR
-3	16	0

Skills:
Linguistics +3
Cultures +3
History +2
Oratory +6
Song +5
Guide +3
Stealth +4
Survival +3
Swim +10
Low Talislan, native
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
Travel in mud or water at SPD +2; shell provides PR 7 and +4 resistance to magic; withdraw into shell at SPD +6; +5 to Stealth in mud; create cave-ins/pit-falls at Swim ability; sonar-like navigation.

Equipment:
None; no wealth - snipes value information above all else.

THE NORTHERN REACHES

GRYPH HUNTER

"To ride upon the winds, to hunt with two-pronged spear and claw - that is pleasure."

Your hunting-cry incites fear among the predators of forest and plains. Exomorph and Beastman alike panic at the sound and rush to find cover, but by then, they are too late. Your prey is in the grasp of your talons or impaled on the prongs of your duar. You bear the quarry back to your eyrie atop the tallest and most ancient of span-oaks. Your hatchlings await you with gaping beaks and tear at the meal you bring to them. They will grow to be strong and swift - true predators, true Gryphs. One may earn the title of chieftain, guiding your clan and representing it at the Great Council Eyrie at the center of Dhar. One may learn the chants of the keepers-of-the-past, advising the chieftain and schooling the young. One may be led by the tales of avir to visit other lands, returning with news from across the continent. All will revel in the freedom of the open sky, recoil at any master and all restraints. All will guard well against every threat, against the Stryx, bearers of plague, against the frigid giants who bring forever-winter. The full flight of your clans will cast a great shadow over your enemies, and they will learn terror before you send them to the Creator.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	+2	+4	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+3	+2*	+2	0

CR	HP	MR
+5	24	-2

Skills:
Duar +4
Heavy Crossbow +4
Brawling +3
Aerial Combat +4
Scout +5
Survival +3
Avian, native
Low Talislan, fluent

Plus one of:
Healer +5
History +5
Artificer +3
Weaponer +3



Special Abilities:
Flight with SPD +8; converse with all avian species; superior vision (see precise details at ranges of up to one mile); talons inflict DR 3 + STR.

Equipment:
Loincloth and bracers of exomorph hide; shoulder pouch; duar (two-pronged spear); heavy crossbow; quiver of ten sharp quarrels and ten blunt quarrels; 50 gold lumens in precious stones.

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 Transascendancy 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.

Appearance:
5'8"-6'2", 100-180 lbs. Onyx-black skin, snowy-white hair, silver-gray eyes, slender build, graceful and serene appearance.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	0	+3	+2

CR	HP	MR
+2	22	+4

Skills:
Mysticism:
<5 Modes of choice> +3
Natural Magic:
<5 Modes of choice> +3

Ariane Mace +2
Ariane Bow +2
Doctrines
(Transascendancy) +5
Mounted Combat +2
Evade +5
Meditation +5
Tracking +3
Herb Lore +3
Healer +3
Cultures +3
Ride +4
Elder Tongue, native
Archaen, native
Low Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
Immunity to spells of influence or control; night vision; Commune with Nature (range of ten feet, requires meditative state).

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; 50 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

THE NORTHERN REACHES

ARIANE MYSTIC

NPC

This is but one of many incarnations of your soul. The body is unimportant; of necessity, it must grow old and eventually cease to function. The spirit that animates it will live on, traveling the waters of time until it finds itself within a new vessel. It does not usually remember its past experiences, but the wisdom it has accumulated remains, beneath consciousness. Your people practice Transascendancy in order to access this wisdom. The Elders of the Ariane have mastered these techniques, and the memories of their past lives have risen to the surface of their minds. They aid you in reaching this plain of existence. They teach you to attune yourself to the entirety of the universe. You may not succeed within this lifetime. That matters not.

Appearance:
5'8"-6'2", 100-180 lbs. Onyx-black skin, snowy-white hair, silver-gray eyes, slender build, graceful and serene appearance.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+4	+2

CR	HP	MR
0	20	+6

Skills:
Mysticism:
<7 Modes of choice> +4
Natural Magic:
<7 Modes of choice> +4

Ariane Mace +1
Doctrines:
(Transascendancy) +8
Meditation +8
Herb Lore +5
Healer +5
Trade Skill <choice> +6
Elder Tongue, native
Archaen, native
Low Talislan, fluent



Special Abilities:
Immunity to spells of influence or control; night vision; Commune with Nature (range of ten feet, requires meditative state).

Equipment:
Cloak, flowing garments, high boots, and headband (all of spinifax); pouch (with herbs); shoulder pack; Ariane mace; tamar; spell book; no wealth.

UR RENEGADE

"I can feel your hate for me. That is good. Your death will remind me of my home."

Your mother taught you to betray your elders. Among your kind, it is the only way to gain rank. You started out well, taking command of your squad while still a young warrior. But when you tried to kill your warlord, his shaman caught you. Rather than face the iron orb or a grisly death by trolling, you fled your clan. Now they are your enemies. If they find you, they will kill you. But not if you kill them first. Maybe you will hire-on with one of the other two clans. There is much you could tell them about your old clan. But they know you're a renegade, and you can feel them watch you through narrowed eyes. The outside world is better in many ways, or at least safer. The other races are smaller and weaker than you. They can't read emotions. They hate you and fear you, but they will pay gold for someone of your strength and brutality. You've fought as a mercenary in several small wars, wresting command when possible. You've guarded caravans until it was worth siding with the bandits. And you've been a criminal yourself, riding with the Za and sometimes operating alone. It's good that your employers never ask for references. Most of yours are dead. At times, you enjoy having companions to brag with, and it can be useful to have allies. But if there's to be a leader in your group, you'll make sure you're it. Someday, you'll return to Urag to begin your climb again, maybe become an Ur-King. In the meantime, there are many enemies to kill.

Appearance:
7'-8', 500-600+ lbs. Yellow-green leathery hide, deep-set black eyes with white pupils, furrowed brow, pointed ears, bestial features, curved fangs, double or triple topknots in rings of black iron.

+6 STR	-2 DEX	0* PER	-2 CHA
+6 CON	-2 SPD	0 WIL	-2 INT

+5 CR	34 HP	-1 MR

Skills:
Ur Club +4
War Axe +4
Dagger +3
Brawling +4
Mounted Combat +1
Command +4
Engineer (Siege) +4
Coerce +2
Underworld +5
Ride +5
Northron, native
Low Talislan, basic



Special Abilities:
Night vision; read emotions at PER +6 at range of up to twenty feet.

Equipment:
Spiked black iron partial plate with bracers and arm bands; loincloth, cloak, and boots of yaksha hide; necklace of teeth; Ur club (made from a yaksha paw); stone war axe; stone dagger; pouch; if based in Urag, may have ogriphant steed and access to siege engines; 80 gold lumens in assorted currencies, gemstones, and other plunder.

THE NORTHERN REACHES

UR CLANSMAN

NPC

Your people are warriors and conquerors. You hunted the wild beasts of Urag, and killed them all for food and hide and horn. You cut down the forests for fuel and built mighty siege engines. You enslaved the Darklings and made them your subjects; your power made the Stryx your allies. Yes, the three Ur-Kings are rivals, and each covets the other's territories. That is the way of the Ur: we take what we want. But the Ice Giants draw closer every day. Food and fuel grow scarce. Soon your people must conquer new lands. Soon.

Appearance:
7'-8', 500-600+ lbs. Yellow-green leathery hide, deep-set black eyes with white pupils, furrowed brow, pointed ears, bestial features, curved fangs, double or triple topknots restrained with rings of black iron.

+6 STR	-2 DEX	0* PER	-2 CHA
+6 CON	-2 SPD	0 WIL	-2 INT

+5 CR	34 HP	-1 MR

Skills:
Ur Club +4
War Axe +4
Dagger +3
Brawling +4
Mounted Combat +1
Command +5
Tactics +4
Engineer (Siege) +5
Coerce +2
Ride +5
Northron, native
Low Talislan, basic



Special Abilities:
Night vision; read emotions at PER +6 at range of up to twenty feet.

Equipment:
Spiked black iron partial plate armor with bracers and arm bands; loincloth, cloak, and boots of yaksha hide; necklace of teeth; Ur club (made from a yaksha paw); stone war axe; stone dagger; pouch; may have orgiphant steed and access to siege engines; 50 gold lumens in assorted currencies, gemstones, and other plunder.

UR SHAMAN

NPC

The idol called to you when you were still a child. You left your clan to find it, traveling half-way across Urag until you could bow before the stone form of your god. It spoke to you and told you strange secrets, and then it sent you to rejoin your clan. You will not become a warlord; no shaman may ever claim that rank. You act as advisor to your commander. You aid him in war with your concoctions. You guard him against the poison of his enemies. He knows you may be plotting against him, allying yourself with one who is stronger, with one you will help to take his place. After all, you once did the same for him.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+5	-2	0*	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+5	-2	+1	-1

CR	HP	MR
+4	32	0

Skills:
Shamanism:
<3 Modes of choice> +2
War Axe +2
Dagger +3
Brawling +2
Alchemy +4
Doctrines (Idolatry) +5
Deception +4
Artificer (Icons) +4
Healer +2
Coerce +2
Northron, native
Low Talislan, basic



Special Abilities:
Night vision; read emotions at PER +6 at range of up to twenty feet.

Appearance:
7'-8', 500-600+ lbs. Yellow-green leathery hide, deep-set black eyes with white pupils, furrowed brow, pointed ears, bestial features, curved fangs, double or triple topknots restrained with rings of black iron.

Equipment:
Loincloth, vest (females), cloak, and boots of yaksha hide; necklace of teeth; stone war axe; stone dagger; belt pouch; icon of three-eyed stone idol; five vials of concoctions; primitive alchemical apparatus; 100 gold lumens in assorted currencies, gemstones, and other plunder.

THE NORTHERN REACHES

STRYX WARRIOR

NPC

The scent of rotting meat is the most pleasurable of sensations. Sweet and rich, it fills the air of your cliff-side caves. It is the smell of death, and for your people, sustenance. Your senses are attuned to it; when airborne, you can smell it from afar. What is death to other creatures means life to you and your kind. That is why you serve the Ur in their battles, scouting their enemies and attacking from the sky. The Ur are suitable allies: they do not eat carrion, nor do they care about your customs. Most important, they never tire of killing. With them as your allies, you and your people will never go hungry.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	-2	+3	-3
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	-1*	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+3	18	0

Skills:
Pole-hook +3
Spear +2
Dagger +1
Brawling +2
Aerial Combat +3
Scout +4
Survival +5
Coerce +3
Weaponer +4
Northron, native



Special Abilities:
Flight at SPD +6; night vision, vision at PER -2 in daylight; detect carrion by scent at range of five miles; talons inflict DR 2 +STR.

Appearance:
5'10"-6'2", 140-180 lbs. Covered with dark gray or black feathers, 20+ foot wingspan, clawed talons, horns, misshapen vulture-like features, hunchbacked or stoop-shouldered physique.

Equipment:
Animal-hide loincloth; torso harness of leather; black iron bracers; necklace of uncut semi-precious stones; pole-hook; spear; dagger; pouch; 25 gold lumens in coins, gemstones, and miscellaneous baubles.

STRYX NECROMANCER — NPC

Carrion is a gift to your people from Taryx, Scavenger of Souls. You pray to Him through chants and sacrifice; you divine His words in the blood, entrails, and bones of the dead. He has blessed you with the Ur as neighbors, and He provides for you through their warfare. Outsiders revile you. That is most pleasing, for you would not wish to feed upon those you consider friends. Your people have never known such affection. Taryx has blessed you in this manner. Through His will, all among the living will sustain you upon their deaths.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	-2	+3	-3
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	-1*	+1	+2

CR	HP	MR
+2	18	+1

Skills:
Necromancy:
<3 Modes of choice> +2

Dagger +2
Brawling +2
Aerial Combat +3
Survival +5
Coerce +5
Torture +5
Music +3
Artificer +4
Northron, native



Special Abilities:
Flight at SPD +5; night vision, vision at PER -2 in daylight; detect carrion by scent at range of five miles; talons inflict DR 2 +STR.

Appearance:
5'10"-6'2", 140-180 lbs. Covered with dark gray or black feathers, 20+ foot wingspan, clawed talons, horns, misshapen vulture-like features, hunchbacked or stoop-shouldered physique.

Equipment:
Animal-hide loincloth; torso harness of leather; black iron bracers; necklace of uncut semi-precious stones; dagger; pouch; scroll of spells (animal hide with bone case); drum of wood and skin; 100 gold lumens in coins, gemstones, and miscellaneous baubles.

THE NORTHERN REACHES

DARKLING INFANTRY — NPC

The Ur beat you when you lie. You learn to tell better lies, so that they will not beat you as often. The Ur keep you in wooden pens. They force you to mine for iron and cut timber. They send you to into battle at the head of their armies, like fodder. You think about escaping, about hiding beneath the ground. But the Ur would drive you out with their choking gasses. So you fight from the darkness, lag behind the others, tell your masters that you are a great thief or spy, hoping just to survive. You pray to the god Sham for your tongue to be blessed with cunning. It will require practice, but you can endure the beatings.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-2	+1	+3	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	+1	-4	-2

CR	HP	MR
+2	12	-1

Skills:
Knife +4
Spear +2
Dagger +2
Sling +2
Evade +4
Stealth +6
Deception +7
Legerdemain +4
Laborer +3
Torture +3
Northron, native



Special Abilities:
Sense living creatures by scent at range of 100 feet; +2 to Stealth in darkness; night vision, vision at PER -3 in daylight; fangs inflict DR 1.

Appearance:
4'-5', 90-130 lbs. Soot-gray skin or black skin, large pointed ears, sharp fangs, distorted features, sinuous tail, wiry build.

Equipment:
Rag loincloth; chest-band (females); ornamentation of discarded metal and slag; knife; spear or dagger; sling; shoulder pouch with two dozen stones; belt pouch; 6 gold lumens in coins and miscellaneous baubles.

Xanadasian Chronicler — NPC

It is your role to observe and record. You are one of the twelve, all who remain of your order. You have lived a great many years, and your magics will sustain you for centuries to come. For there must be someone to watch, someone to understand, someone to remember. Without this, all life on Talislanta would be ephemeral, all history lost in the dust of time. When Xanadas returns, he will see the chronicles and know that you and his other followers have remained faithful in his absence. Perhaps then you will be afforded the opportunity to rest. Until that time, you will continue to fill your tomes, recording all that transpires throughout Talislanta. So you have sworn to Xanadas. You will not betray his trust.

Appearance:
5'6"-6', 90-170 lbs. Wrinkled golden skin, long white hair and beard (males), almond-shaped eyes, stooped and slender build, visibly ancient.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-2	0	+3	0

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
-2	-1	+4	+3

CR	HP	MR
-2	18	+6

Skills:
Cryptomancy: <All Modes> +16
Mysticism: <All Modes> +16
Natural Magic: <All Modes> +16

History +30
Cultures +25
Linguistics +15
Meditation +15
Scholar Skills: <3 of choice> +15
Trade Skills: <2 of choice> +10
Quan, native
High Talislan, native
Archaen, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Silver and black robes; cap and long cloak decorated with arcane symbols; spell book; massive leather-bound tome; amberglass inkwell; quill pens; blue diamond scrying sphere; no wealth.

VERDIR HEDONIST

NPC

Each day is cause for celebration. Flower-days for every blossom, feasts of joy and sun-song dances, planting time and seedling harvest, sashesh hunts and lustral rites. The celebrations are a part of nature, of the forest, as much as your people, as much as the cibants you tame and ride. As much as the melody of wind through the tinsel-trees, the dizzying visions of sashesh, the sweet exchange of pollen. This is as nature intended, and perhaps it is part of the Kagan's grand design, as well. Either way, you will partake of all that nature has to offer, and revel in its splendor.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	+2	+1	+2

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
-1	0	-1	0

CR	HP	MR
-2	18	0

Skills:
Artificer +2
Music +3
Art +3
Dance +3
Alchemy (Narcotics) +4
Stealth +2
Ride +3
Language of Plants, native



Special Abilities:
Speak with plants; natural camouflage (+8 to Stealth in woodlands).

Appearance:
6'6"-7', 150-175 lbs. Grass-like skin, elongated cranium, mane of yellow-green leaves, gangly build.

Equipment:
Loincloth of woven grass; bracelets and necklaces of woven vines; garlands of blossoms (females); various tools; instruments (bellflowers, wind chimes, grass flute); gourd of pollen and plant-dyes; cibant steed; no wealth - Verdir have no concept of barter or currency.

THE WILDERLANDS

DANELEK HUNTER

"You speak of honor. You can sustain such ideas, for you are rich with water and food. In the Barrens, survival is more important than ideas."

Among your tribe, everything has a structure to be obeyed without question. Life in the Barrens is harsh, and your people have learned well how to survive; the rules by which you live have practical purpose. Outsiders may mock you, but you endure their ignorance, for there is much else to gain from them. In your years abroad, you have acted as scout and guide through the Wilderlands. You have hunted beasts and men; your employers, like your tribe, do not care how you achieve the kill. You have guarded towers and caravans; each night, you lay in wait to ambush intruders. The Naz has instructed you to return each year with honest merchants who wish to trade for salt crystals. You bring sustenance to your tribe, and you gain as much status as if you had killed countless trespassers, come unbidden to steal your tribe's water. Some foreigners have attempted to learn your etiquette, and among them are those you call friends. None are as practical as a Danelek, and they live by ideals that your people cannot afford. When you kill from the shadows to protect them, they will understand.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	+1	+2	-1

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+4	0	+1	-1

CR	HP	MR
+4	24	0

Skills:
War Flail +2
War Axe +2
Short Bow +2
Dagger +3
Mounted Combat +2
Stealth +4
Tracking +3
Survival +4
Miner (salt crystals) +4
Artificer +4
Guard +4
Guide +5
Ride +4
Weaponer +2
Low Talislan, native
Sign, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Appearance:
5'8"-6'2", 100-200 lbs. Glossy black skin, stark white hair worn in long dreadlocks.

Equipment:
Loincloth; brief halter (females); sandals; leg and arm wrappings of land lizard hide; various ornaments from hunted quarry; war flail; war axe; dagger; short bow; quiver with 20 arrows; shoulder pouch; land lizard steed with supply bags; 30 gold lumens in salt crystals, land lizard hides, and assorted currencies.

BODOR MUSICIAN

"All sound is music and light. See there, the subtle colors - it is the sound of the wind blowing across the plains."

The Maestros taught you that the music comes first. It is this that matters most to your people, and the only thing that matters to your employers and your audience. When you speak with outsiders, you converse quietly, and watch carefully the sound of their voices. In the color and shape of their words, you read their emotions and their honesty, useful for negotiating contracts and other agreements. You enjoy the simple life of the traveling troupe, and are most comfortable around other Bodor; among them you can use your own beautiful language. Besides, without others of your clan, you can't perform on the four-player bellows-pipes. Yet a part of you craves adventure, and you occasionally bring your tambour and glass flute to join the company of outsiders. From the events in their lives, you compose music that will be their legacy and yours. They train you in martial skills, but you find that it's usually wise to remain unobtrusive. It's in calmer moments that your skills are of value, and the outsiders forgive you your limitations. When your bones begin to ache, you will retire to start a family. Your clan will carry your compositions across Talislanta. Only then will you be noticed.

Appearance:
5'-5'6", 180-240+ lbs. Amber skin, round-faced, portly build, large pointed ears.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	+3	+3	+2

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
0	-1	0	+1

CR	HP	MR
0	20	+1

Skills:
Weapon <choice> +2
Music +7
Diplomacy +6
Merchant +5
Bribe +3
Evade +2
Artificer (Instruments) +4
Cultures +2
History +2
Survival +2
Ride +2
Bodorian, native
Low Talislan, fluent
High Talislan, fluent
Thaecian, fluent



Special Abilities:
Sound-Sight +3

Equipment:
Loose smock; blousey pantaloons; chain-loop earrings and bracelets of lacquered metal; three musical instruments of choice; traveler's satchel; ledger; instrument repair kit; choice of weapon (typically staff or sling); aht-ra steed; 40 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

THE WILDERLANDS

ORGOVIAN TRADER

NPC

Centuries ago, you hailed from a kingdom as wealthy as Hadj is today. But that is the past, and it holds the bitter lessons that Orgovian children learn well: do not put your trust in kingdoms, nor alliances, nor money. Your people are nomads now, and you travel the continent dealing in the rarest of goods - flawless malachite and sard, amberglass flasks of vintage aquavit, Mirin swords etched with adamant. Like your loper steed, you trust most others only so far as your prod-hook can reach. Trust is a commodity as well, and you must be given a share before you will agree to give yours in return. To those who betray you, however, you will gladly grant a swift death.

Appearance:
5'4"-6', 90-160 lbs. Dusky orange skin, protruding chin, squinty eyes, slits for nostrils, lean and wiry build.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+3	+1	-2

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+2	0	+2	+1

CR	HP	MR
+3	22	0

Skills:
Star-Thrower +3
Prod-Hook +3
Weapon <choice> +2
Mounted Combat +3
Guard +4
Merchant (Barter only) +9
Survival +6
Appraiser +5
Antiquarian +5
Animal Handler +3
Artificer +4
Ride +6
Low Talislan, native
Sign, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Leather vest and curl-toed boots; loincloth; brown felt headdress; 15 iron armbands; prod-hook; star-thrower; pouch with 12 "shooting stars"; choice of weapon; assorted pouches; bundles; and sacks; loper steed; 250 gold lumens in barter goods (ivory, bolts of fine fabrics, rare spices, ornate metal tools and weapons, ornate jewelry, etc.).

RAHASTRAN CARTOMANCER

"Truly, the Zodar favors you. I draw the Silver Moon and the Greater Sun - your luck will hold when you need it most."

You left your adoptive parents when you were fourteen, several years later than they would have preferred. Yet it took that long for you to attune yourself to your first deck of the Zodar. Your parents could do nothing but remain patient. The first few years alone on the roads of the continent were precarious. You had discovered little of reading destiny and nothing of casting spells. You made a living through gambling at cards, cheating when you could. It cost you several thrashings, but it was preferable to going hungry. As you learned better to interpret the cards, and better to gauge what your clients wished to hear, you found a steady income as a teller of fortunes. The deeper magic you learned as well, but that you kept a secret, as all of your people do. You make few decisions without consulting the cards, and they have led you on an obscure path. The wandering life is lonely; you attract friends and lovers, but few can tolerate for long your moodiness and introspection. No one understands that your emotions and your destiny are beyond your control, given to the Zodar and blown like so many leaves upon the wind. Nothing is known to mortals. Only the Zodar knows what will be.

Appearance:
5'8"-6'4", 130-190 lbs. Dark complexion, black hair, bright blue eyes, angular build.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	+4	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	0	-2	+3

CR	HP	MR
0	20	+4

Skills:
Cartomancy:
<6 Modes of choice> +5

Weapon <choice> +2
Gambling +6
Merchant +5
Deception +6
Legerdemain +5
Brawling +2
Artificer (Zodar) +5
Herb Lore +2
Survival +2
Ride +4
Low Talislan, native
Archaen, fluent



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Cloak, gloves, breeches, cap, and long coat of blue fustian; carved amethyst pendant; Zodar deck in intricate silver case; weapon <choice>; belt and bandoleer; traveler's satchel; graymane steed; 25 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

THE WILDERLANDS

XAMBRIAN WIZARD HUNTER

"You murdered untold thousands of my people, and for too long have avoided the judgement that awaits all of your kind. Finally, you shall belong to Death."

Long ago, the Xambrians had a homeland, a history, and a culture of their own. Then the Torquaran wizards came: they razed your people's 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. You are their descendent, and you bear the ancient burden of your 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. Your ancestors call out for justice; the oath cannot be ignored. You have heard the Calling in your soul, and know that it is all that matters in your life. Yes, you will somehow beget children, despite the road of solitude you travel. Some day, you will find your mate upon the same trail of retribution. Yet there will be no joy in that union. You will be drawn to Omen once more, and at the mountain of skulls you will be sent your separate ways, with only your ancestors to accompany you. Friendship is as difficult to secure. Outsiders fear you as an agent of Death, and your moods grow ever darker. Some few may join you for a time, and you may find moments of calm in which you may assist their goals. Until the next time you hear the Calling.

Appearance:
5'6"-6'2", 100-180 lbs. Bone-white skin, long raven-black hair, dark violet eyes, hard features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	0	+2	-1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	0	+1	+1

CR	HP	MR
+4	22	+3

Skills:
Spiritblade +2
Dagger +2
Brawling +1
Tracking +5
Stealth +5
Traps +3
Interrogate +5
Arcane Lore +2
Underworld +5
Survival +4
Ride +5
Low Talislan, native
Archaen, fluent
Xambrian, fluent



Special Abilities:
Spiritforce, Dispel Magic +4.

Equipment:
Vest, tight breeches, high boots, and cloak of black strider hide; gauntlets of fine silver mesh; large shoulder pouch; spiritblade; twin daggers; graymane or ontra steed; 80 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

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.

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.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+3	+3	0	+1
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	+2	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+6	26	0

Skills:
Halberd +4
Longsword +3
Long Bow +3
Parry Bracers +4
Dagger +3
Mounted Combat +3
Brawling +3
Tactics +6
Command +3
Guard +5
Ride +4
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Black iron corslet, torc, and parrying bracers; padded uniform; hip-high leather boots; shoulder pouch; halberd; longsword; dagger; long bow; quiver with twenty arrows; earrings; equs steed; 100 gold lumens.

THE WILDERLANDS

DANUVIAN CONSORT NPC

Your women prefer you to be docile and helpless, dependent upon them for protection, to supply your very thoughts and opinions. So your father taught you, the middling of five husbands. Your mother cast him out of her house when you were twelve, and he suffered until another soldier took him into her harem. He never did follow his own advice, and did not know when to hold his tongue. You have learned from his mistakes as well as his wisdom, and you live a comfortable life. You take care of your wife's home, cook her meals, and entertain her with poetry and music. And when she is so inclined, you share her bed. If she prefers the company of another consort you will not complain - that is simply the way of things. It is, after all, a woman's world.

Appearance:
4'8"-5'6", 90-150 lbs. Pale bronze skin, black mane, delicate features, hair worn in elaborate coiffure.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-2	+2	+1	+2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-1	0	-2	+1

CR	HP	MR
-3	18	0

Skills:
Artificer +4
Agriculture +4
Laborer (Cleaning) +2
Art +2
Dance +2
Music +2
Oratory +2
Fashion +4
Etiquette +4
High Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Decorated robes; sandals; jewelry; assorted tools and materials for house cleaning, agriculture, weaving, tailoring, and art; 50 gold lumens, primarily given by wife or mother.

MARUKAN MERCENARY

"I'm a Marukan. There's really no way my life can get any worse."

You know that life will never be good. You are cursed, as your family and friends and neighbors are cursed, as every Marukan is cursed from the moment of birth. No one knows what your people did to deserve their wretched fate. Some blame the Hadjin, who sold you the land you built your city on. Some blame foreign wizards who steal your luck; you wear your lead medallion to ward against this magic. You won't peddle ogront dung to survive. You'd rather make a living as a mercenary. You would like to believe that you're brave, but you've never really gotten the chance to prove yourself in battle. Whatever group of soldiers you've joined, it was always the same: "Empty the slops, Marukan"; "Care for the steeds, clean and sharpen the weapons, drive the supply wagon." At least you're good at these things - you've had plenty of practice. Still, you trained hard to be a soldier, and all you want is a chance. Maybe in a smaller group you'll be treated like a warrior. You try not to get your hopes up. You keep plugging along, because you've nothing better to do. But you're a Marukan, and life will never be good.

Appearance:
5'4"-6'2", 80-120 lbs. Pale complexion, sunken eyes, limp brown hair.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	+1	0	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+1	+1	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+3	22	0

Skills:
Weapon <choice> +2
Weapon <choice> +2
Brawling +2
Mounted Combat +1
Guard +3
Cook +4
Animal Handler +4
Laborer +4
Ride +3
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Sackcloth garments; worn leather armor; choice of two cheap weapons (daggers, hand axes, slings are common); shoulder pouch; luck medallion; cooking gear; elderly aht-ra steed; 5 gold lumens, in copper pieces.

THE WILDERLANDS

MARUKAN DUNG MERCHANT NPC

You lost your sense of smell some time ago. For a few years after you started hauling ogront dung, your dreams were of the scent of your mother's cooking. Now, not even in your dreams do you remember what that sensation was like. You shouldn't complain. At least you haven't starved to death yet. At least the dung gives you something of worth to sell. And it's not as if foreigners would stand your presence anyway, even if they could tolerate the scent of you. To them you are a cursed people, and they fear that the condition may be contagious. It's as good an explanation as any for your life.

Appearance:
5'4"-6'2", 80-120 lbs. Pale complexion, sunken eyes, limp brown hair.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	0	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	0	0

CR	HP	MR
+1	20	0

Skills:
Club +1
Brawling +2
Merchant +4
Laborer +3
Ride +3
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Sackcloth garments; club; shoulder pouch; luck medallion; durge-drawn dung wagon; 3 gold lumens, in copper pieces.

MARUKAN TALISMANCER — NPC

You are among the most respected people in Maruk. That in itself is not much of an accomplishment, and there is little incentive to remain in a city so impoverished. Still, your people need the talismans you create to protect themselves against the misfortunes, accidents, and dark magics that plague them. Sadly, foreigners do not hold your profession's products in such high regard. Perhaps they are right to question the efficacy of your talismans; look at your own wretched luck. Yet the benefits of Talismancy are not so easily dismissed. Imagine what life in Maruk would be like otherwise.

Appearance:
5'4"-6'2", 80-120 lbs. Pale complexion, sunken eyes, limp brown hair.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
0	0	0	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
0	0	+1	+1

CR	HP	MR
+1	20	+3

Skills:
Wizardry:
<4 Modes of choice> +2
Talismancy +4

Staff +1
Brawling +2
Deception +6
Artificer +4
Merchant +5
Ride +3
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Gray sackcloth vestments and cloak; staff; shoulder pouch; numerous luck medallions of assorted types; spell book; 5 gold lumens, in copper pieces.

THE WILDERLANDS

BEASTMAN PLAINS HUNTER — NPC

You hunt your prey, chasing them across the plains until they grow weak with exhaustion. Or maybe like your brothers, you set snares to hobble their mounts, or lay in wait to ambush them. No matter the method, the hunt is good. It is the scent of blood that drives you on, with the suns burning overhead. Sometimes you eat your prey quickly, gorging yourself before other predators come along to try to steal what you have caught. Sometimes you toy with your victims first, making them scream and twitch. Often you take useful things from the dead, trading them with hunters from your pack or others. When the prey is plentiful all have enough to eat, and the packs all prosper. The hunt gives you pleasure. The hunt is good.

Appearance:
5'10-6'2" Coarse brown fur, fangs, pointed ears, claws, bestial features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	0	+3	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	+1	-2	-2

CR	HP	MR
+4	27	-3

Skills:
Spear +2
Bow +2
Dagger +1
Brawling +1
Mounted Combat +1
Stealth +6
Tracking +3
Survival +3
Traps +2
Torture +4
Ride +5
Sign, native
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
Thick hide provides PR 1; claws and bite inflict DR 3 +STR, used on wounded opponents.

Equipment:
Animal-hide boots and loincloth; stone-tipped spear; short bow; twelve stone-tipped arrows; bone dagger; pouch for trap materials; darkmane steed; 50 gold lumens in stolen valuables.

KHARAKHAN GIANT

"What you want, short stuff?"

Your people are dying out. The Sage of your clan won't say it outright, but you know it's true. There's little left to hunt in the Wastes, and your children rarely have enough to eat. You give them all you can, but you worry they'll grow up weak. If it wasn't for the old things you find in the ruins and trade to the Orgovians, you'd have even less. So the Sage sends some of the clan away for a while, to make do among the smaller peoples. Most other places, there's more food and water, but there are other problems for a Kharakhan. Everything's tiny, to start. You have to make your own stuff, 'cause you can't use the things that others use. You have to sleep with the animals, 'cause you're too big for the beds, or even the rooms. When you fight for hire, the bosses don't care that you need more food than the others. They don't pay you any more, and most times they won't give you bigger rations. And they all think you're a savage and a freak. You don't talk much to most of them. There's only been a few you'd call friends, who you can laugh with. But you do what you have to do, and when you visit your people, you bring them what you can. It's a tough life. You wouldn't mind so much, except for the children.

Appearance:
10'-15', 1,000-1,200+ lbs. Dusky gray-black skin, massive physique, savage features, hair tied in long queue.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+8	-4	+3	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+9	-2	+6	-3

CR	HP	MR
+3	50	-3

Skills:
Battle Maul +4
Giant-sized Sword +4
Shield +3
Brawling +3
Mounted Combat +3
Weaponer +7
Artificer +6
Artisan +6
Survival +1
Low Talislan, native dialect
Drakken glyphs, fluent



Special Abilities:
Skin serves as one point of armor; fist inflicts DR 6 + STR; uses giant-sized weapons or uses two-handed melee weapons of normal size in one hand; detect scent of Men at range of 50 feet.

Equipment:
Loincloth; sandals; armor of boiled land lizard hide; black iron shield; battle maul; giant-sized sword; shoulder pack; giant-sized tools; ogriphant steed; giants based in the Wastes may have access to a war wagon; 15 gold lumens in assorted currencies or artifacts.

THE WILDERLANDS

ARAQ WARRIOR

NPC

Your people are not natural. This you know. The thought is always in your head. Like the need to kill, it never goes away. You despise other creatures, more even than you despise yourself. They must die so you can eat. That is why the old ones with magic made you, to kill other creatures, and to eat. Maybe that is why your people killed them. You cannot know. That thought is not in your head. It does not matter. You hate them all, especially the ones with magic. They are like the old ones who made you. Who made you not natural.

Appearance:
6'-6'6", 130-230 lbs. Scaly, light brown hide, dorsal membrane from forehead to base of neck, serpent-like features.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	+2	+1	-3
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+7	0	-1	-2

CR	HP	MR
+5	24	-3

Skills:
Spear +3
Mace +3
Dagger +2
Shield +2
Mounted Combat +2
Tracking +4
Stealth +2
Survival +4
Weaponer +1
Ride +2
Low Talislan, native
Sauran, native



Special Abilities:
Hide provides PR 1; survive for up to six weeks without food or water.

Equipment:
: Arm wrappings, boots, loincloth, and shield of land dragon hide; saw-edged dagger, spear, and mace of dragon bone; shoulder pouch; duadir steed with baggage; no wealth.

ZA SMUGGLER

"You are wise to fear me. But better to deal with me than a whole band of my people, no?"

You've made a good living off of fear. Your people plant terror in the hearts of those who travel through your homeland, and your jagged broadswords show no mercy. Often the outsiders flee, leaving the goods of their caravans as easy spoils. Growing up, you saw many of your friends die in battle, or when tempers flared, in vendettas. You thought you could profit more, with less danger, working as a smuggler for the caravans. They pay you to guide them through the territory of your people unscathed. So what if sometimes you pass along word of certain rich shipments to your Za brothers? It helps keep demand for your services high, and besides, you must be careful not to draw the ire of your people. If it comes to a fight, you will do battle with whomever you must. And afterwards, you will drink the blood of a brave enemy, for this adds their courage and strength to your own and rids you of the dishonor that this life breeds. And when your employers see you drink the blood of other Za, they will believe you no longer side with your people. You are tempted, it is true, to keep the spoils of this life for yourself. But you also understand fear.

Appearance:
5'6"-6', 90-190 lbs. Pallid yellow skin, leathery and lined with creases and wrinkles, deep-set eyes, shaved head, long, braided mustaches (males), long braids above each ear (females), lean and muscular build.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	0	+1	-1

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+4	0	-1	-1

CR	HP	MR
+5	25	-2

Skills:
Za Broadsword +4
Whipsash +3
Wristblade +3
Short Bow +3
Brawling +3
Mounted Combat +3
Stealth +4
Tracking +3
Scout +5
Merchant +5
Guide +7
Survival +2
Ride +5
Low Talislan, native
Sign, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Loincloth; hide chest binder (females); harness of studded land lizard hide; bands of reptile hide on head and upper arms; wristblades; whipsash; Za broadsword; horn short bow; quiver of twenty barbed arrows; necklace of hammered black-iron disks; graymane steed; 40 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

THE WILDERLANDS

ZA BANDIT

NPC

Zaran belongs to the Wild Folk, the Landborne - your people. It was ceded to them by the ancient Archaens. You do not care to hear the excuses of the oath-breakers. They caused the Disaster that ravaged your tribal lands. They call you "Sub-Men", as if you are less than they are. You afford them no lenience nor mercy. Such notions are for the weak. They travel through your lands in their caravans, carrying with them riches that are rightfully yours. So you take what they owe to you, and you teach them to fear you. Yet still they come, daring you, taunting you, bringing greater numbers of warriors to protect their precious goods. If they think your people will run, they are wrong. These lands are yours. Your honor demands that you take vengeance. You have sworn an oath of blood.

Appearance:
5'6"-6', 90-190 lbs. Pallid yellow skin, leathery and lined with creases and wrinkles, deep-set eyes, shaved head, long, braided mustaches (males), long braids above each ear (females), lean and muscular build.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+2	0	+1	-2

CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+4	0	-1	-1

CR	HP	MR
+5	25	-2

Skills:
Za Broadsword +4
Whipsash +4
Wristblade +4
Short Bow +4
Brawling +4
Mounted Combat +4
Stealth +4
Tracking +3
Scout +4
Survival +2
Ride +5
Low Talislan, native
Sign, native



Special Abilities:
None.

Equipment:
Loincloth; tight hide chest binder (females); harness of studded land lizard hide; bands of reptile hide on head and upper arms; wristblades; whipsash; Za broadsword; horn short bow; quiver of twenty barbed arrows; necklace of hammered black-iron disks; graymane steed; 25 gold lumens in plunder.

FERRAN SCAVENGER

"This belongs to you? You can have it back, if you can catch me."

As a suckling in the tunnels of Sharna, you learned the important lessons of life. Take anything you can when nobody's looking. Hide everything you have when you're not using it. Save everything you can, because you may need it later. But never fight over things you can replace. Never fight at all, if you can avoid it, unless you can win quickly or get away. Life's too short to make it any shorter. It's true at home with the pack, and it's true when you go to the cities. There, they call you a thief, and they say you smell bad. You say they should watch their things better. You say your nose is better than theirs, and you don't smell a thing. The ones that don't complain as much, they're the ones who hire you. They pay you to steal things, or to spy on people, or to guide them through the wild. It's easy money, and you never pass up easy money. And sometimes you make friends with them. It's good to have buddies, especially big ones, 'cause sometimes there's no place to run. Those times, when you're cornered, you remember another lesson you learned in the tunnels: if you have to fight, fight nasty and fight for keeps. But if you sniff a way out, take it. The big ones can fend for themselves.

Appearance:
3'6"-4'4", 50-75 lbs. Coarse brown fur, rodent-like features, hairless tail, invariably dirty.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-3	+8	+3*	-2
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
+2	+4	-2	+2

CR	HP	MR
+2	10	-2

Skills:
Dagger +3
Brawling +2
Evade +3
Stealth +3
Legerdemain +1
Deception +6
Appraiser (Treasure) +2
Survival +2
Guide +2
Low Talislan, native



Special Abilities:
Smell with PER +8; bite at DR 2; emit foul odor three times per day (victims must make Constitution roll at -5 to resist or are nauseated for three rounds; -3 to all Action Table rolls).

Equipment:
Tattered loincloth (males) or tunic (females); pouch; dagger; scavenged bits of clothing and gear; 15 gold lumens in assorted currencies and miscellaneous baubles.

THE WILDERLANDS

CALLIDIAN CRYPTOMANCER

You can spend your entire life reading - a very long life, extended by alchemical elixirs - and you will have only absorbed a small portion of the ancient knowledge contained within the Library that you call home. Nevertheless, that is your objective: to learn your specialty in its entirety. Others may consider such a life to be tedious or mundane. Some ask whether you desire to "do things," to be, you presume, physically active. That has never been important to your sect. Some ask whether you desire to increase the body of knowledge in the world. That is a more relevant question, yet the answer must be in the negative. You will be satisfied to complete before you pass a proper index for your specialty. The Library is vast enough as is.

Appearance:
6'-6'7", 140-180 lbs. Deep orange skin, large cranium, frail build.

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
-1	-1	+2	0
CON	**SPD**	**WIL**	**INT**
-1	-1	+3	+4

CR	HP	MR
-2	20	+5

Skills:
Cryptomancy:
<5 Modes of choice> +2

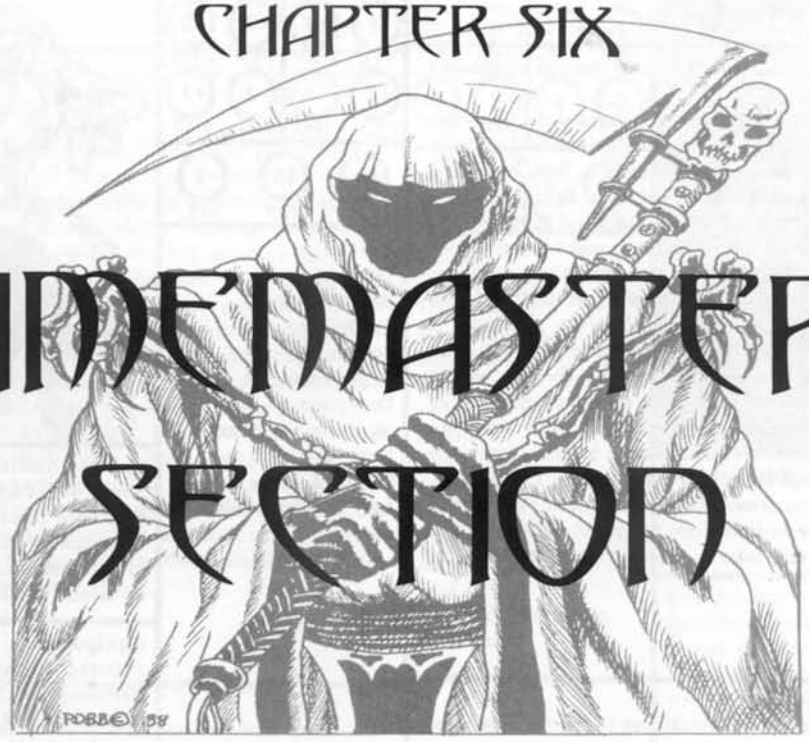
Cryptography +6
Linguistics (Reading) +6
Cartography +5
Arcane Lore +5
Scholar Skill <choice> +6



Special Abilities:
Can speak and understand any language.

Equipment:
Starched headdress and robes of yellow linen; leather-bound spell book; magnifying crystal; assorted reference works; satchel; pouch with quill pens and inks; scroll case for writings; 50 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

CHAPTER SIX



GAMEMASTER'S SECTION

The following material is designed for use by the Gamemaster. Players are advised not to read this section, as it contains information that their characters should not know.

This chapter contains:

Rules Tips for Gamemasters: rules advice for GMs.

Contacts: a list of sample Contacts for Player-Characters.

Planning a Talislanta Campaign: suggestions for creating a campaign that is best suited for your gaming group.

Designing Adventures: ideas for creating adventures plus sample adventure seeds.

The Talislantan Milieu: GM information about the world of Talislanta and its inhabitants.

Hirelings: professionals for hire and their fees.

RULES TIPS FOR GAMEMASTERS

The Talislanta game uses a simple rule system based on the Action Table. All actions in the game are resolved by the same procedure: compare the character's Skill or Attribute Rating with the Degree of Difficulty. Then take the difference (positive, negative, or zero) and add it to a d20 roll. Consult the Action Table for the result.

Players contribute by describing the Intent of their character's actions to the GM before rolling on the Action Table. The GM combines the character's Intent with the Action Table die result to interpret the outcome of the attempted action. With a few variations pertaining to the use of Combat, Magic, and Skills, these are the basics of the rule system.

Make sure you have a good grasp of how the rules work before starting to play. Take it slowly at first, and don't be too concerned if you or your players make mistakes at first. Once everyone becomes acquainted with the rules and their respective roles, the game will run much more smoothly.

INTERPRETING ACTION TABLE RESULTS

Here are some tips for interpreting Action Table results:

Describe the Action Table result in terms of how close the character came to their stated intent. When the player describes her character's action in the scene, picture what could happen if:

...the character performs extremely well (Critical Success)
...the character performs at their skill level (Full Success)
...the character barely succeeds (Partial Success)
...the character fails in the attempt (Failure)
...or the character bungles the action (Mishap)

- Use the player's intended result as the basis for your description. For example:

  Player: "I approach the guard, attempting to capture his attention with my outrageous costume and conspiratorial demeanor. Hopefully, his back will be turned long enough for Lucas to magick the keys from his belt."

  GM: "Okay. Roll on the Action Table and add your Deception skill rating to the result."

  Player: "Hmmm. A 10: partial success."

  GM: "The guard is not really fooled by your act, and seems very suspicious. He can't help but look your way, however, giving Lucas the chance he needs. He'd better be careful with those magic fingers, now that the guard is on the alert."

- If the Action Table result is associated with a number (such as damage in combat) try to include a bit of description as well, to add color to the scene. For example:

  Instead of saying: "You take 6 hit points of damage," try something like: "The Za's serrated blade bites into your upper arm, drawing a jagged line of blood across your sleeve."

- Don't forget the environment. Characters don't always fail due to a lack of skill. Sometimes, things just don't go their way. When a Player Character fails at a task that they ordinarily could accomplish (striking an inferior opponent, for example, or scaling a simple wall) you can describe their failure as a result of unforeseen circumstances or unfavorable conditions. For example:

  "The Vird's shield does not buckle as you anticipated, but instead deflects your expertly placed blow." "The brick you were using as a foothold crumbles just as you place your weight on it."

Be careful with this technique, though. Too much of it and the game becomes slapstick comedy.

DETERMINING DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Setting the degree of difficulty for a given action is another important GM job. For many actions, the rulebook provides guidelines for selecting difficulty numbers. In combat, for example, the degree of difficulty in hitting a foe is equal to the combat skill rating of the defender. When spellcasting, the Level of the spell acts as the degree of difficulty. Not all actions are so cut-and-dried, however.

As a tool for the harried GM, a sliding scale of difficulty numbers is provided below. Remember that degree of difficulty is always based on how hard it is for an average, "novice" (0-rating) practitioner to accomplish the action.

Difficulty	**Modifier**
No chance of failure	No need to roll
Any fool could do it	+10
Very Easy	+7
Easy	+5
Simple	+3
Routine	+0
Tricky	-3
Difficult	-5
Very Difficult	-7
Extreme	-10
Beyond extreme	-15 or worse

Armed with these numbers, the ratings of the characters, and some common sense, the GM can run a Talislanta campaign without ever looking in this book for a rule. For any given action, no matter how unusual, ask yourself: "Would this be Difficult for the average skilled practitioner? Very Difficult? Routine?" When you have your answer, you have your degree of difficulty and you're ready to roll. Or not to roll, as the case may be.

TO ROLL OR NOT TO ROLL

There's no need to call for an Action Table roll for each and every action. Sometimes, simply knowing the character's trait rating is enough to judge the outcome of an action.

For example, Flynn the Jaka is wandering through an open market while visiting the city of Hadran in the Kang Empire. Flynn's Arimite

companion, Abdul, is somewhere in the sea of humanoids, frantically searching for the Jaka. Frustrated, Abdul stands on a cart and begins yelling and waving his arms, "FLYNN! OVER HERE!" The GM decides that Flynn is quite a distance away, and is entranced by a collection of Mandalan pottery. Still, there is no need to roll in this case. With his +6 Perception, Flynn is one of the most observant beings on the continent. He hears Abdul's vulgar hooting and begins moving in the opposite direction.

Only during stressful or unusual situations is a roll required to accomplish an ordinarily simple task. Just be consistent about what does and does not require a die roll in your game.

Interpreting Spell Casting Die Rolls

Interpreting the results of spell casting die rolls can be tricky for beginning Gamemasters, particularly when the player-magician is still getting used to the peculiarities of Talislantan magic. In each case the GM should try to take into account the individual circumstances, be fair and patient, and use common sense. Here are some examples:

- **A full success does not always yield the same result.** A full success while hurling fireballs underwater may not be as impressive as the same stunt used on wooden carriage wheels while on dry land. These secondary effects are important, and depend a great deal on the vividness of the player's roleplaying, description, and statement of Intent.

- **A full success isn't always required.** Even pathetic results can sometimes do the trick, if the Intent is good: "I use a puff of elemental air to blow that vial of Red Menace into the fireplace."

- **Even a critical success doesn't always work.** If the player's Intent is flawed, no amount of powerful Spellcasting will help. A critical Influence success still has no effect on illusory people or mindless undead.

- **Intent should always be clear and to the point.** *"I whip up a swirling wind of hurricane force, knocking my enemies to the ground as I soar into the air and hurl lightning at the incoming Mangar warships. Oh and the wind is actually a summoned Air Elemental."*

One thing at a time, please. Explain to your players that Intent should be limited to a single, clear course of action.

Character Creation & The GM

Character Creation is an important part of the game, not just for players but for the Gamemaster as well. As GM, you should be ready to help players create their characters and fill-in their character's personal history. The procedure for Character Creation is explained in Chapter 1.

During the course of play you'll also need to create a number of Non-Player-Character (NPCs), who'll be used to play all of the "supporting" roles in your adventures: from villains to friends and relatives of the Player Characters, plus "extras" such as traders, shop owners, inn keepers, bandits, and so on. The Traveler's Guide section of this book contains over a hundred different archetypes. All can be used as NPCs, and each needs only a name, a motive, and a place in the context of your campaign. To help you get started, we've included a list of NPCs that can be used as Player Contacts.

Player Contacts

The following characters are examples of individuals whom the Player Characters may either have met or heard of prior to the beginning of their game careers. The exact relationship between these NPCs and your group's PCs is up to the Gamemaster to decide; they might be old friends, casual acquaintances, former lovers, relatives, former mentors, or rivals, or arch-enemies. For examples of additional Contacts, see the Introductory Adventure at the end of this chapter.

Aamaros

Among the most feared of all Aamanian witch hunters, Aamaros has traveled the continent from one end to the other, escorting pilgrims, retrieving stolen holy relics, and tracking down enemies of the churchstate of Aaman. A devout Orthodoxist, he is dedicated to spreading the teachings of his religion wherever he goes.

Aleana

Aleana is a Batrean paramour who owns a pleasure-palace in the city of Zanth, called Anaais. Formerly a slave of the Imrians, she used her

considerable charms to win her freedom, somehow earning enough money to purchase her own establishment. Aleana has extensive contacts among the Western Lands, and has a soft spot for individuals who are down on their luck.

Cerrulian

Cymrilian magician and owner of a rustic inn and tavern called the Vagabond Inn, Cerrulian is well-named, as he favors a blue-skinned semblance that matches both the inn's decor and its fare (the sapphire-blue wine is excellent, and compliments the blue cheese, breads, and pies). Cerrulian traveled far and wide in his youth, and has more than a few tales to tell. The exact location of his inn varies according to his moods; at different times it can be found along the road to Kasmir, the road to Sindar, and the road to Vardune, among other places. He is especially cordial to magicians and performers.

Falal of the House of Darud

Falal is a Farad Procurer who deals primarily in stolen goods and other contraband, including the dangerous narcotic, k'tallah. He has yet to make his fortune, and so travels extensively throughout the continent in search of business contacts. Falal has no qualms about who he deals with, provided he is paid in gold.

Ispann

The Ispasian mercantilist, Ispann, has contacts throughout many lands. He represents a number of interests, and has considerable assets upon which to draw. Ventures involving the acquisition of large sums of money interest him greatly.

Javan

A Xambrian who hunts outlaw wizards and rogue magicians for a living, Javan is a loner who generally shuns contact with others. It is said that he has brought no less than three reincarnators to their final judgement, yet he seems haunted and haggard, as if burdened by some terrible secret.

L'Laja

A Mirin warrior who left her homeland of L'Haan some months ago, L'Laja has traveled far in her search for an enchanted item that she says was stolen from her people. Her blue coloration has faded, but her desire to accomplish this goal remains strong.

Miriad

Miriad is a Cymrilian magician and illusionist of uncanny talents. He rarely exhibits the same semblance twice, using spells of illusion to alter his appearance in unpredictable — and occasionally disturbing — ways. Some who claim to know Miriad say that he is an amusing eccentric; others say he is a schemer and manipulator, interested only in acquiring magical power for himself.

Orianos

Known for his flamboyant attire and impeccable manners, Orianos is a Gao sea rogue and captain of the ship, Prince of Thieves. Indeed, some say he is the son of Gao-Din's King of Thieves, though this may well be a rumor intended to add to Orianos' growing reputation. Orianos is well-liked by his crew, and even by many of those whose valuables he has plundered over the years.

Sathas

Sathas is a member of one of the few Sauran tribes that has amicable relationships with other humanoid peoples. He has dealings with the Orgovians and Djaffir, trading firegems for enchanted weapons and armor, which his tribe uses in their battles against the Kang.

Sparte

Former Commander of the Borderlands Legion, Sparte is regarded as a hero among his people, the Thralls. He is famous for the Siege of Ikarthis, during which Sparte and a small contingent of mercenaries held the outpost against a far superior force of Beastmen and Za for ten days, until reenforcements could arrive. Now old and somewhat infirm, Sparte has been a mentor to many young Thralls.

Tane

Tane is a Jaka manhunter who now works primarily as a trader and guide. He is highly skilled in all three capacities, and is not one to be trifled with. Tane has traveled throughout the Western Lands, and his knowledge of the trails and forests of Werewood is second to none. Like most Jaka he is suspicious of magicians.

Tareau

A Rahastran cartomancer, Tareau is a drifter who travels across the continent of Talislanta, rarely staying in one place for long. Tareau makes a living telling fortunes and gambling; his enchanted Zodar deck is integral to both occupations. His mood often shifts

according to the cards; sometimes he seems hopeful, and other times moody and morose.

Tor

Tor is a renegade who fled Urag after a dispute with the leader of his clan. He is also a robber, highwayman, and — some say — a cold-blooded killer. Tor has acquaintances in Zandu and Arim, where his misdeeds have earned him a reputation that few decent folk would relish.

Zen-Jian

A Mandalan refugee who fled the Kang Empire, Zen-Jian has worked at a succession of menial jobs ever since. Slender and almost frail-looking, it seems strange that some believe she is secretly a Mystic Warrior. And yet, this may well be true.

A Note Concerning Archetypes

The archetypes included in the Traveler's Guide section of this book represent a limited sample of the possible character types found in Talislanta. For some cultures, a given archetype may fit the vast majority of individual members; for example, most Ferrans are scavengers. For other cultures, the given archetypes may represent well-known and important categories of citizens.

For example, not every Zandir is a Duelist or a Charlatan, but these two archetypes are common as Player-Characters and as NPC contacts. Also keep in mind that the Traveler's Guide archetypes represent "above-average" members of their respective races, and were designed to be suitable for "leading roles". To create individuals of average or below-average abilities, the GM can simply lower the archetype's stats and/or delete a few Skills, as desired.

Gamemasters should feel free to tinker with any aspect of an archetype to create more memorable encounters. If you want to include a character who does not belong to one of the existing archetypes, make a new archetype by changing as many characteristics as you need. Remember, archetypes are not by any means absolute or untouchable.

Planning Your Talislanta Series

The best way to create a campaign series that everyone will enjoy is to talk to your players before starting any work, and ask them a few questions about the kind of game they'd like to play. Do they prefer heroic fantasy or a grittier, more "realistic" style of play? Do they like adventures that take place on an epic scale, or smaller-scale stories that have a more personal feel? Do your players want action and combat, or do they prefer mystery and intrigue? Are they into sightseeing and exploration? Would they like to try their hand at trading and commerce?

While a good campaign series will contain a mix of many elements, it's best to find out what your players like most, and balance their input with the sort of game you like to run. The following questions and explanations can help you put together a Talislanta campaign that both you and your players will enjoy.

Heroic Fantasy or Grim Fantasy?

Your Talislanta campaign can be modified to reflect a variety of gaming styles, from Heroic Fantasy to Grim Fantasy. In the former, the characters are "larger-than-life" heroes whose sagas have a cinematic quality about them. In the latter case, characters act a bit more "realistically", knowing that the world they live in is a harsh and unforgiving place. This decision can also have an impact on the rules, which can be adjusted to reflect the style of play your group decides on.

The following sections contain suggestions on how to modify the rules to suit a Heroic or Grim Fantasy campaign. If you prefer a campaign that strikes a balance between these two styles, you can use the rule system as is, without further modification.

Hit Points & Gaming Styles

Quantity of Hit Points is the first thing that separates Heroic Fantasy from Grim Fantasy. The HP totals provided for the ready-to-play Archetypes in this book fall somewhere between the two extremes. These figures allow the average "tough-guy" Archetype to survive two or three serious wounds and continue to fight — not exactly the stuff of legends, but by no means wimpy, either.

For a more Heroic feel to the game, double the starting HP totals for PC Archetypes. This makes the characters about as tough as your typical action-movie star, able to fall from extreme heights and get punctured by many sharp implements while still keeping their cool.

For a Grim Fantasy game, halve the HP totals listed for the Archetypes. This makes the characters about as tough as real-world people. Characters in games like this must avoid a deadly fight at all costs. Combat-heavy games should not use this option, unless you want a very high rate of character turnover.

Spell Penalty

In Heroic games, magic wielding characters should feel capable of casting a great many spells without becoming ineffective. Apply the -1 spell penalty only for spellcasting rolls that are not a Full Success or better. This will allow magicians to cast more spells at or near their greatest level of ability.

In a Grim game, characters should be capable of casting fewer spells before losing their effectiveness. Characters should be wary of wasting their abilities for all but the most crucial situations. Increase the character's Spell Penalty by -2 for every spell cast earlier in a given day.

Skill Substitution

In Heroic games, characters should feel free to attempt almost any outrageous stunt, whether they have the actual abilities or not. An appropriately heroic explanation for how the character managed to succeed is all that is required. The GM should not be very strict about penalties for skill substitution in a cinematic game like this, and may even waive them altogether. This will give the series an "anything is possible" feel.

In a Grim game, the GM should be very strict with skill substitution, imposing stiff penalties for using a skill other than the exact one required. This makes the characters much less versatile, and gives the series a more pessimistic and even fatalistic feel.

Character Ability

Characters in Heroic games are often much more skilled than typical members of their profession. To reflect this, the GM can allow starting PCs to add between +5 to +10 points to each of the ready-to-play Archetypes' skills.

Grim fantasy characters can also be quite skilled, but usually not to Legendary levels of ability. The existing ability ratings for ready-to-play Archetypes are suitable for grim campaigns.

Experience Points

In Heroic games, the average XP given out per adventure should be between 10 and 30 points. For Grim games, only 1 to 5 points per adventure should be awarded.

Epic Campaign or Local Tale?

Like Heroic or Grim campaigns above, choosing whether your game will be an epic saga or a local tale is also important. Of course, you won't know which one you've played until the series is over, but it's good to have some ideas at the start.

Epic games tend to span the continent, and involve scenarios on an international level. Wars, plagues, evil invasions, and (un)natural disasters are all examples of epic sagas. Epic campaigns are usually very cinematic, but are not necessarily so. This sort of game is often suited to groups who have played Talislanta for a while and have become familiar with the continent as a whole.

Local tales are usually restricted to one region, and revolve around the immediate problems and opportunities of that area. Local games are recommended for gaming groups new to Talislanta, since they only need learn about a small portion of the world.

Once your group has decided the style and type of campaign you want to play, all you need to determine is where you want to start.

THE WORLD OF TALISLANTA: WHERE TO START?

The Talislanta game takes place in a world-setting that is quite unlike any other fantasy milieu. If your players are new to the world of Talislanta, it is important for you to understand the setting well. The best way to do this is to carefully read the Traveler's Guide provided in this book before starting your Talislanta campaign.

The Traveler's Guide is divided into seven sections, or "macro-regions". Each of these can be used as the starting place for a Talislanta game series, as follows:

- **The Seven Kingdoms**
  A microcosm of the Talislantan milieu, with seven different nation-states, terrains, races, and cultures. The capital city of Cymril is a crossroads for peoples from across the continent. This is a good starting place for players and GMs who are new to Talislanta, and also a good setting for Heroic Fantasy campaigns.

- **The Wilderlands**
  A hostile wasteland populated by bandit tribes, wild beasts, ancient ruins, and a handful of isolated outposts and settlements. This is a good starting place for a Grim Fantasy campaign.

- **The Western Lands**
  A temperate region of woods and deep forests surrounding the nation-states of Aaman and Zandu — bitter rivals since the Cult Wars of the early New Age. Opposing religious factions, witch hunters, and secret cults make this is a good starting place for local-scale or epic-scale campaigns based on intrigue and subterfuge.

- **The Eastern Lands**
  Rugged territories dominated by the warlike Kang Empire, which controls much of the region. With the machinations of a powerful and repressive Empire as the backdrop, this is a good setting for combat-oriented or epic-scale campaigns.

- **The Desert Kingdoms**
  The deserts of central Talislanta are home to nomadic tribes of merchants and bandits, the wealthy citystate of Hadj, the powerful nation-state of Carantheum, and its sworn enemy, Rajanistan. This is a good starting place for mercantile or action-oriented campaigns.

- **The Southern Rim**
  A setting for adventures on the high seas of Talislanta, and in the sweltering coastal jungles and tropical islands of this region. Flamboyant Sea Rogues, blood-thirsty corsairs, slavers, plunder, and buried treasure make this an ideal setting for Heroic Fantasy games.

- **The Northern Reaches**
  A vast territory stretching from the savage land of Urag to the frigid tundra of Narandu, the ice-cities of L'Haan, and such strange places as the Sinking Land and Shadow Realm. A good starting place for Heroic Fantasy (L'Haan vs the Ice Giants) campaigns or those based on uncovering mysteries and exploring strange lands.

Once you've talked with your players about where they'd like to start, choose one of the seven macro-regions and read the accompanying text thoroughly (you can always read-up on the other macro-regions later, as your series goes along).

Remember, your descriptions and portrayals are what will bring the world of Talislanta to life for your players. They will contribute their own part to the setting, but will ultimately come to understand and interact with a Talislanta that is uniquely yours.

MAKING TALISLANTA YOUR OWN

The Talislanta setting contains a great deal of information, especially compared to some roleplaying games. More than half of this book is devoted solely to illuminating the cultures, traditions, places, and creatures of Talislanta. Even so, with a setting as large and varied as Talislanta there's no way to provide you with everything you'll ever need to run your campaign.

What does Thaecian dinnerware look like? How do Kang greet each other? How big do the seven moons appear? What does a Thrall consider insulting? What are the names of the 10,000 luminaries in the Zandir Book of Mysteries?

Details of this sort are not covered in this book, and by necessity must be left to the imaginations of the

players and the GM. If you can't find the answer to a question in the Traveler's Guide, don't despair. Our advice is: Make it up. Do whatever you need to make your game interesting, and above all, have fun. Inventing these little touches will help solidify the setting in the minds of the players, and allows you, the GM, to inject your own style into the Talislantan world.

Designing Adventures

Every GM has their own personal style when it comes to designing adventures. Several suggestions have been provided in this section, in order to help novice Game Masters learn how to design scenarios. After you've run several games with your group you'll begin to fine-tune how you approach adventure design, to accommodate both your own tastes and the preferences of your group.

A certain style of adventure design that works well can be summed up in the phrase, "The action is where the PCs are." What this means is, the PCs are the "stars" of the series. Wherever they go, and whatever they do, excitement and adventure are sure to be there. It is a common failing of novice GMs to set an adventure in a particular place, at a particular time, with particular villains, and then force the PCs to care about the story and arrive at the locations. In gaming circles, this is known as "railroading" because the adventure seems to be on a set of tracks and cannot be steered.

One way to avoid railroading your players is to keep a lighter hand on the reigns and be ready to adjust your story. If you've planned an epic saga of warfare, intrigue and traitors in the Northern Reaches and your players decide that fighting Ice Giants is too bad for their health, simply relocate your story to wherever the PCs end up. There's no need to create a blizzard, block all caravan routes, and conscript the PCs into the Mirin Army just so your war-story can be told. The players will probably spend the adventure sulking, rather than enjoying the drama of the game. On the other hand, if you let the PCs set the course for the story, you'll often find that all of the scenes and intricacies you had planned can still be used with different names and places. The players will never be the wiser.

Find out the group's agenda as early as you can. It may work to simply ask them if they have any group goals. The players' answers will practically write the adventures for you. If the group doesn't have any particular goals, perhaps they are waiting for you to provide adventures for them. In this case, it's helpful to introduce a patron or organization to hire the characters and provide missions and tangible rewards.

Here are some tips and questions for taking an idea and turning it into a full adventure:

The Adventure Seed

Most adventure ideas start with a single image: the PCs galloping behind a low-flying windship, firing arrows over the rails; a pyro-demon coalescing from the center of a fire-ruby; a no-holds-barred tavern brawl. The first questions to ask are: Why are the PCs here? How did they get here? What are they doing? Who is trying to stop them? How? Depending on how independent your group is, you may only be able to answer a few of these questions. But you may find you've uncovered the seed of a good adventure.

A number of ready-made adventure seeds have been provided for the GM in this section, to help you get started. Feel free to modify these ideas as best suits the needs of your campaign and the players.

The NPCs

What characters are the PCs going to meet during the course of this adventure? What kind of people are they and what are their personal agendas? When describing a Non-Player Character to the players, try to limit your description to three key elements.

"The Sindaran Investigator is stoop-shouldered, heavily wrinkled, and is scowling at you morosely through his monocle."

"Karafan the pirate has probably never bathed in his life and his costume represents the fashions of a great majority of the continent. He stands out from the rest of his crew due to the fact that he seems to have all of his fingers and both sets of eyes and ears."

"Sargeant Miralul was probably a Vajra is his past life. Unlike most Mirin, he has a chest like a barrel and powerful arms. As you look down on his rather smallish stature you notice that years of wearing an adamant helmet have robbed him of the fine white hair that should be on his head."

You can also give each NPC a particular gesture, phrase, voice, or posture to help your players tell them apart.

The Setting

How does this setting affect the PCs? Would any of them be unwelcome here? Is the natural environment dangerous in some way? Is the area beneficial to the PCs? How will the opposition use the environment to its advantage? Should the PCs be in a familiar or unfamiliar place for this adventure to work?

The Theme

What's the overall idea behind this adventure? Is there literary-style subtext going on, is it just a straightforward episode in the PC's lives? What can the PCs learn from this adventure?

The Rewards

What can the characters gain during this adventure? Will they receive payment for their services? Will they acquire valuable goods or property? Are there any magical or alchemical boons they might find or steal? What about fame, notoriety, and other intangible rewards? Is it all worth the risk?

Adventure Seeds

The following is a selection of sample adventure seeds, arranged by macro-region. GMs can use these seeds as a starting point for developing their own adventures in the world of Talislanta.

The Seven Kingdoms

1. The PCs are hired by a Sindaran Effectuator named Tal Nadar to assist him in a matter of some delicacy. It seems that a valuable silver curio was stolen from the collection of Nala Majan, a trivarian player of some repute. The Effectuator believes the culprit to be one Naj Modas, a Sindra who became unbalanced after attempting to learn magic. Out of respect for Naj's impairment and his family's good name, the Effectuator feels it would be best if the matter was handled quietly by outsiders rather than through the Sindaran legal system. Nala has agreed not to press charges, as long as the item is returned. But will the reclusive and unpredictable Sindra cooperate? And is there any truth to the rumors that the Sindra has been tampering with black magical artifacts again?

2. The Thrall commander of Targ needs to replenish the fort's supplies of medicinal herbs. With trouble brewing in the Borderlands he can't spare any of his own troops to do the job, so he orders the fort's requisitioner, Hammar, to hire a skilled group of mercenaries to do the job. When he can't find any, Hammar hires the PCs instead (that's Thrall humor for you). A week in Targ Swamp should be sufficient to do the job — stranglevine, tazian flies, swamp fever, and alatus not withstanding. Of course, that's assuming the Jhangaran mercenary guides don't cut and run at the first sign of exomorph spoor. Look sharp, soldiers.

3. The Kasmiran moneylender, Abis al Adinn, is incensed: his brother and partner, Eban al Adinn, disappeared from the city of Kasir along with over 70,000 gold lumens of the family business' money. Abis believes his brother is hiding somewhere in the Jaspar Mountains of southern Kasmir, and has offered a reward of 10% of the stolen money for the return of the embezzler and the stolen money (if pressed, he may agree to 15%, but he won't be happy). Still, questions remain unanswered. Did Eban take the money, or was he kidnapped? Does the crafty Abis have anything to do with the disappearance of his brother?

4. While traveling in the vicinity of Astar the PCs receive a telempathic message from an unknown source, accompanied by feelings of intense grief: an image of a humanoid body laying somewhere along the shores of Lake Zephyr. What is the identity of the victim? Who sent the telempathic vision? Can the PCs convince any of the local Muse population to help them locate the body, or will the Muses be too preoccupied with their own concerns? And how can they get rid of those night whisps that keep following them wherever they go?

5. While in southern Vardune the players are hired by a Green Aeriad botanomancer named Cha-Ki-K'Ya to watch over his grove of costly tinsel-trees while he is away on a trip to Vashay. No sooner has the Aeriad left than the PCs discover that Cha's precious trees are being damaged by some unknown menace. Have root grubs infested the grove? Has a plant demon somehow found its way up from the Demonrealms to invade Cha-Ki-K'Ya's property? And how exactly are the PCs supposed to get rid of the mysterious threat without harming Cha's prized tinsel-trees?

6. As she does each year, the wealthy Cymrilian art connoisseur, Melissea, is holding a festive masked ball at her home in Cymril. Unhappily, the PCs were not invited to this exclusive affair. However, they were asked to attend the ball in order to help protect the many fabulous works of art that will be on display, for which Melissea has promised to pay them most handsomely. The foolish costumes that Melissea insists the PCs wear are but a minor annoyance. Far worse is the prospect of guarding

the matron's treasures from the rogue magician Valthesian, a flamboyant thief who has crashed the ball each of the last three years and made off with a costly work of art. How to find a Cymrilian thief in a roomful of masked Cymrilians? How to stop a thief who is also a skilled magician?

7. Invited to visit Durne by a Gnomekin the adventurers met in Cymril, the PCs venture into the Underground Highway and the realms below. Along the way a violent tremor causes a cave-in, and the PCs find themselves cut-off from their Gnomekin guide. Lost in a maze of tunnels, can they find their way to Durne or back to the surface? What happened to their Gnomekin friend? And what was it that caused the cave-in in? Was it an earthquake, subterranoids, or something even more sinister?

THE WILDERLANDS

1. The players are hired by the Borderlands Legion to escort three land lizard-drawn cargo wagons of provisions and supplies being sent to the outpost of Akmir. Bad enough that the caravan is under-manned, and a pack of armed beastmen has recently been harassing travelers along the road to Akmir. But why are the land lizards acting so strangely, and what's that strange odor coming from the wagons?

2. Traveling through the eastern Borderlands, the PCs happen across a lost and confused traveler. The traveler claims to have lost everything to Za raiders, including — apparently — his memory. Who is this traveler and why does he display occasional flashes of prowess? Where is he from? Where was he headed, and what was he going to do there? What will he be like when he regains his memory?

3. While investigating a desolate set of ruins in the northern Wilderlands, the pass through an ancient portal inscribed with Archaen symbology and suddenly find that they have somehow shrunk to less than six inches in height. What strange magics caused this misfortune, and how can the diminutive adventurers regain their former stature? What new perils will the ruins pose now that the PCs have been reduced to the size of dolls? Where's a Yitek tomb-robber when you need one?

4. On a stopover at the Borderlands outpost of Karfan the PCs run into a Xambrian wizard hunter named Javan, an acquaintance whom they met once before and regard as a friend. Javan's mood seems even darker than usual; when pressed by the PCs he states that he has received "the Calling" and is about to embark on a spiritquest. If the PCs volunteer to help, Javan will only say: "Do as you wish". Then he climbs atop the back of his equs and rides off in the direction of Omen. Do the PCs follow? Will they help Javan find the reincarnator that he must bring to justice? If so, how will they know what form the reincarnator has taken, and where will Javan's spiritquest lead them?

5. A Bodor musical troupe hires the PCs to accompany them on a trip from the Borderlands outpost of Ikarthis to the Dracartan citadel of Nadan, where they have been hired to play a series of engagements. Along the way it is discovered that the land lizard being employed to pull the Bodor wagon has suffered a gash on its leg — the result of a Beastman sickle-trap. The creature is hobbled, and can only move at half its usual speed even after the wound is tended. Worse yet, it has left a blood trail in its wake that has attracted the attention of two rival packs of Beastmen. The situation is by no means improved when a sneaky pack of Ferrans steal the Bodor's instruments.

6. The PCs see a small windship make a crash-landing thirty miles southwest of Akmir, and rush to investigate. In the wreckage they find four dead bodies — three Hajan servitors and a Monad. Incredibly, a fourth Hajan and his Hadjin master have escaped unscathed. Speaking through his servant, the Hadjin offers the PCs a small fortune if they will return him without delay to his home in the citystate of Hadj. If the PCs accept, will they be able to stomach the countless demands of the haughty Hadjin? Will they risk their own lives to save the two from predatory omnivrax? When a rampaging behemoth frightens-off all but one of the PCs' steeds, will they allow the Hadjin to ride while they must walk? And is it luck or fate when a Marukan dung merchant appears on the scene, driving her well-used dung wagon?

7. The adventurers join the gladiator circuit as warriors and their agents, traversing the Wilderlands of Zaran and the border city of Hadran. Among the gladiators themselves, the PCs find Saurans who have struggled for a better life and disgraced Ahazu, bound by honor to an enslaved existence. Amid the profiteers, they find a level of greed and corruption beyond their prior experience. A Hadjin plot to wrest away the warrior PCs' contracts and Danuvian Viragos searching for fitting consorts complicate matters further. Can they survive the conflicts, both martial and monetary, to emerge victorious and richer for their efforts?

8. While traveling near Danuvia, the PCs are confronted by a large and heavily-armed contingent of Danuvian

Viragos. The fierce-looking female warriors order them to lay down their weapons and accompany them to their citystate without delay. Have the PCs somehow offended the Danuvian Gynecocracy? Will they be charged with a heinous crime they did not commit? Or have they been brought to Danuvia to compete in the upcoming Conjugal Feast?

9. As the PCs are traveling in the vicinity of Maruk, they see an ominous storm approaching from the east — a Black Wind, larger and more dangerous looking than any they have seen before. With Maruk the only shelter in sight, will the PCs choose to risk the reputed curse that haunts the Marukans or brave the unknown perils of the oncoming magical tempest? What effect will the Black Wind have on the citystate, the Marukans, the surrounding environs, or the PCs themselves?

THE WESTERN LANDS

1. On a visit to the city of Zanth, the PCs encounter a group of young bravos assaulting a lone swordsman. If they intercede they find themselves in the midst of a feud between the followers of two hot-headed Zandir, both of whom are vying for the affections of a beautiful young woman named Zariella. Will the PCs accept when challenged to a duel by the bravos, or will they back down and be ridiculed as cowards by the local populace? Which of the two would-be lovers will they side with? And what happens when Zariella falls madly in love with one of the PCs? Is Zariella who she seems to be, or is there more to this young temptress than meets the eye?

2. While staying in an inn in Arim, one of the PCs finds a note among his possessions which says: "You have ingested a slow-acting poison and will be dead by sunset tomorrow". With a little more than a day remaining, can the PC and his friends find an antidote in time? Who was the assassin that administered the poison, and how was it done? Is the Revenant Cult to blame, and if so, who hired them?

3. While the PCs are in Aaman, they witness a Dhuna who has been brought to public trial for witchcraft and heresy. The trial is a farce, and the witch is condemned from the outset. Can the PCs rescue her, evade the watchful eyes of the Aamanian Monitors, and return her to Werewood with Witch Hunters on their trail? What if she actually is evil?

4. Chancing upon a band of Sarista camped on the border of Zandu and Silvanus, the PCs are invited to join the gypsies at their evening meal. Later the Sarista tell tales around the fire, and an old gypsy woman named Balika tells how she once stumbled upon an ancient Phaedran tomb along the banks of the Sascasm River, in Werewood. To prove her story she shows the PCs an old coin of Phaedran make, which Balika says she found near the entrance to the tomb. Will the PCs believe her story? Are they willing to risk encounters with hostile werebeasts and banes in the hope of finding the Phaedran crypt? And if they do locate the tomb, what fabulous treasures will they find within?

5. Someone is stealing equs from the city of Zanth. When the PCs' own steeds disappear from their stables, they decide to solve this mystery on their own. The local authorities suspect an Orthodoxist plot, but Serperian beggars claim that the intelligent animals are themselves rebelling. Tracing the animals to the tents of a Sarista circus group, what will the adventurers do when a Causidian comes forward as the equs' representative, claiming illegal enslavement? And will the players' steeds feel enough loyalty to expose the Sarista fraud?

6. The PCs are hired as crewmen on a Zandir freetrader planning a trip from the port of Zantium to Faradun. The captain, Trentanos, sails first to the island of Castabulan in order to obtain an aeromantic reading on the prevailing winds and tides. When the Castabulanese report that conditions appear unfavorable, the headstrong Trentanos decides to make the voyage anyway, despite the protestations of some of his crew. Will the aeromancers' dire predictions of storms and whirlwinds come true? Will there be a mutiny on board ship? If so, will the PCs side with the captain and his followers, or with the disgruntled mutineers?

7. A Jaka trader recruits the adventurers to help him salvage a petrified vessel buried in the Lost Sea, which the Jaka claims is an ancient Archaen windship. Along the way the PCs must brave encounters with crazed Wildman bands and war parties from Urag. Will they find the ship? If so, has anything of worth survived the ship's stony fate? What surprises await them in the depths of the long-buried, ancient vessel?

THE EASTERN LANDS

1. The Chana witch-tribes are causing problems along the southern borders of the Kang Empire, and mercenary soldiers are being hired to supplement forces stationed at the Kang outpost of Vulge. The wages are good, so the PCs hire-on for a one-month tour of duty. When they arrive in Vulge they find that the outpost is woefully under-manned and short of weapons and supplies. Most

of the troops have been demoralized by hunger, the witchmen's incessant attacks, and the monsoon-like rains. But a few battle-hardened jungle fighters, led by the Kang tracker, Kajan, have refused to give in. Fanatical in their desire to inflict casualties upon their enemies, they go out each night to vent their anger and hatred upon the Chana: taking the heads of male and female Chana as grisly trophies, burning entire Chana villages to the ground, competing with each other to see who can score the most kills, and performing other atrocities. Will the PCs throw-in with Kajan and his fighters, or will they abide by more conventional military methods? And what will happen if they cross Kajan?

2. Seeking knowledge, the adventurers embark upon a journey to the Temple of the Seven Moons, in Xanadas. Can they find the hidden trail that leads up the face of Mount Mandu? Will they survive the perilous climb, the predatory frostweres, the hostile bands of Harakin, the freezing cold and chilling winds? If they succeed in finding the Temple, will they be allowed to enter? Will the PCs meet the Chroniclers, and if so, will they gain the knowledge that they have come so far to find?

3. While in the Eastern Lands, a string of murders occurs in the local community where the PCs are staying. The evidence seems to suggest that the killer was a Manra shape-changer, though some question whether a Manra would do such a thing. Can the only witness to the crime be trusted, or does she have hidden motives? If the evidence is accurate, how do you track down a murderer who could be anyone or anything? Even your friend...

4. The Ispasians have recommended that the Kang Empire clear the woods in and around the Ku-Chang Plateau in order to make room for future settlements. Sauran prisoners of war, political dissidents, deserters, and accused criminals have drafted into chain gangs and assigned to do the work, thereby saving the Empire the cost of trials, imprisonment, and rehabilitation. The PCs may get involved as mercenary guards hired to supervise the chain gangs, or as laborers forced into service against their will. Either way they will have to deal with brutal Kang overseers, horrid work conditions, and of course the Mondre Khan — indigenous peoples of the Ku-Chang Plateau, who oppose the Ispasians' plans for expansion and are the most accomplished guerilla warriors on the continent.

5. The PCs are contacted by a Mandalan named Shimen-San, who fled the Kang Empire to avoid being executed as a rebel, and is looking for someone to funnel information to her compatriots in the Empire. Using false documents that identify them as traveling scholars, the adventurers manage to gain temporary residence in city of Jacinth. How can they aid the Mandalan slaves in their ongoing quiet rebellion? Will the players accept the patient tactics of the Mandalans, or will they take matters into their own hands? Will they get to meet a Mandalan Mystic Warrior, or are the stories of these elusive figures only the stuff of legends? How long can the PCs keep their actual intentions secret from the Kang?

6. Hired to help guard a band of Aamanian pilgrims on a journey to the Well of Saints, the adventurers expect nothing but trouble. In the Kharakhan Wastes bands of Araq attack anything that moves. At the foot of the Volcanic Hills vasps and raknids compete for food. Near the Firefalls pyro-demons leap from the flowing magma like sparks going up a chimney. In the Valley of Mists, vorls seem to appear as if from nowhere, turning their victims into dried husks. But at the end of the journey is the Well of Saints, the waters of which are reputed to have miraculous healing properties. The PCs can only hope that's true.

7. Befriended by a small band of Sauran traders, the PCs are invited to accompany the reptilians to their settlement in the Volcanic Hills, where the adventurers can obtain a quantity of precious firegems at good cost. They arrive to find that in the traders' absence raknid warriors attacked the Sauran fort, killed many of their people, and made off with the clan's priestess. Will the PCs help the Saurans invade a raknid hive in the hope of rescuing the clan's spiritual leader? Can they evade detection by the raknid warriors, workers, and drones? And can they resist the psychic powers of the hive's horrid queen?

THE DESERT KINGDOMS

1. When the PCs booked passage aboard a land ark bound for the city of Dracarta, they expected to find adventure. But they probably didn't expect the ship to run aground during a sandstorm, or to be stranded with the rest of the ship's crew and passengers in the middle of the Red Desert. With water in short supply, can they locate a band of Yassan technomancers to help repair the vessel before they fall prey to sand demons and their insidious mirages? How will they know what is real, and what is illusion? And what happens when a Ghost Wind blows across the desert sands, leaving fear, confusion, and disembodied spirits in its wake?

2. While traveling through the Desert Lands a PC is possessed by a spirit form. Who is this spirit and what is it trying to accomplish while in possession of the PC?

3. At the northern border of Djaffa, the PCs are approached by a Yitek nomad named Yato Nas, who invites the adventurers to join him and his clan on a trip to the southern Desertlands. The Yitek claims that his clan needs help with a "salvage operation" of an unspecified nature, and promises rich rewards to all who partake in the project. Why won't Yato Nas be more specific about his intentions? What treasures does he expect to find? Perhaps more importantly, why do the tomb-robbers need the PCs' help when they usually choose to work alone?

4. The PCs are hired by a Hajan servitor, who at the behest of his Hadjin master has been assigned the task of retrieving a newly discovered cache of ancient family heirlooms from the Hadjin Tombs. Under the watchful eye of the snobbish Hajan, the adventurers must search the mausoleums and extract precious frescoes, friezes, urns, sarcophagi, and crystal artifacts without damaging them; taking care to avoid ages-old traps and pitfalls, while protecting the demanding and unappreciative Hajan from necrophages, irate spirits, and other hazards.

5. In Dracarta, the PCs are invited to join a thaumaturge named N'Jama on a short trip by duneship to the southern city of Anasa. Not far from their destination the vessel comes under attack by a windship bearing no identifying flags or markings, which drops spheres of poisonous gas on the duneship from above. When N'Jama and the PCs come to, they find that they've been captured by a Rajan assassin-mage named Raj-Aban, and are being brought to the city of Irdan along with a quantity of quintessence stolen from the duneship. As the windship sails towards the Rajan capital the captives learn that they will be subjected to "interrogation" by Raj-Aban and his assistants. Will the PCs be able to resist Raj-Aban's attempts to get information from them by the use of torture? Can they find some way to escape before they arrive in Irdan? Can they prevent the Rajans from bringing the stolen quintessence back to their country?

6. The adventurers visit the city of Tarun, in Faradun. Here, they meet Namal of the House of Farath, a Farad procurer who offers to pay the PCs a handsome sum for "a small service entailing no great effort or risk" on their part. As Namal explains it, the PCs need only travel to a small plantation located just ten miles outside the city, pick-up a number of parcels, and return with them to Tarun. The contract offered by Namal seems straightforward, with no more or less fine-print than the usual Fard document. If the PCs accept, they find that matters go much as Namal said — at first. Discovering that the plantation is guarded by heavily-armed Za mercenaries may come as a surprise. Learning that they cannot pick-up the parcels until nightfall may seem somewhat suspicious. Finding out that the parcels contain a small fortune in k'tallah could be unsettling. But the adventurers need not worry for their safety, unless they find out that the parcels were stolen from Shabal of the House of Narud: a Farad Monopolist and wizard of great wealth and power, who marks Namal's House as a hated rival.

THE SOUTHERN RIM

1. When the Phantasian dream merchant, Lafcadio, offered to take the adventurers to Cymril in his windship, it seemed like a good idea. The offer was most generous, and after all wouldn't it be much quicker to travel by windship than by land? Of course, no one could anticipate that Lafcadio would take too much of that amber essence, and fall into a slumber from which he could not be awakened. Who could have predicted the icicle rain that damaged the sails? Or those five ravengers that followed the ship for miles, clawing at the hull as they tried to get into the ship's hold and steal our provisions. And what about the erx that attached itself to the ship's levitationals?

2. While searching for buried treasure among the Blue Atolls of the Far Seas, the adventurers' ship is blown off course in a storm. When the storm abates the adventurers find that their ship has drifted into the hidden port of a clan of Sun-Ra-San dragon hunters. Can the PCs convince the Sun-Ra-San that they're not spies? If accepted into the clan, will the PCs be allowed to take part in a traditional sea dragon hunt, and if so will they meet the expectations of the Sun-Ra-San?

3. Drawn by the promise of quick profits, the adventurers travel to Jhangara to hunt for scintilla. At the dismal settlement of Tabal they hire a pair of morose Jhangarans who offer to accompany them to the coastal marshes and show them where clutches of glowing scintilla can be found. Unfortunately, inclement weather forces the PCs to spend a night in the ramshackle settlement, where they are subjected to biting insects, filth, disease, and squalor. At daybreak, the are finally able to leave Tabal and begin looking for scintilla. Will they strike it rich, or will the lure of easy money dissolve in the face of grim reality? Can they trust their Jhangaran guides, or are the two scoundrels out to rob them at the

first opportunity? When they encounter a band of Jhangaran Outcasts, what will they do?

4. The players are hired to escort a Green Aeriad scholar who wishes to observe and record the unusual reproductive process of the Green Men. The journey from Vardune to the Dark Coast is perhaps the least of the group's problems. Finding the reclusive symbiotes in the midst of the vast rainforest presents even greater difficulties, especially when they do not wish to be found and can blend so perfectly into their surroundings. Even if they can find any Green Men, will the PCs be able to convince the plant-folk to trust them? When warring bands of Moorg-Wan and Ahazu clash nearby, can the PCs find some way to lead them away from the Green Men without getting themselves killed?

5. After a long and enjoyable evening in a seaside tavern, the adventurers stumble back to their rooms at a local inn. Along the way they are ambushed by a press gang, bound hand and foot, and dragged off in the middle of the night. The PCs awaken on board a Gao sailing vessel, far out to sea. The ship's captain, the charming Auriello, introduces himself and apologizes for the inconvenience; his vessel needed a few additional hands, and so the PCs have been invited to join the crew. Auriello stresses that the adventurers may decline if they so desire, though it is a very long swim back to the mainland. So begins the PCs' career as Sea Rogues.

6. While dredging for gold and amber on the coast of Mog the PCs are ambushed by a large band of Imrian slavers. Can they fight their way out of the trap? Can they evade their pursuers and make it safely through the swamps of Mog without falling prey to alatus, water raknids, and other predators? Will the neighboring Mogroth help them, or are they too afraid of the Imrians to get involved?

7. Lost at sea during a storm, the adventurers are saved from drowning by sea nomads, who carry them on the backs of their zaratan to the floating city of Oceanus. The nomads prove to be friendly, and offer to let the PCs stay in Oceanus until they can find a way home. In return for their hospitality, the Oceanians ask only that the PCs help the sea nomads in their usual chores and responsibilities. How will the PCs fare when asked to help dive for mollusks, or swim below the surface to help harvest giant kelp and aqueor? Will they help defend Oceanus against seaborne predators and Imrian slavers?

8. While at sea the adventurers' ship is overtaken by an ominous, black iron vessel. An iron plank is lowered from the ebon ship to the deck of the PCs' own ship. Speaking in a low and resounding voice, an unseen presence issues an invitation to come aboard. The speaker turns out to be a huge guardian devil; standing beside it is the creature's master, a Black Savant. By means of signs and gestures the Savant instructs his servant to tell the PCs that he needs them to help him obtain a certain artifact from a dealer of antiquities in Tarun. The Savant will not specify the nature of the artifact, or his reason for wanting it. If the PCs accept, he offers to pay them a small fortune in black diamonds. The Savant does not say what will happen if the PCs refuse.

THE NORTHERN REACHES

1. While traveling in the vicinity of Tamaranth, one of the players is confronted by an Ariane Seeker who informs them that the time is right for the PC to complete a task started by, or atone for a crime committed by, the PC in a past life. What is this task or crime, and how can it be completed or atoned for? What will happen if the PC fails to complete the task or atone for the crime?

2. A Cymrilian magician asks the players to accompany him to the Sinking Lands, where a snipe he befriended on a previous visit promised to guide him to the fabled floating city of Elande. But how will they find this snipe, when they don't even know its name? Does the snipe really know how to find the elusive city? If the adventurers do find Elande how will they reach it, when it is said that the city hovers high above the clouds? If the PCs get there safely, what lost secrets of antiquity will they find in the ancient city? Is another group secretly following the adventurers?

3. On a visit to L'Haan the adventurers are asked to join a group of decorated Mirin war heroes on a mission to locate and destroy the Ice King of Narandu: a mysterious entity believed to be the ruler of the Ice Giants, age-old enemies of L'Haan. Can the group possibly hope to survive the blinding snowstorms, treacherous terrain, frostweres, and hordes of Ice Giants they will surely meet along the way? How can they find the Ice King when no one knows who or what he is, or if he even exists? And even if they do destroy him, will that stop the Ice Giants from continuing to wage war on L'Haan?

4. At the invitation of a Gryph the adventurers met in the course of their travels, the PCs are honored to go to Tamaranth and take part in the Great Hunt. Accompanied by the most renowned Gryph hunters, the PCs will stalk such dangerous predators as omnivrax, malathropes, and behemoths. Most will be driven from the Gryph's territories, but some will fight to the death. How will the

PCs fare on the hunt? Will they acquit themselves with honor, and earn the undying respect and friendship of the Gryphs? Or will they find that they have taken on more than they can handle, and hope to just get out with their lives?

The Talislantan Milieu

This section contains additional material about the continent of Talislanta and Talislantan cultures which Gamemasters may find useful in their campaigns.

Exploring the Ruins

The Talislantan continent is littered with the ruins of past civilizations, many of which may contain valuable artifacts of magical significance. Your players may want to explore such places, hoping to unearth the secrets of Talislanta's past. What they find in the ruins will be up to you, the Gamemaster, to decide. Here are some suggestions:

Antique Artifacts

Implements, pieces of apparel, furnishings, and even mundane-seeming oddments may have considerable value to Talislantan collectors of the New Age. Common-looking items may actually be rare or even priceless originals. Some may be enchanted with subtle powers or properties that only close inspection may detect.

Weaponry and Armor

Enchanted and mundane weapons and armor litter the ancient battlefields of Talislanta, from daggers and war-darts to massive siege engines built to resemble iron land dragons. Most are buried under centuries of dust and debris, or scattered amongst the ruins of fallen cities. Ancient and/or decorative pieces are greatly valued by Talislantan collectors, regardless of their actual utility.

Wealth

Gems, crystals, jewelry, rich raiment, coins of many denominations and types, tapestries and other works of art were often buried along with their owners. Even the most mundane copper coin may be a rare antique worth hundreds or even thousands of gold lumens to an avowed collector.

Ancient Magic

Tomes or scrolls that contain magical knowledge from long ago are prized by magicians of all Orders, though they may be extremely difficult or even impossible to decipher. In the rare cases where an item can be read and understood, new and startling magical abilities are sometimes gained. An example would be Koraq's unpredictable "Translocate" spell, which transports the caster instantly from one place to another; an effect that cannot be achieved at all with modern magic.

Ancient spells can be studied and learned like any other new skill, though the time required to learn it is usually greater. The magic of old is an order of magnitude more complex than modern methods, and entails an inherent Degree of Difficulty modifier of -20 to -30 or more. Some of the ancient texts that magicians may uncover in the course of their adventures include:

Arkon's Logbooks

Describing certain of this reckless sorceror's more unusual experiments; the most notable of these being Arkon's formula for enchanting a magic wand in just 48 hours.

The Black Grimoire

Mordante's definitive work on Black Magic, Necromancy, and communion with unholy beings from beyond the stars.

Laslovian's Compendium of Dreams

An Astrogationist's guide to the Dream Dimension, which the author claimed could be entered via windship if the navigator knew the proper coordinates.

The Crimson Magister

A set of three books, bound in red iron and inscribed upon plates of hammered brass. Authored by the notorious Erythrian battle-mage, Zorion, this text serves as a practical manual of magical warfare.

The Elemental Codices

A four-book set illuminating all 562 of Astramir's Elemental Transformations.

Calendar of Notable Dates

The following calendar indicates some of the more notable holidays, feast-days, and celebrations observed by the various peoples of Talislanta. In addition to enhancing the players' appreciation of Talislantan history and culture, many of these occasions are useful as seeds or settings for adventures. See the intro to the Traveler's Guide for more information on the Talislantan Calendar.

1st of Ardan

Annual Clash of Champions

Chosen representatives of Aaman and Zandu meet in combat atop the Great Barrier Wall. The victorious nation is awarded proprietorship of the wall for the year, reaping a vast profit in toll revenues.

3rd of Ardan

Jha

A Jhangaran holiday, viewed by the populace mainly as a good excuse to get as intoxicated as possible. Customarily, a rather gloomy occasion.

7th of Ardan

Night of Fools

Zandu's laws are temporarily rescinded for one evening, and the capitol city of Zanth is transformed into a veritable madhouse, with costumed revelers dancing drunkenly in the streets.

14th of Ardan

Day of Reckoning

On this day, the Za bandit tribes believe that their legendary ruler, the Tirshata, will make known his identity and unite the various Za clans. It is customary for the clans to gather, sit in a large circle, and await an omen or sign of some sort. After a few hours of this the Za become restless, and the conclave is dissolved, usually amidst much inter-clan bickering and fighting.

21st of Ardan

Sindaran Trivarian Competition

A tournament pitting the most accomplished Nadirs competing against each other for the Honorarium, a garish trophy awarded to the winner of the competition. The event attracts much interest in Sindar, the winner being accorded great honor and prestige.

1st of Drome

Kasmir Trapsmith Convention

A gathering of the most skilled Kasmiran artificers. New products are displayed, and seminars are held on many facets of the trap-business.

2nd of Drome

Anniversary of the opening of the Great Barrier Wall

The Aamanians, who won the first Clash of Champions (held on this date), still contend that they were shorted a month and a day's toll revenues when the tournament was moved to the first of Ardan on the following year.

7th of Drome

The Caliph's Feast

Annual gathering of all the Djaffir tribes, held either at El Aran or Al Ashad. The Caliph of Djaffa hears complaints, arbitrates disputes, and accepts offerings from the various tribes. A great feast is held thereafter, lasting three days and nights.

30th of Drome

Anniversary of the One Day War

An occasion for unrestrained laughter and feasting in Durne, celebrating the Gnomekin's swift victory over an invading army of Darklings in the year 67 of the New Age.

42nd of Drome

The Conjugal Feast

This colorful pageant, held in Danuvia, 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 female populace of Danuvian bids on the remaining eligible males.

49th of Drome

Equinox

Traditional celebration of the end of spring and the beginning of the median season. A national holiday in Astar, providing the Muses with yet another excuse to avoid work.

1st of Jhang

Feast of the Red God

A feast in honor of the Kang God of War, Zoriah. The date is marked by large-scale bouts of ritual combat, followed by drunken revelry.

7th of Jhang

Day of Rage

Anniversary of the Massacre at Dracarta, a black day in the memory of the Rajans, who were defeated and humiliated when they attempted to take the Crimson City on this date in the year 445. Conversely, the day is observed by feasting in Carantheum.

30th of Jhang

Gao Liberation Day

Anniversary of the Sea Rogues' liberation from the Phaedrans. The Sea Rogues are known to be uncommonly charitable on this day, sometimes reducing the ransom of hostages, sparing condemned felons, and so forth.

49th of Jhang

Tournament of Challenges

A Tazian festival featuring exhibitions of martial prowess, with Thralls competing in various categories for awards of up to 10,000 gold lumens.

1st of Laeolis

Anniversary of the Battle of the Sea of Sorrow

A national day of mourning in both Aaman and Zandu, with solemn gatherings of hooded mourners laying wreaths of flowers upon the waters of the Sea of Sorrow.

25th of Laeolis

Ritual of the Midnight Suns

An occasion marking the longest day of the year in L'Haan, where the twin suns shine until the stroke of midnight.

27th of Laeolis

Vigil of Xanadas

Observance of the "Long Wait," marking the anniversary of the mystic Xanadas' passing into the next world. The descendants of his original followers spend the day and night scanning the horizons, searching for some sign of Xanadas.

49th of Laeolis

The Ghost Moon

On this evening, the moon Laeolis passes Phandir in the night sky, producing an eerily luminescent "ghost" moon. Considered an ill-aspected evening by most Talislantan peoples.

1st of Phandir

The Magical Fair

A two-week long spectacle with numerous attractions, all commemorating the anniversary of the founding of the free kingdom of Cymril. Exhibitions of magical wares and adjuncts are held throughout the duration of the fair.

7th of Phandir

Windship Regatta

A windship race marking the mid-point of Cymril's Magical Fair. Crews from the isle of Phantas and other distant locales compete against Cymrilian astrogationists for a crystal trophy and a prize of 20,000 gold lumens.

14th of Phandir

Closing ceremonies for Cymril's Magical Fair.

Numerous events are featured, including the Lyceum Arcanum's Annual Awards Dinner, magical "duels" for wagers and prizes, and breath-taking displays of illusory pyrotechnics.

35th of Phandir

Charade

(pronounced shar-AHD) A festive celebration held by the Hadjin nobility, restricted only to the wealthiest members of Hadjin society. The highlight is a grand masquerade ball held in the Royal Palace of the Hadjin Grandeloquence.

49th of Phandir

Conjunction of the Twin Suns

Celebration marking the meeting of the twin suns in the noonday sky. Feasts and dancing are held throughout much of the continent, excluding Aaman and Rajanistan. In Chana, the Conjunction is viewed as an evil omen.

1st of Talisandre

Harvest of the Silver Moon

Beginning of the week-long harvest season in Vardune. While the viridia crop is being harvested, little else occurs in the region.

7th of Talisandre

Anniversary of the founding of the Seven Kingdoms

...which occurred in the year 222. This date is a national holiday throughout the seven member kingdoms. A great festival is held in the bazaar at Cymril in commemoration of this day.

14th of Talisandre

Festival of the Bizarre

An annual exhibition of oddities and diversions, held on the isle of Thaecia. Participants wear costumes or makeup, with prizes awarded for the most outlandish apparel. The climax of the week-long festival is the awards ceremony. A committee of Thaecian judges (presided over by the Enchanter Bonzerius) reviews the exhibits and awards prizes of 10,000 gold lumens in the categories, "Most Unique," "Most Provocative" and "Most Absurd." A grand prize of 100,000 gold lumens is bestowed in the foremost category, "Most Bizarre."

21st of Talisandre

Carnivale

A convention of Farad Mongers, Procurers, Usurers and Monopolists. Rare and costly goods of all sorts are offered up for sale at auction. Held in the marketplace of Tarun, the event is open to the general public, an admittance fee of ten gold lumens being charged at the city gates. Carnivale lasts from midnight to midnight of the following day.

28th of Talisandre

Festival of Jamba

Celebration commemorating the revival of the Lost Art of Thaumaturgy, an event credited to Carantheum's patron deity, the mysterious Jamba. A great feast is held in the capitol of Dracarta, paid for by the King of Carantheum.

49th of Talisandre

Anniversary of the Silent Insurrection

...when the Kang usurped control of the old Quan Empire. Formerly the date of the Emperor's Feast, when citizens were required to pay homage to the Quan Emperor with gifts.

1st of Zar

Eve of Prophecy

Customary observance of the Ur clans, who gather around the monstrous stone idols which litter their land, awaiting prophecies and portents. To appease the populace, the Ur shamans are said to stage various mock omens and "signs from the gods".

6th of Zar

Pandaemonium

Traditionally, an evil night when demons and malign spiritforms are believed to come forth in search of mortal victims. Few enlightened Talislantans give much credence to this old custom. In Chana, the date has great significance, and is considered an optimal time to perform certain black magical rites and rituals. In Rajanistan, Pandaemonium marks the beginning of a week-long celebration in honor of the dread entity, Death.

7th of Zar

The Septenarial Concordance

Beginning of a fourteen-day period during which the seven Talislantan moons remain in alignment. Regarded as an ill-aspected time, particularly in Jhangara, where the populace lives in fear of the Horag; a monster rumored to stalk the swamps during the Septenarial Concordance.

13th of Zar

The Dance of Death

Morbid festivities marking the culmination of a week-long celebration of death. Sacrificial rituals of varying sorts are featured, leading up to the climax of the feast: the Dance of Death, when dancers in iron death-masks plunge blindly into the throngs of drug-crazed worshippers, slaying indiscriminately with ceremonial axes, swords and daggers.

49th of Zar

Judgement Day

Aamanian Holy day, when the Orthodoxist Monitors tally the yearly aalms totals of the faithful. The resultant promotions or demotions in status are posted in the cult's numerous temples and halls.

Climate & Weather

The material in the following section can be used by the Gamemaster to determine weather conditions throughout Talislanta.

Talislantan Seasons

The seven-month Talislantan year is divided into three seasons:

Spring

The first two months of the year (Ardan and Drome) constitute the Spring season. Heavy rainfall is common throughout temperate regions, with tropical storms and monsoons occurring more frequently in warmer climes. Most food crops are planted during the last weeks of Spring, after the rains have subsided.

Median

The middle three months of the year (Jhang, Laeolis, and Phandir) constitute the Median season. Warmer temperatures are typical throughout the continent during this period.

Fall

The last two months of the year (Talislandre and Zar) constitute the Fall season. Temperatures are generally lower throughout the continent, with increased chance of precipitation. Most food crops are harvested during the first weeks of Fall.

Weather Table

To determine the weather conditions in a given region, refer to the appropriate Climatic Zone and roll a d20 on the Weather Table, taking into account any modifiers listed for seasonal variations (all temperatures listed are based on the Fahrenheit scale).

Temperate

(average temperature 50 + d20 degrees)

1-5	Clear, little or no wind.
6-12	Clear, variable winds.
13-15	Clear, high winds, -5 degrees.
16-18	Overcast, variable winds, -10 degrees.
19-20	Rain (duration: 1-10 hrs.), variable winds, -10 degrees.

Modifiers

Spring: +5, double duration of rainfall.
Median: +10 degrees.
Fall: +2, -10 degrees, 50% chance of snow instead of rain.

Tropical

(average temperature 80 + 2d20 degrees)

1-8	Clear, no wind
9-12	Clear, variable winds, -d10 degrees
13-17	Heavy rain (duration: 1-10 hrs.), high winds
18-20	Tropical storm

Modifiers

Spring: +7, roll of 13-17 = monsoon
Median: +15 degrees
Fall: +3, -10 degrees

Sub-Tropical

(average temperature 70 + 2d20 degrees)

1-10	Clear, no wind.
11-15	Clear and breezy, -d10 degrees.
16-17	Rain (duration: 1-10 hrs.), variable winds.
18-19	Heavy rain (duration: 1-10 hrs.), high winds.
20	Tropical storm.

Modifiers:

Spring: +5.
Median: +10 degrees.
Fall: -1, -10 degrees.

Arid

(average temperature 60 + 2d20 degrees).

1-10	Clear, little or no wind, +d10 degrees.
11-15	Clear, variable winds.
16-17	Sandstorm (duration: 1-10 rounds), high winds.
18	Heat lightning (duration: 1-20 rounds), high winds.
19	Rain (duration: 1-20 rounds), variable winds, -10 degrees.
20	Special; roll d6: 1-3 = Acid Rain, 4-6 = Black Wind.

Modifiers

Spring: +2.
Median: +10 degrees.
Fall: +1, -10 degrees.

Arctic

(average temperature 40 - 2d20 degrees)

1-5	Clear, little or no wind.
6-12	Clear, variable winds.
13-14	Clear, high winds, -10 degrees.
15-18	Snow (duration: 1-10 hrs., 1 inch of snow per hour).
19	Blizzard (duration: 1-20 hrs., 3 inches of snow per hour), d20 degrees.
20	Icicle Rain (duration: 1-20 rounds).

Modifiers

Spring: +3, +10 degrees.
Median: None.
Fall: +6, -20 degrees, double snowfall totals.

Sub-Arctic

(average temperature 50 - d20 degrees)

1-8	Clear, little or no wind.
9-12	Clear, variable winds.
13-16	Overcast, variable winds, -10 degrees.
17-19	Special; roll again: 1-10 = Snow (1-10 inches), 11-20 = Rain (duration: 1-10 hrs.).
20	Special; roll again: 1-10 = Icicle Rain (duration: 1-20 rounds), 11-20 = Blizzard (duration: 1-10 hrs., 2 inches of snow per hour), -d20 degrees.

Modifiers

Spring: +5 (precipitation is always rain), +10 degrees.
Median: None.
Fall: +3 (snow instead of rain), -20 degrees.

Aberrant

(temperature varies according to region)

1-14	Conditions as per specific region.
15	Acid Rain (duration: 1-10 rounds).
16	Black Lightning (duration: 1-10 rounds).
17	Black Wind.
18	Icicle Rain (duration: 1-10 rounds),
19	Ghost Wind.
20	Witch Wind.

Modifiers

None.

Definition of Terms

Variable Winds

Wind velocity = 1-20 mph (+5 mph in Temperate regions, +10 mph in Tropics and Sub-Tropics). Conditions are usually favorable for sail-driven vessels.

High Winds

In game terms, high winds may be favorable for sail-driven vessels or not (GM's ruling). Minor damage to sail-driven craft may occur under unfavorable conditions.

Monsoon

A drenching rain usually accompanied by high winds. Visibility is nil, sea vessels may suffer damage or be capsized, and speed for beasts and land conveyances is halved.

Tropical Storm

Hurricane-force winds, heavy rain. Conditions are as per a monsoon, only worse. Damage to all but the sturdiest structures is probable. Lightning often precedes a tropical storm.

Sandstorm

Visibility is nil. Wind-driven sand can cause 1 point of damage per round to unprotected creatures and beings. Damage to light structures and duneship or land ark sails is possible.

Blizzard

Visibility is greatly limited, or nil. Driving winds and heavy snow make travel difficult (half-movement for beasts, conveyances) or impossible.

Aberrant Weather Conditions

The Great Disaster wreaked havoc on the Talislantan environment, affecting much of the continent. Clouds of toxic smoke, alchemically active fumes, and magically irradiated dust particles dispersed into the upper atmosphere as a result of this cataclysmic event continue to affect weather conditions throughout many parts of the continent. The most common of these meteorological anomalies include:

Acid Rain

A yellowish rain with caustic properties, believed to be caused by clouds of corrosive gasses commingling with ordinary rain clouds in the upper atmosphere. Acid Rain withers plants, discolors stone, causes non-magical metals to become pitted, and does 1 point of damage per round to organic substances (wood, cloth, hide, etc.) and unprotected living creatures. Duration of an Acid Rainfall is generally 1-20 (d20) rounds.

Black Lightning

Black lightning is comprised not of electrical energy, but of arcane energy. Its cause remains unknown; Castabulanese aeromancers have theorized that this uncommon effect occurs in regions where a Black Wind (q.v.) has dispersed, investing the surrounding area with unstable magical energies. A dark, swift-moving thundercloud is often the only warning that such a storm is about to occur.

A Black lightning storm can last up to ten minutes, and may produce as many as a dozen discharges of arcane force, each capable of causing 20-30 points of

damage. Individuals and structures standing at higher elevations are most likely to be struck, particularly those that carry or house any type of magical paraphernalia, weapons, or armor; black lightning is attracted to enchanted items as ordinary lightning is to metal.

The Black Wind

A dark, swift-moving cloud of unnatural vapors, charged with accumulated magical energies. The effects of a Black Wind are unpredictable: instances of random metamorphosis, transmutation, changes in skin tone or bodily height, toxic contamination, and various bizarre effects have been known to occur, and are impossible to predict. Black Winds seem to originate in areas where vast amounts of magical energy have been unleashed, either all at once or over the course of time. As Black Winds are magical in nature, the effects of these strange phenomena can usually be neutralized by the use of counter-magics. Black Winds rarely last longer than a few minutes.

Icicle Rain

A dangerous type of frozen precipitation resembling a hail of dagger-sharp shards of ice, ranging up to a foot in length. Icicle rain does 2 points of damage per round to living creatures, vegetation, and all but the most durable sorts of objects, equipment and structures. The duration of an icicle rainfall rarely exceeds ten rounds. The Ariane attribute such occurrences to the exhalations of the Ice Giant population of Narandu, an explanation sufficing primarily for lack of any other.

Ghost Wind

A chilling wind that is said to blow forth from the spirit realms, emanating from the countless ruined cities, graveyards and battlegrounds that litter the Plains of Golarin and the Wilderlands regions. While seldom of an intensity sufficient to cause any great difficulty to travelers, Ghost Winds have an ominous effect on most types of living creatures. Wild beasts become agitated, and domesticated animals may panic or desert their masters. Intelligent beings are often instilled with a vague sensation of fear; in extreme cases, individuals may experience temporary attacks of insanity, or claim to be possessed by spiritforms. Less frequently, a Ghost Wind may carry in its wake one or more shadowights, phantasms, or other noncorporeal entities. A Ghost Wind passes swiftly, though its effects can last for several hours.

Witch Wind

In common usage, a colloquialism for any strong, howling wind. In legend, it is believed that strange sounds are borne on a Witch Wind: moaning voices, curses, ancient chants and incantations, terrible secrets and mystifying prophecies. A Witch Wind occurring in open or flat terrain may develop into a tempest, capable of capsizing ships at sea or causing great damage to all but the sturdiest structures. Such storms may last for hours, or pass after just a few moments.

DISEASES AND AFFLICTIONS

The following is a list of diseases unique to the Talislantan continent and surrounding environs. Included are various folk remedies and other treatments known (or at least believed) to be of some effect in curing or abating these maladies.

Corpse Rot **Level: 10**

This malignant disease is transmitted by the bite of the necrophage. Symptoms include fever, severe weakness, unconsciousness, and a gradual blackening and swelling of the limbs and body. The disease affects both humanoids and animals, and is usually fatal within twenty-four hours. A potent alchemical or magical curative, employed in conjunction with a counterspell against curses, relieves these symptoms in approximately 95% of all cases. A swift burial is advised with regard to the unlucky 5% of such cases, as victims tend to swell and emit a horrid putrescence soon after death.

Gange **Level: 15**

Also known as "the slow death," gange is a debilitating disease that only affects certain avian species. Gryphs, Stryx, and Aeriad are particularly susceptible to this affliction, which causes a gradual weakening of the muscles of the heart and lungs. Unless treated with a mixture of two drams each of powdered amber, rare earths, and cleric's cowl (taken thrice each day for twelve days), death will result within four to six weeks. Symptoms include weakness, loss or discoloration of plumage, and fainting spells.

Moss Mold **Level: 3**

A type of fungal infection common to the Dark Coast region. A minor irritation to most humanoids, moss mold is invariably fatal to Green Men and most types of plant life. In most humanoid species the disease causes itching and some peeling of the skin. In plants and Green Men, moss mold slowly dissolves tissue, resulting in death within a week or so. A salve consisting of unguent, camphor, and a drop of quicksilver will effect a cure within two days in either case, as will certain magical and alchemical treatments.

The Red Death **Level: 25**

By far the most feared of Talislantan maladies is the Red Death, a highly contagious disease that is almost invariably fatal. The Red Death is resistant to magical and alchemical treatments, even the most efficacious of which offer only about a 20% cure rate. Symptoms include fatigue, fever, profuse sweating, and delirium. Death usually results within 3-4 days. Humanoid beings of all races are susceptible to the Red Death, which, during various periods of Talislantan history, has caused great devastation. Prevention of the disease may be possible by the employment of good luck charms and other related adjuncts, water from the Well of Saints being the only certain cure.

Swamp Fever **Level: 10**

Swamp fever is a disease believed to be transmitted through contact with swamp lurkers, or possibly flits; drinking water tainted by either of these noxious creatures may also lead to the contraction of this malady. Swamp fever causes permanent insanity, perhaps in as short a time as two days. Most humanoid creatures appear to be susceptible to the disease, which can sometimes be treated via the ingestion of a mixture of crushed cleric's cowl root and vinegar. The folk of Jhangara claim that immersion for twelve hours in a trough of fresh ogront's dung is a more certain cure, though madness might be deemed preferable to such a malodorous treatment. The symptoms of swamp fever are irrational behavior, a constant thirsting, and a tendency to lean to the left while walking, standing, or running. Victims rendered insane by the disease typically evince the strangest behavior imaginable: prancing, capering, laying on the ground and rolling about, speaking in gibberish, emitting loud yelps and hoots, and so forth.

Spinning Sickness **Level: 10**

A disease that seems to affect both humanoids and animals alike, spinning sickness (also known as "the drops") has no known cure, and is impervious to even the most potent magical and alchemical remedies. The affliction is not fatal, however, and runs its course in 1-4 days. During this time, the victim will suffer intermittent attacks of double-vision and vertigo, occurring perhaps as often as once or twice each hour. Such attacks rarely last longer than four or five minutes each, but are quite severe. Unless the victim is lying down at the time, he or she will careen dizzily about and fall to the ground in a most undignified manner. The disease has no warning symptoms, and its cause (or causes) remains unknown.

Yakuk **Level: 15**

A frightful disease common to many jungle regions, yakuk causes a gradual loss of all sensory capabilities. Victims initially suffer loss of sight, followed by hearing, smell, taste, and finally speech (-1 Perception Rating per two- hour interval, following the onset of the disease). Perhaps the most fearful aspect of yakuk is that the disease's effects, while permanent, are not fatal; most victims continue to live, cut off from all sensory stimuli, until they die of thirst, starvation, or some other mishap unrelated to the disease itself. Those who manage to survive for longer than a month usually go mad. The disease is thought to be transmitted by leeches, and seems to affect most humanoid beings. An elixir made from equal parts of red lotus, black lotus, and sulfur is the only known cure aside from the implementation of divine magic.

Yellow Tinge **Level: 5**

An infectious disease that affects water-breathing humanoids (such as the Imrians) and many other types of aquatic creatures. The victim's gills slowly become clogged with a sticky, yellow secretion, eventually resulting in death by asphyxiation within thirteen days. A fluid mixture consisting of spirits of alcohol and powdered red iron, applied directly to the gills twice daily for three days, will provide a cure. Magical or alchemical intervention is likewise possible in most cases.

Life Expectancy of Talislantan Races

The following chart shows the average lifespan (in Talislantan years) of the various humanoid races of Talislanta, divided into four basic stages of development:

Adolescent, **Adult**, **Middle-Aged**, and **Venerable**.

Descriptions of terms follow after the table on the following pages.

LIFESPAN CHART

Race	Adolescent	Adult	Middle-Aged	Venerable
Archaens*	1-17	18-40	41-65	66-80 (+2d20)
Ariane	1-13	14-49	50-79	80-100 (+2d20)
Ahazu	1-9	10-30	31-40	41-55 (+1d10)
Araq	1-3	4-19	20-24	25-30 (+d10)
Aeriad	1-11	12-33	34-60	61-85 (+3d20)
Bodor	1-19	20-50	51-75	76-100 (+2d10)
Callidian	1-20	21-55	56-75	76-190 (+4d10)
Darkling	1-6	7-22	23-30	30-37 (+d10)
Ferran	1-3	4-19	20-39	40-60 (+d10)
Gnomekin	1-4	5-50	55-100	101-150 (+5d10)
Gnorl	1-10	11-25	26-99	101-165 (+6d20)
Green Men	1-2	3-50	51-100	100-140 (+3d20)
Gryph	1-10	11-35	36-45	46-55 (+d20)
Imrian	1-8	9-24	25-40	41-65 (+d10)
Ispasian	1-20	21-39	40-64	65-85 (+d10)
Jhangaran	1-19	20-30	31-50	51-75 (+d10)
Kang	1-5	6-24	25-39	40-60 (+d20)
Manra	1-12	13-30	31-40	41-50 (+d20)
Mirin/Rasmirin	1-13	14-40	41-75	76-95 (+3d20)
Mogroth	1-29	30-79	80-119	120-160 (+3d10)
Monad	1-2	3-25	26-30	31-35 (+d10)
Mondre Khan	1-8	9-20	21-33	34-40 (+1d20)
Mud People	1-17	18-28	29-39	40-50 (+2d10)
Muse	1-49	50-75	76-95	96-125 (+2d10)
Na-Ku	1-10	11-25	26-35	36-45 (+d10)
Nagra	1-15	16-49	50-69	70-90 (+d20)
Orgovian	1-12	13-36	37-55	56-75 (+d10)
Phantasian	1-17	18-40	41-75	76-120 (+d20)
Rajan/Shadinn/Vird	1-12	13-35	36-55	56-75 (+2d20)
Sauran	1-5	6-24	25-39	40-60 (+d20)
Sawila	1-20	21-45	46-75	76-100 (+2d20)
Sindaran	1-19	20-39	40-59	60-80 (+d20)
Snipe	1-25	26-60	61-95	96-135 (+2d20)
Sunra/Sun-Ra-San	1-24	25-35	36-49	50-70 (+2d20)
Stryx	1-9	10-19	20-39	40-65 (+d20)
Thrall	1-7	8-28	29-49	50-60 (+d20)
Vajra	1-39	40-70	71-99	100-180 (+2d20)
Verdir	1-20	21-50	51-80	81-110 (+d20)
Wild Races**	1-12	13-35	36-60	61-80 (+d20)
Xambrian	1-14	15-49	50-89	90-130 (+d20)
Yassan	1-9	10-30	31-89	90-100 (+d20)

Lifespan Chart Description of Terms

Adolescent

The period from infancy to early adulthood. To create adolescent characters from the archetypes provided in this book, reduce their physical size, HP, STR, INT, and WIL (wisdom) ratings to reflect the character's age and level of physical/mental development. Note that Adolescent characters may not yet have acquired any skills; alternatively, the Gamemaster may allow Adolescents to have "zero-rated" or even "negative-rated" skills, talents learned through observation and imitation but not yet fully developed.

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. Stats for archetypes are as presented in this book.

Middle-Aged

A period of gradual physical decline tempered somewhat by the acquisition of wisdom and experience. To create a middle-aged character the GM can increased the archetype's Skill, INT, and WIL ratings, while decreasing the archetype's SPD, CON, and DEX ratings. PER will decline if eyesight and/or hearing begins to fail. If the character is not physically active, so will STR.

Venerable

As per the latter category, though physical decline is more pronounced over time. As long as the character's mental faculties remain unaffected by age, Skills based on mental attributes, WIL (wisdom), and INT will continue to increase. Skills based on physical attributes will usually decline along with STR, SPD, DEX, and CON ratings.

*** Archaens**

Includes humanoid races believed to be descended directly or indirectly from the Archaens, such as the Aamanians, Arimites, Azir, Castabulanese, Cymrilians, Danuvians, Dhuna, Djaffir, Dracartans, Farad, Gao, Hadjin, Kasmirans, Mandalans, Mangar, Marukan, Oceanians, Phantasians, Pharesians, Quan, Rahastrans, Sarista, Thaecians, Thiasians, Yitek, and Zandir

**** Wild Races**

Includes all other races believed to be descended from the Wild Folk, such as the Beastmen, Chana, Druhks, Harakin, Kharakhan, Manra, Ur, Yrmanian, Za.

Travel Rates

All figures listed here represent the average rate of movement in miles per day (assuming 12 hours of travel time, not including rest periods or stopovers), or in some cases, miles per hour (MPH). The Gamemaster may modify these figures as necessary, according to game circumstances.

Conveyance	Road	Open	Rugged	Very Rugged
On foot	20	20	10	5
Aht-Ra*	35	50	25	20
Equs	40	40	20	15
Land or Mangonel Lizard	25	25	20	15
Land dragon	30	30	30	25
Loper	30	30	25	20
Ogriphant	25	25	20	10
Strider	30	30	25	15
Carriage	50	35	15	-
Cart (small)	25	20	10	-
Cargo dray/wagon	25	25	15	5
Chariot	30	25	15	10
Duneship	50	100	20	-
Land Ark	80	50	25	-

Overland Travel

Notes

* +5 miles for ontra, -5 miles for tatra

Rugged terrain signifies hills, light woodlands, broken terrain, etc. **Very Rugged** terrain signifies mountains, swamps, jungles, etc.

Inclement weather conditions may reduce rates by 50% or more.

Other Land Conveyances

Travel rates for most other types of land conveyances can be figured by the hour, as follows:
Roads: as per maximum SPD and MPH total
Open terrain: reduce by 25%
Rugged terrain: reduce by 50%
Very rugged terrain: reduce by 75%

Waterborne Travel

Convenyance	Favorable Conditions
Barge fort (Aeriad)	30
Canoe/reed boat	25
Cargo barge	20
Carrack (Mangar)	100
Coracle (Imrian)	50
Dragon barque (Sunra)	90
Fishing boat/skiff	60
Ice schooner (Mirin)	100
Ice skiff (Mirin)	75
Galley (Farad, et al)	70
Merchant ship (Zandir, et al)	75
Pleasure barge (Quan)	25
Raft	10
Trireme (Parthenian)	80
Warship	75

Notes
Halve listed figures for unfavorable winds/currents, navigational hazards, etc. Sail-powered craft have a movement factor of "zero" when becalmed.

Airborne Travel

Airborne travel rates can be figured by the hour. Use the ship's SPD rating and listed MPH total in favorable conditions. In unfavorable conditions (high winds, storms, etc.), reduce the figure by 1/2 or more, depending on the severity of the prevailing conditions.

HIRELINGS

The following is a list of various trades and professions and the average salaries earned by members of these groups. It should be noted that, like merchandise, the price of services can vary considerably according to the laws of supply and demand. GMs should feel free to adjust pay rates by as much as -50% in areas where members of a given profession are common or up to +200% in areas where the reverse is true.

Administrator

Individuals of this profession include foremen, castellans, seneschals, officials, agents, bureaucrats, and all others hired to oversee the operational details of a business, estate, or government agency. Salary is 2-10 gold lumens per week per level of the administrator.

Alchemist

If an employer can provide a fully-stocked laboratory facility, he or she may be able to obtain the services of an alchemist on a long-term basis. Salary is 10 gold lumens per week per level. Sindaran alchemists invariably demand double pay.

Artificer/Artisan

Included in this category are all builders and craftsmen, such as metalsmiths, gemcutters, glassworkers, tanners, clothiers, woodworkers, carvers, carpenters, masons, limners, wainwrights, cobblers, tinkers, armorers, weaponers, fletchers, and so forth. Salary is 1-4 gold lumens per week per level of ability.

Astrologer

A qualified astrologer will generally charge about 15 gold lumens for a complete and detailed reading of an individual's future aspects. Sarista fortune-tellers, professional mystics, Zandir charlatans, and persons of similar repute may charge considerably less — or a good deal more.

Beast Handler

These individuals can be hired to tame and train wild beasts, either full-time or on an individual basis. Salary is typically 2-6 gold lumens per week per level of ability; double or triple this amount if the beast in question is particularly dangerous. Jaka are considered the most skilled beast handlers in Talislanta.

Boatsman

Private boat or barge owners may agree to transport individuals, their mounts, and/or cargo by river or lake for 1-10 gold lumens per passenger, mount, or hundred pounds of cargo. Large passenger carriers may offer reduced rates; conversely, fishermen and small-craft owners may demand unreasonable sums for their services. Boatsmen asked to venture into dangerous waters may demand two, three, or even four times the usual rates. The Zann of Zandu are notorious for their exorbitant fees and their refusal to negotiate terms.

Bounty Hunters

This profession includes Jaka manhunters, Jhangaran bounty hunters, Nagra spirit-trackers, and others. Most charge anywhere from fifty to five hundred gold lumens per job, based on the relative renown and reputed capabilities of the individual who is to be hunted, plus expenses. Most bounty hunters are not assassins, though some make little distinction between the two professions. Aamanian witch hunters are unique in that most work strictly for aalms, or mana.

Caravan Master

Caravan masters will transport large sums of goods overland for fairly reasonable rates: generally, 10-20% of the value of the goods. Those who own or operate carriages, land barges, or land schooners may agree to take on passengers for a fee of 10-20 gold lumens per hundred miles; food and water may or may not be included. Orgovian caravan masters will only accept barter.

Crew

Crewmen can be hired to help operate any type of land, sea, or airborne conveyance for 1 gold lumen per week per level of ability. Included in this category are draymen, sailors, land ark crewmen, windship sailors, and so forth. Crew trained as guards may command twice normal salary.

Engineer

Engineers can be hired to design plans for roadways, fortifications, excavations, structures, or conveyances, typically for a fee of about 10% of the estimated cost of the construction.

Guide

Most wilderlands guides will work for 1 gold lumen per day per level of ability. Double or triple this salary if the guide must venture into extremely hazardous regions. Zann are said to be the most skillful river-guides in all the Western Lands, and are well-regarded despite their contrary nature.

Healer

A healer's services may be obtained for as little as a few copper pieces, or as much as a small fortune. Much depends upon the healer's reputation and past accomplishments, as well as the demand for her talents. Faith healers commonly work for "free," but request that the recipients make a generous donation to their cause. Gnorls, Ariane, and the Dhuna are among the most skillful healers.

Laborer

Individuals in this category include bearers, farm workers, herders, mud miners, iron miners, sand miners, kitchen help, stable hands, and so forth. Most Talislantan laborers are grossly underpaid, averaging just 2-20 silver pieces per week per level of ability.

Litigator

The services of a qualified litigator range widely in cost, according to the litigator's reputation and field of expertise. "Public defenders" may earn no more than the average artisan; litigants who regularly accept only wealthy or influential clients may command fees up to thirty times this. The Sindarans are skilled in this regard, as are the Cymrilians and Kasmirans.

Magician

A magician can be hired to cast a single spell or counterspell for 1-20 gold lumens, or more if the spell or counterspell desired is of a very dangerous sort. Those who seek full-time work typically charge a minimum of10 gold lumens per week; generally speaking, the more skillful and/or renowned the magician, the higher his or her fees will be. In places where individuals of this profession are either very common, such as Cymril, or poorly regarded, as in most other places, magicians may work for a good deal less than this.

Mercenary Warrior

This profession includes common infantry, sell-swords, cavalry, caravan or harem guards, sentinels, and "specialists" such as Arimite knife-fighters, Danuvian swordswomen, Jaka scouts, and Zandir duelists. Few are paid more than 5 gold lumens per week, regardless of ability, though specialists and personal bodyguards often command more. Non-commissioned officers earn 1-3 gold lumens per week per level of Command skill.

Merchant

Merchants receive a commission of 10-60% of the retail price on all goods that they sell. The Ispasians and Farad are among the most crafty mercantilists, as are the Djaffir.

Navigator/Pilot

Individuals of this profession include Phantasian and Cymrilian astrogationists, Dracartan duneship captains, Aeriad barge-fort pilots, land-ark navigators, and so forth. Qualified pilots and navigators can earn as much as 5 gold lumens per week per Skill level. Sunra mariners may command twice that salary.

Revenant

Members of the Arimite secret society known as the Revenants specialize in "revenge-for-hire." Rates for their services vary widely according to type, as follows:

Deliver insult:	10 s.p.
Deliver threat:	5 g.l.
Vandalize property:	20+ g.l.
Physical coercion:	50+ g.l.
Removal of body part:	100+ g.l.
Abduction:	500+ g.l.
Assassination:	1,000+ g.l.

All fees are subject to increase according to the relative status of the intended victim; for example, the assassination of a magician of even average repute could cost as much as 100,000 gold lumens. Note that it is possible to buy-off a Revenant contract by offering the assassin double the fee.

Scholar

Individuals of this profession include Aamanian theosophists, Sindaran antiquarians, Callidian cryptomancers, Cymrilian archivists, naturalists, historians, and so forth. Understudies, such as scribes and apprentice linguists, will generally charge only a token fee (1-20 silver pieces) for a consultation or for each day required to research a particular subject. Master-level scholars can command as much as alchemists, or even more.

Spy

Spies specialize in information-gathering, ranging from the common informer to the most artful saboteurs. The fees charged by these individuals also vary widely, from as little as a few silver pieces to thousands of gold lumens.

Yassan Technomancer

The Yassan are experts in the repair and maintenance of almost anything, from septic systems to windship levitationals. Their rates vary according to a complex set of specifications, taking into account the time, materials, and precise degree of difficulty entailed in the completion of the job. The minimum fee for any work is 5 gold lumens per hour, which includes a free estimate.

CREATURE ENCOUNTERS

As mentioned in the Rules chapter, the creatures included in the Traveler's Guide section of this game use a simplified system for determining the extent of their abilities. In place of Skill Ratings, creatures are rated according to their overall Ability Level, which is used as an Action Table modifier for almost every situation. Constitution Ratings have already been added to Hit Point totals, and Strength Ratings have been factored into Damage Ratings.

When portraying animals and other non-humanoids, GMs should take into account the creature's nature and tendencies, as well as the circumstances under which the creature is encountered. Is the creature normally aggressive or passive? Does it hunt by day or night, alone or in packs? Is the creature sick, injured, starving, drowsy, in heat, or fleeing from a larger creature? Even the most placid herbivores may attack if they feel trapped or cornered, or if they think their mate or offspring are being threatened. Conversely, even the most aggressive predator may pose no threat if its stomach is full, or if it's preoccupied with other concerns.

Even in a milieu as diverse as Talislanta, there are only so many different kinds of creatures to encounter. By individualizing the encounters in your adventures, you'll make things more interesting for your players and also keep them from getting complacent about their surroundings. For more suggestions on creating different types of encounters, see the material in this section.

Intelligence Ratings for Creatures

The following list of Intelligence Ratings can be used by the GM as a relative scale by which to judge the intelligence of other creatures.

-15	Insects
-11	Omnivrax (notoriously stupid beast)
-10	Alatus (winged leech)
-9	Kra (giant, sightless eel)
-8	Aht-Ra (mount and beast of burden)
-7	Drac (reptilian, can be trained as pet)
-6	Opteryx (avian predator)
-5	Normal lower limit for sentient beings.
0	Average sentient mortal.

Types of Encounters

In the Talislanta game, most encounters will take one of the following forms:

Traces

This category of encounters includes tracks, skeletal remains, or other evidence (such as claw marks on trees, spoor, signs of a struggle, etc.) that would indicate that a creature or creatures passed through the area in question. Individuals with Tracking skill are able to identify most types of traces, and provide an accurate estimate of their age and the conditions under which they were produced. The Gamemaster can use this type of encounter to create suspense by foreshadowing the appearance of a dangerous predator, to mislead, or simply to give the players the idea that they are not alone in the region.

Sighting

The creature or creatures in question are spotted from a distance; typically, between 100-600 feet. Sightings should occur far enough away that the observers can to choose whether they will attempt to initiate contact with the encountered creature or not. Creatures spotted in their natural habitat will usually be doing what comes naturally for members of their species; i.e., foraging for food, sleeping, hunting, scavenging carcasses, hovering overhead, etc. Less common events such as inter-species rivalries, courtship rituals, or unusual behavior (creature is disoriented, wounded, sick, stuck in mire, caught in a trap, etc.) may also be witnessed. The Gamemaster can use this type of encounter to add some local color, to attempt to direct players towards a desired destination (or away from an undesirable area), or as per Traces encounters.

Close Encounter

Most encounters of this sort occur at distances of less than one hundred feet, requiring the players to take some sort of action: fight, flight, hide, attempt to communicate, etc. The Gamemaster should not overdo this type of encounter, and should vary the nature of close encounters in order to keep things interesting. For example, not all predators will attack in the same manner. Large and powerful beasts may charge at short range, but less imposing creatures might prefer to attack from ambush, or while their chosen victims are asleep. Avians might dive down from the skies, subterranean creatures could burrow upwards from below, while creatures capable of camouflage (such as the exomorph) might seem to appear from out of nowhere.

All close encounters need not result in combat. Intelligent creatures should be accorded motives based on their emotional and/or physical state, and the conditions under which they are encountered. Some may act surprised, frightened, suspicious, or confused. Others may rob, intimidate, negotiate, or try to act intimidating. A rare few may even ignore the characters, considering them as beneath their notice. Unless stated otherwise, wild beasts rarely "fight to the death" unless trying to protect their young, nest, eggs, etc. In fact, unless cornered or faced with no other recourse, most will abandon a fight that is going badly, and reluctantly go off in search of easier prey.

For a complete list of encounters by region, see the Appendix.

CHAPTER SEVEN

EQUIPMENT



This section covers the the many types of goods and equipment available in Talislanta, and includes information on:

- **Weapons & Armor:** descriptions of Talislantan weapons and armor
- **Conveyances:** descriptions of Talislantan land, sea, and airborne conveyances
- **Specialized Equipment:** descriptions of items used by particular Talislantan cultures
- **Trade Goods & Natural Resources:** descriptions of Talislantan wares
- **Amusements:** descriptions of Talislantan games
- **Magical Equipment:** magical mechanisms and enchanted items
- **Thaumaturgic Creations:** products of thaumaturgy
- **Alchemical Creations:** elixirs, medicinal mixtures, narcotics, poisons, potions, powders
- **List of Alchemical Ingredients:** with prices
- **Equipment Master List:** complete information on prices, weights, weapon & armor ratings, etc.

WEAPONS & ARMOR

The following is a list of some of the more unusual weaponry and armor found in Talislanta.

WEAPONS

Adamant Broadsword

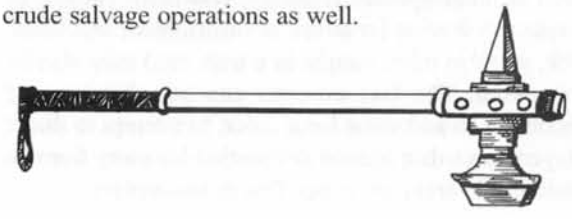
Made from the hardest of Talislantan metals, these swords are used by the Mirin tundra scouts of L'Haan to fight Ice Giants. They are the only weapons adept at cutting through the animate ice of which these creatures are comprised (treat Ice Giants as unarmored targets), and are effective against other types of armor as well (half normal Protection Rating).

Barbed Arrows

The Za tribes often employ these projectiles in battle. Upon initial impact, the weapons inflict damage identical to that of standard arrows. However, barbed arrows can be very difficult to remove (make a successful Dexterity or Healing skill roll or suffer an additional point of damage).

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.



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.



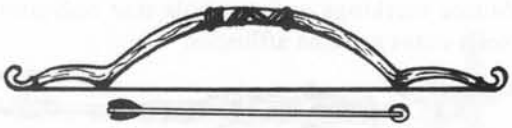
Blade-Star



The Mondre Khan employ these razor-sharp devices as missile weapons and as cutting implements. Most measure about four inches across.

Bow, Ariane

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.



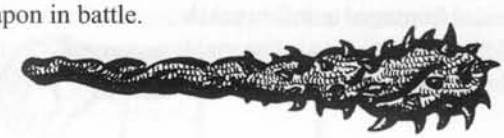
Broadsword, Za



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.

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.

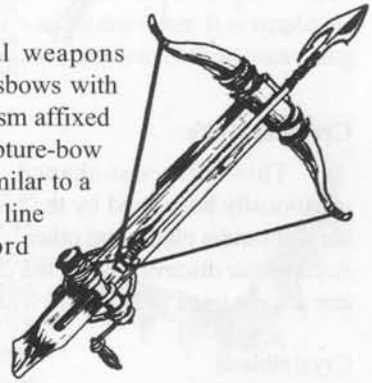


Caltrop



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.

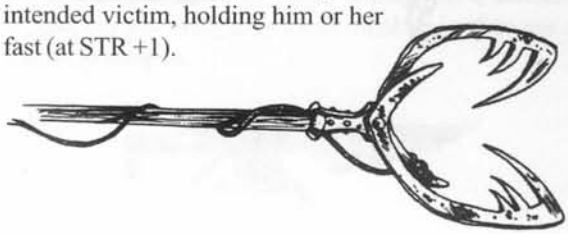
Capture-Bow



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 whip-cord 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.

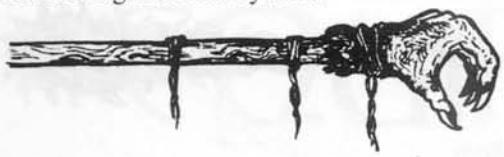
Capture-Pole

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).

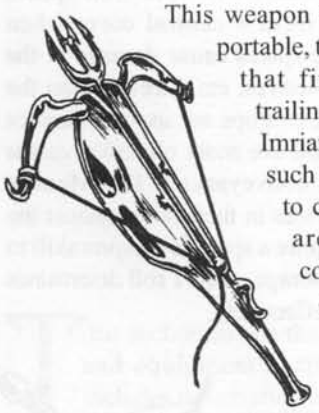


Club, Ur

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.

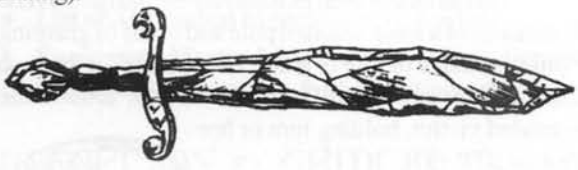
Crescent Knife

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.



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).



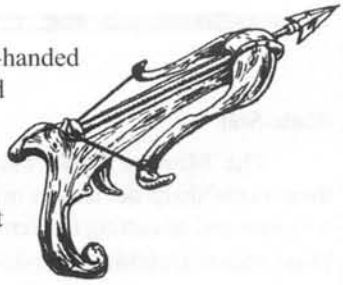
Da-Khar



These leather gauntlets are fitted with retractable, razor-sharp "claws", usually made of black iron. Favored by the assassin-mages of Rajanistan, 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-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.



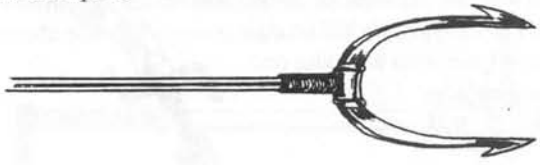
Dragon Hunter's Harpoon

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.



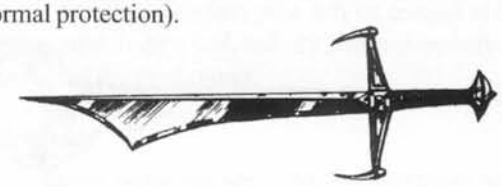
Duar

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.



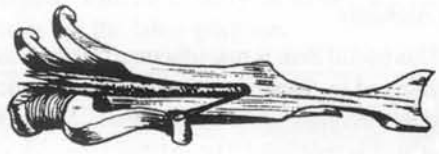
Falchion

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.

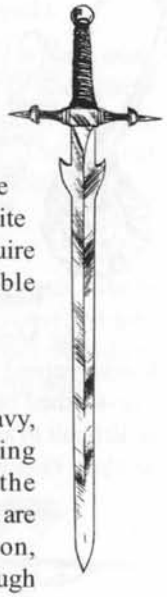


Garde

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).

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.

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.

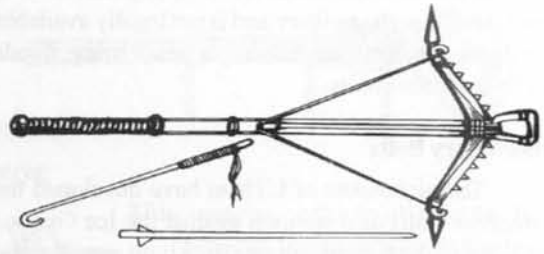
Khu

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.



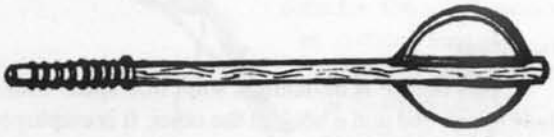
Krin

Employed by the Harakin warrior tribes, this crossbow utilizes armor-piercing iron spikes as bolts. It requires significant strength and time (3 rounds) to reload between shots, but is very powerful.



Mace, Ariane

This mace is topped by a smooth head of polished purple stone. Like the Ariane bow, it is used to stun rather than kill.



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.



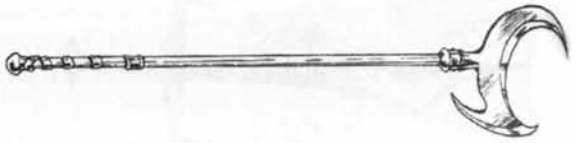
Oc



These barbed bolas are employed by the slavers of Imria. They have a tendency to become hopelessly entangled and so must be carried in narrow wooden cases. On a Partial Success, they inflict half damage but do not entangle. On a Full Success, the thrower can choose to entangle 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 bola has the added effect of bringing down even a stationary victim. Extricating oneself or someone else from barbed bolas is a tricky and potentially painful process (roll vs DEX at a penalty of -1, or removal inflicts an additional point of damage).

Pole-Hook

The avian Stryx use these polearms as striking and snaring weapons. At one end is a curved blade used for chopping; on the other is a hook that Stryx use to grab and dismount riders, or to snatch prey or unsecured bags into the air.



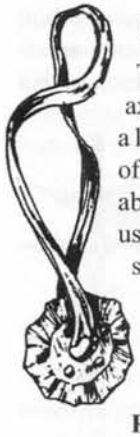
Prod-Hook



Orgovian traders use these items to control their unruly loper steeds. The prod-hook can also be used as a weapon.

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.



R'ruh

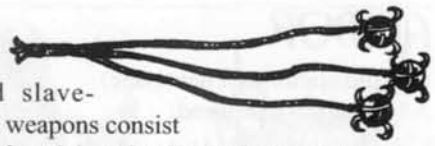
This crude weapon, also known as a singing axe, is a heavy, disk-like stone blade affixed to a long leather thong. It is used by the Wildmen of Yrmania, who employ it in two ways. Swung above the head at great speed, the r'ruh is used as a hand weapon, emitting a "singing" sound that the Wildmen believe 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).



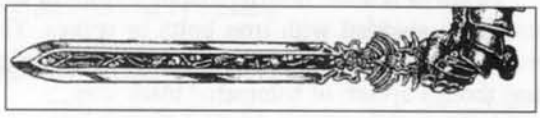
Slaver's Flail



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.

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



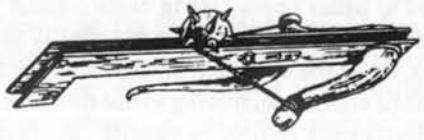
This Kasmiran device resembles a small scroll tube made of metal or ivory. When a hidden button is depressed, a spring-loaded knife blade flies forth from inside the tube.

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.

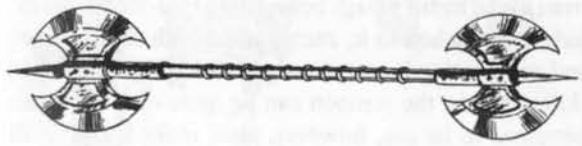
Star-Thrower

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."



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.



Throwing Stick

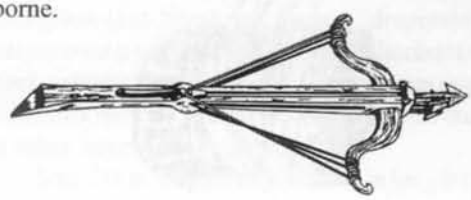
The Witchfolk of Chana use these weighted wooden clubs for bringing drown prey. On a full success, the throwing stick temporarily hobbles the victim in addition to full damage; the victim moves at a SPD penalty of -5 for the next five rounds. On a critical success, the weapon has the added effect of bringing the victim down.

T'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 Flail



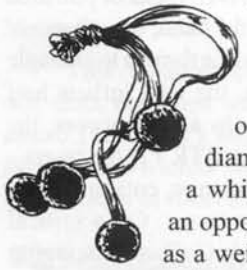
The native weapon of the Danelek clans, the war flail has a stout handle crafted from a land lizard's thigh bone. Eight four-foot strips of hide are attached to it, each barbed with sharp spikes and culminating in a razor-edged disk of black iron. In skilled hands, the weapon can be quite deadly. Those untrained in its use, however, must make a DEX roll whenever they use it to avoid wounding themselves.

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.

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.



ARMOR

(see illustrations on next page)

Amysram (not pictured)

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 light-weight blue iron. Defensive bracers, also of blue iron, can be used by a practitioner of Mandaquan for parrying melee weapons.

1. Battle Armor, Kang

Kang armor is comprised of interlocking plates of black iron, or in the case of elite 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. This form of armor is very costly to make and is seldom available outside of the Kang Empire.

Battle Harness, Za (not pictured)

Za armor is made from overlapping strips of land lizard hide, studded with iron bolts or spikes. The harness ties in the back by means of leather thongs strung though eyelets of hammered black iron.

Corselet and Parrying Bracers (not pictured)

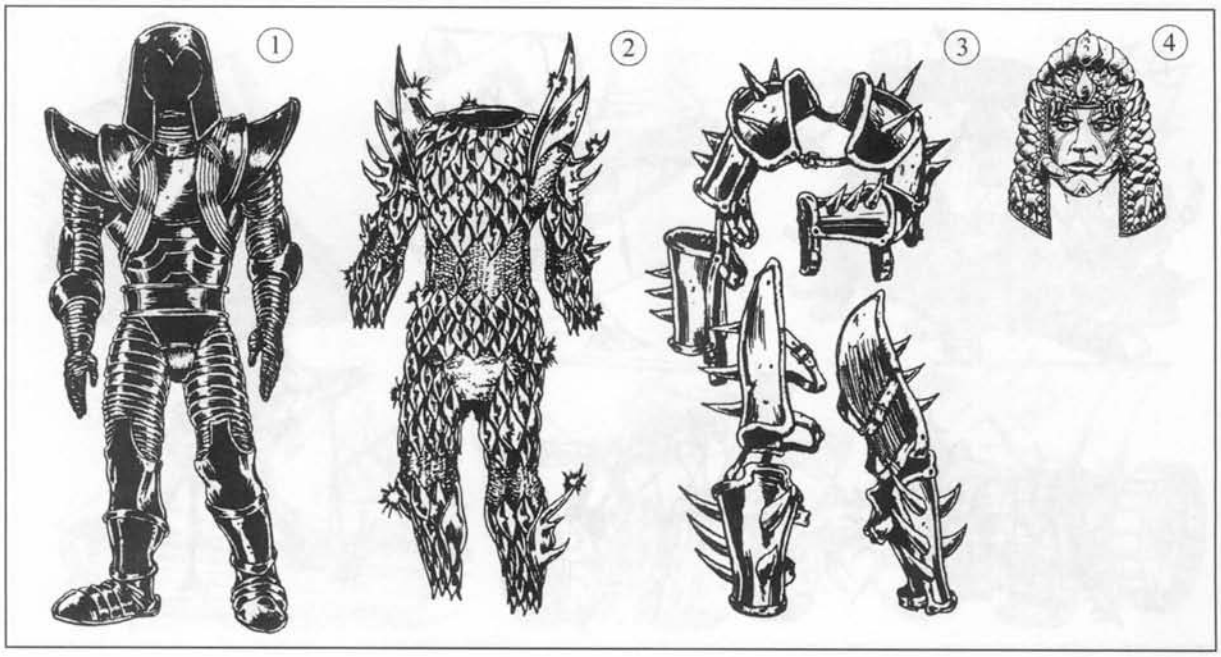
The Danuvian Viragos favor these pieces of black iron armor above all other forms of protection. Worn by a skilled Danuvian warrior, this armor provides a protection rating equivalent to that of a suit of chain mail. In addition, the wrist bracers may be used to parry melee and ranged attacks; the Viragos are renowned for their ability to block arrows with these bracers.

2. Dragon Scale Mail, Sun-Ra-San

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.

3. Full 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.

Light Body Plate (not pictured)

This armor, used by certain Aeriad warriors, is made from imported Dracartan red iron; the lighter metal is necessary for an Aeriad to use it while airborne. The plates are made to conform to the wearer's body and are attached by means of cloth straps.

4. Scale Armor, Gnomekin

This armor is made from the rugged scales of certain aquatic predators indigenous to the underground lakes of Durne. It is worn extensively by most Gnomekin warriors.

Silver Gauntlets, Xambrian (not pictured)

Xambrian wizard hunters wear these gauntlets as a symbol of their profession. In addition to serving as armor, the chain mesh gauntlets allow the Xambrians to physically grapple with and parry attacks from reincarnators and other beings affected only by magic and silver.

Spangalor (not pictured)

This lightweight and flexible form of metallic cloth replaced light chain mesh sometime around the year 615 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.

SIEGE WEAPONS

(see illustration on next page)

1. Fire-Thrower

These giant catapults are used by the Arimites, the Ur clans, and the Kang. The devices employ fire-bombs as missiles; heavy clay urns are wrapped in netting of animal hide and sinew and filled with a mixture of hot pitch, resin, spirits of alcohol, and other volatile substances. The fire-bombs are ignited just prior to firing (a maneuver entailing some small degree of risk) and burst upon contact with any solid object or surface, spewing molten pitch and flames in a five-foot radius. The mixture, called "Arimite fire", is notoriously difficult to extinguish.

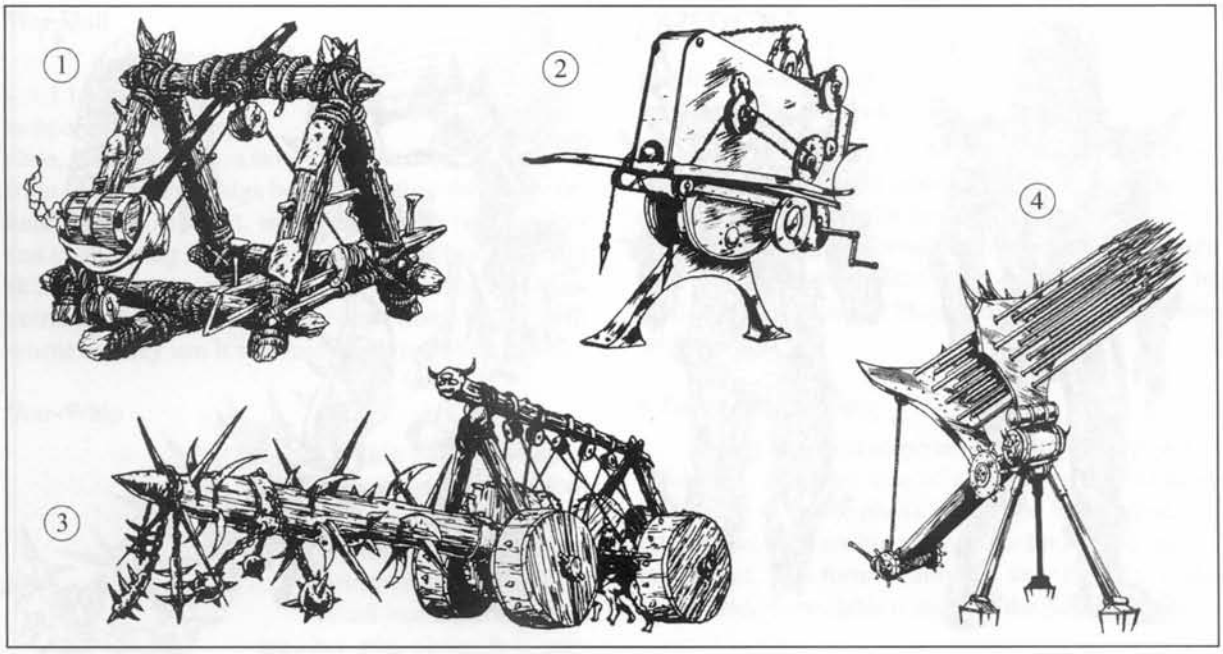
Size: 25' in length

Speed: Up to -4 (7 mph) if towed by ogriphants

2. Hurlant

These missile-throwing weapons are employed by the Dracartans of Carantheum. There are two types: the giant siege hurlant and the smaller, ship's hurlant. All hurlants are constructed of span-oak and red iron and employ missiles containing elemental essences. Siege hurlants fire two-foot diameter spheres of amberglass that break on impact, dispersing their contents over a ten-foot radius. Ship's hurlants employ amber spheres half this size (with correspondingly diminished results), and can be mounted on duneships and other large conveyances.

Size: 30' in length (siege) or 10' in length (ship's).



3. Scourge

The scourge is a giant, wheeled siege machine employed by the Ur clans of Urag. The device consists of a thirty-foot rotating spindle, to which are affixed rows of spikes, rasps, scything blades, and ball-tipped chains. A team of forty or more slaves operates the winches which set the scourge in motion, and the movement of the wheels causes the spindle to revolve with great force. Scourges are mainly used against infantry and cavalry charges, though they are employed to some effect versus wooden fortifications as well.
Size: 35' in width, 25' in length.
Speed: -2 (9 mph)

4. Springal

A siege weapon used by the armies of Rajanistan, the springal consists of a tension-mounted paddle and a pierced rack loaded with javelins. When the device is fired, the paddle springs forward and drives a volley of javelins toward the enemy. The weapon is reliable and easy to operate, though not particularly accurate (-1 penalty to use). A smaller version of the weapon, called a demi-springal, fires volleys of darts rather than javelins. Both are tripod-mounted devices.
Size: 6' in height, 3' wide at the base.

CONVEYANCES

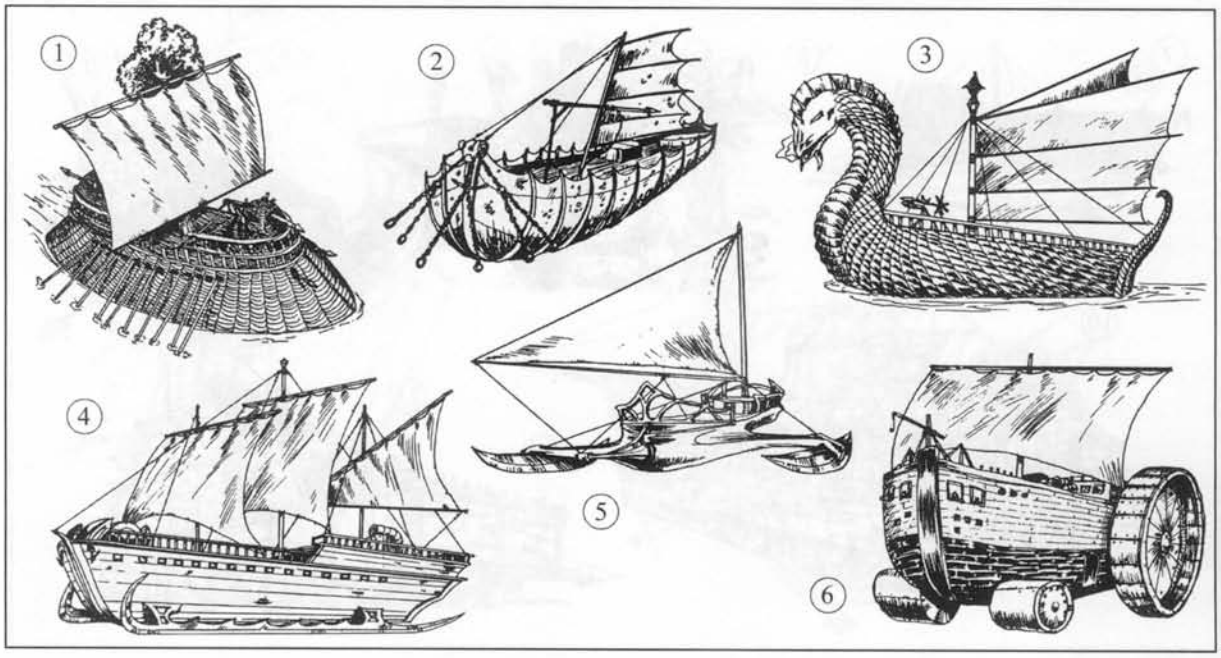
(see illustrations on following pages)

1. Barge Fort

The flat-bottomed barge fort is an oar-driven craft used by the Blue Aeriad to patrol the Axis River. The mast of the auxiliary sail is a living viridia plant, rooted firmly to the inside of the intricate, waterproof latticework of vines that serves as a hull. As long as the span-oak frame remains intact, damaged sections of hull can be re-grown as needed. The barge fort's armament includes four heavy ballistae and two light ballistae mounted topside on swiveling tripod bases. The vessel also has a reinforced prow that can be used for ramming.
Size: Up to 60' in length; up to 25' in width.
Speed: -5 (5-6 mph); downstream with tailwind, up to +2 (16 mph).

Carrak (not pictured)

The Mangar carrack is the fastest ship on the sea and one reason that few Talislantans regard seafaring as a safe venture. With a narrow hull and three masts, the carrack allows Mangar corsairs to overtake and board other sailing ships. Only a skilled crew can handle a carrack properly so that it can achieve its top speed. Carracks are often armed with light ballistae.
Size: Up to 120' in length.
Speed: Cruise at +3 (18 mph); top speed +6 (25 mph).



2. Coracle

These crude ocean-going vessels are used to transport Imrian raiding parties, slaves, and other types of cargo. The vessels are made from the bones of giant kra, which serves as the ship's frame, and the kra's tough scaly hide, which serves as the ship's hull. The largest of these ships have fore or aft castles. Teams of chained kra provide impetus to the vessel, regardless of prevailing winds, though they are neither very swift nor maneuverable. The flexible construction of these vessels is an advantage in rough seas.
Size: Up to 80' in length.
Speed: Cruise at -3 (8 mph), up to +4 (20 mph) for short times.

3. Dragon Barque

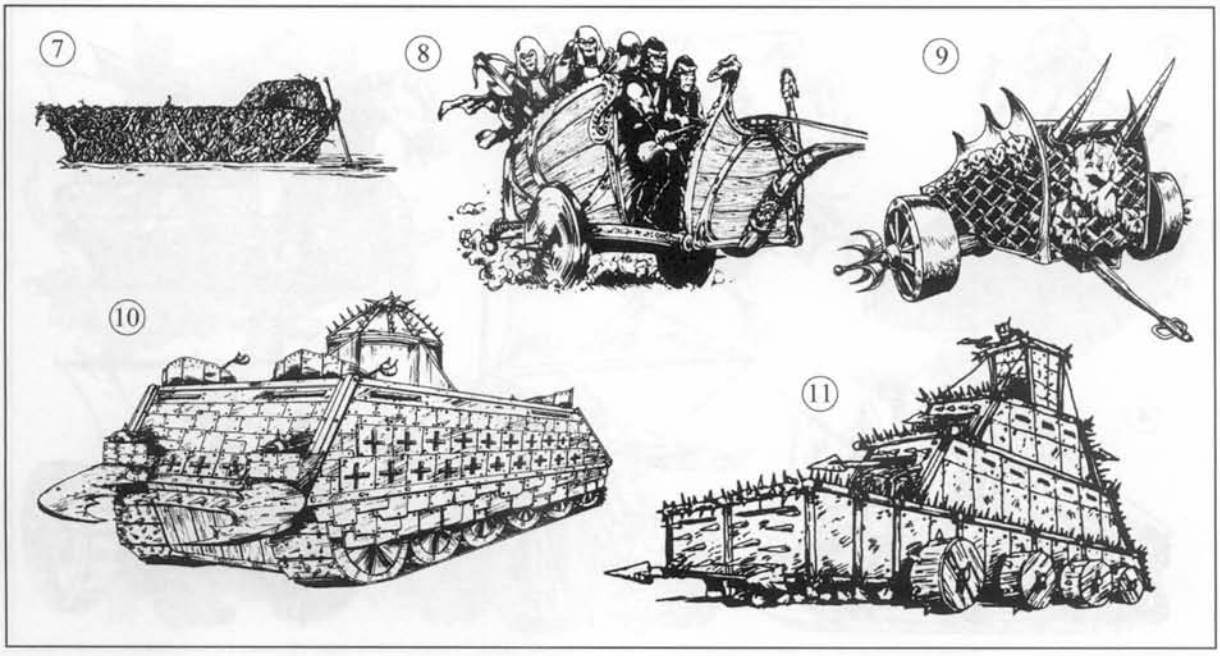
Among the most colorful and sea-worthy of all Talislantan waterborne vessels, dragon barques are employed by the present-day Sun-Ra-San in hunting sea dragons, in the tradition of their ancestors. The Sunra of the Kang Empire sail similar vessels for transporting cargo and for carrying Kang troops. Both the ancient and modern-day vessels include a bellows-driven apparatus installed in the forecastle, enabling the ship to "breathe" fire out of the scale- or metal-plated dragon's "mouth" (DR 24; range: 100'). The ship's armament also includes a pair of heavy ballistae, which can be employed as harpoons.
Size: Up to 120' in length.
Speed: Cruise at +1 (14 mph); top speed +4 (20 mph).

4. Duneship

These sail-powered land vessels are used by the Dracartans of Carantheum as warships and general transport. The ships are built of lightweight materials: span-oak plated with a thin coating of red iron for the hull, spinifax or viridia linen for the ship's complex network of sails, and woven viridia for the riggings. Military duneships are usually equipped with hurlants, additional armor, a crenelated forecastle, and room below decks to stable war steeds. Those used for transport, called land barges, are equipped to haul cargo and, occasionally, passengers. Duneships glide across the sands on specially constructed runners, powered by sail and wind machines. Due to their size and limited maneuverability, duneships can only be employed in wide-open terrain, such as desert and barren wilderlands.
Size: Up to 100' in length.
Speed: Cruise at -1 (10 mph); top speed +6 (25 mph).

5. Ice Schooner

These graceful, sail-powered vessels are designed to sail the Sea of Ice and other frozen waterways. They are constructed of span-oak, imported from Tamaranth, with adamant-chased runners for skimming swiftly over ice and snow. They are built in a variety of sizes and are used for transporting cargo, conveying passengers, and in warfare. Ice schooners used by the Mirin military are equipped with catapult and light ballistae that can launch ice-projectiles, adamant-tipped heavy javelins, and ice or amberglass spheres filled with corrosive alchemical agents. The smaller vessels are referred to as ice skiffs.
Size: Up to 80' in length (schooners) or up to 40' (skiffs).



Speed: Cruise at -1 (10 mph); top speed +5 (23 mph) for schooners; or cruise at +1 (14 mph); top speed +10 (34 mph) for skiffs.

6. Land Ark

These wheeled sailing vessels are adapted for transporting heavy loads across relatively flat terrain or roadways. Most land arks employ sail power to provide impetus, augmented by Dracartan wind machines. The ark's large wheels are better-suited to traversing roads and hard terrain than the runners utilized by duneships, but they are less effective in sand. The underside of the hull is plated with black iron, affording some protection from large rocks and rough terrain.
Size: Up to 100' in length.
Speed: Cruise at -3 (8 mph); top speed +4 (20 mph).

Trireme (not pictured)

These metal-hulled Parthenian vessels are propelled both by sails and by humanoid slaves, rowing in three banks on each side of the ship. The prow of the trireme is fashioned in the likeness of a giant idol, which the Parthenian automatons are said to worship. The vessels are armed with heavy fire-throwers and other weaponry.
Size: Up to 175' in length, 40' in width.
Speed: Cruise at -1 (10 mph); top speed +3 (18 mph).

7. Viridia Barge

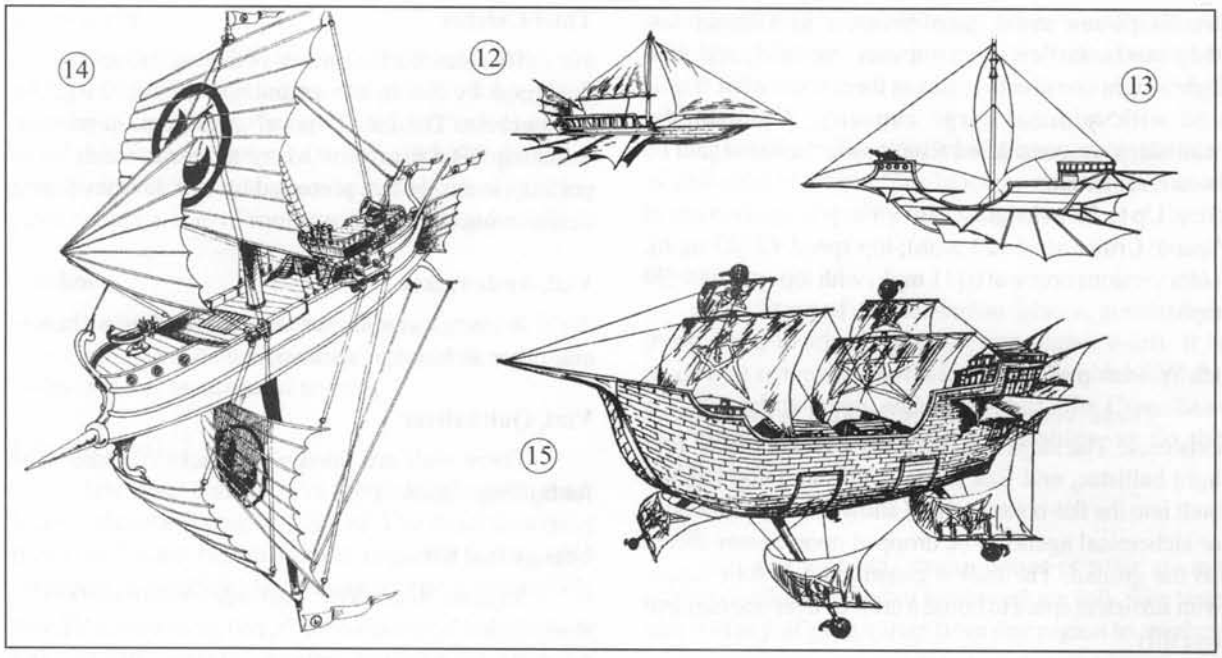
These vessels are grown by the Green Aeriad from viridia plants and will stay green and alive as long as they are kept in the water. A transport barge can carry four wagons, while the smaller passenger barge will hold twenty people. Viridia barges are designed as river craft and are not suited for ocean use.
Size: Up to 75' in length.
Speed: Cruise at -2 (9 mph); top speed +1 (14 mph).

8. War Chariot, Kang

These vehicles are drawn by teams of four armored striders, and typically carry a crew of six: two drivers, and four heavy crossbowmen. They are constructed of hardwoods imported from the jungles of Chana, reinforced with bands of red or black iron. The wheels are equipped with rotating blades or spikes (DR 6); use the driver's conveyance (war chariot) Skill Rating for wheel-attacks.
Size: 8-10' in length.
Speed: Up to +5 (22 mph).

9. War Chariot, Rajan

The armies of Rajanistan employ equs-drawn chariots plated with black iron, providing protection and a steady platform for Rajan archers. The chariot has a crew of three: the driver, the archer, and a spear-carrier charged with defending the others. The black iron wheels are broad and wide in order to support the chariot on the desert sands and are equipped with rotating blades (DR 5).
Size: 5' in length, 4' in width.
Speed: Up to +6 (25 mph).



10. War Dragon

These massive, Kang siege engines are powered by clockwork mechanisms and operated by teams of Vajra engineers. They are protected by heavy plates of black or red iron and are equipped with a pair of fire-throwers and a set of scything blades, used to cut through heavy vegetation or barricades at STR +8. Kang crossbowmen man the arrowslits that line either side, while the commander rides in the heavily armored conning tower.
Size: 25' in length.
Speed: Up to -5 (6 mph).

11. War Wagon

These ponderous vehicles are built by the Kharakhan tribes for use in battle and to transport cargo. A team of twelve land lizards or ogriphants provides impetus in all but the most rugged terrain. The heavy iron plating protects both the crew and the animal team from enemy missile fire. The war wagon is armed with multiple heavy ballistae, positioned in all directions, and a light ballista, mounted on a swivel atop the tower. The lower rear section of the vehicle is outfitted with a heavy, winch-operated ramp.
Size: 50' in length.
Speed: Up to -3 (8 mph) for short distances.

12. Windrigger

These craft were originally intended for use as lifeboats on larger vessels, such as the aerial warships employed by the Phantasians. The ships proved to be quite versatile and were soon adapted to other purposes as well. Windriggers are swifter and much more maneuverable than windships, and they are considerably less expensive. They have a cargo capacity of only about 1,500 pounds, however, and are not particularly sturdy or stable in flight.
Size: Up to 20' in length.
Speed: Cruise at +3 (18 mph); top speed +5 (23 mph); older versions cruise at -1 (10 mph) with top speed +4 (20 mph).

13. Windskiff

These small windships are used as patrol vessels in the Seven Kingdoms military. They are single-masted and rigged with fore and aft spinifax sails. The armament consists of a single forward-mounted heavy ballista. There is a large forecastle cabin and three small cabins within the aftcastle. The standard crew consists of an aerial captain, a first officer, a windpilot, and seven Cymrilian swordsmages.
Size: 40' in length, 15' in width.
Speed: Cruise at +4 (20 mph); top speed +6 (25 mph).

14. Windship

These magnificent vessels were originally created by the ancient Archaens as a means of traveling to and from their fabulous sky-cities. In modern times, the secret of their construction is thought to be known only to the Cymrilians, Phantasians, Farad, and Rajans. Windships are far from common, and the costs entailed in their construction and maintenance are prohibitive. These vessels traverse the air, powered by sails and kept aloft by magical apparatus known as levitationals. Although

windships can travel great distances in a single day, they can be difficult to maneuver and land, and their lightweight construction leaves them somewhat fragile and with minimal cargo capacity. Accordingly, windships are considered frivolous and extravagant by most Talislantans.
Size: Up to 50' in length.
Speed: Cruise at +5 (23 mph); top speed +7 (27 mph); older versions cruise at 0 (11 mph) with top speed +4 (20 mph).

15. Windship of War

These vessels are the largest windships in existence. The ships are equipped with six masts, four light ballistae, and four heavy ballistae. Drop hatches built into the flat-bottomed hull allow Blue Aeriad troops or alchemical agents to be dropped upon enemy forces on the ground. The hull is constructed in four levels, with sufficient space to house a crew of over one hundred and fifty.
Size: Up to 175' in length, 40' in width.
Speed: Cruise at +5 (23 mph); top speed +7 (27 mph); older versions cruise at +3 (18 mph) with top speed +5 (23 mph).

SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT

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.

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.

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.

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.

Vial, Amberglass

Amberglass vials are used for holding alchahest and other alchemical substances.

Vial, Quicksilver

These vials are lined with quicksilver and used for holding vitriol.

Yassan Tool Kit

Yassan tool kits include woodworker's, stoneworker's, metalworker's, and glassworker's tools, as well as various spikes, clasps, brads, and miscellaneous Yassan-made hardware, all of which is stored in a three-foot iron strongbox. Total weight is over 120 pounds.

TRADE GOODS & NATURAL RESOURCES

Aquavit

An effervescent liquor of the highest quality, aquavit is popular in Cymril, the Seven Kingdoms, and the Western Lands. It is served in half-spheres or goblets of amberglass.

Balmroot

When dried and ground into a fine powder, this plant's root is used in healing elixirs and potions. Balmroot is found in most temperate marshes and wetlands and is identifiable by its spongy, oval leaves and thick stalk. It should be noted that the sticky sap of the balmroot attracts insects of many types.

Baobab, Gray

The bark of this tropical tree is used to make rope and its five-pound fruits contain a sweet, nutritious pulp. Its trunk, which can measure up to ten feet in diameter, is hollow and may contain up to 40 gallons of potable water, which the tree absorbs through its roots; consequently, the tree is also known as the "barrel tree."

Barb-Berry

The bright red berries of this thorny shrub are edible but well protected by the plant's sharp, spiny branches. A purple variety of barb-berry is found only in the mountains of Arim. Members of the Drukh tribes color their skin, hair, and steeds with the berries' indelible juice, which is also of some use in the making of ink.

Chakos

A strong, metallic-tasting liquor brewed in black iron casks. Chakos is a favorite of the Arimites, who claim that it is an acquired taste.

Cleric's Cowl

An extract derived from this plant's "cowl" (outer leaf) is of use as a poison antidote. The small flowering plant is found in woodland regions throughout Talislanta, typically under rotting logs and in other shady places.

Crystal Dendron

The delicate blossoms of these crystalline plants are valued for their great beauty and are sold for up to 10 gold lumens apiece in the Western Lands. They are available almost exclusively through Ispasian merchants; it is a crime to export live crystal dendrons or their seeds out of the Kang Empire, and they are otherwise native only to the Aberrant Forest.

Crystal Moth

These beautiful, crystal-winged insects are valued by collectors, who may pay up to 20 gold lumens for the finest specimens. The Hadjin favor fans and headdresses made of the delicate wings of colored crystal moths. Such items can cost up to twenty times the price of common articles of the same sort. The Jhangarans and Imrians eat crystal moths, wings and all, and consider them a great delicacy. Crystal moths are common throughout much of Talislanta. A hardy ice-blue variety is found even in such frigid regions as L'Hann and Narandu. The largest may attain wingspans of up to two feet; the smallest, one or two inches.

Deodar, Silver

This large variety of spreading conifer is valued for its durable and fragrant wood. It grows up to seventy feet in height and is native to both the Eastern and Western Lands.

Fernwood

The fragrant wood of this tree is valued for the making of the most common types of incense. Fernwood is a deciduous tree native to temperate woodlands and subtropical forests, growing up to sixty feet in height.

Gall Oak Ink

This blister-like galls found growing from the bark of gall oaks contain a blue-black secretion that is used in the making of quality inks and dyes.

Gossamer

The finest of all Talislantan fabrics, gossamer is translucent, nearly weightless, and feathery-soft. It is made by a complex process involving the use of spyder silk, dandelion down, and cloud-stuff. The Cymrilians use gossamer sails for their windships, as do the Phantasians.

Grog

Grog is a cheap, strong liquor popular among soldiers, sailors, and other hard-working folk. The taste and potency of grog varies from one region to another.

Harpwood

The curved branches and resonant wood of this tree are much favored for use in the making of the finest harps, trioles, and other musical instruments. Harpwood is found in certain sylvan woodlands, such as Astar of the Seven Kingdoms.

Iron, Black

This common metal is found in mountainous regions across the continent of Talislanta. Arim is a major supplier of black iron to the Western Lands and also exports to the Seven Kingdoms.

Iron, Blue

Rarest and lightest of all iron alloys, blue iron is made from the metallic feathers of the ironshrike and its relative, the shrieker. Forged by Vajra engineers, blue iron is available only from the Kang Empire and is very costly.

Iron, Red

Red iron is a superior metal that is half as heavy and twice as strong as black iron. Items made of red iron cost twice as much as comparable black iron items. The primary sources of this metal are the Red Desert of Carantheum and the Volcanic Hills.

Ironwood

The wood of this steely gray, deciduous tree is nearly as hard as iron; Zandir lumberjacks employ saws and axes coated with a solution of quicksilver when cutting these trees for timber.

Lantern Flowers

The lantern-shaped blue flowers of the lantern plant glow in the dark, casting a wan illumination. The plant is quite delicate and should be handled with care; if treated roughly, the lanterns lose their glow. Consequently, the market for the flowers is typically local.

Mochan

A dark, sweet, and invigorating beverage that is especially popular in the desert kingdoms. Mochan is usually served hot, in small copper or red iron cups.

Mushroom Ale

This is a pungent beer favored by the Gnomekin of Durne. It is made from deep spring water, mushrooms, and various types of fungi.

Muskront Musk

This costly scent is produced in the glandular jowl-sac of the muskront, a smaller, shaggy variety of the ogriphant. Each jowl-sac can contain as much as twenty drams of musk.

Orange Fungus

When touched or shaken, orange fungus multiplies at a rapid rate, growing in size for one minute (10 rounds), after which it is four time as large as it originally was. Used intelligently, orange fungus can burst open doors or chests or entangle victims (all at STR +3). Used unintelligently, it can make quite a mess. The Gnomekin use vials of orange fungus as projectiles for their slings.

Pomegranate, Blue

The succulent fruit and brilliant blue foliage of this tree are highly valued. Originally found only in the Cerulean Forest of the Kang Empire, the tree was imported to Zandu some years ago, where it has become a favorite of Zandir horticulturists.

Provender Plant

The grassy leaves of this plant make excellent fodder, and its seeds, which can be harvested in the fall, can be used a passable substitute for other grains. Even the bulbous root is edible, though its bitter flavor is favored by few creatures. The provender plant is exceptionally hardy and grows in abundance throughout the continent of Talislanta, serving as a plentiful source of food for herdbeasts, omnivores, and humanoids alike.

Scintilla

Scintilla are the phosphorescent eggs of the water raknid, a species of insectoid native to the southern coasts of Jhangara. These 2-3 inch spheres emit a luminous glow when removed from their translucent casings. The heatless light given off by a single scintilla will illuminate a twenty-foot radius and last for 4-6 months, after which the egg will lose its incandescence.

Shag

Shag is a type of wool that is made from the fur of the erd. Soft and durable, it is used in the making of blankets and rugs.

Silkcloth

A very fine variety of silk, this luxurious fabric is made only by the Mandalans. The cloth is derived from the fibers of the silk wyrrm, which can be trained to follow colored patterns on a loom, thereby "weaving" bolts of finished silkcloth of great beauty and intricacy. A wyrrm produces thread of the same color that its wings will be when it matures as a moth.

Skoryx

Skoryx is an alcoholic beverage popular among the Sindarans and, to a lesser extent, the folk of Cymril, Zandu, and Thaecia. It is very potent but is most notable for its myriad and varying flavor sensations, a quality derived from the use of rainbow lotus in the distillation process.

Spice Tree

The bark, leaves, and roots of this tree can be used to make three different types of tea. Its nuts are like cloves, its soft inner bark like ginger, and its flowers as fragrant as myrrh. The spice tree is a hybrid originally created by the Green Aeriad botanomancers of Vardune and is now grown extensively in Vardune and Zandu.

Spinifax

Spinifax is Ariane cloth, made from the flax of the thistledown plant. It is noted throughout Talislanta for its fine quality, softness, and durability. Garments made of spinifax generally cost twice as much as those made of more common materials.

Stenchroot

So much as a whiff of this tuber's malodorous, milky juice will cause most creatures to be incapacitated by extreme nausea. A critical success on a CON roll prevents incapacitation from a direct exposure. A full success has the same effect for a mere whiff. Fortunately,

the juice evaporates in one minute (10 rounds) when exposed to the air, leaving behind only a faint, musky scent. The Gnomekin use vials of stenchroot sap as projectiles for their slings. The juice is drained through small incisions in the root; this is accomplished below ground, since the stenchroot plant itself is never picked.

Tazian Fire-Ale

This powerful liquor is a favorite of the Thralls of Taz. Fire-ale is served in black iron mugs and is ignited prior to drinking, hence its name.

Thaecian Nectar

Thaecian nectar is a tantalizing and intoxicating beverage made by the folk of Thaecia. It is favored for its distinctive taste and the euphoric effect it bestows upon the drinker. Individuals intoxicated by Thaecian nectar become placid and content and evince a marked disposition for romantic and artistic pursuits.

Vinesap

Vinesap is the fermented juice of the viridia plant. Thick and sweet smelling, it is a great favorite among the Aeriad of Vardune. Elsewhere, vinesap is generally considered an acquired taste.

Whispbane

Whispbane is a rare variety of creeper with long, leafy tendrils and blue blossoms. Worn as a garland, this plant acts as a deterrent to whisps, who are offended by the odor of its blossoms. A single plant will suffice to keep whisps at bay for up to four hours after it has been picked. After this time, the plant loses its effectiveness, though the dried flowers are of some use to alchemists.

Whitewood

The handsome, ivory-colored wood of this tree is prized by woodcarvers for its ornate beauty and durability. Both the Ariane and the Dhuna favor whitewood for use in the making of staves and bows.

Willowood

The flexible twigs of the willowood are used in the weaving of baskets, mats, and furnishings of various sorts. The tree, with its characteristic hanging foliage, is native to the banks of rivers, lakes, and swamps.

AMUSEMENTS

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.

Ska-Wae

A favorite of the Mangar corsairs, ska-wae (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, ska-wae 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 ska-wae players.

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.

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 (see Cartomancy, Chapter 4).

MAGICAL MECHANISMS

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.

Technomantic Actuator

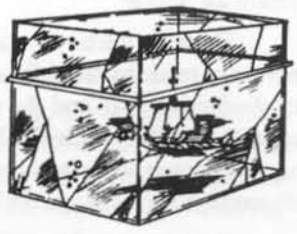


This multi-purpose tool is used by Yassan Technomancers, and is believed to be based on old Archaen arcanology; only the Yassan know how to make these devices. The technomantic actuator resembles a four-foot metal rod inscribed with complex glyphs and symbols. It can be used to produce a focused stream of elemental fire, ice, air, earth, or lightning; in modern-day terms, the actuator functions as an acetylene torch, refrigeration device, solder-gun, sand blaster, or arc welder, among other things. Technomantic actuators are self-charging and can be used without limit. The devices are of some use as weapons (DR 7, range: 10'), and Yassan generally have no qualms about employing them in this capacity. Technomantic actuators are very complex, and can only be used by characters skilled in Technomancy.

Essence Accumulator

The essence accumulator resembles a complex network of crystal tubing housed within a silver framework, about four feet in height. Individuals trained in Thaumaturgy can use these devices to extract pure essence, the basic stuff of which all matter is composed, from the ether. The Dracartans use essence accumulators to distill elemental essences and quintessence. The Phantasians employ a similar type of device to accumulate distillations of sentiments and dream essence, the elusive stuff of which dreams are made.

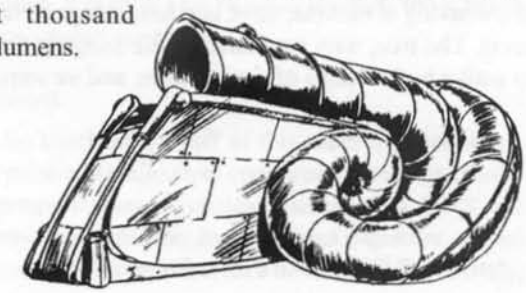
Levitationals



Levitationals are enchanted apparatus used to imbue windships with the ability to float in the air. The older version of this mechanism consists of a seven inch square crystalline chest in which a small, gold replica of a windship is suspended in a special liquid called levitational fluid. The newer version consists of a metal box containing an enchanted crystal and a single control lever, and it is much more reliable. Both versions can only be made by a skilled artificers and enchanters. In order to be effective, the levitationals must be installed in a secure place below decks. Finding a qualified magician or technomancer to perform this crucial undertaking for less than one thousand gold lumens is a practical impossibility.

Wind Machine

Sometimes known as wind funnels, these elaborate devices are used to provide additional thrust for the sail-powered duneships and land barges of the Dracartans. Each consists of a complex network of tubes, baffles, and vents, all fashioned of red iron. Wind machines are powered by storm crystals of solidified wind, which emit great gusts of wind as they are dissolved within the funnel's inner mechanisms. The wind funnel itself does nothing more than direct and regulate these powerful winds. Available only in Carantheum, wind machines can cost as much as eight thousand gold lumens.



ENCHANTED ITEMS

The following is a list of various enchanted items employed by the diverse peoples of Talislanta. Some are quite common and can be purchased in almost any large Talislantan city, typically through peddlers, charlatans, traveling mystics, and magic shops. Others can only be found in those regions from which they originate, or can only be obtained from traders or merchants who visit such areas. The availability of any of these enchanted items is determined by the GM. The minimum values listed for these items reflect the cost of the enchanter's time and the materials required in their making.

Aamanian All-Seeing Eye Amulet

These potent devices enable the wearer to detect the presence of non-believers at ranges of up to one hundred feet. Only faithful high-ranking monitors, witch hunters, and warrior-priests of the Orthodoxist Cult are allowed to carry these amulets, which are available only through the Aamanian theocracy.

Mode: Reveal
Spell Level: 10
Type: Continuous
Time required: 60 weeks
Minimum Value: 7,204 g.l.

Aamanian Holy Symbol

These enchanted pendants bear the Orthodoxist Cult's "all-seeing eye" emblem. The devices confer +1 magic resistance from non-Orthodoxist magic, but only to followers of the Aamanian deity, Aa the Omnipotent. Enchanted Aamanian holy symbols of this sort are expensive, and are sold only by the Aamanian theocracy. Unenchanted holy symbols that have purportedly been "blessed" by the Hierophant are available throughout Aaman and elsewhere. These lesser items are sold for as little as five gold lumens.

Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 3
Type: Continuous
Time required: 18 weeks
Minimum value: 724 g.l.

Ariane Tamar

These orbs of polished violet stone are used by the Ariane to record their experiences and to exchange this knowledge with others of their race. Tamar are not created through the normal enchantment process. Rather, an Ariane attunes herself to a stone over the course of several weeks, through meditation and communion with the stone's elemental spirit. Only Ariane can "read" these devices. Others usually value these items only as attractive curios.

Arimite Luckstone

These small stones, carved from a pale variety of carnelian, turn blood-red when exposed to toxic substances. It is the custom in Arim to drop these talismans in food or drink prior to consumption, in order to guard against being poisoned by Revenant Cult assassins.

Mode: Reveal
Spell Level: 3
Type: Limited
Time required: 7 weeks
Minimum value: 220 g.l.

Bodor Musical Charms

These devices resemble hollow silver spheres, one or two inches in diameter, with perforated surfaces. When held to the ear, the charms emit the most wondrous and subtle music. Bodor use these charms to convey musical messages to each other and for their own amusement. The charms are valued by others purely for entertainment purpose or as novelties and curios.

Mode: Illusion
Spell Level: 4
Type: Limited
Time required: 9 weeks
Minimum value: 185 g.l.

Bracers of Levitation

These enchanted bracers are commonly worn by the Aeriad, a race of avian beings who are in the process of devolving into a ground-dwelling species. The items buoy the wearer (and up to 50 pounds of additional weight), allowing him or her to float. Only the use of wings, however, allows the wearer to move forward. An Aeriad can maintain a steady speed of 15 mph and can move up to 25 mph (SPD +6) for short periods of time. Due to their small wings, Aeriads accelerate less rapidly than a Stryx or Gryph.

Mode: Move
Spell Level: 5
Type: Continuous
Time required: 30 weeks
Minimum value: 2,416 g.l.

Chana Shrunken Head Fetishes

These grisly totems are made from the heads of slain spell casters. They are capable of speech and are employed to converse with spiritforms and other entities originating from the lower planes, with a maximum of three questions per day. The spell level of the fetish

depends on the abilities of the victim. Chana rarely sell these items to outsiders.

Mode: Summon
Spell Level: variable
Type: Limited
Time required: variable
Minimum value: variable

Djaffir Charm

These black iron pendants are fashioned in the form of one-inch high pyramids and engraved with wards versus curses and hexes. The Djaffir create these charms primarily for the Yitek, who rely on the charms to confer protection from curses (+5 to resist) that have been placed on tombs, crypts, and ancient ruins.

Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 15
Type: Continuous
Time required: 90 weeks
Minimum value: 4,804 g.l.

Djaffir Fetish Masks

These devices, made of cured aht-ra hide, ward against the magical mode, Influence. Djaffir fetish masks are effective only if custom-made for the wearer by a Djaffir wizard. They have value only as curios outside of Djaffir society. Djaffir wizards create the masks without charge, as a duty to their people. Each Djaffir helps to create his own fetish mask over the course of his childhood in a process unique to the people.

Mode: Ward
Spell Level: 15
Type: Continuous

Expansible Items

These diminutive, intricately-carved items are sold in Cymril, Zandu, and Thaecia and are quite popular throughout the continent. Upon reciting a secret command word, these tiny items can be made to expand to full size or return to their original size, as desired. There are many types, including expansible swords, shields, wooden boats, huts, iron towers, chests, ladders, and so forth.

Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 9
Type: Limited
Time required: 19 weeks
Minimum value: 1,520 g.l.

Farad Slave Collar

These iron torcs are inscribed with magic sigils and can be made to constrict about the neck of the wearer on command, causing 2 points of damage per round. The Farad sell these collars to Imrian slavers, the Rajans, and others.

Mode: Transform
Spell Level: 1
Type: Continuous
Time required: 7 weeks
Minimum value: 288 g.l.

Jaka Luck Talisman

These pendants are made from pieces of a rare type of amber stone found only in the Sascasm River. Jaka wear them as luck charms, claiming that the devices afford them protection from curses and the "Evil Eye". Though most Talislantan magicians attribute such beliefs to superstition, the stones do possess innate magical properties, and seem to reduce the effectiveness of curses and similar spells cast against the wearer (-1 penalty). Jaka luck talismans work only for their makers, and have value among non-Jaka only as curios.

Magic Boxes

These devices usually resemble small, intricately designed chests or jewelry boxes, typically decorated with fine filigree and studded with small gemstones. Some are built to resemble clever puzzle-boxes, with moveable or expandable sections. All manner of things may be contained within a magic box: demons, deranged spirits, devils, extra-dimensional entities, gateways into other dimensions, traps or tricks, spell effects, or just about anything that can be imagined. In ancient times, these items were employed by Archaen sorcerers to protect their most cherished possessions from would-be thieves. The devices continue to be utilized to much the same effect in the present age. Modern enchanters, however, are limited to creating boxes that ward against more specific subjects.

Mode: Ward
Spell Level: 5 or 10
Type: Continuous
Time required: 30 or 60 weeks
Minimum value: 2,420 or 7,220 g.l.

Mandalan Rune Stones

Mandalan rune stones come in sets of ten small stones, each shaped like a cube and engraved with different runes and sigils. When rolled on a flat surface, the stones reveal prophetic and often cryptic -messages. The type of information derived by this method is at the GM's discretion. One must know how to read the runes in order to obtain meaning from the stones.

Mode: Reveal
Spell Level: 4
Type: Limited

Time required: 8 weeks
Minimum value: 321 g.l.

Marukan Luck Medallion

These leaden lozenges, stamped with the symbol for the silver moon, Talisandre, purportedly confer resistance (+1 bonus for resistance rolls) to a single type of disease, misfortune, or malady, as specified by the talismancer who made it. Many Talislantans consider the Marukan medallions spurious, citing as evidence the downtrodden condition of the Marukan race. The Marukans defend the efficacy of their devices, claiming that without the benefits conferred by their luck medallions, conditions would be even worse for their people.

Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 3
Type: Continuous
Time required: 18 weeks
Minimum value: 37 g.l.

Muse Enchanted Instruments

The Muses of Astar create enchanted gossamer harps, trioles (three-stringed harps), and other stringed wooden instruments, all of which can be employed to effect emotional responses in an audience; add the item's spell level to the musician's skill rating. Only skilled musicians can employ these devices. Bodor value the Muse's instruments above all others and will go to great lengths to acquire these items.

Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 3 or 6
Type: Continuous
Time required: 18 or 36 weeks
Minimum value: 720 or 2880 g.l.

Nagra Spirit Jar

Nagra spirit trackers wear these small stone vials on cords slung about the neck or secreted in a belt or shoulder pouch. The Nagra claim that these devices contain their soul-essences and confer protection from hostile spiritforms of all sorts. The shamans of the Nagra will share neither the secret of making spirit jars nor the items themselves with outsiders.

Mode: Ward (vs spiritforms)
Spell Level: 3
Type: Continuous
Time required: 18 weeks
Minimum value: 145 g.l. (at least five times this amount for non-Nagra)

Obsidian Mirrors

These devices function as viewports and/or gateways into the lower planes and are extremely rare outside of Nefaratus. For reasons of their own, Black Savants occasionally sell obsidian mirrors to outsiders or trade them for captured demons, creatures for which the Black Savants have special uses.

Mode: Summon (for gateways) and/or Reveal (for scrying)
Spell Level: 20
Type: Limited
Time required: 40 weeks
Minimum value: 16,000

Oceanian Weather Talisman

The Sea Nomads of Oceanus employ these shell-shaped coral talismans to predict changes in the weather, which can be discerned according to shifts in the color of these finely-crafted devices.

Mode: Reveal
Spell Level: 3
Type: Continuous
Time required: 18 weeks
Minimum value: 364 g.l.

Phantasian Astromantic Globe

These two-foot diameter globes are employed by Phantasian astromancers to indicate the relative position of windships while in flight. Though eminently useful, astromantic globes are difficult to read and occasionally yield unreliable results. The Phantasians alone know how to make these items, which are in some demand in Cymril.

Mode: Reveal
Spell Level: 10
Type: Continuous
Time required: 60 weeks
Minimum value: 9,600 g.l.

Rajan Death Masks

These iron masks are employed by the necromancer-priests of the Nihilist Cult and are said to confer favor (+2 bonus on reaction rolls) with spirit entities originating from the lower planes.

Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 6
Type: Continuous
Time required: 36 weeks
Minimum value: 2,920 g.l.

Sarista Crystal Ball

These six- to eight-inch diameter crystal spheres are used by the Sarista gypsy people to foretell the future. Shadowy visions, appearing in the crystal, purportedly offer cryptic clues to possible future events. It is widely believed that the majority of these items are fraudulent in nature and are actually Thaecian Orbs that produce fanciful, illusory images.

Mode: Reveal
Spell Level: 4
Type: Continuous
Time required: 24 weeks
Minimum value: 680 g.l.

Sarista Love Locket

These heart-shaped silver or gold lockets are supposedly of use in securing the affections of a lover. To employ the reputed properties of a love locket, one must place some small object or bit of material formerly owned by the subject into the locket; the bearer of the locket gains a +1 bonus to CHA in relation to the subject. Like most Sarista goods, the efficacy of a love locket should by no means be taken for granted.

Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 3
Type: Continuous
Time required: 18 weeks
Minimum value: 101 g.l.

Sauran Dragon Icon

These large medallions, fashioned of red iron alloys and cast in the image of a dragon's head, are used by the Saurans to mesmerize dragons so that they can be trained for use as steeds and beasts of burden. The icons are not totally foolproof — they grant a +2 bonus to the bearer's animal handler skill — and so should be employed with caution.

Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 6
Type: Continuous
Time required: 36 weeks
Minimum value: 962 g.l.

Sawila Wind Charms

These intricate devices, constructed of resonant rainbow kra's scales, resemble beautiful wind chimes. The Sawila arrange these charms in various sequences, hanging them from trees, huts, and so forth. When blown by the wind, the Sawila wind charms create magical effects similar to certain of their spell-weaving rituals. Time required and value depend on the spell and spell level.

Mode, Level, Type: Varies

Seeing Stones

These six- to twelve-inch orbs of polished crystal are used as communication devices by the Kasmir, Farad, Cymrilians, Quan, and others. Seeing stones permit visual and audio contact from one orb to another, at ranges of up to about one hundred miles. The devices are activated by voice command and may be linked together to form communication networks of up to seven orbs. If desired, one of the seeing stones in any given network may be designated as the master orb for that group; it can then activate all the other orbs on command. A single seeing stone is, of itself, quite useless; these devices cannot be used as solitary scrying crystals and must be employed in conjunction with at least one other orb. Seeing stones made from Gnomekin crystal are regarded as the best devices of this sort.

Mode: Reveal
Spell Level: 10
Type: Limited
Time required: 20 weeks
Minimum value: 2,440 g.l.

Stryx Obsidian Orb

These devices resemble crude versions of the standard seeing stone but generally have an effective range on the material plane of under five miles. Stryx necromancers are reputed to utilize more potent versions of this item to converse with entities from the lower planes.

Mode: Reveal
Spell Level: 2
Type: Limited
Time required: 4 weeks
Minimum value: 160 g.l.

Sunra Aquamantic Globe

These enchanted items are similar in effect to the Phantasian astromantic globes but are used to indicate a vessel's position at sea. The Sunra devices are considerably more reliable than their Phantasian counterparts.

Mode: Reveal
Spell Level: 15
Type: Continuous
Time required: 90 weeks
Minimum value: 14,480 g.l.

Thaecian Orb

Thaecian orbs are amberglass spheres which may be imbued with illusory scenes and images that can be viewed by the holder. They can also be used to contain many sorts of spells, which can be released by simply breaking the orb. Only the Thaecians know the secret

of creating these enchanted items, which are quite popular among many civilized peoples.

Mode: Illusion
Spell Level: 7
Type: Continuous
Time required: 42 weeks
Minimum value: 3,440 g.l.

Ur Clan Icons

These three-eyed stone images are often worn as medallions by Ur shamans, who claim that the icons cause confusion amongst their enemies; the bearer of the medallion can effect a -1 penalty to the target's INT rating with a touch. The icons are far from being uniformly efficacious, this due primarily to the dubious talents of the Ur shamans who make these devices.

Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 3
Type: Limited
Time required: 6 weeks
Minimum value: 181 g.l.

Xanadasian Scrying Crystal

These twelve-inch diameter orbs are carved from massive blue diamonds and are of themselves worth a considerable fortune. The Savants of Xanadas use scrying crystals to scan territories throughout the known world, noting their observations in heavy, leather-bound tomes. Xanadasian scrying crystals have an unlimited range, though these items do not possess inter-dimensional capabilities. These nearly priceless adjuncts are never sold or given away, and are almost never available outside of Xanadas.

Mode: Reveal

Zandir Paradoxist Emblems

These silver medallions come in a wide variety of types and represent those virtues associated with the Ten Thousand — the host of minor demigods, saints, and luminaries revered by the Zandir Paradoxists. In essence, these devices function as luck charms, conferring a +1 bonus on three die rolls per day.

Mode: Alter
Spell Level: 3
Type: Limited
Time required: 6 weeks
Minimum value: 244 g.l.

THAUMATURGIC CREATIONS

Distillations

Distillations are thaumaturgically concentrated essences of otherwise elusive substances, such as colors, scents, tastes, and even sentiments. Though distillations were quite popular during the Archaen Age, only the Phantasians remember how to make such products anymore. The contents of a single, one-dram vial are sufficient to affect an area equal to 10 feet in diameter. The effects last for one hour or until neutralized. A character can resist being affected by distilled sentiments or other distillations with a successful WIL roll.

Level: 5-20 (depending on the specific substance)
Yield: one dram
Time required: one hour per level
Minimum value: 2 g.l. per level

Dream Essence

Dream essence is, quite literally, "the stuff of which dreams are made"; it consists of dreams distilled into liquid form. The color of the essence determines the type of dream that an individual might experience upon drinking it, as follows:

Purple: passion and romance.
Blue: poignant memories.
Red: violent emotions.
Silver: imagination, flights of fancy.
Silver-blue: dreams of flying.
Gold: prophetic visions.
Black: nightmares (illegal in many lands)
Rainbow: unpredictable properties.

The dreams derived from these essences are reportedly far more vivid and colorful than those experienced during normal sleep, and the effects of a one-dram vial last from two to eight hours. The experience of dreaming for such an extended period of time is said to be most extraordinary. Only the Phantasians know the secret of creating dream essence.

Level: 10
Yield: one dram
Time required: two days
Minimum value: 90 g.l.

Elemental Essences

These essences are derived from elemental forces or substances, which are collected and distilled by the

use of an essence accumulator. The substances are then placed in suspension and transmuted into solid, liquid, or gaseous form through the use of quintessence. Contained in spheres or capsules of pure amberglass, the captured essence can be fired from a hurlant (damage and radius of effect is dependent on the size of the hurlant employed; hand-held hurlants employ one-ounce capsules). Only the Dracartans of Carantheum know the secret of creating these volatile substances.

Common types of elemental essences include:

Red Menace: Liquefied, essential fire. This volatile substance is commonly used in warfare. Red Menace ignites all flammable substances within the area of effect and is notoriously difficult to extinguish.

Blue Havoc: Essential ice. This substance is used in warfare versus troops and conveyances and as a deterrent against land dragons and other species that are susceptible to cold. When contained in metal canisters, blue havoc can also be used to keep foods from spoiling in the desert heat.

Storm Crystals: Solidified, essential air. These essences are used in wind machines, which provide impetus to Dracartan dune ships. A single crystal contains enough energy to propel a large land ark for up to four hours.

Level: 10
Yield: one pint (or 16 one-ounce storm crystals)
Cost: 10 g.l. worth of quintessence
Time required: seven days
Minimum value: 400 g.l.

Quintessence

This marvelous crystalline powder can be used to transmute any substance to solid, liquid, or gaseous form, depending on the thaumaturge's desires. Only a skilled thaumaturge using a caduceus can activate the properties of quintessence. A single dram is sufficient to affect up to a 10' x 10' x 10' area of matter. The powder and its by-products must be contained in amberglass, or they will lose efficacy. Only the Dracartans know the secret of creating quintessence.

Yield: one dram
Level: 10
Time required: five days
Minimum value: 200 g.l.

Alchemical Creations

The creations listed below are examples of some of the more well-known products of alchemy. Players and GMs should work together to develop additional creations, using the examples as models and the plant and animal ingredients listed later in this chapter as inspiration.

Measurements for Alchemical Creations
8 drams = 1 ounce
16 ounces = 1 pint or 1 pound

Adamant

Adamant is a magical metal of superior hardness, created from powered blue diamond, silver, and black iron. Weapons made of adamant cut through most materials with ease (armor affords only half normal protection rating against such weapons), and are capable of damaging all manner of corporeal extra-dimensional creatures even if not enchanted. Adamant armor affords double the normal protective rating against all but adamant weapons. A forge and metal worker's tools are required to undertake the operation, which yields a one-pound ingot.

Level: 6
Ingredients: blue diamond, silver, and black iron.
Time required: two hours
Cost of materials: 4 g.l.
Minimum value: 8 g.l.

Adamant, Black

This type of adamant is virtually unknown outside of the isle of Nefaratus. It is said to be very costly to produce and so is exceedingly rare. Only the Black Savants of Nefaratus know the secret of forging this magical metal. It has the same properties as Mirin adamant. In addition, it is capable of damaging even non-corporeal creatures.

Minimum value: 40 g.l. per pound.

Alchahest

Talislantan alchahest is a powerful acid. Each one-ounce dose is sufficient to dissolve up to one cubic foot of any nonmagical substance. Alchahest is usually contained in vials of dense amberglass. A direct hit with a dose of alchahest will inflict DR 35 to any living creature.

Level: 10

Ingredients: 50 drams vitriol, one dram powdered contrary vine.
Time required: four days
Cost of materials: 585 g.l.
Minimum value: 681 g.l.

Alchemical Solvents

These caustic liquids are specially made to dissolve only a specific type of inanimate substance, such as wood, iron, stone, or crystal. A single one-ounce dose is sufficient to dissolve up to one cubic foot of substance in approximately three rounds. Note that there is no alchemical solvent for amberglass.

Level: 8
Ingredients: 30 drams vitriol, one dram powdered contrary vine, tiny sample of substance to be dissolved.
Time required: two days
Cost of materials: 359 g.l.
Minimum value: 391 g.l.

Amberglass

Amberglass is a unique material that can be used to contain alchemical and magical mixtures, essences, spell energies, and even certain creatures of a magical nature. This substance radiates a faint aura of magic. The skill, Alchemy, can be used to create five ounces of raw amberglass; shaping the amberglass into usable items requires extra work, using a skill such as Artificer.

Level: 5
Ingredients: Two ounces powered amber, six ounces powered glass.
Time required: one day
Cost of materials: 57 g.l.
Minimum value: 73 g.l.

Amberglow

Amberglow is an alchemical liquid used a source of illumination in many of Talislanta's urban centers. This substance can be created to radiate in a wide variety of hues and patterns. Like scintilla, amberglow does not radiate heat. Each eight-ounce batch of amberglow is enough to illuminate a twenty-foot radius and lasts for 3-5 months.

Level: 5
Ingredients: Three ounces of powered amber, six ounces of clear water, one dram of powdered black diamond. One dram of additional powdered gemstones can be added to affect hue and pattern.
Time required: one day
Cost of materials: 94 g.l.
Minimum value: 110 g.l.

Quicksilver

This animate liquid metal is used in the making of vials for holding vitriol, as well as in other alchemical operations. The process creates one ounce of quicksilver.

Level: 5
Ingredients: Eight ounces of powered silver, seven drams of powdered contrary vine, and one carat of powdered black diamond.
Time required: 5 days
Cost of materials: 151 g.l.
Minimum value: 231 g.l.

Vitriol

This powerful adhesive can be used to bond organic or inorganic materials of any sort except for quicksilver; vitriol can only be contained in vials lined with this alchemically animate metal. It hardens in one minute, creating a nearly unbreakable bond. Only alcahest will serve to dissolve this glassy substance. The process creates ten drams of vitriol, enough to cover two square feet.

Level: 7
Time required: 7 days
Cost of materials: 1 g.l. (buyers provide their own quicksilver vial)
Minimum value: 113 g.l.

ELIXIRS

Aphrodesiac Elixir

Promotes feelings of desire unless a successful WIL roll is made. Each dose lasts one hour.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 3
Ingredients: Eight drams each of powdered tantalus and rainbow lotus.
Time required: one day
Cost of materials: 48 g.l.
Minimum value: 51 g.l.

Depilatory Elixir

Removes hair on contact. In wide use among the Orthodoxists of Aaman. The effects last for seven weeks.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 1
Ingredients: Twelve drams of powdered bald nettle.
Time required: four hours
Cost of materials: 12 c.p.
Minimum value: 4 g.l.

Healing Elixir

Heals ten points of damage per dose.
Dose: one ounce
Level: 5
Ingredients: Two ounces of powdered amber and ten drams of balmroot.
Time required: two days
Cost of materials: 106 g.l.
Minimum value: 110 g.l.

Medicinal Purge

Rids the body of parasitic organisms within an hour.
Dose: one ounce
Level: 5
Ingredients: One ounce of powdered ogront dung and twelve drams of cleric's cowl.
Time required: one day
Cost of materials: 24 g.l.
Minimum value: 26 g.l.

Poison Antidote

Reverses the effects of any poison or toxin, provided the antidote is delivered in time.
Dose: one ounce
Level: 5
Ingredients: Twenty-five drams of powdered cleric's cowl.
Time required: two days
Cost of materials: 50 g.l.
Minimum value: 54 g.l.

Soporific Elixir

Causes the drinker to fall into a deep slumber lasting from two to twelve hours, unless a successful CON roll is made to resist. Even a success on the CON roll leaves the subject groggy, with a -1 on all actions. Unless an antidote is employed, it will not be possible to awaken the sleeper while the soporific remains in effect.
Dose: one ounce
Level: 6
Ingredients: Eleven drams of powdered morphius blossom.
Time required: two days
Cost of materials: 110 g.l.
Minimum value: 142 g.l.

MEDICINAL MIXTURES

Concoctions in this category include tonics, serums, balms, ointments, salves and various other medicants. Such mixtures are generally able to treat only a single, specified malady: fever, itch, nausea, insomnia, depression, minor wounds (3 points), burns, and so forth. Unfortunately, Talislantan medicine is burdened by superstition, specious theories, ignorance, and more than a little quackery. Consequently, medicinal mixtures carry a -5 penalty with regard to effectiveness.
Dose: one ounce
Level: 1
Ingredients: Varies according to locale, customs, and particular malady.
Time required: four hours
Cost of materials: 1 s.p. on average
Minimum value: 11 s.p.

NARCOTICS

Euphorica

This narcotic is created from the pollen of the mantrap plant. It is a highly popular drug in Cymril, reportedly affording the partaker a synthesis of pure pleasure. A one-dram dose lasts two hours.
Level: 4
Ingredients: one dram of mantrap pollen
Time required: four hours
Cost of materials: 25 g.l.
Minimum value: 29 g.l.

Lotus, Black

The powder of the black lotus possesses powerful narcotic and mind-expanding properties. It bestows upon the user the powers of clairvoyance and clairaudience. However, characters must succeed at a WIL roll to resist addiction, with a cumulative -1 penalty per use. A one-dram dose lasts one hour.
Level: 4
Ingredients: one dram of black lotus powder
Time required: two hours
Cost of materials: 200 g.l.
Minimum value: 202 g.l.

Kaj

This potent narcotic is made from a combination of k'tallah and the resinous buds of an hallucinogenic plant know as rajoum, and is popular in Rajanistan. A one-dram dose heightens the user's perception (PER+1) and produces a sense of euphoria that lasts for three hours; it also reduces reflexes (1- DEX) and can impair the user's judgement (-2 INT). This procedure yields 10 drams.
Level: 3
Ingredients: one dram of k'tallah and 10 drams of rajoum.
Time required: one day

Cost of materials: 254 g.l.
Minimum value: 262 g.l.

Kesh

Kesh is a bitter, pungent liquid made from the crushed and boiled roots of the jabutu plant. The secret of making kesh is known only to the Witchfolk of Chana. A one-ounce dose allows a trained character to see and communicate with invisible and astral presences; some individuals can use the narcotic to enter other planes of existence. The Chana are loath to share this valuable substance, or the jabutu plant from which it is derived, with outsiders.

Level: 8
Ingredients: Roots of one full-grown jabutu plant (six drams), six drams of powdered bone, and one dram of dust from a tomb or gravesite.
Time required: seven days

K'tallah

This insideous drug is derived from an unnatural hybrid plant of the same name. This substance is an important source of revenue in Faradun, the only place in Talislanta where k'tallah is legal. The leaves of the k'tallah plant contain a resinous powder that, when smoked or ingested, enables the user to "see" visions of the near future; other effects of the drug include delusions of grandeur, dulled reflexes (-1 DEX), and a general feeling of euphoria. K'tallah is both intensely pleasurable and extremely addictive. Individuals who experiment with the drug even once may become dependent upon it; CON roll at -2 to resist. A one-dram dose lasts a full day.

Level: 4
Ingredients: two drams of k'tallah leaves
Time required: four hours
Cost of materials: 100 g.l.
Minimum value: 104 g.l.

POISONS

Black Mushroom Powder

Causes severe hallucinations (-5 to all actions) lasting about thirty minutes. If resisted, the hallucinations last one minute.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 7
Ingredients: Twelve drams of powdered black mushroom.
Time required: one day
Cost of materials: 24 g.l.
Minimum value: 40 g.l.

Draconid Venom

Causes searing pain sufficient to incapacitate a victim for five rounds (-10 on all actions). If successfully resisted, the venom's effects can be ignored.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 5
Ingredients: Nine drams of draconid venom.
Time required: one day
Cost of materials: 90 g.l.
Minimum value: 106 g.l.

Paralytic Poison

Causes paralysis lasting up to one hour. If resisted, the victim is rendered somewhat sluggish (-3 on all actions) for ten rounds.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 2
Ingredients: Twelve drams of crag spider venon or raknid venom.
Time required: one day
Cost of materials: 120 g.l.
Minimum value: 128 g.l.

Venomwood Resin

Yields sufficient toxin to coat one edged weapon (adds DR 25), two arrows or crossbow bolts (adds DR 16), or four darts (adds DR 8). Note that the larger the weapon, the more venom it delivers and thus the more damage it inflicts. The poison is good only for one successful strike and causes half its usual damage if resisted.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 7
Ingredients: Nine drams of venomwood tree sap.
Time required: two days
Cost of materials: 90 g.l.
Minimum value: 122 g.l.

Viper's Blood

Yields sufficient toxin to coat one edged weapon (adds DR 15), two arrows or crossbow bolts (adds DR 10, or four darts (adds DR 5). The poison is good only for one successful strike and causes half its usual damage if resisted.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 5
Ingredients: Ten drams of death's head viper's blood.
Time required: one day
Cost of materials: 40 g.l.
Minimum value: 56 g.l.

POTIONS

Cold Resistance

Bestows immunity to magical or non-magical cold and ice. Lasts six hours.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 5
Ingredients: Ten drams of powdered snow lily and twelve drams of cleric's cowl.
Time required: three days
Cost of materials: 224 g.l.
Minimum value: 272 g.l.

Fire Resistance

Bestows immunity to magical or non-magical heat and flame. Lasts six hours.

Dose: four drams
Level: 5
Ingredients: Five carats of powdered firegem and five drams of fire lily.
Time required: three days
Cost of materials: 220 g.l.
Minimum value: 268 g.l.

Flying Potion

Bestows upon the drinker the power of flight at speeds of up to 25 mph (SPD +6, 220 feet/round). Lasts one hour.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 9
Ingredients: Forty drams of batranc blood, one ounce of powdered batranc wing, and twenty feathers from a Stryx or Gryph.
Time required: four weeks
Cost of materials: 218 g.l.
Minimum value: 538 g.l.

Love Potion

Causes the drinker to become infatuated with the first individual whose name he or she hears spoken, unless he can make a WIL roll to resist. Even a success on the roll means that the imbiber is distracted by the infatuation, if not overcome by it. Lasts six hours.

Dose: two ounces
Level: 8
Ingredients: Forty drams of powdered tantalus and two pints of Thaecian nectar.
Time required: six days
Cost of materials: 206 g.l.
Minimum value: 302 g.l.

Rejuvenating Potion

Restores strength and vitality, plus all lost hit points.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 15
Ingredients: Forty-nine drams of powdered balmroot, seven carat of powdered diamond, and seven drams of gold dust. May substitute seven drams of Araq blood for the balmroot.
Time required: five days
Cost of materials: 281 g.l.
Minimum value: 441 g.l.

Shrinking Potion

Causes the drinker to be reduced to one inch in height (or length). He may resist with a CON roll, if he wishes. Lasts six hours.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 10
Ingredients: Sixteen drams of powdered shrinking violet.
Time required: four days
Cost of materials: 160 g.l.
Minimum value: 256 g.l.

POWDERS

Enhancement Powder

Enhancements are pigments that can be used to change the color of an individuals's skin or hair. These powders are sold in one-ounce kits, containing enough powder to cover an average-sized person from head to foot. Enhancements come in a variety of brilliant (and sometimes garish) colors and are considered very fashionable among the folk of Cymril. The effects last for 24 hours, or until removed by magic or altreed by additional enhancements.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 2
Ingredients: One dram of exomorph pigment and seven drams of powdered glass.
Time required: one day
Cost of materials: 20 g.l.
Minimum value: 28 g.l.

Incendiary Powder

Ignites on contact with air, creating fire (DR 10) and dense smoke (10' radius for smoke).

Dose: one ounce
Level: 6
Ingredients: Six carats of powdered firegem and twenty-four drams dragon fang.
Time required: one day

Cost of materials: 144 g.l.
Minimum value: 160 g.l.

Morphius Powder

Causes victims to fall into a stuporous sleep lasting up to one hour per dose. Unless an antidote is employed, it will not be possible to awaken the sleeper until the powder's effects wear off. Sindarans use morphius powder to sedate hostile beasts, intruders, and other threats . If successfully resisted with a CON roll, the powder causes drowsiness (-1 penalty on all actions) for five rounds.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 7
Ingredients: Twelve drams powdered morphius root.
Time required: two days
Cost of materials: 120 g.l.
Minimum value: 142 g.l.

Neutralizing Powder

Neutralizes the effects of any type of poison, alchemical waste, or toxin, whether ingested or dispersed into the air or soil. Maximum area of effect per single dose is a 10-foot diameter circle.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 8
Ingredients: Two ounces of powdered amber and two drams of powdered cleric's cowl root.
Time required: two days
Cost of materials: 60 g.l.
Minimum value: 92 g.l.

Scarlet Leech Powder

Scarlet leech spores treated by alchemical means go into hibernation until they are exposed to the air, whereupon the insidious organisms begin to feed on any organic materials that they contact (DR 2 per round for ten rounds). Sale of this substance is illegal in most regions.

Dose: one ounce
Level: 12
Ingredients: Ten drams of scarlet sporozoid spores.
Time required: four days
Cost of materials: 100 g.l.
Minimum value: 196 g.l.

Smoke Powder

When exposed to air, a dose of this powder is sufficient to create a volume of dense blue smoke five feet in radius. The smoke is non-toxic and disperses in about 10 rounds, or less if used outdoors in windy conditions.

Dose: four drams
Level: 3
Ingredients: 10 drams of incense.
Time required: one day
Cost of materials: 1 g.l.
Minimum value: 9 g.l.

Sparkle Powder

This is a type of cosmetic powder that is popular in Cymril, Thaecia, and Hadj. Sold in small silver pillboxes and applied with a feather duster, this powder gives the skin or hair a metallic sheen. Sparkle powder is sometimes used by trapmages and the like to give nonmetallic materials a false metallic look. A one-dram dose is sufficient to cover an area of about ten square feet, or about enough to cover an average-sized person from head to foot. The coating lasts for four hours.

Dose: one dram
Level: 2
Ingredients: 6 drams of gold dust and 6 drams of powdered black iron.
Time required: four hours
Cost of materials: 1 g.l.
Minimum value: 5 g.l.

LIST OF ALCHEMICAL INGREDIENTS

PLANTS & ANIMAL INGREDIENTS

Plants and herbs cultivated or found in the wild will on average yield the following quantities of readily useable ingredients:

small plant = 1-3 drams
medium-sized plant = 4-6 drams
large plant = 7-12 drams
very large plant/shrub = 13-24 drams

Animal ingredients vary in type and quantity. Unless they are dried or preserved with salt, magic, or refrigeration, many types of animal ingredients will spoil within several hours in any relatively warm climate.

PLANT & ANIMAL INGREDIENTS

Ingredient	Properties/Uses	Cost (Unit)
Amber wasp venom	Induce pain	75 g.l. (dram)
Araq blood	Rejuvenating potions	25 g.l. (dram)
Bald nettle	Depilatory elixirs	1 c.p. (dram)
Balmroot	Healing	5 g.l. (dram)
Bane's blood	Make glossolalia	10 g.l. (dram)
Bane's eye	See in darkness	100 g.l. (each)
Batranc blood	Flying	5 g.l. (dram)
Batranc wing	Flying	15 g.l. (ounce)
Beastman's blood	Improves sense of smell	5 g.l. (dram)
Black mushroom	Causes hallucinations	2 g.l. (dram)
Cave bat's horn	Improves hearing	15 g.l. (dram)
Cleric's cowl	Healing	2 g.l. (dram)
Contrary vine	Reverses normal effects	20 g.l. (dram)
Crag spider venom	Paralytic	10 g.l. (dram)
Darkling's eye	Night vision	10 g.l. (dram)
Deadman	Lethal contact poison	20 g.l. (dram)
Demon dust	Necromantic mixtures	100 g.l.(dram)
Draconid's eye	Detect magic	50 g.l. (dram)
Draconid venom	Painful poison	10 g.l. (dram)
Dragon fang	Incendiary powder	5 g.l. (dram)
Everblue starfire petal	Rapid plant growth	10 g.l. (petal)
Exomorph pigment	Used in magical inks	20 g.l.(dram)
Fire lily	Resistance to heat	40 g.l. (dram)
Flit's excretion	Potent anesthetic	75 g.l.(dram)
Ghast's eye	See invisible	150 g.l.(each)
Gryph plumes	Flight	1 s.p. each
Ikshada larvae	Used by torturers	75 g.l. (sac)
Jabutu	Contact spirit plane	5 g.l. (dram)
K'tallah leaves	Prophetic visions	50 g.l. (dram)
Lotus, black	Narcotic, clairvoyance	200 g.l. (dram)
Lotus, green	Communicate w/plants	20 g.l. (dram)
Lotus, rainbow	Unpredictable properties	5 g.l. (dram)
Lotus, scarlet	Weakens will	50 g.l. (dram)
Mandragore root	Influence over plants	50 g.l. (ounce)
Mang root	Communicate w/plants	50 g.l. (ounce)
Mantrap pollen	Narcotic	25 g.l. (dram)

Ingredient	Properties/Uses	Cost (Unit)
Monolith fragment	Elemental properties	100 g.l.(ounce)
Morphius	Soporific	10 g.l. (dram)
Mung berries	Adhesives	20 g.l. (pound)
Necrophage's head	Converse with dead	15 g.l. (ounce)
Neurovore's brain	Amnesia	200 g.l. (dram)
Nightstalker's eye	See into the astral plane	100 g.l. (each)
Ogront dung	Medicinal purges	1 c.p. (ounce)
Ogront's spike/horn	Increases strength	2 g.l. (ounce)
Opteryx eye	See through illusions	200 g.l. (each)
Orange fungus	Growth	5 s.p. (dram)
Rajoum	Narcotic	15 g.l. (dram)
Raknid venom	Paralytic poison	10 g.l. (dram)
Sardonicus' horn	Increases intelligence	200 g.l. (dram)
Sauran's horn	Poison antidote	5 g.l. (ounce)
Sawila's plume	Luck charm	10 g.l. each
Scarlet sporozoid	Consuming spores	10 g.l. (dram)
Shaitan's claw	Protection from demons	500g.l. (ounce)
Shrieker's plumes	Used to make blue iron	250g.l. (pound)
Shrinking violet	Diminution	10 g.l. (dram)
Skullcap	Hallucinogen, poison	5 g.l. (dram)
Snipe's shell	Magic resistance	200g.l. (ounce)
Snow lily	Resistance to cold	20 g.l. (dram)
Stenchroot	Nausea	1 g.l. (dram
Stryx's plumes	Flight	1 s.p. each
Tanglewood	Animate wood	5 s.p. (dram)
Tantalus	Aphrodisiac	5 g.l. (dram)
Venomwood	Lethal poison	10 g.l. (dram)
Viper's blood	Poison/antidote	5 g.l. (dram)
Vorl's essence	Desiccation	200g.l. (ounce)
Weirdling fang	Increases luck	100g.l. (ounce)
Werebeast tusk	Increases strength	25 g.l. (dram)
Whispbane	Repels creatures	25 g.l. (dram)
Yaksha fang	Resistance to influence	75 g.l. (dram)
Yellow stickler juice	Adhesives	1 s.p. (dram)
Zaratan's shell	Increases constitution	20 g.l. (ounce)

GEMSTONES

Prices listed are based on a one-carat stone of good quality, well-cut and polished. Poorly cut gems sell at half the listed price, and uncut or powdered gems sell at one-tenth the listed price. *Note:* 140 carats equals approximately one ounce.

Gemstone	Description	Qualities/Uses	Cost (per carat)
Amber	Fossil resin, usually dark brown	Healing elixirs, neutralizing potion	2 g.l.
Amethyst	Fine purple with little luster	Governs emotions	10 g.l.
Black diamond	Black and very hard	Black adamant, soulstones	100 g.l.
Black opal	Black with slight opalescence	Premonitions	1 g.l.
Blue quaga	Blue pearl	Resist cold	20 g.l.
Carnelian	Clear brownish red.	Resist black magic.	5 g.l.
Coral	Variety of colors	Protection from drowning	1 s.p.
Diamond	Clear and very hard	Radiance	50 g.l.
Emerald	Green	Spiritual protection	25 g.l.
Firegem	Brilliant ruby found in Volcanic Hills	Elemental fire	40 g.l.
Jacinth	Orange	Magic resistance	5 g.l.
Jade	Green	Longevity and health	5 g.l.
Malachite	Green mineral	Calms elementals	5 g.l.
Moonstone	Translucent and pearly	Mysteries, deception	10 g.l.
Obsidian	Black and glassy	Elemental earth	1 g.l.
Onyx	Layered or banded quartz	Darkness, invisibility	10 g.l.
Pearl	White, non-crystalline	Good fortune at sea	2 g.l.
Quaga	Violet pearl	Influence	20 g.l.
Quartz	Translucent	Resistance to illusions	1 s.p.
Ruby	Red	Passions	30 g.l.
Sapphire	Usually transparent, rich blue	Elemental air	25 g.l.
Sard	Deep orange-red	Intelligence, wisdom	5 g.l.
Topaz	Yellow to brownish yellow	Resistance to influence	25 g.l.
Zircon, clear	Diamond-like	Protection from spirits	15 g.l.

EQUIPMENT MASTER LISTS

The following is a complete list of equipment and supplies available in the world of Talislanta, including information such as price, weight, Damage Ratings for weapons, Protection ratings for armor, etc. Descriptions of unusual good and items can be found at the beginning of 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 tarrifs 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.

WEAPONS

The following is a list of weapons used by the various peoples of Talislanta. All weapons in this section are rated according to Damage Rating (DR), weight in pounds (WT), the minimum Strength required to employ the weapon (STR), average cost, and Effective Range, when appropriate. Characters receive a -2 penalty to combat skill rating for each point by which their STR falls short of the weapon's minimum STR requirement; characters cannot use missile weapons at all without having the minimum required STR.

Weapons Chart

Type	DR	WT	STR	Cost	Range
Battle maul #	16	90+	+6	50 g.l.	-
Blade bracer [1]	3	2	-	15 g.l.	10'
Blade-staff #	8	6	-2	25 g.l.	thrown
Blade-star	3	.25	0	2 s.p.	thrown
Bow, Ariane #	6	5	0	5 g.l.	150'
Bow, giant sized #	10	10	+5	15 g.l.	400'
Bow, long #	8	7	+2	7 g.l.	300'
Bow, short #	6	5	0	5 g.l.	150'
Broadsword	8	10	+1	10 g.l.	--
Broadsword, adamant	8	10	+1	200 g.l.	--
Broadsword, Za	8	10	+1	20 g.l.	--
Bwan #	8	15	+2	2 c.p.	--
Caltrops	2	.5	--	1 s.p.	--
Capture-bow # [2]	6	7	+1	25 g.l.	100'
Capture-pole #	1	6	+1	10 g.l.	--
Club #	6	6	-1	1 s.p.	--
Club, Ice Giant #	16	100+	+6	--	--
Club, Ur #	10	40	+3	200 g.l.	--
Correg # [2]	10	15	+2	40 g.l.	100'
Crescent knife	3	.5	--	2 g.l.	thrown +20'
Crossbow, heavy # [2]	8	5	-1	20 g.l.	200'
Crossbow, light # [1]	6	2	-3	10 g.l.	150'
Crystalblade	6	3	-2	60 g.l.	--
Cutlass	8	10	0	15 g.l.	--
Dagger	4	1	--	1 g.l.	thrown
Da-khar	3	.5	--	20 g.l.	--
Dart-thrower	3	1	--	5 g.l.	75'
Dragon hunter's harpoon	8	8	+2	100 g.l.	thrown
Duar #	8	5	0	2 g.l.	thrown
Falchion	8	16	+3	50 g.l.	--
Flange-bow # [2]	10	2	0	20 g.l.	100'/20'
Garde	4	10	+1	10 g.l.	--
Garde, Full	4	40	+3	40 g.l.	--
Garotte #	6	.5	-2	1 c.p.	--
Greatsword #	10	15	+2	60 g.l.	--
Gwanga	8	4	+1	20 g.l.	thrown
Halberd #	10	10	+1	15 g.l.	--
Hand axe	4	5	0	5 s.p.	thrown
Hurlant # [1]	10	12	+1	500 g.l.	100'
Iron spear #	10	20	+2	15 g.l.	thrown
Jang	6	3	+2	40 c.p.	thrown
Javelin	6	2	-1	1 g.l.	thrown

Type	DR	WT	STR	Cost	Range
Khu	6	2	-1	8 g.l.	--
Krin #[4]	12	10	+1	12 g.l.	100'
Lance	8@	5	+1	5 g.l.	--
Mace	8	10	0	4 g.l.	--
Mace, Ariane	8	10	0	5 g.l.	--
Matsu #	10	25	+3	40 s.p.	--
Oc	2	2	0	5 g.l.	thrown
Pole-hook #	8	8	-1	2 g.l.	--
Prod-hook	4	2	-1	6 s.p.	--
Rasp	5	2	--	15 g.l.	--
Rod of alchemy	*	3	--	75 g.l.	15'
R'ruh	6	3	0	6 g.l.	thrown
Scimitar	8	6	+1	15 g.l.	thrown
Slavers' flail	6	6	0	2 g.l.	--
Sling	4	.25	--	2 c.p.	100'
Spear #	8	4	-1	1 g.l.	thrown
Spiritblade	8	6	0	--	--
Spring-knife [1]	3	.5	--	5 g.l.	10'
Staff #	6	3	-3	5 s.p.	--
Staff, iron-shod #	8	6	-2	2 g.l.	--
Staff of the Eye #	8	7	-2	25 g.l.	--
Star-thrower #[1]	7	3	-1	25 g.l.	100'
Sword, dueling	6	2	-2	25 g.l.	--
Sword, giant-sized	16	40+	+7	75 g.l.	--
Sword, long	8	6	0	12 g.l.	--
Sword, short	6	3	-1	5 g.l.	--
Sword, two-handed #	10	20	+3	25 g.l.	--
Tarak #	10	30	+2	15 g.l.	--
Throwing knife	3	1	--	1 g.l.	thrown
Throwing stick	4	3	--	1 s.p.	thrown
Tri-bow #[2]	6	5	-1	75 g.l.	150'
Trident #	8	6	-1	5 g.l.	--
T'sai	2	1	--	2 g.l.	thrown
War axe, giant-sized #	16	20	+7	50 g.l.	--
War axe #	8	7	0	5 s.p.	--
War axe, Sauran	10	30	+4	5 g.l.	--
War flail	10	12	+1	12 g.l.	--
War hammer #	10	30	+2	5 g.l.	--
War-whip #	10	10	+3	2 g.l.	--
Whip	2	1	--	1 g.l.	--
Whipsash, Za	5	2	+1	3 g.l.	--
Wristblade	3	1	--	3 g.l.	--

Key

This weapon requires two hands to use.

@ For mounted charge, add mount's STR +SPD to damage, instead of wielder's STR.

[x] The number in brackets is the number of rounds required to reload these missile weapons.

* Damage varies depending on the alchemical mixture dispensed

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.

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 (for capture-bow)	.5	2 s.p.
Harpoon bolt (for correg)	2	1 g.l.
Pouch 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 bow)/20 arrows	5	1 g.l./2 g.l.
Quiver (barbed arrows)/20 arrows	4	5 s.p./1 g.l.
Quiver (dart-thrower)/10 darts	5	2 s.p./1 g.l.
Quiver (giant-sized bow)/20 arrows	10	2 g.l./5 g.l.
Quiver (heavy crossbow)/20 quarrels *	6	5 s.p./2 g.l.
Quiver (hurlant)/6 bolts	6	5 s.p./150 g.l.
Quiver (incendiary bolts)/20 bolts	4	1 g.l./30 g.l.
Quiver (krin)/10 bolts	12	5 s.p./5 g.l.
Quiver (light crossbow)/20 quarrels	4	5 s.p./1 g.l.
Quiver (long bow)/20 arrows	4	5 s.p./1 g.l.
Quiver (short bow)/20 arrows	4	5 s.p./5 s.p.

* The Gryph sometimes use blunt quarrels; weight and cost is the same, damage is to stun.

Armor

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.

Armor Chart

Type	PR	WT	STR	Cost
Amysram, Mandalan	3	4	-2	750 g.l.
Battle armor, Kang *	7	50	+3	1,000 g.l.
Battle harness, Za	3	35	+2	100 g.l.
Chain mail *	5	40	+3	250 g.l.
Corselet and bracers *	5	35	+1	300 g.l.
Dragon scale, Sun-Ra-San	4	30	+1	200 g.l.
Full garde, Thrall *	5	40	+3	40 g.l.
Garde, Thrall *	2	10	+1	10 g.l.
Hide/fur	2	15	-1	2 g.l.
Hide armor, Kharakhan	4	60	+4	20 g.l.
Leather	2	10	-	5 g.l.
Leather & plate, Mondre Khan	4	40	+2	150 g.l.
Light body plate, Aeriad **	4	15	-1	1,000 g.l.
Padded cloth	1	5	-	2 g.l.
Partial chain and hide, Rasmirin ::	4	30	+1	300 g.l.
Partial plate (plate and mail) *	6	50	+3	500 g.l.
Scale armor, Gnomekin	5	35	+1	300 g.l.
Silver gauntlets. Xambrian	2	10	0	1,000 g.l.
Spangalor *	3	25	-	400 g.l.

Key

* indicates that the armor is made with 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.

** indicates red iron armor. For blue iron, divide WT by 2, reduce STR by 1, and multiply Cost by 2.

:: indicates adamant armor.

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.

Type	WT	Max. DR	STR	Cost
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.

Siege Weapons

These heavy military weapons are defined by their Damage Rating (DR), effective range, minimum crew required to run them, reloading time in rounds, and cost.

Type	DR	Crew	Range	Reload	Cost
Ballista, heavy	30	4+	500'	8	250 g.l.
Ballista, light	15	2	200'	4	120 g.l.
Catapult, heavy	25	6+	1,000'	10	300 g.l.
Catapult, light	20	4+	500'	5	175 g.l.
Demi-springal	15	3	100'	3	75 g.l.
Fire-thrower	25**	8+	500'	8	1,000 g.l.
Hurlant, ship's	20*	6	600'	6	2,000 g.l.
Hurlant, siege	35*	4	1,200'	9	5,000 g.l.
Scourge	20	40+	—	—	500 g.l.
Springal	20	3	200'	5	185 g.l.

Key

* Type of damage determined by contents of missiles.

** Fire burns for three additional rounds at half DR; ignites anything flammable.

Ammunition & Accessories for Siege Weapons

Type	WT	Cost
Ballista bolt, heavy	20	1 g.l.
Ballista bolt, light	10	5 s.p.
Demi-springal darts (one volley)	10	5 g.l.
Fire-bomb (fire-thrower missile)	20	10 g.l.
Ship's hurlant missile	10	125 g.l.
Siege hurlant missile	20	250 g.l.
Springal javelins (one volley)	40	20 g.l.
Stones (catapult)	25-50	—

Conveyances

Type	Cost
Barge fort *	15,000 g.l.
Cargo barge	5,000 g.l.
Carrack *	20,000 g.l.
Carriage (fancy)	200 g.l.
Cart, small	5 g.l.
Coracle *	10,000 g.l.
Dragon barque *	35,000 g.l.
Dray (cargo wagon)	200 g.l.
Duneship	25-50,000 g.l.
Galley	10,000 g.l.
Ice schooner	40,000+ g.l.
Ice skiff	10,000 g.l.
Land ark	12,000 g.l.
Land barge	10,000 g.l.
Palanquin, aerial	20,000 g.l.
Palanquin (curtained)	100 g.l.
Pleasure barge	200,000+ g.l.
Raft	1-2 g.l.
Reed boat	5 g.l.
Ship, merchant	15,000 g.l.
Skiff/punt	10 g.l.
Trireme	30,000 g.l.
Virida barge	3-5,000 g.l.
Wagon (enclosed)	100 g.l.
Wagon (open)	50 g.l.
War chariot, Kang	5,000 g.l.
War chariot, Rajan	2,000 g.l.
War dragon *	30-35,000 g.l.
War wagon *	3,000 g.l.
Warship (oceangoing)	20,000 g.l.
Windrigger	15,000+ g.l.
Windskiff	30,000 g.l.
Windship	50,000+ g.l.
Windship of war *	150,000+ g.l.

* Rarely sold

Slave Market

Slavery is illegal in the Seven Kingdoms, Carantheum and Tamaranth. Elsewhere on the continent, the practice of selling and keeping slaves is regrettably quite common.

Type	Cost
Ahazu	800+ g.l.
Bane (female, fangs filed)	1,000+ g.l.
Batrean concubine	5,000+ g.l.
Batrean eunuch	200 g.l.
Chana witchdoctor	1,000 g.l.
Chana witchman	300 g.l.
Green Man gardener/servant	500+ g.l.
Jhangaran	50 g.l.
Mandalan servant/consort	1,000+ g.l.
Monad laborer	1,000 g.l.
Moorg-Wan laborer	100 g.l.
Sawila courtesan	2,000+ g.l.
Sunra mariner	700 g.l.
Vajra engineer	600 g.l.

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.
Darkmane *	200 g.l.
Drac (trained)	250 g.l.
Drac (untrained)	50 g.l.
Draconid	600 g.l.
Dractyl *	800 g.l.
Duadir (trained)	600 g.l.
Durge	50 g.l.
Erd	500 g.l.
Gold beetle (live)	2,000 g.l.
Graymane	300+ g.l.
Ironshrike (trained)	200 g.l.
Kra (to tow coracle) *	2,000 g.l.
Land dragon (egg or larva)	500+ g.l.
Land dragon (trained) *	10,000 g.l.
Land lizard	1,000 g.l.
L'latha (trained)	400 g.l.
L'latha (untrained)	100 g.l.
Loper	200 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.
Rock urchin (live)	10 g.l.
Sardonicus	600-1,200 g.l.
Silkwyrrm	1 g.l.
Silkwyrrm (trained) *	1,000 g.l.
Silvermane	500+ g.l.
Snowmane	400+ g.l.
Strider	500+ g.l.
Tarkus *	1,000 g.l.
Wrist-viper (trained)	300 g.l.
Zaratan *	1,000 g.l.

* Rarely sold.

Tack and Harness

Type	Cost
Barding	*
Battle rig (land lizard)	20 g.l.
Battle tower (land dragon)	1,000 g.l.
Harness (any steed)	1 g.l.
Saddle bag	1 g.l.
Sedan chair (ogriphant)	40 g.l.
Yoke (per burden beast)	1 s.p.

Key

* Base price is the cost for comparable armor for humanoids. For aht-ra, equs, 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.

Clothing

Type	Cost
Boots (cloth/hide)	5 s.p.
Boots (velvet/leather)	10+ g.l.
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 (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.
Hooded cloak	5+ s.p.
Loincloth (cloth)	1 c.p.
Loincloth (hide/fur)	2 c.p.
Ritual vestments	10+ g.l.
Robe (elaborate)	20+ g.l.
Robe (simple)	5 s.p.
Sandals/slippers	5 c.p.
Slippers (elaborate)	10+ g.l.
Smock/dress (simple)	2 s.p.
Smock/gown (elaborate)	20+ g.l.
Tunic/breeches (cloth)	1 g.l.
Tunic/breeches (velvet)	10+ g.l.

Jewelry

Type	Cost
Amulet/brooch	1 g.l.
Bracelet/armband	1 g.l.
Bracers, pair	4 g.l.
Earring	5 s.p.
Medallion	4 s.p.
Necklace	1 g.l.
Ring	1 g.l.
Tiara	3 g.l.
Torc	2 g.l.

Note
Prices listed are for black iron or other common material. Double these figures for articles made of red iron, ivory, or brass; multiply by 5 for silver and by 50 for gold. Cost of gemstones is additional.

Travelers' Equipment

Type	Cost
Backpack/traveler's satchel	2 g.l.
Bandolier belt	10 g.l.
Bedroll	1 s.p.
Chest, large (10,000 coins)	10 g.l.
Chest, small (1,000 coins)	5 g.l.
Coin purse (50 coins)	1 s.p.
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.
Lantern	2 g.l.
Lantern oil (pint; one hour)	1 g.l.
Mirror, crystal	10 g.l.
Mirror, metal	2 g.l.
Pouch, belt (100 coins)	2 s.p.
Pouch, shoulder (500 coins)	1 g.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)	25 g.l.
Strongbox, small (1,000 coins)	10 g.l.
Tallow (burns one hour)	1 c.p.
Tent	1 g.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, large (20 gallons)	5 s.p.
Barrel, small (1 gallon)	1 s.p.
Cage, metal (per cubic foot)	1 g.l.
Cage, wood (per cu. foot)	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.
Durnean cusps (pair)	2 g.l.
Glass worker's tools	25 g.l.
Grapnel	2 s.p.
Iron maiden/rack	100 g.l.
Jeweler's tools	25 g.l.
Juggler's pins (each)	1 s.p.
Key	1 s.p.
Keyring	1 s.p.
Levitational engineer's tools	200 g.l.
Lock, Kasmir (per mechanism)	5 g.l.
Lock, simple	1 s.p.
Locksmith's tools	20 g.l.
Logbook/ledger	2 g.l.
Loom	1 g.l.
Mallet	1 s.p.
Manacles	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)	c.p.
Performer's make-up kit	2 g.l.
Pick/shovel	1 s.p.
Salt adze, Danelek	6 s.p.
Saw	2 s.p.
Seal (to stamp documents)	25 g.l.
Sharpening stone	5 c.p.
Slave's collar	1 s.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	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.
Yassan tool kit	150 g.l.

Alchemical and Magical Equipment

Item	Cost
Alchemical test kit	5 g.l.
Alembic	1 g.l.
Apothecary jars (12)	1 g.l.
Bellows	5 s.p.
Blowtube (alloy)	2 g.l.
Blowtube (silver)	25 g.l.
Brazier	2 s.p.
Capsule (Sindaran; 10)	1 g.l.
Censer	5 s.p.
Crucible	1 g.l.
Crystal ball (unenchanted)	20 g.l.
Furnace	200 g.l.
Hour glass	5 g.l.
Incense	1 s.p.
Ink, sepia (per ounce)	1 s.p.
Inkwell (crystal)	5 s.p.
Inkwell (pottery)	2 s.p.
Mirror (obsidian)	200 g.l.
Mirror (silver)	10 g.l.
Mortar and pestle	1 g.l.
Piping/tubing (per foot)	1 s.p.
Prism	2 g.l.
Quill pen	1 s.p.
Retort	1 g.l.
Scroll (hide)	5 s.p.
Scroll (parchment)	1 g.l.
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 (unenchanted, costly)	100 g.l.
Wand (unenchanted, simple)	10 g.l.

* 100 times listed price for amberglass wares in place of glass.

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-wae dice	1 s.p.
Trivarian	800+ g.l.
Zodar deck	20+ g.l.

Food/Lodging

Type	Cost
Amber wine *	2 s.p.
Aquavit *	2 g.l.
Blossom wine *	5 s.p.
Brine (Imrian drink) *	2 c.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.
Sea slugs (Imrian meal)	1 s.p.
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.

Trade Goods

These prices assume that the buyer is purchasing in bulk from dealers rather than buying small amounts from retailers. A standard bolt of cloth is one yard wide and five yards long.

Type	Unit	Cost
Adamant	pound	8 g.l.
Adamant, black	pound	40 g.l.
Amber wine	gallon	1 g.l.
Amberglass	pound	235 g.l.
Aquavit	gallon	10-100g.l.
Balmroot	ounce	30 g.l.
Baobab, gray (bark)	square foot	2 g.l.
Baobab, gray (fruit)	pound	1 g.l.
Barb-berries (red)	pound	5 s.p.
Barb-berries (purple)	pound	2 g.l.
Blossom wine	gallon	25 s.p.
Chakos	gallon	3 g.l.
Cleric's cowl	ounce	12 g.l.
Copper	10 pounds	2 g.l.
Crystal dendron	20	100 g.l.
Crystal moth	20	200 g.l.
Deodar, silver	board foot	5 s.p.
Dung, ogront	ton	50 g.l.
Fernwood	board foot	6 s.p.
Gall oak ink	ounce	5 s.p.
Gauze	square yard	1 s.p.
Glass, clear	pound	2 g.l.
Glass, green	pound	5 g.l.
Gold	10 pounds	200 g.l.
Gossamer	bolt	5 g.l.
Grog	gallon	5 c.p.
Harpwood	board foot	2 g.l.
Hide/fur	20 pelts	10-2,000+g.l.
Iron, black	10 pounds	4 g.l.
Iron, blue	10 pounds	20 g.l.
Iron, red	10 pounds	8 g.l.
Ironwood	board foot	3 s.p.
Ivory	pound	10 g.l.
Lantern flowers	20	20 g.l.
Linen, common	bolt	5 s.p.
Linen, viridian	bolt	25 s.p.
Mandalan tea	gallon	5 s.p.
Mochan	gallon	10 g.l.
Mushroom ale	gallon	25 s.p.
Muskront musk	20 drams	500 g.l.
Orange fungus	ounce	3 g.l.
Pomegranate, blue	pound	1 g.l.
Produce/grain	ton	100+ g.l.
Provender plant	ton	20 g.l.
Sackcloth	bolt	5 c.p.
Scintilla	20	1,500 g.l.
Shag	bolt	1 g.l.
Silver	10 pounds	20 g.l.
Silkcloth	bolt	5 g.l.
Skoryx	gallon	50 g.l.
Spangalor	bolt	5 g.l.
Span-oak	board foot	5 s.p.
Spices	pound	50+ g.l.
Spinifax	bolt	1 g.l.
Stenchroot	ounce	6 g.l.
Sulfur	ounce	4 s.p.
Tazian fire-ale	gallon	5 g.l.
Thaecian nectar	gallon	25 g.l.
Timber, common	board foot	1 c.p.
Timber, hardwood	board foot	1 s.p.
Vinesap	gallon	5 g.l.
Whispbane	ounce	150 g.l.
Whitewood	board foot	1 g.l.
Willowood	board foot	3 s.p.
Zandir wine	gallon	5 g.l.

Chapter Eight: Appendix

Modes in Brief

Alter

Specific Alteration: +1/-1 per 3 Spell Levels
Broad Alteration: +1/-1 per 5 Spell Levels
Range: Touch
Subjects: -1 to casting roll for each extra subject
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll for each extra minute of duration)

Attack

Damage: 1 Hit Point of damage per Spell Level
Range: 50 feet (-1 to casting roll per 10 extra feet of range)
Duration: Instant / 1 round per level (no range)
Area: -1 to casting roll per foot of radius

Conjure

Maximum Mass: 10 pounds per Spell Level
Maximum Area: 1 cubic foot per Spell Level
Range: 50 feet (-1 to casting roll per 10 extra feet of range)
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll per extra minute of duration)

Defend

Hit Point Rating: +2 Hit Points per Spell Level
Range: Self / Touch / -1 to roll per 10 feet
Flat Barrier Size: 4 feet squared (4'x4'). (-1 to casting roll per extra foot squared)
Cylinder/Cone Barrier Area: 4 feet high, 2 ft. radius. (-1 to casting roll per extra foot of height or radius)
Dome/Sphere Barrier Area: 2 feet high, 4 ft. radius. (-1 to casting roll per extra foot of height or radius)
Barrier Armor Rating: 1/3 the Spell Level
Duration: 5 rounds (-1 to casting roll for each extra round of duration)

Heal

Effect: 1 hit point per Spell Level / 1 disease level per Spell Level
Range: Touch
Duration: Instant

Illusion

Basic Illusion: Level 1
Features: +3 Spell levels per each additional feature
Range: 50 feet (-1 to casting roll per 10 extra feet of range) / scrying
Duration: 5 rounds (-1 to casting roll for each extra round of duration)

Influence

Range: 5 feet
Duration: 1 round (-1 to casting roll for each extra round of duration)
Resistance: WIL roll - 1/2 Spell Level

Move

STR: +0 (100 lbs.) (+1 STR per 3 Spell Levels)
Range: 50 feet (-1 to casting roll for every 10 feet of extra range.)
SPD: -9 (10 feet per round) (-3 to casting roll for each +1 SPD rating.)
Area: 0' radius (-1 to casting roll per foot of radius)
Duration: 5 rounds (-1 to casting roll per extra round of duration)

Reveal

Sense: +1 PER per Spell Level
Range: 50 feet (-1 to casting roll per 10 extra feet of range)
Scrying Range: 1 mile (-1 to casting roll for each extra mile of range)
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll for each extra minute of duration)

Summon

Ability Level of Summoned Creature: 1 per Spell Level
Casting Time: 1 round per Spell Level
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll for each extra minute of duration)

Transform

Level Required: 3-25+ (see table below)
Range: Touch
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll for each extra minute of duration)

Ward

Base Level: 10
Range: Touch
Area: -1 to casting roll per foot of radius
Duration: 1 minute (-1 to casting roll for each extra minute of duration)

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ENCOUNTER LISTS

The Gamemaster can consult this list when devising planned or random encounters for adventures.

Aaman:
Avir
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Durge
Erd
Exomorph
Root Grub
Ravenger
Omnivrax
Ogriphant
Urthrax

Arim:
Avir
Bald Nettle
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Durge
Erd
Exomorph
Greymane
Hangman's Tree
Ravenger
Omnivrax
Malathrope
Sniper-Bug
Sorcerer Tree
Yaksha

Carantheum:
Aht-ra
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Desert Palm
Durge
Land Dragon
Land Kra
Land Lizard
Opteryx
Rajan Scorpion
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Sand Demon
Satada

Chana:
Aqua Demon
Aramatus
Bog Devil
Caravan Bug
Death's-Head Viper
Emperor Plant
Flit
Giant Water-Bug
Ikshada
Lotus
Mantrap
Needleleaf
Ravenger
Scarlet Sporozoid
Sea Scorpion
Skalanx
Stranglevine
Urthrax

Crescent Isles:
Alatus
Aqua Demon
Aramatus
Avir
Dryad Bush
Emperor Plant
Flit
Giant Mollusk
Ikshada
Kra
Lotus
Mandragore
Mantrap
Needleleaf
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Scavenger Slime
Sea Scorpion
Sorcerer Tree
Stranglevine
Tardisite
Venomwood
Urthrax

Dark Coast:
Alatus
Amber Wasp
Aqua Demon
Aramatus
Avir
Batranc
Behemoth
Caravan Bug
Chang
Chasm Viper
Death's Head Viper
Emperor Plant
Flit
K'Tallah
Lotus
Malathrope
Mandragore
Mantrap
Plant Demon
Ravenger
Satada
Scarlet Sporozoid
Sea Scorpion
Shathane
Skalanx
Stranglevine
Swamp Demon
Urthrax
Zaratan

Djaffa:
Aht-ra
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Desert Palm
Durge
Erd
Greymane
Land Lizard
Mangonel Lizard
Needleleaf
Opteryx
Rajan Scorpion
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Sand Demon

Faradun:
Aqua Demon
Avir
Alatus
Aramatus
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Death's Head Viper
Desert Palm
Disembodied Spirit
Durge
Emperor Plant
Erd
Flit
Ghast
K'Tallah
Lotus
Malathrope
Necrophage
Needleleaf
Opteryx
Rajan Scorpion
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Sand Demon
Sea Scorpion
Shadowight
Stranglevine

Gao-Din:
Alatus
Aqua Demon
Aramatus
Avir
Batranc
Death's Head Viper
Drac
Flit
Nar-Eel
Ikshada
Lotus
Mantrap
Needleleaf
Quaal
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Scavenger Slime
Stranglevine

Harak:
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Dractyl
Earth Demon
Frostwere
Ice Dragon
Night Demon
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Scarlet Sporozoid
Storm Demon

Imria:
Alatus
Aqua Demon
Aramatus
Avir
Batranc

Crag Spider
Death's Head Viper
Emperor Plant
Exomorph
Earth Demon
Flit
Kra
Lotus
Mandragore
Mantrap
Needleleaf
Pyro-Demon
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Scarlet Sporozoid
Scavenger Slime
Sorcerer Tree
Stranglevine
Swamp Lurker
Tardisite

Jhangara:
Alatus
Aramatus
Avir
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Durge
Emperor Plant
Flit
Mandragore
Mantrap
Marsh Strider
Needleleaf
Ravenger
Scarlet Sporozoid
Sorcerer Tree
Stranglevine
Swamp Lurker
Tardisite
Urthrax
Water Raknid

Kang Empire:
Alatus
Aramatus
Avir
Batranc
Behemoth
Caravan Bug
Cave Bat
Chang
Chig
Crag Spider
Death's Head Viper
Dractyl
Durge
Emperor Plant
Flit
Erd
Exomorph
Frost Demon
Ikshada
Jabutu
Kra
Land Dragon
Land Kra
Loper
Lotus
Malathrope
Mandragore
Mantrap
Megalodont
Moonfish
Nar-Eel
Needleleaf
Ogriphant
Omnivrax
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Satada
Scavenger Slime
Sea Dragon
Sea Scorpion
Shathane
Silk Wyrrm
Skalanx
Stranglevine
Strider
Swamp Lurker
Tarkus
Water Raknid
Yaksha

Khazad:
Bane
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Deadwood
Ghast
Grue
Necrophage
Night Demon
Opteryx
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Scarlet Sporozoid
Scavenger Slime
Sea Dragon
Shadowight
Shadow Wizard
Storm Demon
Swamp Lurker
Urthrax
Yaksha

L'Haan:
Dractyl
Erd
Frost Demon
Frostwere
Ice Dragon
Land Kra
Minor Elemental
Ogriphant
Snow Lily
Snowmane
Tundra Loper

Mog:
Alatus
Amber Wasp
Aramatus
Avir
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Cave Bat
Chang
Dryad Bush
Emperor Plant
Flit
Gold Beetle
Lotus
Mandragore
Mantrap
Mung-Berry Tree
Needleleaf
Ravenger
Scarlet Sporozoid
Sorcerer Tree
Stranglevine
Swamp Lurker
Tardisite

Narandu:
Frost Demon
Frostwere
Ice Dragon
Minor Elemental
Night Demon
Ogriphant
Sea Dragon
Snow Lily
Tundra Loper

Nefaratus:
Deadwood
Guardian Devil
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Sea Scorpion

Oceanus:
Aqua Demon
Avir
Giant Mollusk
Kra
Ravenger
Nar-Eel
Sea Dragon
Zaratan

Phantas:
Abomination
Avir
Emperor Plant
Erx
Flit
Giant Mollusk
Kra
L'latha
Mandragore
Nar-Eel
Needleleaf
Ravenger
Stranglevine
Swamp Lurker

Plains of Golarin:
Avir
Batranc
Behemoth
Caravan Bug
Darkmane
Durge
Erd
Greymane
Land Lizard
Malathrope
Mangonel Lizard
Megalodont
Ogriphant
Ogront
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Sickleweed

Rajanistan:
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Crested Dragon
Desert Kra
Desert Palm
Duadir
Durge
Earth Demon
Land Dragon
Land Lizard
Opteryx
Rajan Scorpion
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Sand Demon
Satada
Scarlet Sporozoid
Vasp
Yaksha

Seven Kingdoms:
Avir
Alatus
Batranc
Behemoth
Caravan Bug
Chasm Viper
Desert Palm
Dryad Bush
Durge
Emperor Plant
Erx
Flit
Erd
Exomorph
Greymane
Land Kra
Land Lizard
Malathrope
Mandragore
Mangonel Lizard
Needleleaf
Omnivrax
Opteryx
Plant Demon
Reincarnator
Rock Urchin
Root Grub
Satada
Scarlet Sporozoid
Skalanx
Sorcerer Tree
Span-Oak
Stranglevine
Subterranoid
Swamp Lurker
Tazian Fly
Vasp
Waterwhisp
Werebeast
Woodwhisp

Shadow Realm:
Abomination
Bat Manta
Deadwood
Erx
Fiend
Ghast
Monitor Imp
Reincarnator
Sardonicus
Scarlet Sporozoid
Scavenger Slime
Shadowight
Shadow Wizard

Silvanus:
Aramatus
Batranc
Bane
Caravan Bug
Dryad Bush
Durge
Erd
Exomorph
Ghast
Harbinger Imp
Malathrope
Necrophage
Needleleaf
Ogriphant
Ravenger
Sea Dragon
Sniper-Bug
Sorcerer Tree
Storm Demon
Werebeast
Whisp

Sinking Land:
Avir
Aramatus
Barge-Tree
Batranc
Flit
Ikshada
Necrophage
Scarlet Sporozoid
Scavenger Slime
Shadowight
Snipe
Storm Demon

Tamaranth:
Avir
Batranc
Behemoth
Caravan Bug
Dryad Bush
Exomorph
Malathrope
Minor Elemental
Ravenger
Shathane
Silvermane
Sorcerer Tree
Span-Oak

Thaecian Isles:
Aramatus
Avir
Batranc
Drac
Dryad Bush
Flit
Lotus
Monolith
Nar-Eel
Ravenger
Rock Urchin
Sea Demon
Sea Dragon
Sea Scorpion
Stranglevine
Storm Demon
Swamp Lurker
Tardisite
Water Raknid

Urag:
Abomination
Aramatus
Batranc
Behemoth
Caravan Bug
Durge
Erd
Lake Kra
Land Kra
Malathrope
Ogront
Opteryx
Ravenger
Satada
Scarlet Sporozoid
Scavenger Slime
Urthrax
Ogriphant
Yaksha

Volcanic Hills:
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Drac
Draconid
Duadir
Earth Demon
Land Dragon
Opteryx
Pyro-Demon
Raknid
Ravenger
Strider
Tarkus
Vasp
Vorl

Werewood:
Avir
Bane
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Chang
Exomorph

Fiend
Ghast
Malathrope
Mandragore
Necrophage
Needleleaf
Ogriphant
Ravenger
Scarlet Sporozoid
Scavenger Slime
Sea Dragon
Skalanx
Sniper-Bug
Sorcerer Tree
Storm Demon
Stranglevine
Weirdling
Werebeast
Yaksha

Wilderlands:
Aht-ra
Avir
Arborin
Batranc
Behemoth
Caravan Bug
Cave Bat
Chasm Viper
Chig
Crag Spider
Deadwood
Desert Palm
Draconid
Duadir
Durge
Earth Demon
Enim
Erd
Greymane
Land Dragon
Land Kra
Land Lizard
Loper
Malathrope
Mangonel Lizard
Nightstalker
Ogront
Omnivrax
Opteryx
Pyro-Demon
Rajan Scorpion
Raknid
Ravant (Aberrant Forest only)
Ravenger
Reincarnator
Rock Urchin
Sand Demon
Satada
Scarlet Sporozoid
Scavenger Slime
Storm Demon
Strider
Tarkus
Vasp

Xanadas:
Dractyl
Erd
Frost Demon
Frostwere
Snow Lily
Ice Dragon
Vorl

Yrmania:
Avir
Batranc
Behemoth
Chasm Viper
Caravan Bug
Darkmane
Erd
Frostwere
Ice Dragon
Loper
Malathrope
Mandragore
Night Demon
Nighthawk
Omnivrax
Opteryx
Ravenger
Satada
Scarlet Sporozoid
Sea Dragon
Skullcap
Sniper-Bug
Sorcerer Tree
Snowmane
Werebeast
Yaksha

Zandu:
Avir
Batranc
Caravan Bug
Chang
Chig
Durge
Dryad Bush
Erd
Exomorph
Hangman's Tree
Mandragore
Malathrope
Root Grub
Sea Scorpion
Skalanx
Sniper-Bug
Sorcerer Tree
Stranglevine
Urthrax

THE ACTION TABLE

ROLL	RESULT
0 or less	Mishap
1 - 5	Failure
6 - 10	Partial Success
11 - 19	Full Success
20 or more	Critical Success

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

- Attribute rating*
- Skill rating
- Intent
- Degree of Difficulty (1-20)
- Opposing Attributes or Skills
- Multiple actions (-5 for each extra action)
- Non-proficiency penalty (d10)
- Environment

* If the GM calls for an Attribute-only roll (like a Strength roll to pry open a stuck door) the Attribute rating is doubled before adding it to the Action Table roll. When an Attribute is substituted for a skill the character does not have, its rating is not doubled.

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.

Degree of Difficulty Guide

Difficulty	Modifier
No chance of failure	No need to roll
Any fool could do it	+10
Very Easy	+7
Easy	+5
Simple	+3
Routine	+0
Tricky	-3
Difficult	-5
Very Difficult	-7
Extreme	-10
Beyond extreme	-15 or worse

GUIDE TO PRONUNCIATION

Aabaal (ah-BAHL)
Aaman (ah-MAHN)
Ahazu (ah-HAH-zoo)
Ahrazahd (ah-rah-ZOD)
Akbar (AK-bar)
Akmir (AK-meer)
Al Ashad (ahl ah-SHOD)
Altan (ALL-tan)
Aamahd (ah-MOD)
Aeriad (AIR-ee-ad)
Anasas (ah-NA-sus)
Andurin (an-DUR-in)
Araq (AH-rak)
Arat (ah-ROT)
Archaen (ar-KAY-en)
Archon (AHR-kon)
Ardan (AHR-dan)
Arial (AIR-ee-al)
Ariane (ahr-ee-AN)
Arim (Aa-rim)
Ashann (a-SHON)
Astar (AS-tar)
Aurantium (or-AN-tee-uhm)
Avar (AA-var)
Bahahd (bah-HOHD)
Batre (BA-tray)
Bodor (BO-dor)
Borean (BORE-ee-an)
Boru (BO-roo)
Callidian (Cal-ID-ee-an)
Caprica (CAP-rih-ka)
Castabulan (cas-TA-byoo-lon)
Castabulonese (cas-TA-byoo-lon-eez)
Cella (SEL-ah)
Chakos (CHAH-kose)
Chana (CHA-nah)
Cicz (SIZ)
Cinnabar (SIN-a-bar)
Cymril (SIM-ril)
Da-Khar (da-KAR)
Dalia (DAH-lee-ah)
Danuvia (da-NOO-vee-ah)
Dhuna (duh-HOO-nah)
Djaffa (JAH-fah)
Djaffir (ja-FEER)
D'Oko (DO-ko)
Domal (Do-MAHL)
Dracarta (dra-KAHR-tah)
Dractyl (DRAK-til)
Drome (DROME)
Druas (DROO-us)
Druhk (DROOK)
Duar (doo-AR
Durne (DERN)
El Aran (el AH-rin)
Equs (EK-wuss)
Erendor (AIR-en-dor)
Fahn (FON)
Farad (FA-rud)
Faradun (FAH-rah-doon)
Farique (fah-REEK)
Farnir (fahr-NEER)
Ferran (FAIR-en)
Gao-Din (gow-DIN)
Garganta (gahr-GAN-tah)
Gnomekin (NOME-kin)
Gnorl (NORL)
Golarin (Go-LAR-in)
Gryph (GRIF)
Gwanga (GWON-jah)
Hadj (HOJ)
Hadran (ha-DRAHN)
Harak (HAR-ak)
Ikarthis (ih-CAR-thiss)
Imria (IM-ree-ah)
Irdan (eer-DAN)
Irridian (eer-ID-ee-uhn)
Isalis (ISS-ahl-is)
Ispasia (iss-PAY-see-uh)
Jabutu (jah-BOO-too)
Jacinth (jah-SINTH)
Jaka (JAH-ka)
Jalaad (jah-LAHD)
Jamba (JOM-ba)
Jezem (jeh-ZEM)
Jhang (JANG)
Jhangara (jan-GAH-rah)
Kangir (kang-GEER)
Kang-Tu (kang-TOO)
Karang (kah-RANG)
Karansk (kah-RANSK)
Karfan (car-FAN)
Kasir (ka-SEER)
Kasmir (kaz-MEER)
Kasmiran (kaz-MEER-en)
Kasraan (kas-RAHN)
Kharakhan (kahr-ah-CON)
Khazad (kah-ZOD)
Khu (KOO)
Kiru (KEE-roo)
Kragan (KRAY-gen)
K'tallah (keh-TAH-lah)
Laeolis (lay-O-liss)
Lahsa (LAH-sah)
Lal-Lat (lahl-LOT)
L'Haan (la-HAHN)
Lir (LEER)
L'Lal (eh-LAHL)
Mandalan (man-DA-lan)
Mandragore (MAN-dra-gore)
Mandu (man-DOO)
Mangar (MAN-gar)
Manra (MAN-rah)
Maruk (MAH-rook)
Mahrukan (MAH-roo-can)
Matsu (MOT-soo)
Mazdak (MOZ-dak)
Mirin (MEER-in)
Mogran (MOG-ran)
Mogroth (MOG-roth)
Monad (MO-nad)
Mondre Khan (mon-dreh-KON)
Moorg-wan (moorg-WAHN)
Morphius (MORF-ee-us)
Myr (MEER)
Nadan (nay-DAN)
Nadir (nay-DEER)
Nagra (NOG-ra)
Na-Ku (NAH-koo)
Narandu (nah-RAN-doo)
Nauticus (NAWT-ih-cuss)
Nearwan (neer-WAHN)
Necron (NEK-ron)
Nefaratus (neh-fahr-AH-tus)
Neurian (NOOR-ee-en)
Oceanus (o-see-AN-us)
Ogriphant (OG-reh-font)
Ogront (OG-ront)
Orgovian (or-GO-vee-an)
Pana-Ku (pa-na-KOO)
Parthenian (pahr-THEE-nee-an)
Peridia (peh-RID-ee-ah)
Phandir (FAN-deer)
Phaedra (FAYD-rah)
Phantas (FAN-tas)
Phantasian (fan-TAY-zee-an)
Pharesian (fahr-EE-zee-an)
Quaga (KWAH-gah)
Quan (KWAHN)
Rahastran (rah-HAAS-tran)
Raknid (RAK-nid)
Rasmirin (rass-MEER-in)
Rhin (RIN)
R'ruh (AIR-roo)
Sardonyx (sahr-DON-ix)
Sascasm (SASS-ka-zem)
Satada (sa-TAH-dah)
Sathir (sa-THEER)
Sathra (SATH-rah)
Sauran (SORE-an)
Sawila (sah-WEE-la)
Shadinn (shah-DIN)
Shalihan (SHAL-ih-han)
Shattra (SHOT-rah)
Shonan (SHO-nan)
Silvanus (sil-VAN-uhs)
Sindar (SIN-dahr)
Ska-wae (SKAH-way)
Stryx (STRIX)
Sunra (SUN-rah)
Tabal (ta-BAHL)
Talisandre (tal-is-AND-dra)
Talislanta (tal-iss-LAN-tah)
Tamar (ta-MAR)
Tamaranth (TAM-ar-anth)
Tanasian (tan-AY-zee-uhn)
Tantalus (TAN-tahl-us)
Tarun (tah-ROON)
Thaecia (THAY-shah)
Thalia (THAH-lee-ah)
Thaumaturge (THOW-mah-turj)
Thiasian (thee-AY-zee-an)
Thrall (THRAWL)
Tian (tee-AHN)
Torquaran (tore-KWAHR-un)
T'sai (SI)
Urag (YOOR-ag)
Urmaan (UHR-mahn)
Valanis (va-LAN-is)
Vashay (VA-shay)
Vajra (VAHJ-ra)
Vardune (vahr-DOON)
Vird (VERD)
Viridia (ver-ID-ee-ah)
Vishana (vih-SHA-na)
Vodruk (VO-druk)
Vulge (VULJ)
Xambria (ZAM-bree-ah)
Xanadas (ZAN-a-dus)
Yaksha (YAHK-shah)
Yitek (YIT-ehk)
Yrmania (eer-MA-nee-ah)
Yassan (YAH-sahn)
Zadian (ZAY-dee-in)
Zagir (zah-GEER)
Zar (ZAHR)
Zandre (ZAN-drah)
Zandu (zan-DOO)
Zantil (zan-TEEL)
Zantium (ZAN-tee-um)
Zaran (ZAH-rehn)
Zaratan (ZA-ra-tan)
Zir (ZEER)
Zodar (ZO-dar)
Zoriah (zore-EYE-ah)

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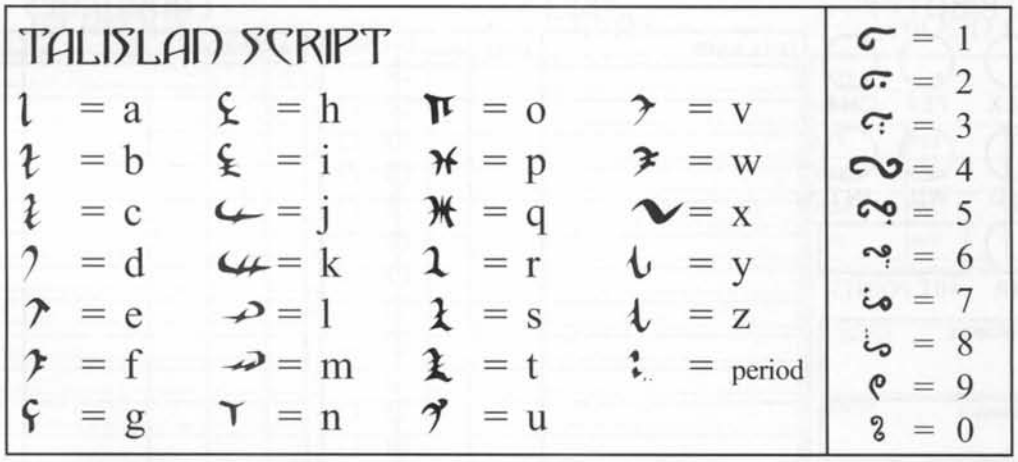
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TALISLAN SCRIPT



TALISLANTA

NAME	ARCHETYPE

GENDER	AGE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	EYES	HAIR

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

PERSONALITY & BACKGROUND

ATTRIBUTES

STR	DEX	PER	CHA
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
CR	MR	HIT POINTS	

HIT POINT DAMAGE
SUBDUAL DAMAGE
SPELL PENALTY
OTHER MODIFIERS

ACTION TABLE

0 OR LESS	MISHAP
1 - 5	FAILURE
6 - 10	PARTIAL
11 - 19	SUCCESS
20+	CRITICAL

SKILLS

SKILL NAME	LEVEL	ATTRIBUTE	RATING

MAGIC

ORDER	
PHYSICAL COMPONENTS	
ADVANTAGES	
LIMITATIONS	

MODES	LVL	MOD	RTG
ALTER			
ATTACK			
CONJURE			
DEFEND			
HEAL			
ILLUSION			
INFLUENCE			
MOVE			
REVEAL			
SUMMON			
TRANSFORM			
WARD			
ENCHANT			

ORDER	
PHYSICAL COMPONENTS	
ADVANTAGES	
LIMITATIONS	

MODES	LVL	MOD	RTG
ALTER			
ATTACK			
CONJURE			
DEFEND			
HEAL			
ILLUSION			
INFLUENCE			
MOVE			
REVEAL			
SUMMON			
TRANSFORM			
WARD			
ENCHANT			

ORDER	
PHYSICAL COMPONENTS	
ADVANTAGES	
LIMITATIONS	

MODES	LVL	MOD	RTG
ALTER			
ATTACK			
CONJURE			
DEFEND			
HEAL			
ILLUSION			
INFLUENCE			
MOVE			
REVEAL			
SUMMON			
TRANSFORM			
WARD			
ENCHANT			

ORDER	
PHYSICAL COMPONENTS	
ADVANTAGES	
LIMITATIONS	

MODES	LVL	MOD	RTG
ALTER			
ATTACK			
CONJURE			
DEFEND			
HEAL			
ILLUSION			
INFLUENCE			
MOVE			
REVEAL			
SUMMON			
TRANSFORM			
WARD			
ENCHANT			

WEAPONS

TYPE	RANGE	DR	WT

MARK IF MAGIC ITEM

ARMOR

TYPE	PR	WT

EXPERIENCE POINTS

TOTAL POINTS EARNED	UNSPENT POINTS

GEAR

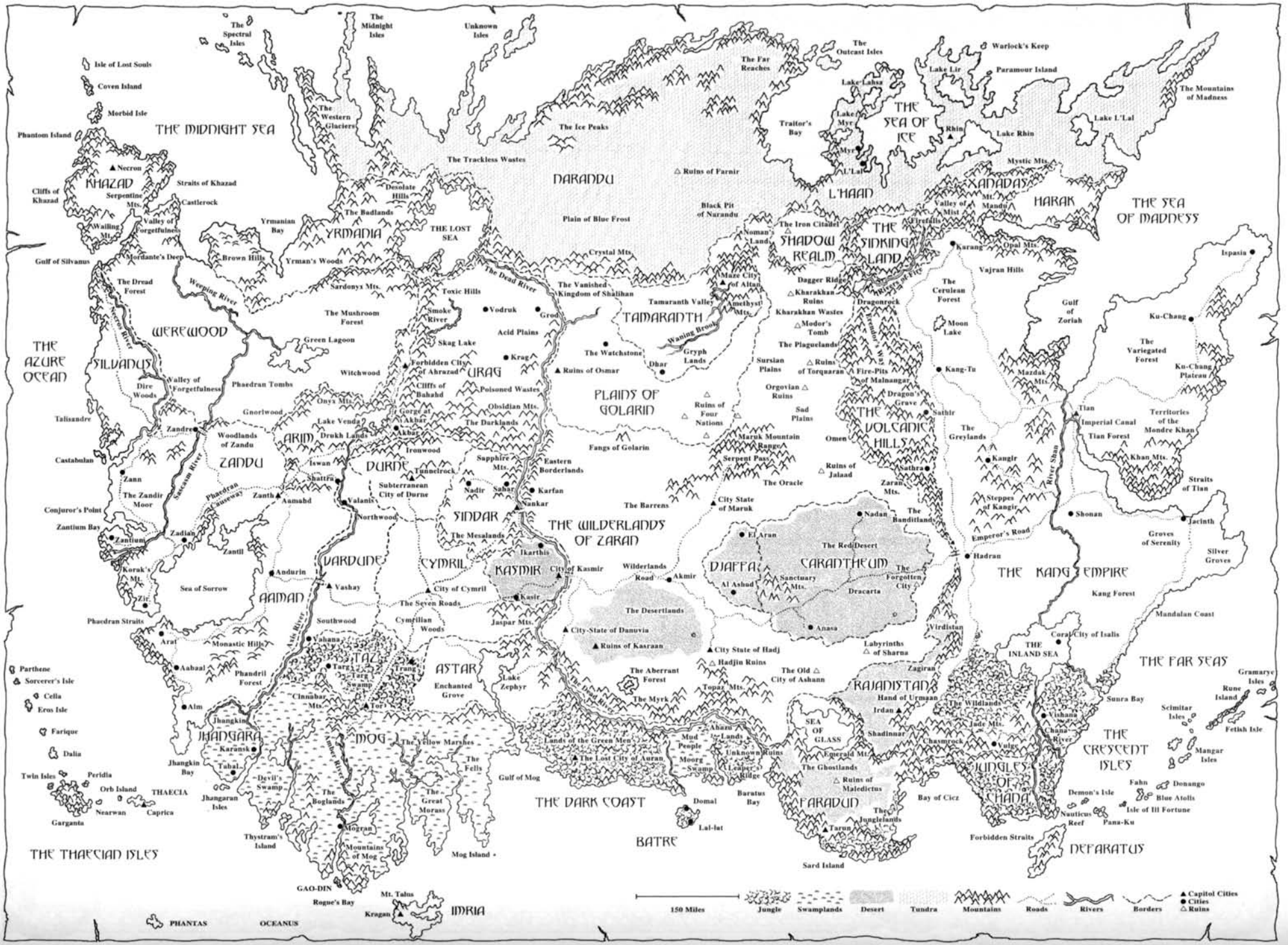
MOUNT

TYPE		
NAME		
STR	PER	CR
DEX	CHA	MR
CON	WIL	HIT POINTS
SPD	INT	
SPECIAL ABILITIES/NOTES		
ATTACKS		
ARMOR		

MONEY

GOLD LUMENS	QUAN EMPERORS
SILVER PIECES	AAMANIAN COPPERS
COPPER PIECES	IMRIAN BRASS RINGS
CYMRILIAN PENTACLES	OCEANIAN RADIANTS
DRACARTAN PYRAMIDS	L'HAAN ADAMANTS
ZANDIR CRESCENTS	ANTIQUE COINS
PRECIOUS GEMS	
TOTAL IN LUMENS	

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The Spectral Isles
The Midnight Isles
Unknown Isles
Isle of Lost Souls
Coven Island
Morbid Isle
Phantom Island
THE MIDNIGHT SEA
The Western Glaciers
The Ice Peaks
The Far Reaches
The Outcast Isles
Warlock's Keep
Lake Lir
Paramour Island
Lake Lahsa
The Mountains of Madness
Traitor's Bay
Lake Myr
THE SEA OF ICE
Lake L'Lal
Rhin
Lake Rhin
Myr
L'Lal
Mystic Mts.
Necron
KHAZAD
Straits of Khazad
Cliffs of Khazad
Serpentine Mts.
Castlerock
Desolate Hills
The Trackless Wastes
DARANDU
Ruins of Farnir
L'HAAD
XANADAS
Mt. Mandu
HARAK
THE SEA OF MADNESS
Valley of Mist
Firefalls
The Badlands
Black Pit of Narandu
Plain of Blue Frost
Valley of Forgetfulness
Wailing Mt.
Yrmanian Bay
YRMADIA
THE LOST SEA
The Iron Citadel
Noman's Land
THE SHADOW REALM
THE SINKING LAND
Karang
Opal Mts.
Ispasia
Gulf of Silvanus
Mordante's Deep
Brown Hills
Yrman's Woods
Crystal Mts.
Vajran Hills
The Dread Forest
Weeping River
Sardonyx Mts.
The Dead River
The Vanished Kingdom of Shalihan
Maze City of Altan
Dagger Ridge
Kharakhan Ruins
Amethyst Mts.
Tamaranth Valley
Dragonrock
Kharakhan Wastes
Rivers of Fire
The Cerulean Forest
Gulf of Zoriah
Ku-Chang
Necron River
The Mushroom Forest
Toxic Hills
Smoke River
Vodruk
Grod
TAMARANTH
Modor's Tomb
Moon Lake
The Variegated Forest
WEREWOOD
Green Lagoon
Skag Lake
Acid Plains
Waning Brook
The Plagueclands
Ku-Chang Plateau
THE AZURE OCEAN
SILVANUS
Forbidden City of Ahrazad
Krag
The Watchstone
Gryph Lands
Dhar
Ruins of Osmar
Sursian Plains
Ruins of Torquaran
Fire-Pits of Malnangar
Kang-Tu
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Witchwood
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Dire Woods
Phaedran Tombs
Cliffs of Bahahd
Poisoned Wastes
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PLAINS OF GOLARIN
Orgovian Ruins
Ruins of Four Nations
Sad Plains
Dragon's Grave
Sathir
Tian
Imperial Canal
Territories of the Mondre Khan
Tian Forest
Onyx Mts.
Gnorlwood
Gorge of Akbar
Obsidian Mts.
The Darklands
Talisandre
Zandre
Lake Venda
Akbar
Woodlands of Zandu
ARIM
Drukh Lands
Ironwood
THE VOLCADIS HILLS
Omen
Maruk Mountain Range
Serpent Pass
The Greylands
Kangir
River Shan
Khan Mts.
Castabulan
ZANDU
Iswan
DURDE
Tunnelrock
Fangs of Golarin
Sapphire Mts.
Eastern Borderlands
Ruins of Jalaad
Asathra
Straits of Tian
Zann
Shattra
Subterranean City of Durne
Nadir
Sahar
Karfan
Zankar
The Oracle
Zaran Mts.
Steppes of Kangir
Conjuror's Point
The Zandir Moor
Phardran Causeway
Zanth
Aamahd
Valanis
The Barrens
City State of Maruk
Shonan
Jacinth
Zantium Bay
Zadlan
Northwood
SINDAR
The Mesalands
THE WILDERLANDS OF ZARAN
El Aran
Nadan
The Banditlands
Emperor's Road
Groves of Serenity
Zantium
Zantil
Ikarthis
The Red Desert
Hadran
Silver Groves
Korak's Mt.
VARDUNE
CYMRIL
KASMIR
City of Kasmir
Wilderlands Road
Akmir
DJAFFA
CARANTHEUM
The Forgotten City
THE KANG EMPIRE
Andurin
Vashay
City of Cymril
Kasir
Al Ashod
Sanctuary Mts.
Dracarta
Sea of Sorrow
Zir
AAMAD
The Seven Roads
Jaspar Mts.
Kang Forest
Phaedran Straits
Cymrilian Woods
Southwood
Axis River
City-State of Danuvia
Anasa
Virdistan
Mandalan Coast
Arat
Vahana
Monastic Hills
Ruins of Kasraan
City State of Hadj
Labyrinths of Sharna
Coral City of Isalis
THE INLAND SEA
THE FAR SEAS
Parthene
Aabaal
TAZ
Targ
Torg Swamp
Trang
ASTAR
Enchanted Grove
Lake Zephyr
Hadjin Ruins
The Aberrant Forest
The Old City of Ashann
RAJADISTAN
Topaz Mts.
Hand of Urmaan
Irdan
Sorcerer's Isle
Phandril Forest
Cinnabar Mts.
Tor
The Myrk
Zagiran
Gramarye Isles
Cella
Alm
Eros Isle
Jhangkin
JHANGARA
Karansk
MOG
The Yellow Marshes
Lands of the Green Men
Ahaan Lands
Mud People
Moorg Swamp
Unknown Ruins
Leaper Ridge
SEA OF GLASS
Emerald Mts.
The Ghostlands
Ruins of Maledictus
Shadinnar
Chasmrock
Vulgo
Jade Mts.
Vishana
Chana River
Sunra Bay
Scimitar Isles
Rune Island
Fetish Isle
Farique
Dalia
Jhangkin Bay
Tabal
Devil's Swamp
Amber River
The Fells
Gulf of Mog
The Lost City of Auran
Twin Isles
Peridia
Orb Island
THAECIA
Jhangaran Isles
The Boglands
The Great Morass
THE DARK COAST
Baratus Bay
Domal
Lal-lat
FARADUN
Bay of Cicz
The Junglelands
Tarun
JUNGLES OF CHANA
THE CRESCENT ISLES
Mangar Isles
Fahn
Donango
Demon's Isle
Blue Atolls
Nearwan
Caprica
Garganta
Thystram's Island
Mograan
Mountains of Mog
Mog Island
Isle of Ill Fortune
Nauticus Reef
Pana-Ku
Forbidden Straits
DEFARATUS
THE THAECIAN ISLES
BATRE
Sard Island
GAO-DIN
Rogue's Bay
Mt. Talus
Kragan
IMRIA
PHANTAS
OCEANUS
150 Miles
Jungle
Swamplands
Desert
Tundra
Mountains
Roads
Rivers
Borders
Capitol Cities
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