

# The Crucible

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## Inside This Issue

- [Sechi Art](#)
- [Wildmen](#) and [Xambrians](#)
- [Jaka Weapons](#)
- [Kang Civil War](#)
- [Rick's Deviant Mana System](#)
- [Talislantan Poetry](#)
- [Talislantan Curses](#)
- [Subscription Information](#)

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## Artwork from Steve Sechi

"Talislanta was first conceived not as a role playing game but as a world setting. From its inception, the most important part of the milieu has always been the visual elements. While writing the first draft of The Chronicles I created over three hundred design sketches of Talislantan races, creatures, costumes, weapons, and conveyances. These rough sketches (some of which appear in this issue) were sent to P.D. Breeding-Black, who turned them into the works of art that graced the pages of the first Talislanta books."

SMS

(Stephan Michael Sechi)



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## The Wildmen: A Field Study

(excerpted in part from a rare unabridged copy of "The Chronicles of Talislanta", by the wizard Tamerlin.)

After two unsuccessful attempts to study a tribe of Wildmen at close range, the last of which involved a truly frightful encounter with 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 having nearly proved fatal), I scoured the surrounding woods until I had gathered a considerable quantity of a local fungi known as skullcap. This done, I packed the mushrooms in a basket, 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 vision. Another came close, looked into the basket, and exhibited a great, fanged grin. The creature pointed to its mouth; I nodded and gave him a mushroom. He swallowed it whole, shook his mane of dreadlocks 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 it would be more dangerous for me to ingest a poisonous mushroom or to defy a band of armed and inebriated Wildmen. 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 peculiar "singing stones" 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 spider-oak, with a headache that lasted the better part of three days."

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## **Xambrians: A Shadow Across the Soul**

(excerpted in part from a rare unabridged copy of "The Chronicles of Talislanta", by the wizard Tamerlin.)

Of all Talislantans perhaps none are so tortured in mind and spirit as the Xambrians. Their ancient ancestors were nearly eradicated by the [Torquarans](#), who sought to exterminate their race for no other reason than sheer hatred and greed. 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 spectre 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 out of the question; a Xambrian must be prepared at all time to follow the calling, whenever it may occur. Outsiders regard them with superstition and mistrust, and such friends and acquaintances as they may make are 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 that the Xambrians are a doom-haunted people who bear a shadow across their souls.

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## A Study of Jaka Weaponry

(the following has been taken from an essay by Monarthar Ilgrass, Sage and Wanderer Extraordinaire) by Tom 'Talisman' DeCory-Keen

While many folk believe the Jaka to be uncivilized barbarians, nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed, during the short time that I spent with them, I found them to be a thoughtful, intelligent, and cultured people.

Evidence of this is their preference in weaponry. Most Jaka employ graceful, bladed arms. These weapons are designed to be light and sharp. This allows the wielder to move quickly, dodging and ducking until his or her opponent makes a mistake.

**Ga-Cha:** This is the favored weapon of most Jaka. Basically a bastard sword, the blade is straight and single-edged, averaging 3 feet in length. The hilt consists of a tiny, oval hand-guard (maktu) at the base of the blade, the grip, and a pommel. The grip is usually 9 or 10 inches long, and wrapped with werebeast hide. This allows the wielder to use the Ga-Cha two-handed and aids the pommel in counter weighting the blade. The pommel (krata) is usually rounded and always large; providing the proper balance to the blade's weight.

Dam: d10 WT: 5 STR: -1 Cost: 20 g.l.

**Gaht:** This is the Jaka word for a baldric scabbard. Most Jaka scabbards are made of oil-hardened werebeast hide, with black iron caps on either end, and a soft, werebeast hide strap.

WT: 1/2 Cost: 1 g.l.

**Grah:** These small spikes are often carried as missile weapons. They consist of nothing more than thin, cylindrical slivers of black iron, with the ends sharpened to fine points. They are generally no longer than 8 inches. In combat, the Jaka can throw them with great skill, occasionally coating them with paralytic poisons.

Dam: d4 WT: 1/2 STR: -- Cost: 3 s.p.

**Jeh:** This is a small, needle-like dart used in thas (Jaka blowguns). They are generally made of black iron with werebeast fur tied carefully to one end in order to ensure an airtight fit in the tube. Jeh are usually coated with some form of poison.

Dam: 1 WT: 1/10 STR: -- Cost: 1 s.p.

**Panta:** This is a long spear which ends in a barbed blade. The average panta is 8 feet long from tip to butt. The shaft is made of hard wood and wrapped in a coil of black iron which is secured at either end. This coil serves to strengthen the shaft, making it much more difficult to break, and to provide the wielder with a firm grip. The head is long and thin ending in a sharp blade which is barbed at its back. This makes it very difficult to remove the blade from an impaled victim without causing a great deal of pain and damage (d10). Finally, the butt is covered with a small, black iron cap which keeps the wood from splitting when the panta is braced against a charge. The importance of these elements becomes clear when you consider that the panta is primarily used for hunting werebeasts.

Dam: d8 WT: 8 STR: 0 Cost: 10 g.l.

**Thas:** This is a Jaka blowgun. Most thas average 6 feet in length, though they are made of connected wooden segments which allow them to be broken down to more transportable proportions. Thas are not used in combat. They are primarily intended for hunting.

Dam: see jeh WT: 1 STR: -- Cost: 3 g.l.

**Tranah:** Also called the Jaka war-axe, the tranah is the closest thing to a hacking weapon that the Jaka use. While it looks to be a particularly heavy weapon, the design of its long, thin blade makes it surprisingly light. In addition, its design maintains the Jaka preference for slashing weapons, while allowing its wielder the ability to effectively utilize his or her strength. The blade itself is generally about 1'6" in length and its edge is razor sharp. The haft is made of hard wood and wrapped in werebeast hide.

Dam: d12 WT: 15 STR: +1 Cost: 10 g.l.

**Zhay:** The single-edged blade of this knife averages 8-10 inches in length. It is made of thin, but strong, black iron tapering to a fine point. The grip is generally made to equal the length of the blade, providing a counter balance, and wrapped in the all purpose werebeast hide.

Dam: d4 WT: 1/2 STR: -- Cost: 1 g.l.

My esteemed colleague, Kelropar, has theorized that the Jaka preference for such weapons is a result of their racial history. He suggests that their interest in slashing arms is an unconscious regression to an ancient time, when the only weapons the Jaka used were their claws and teeth. I will not dispute this. It is quite possible that such a primal instinct is in some way involved.

However, I do not believe that Kelropar's theory is an entirely complete explanation of their preference.

Watching a Jaka warrior in combat can be almost entrancing. Their lithe bodies move with fluidity and purpose. For them, blade combat is an art. It is a perfect display of the beauty in life, death, and the physical form. Certainly, this is not a primal viewpoint. No, this is a cultured way of looking at the inevitable balance of nature.

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## **The Kang Civil War : Prelude**

by John Harper

It was all an accident.

Honest. I didn't mean to embroil the mightiest nation in Tal in a bloody seven-year civil war that would ultimately lead to the subdivision and conquering of part of the empire; medium scale genocide; and a shifting of the power structure of the entire continent. It was an accident. We were playing Tal one night and I made a comment like, "There's a few Kang traveling with the caravan... one of them looks older." Just a throwaway bit of detail... something unusual, different from the standard Orgovians, Kasmir, and Djaffir that the party usually caravans with. I didn't even think to myself, "why would three kang, one of them an older guy, be traveling \*way\* outside the empire [in south cymril, heading for the dark coast]" Never crossed my mind. Until..

One of the players (Pat, I think... he plays the knife-fighter, Abdul) says, "Hmm. I wonder why three kang, one of them an older guy, would be traveling \*way\* outside the empire like this?" Players say the darndest things.

So, out of nowhere, my mind says, "It's the Warlord. The two with him are Dragonlords [clan leaders]. One of the dragonlords is a weak puppet controlled by a Battlelord [general] of his house. There's a deep, dark conspiracy going on in Kang." I thought, "Huh? What's a Battlelord? Conspiracy?" My mind said, "Shut up. I'm thinking." So, I shut up and put on my "Yes, the GM \*does\* know what he's doing after all" face. To answer Pat, I said... "Yeah that's strange, isn't it?"

And we got on with the adventure (which was something about traveling through the Ahazu jungles and trying to stay in one piece. I don't know the details... there where these merchants who were dead set on going through the jungle and they needed guides and guards... they had to meet a ship on the coast at a certain time... something like that... typical adventure for our party - we meet the weirdest merchants --). Turns out it's the Kang's ship that they're meeting. The Kang (and the merchants) are traveling by way of the freaking jungle so they won't be seen on any of the normal trade/travel routes. The party really doesn't care \*why\* (at this point) they just want to live to see the ocean. Which they did (after dealing with an Imrian slaver subplot...

Abdul has an old grudge against the fish-heads so it was appropriate... in fact, everything in our party revolves around Abdul... no one seems to mind).

So, they make it to the shore and find that the ship they are to meet has been captured by the slavers, and they capture the ship back (along with freeing the Ahazu slaves, and collecting some brass rings). The Kang sorta sit back and watch all this. The party, in a fit of greed, decide they're gonna keep the Imrian Coracle, and sell it in Tarun where no questions will be asked. (they even figured out a way to get it there, but that's a longer story) (also, the party wasn't just being power-hungry, they actually needed funds at this point in the campaign in order to accomplish some of their long term goals) (please pardon my tense-switching... comes from relating past events as present, and vice-versa). This does pertain to the War... stick with me.

SO, the Kang come forward at this point and say, "Nope. The coracle is the property of the Empire as soon as we step on board and no one will stop us." (major paraphrase). At this point, the Kang are sick of dealing with these foreign mercenaries, and are hoping to get rid of them. Doesn't work. The party almost fought the Kang for the vessel (that would have been astonishingly short). I watched as my fine role-playing troupe degenerated into a bunch of money-monkeys chanting "gimme gimme gimme". Ugly. But, what could I do? I bullied them.

"Say, guys? Kang are warlike and aggressive, right?"

"Right."

"So, to live to middle age as a Kang means..."

"Oh. Okay. We don't fight them."

"Good idea."

Jeez. Munchkin syndrome was not over, however. Instead of fighting, they decide to steal the darn thing once they reach Tarun. I am amazed at the underhandedness of my players, sometimes. All of this led to a great campaign though, so I can't complain.

(Unbeknownst to the players, the Kang are traveling to Tarun to make a \*very\* important deal with the Farad. They have contacts in the highest of places. After all, he \*is\* the Warlord. All of this will make sense eventually, trust me)

So, forward to Tarun.

The Tarun adventure could take up volumes... It would take me pages just to relate all the schemes the players had for stealing the Coracle. But, the really important thing is this: Before, entering port, one of the Kang comes out on deck and say "Go ahead, take the vessel, consider it payment for your services, and begone." (another major paraphrase, Kang don't exactly talk that way). What? you ask. You just \*gave\* it to them? You didn't teach them a lesson about greed or \*anything\*? He he. Not so fast. You see, the Sunra captain had this neat-o device called a spyglass. With his spyglass he had seen that there were several coracles in port at Tarun (slavers selling to the Farad) and it would be \*bad\* for them to show up with a stolen Imrian vessel (it would certainly ruin all hopes of remaining inconspicuous). So, they dumped the thing off on the players (who were happy... the fools! ha ha ha ha.... excuse me... munchkinism had infected the GM as well, obviously).

So, the suckers, er, players sailed happily into Tarun port (trying like mad to steer the giant Kra). Until...

"Hey Flyn, aren't those Imrian Coracles over there?"

"Um, yes. So are those. And those. And those."

"Uh..."

"Turn around."

"Are you kidding? I just convinced these freaking fish to go straight!"

"Never mind. They've already seen us."

So we played Lets-Meet-The-Huge-Crowd-Of-Unhappy-Imrians-With-Their-Sympathetic-Farad-Soldier-Buddies. But, you've probably done that one a million times.

"'We'll sell the coracle' you said. 'It's worth a small fortune' you said. 'They ask no questions in Tarun' you said."

"Shut up, I've almost got this lock picked."

"With a piece of straw? Abdul, you're picking the lock to our cell with a piece of straw. Where are your picks?"

"Strip search, remember? Now shut up... I can feel it giving..."

"You are a moron."

Prison in Tarun is not a nice place. I won't go into the gruesome descriptions I used in the Game... let's just say the party really wanted to get out. Like yesterday. Miraculously, they were freed only after two weeks in prison (enough to give them nightmares for the rest of their lives). Someone payed their freedom-price. This was good (they were free). This was bad (every Imrian in the city wanted them dead). Actually it was one of the Imrian's main Farad supporters that had freed them (so his fish-head buddies could slaughter them). He approached them as someone in trouble with the Imrians, in need of mercenary help (right up the players alley). He invited to take them to his estate where they would be safe until they escaped the city together. I have never straight-faced lied to my players this badly before. They were \*very\* suspicious (naturally), but I lied and lied and lied. I lied in that "this is the way to go with the adventure" GM voice. I lied until they really believed that the "plot" (what plot?) depended on them helping this guy out. It was shameful, but this Farad was supposed to be slick. A lot slicker than I could pull off... so... I cheated (kinda). And they bought it. It was a miracle. It was such an obvious trap, I think they just wanted to believe it was for real... and they were desperate. So they accompanied him to his estate. Now...

Everything happens at once (one of my favorite techniques... I just love those scenes when several plot threads coalesce and combine right before our amazed eyes... yes, I was amazed too... you'll see why).

This was the session that led to the War. Not causally, but the events of this session led me to invent the war and why the players would be involved (I was wrong about the second thing, but that was the players inventiveness).

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## Characters

So, the guys are in Tarun... about to get slaughtered by the fish-heads. This is as good a time as any to outline who was in the party at this point.

We had:

### Abdul of Arim

Knife-fighter / revenant, all around crazy guy. Official Plot Starter and Short Guy (5' 3"). Played by Patrick Cunningham (of Cobalt Commander fame). General concept: former slave with enough unfocused hate to be mean. Abdul started as a bloodthirsty bastard and Pat slowly crafted him into an all-around good guy. It took a while... and it was so gradual that we didn't realize Pat was doing it (maybe Pat didn't either). At this point in his career (before the war), Abdul is closer to bastard than good guy... but the midpoint happens sometime around the start of the war (when Abdul finds something worth fighting for and suddenly has a reason to be who he is...)

### Flyn the Jaka

Beastmaster, archer, Mandaquan student. Sound weird? Well, it was, kinda. Flyn is played by Chris Holmes (the creator of Rail, among other things). Flyn is an old Tal character that has been shuffled around in several campaigns...so he looks like a patchwork. Chris somehow managed a consistent persona despite his hodge-podge of abilities. In fact, he fused them in a way that none of us expected... turned Flyn into something of a Mystic, Zen Archer, type. It worked. We were all amazed and delighted.

### Lucas the Gypsy

Scalliwag, Con-Man, Flamboyant Rogue. That's Lucas. Sarista Gypsy... pretty much just like the archetype. Lucas did become much larger than the archetype, eventually. In fact, he and his brothers became Tal folk heroes of popular myth (they were all named Lucas, so \*all\* their wild adventures got attributed to 'Lucas the Gypsy'... he quickly became larger than life. In a distant future session, Abdul tells his grandchildren that he knew Lucas. THE Lucas?, they ask... heh heh, that was fun :). Lucas was played by Patrick and myself (he was Pat's creation, but was GM run some of the time).

### Crush

Thrall hand-to-hand expert. What more do ya want? He is just like his name suggests. Crush craves glory in combat (the Kang loved him) and is committed to following Abdul through every one of his insane plans (heck, the little guy gets it the coolest fights). Crush has a huge sun tattoo across his back (his tribal emblem) (anyone know where that's from?... many virtual twinkies to any who guess right). He also has earned the Blood Tears (red triangular markings under his eyes that signify his bravery vs. superior numbers). Crush is played by the GM (which is me... jeez Thralls are fun to play). Aside: Crush's brother, Torrent, was played by Chris in another campaign, which gave me some insights into playing Thralls well. Thanks Chris.

### Kenjok

Zandir swordsmage. Hm. What can I tell you about Kenjok? He was a casualty of the war. It wasn't a tragedy either (I like character death to be a good tragedy if it \*has\* to happen). Kenjok was played by Hiren, and Hiren just didn't seem to care either way whether Kenjok lived, died, got the plague, turned into an ogriphant... whatever. As long

as he got to flip his sword around and cast a spell occasionally. Not exactly a stunning role-playing performance to say the least. I think Hiren would agree with me, it wasn't his best work. I won't go into detail here. Just don't be surprised if there is little mention of Kenjok in the story. He didn't really do anything. I tried.. but, oh well... water under the bridge I suppose.

Okay, that's the group. Onward...

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## **Rick's Deviant Mana System**

by Rick Elliot

### **Description**

All magical spells derive their power from the expenditure of mana. Mana is provided to the spell caster by divine (or diabolic) benediction, and by the practice of certain rituals and the imbibing of various rare substances. A certain amount of mana can be stored in living creatures (the spell caster) as well as in artifacts (wands, staves, talismans, etc).

Mana is measured in points. A spell caster's permanent mana score is equal to their Basic Magic Rating X 2. A 1st level Cymrillian mage might have a BMR of 5, and hence have 10 mana points. A wizard with a BMR of 10 has 20 mana points, etc.

Casting a spell consumes 1 mana point per level of power. A 10th level Arcane Bolt consumes 10 points of mana.

In order to regain spent mana, the mage must rest and/or engage in rituals, sacrifices, etc. It requires one hour to regain 2 mana points. A minimum of 2 hours is required, since the proper state of mind is not easily slipped into. (ie, deep sleep, not cat napping).

Ordinarily, once a mage's mana has reached 0, they will rest before casting more spells. However, if required, the mage can attempt to go beyond their limits: this is negative mana. A mage may consume negative mana up to 1/2 their permanent mana score (rounded down). Eg. a mage with 10 permanent mana points may use up to -5 negative mana points, a mage with 15 permanent mana points may use up to -7 negative mana points, etc. Each time the mage tries to use any amount of negative mana, the player must state how much mana is requested and roll a WIL roll on the Action Table, using the current amount of negative mana used as a penalty. The roll must be a complete success or a critical success to work. A partial success causes the attempt to generate more mana to fail, but no mana is lost. A failure causes the attempt to fail, and the caster to lose the amount of mana requested. A Mishap causes the attempt to fail and the caster to lose double the amount of mana requested. If this loss puts the caster below the negative mana limit, see the section on Critical Negative Mana below.

## Summary

Permanent Mana = BMR x 2

Spells cost 1 mana point / lvl

Mana regeneration = 2 points / hour of rest/ritual. (min 2 hours required)

Negative mana limit = 0 - (1/2 permanent mana)

Spell casting below 0 mana, up to negative mana limit requires WIL roll

Spell casting below negative mana limit requires WIL roll to avoid injury

## Example

Schmoon the Magnificent has a BMR of 12; his permanent mana score is 24, his negative mana limit is -12. Through the course of his adventure with the escaped cacodaemon, he finds himself at 0 mana. Suddenly, the daemon appears. In fear, Schmoon dips into his negative mana pool to cast a 10th level spell of protection. Before the spell can be cast, he prays to the elder gods to bless him with 10 points of mana and makes his WIL roll: his WIL is -1 and he has used no negative mana yet, so the roll is at -1. He rolls a  $14-1 = 13$ . A success. Power floods into him. He can now cast the spell as usual. (Note: all we are talking about here is power, not the success or failure of the spell itself. Nothing changes there).

## Critical Negative Mana

Consuming mana beyond the negative mana limit is very dangerous. Anytime a mage attempts to draw on mana below their negative mana limit, they risk injury or even death if they fail on their WIL roll. A failure on this roll when requesting mana below the negative mana limit causes the caster to take an amount of damage equal to requested amount. A mishap doubles this damage. A partial success halves it.

## Example

Schmoon is now battling for his corpulent life. He is at -10 mana, only 2 points away from his negative mana limit of -12. In desperation, he beseeches Yog Sothoth for more power: 10 points for a spell of banishment. He makes his WIL roll at -11 (-10 mana + -1 WIL); he rolls a  $16-11=5$ . Failure! His bloated, debauched body is racked with spasms of pain as 8 points of damage are done to him in backlash for his impudence. (8 HP because he requested 10 points, 8 of which were beyond his negative limit of 12). He also loses the 10 mana points he requested, bringing him to -20 mana points. Stunned from his failure, he is fair game for the ravenous daemon.

## Recovering negative mana

Recovering negative mana is twice as time consuming as recovering regular mana. I.E. it requires 1 hour of rest to recover 1 point of negative mana. Again, a minimum rest period of 2 hours is required before recovery begins (though the caster gets the benefit of those 2 hours.)

## Example

Schmoon miraculously survives his little soiree with the vengeful daemon. He drags his sorry carcass back to his home to rest. He needs to recover: at least 8 hit points 20 negative mana points 24 regular mana points. The 20 negative mana points will require 20 hours of rest. The 24 regular mana points will require 12 hours of rest. The 8 hit points require the usual couple of days (simultaneous with mana recovery?) In a week or so, Schmoon emerges, chastened and wiser, if the worse for wear.

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## Talislantan Poetry

by John Harper

These poems and arelles are by Tze, a contemporary Mandalan poet. They have been translated by Jaram, a Xambrian scholar (unless otherwise noted).

### On seeing a friend at the Sunra gate

Your smile  
and embrace were warm.  
You did not mention  
my new scars.  
-- Tze

The wind knows no country.  
The sky holds no borders.  
The air moves where it will.

The storm bows to no emperor. The rain falls where it likes.  
The wise man is like a mirror  
facing the heavens.

-- Tze

### Translation of the above poem by the Zandir poet, Zahn:

The glass of my heart  
reflects the wanderings  
of the clouds.

The first translation is more literal, but Zahn contends it is his version that captures the poem's spirit. We will leave the reader to decide for him or herself.

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## Talislantan Curses

by John Harper

Here are a few curses that set the mood for some of Talislanta's darker cultures...

### - Curse ritual of the Dhuna -

Circle of fire to bind him,  
Four points of light to steal his spirit,  
Ash to choke his vision,

Staff to punish him,  
Mask to hide him from his own,  
Circle of blood to damn him.

**- Sarista curse to cause suffering -**

Cry in the night and claw at your eyes.  
Lie on burning coals and sweat blood.  
Make your home in caves and feast on rock.  
Speak only foolish words and close your ears.  
Wander from love and embrace evil.  
Suffer all your days, mine enemy.

**- Death Cant of the Necromancers -**

My eyes see boiling lead.  
My hands dig my grave.  
My feet seek the roads of punishment.  
My heart beats the funeral drum.  
My way lies in blackness.  
My soul is undone.  
My life is undone.

[Note: the above cant is usually performed just before the priest commits the sacrifice of his own life to oblivion; if it is to be used as a curse, replace 'my' with 'your']

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-- Jai Kel

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**Editor's note:**

Due to the unintentional link between the name of the 'Quaranians', an evil race of necromancers in Talislanta, and the 'Quaran' or Koran, the sacred text of Islam, the Quaranians will be renamed the Torquarans in the fourth edition of Talislanta (*Black Moon Rising*). Steve Sechi provides the following background on the name:

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Date: Tue, 12 Jul 94 10:28:04 -0700  
From: SteveSechi@aol.com  
Subject: Re: Another Note on Muses

Hey Rob -

By the way, I decided to take your advice re: the potentially derogatory connotations of the Arabic-sounding "Quaranians". Here's my new take on this:

The Quaranians as a people were not all evil, any more than all Germans were evil when the Nazis were in power. The cult of Black Magicians who ruled Quaran during this period were the true source of evil in that land. Members of this dark cult were known as the Torquarans, and will be referred to as such from now on.

The similarity between the Torquarans and the Torquar of Rajanistan is intentional, and has an historical basis. The Rajan Torquar of the New Age derived their name from the ancient Torquarans, from whom they claim descent.

Whatcha think?

SMS