

# TALISLANTA



A Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta

TALISLANTA  
FANTASY ROLE PLAYING GAME  
Fifth Edition

# A Gamemaster's Guide to Talislanta

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# RUNNING TALISLANTA



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 rule book 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.

## WHEN 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 Quan 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."

## PLANNING YOUR TALISLANTA CAMPAIGN

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.

- ✿ **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.

## 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

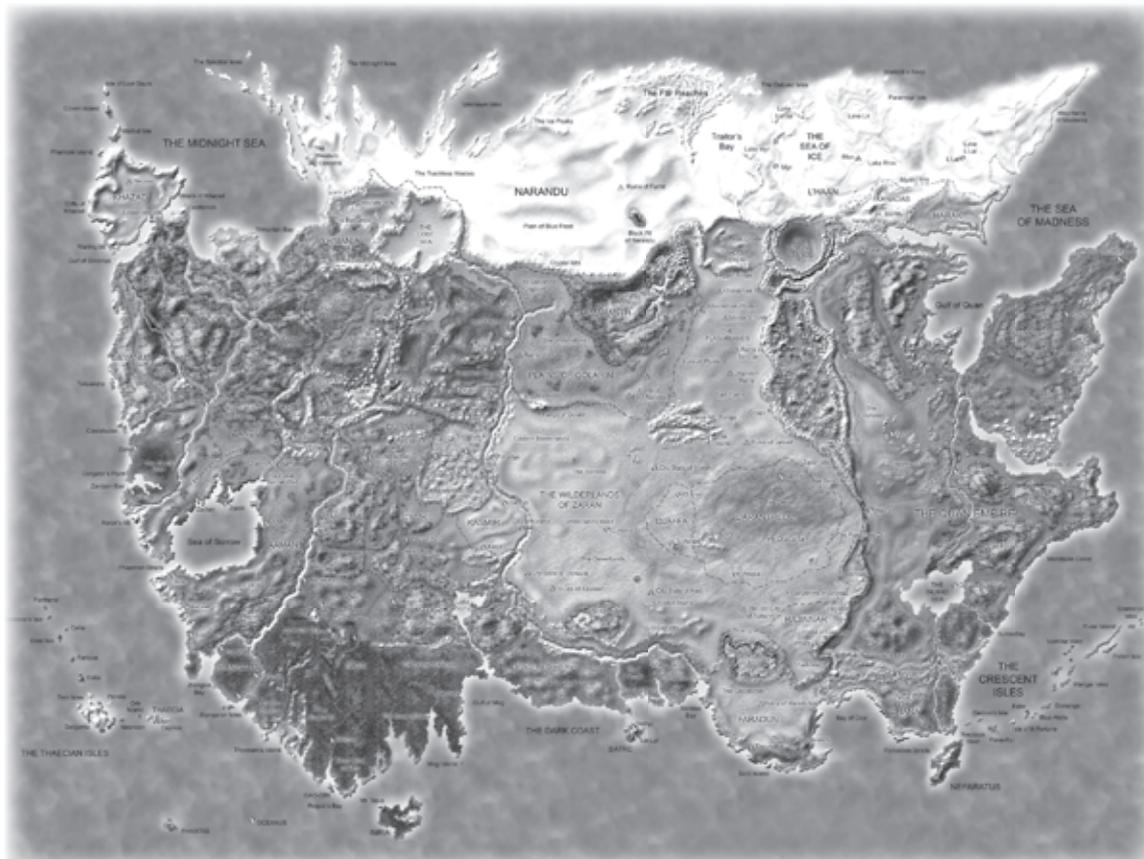
from across the continent. This is a good starting place for players and GMs who are new to Talislanta, and also a good setting for Heroic Fantasy campaigns.

## 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 a good starting place for local-scale or epic-scale campaigns based on intrigue and subterfuge.

## THE EASTERN LANDS

Rugged territories dominated by the powerful Quan 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, Rajinnar. 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.

# TYPES OF TALISLANTAN CAMPAIGNS

When planning a Talislanta campaign, you should talk to the players in order to find out the kind of adventures that they like to play. Using the examples listed below as a general guideline, you and your players can decide on a basic type for your campaign.

## PICARESQUE

In a picaresque campaign, the PCs spend most of their time traveling from one place to another. There may be a central theme, such as a voyage or pilgrimage to a distant land, or the characters could just be wanderers at heart. In either case, characters in a picaresque campaign rarely have to go to great lengths to find adventure. Instead, adventures seem to find them as they proceed along their journey. Contacts and associates of similar habits could include Rahastran cartomancers, Sarista gypsies, Djaffir merchants

or bandits, troupes of Bodor musicians or Thiasian performers, thieves, brigands, and outcasts.

## EPIC SAGA

This type of campaign typically takes many adventures to develop, has a central theme, and may contain a number of subplots. Over the course of time, the player characters will come to play a part in an event of great importance—a Sub-Men uprising, perhaps, or a conflict between two rival governments, such as Carantheum and Rajinnar, or cults, such as the Aamanian Orthodoxists and the Paradoxists of Zandu. At first, contacts and associates are limited to individuals who may only be minor participants in the saga. As the story begins to develop, the PCs will gradually find themselves drawn into the center of the action as they encounter individuals of increasing power and influence.

## SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE

In this type of campaign the characters are mercenaries, selling their services to the highest bidder. They may have certain principles, alliances, or beliefs, or they may not; that's up to the player characters to decide. Any major city or even a remote location like Deadwood can serve as their base of operations. Even the most unscrupulous mercenaries can blend in here as long as they keep a relatively low profile. Contacts and associates will usually include other mercenary warriors such as Thralls and Danuvians, along with individuals who seek to hire the PCs for their own purposes.

## EXPLORERS OF THE UNKNOWN

In this type of campaign, the characters seek the thrill of discovery above all things—except perhaps the thrill of making a quick fortune in ancient arti-

facts and lost treasures. They will travel to the four corners of the world in their search to discover the lost secrets of past ages, usually returning to their home base to sell what they have found. Contacts and associates could include Sindaran collectors, Lyceum scholars, antiquarians, savants, cartographers, explorers, Yitek tomb robbers, and so forth.

## MERCANTILE

In a mercantile campaign, the characters' primary focus is on making money by selling and trading wares of various sorts. They purchase trade goods at discounted prices and transport them to markets across the continent via wagon, caravan, or windship. Contacts and associates could include Kasmiran moneylenders, Farad procurers, Ispasian mercantilists, Djaffir merchants, Orgovian traders, and similar folk.

# TO THE VICTOR GO THE SPOILS

Adventuring is a dangerous business, something a character does not adopt as a way of life without hope for some kind of reward. Be sure to give your players some kind of tangible rewards for their efforts. While not all rewards are appropriate for all characters or for all adventures, the following list can give you a few helpful suggestions.

## PAY

When hired for a job, the characters can expect to be paid in coin or easily marketable goods. Dangerous missions may entail pay of approximately 1,000 g.l. per character for a relatively inexperienced party up to 5,000 g.l. per character for a more skilled group. As characters gain experience they should probably have enough power and clout to make and follow their own agendas rather than working for pay. Pay can sometimes come in the form of equipment, supplies, or other considerations.

## LOOT

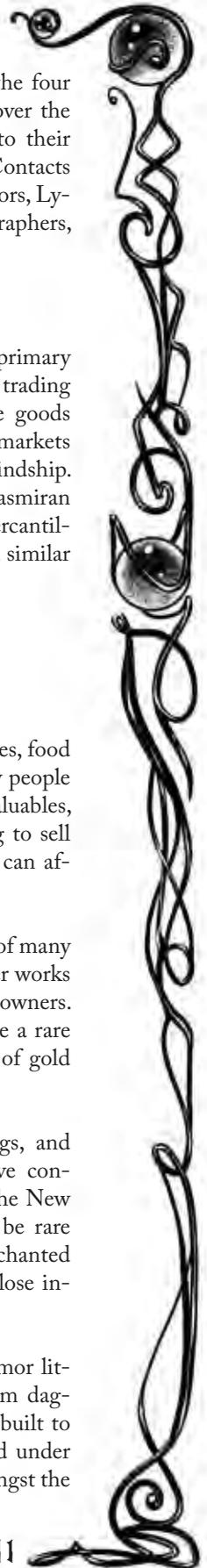
No one calls it robbing when characters take the wealth amassed by slain enemies—no one, that is, except friends and allies of the slain. Rather than presenting rewards as coin, it is sometimes more colorful to let the PCs find valuables or trade goods

such as bolts of silk, gemstones, gold statuettes, food and drink, or jewelry. Don't forget that many people find ways to hide, disguise, or protect their valuables, and the Kasmirans have always been willing to sell their intricate locks and traps to those who can afford them.

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.

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.

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.

## ALCHEMICAL INGREDIENTS

Araq blood, dragon fangs, and other bits and pieces of dangerous creatures have magical or alchemical value and can be sold in lands where enchantment and alchemy are known. Note that the prices in the Equipment chapter are for buying these ingredients. When selling them, the characters can get approximately 50–60% of the list price. And if they glut the market by bringing in gallons of Araq blood, the price will drop even further. Some of it might not even be salable, due to spoilage or other factors.

## MAGIC

In addition to the magic items described in the Enchanted Items chapter, the characters may, on rare occasions, discover an ancient artifact that breaks the rules. Archaen magic was more advanced than the current magic systems, and it is widely believed that the Archaens produced artifacts whose powers could not be reproduced in the New Age. The characters may also find magical knowledge, such as scrolls and spellbooks, that would be quite valuable to magical characters.

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 sorcerer'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.

## TRAINING

Some employers may be able to provide free training for their employees. Usually this training comes after completion of a mission, but sometimes reputable characters may get training ahead of time, especially if they need to learn new skills to perform the mission safely, such as learning to swim before going on a sea adventure.

## PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT

Depending on your characters, they may have personal goals or goals related to their homelands. Zan-dir characters may want to weaken the Aamanian Orthodoxists, Dracartans will certainly want to fight the Rajans and Sub-Men, and any character may have a personal vendetta to satisfy. Be sure to give the characters some tangible reward in addition to these more abstract rewards.

## POWER

As characters advance in skill level, they may seek to amass power, which might be political, martial, magical, or mercantile in nature. Merchants may find ample reward simply in establishing themselves in good standing with important leaders or major suppliers, or in solidifying their control over a trade route.

## FAME

Being known for prowess, knowledge, or wealth has been the goal of more than one driven adventurer.

# 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.

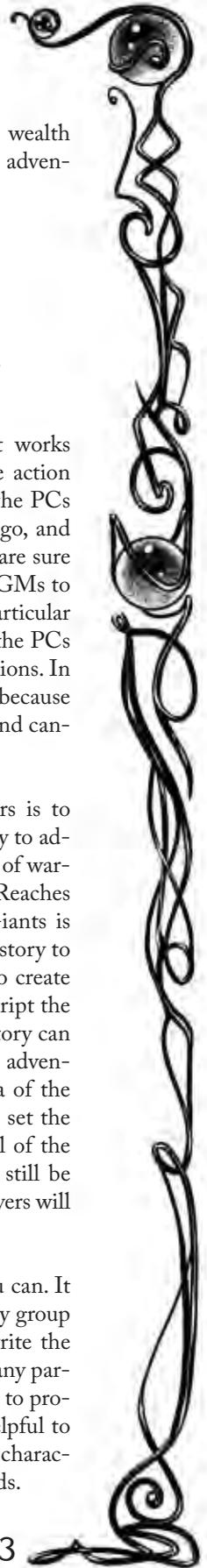
## DESIGNING ADVENTURES

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.



## 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.”*

*“Sergeant Miralul was probably a Vajra in 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 notwithstanding. 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 Jaspur 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,

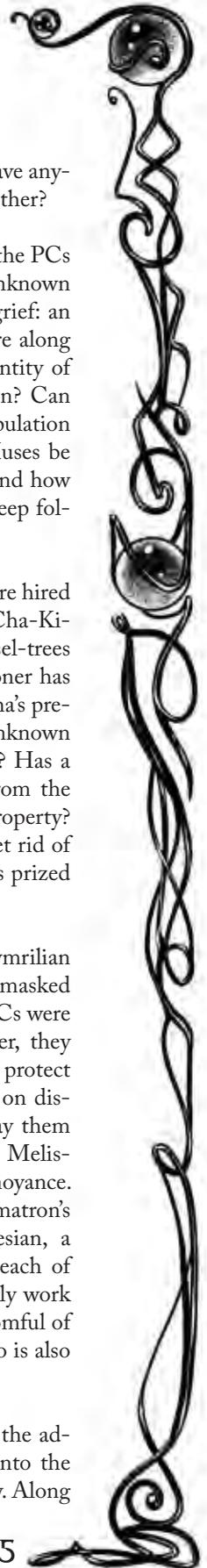
or was he kidnapped? Does the crafty Abis have anything to do with the disappearance of his brother?

4. While traveling in the vicinity of Astar the PCs receive a telepathic 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 telepathic 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 wisps 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, subterranooids, 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 undermanned, 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 equus 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 Revnant 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 wind-ship. 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 Quan 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 Quan 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 Quan 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 Quan?

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 vasp and raknid 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?

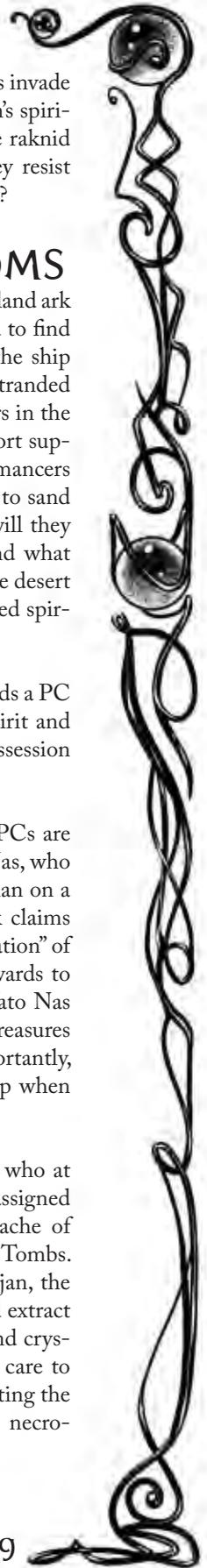
## THE DESERT KINGDOMS

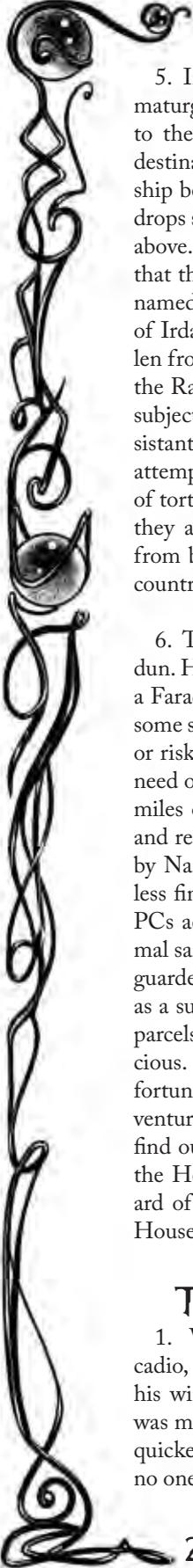
1. When the PCs booked passage aboard a land ark bound for the city of Dracarta, they expected to find adventure. But they probably didn't expect the ship to run aground during a sandstorm, or to be stranded with the rest of the ship's crew and passengers in the middle of the Red Desert. With water in 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 thau-maturge 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 straight-forward, 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, they 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.

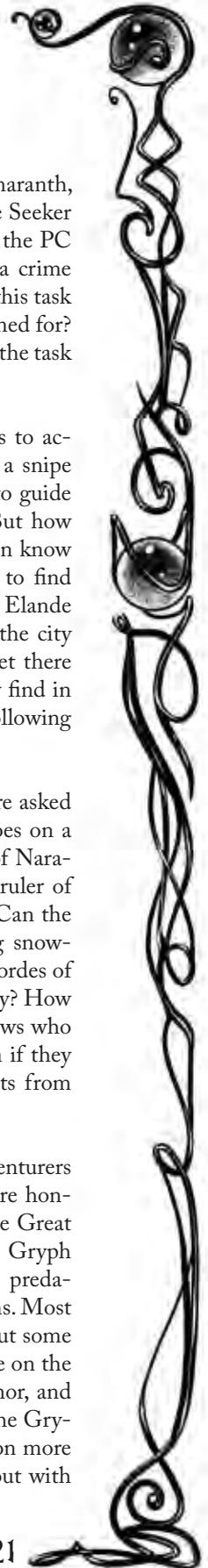
## THE NORTHERN REACHES

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 CALENDAR

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

- One day = 24 hours
- One week = 7 days
- One month = 7 weeks
- One year = 7 months

the months are named after the seven moons with each month corresponding to the time when its namesake is in the full phase. Days have no names but are always referred to by number such as the twelfth of Ardan or the thirty-seventh of Drome. Days with numbers divisible by seven (i.e. 7, 14, 21, 28, 35, 42 and 49) are called "high days". In many Talislantan religions, high days are considered sacred, a time for fasting, penance and sacrifice.

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 climates.

## 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, Talisandre and Zar, constitute the fall season. Temperatures are generally lower throughout the continent with increased chance of precipitation.

## 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 Hon-

orarium, 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

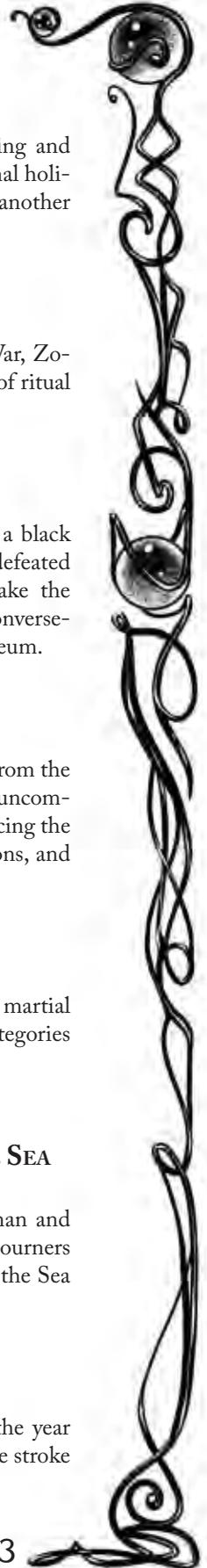
#### ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE SEA OF SORROW

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 LHaan, 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 Rajinnar. 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 Thaeccia. 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 Thaeccian 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 Rajinnar, 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.

## 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.

## 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.

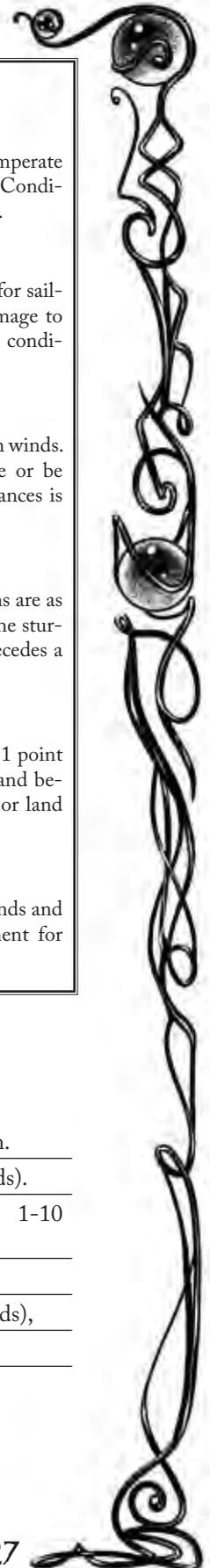
## ABERRANT

(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.





## WIND & OCEAN CURRENTS

In the wake of The Great Disaster, an enormous, spiraling storm of aberrant magical energy formed in the Talislantan atmosphere. Now, hundreds of years later, this storm continues to profoundly affect Talislantan weather, though most of the Talislantan population is completely oblivious to the atmospheric drama taking place above their heads.

This colossal magical hurricane, called the Nexa by those aeromancers who have theorized of its existence, is the dominant influence on the wind currents around the Talislantan continent. As it spirals overhead it causes the air to spiral with it, which affects wind currents down near the continent to some degree. This is particularly evident in the west-to-east winds along the southern edge of the continent, and the east-to-west winds along the northern edge.

Perhaps also as a result of the Nexa, it is not un-

common for a strange wind to appear out of nowhere, blowing in a direction that is not typical for that area. Sometimes these winds create strange magical effects; other times they simply bring rain to an area that used to be great for parades.

The extreme heat in the Wilderlands area also asserts a minor influence on Talislantan winds. As the air from this area warms and rises, air flows in from the south to take its place, causing inward wind patterns at low elevations. As the air rises over the center of the continent it pushes the air that was already there laterally, thereby causing wind currents that blow outward from the continental center at higher elevations.

At extremely high elevations there are occasional jet streams that do not appear to have any discernable pattern. These incredibly fast winds will rip a windship to shreds so fast that most captains will not take their ships more than about 20,000 feet into the air for fear of encountering one of these fierce gales.

Some say that these jet streams are actually the manifestations of some strange wind demon about whom little is known.

Many of the major wind currents on Talislanta are named after ancient aeromancers of generations long gone, while others are named after the windship captains who charted them. In addition there are numerous secondary wind currents.

Naturally wind can exist anywhere, but near a prevailing or secondary wind current the wind is more predictable. To discover current wind conditions, first roll for wind speed and then, if there is a wind at all, roll for direction.

To check for wind speed in a specific location, roll a d20 on the Wind Speed Chart. If at or near a secondary wind add 2 to your roll, or if at or near a prevailing wind add 4 to your roll. A hurricane result should only apply if the roll was a 20 before modifications, or if the location and season would indicate a tendency toward hurricane weather; otherwise treat a 20 result as a 19.

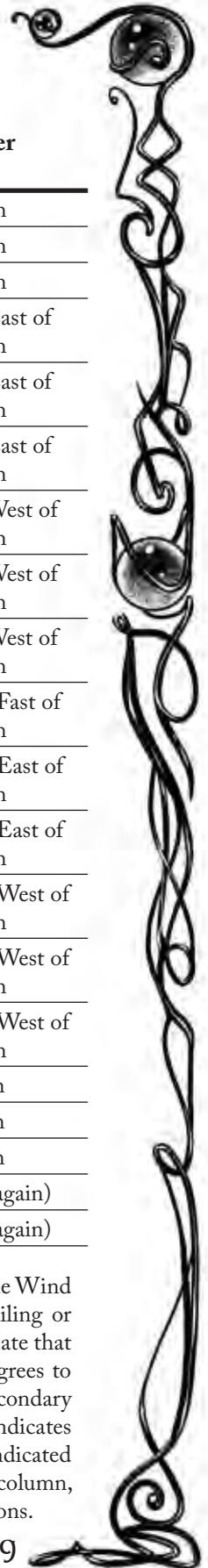
## WIND SPEED CHART

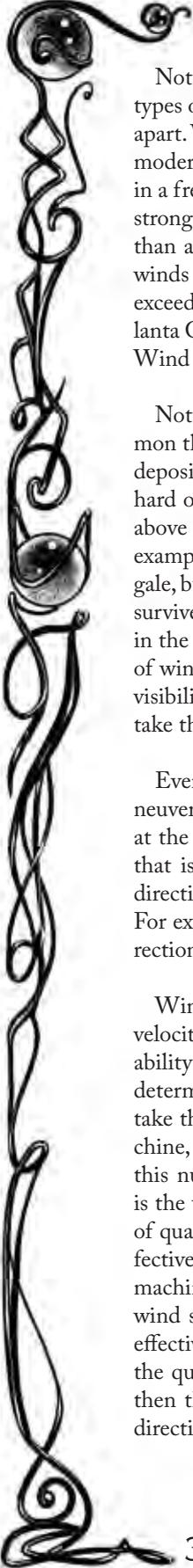
Roll	Wind type	MPH
1-5	Calm	less than 1
6-7	Light Air	1-3
8-9	Light Breeze	4-7
10-11	Gentle Breeze	8-12
12	Moderate Breeze	20-28 13-18
13	Fresh Breeze	19-24
14	Strong Breeze	25-31
15	Moderate Gale	32-38
16	Fresh Gale	39-46
17	Strong Gale	47-54
18	Whole Gale	55-63
19	Storm	64-73
20	Hurricane	74 & above

## WIND DIRECTION CHART

Roll	Prevailing Wind	Secondary Wind	Other
1	Straight	Straight	North
2	Straight	Straight	North
3	Straight	Straight	North
4	Straight	Straight	60° East of North
5	Straight	Straight	60° East of North
6	Straight	Straight	60° East of North
7	Straight	60° Left	60° West of North
8	Straight	60° Left	60° West of North
9	Straight	60° Left	60° West of North
10	60° Left	60° Left	120° East of North
11	60° Left	60° Right	120° East of North
12	60° Left	60° Right	120° East of North
13	60° Right	60° Right	120° West of North
14	60° Right	60° Right	120° West of North
15	60° Right	120° Left	120° West of North
16	120° Left	120° Left	South
17	120° Left	120° Right	South
18	120° Right	120° Right	South
19	120° Right	Opposite	(roll again)
20	Opposite	Opposite	(roll again)

To check for wind direction roll a d20 on the Wind Direction Chart. For areas at or near prevailing or secondary winds, the results of the table indicate that the wind is blowing a certain number of degrees to the left or right of what that prevailing or secondary wind would normally indicate; "Straight" indicates that the wind is blowing in the direction indicated on the map. For other areas, use the "Other" column, in which the results indicate standard directions.





Note that windships can only operate in certain types of wind. Wind that is too violent will rip a ship apart. With a good crew a windrigger can survive in a moderate gale, a windskiff or a windship can survive in a fresh gale, and a windship of war can survive in a strong gale. But none of these ships will survive more than a few minutes in anything stronger than those winds indicated. A windship's sailing speed cannot exceed either the printed speeds listed in the Talislanta Guidebook™ or the wind speed rolled on the Wind Speed Chart.

Note also that fierce sand and dust storms are common throughout the Wilderlands, and the black iron deposits on the ground near Harak make it extremely hard on windships as well. The survival speeds listed above are reduced by one category in these areas. For example, a windskiff can normally survive in a fresh gale, but in the Wilderlands or in Harak it could only survive in a moderate gale. The continual ash clouds in the air around the Volcanic Hills make the sailing of windships there extremely hazardous due to poor visibility. Reputable windship captains will refuse to take their ships into this area.

Even without a wind machine, windships can maneuver quite well. A windship can sail with the wind at the full allowable speed, or can sail in a direction that is up to 60 degrees left or right of the wind's direction with a loss of speed equal to 1% per degree. For example, sailing 60 degrees left of the wind's direction would result in a 60% loss of speed.

Wind machines can alter both the effective wind velocity and the direction of the actual wind. Their ability to do so, however, depends on their quality. To determine the quality of a given ship's wind machine, take the standard gold lumen value of the wind machine, which represents its overall quality, and divide this number by one thousand, rounding down; this is the wind machine's quality rating. For every point of quality rating, the wind machine can alter the effective wind speed up or down by 1 mph. If the wind machine is used in a very light wind to reduce the wind speed below zero, then the wind machine has effectively created a wind in the opposite direction. If the quality rating of the wind machine is at least 5, then the wind machine can alter the effective wind direction by up to 60 degrees in either direction.

For example, if a wind machine is valued at 7,000 gold lumens then its quality rating is 7. If the wind is blowing in an easterly direction at 17 mph, this wind machine could be used to make the effective wind speed anything from 10 mph to 24 mph, and could also cause the direction of the wind to blow anywhere from 30 degrees east of north to 30 degrees east of south.

## OCEAN CURRENTS

In Talislanta, ocean currents are not usually as strongly affected by tides as they are on earth. This is because the tides themselves are not usually very powerful. While the moons do have some effect on the tides, the effect of any one moon is not as intense as you might expect. Talislantan moons typically orbit in a pattern that causes their gravitational pulls to cancel each other out. There are occasions, however, when things get unbalanced enough that tidal action becomes quite crazy and totally unpredictable. Perhaps this explains why most Talislantans prefer to stay on land.

The Talislantan continent is the convergence point for two very powerful ocean currents. One of these currents comes at Talislanta from the southwest, while the other comes from the northeast. These ocean currents are caused primarily by the wind as it blows over the surface of the water. This movement can cause water to "pile up," thus creating differences in pressure that can cause an undercurrent in the opposite direction as far down as one kilometer.

The speed of an ocean current at a particular location can be determined by rolling on the Wind Speed Chart and subtracting 3 from the die roll. If near an ocean current, roll without any modification. Ocean current direction can be determined by rolling on the Wind Direction Chart, adding 5 to the roll if at or near an ocean current.

## GENERAL NOTE

An important thing to remember when rolling for wind and ocean currents is that as wind or water travels in some direction it pushes the wind or water that was there out of its way. This can result in other minor currents that flow in different directions; these currents might flow sideways, down and under, or up and over. These can create spirals of current that can help form whirlpools, tornadoes, or hurricanes.

## 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 oc-

cur, 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

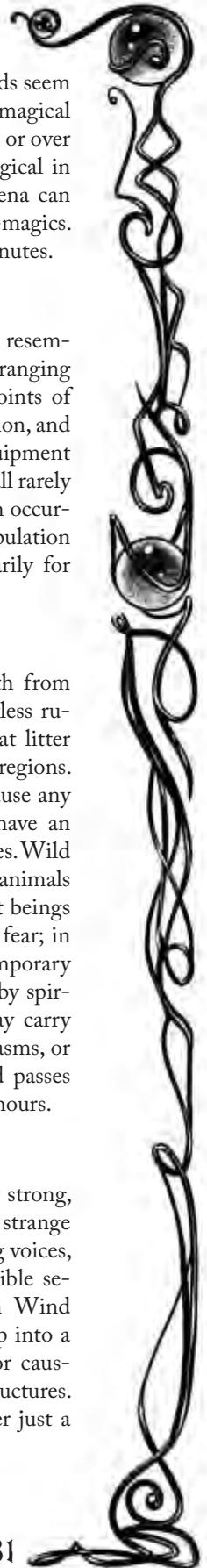
A dangerous type of frozen precipitation resembling a hail of dagger-sharp shards of ice, ranging up to a foot in length. Icicle rain does 2 points of damage per round to living creatures, vegetation, and all but the most durable sorts of objects, equipment and structures. The duration of an icicle rainfall 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 & 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. The level of a disease is the base penalty to the CON roll used to resist or recover from the disease. It is also used to negatively modify all Heal rolls when attempting to cure an affliction.

## **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.

## **SEWER ROT** **LEVEL: 15**

The Rot, as it is commonly known, is a fairly common affliction that plagues most urban centers. It is thought to be carried and transmitted by Urthrax, Rictus and other urban scavengers and is the bane of those who live in urban poverty. Symptoms include pale spots on the skin and eyes that turn into red, raised, blister-like nodules. Skin spots are insensitive to cold, touch, and pain; as the disease progresses, hands and feet lose feeling and eventually muscle weakness and paralysis sets in, usually in the extremities. Secondary infections of lesions or unnoticed wounds often become gangrenous and lead to further complications. In most cases, blindness occurs after several years. In time, the nose, fingers and toes decay and rot and the hands become clawed. Those infected suffer an eventual, lingering, inevitable death, sometimes taking years (-1 CON and -1 CHA per year of infection until death occurs at -5 CON)

## **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 thir-

teen 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.

## 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**

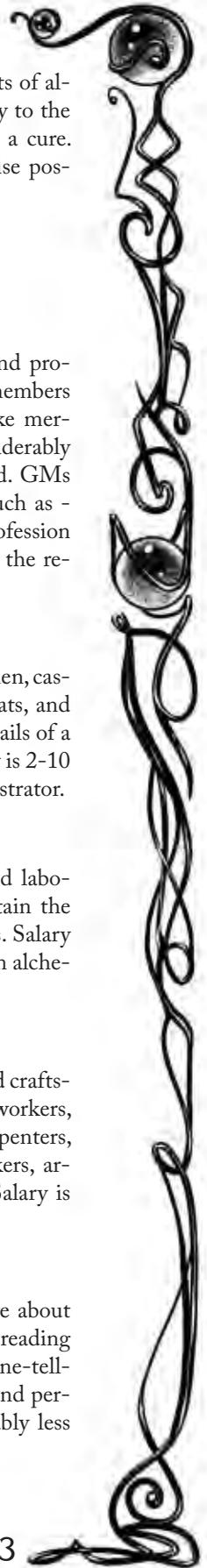
If an employer can provide a fully-stocked laboratory facility, he or she may be able to obtain the services of an alchemist on a long-term basis. Salary is 10 gold lumens per week per level. Sindaran alchemists invariably demand double pay.

### **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. Boatmen 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 of 10 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

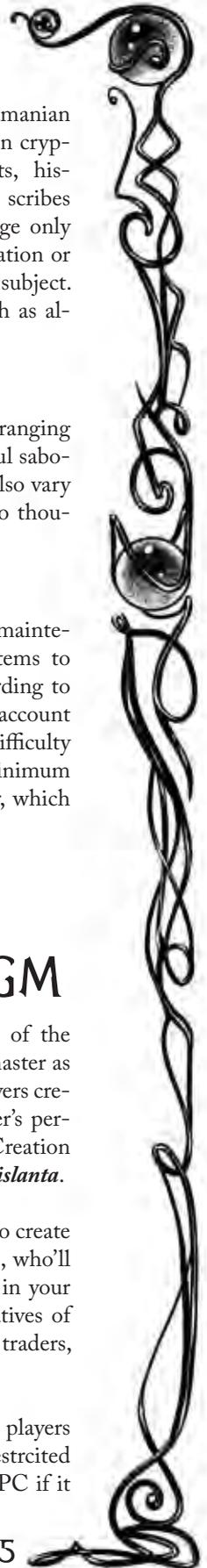
The Yassan are experts in the repair and maintenance of almost anything, from septic systems to windship levitationals. Their rates vary according to a complex set of specifications, taking into account the time, materials, and precise degree of difficulty entailed in the completion of the job. The minimum fee for any work is 5 gold lumens per hour, which includes a free estimate.

## 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 fully in the *Player’s Guide to Talislanta*.

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.

GMs should follow the same procedure as players when creating NPCs however, they are not restricted from injecting some unique traits into an NPC if it



serves a point in the campaign. For example, Sindaran's are not normally able to gain magic skills as PCs but as an NPC, the GM is perfectly allowed to create a magic-wielding Sindaran. This NPC would be incredibly unique but if it serves a purpose for the development of the campaign, so be it.

## 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.

### 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 NARUD

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 reinforcements 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

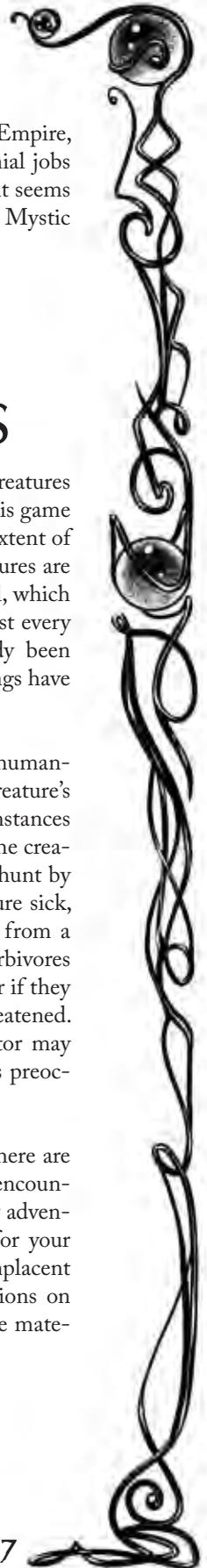
A Mandalan refugee who fled the Quan Empire, Zen-Jian has worked at a succession of menial jobs ever since. Slender and almost frail-looking, it seems strange that some believe she is secretly a Mystic Warrior. And yet, this may well be true.

# 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

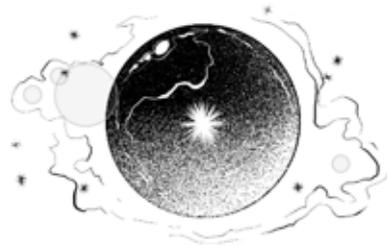
The creature or creatures in question are spotted from a distance; typically, between 100-600 feet. Sightings should occur far enough away that the observers can choose whether they will attempt to initiate contact with the encountered creature or not. Creatures spotted in their natural habitat will 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.



# MORE RACES



With the sheer number of races and ethnicities found on the continent of Talislanta, it is impossible to include them all in one book. While the races presented in the *Player's Guide to Talislanta* provide players with many options, there are over 50 more Talislantan races detailed here for your playing pleasure.

## A NOTE ON BALANCE

Many different roleplaying games go to great lengths to ensure a proper balance is maintained between characters of different types. Talislanta has never been one of those games.

The sheer number of playable races makes balancing them all impossible. Talislanta has always been about the setting and as such, matters of balance are largely ignored. The focus of Talislanta has been, and should be, about roleplaying. This means that certain character types might be less powerful than others in game terms, however this should have no bearing on the fun a player will have playing a lesser powered character. A lowly Greenman slave can be just as much fun to roleplay as a mighty Kharakhan Giant or Sauran warrior.

That said, a couple of races presented herein are particularly powerful and they are therefore recommended as GM characters only (see Black Savant and Malum).

## NEW TALISLANTAN RACES

Aramut ( <i>see Rajan</i> )	Harakin	Sauran
Araq	Imrian	Sawila
Azir	Ispasian	Shadinn ( <i>see Rajan</i> )
Bane	Kharakhan Giant	Snipe
Batread	Malum ( <i>recommended NPC</i> )	Stryx
Beastman	Mangar	Sun-Ra-San
Black Savant ( <i>recommended NPC</i> )	Manra	Thaecian
Bodor	Mogroth	Thiasian
Callidian	Monad	Ur
Castabulanese	Mondre Khan	Whisp
Chana	Moorg-Wan	Vajra
Chromid	Nagra	Verdir
Danelek	Na-Ku	Vird ( <i>see Rajan</i> )
Darkling	Oceanian	Yassan
Druhk	Parthenian	Yitek
Equus	Quan	Yrmanian
Farad	Rahastran	Za
Gnorl	Rajan	Zagir ( <i>see Rajan</i> )
Greenman	Rasmirin	
Hadjin	Satada	

## ARAQ

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.

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.

Araq roam the Wilderlands of Zaran 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.

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.

### RELATIONS

Araq mark all other creatures as hated foes. They have no relations with other peoples, and are widely despised by most Talislantans.

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



## ARAQ CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'-6'6", 130-230 lbs. Scaly, light brown hide, dorsal membrane from forehead to base of neck, serpent-like features.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -2	PER +1	WIL -1
CHA -3	STR +1	DEX +1
CON +7	SPD +0	
CR +2	RC +2	MR -3

**Hit Points:** 24

**Skills:** Culture (Araq) +5, Language (Sauran - native), Language (Low Talislan - native), Ride (duadir) +1, Survival (wilderlands) +2.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Fast, Rage, Thick Hide

**Open Paths:** Gladiator, Hunter, Hussar (duadir), Tribal, Warrior

**Starting Equipment:** Arm wrappings, boots, loincloth, and shield of land dragon hide; saw-edged dagger, spear of dragon bone; shoulder pouch.

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.

## 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.

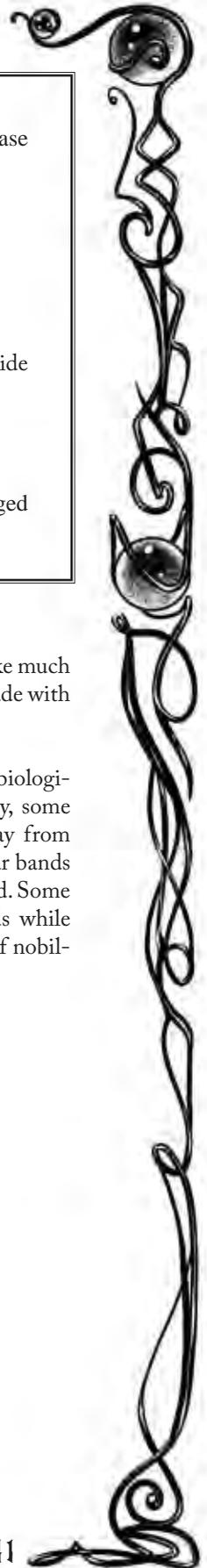
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

Although the magically bred Araq are biologically very similar to one another even today, some mutations do occur. Araq encountered away from the Wilderlands of Zaran and apart from war bands will likely be "defective" examples of their kind. Some may have been driven from their war bands while others are self-exiles, having recessive traits of nobility that their kin lack.



# 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.

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.

Azir live in large dome-shaped huts of woven grass. Each dwelling provides shelter for an extended fam-

ily. 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 Talislandans. 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.

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.

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.

Azir wear colorful wooden masks as an indicator of mood and emotion. Several different types of masks are



## AZIR CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'4"-6'2", 100-170 lbs. Dark skin, hair, and eyes. Robust build. Wear wooden masks reflecting their moods.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +1	WIL +2
CHA -1	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +2	SPD +0	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Azir) +5, Language (Elder Tongue - native), Doctrines (Azir Religion) +2, Swim +1.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** None

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Artist, Chieftain, Healer, Herbalist, Musician, Talismaner, Tribal.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth, anklet and bracelets of woven plant fibres; elaborate mask of carved wood.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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. The Azir have no rituals for the seven moons, and only recognize one of the twin suns. When questioned on the subject, the Azir merely state 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".

## LANGUAGE

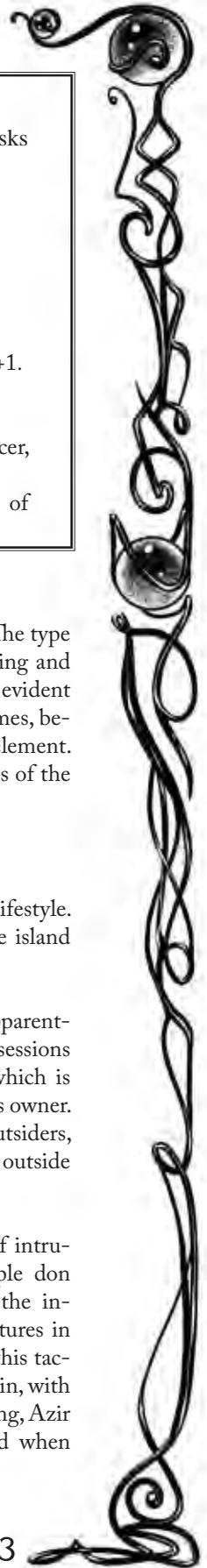
Azir speak a version of the Elder Tongue. The type of mask worn is said to add a layer of meaning and emotion to their speech that is not always evident to non-Azir. Azir names combine proper names, beginning with the prefix "Az", with a natural element. For example: Azia of the Blue Blossoms, Azis of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

## ADVENTURERS

Azir very rarely take up an adventuring lifestyle. Those encountered any place but their home island are invariably slaves or escaped slaves.

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.

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. Swift and cunning, Azir are almost impossible to catch or even find when they do not wish to be seen.



## BANE

Sleek, muscular and strangely attractive, the Banes of Werewood have coal-black skin, wild and tangled black hair, and eyes like burning embers, a disconcerting sight when viewed at night. They are vampiric predators armed with a pair of long sharp ivory fangs and rending claws. Both genders wear loincloths, as well as armbands that serve both decorative and symbolic functions.

Thought to be a bizarre and sinister Archaen-created hybrid of Darkling, night demon, the now-extinct babbling howler, and perhaps even Ariane, Banes are feared and little understood. Although speculation

still continues as to the exact components of their biological ancestry, many scholars have agreed with the postulation that Banes are neomorphs created to serve as assassins, a task to which they are extremely well-suited, both in terms of prowess and psychology.

Predominantly solitary in nature, Banes lair in caves and old ruins during the hours of daylight. However, contrary to the questionable theories of several naturalists, Banes are not solitary because they cannot abide each other's feeding habits or because of any inclination to prey upon each other.

Rather, Banes are solitary because they need large territories to support themselves, and more Banes means more competition for food. Despite this, Banes have been known to operate in small groups in the handful of areas in Werewood where prey is plentiful, much to the consternation of those unfortunate enough to encounter such "packs."

Banes rely primarily on cunning while hunting and make intelligent use of their uncanny mimicry skills to lure, unnerve, and misdirect their prey. They seldom stand and fight, preferring to use any advantage they can.

When a female Bane is in season, she fills the night air with a low, hissing cry, repeating it until any nearby males arrive. Should more than one male approach, they will often initiate a vicious brawl, with only the winner being permitted to approach the female. After mating has occurred, the male invariably returns to his own territory, leaving the female to rear the children.

Bane children are born with fangs, but they are provided for by the mother until they are mature enough to hunt for themselves.



## BANE CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'10"-6'6", 130-220 lbs. Sleek and muscular physique, coal-black skin, wild black hair, eyes that glow like burning embers.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +1	PER +3	WIL -2
CHA -1	STR +2	DEX +2
CON +1	SPD +1	
CR +1	RC +0	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Brawling +3, Culture (Bane) +5, Culture (ex-master's) +2, Language (Bane - native), Language (ex-master's - basic), Mimicry +10.

**Special Abilities:** Immune to all visual spells of the illusion mode.

**Quirks:** Attractive, Declawed/Defanged, Destitute, Night Vision

**Open Paths:** Assassin, Courtesan, Hunter, Spy, Tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth; rough concealing hood and cloak; carved bone armbands and jewelry.

Despite their reputation as baleful monsters, Banes are keenly intelligent and self-aware, possessed of their own culture, as alien as it seems to outsiders. Although they are largely nocturnal in habit, they do not spend all of the daylight hours asleep.

## RELATIONS

The only sentient individuals the Banes encounter with any great regularity are the Dhuna, whom they fear. Beyond this, those few others they meet seldom have the welfare of the Banes in their interests. As a result, Banes regard outsiders as predators and potential threats. Those Banes taken as slaves or gladiators have demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt to their new situations, as one would expect from such intelligent beings. Despite this, they still despise being held captive and strive to escape at every opportunity.

## RELIGION

Despite possessing no magical lore, Banes have, on rare occasions, displayed the somewhat unnerving capability of mimicking a magician's spellcasting perfectly, casting the exact same spell themselves. Talislantan magicians are at a loss to explain this peculiar ability, which they consider theoretically impossible. Banes consider death part of the natural cycle and a necessity in ensuring the continuation of life.

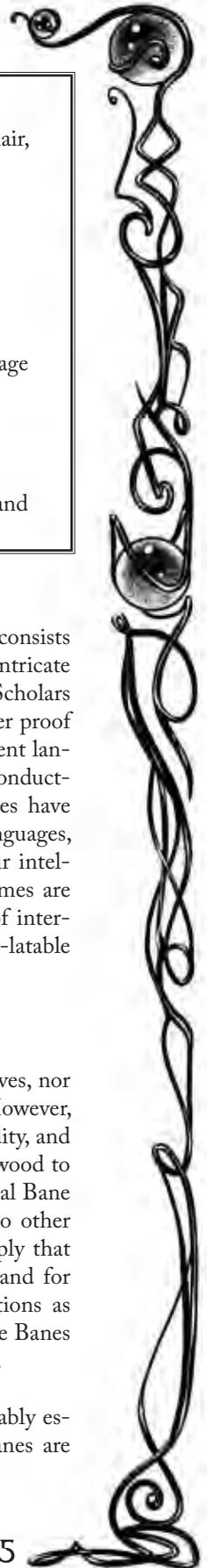
## LANGUAGE

All Banes speak their own language, which consists of a combination of low sibilant hisses and intricate hand and facial gestures that resemble Sign. Scholars have pointed to this variant of Sign as further proof that Banes were created as assassins, for a silent language would certainly be beneficial when conducting such a stealthy enterprise. Captive Banes have a remarkable aptitude for learning other languages, although this is hardly surprising given their intellect and their powers of mimicry. Bane names are expressed as short but complicated series of interlocking hand gestures, which have no translatable equivalent in any existing Talislantan tongue.

## ADVENTURERS

Banes do not trade goods among themselves, nor do they have a desire for goods or currency. However, they are themselves something of a commodity, and heavily armed slavers frequently enter Werewood to capture female Banes for sale as slaves. Several Bane body parts are also coveted by alchemists, so other enterprising individuals hunt Banes to supply that demand. There has been an increasing demand for exotic gladiators for the arenas of such nations as Hadj, and fight organizers have found captive Banes to be especially popular with their customers.

Banes found outside Werewood are invariably escaped slaves (always the case where PC Banes are concerned).



## BATREAN

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.

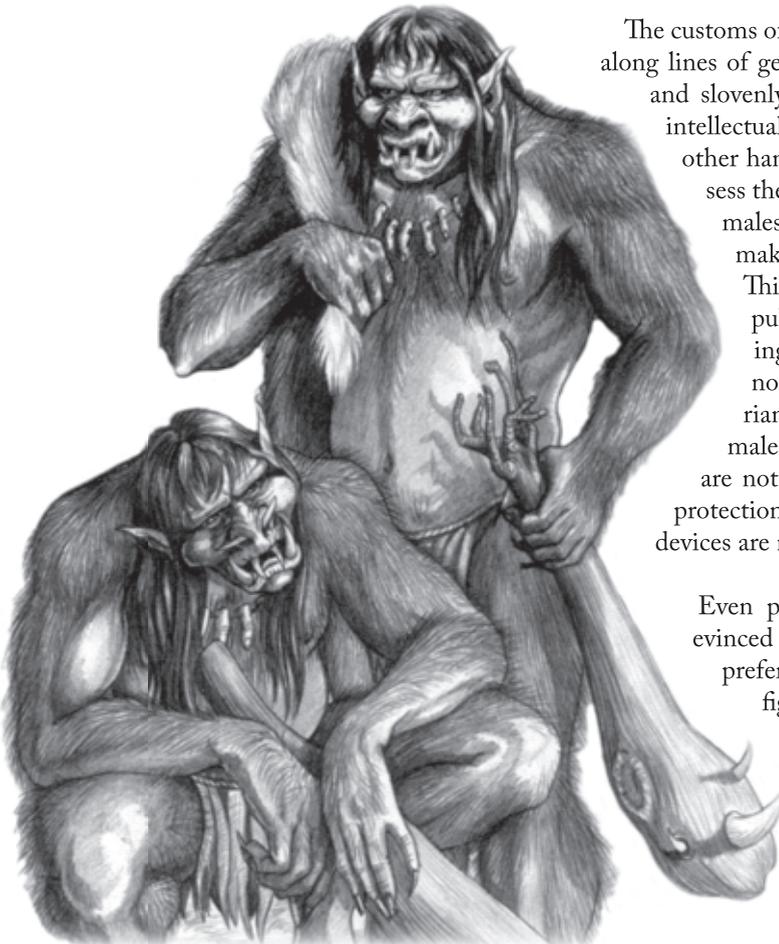
The Batreans are believed to be descended from survivors of The Great Disaster, who fled from the Lost Continent after it sank below the waves. If true, then Batreans may be related to the sea nomads of Oceanus.

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 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.

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).

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



## BATREAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** *Females:* 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. *Males:* 7'-8', 250-350+ lbs. Dingy yellow skin, matted green hair, sloping shoulders, muscular physique.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +2/-4	PER +0/-2	WIL +1/+0
CHA +4/-2	STR -2/+5	DEX +0/-3
CON +0/+0	SPD +0/-1	
CR +0/+2	RC +0/+2	MR +1/-4

*Females/Males*

**Hit Points:** Females 18; Males 30

**Skills:** Culture (Batrean) +5, Language (Chanan - native), Survival (jungle) +2. Females also have Language (Low Talislan - fluent)

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Tough (male only), Pheromones (female only).

**Open Paths:** *Females:* Apprentice Craftsman, Artist, Chieftain, Courtesan, Herbalist, Neophyte Magician (Natural Magic), Tribal. *Males:* Gladiator, Hunter, Tribal, Warrior

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth or translucent robe.

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.

## 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 Quan Empire, Arim, Hadj, and Zandu. Aside from this, Batre has no relations with the outside world.

## RELIGION

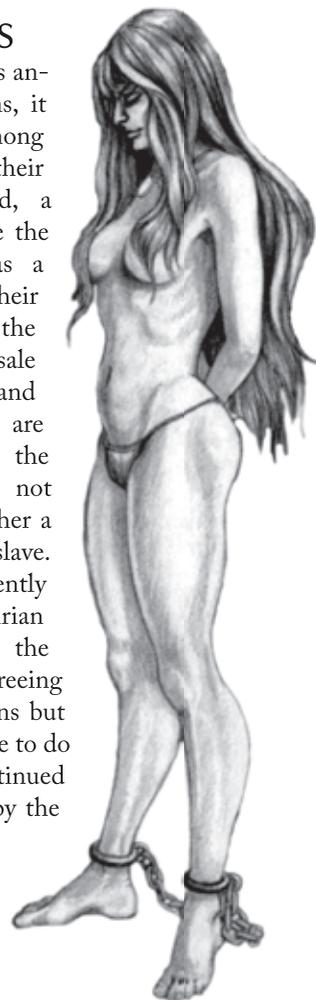
Batreans have no organized religion. The females are said to know something of magic, though the males are far too dense to comprehend such things. Batrean females adorn the bodies of their dead with garlands of flowers prior to burial, a custom that is still tolerated by the Imrians. Males had no such customs.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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. Any Batrean not found on Batre is either a slave or an escaped slave. The Gao have recently taken to raiding Imrian slave convoys with the express purpose of freeing the oppressed Batreans but thus far have been able to do little about the continued occupation of Batre by the Imrians.



## BLACK SAVANT

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.



## BLACK SAVANT NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'6"-6'10" tall; 160-200 lbs. Stoop-shouldered, gaunt, cold onyx eyes.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +4	PER +5	WIL +4
CHA -5	STR +0	DEX +0
CON -1	SPD -1	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +2

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Nefaratan) +5, Language (Sign - native), Language (Arhaean - fluent), Soul Binding +1.

**Special Abilities:** May see invisible and astral creatures. immune to aging. No need for food or water.

**Quirks:** Immune to Disease (all), Literate, Mute.

**Open Paths\*:** Enchanter, Magician, Neophyte Magician (necromancy), Savant.

**Starting Equipment:** Veiled headress, hooded cloak, robes, gloves and boots (all of black satin-like cloth), black adamant and silver bound spell book; black adamant stff, obsidian mirror, 1d20 demonic slaves

*\*All Black Savants begin with a minimum of 6 Paths and do not need to take a Background Path.*

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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.

## LANGUAGE

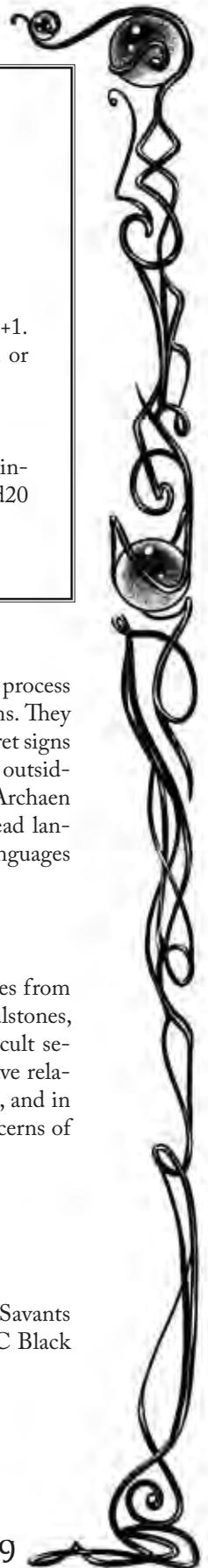
Black Savants are mute, a side-effect of the process that was used to preserve their physical forms. They converse in an ancient form of Sign, using secret signs when they do not wish to be understood by outsiders. Savants also read and write in the old Arhaean tongue. Some are said to be fluent in the dead languages of the Forgotten Age, as well as the languages of creatures who hail from the lower planes.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

## NOTE TO GAMEMASTERS

It is *strongly* recommended that the Black Savants be reserved as non-player characters only. PC Black Savants can quickly overwhelm a game.



# BEASTMAN

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.

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.

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.

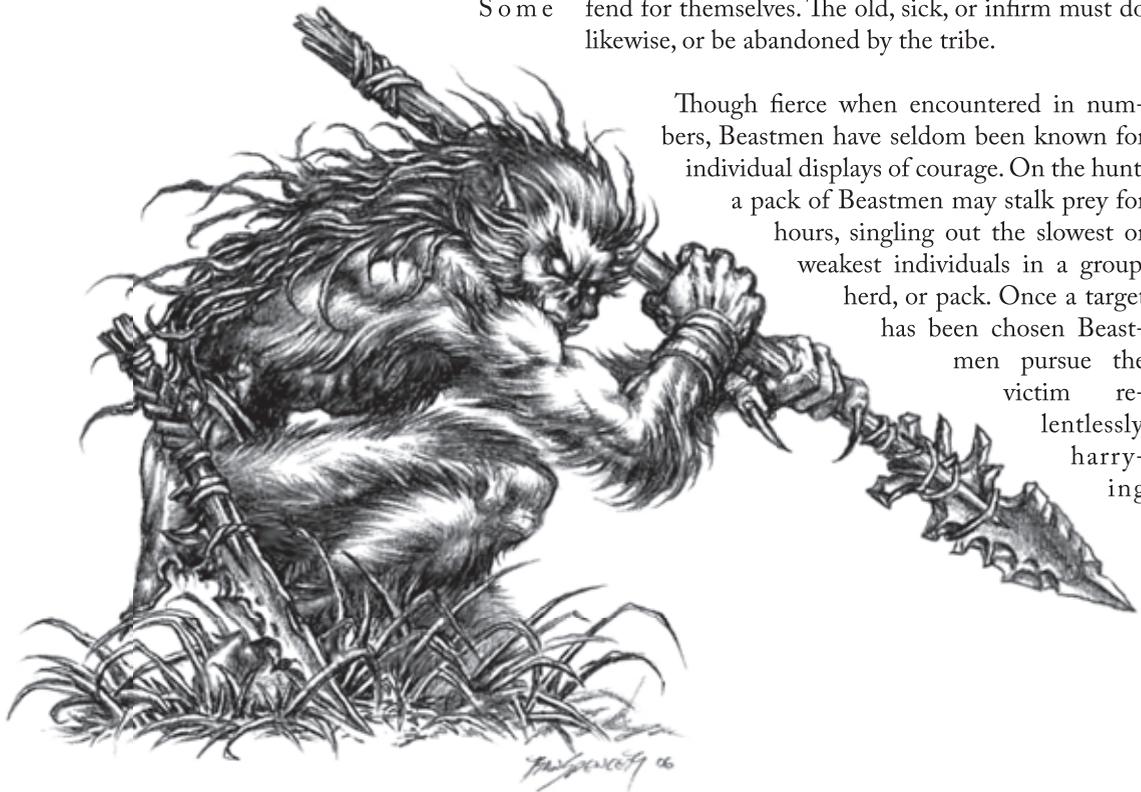
Some

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.

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, harr-  
ing



## BEASTMAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'10-6'2" Coarse brown fur, fangs, pointed ears, claws, bestial features.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -2	PER +3	WIL -2
CHA -2	STR +2	DEX +0
CON +2	SPD +1	
CR +2	RC +2	MR -3

**Hit Points:** 27

**Skills:** *Brawling* +2, *Culture (Beastman)* +5, *Language (Low Talislan - native)*, *Stealth* +1, *Survival (plains)* +2.

**Special Abilities:** Claws and bite each have DR 3

**Quirks:** Night Vision, Thick Skin

**Open Paths:** Archer, Chieftain, Hunter, Hussar (Blackmane), Tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Animal-hide boots and loincloth

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).

The leader of any Beastman pack will always be its most dominant male member. Among the Beastfolk, 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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

Beastmen rarely leave their packs though some few are struck with a wander lust that will see them leave the Plains of Golarin to explore the world. Still others are driven from their packs for various reasons and are forced to survive on their own.



## BODOR

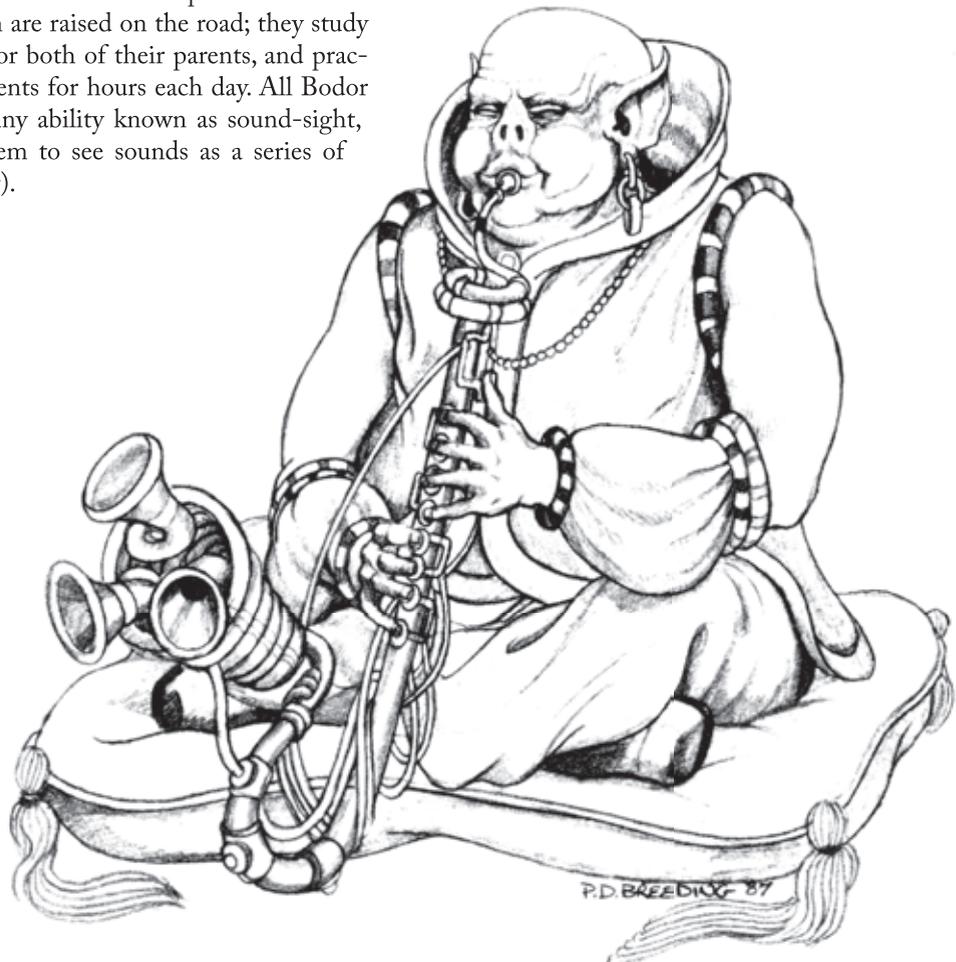
An amber-skinned people, the Bodor are short, round faced, and somewhat portly of build. Their choice of costume is eccentric, and consists of a loose-fitting smock, blousey pantaloons, chain-loop earrings and bracelets of lacquered metal.

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.

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. 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).

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.

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.



## BODOR CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'-5'6", 180-240+ lbs. Amber skin, round-faced, portly build, large pointed ears.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +1	PER +3	WIL +0
CHA +2	STR -1	DEX +2
CON +0	SPD -1	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Bodor) +5, Language (Bodorian - native), Language (Low Talislan - fluent), Language (High Talislan - fluent), Language (Thaecian - fluent), Music +3.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Sound Sight

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman (musical instruments), Gambler, Master Craftsman (musical instruments), Musician, Peddler, Wandering.

**Starting Equipment:** Loose smock; blousey pantaloons; chain-loop earrings and bracelets of lacquered metal; musical instrument of choice; traveler's satchel; instrument repair kit.

## RELATIONS

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 Quan Empire.

## 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.

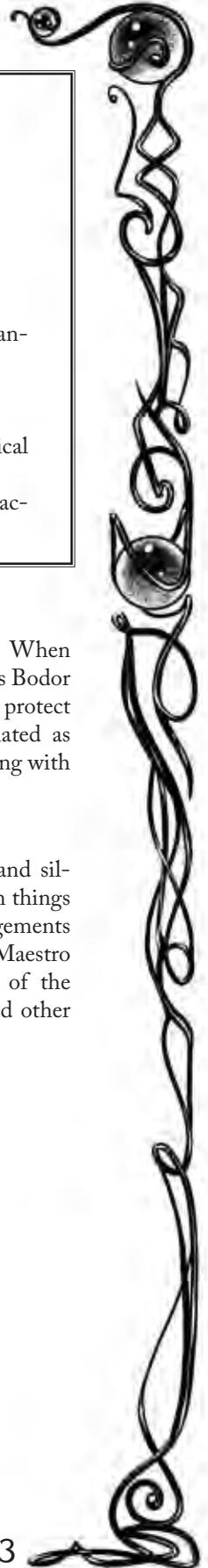
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

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.



# CALLIDIAN

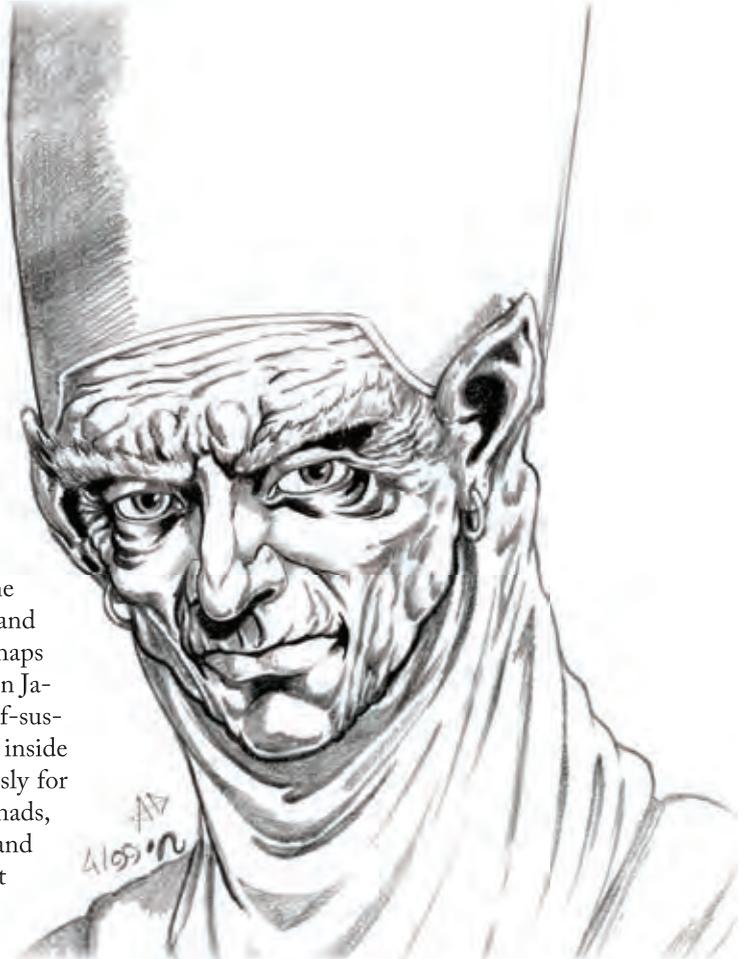
Tall and frail in stature, the Callidians have skin a deep orange in hue. They dress in starched headdress and robes of yellow linen, and walk with a slow and stately gait.

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.

The Callidians are members of a cabal that 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.

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 at 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.



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.

## RELATIONS

The Callidians are neutral as regards all other peoples and governments. Their archivists are available for consultation, but only by permission, and only

## CALLIDIAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'-6'7", 140-180 lbs. Deep orange skin, large cranium, frail build.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +3	PER +2	WIL +3
CHA +0	STR -1	DEX -1
CON -1	SPD -1	
CR -1	RC -1	MR +3

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Callidian) +5, Linguistics (reading) +3, Any One Scholarly Skill +3.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Literate, Linguist

**Open Paths:** Diplomat, Neophyte Magician (cryptomancy), Magician (cryptomancy), Savant, Urban.

**Starting Equipment:** Starched headdress and robes of yellow linen; magnifying crystal; assorted reference works; satchel; pouch with quill pens and inks; scroll case for writings.

during certain hours of the week. As visitors are not allowed to stay overnight, this limits the opportunities for extended study.

## 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.

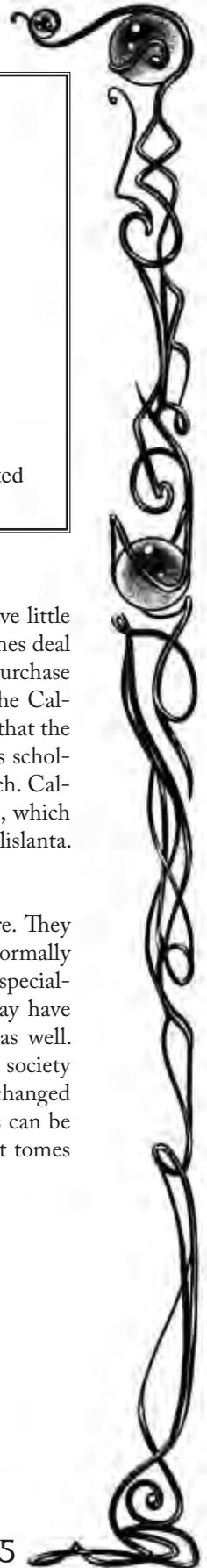
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

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 at 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. Some Callidians can be found adventuring, normally seeking out lost tomes or ancient knowledge.



## 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.

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.

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 ob-

servaion 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.

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 ship-wrecked 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.

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.



## CASTABULANESE CHARACTERS

**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.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +2	PER +3	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +1	SPD +0	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +3

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Castabulan) +5, Language (High Talislan - native), Swim +1.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Eye for Magic, Literate

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Diplomat, Enchanter, Engineer (observatory), Magician (astromancy), Master cCraftsman, Neophyte Magician (astromancy), Rural, Savant.

**Starting 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).

## 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.

## 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

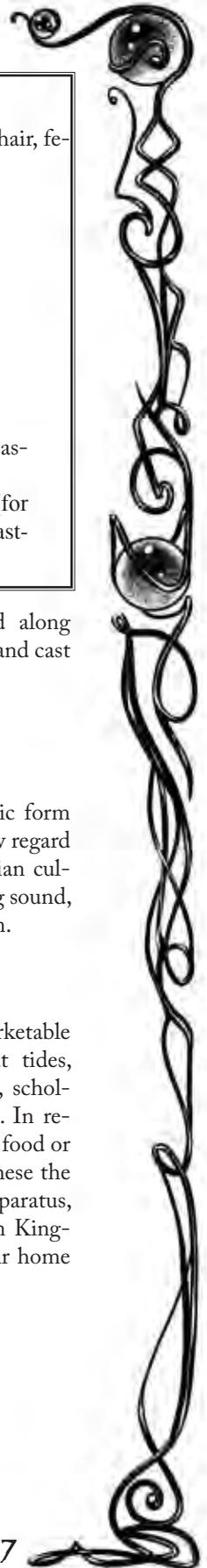
aeromancy. Castabulanese place their dead along with their personal effects in wooden coffins and cast them adrift, to be carried away on the tides.

## 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 Ceselian.

## ADVENTURERS

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. few travel beyond their home island.



## CHANAN

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.

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 became known as the Witchmen, or Chana.

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.

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 spirit-forms. 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.

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.



## CHANAN CHARACTERS

**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.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA -3	STR +0	DEX +1
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC +2	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Chanan) +5, Language (Chanan - native), Language (Quan - fluent), Survival (jungle) +2, Weapon (blowgun, sm blades, polearm or thrown) +1.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** All Chana may add Pet (viper) to their list of available Quirks regardless of Paths.

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Enchanter, Guide, Herbalist, Hunter, Shaman, Shamanic Student, Talismaner, Tribal.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth; bone dagger; shoulder pouch.

## RELATIONS

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 Quan Empire, wreaking havoc on the plantations there. 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

## 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.

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.

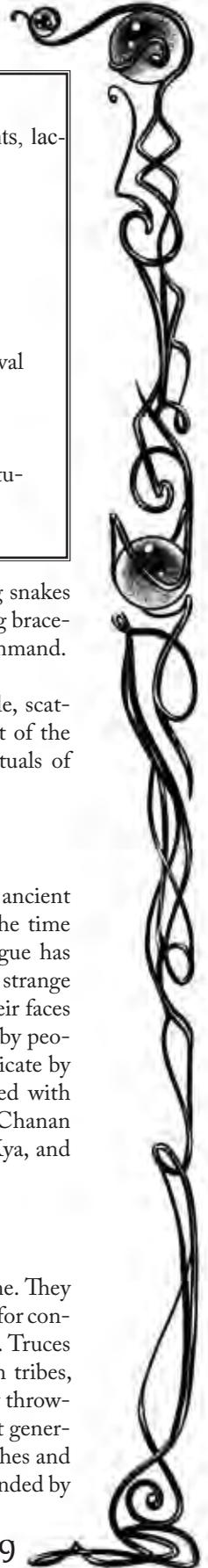
Chana burn their dead as soon as possible, scattering the ashes far and wide so that no part of the deceased can be used in the black magic rituals of their enemies.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.



# CHROMID

Despite their diminutive size, the Chromids are a sentient race—a fact is denied by the Quan who enjoy keeping Chromids as pets. It is widely believed that the Emperor of Quan himself keeps an entire tribe in thrall within the Imperial Palace in Tian. Unfortunately, Chromids rarely live longer than a few month in captivity.

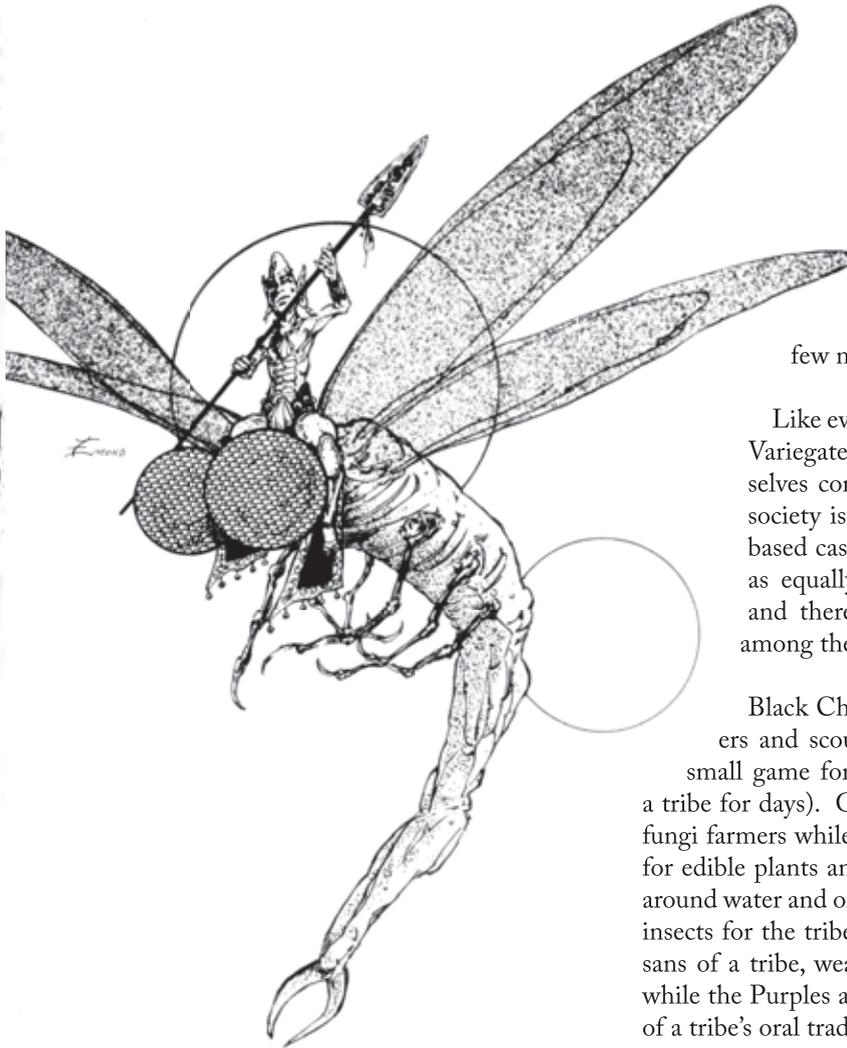
Like everything else that comes from the Variegated Forest, the Chromids themselves come in a variety of colors. Their society is divided into a number of color-based castes although all castes are viewed as equally important to a tribe's survival and therefore, there is no discrimination among the Chromids because of skin color.

Black Chromids make up a tribes defenders and scouts, Reds hunt insects and other small game for food (a single quaal could feed a tribe for days). Greens are employed as mold and fungi farmers while the Yellows scavenge the forests for edible plants and berries. Blues are comfortable around water and often harvest algae or small aquatic insects for the tribe. Orange Chromids are the artisans of a tribe, weaving clothing and crafting tools while the Purples are the lore keepers and guardians of a tribe's oral tradition. The rarest of all color-types are the Whites who serve as the tribes shamans and healers.

All Chromids have a unique ability known as Spirit Bonding and many tribes care for and are thereby protected by creatures much larger than themselves. A spirit bonded Shathane or Drac will sacrifice its own life to protect these diminutive people (*see Religion below*)

## RELATIONS

Though wary of strangers, Chromids are quick to befriend those who have proven to be trustworthy. Chromid tribes never fight amongst themselves but have been known to act cooperatively to defend their forest home from intruders. They have a strong dis-



A diminutive folk that hail from the Variegated Forest region of the Quan Empire, the Chromids remain one of the most elusive peoples on the entire continent of Talislanta.

Thought by some scholars to be related to the race of Whisps and Muses, Chromids live in tribes of up to one hundred individuals among the multicolored vegetation of the Variegated Forest. This bizarre forest is home to a plethora of oddly-colored animals and plants that some believe to be a side-effect of the Great Disaster. The Chromids themselves believe that the region has always been multi-hued although no hard evidence of this can be provided.

## CHROMID CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 3"-6" tall; 6 to 10 oz.; miniature humanoid with elongated cranium. Chromids come in a variety of colors and are often striated with black, gray or dark brown.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -1	PER +3	WIL +0
CHA -1	STR -5	DEX +2
CON +0	SPD -2*	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +1

\*+2 for purposes of initiative

**Hit Points:** 8

**Skills:** Culture (Chromid) +5, Language (Sylvan - native), Language (Quan - basic), Survival (forest) +4, Ride (iron dragonfly) +1, Swim +1 (*Blue Chromids only*).

**Special Abilities:** All Chromid-sized weapons are DR1. All Chromids receive a +6 bonus to defense as they are difficult to hit due to their small size.

**Quirks:** Natural Climber, Spirit Bond, Stealthy

**Open Paths:** Artist, Guide, Healer, Herbalist, Hunter, Hussar (iron dragonfly), Scout, Shaman, Shamanic Student, Tribal.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth; miniature spear (*see Special Abilities above*).

like for the Quan and their Kang servants as these people hunt the Chromids and keep them as pets. They have little dealings with the other peoples of Talislanta. While Chromids hunt a variety of insects as food, they never attack the more intelligent insects such as Sniper or Caravan Bugs.

## RELIGION

Chromids believe every living thing is connected and therefore they show great respect for all life. Although they consume both meat and plant matter, Chromids show great reverence for anything they must kill in order to survive. Thanks is always given before every meal and no Chromid would think of harming another living creature unless for survival.

Chromids also have a unique ability called Spirit Bonding. Once in a Chromid's life they are able to bond with another living creature. This act actually merges the spirit of the Chromid with that of another creature in such a way as to form a permanent bond between the two. Similar although more profound than the Melding ability found among the Mirin, with concentration, a Chromid can actually see through the eyes and hear the thoughts of it's Spirit Bond.

The selection of a spirit bond is of great spiritual importance of a Chromid and once a bonding is complete, another bond can never be established. Many choose to bond with Iron Dragonflies, the favored

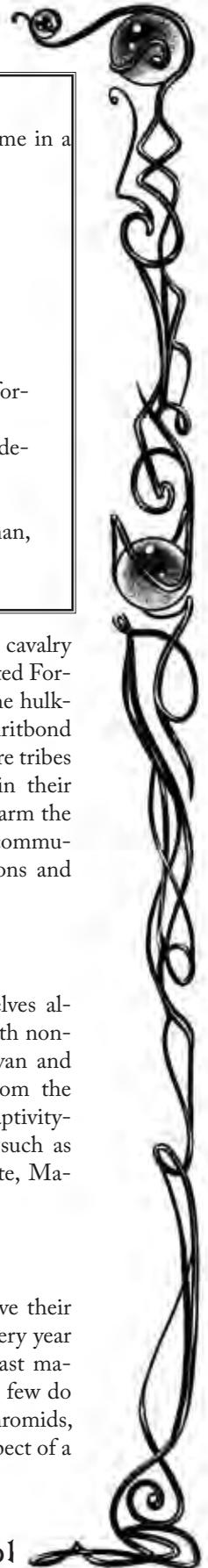
mount among the Chromids and their aerial cavalry travel the length and breadth of the Variegated Forest and even beyond. Others often choose the hulking Shathane or stealthy Exomorph as a spiritbond and these creatures serve as protectors of entire tribes of Chromids. Spirit bonded creatures maintain their own will and faculties but will never act to harm the bonded Chromid. Chromid and bond may communicate telepathically and often share emotions and thoughts as if they were their own.

## LANGUAGE

Chromids are telepathic amongst themselves although very few are able to communicate with non-Chromids in this manner. They speak Sylvan and many have learned rudimentary Quan from the scouts and those who have escaped Quan captivity-Common Chromid names are color-based such as Goldie, Indigo, Crimsyn, Violet, Cyan, Slate, Magenta or Teal.

## ADVENTURERS

Chromids are a tribal people and few leave their tribes. As mentioned, many are captured every year and kept as pets by the Quan. While the vast majority of these die horribly in captivity, some few do escape. While Chromids are wary of non-Chromids, once an outsider has gained the trust and respect of a Chromid, a friend has been made for life.



# 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.

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.

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.

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 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.

## RELATIONS

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.



## DANELEK CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'8" - 6'2"; 100-200 lbs.; Glossy black skin, white hair worn in long dreadlocks.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -1	PER +2	WIL +1
CHA -1	STR +1	DEX +1
CON +4	SPD +0	
CR +2	RC +1	MR +0

**Hit Points:** 24

**Skills:** Culture (Danelek) +5, Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (Sign - native), Dance +3, Survival (desert) +2.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Terrain Familiarity (desert)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Bandit, Chieftain, Guide, Hunter, Hussar, Nomadic, Scout, Shaman, Shamanic Student, Talismaner, Teamster

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth; brief halter (females); sandals; leg and arm wrappings of land lizard hide; various bangles and personal ornaments; dagger; shoulder pouch; 20 gl worth of salt crystals, land lizard hides and assorted currency.

## RELIGION

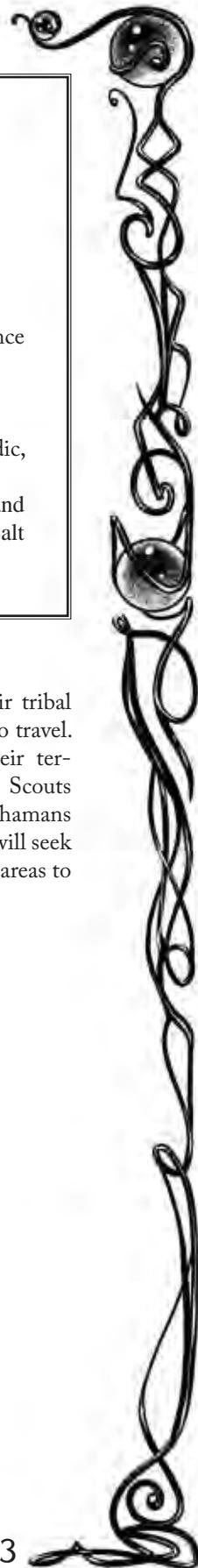
Danelek worship the Creator, who is said to have given their people salt, spring rains, and the oases: the necessities of survival in this harsh land. Danelek shamans are skilled in the healing arts, and are said to have some small talent for divining the location of water and salt crystals. However, few have actual spell-casting abilities. Danelek preserve the bodies of their dead with salt and bury them deep in underground ossuary.

## LANGUAGE

Most Danelek are able to converse both in Low Talislan and Sign. The oral history of each Danelek tribe is kept by its Naz, who passes the stories down from one generation to the next. 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.

## ADVENTURERS

Although they rarely venture beyond their tribal lands, some few Danelek have been known to travel. Most Danelek encountered (outside of their territories) find employment as Guides and Scouts although the Danelek do count powerful Shamans among their tribes. Occasionally, a Danelek will seek out more refined martial training in civilized areas to return to his tribe a hero.



# DARKLING

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.

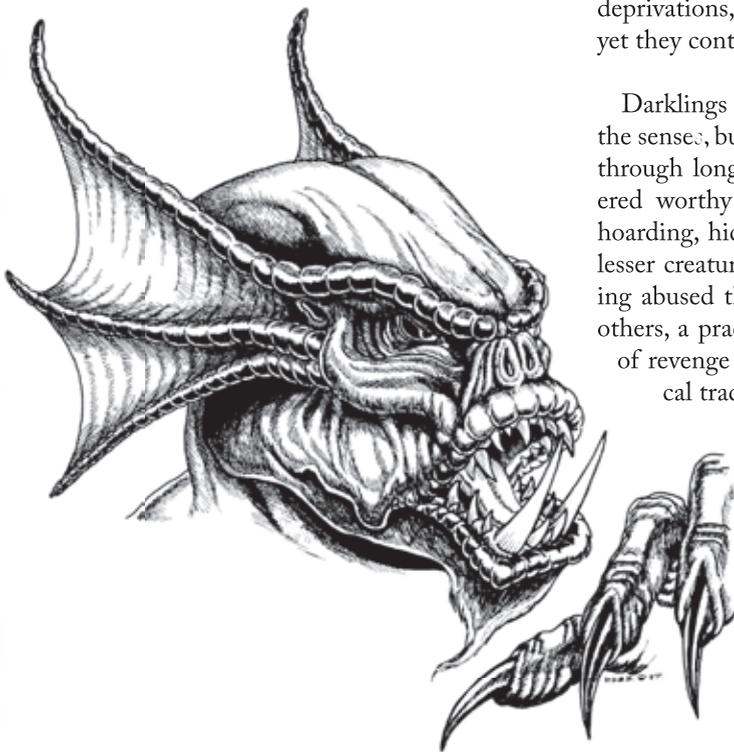
Darklings are creatures of subterranean origin whom naturalists believe may be a mutated species of Ferran, or a cross of Ferran and some lower-planar lifeform. Their tribes once controlled the region known as the Darklands, until they were conquered and enslaved by the Ur.

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.

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.

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.



## DARKLING CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 4' to 5' tall, 90-130 lbs.; Soot-gray to black skin; large pointed ears, sharp fangs; distorted features; sinuous tail, wiry build.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -2	PER +2	WIL -4
CHA -2	STR -2	DEX +1
CON +2	SPD +1	
CR +1	RC +1	MR -1

**Hit Points:** 12

**Skills:** Culture (Darkling) +5, Culture (Ur) +5, Language (Northron - native), Deception +2, Survival (subterranean) +2.

**Special Abilities:** +2 to Stealth in darkness; Fangs inflict DR1

**Quirks:** Darkvision; Scent; Sunblind

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Assassin, Bandit, Burglar, Con Artist, Pickpocket, Priest (Sham), Rural, Spy, Tribal, Urban

**Starting Equipment:** Rag loincloth; chest-halter (females); ornamentation of discarded metal and slag; knife, belt pouch.

## RELATIONS

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 survive in small tribal groups led by their shamans and trade tools, weapons, and bits of precious metal or semi-precious gems - when they are not preoccupied with stealing from each other.

## RELIGION

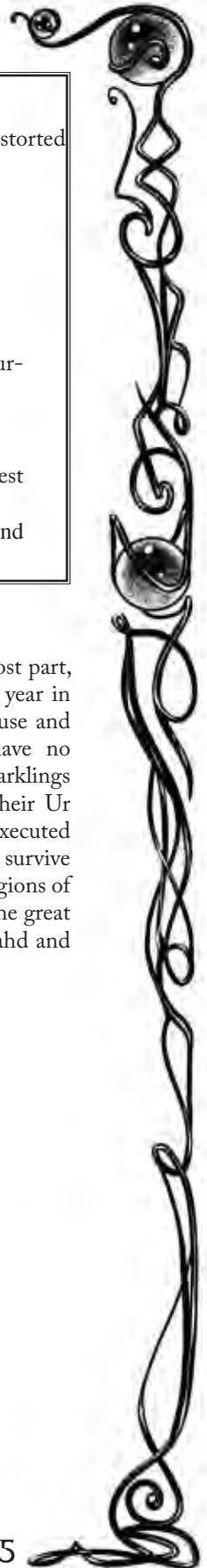
All Darklings are members of a secret society known as the Shadow Cult. Adherents of the Cult's doctrines revere Sham, the so-called "*King of Lies*" and patron deity of the Darklings. "Priests" of Sham are in reality thieves, charlatans, or assassins, and rarely possess any but the most limited spell casting abilities. Though the Ur have outlawed all aspects of the Shadow Cult, Darklings continue to practice their beliefs in secret.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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. Every year, hundreds of Darklings attempt to improve their lot by escaping their Ur bonds. The vast majority are caught and executed or die in the wilderness while a minority do survive and can be found in the darker and remote regions of the continent. A few can even be found in the great metropolises of Talislanta like Cymril, Aamahd and Zanth (although rarely out in the open).



# DRUHK

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.

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.

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.

Drukhs 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 sun-down. During this time fierce duels to the death for dominance can occur at any time. 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



## DRUHK CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'2" to 6'0" tall, 80-160 lbs.; Skin and hair dyed purple; bestial features; wild gray eyes.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +1	WIL +2
CHA -2	STR +1	DEX +1
CON +3	SPD +0	
CR +2	RC +2	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 23

**Skills:** Culture (Druhk) +5, Language (Low Talislan - native), Brawling +1, Survival (forest) +1.

**Special Abilities:** Druhk characters may add Perform (bone flute or drum) to the list of preferred skills regardless of Paths followed.

**Quirks:** Fearless, Druhk Music (shaman only)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Hunter, Shaman, Shamanic Student, Talismancer, Tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Fur & bone headress; vest, breeches & boots of yaksha hide; bone dagger or stone club; 10 gl in ivory, hide or gold dust.

their laws and customs to outsiders as well. In this way they regard themselves as honorable and fair.

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. 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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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

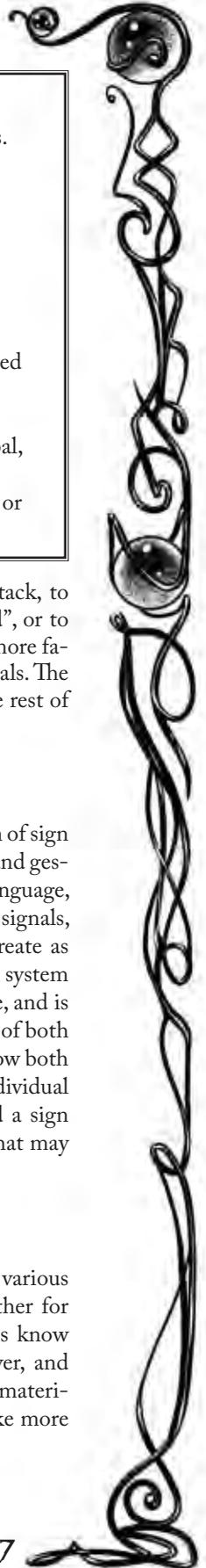
tribe. Their readings can impel a tribe to attack, to avoid an area or person designated as "cursed", or to postpone their plans until the appearance of more favorable omens. Drukhs observe no burial rituals. The dead are left to be eaten by animals while the rest of the tribe moves on.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.



# EQUS

Prized as steeds by sentient races the continent over, Equis are distinct quadrupeds: bizarre hybrids of mam-mal and reptile. Equis are sleek and muscular, with scaly hide and a long tail and mane. There are four sub-species of Equis, each with its own distinct attributes. By far the most common are the sturdy and reliable Graymanes, with their dusty gray hide and widespread distribution. The forest-dwelling Silvermanes, with their lustrous silver hides and superior speed, are the rarest and most prized of Equis, though they are somewhat lacking in durability. The alabaster-scaled Snowmanes have adapted to the frigid northern climes and are sure-footed on ice and snow, making them ideal mounts for the Mirin. Finally, there are the wasteland-dwelling Darkmanes, surly beasts with ebony scales, sharp hooves and fangs, and foul dispositions.

Equis are natural, native inhabitants of Talislanta and have changed very little over the centuries. However, scholars have noted that very early textual references to Equis make no mention of their intellect or linguistic capabilities, leading to speculation that these traits are the result of Archaen experimentation, mutations spawned by the Great Disaster, or a rapid and inexplicable evolution.

Social creatures with strong herd instincts, Equis are considered to be barely intelligent by most Talislantans, who are largely ignorant of the fact that Equis are sentient, capable of speech, and possessed of their own culture and language.

This lack of knowledge concerning the intelligence of the Equis is largely the product of the Equis tendency to secrecy. Equis have little desire to end up as sideshow curiosities and prefer to keep to themselves anyway. Only the Ariane, and a few Sarista clans, have earned the trust and respect of the Equis to the extent that the creatures are openly conversational with them.

In the wild, Equis travel in herds of up to sixty individuals, with each sub-species of Equis inhabiting certain types of habitat. The Graymanes prefer open tracts of land, such as grassy plains and hills, while Silvermanes favor the shelter of woodlands, Snowmanes, the frigid tundra and snowfields of the north,

and Darkmanes, the bleakest of wastelands.

Equis familial bonds are strong, even among the vindictive Darkmanes, although the latter think nothing of pursuing brutal feuds with other families in the same herd. Equis males must impress the females they wish to mate, displaying strength, skill and appropriate physical condition under intense female scrutiny. The personal-ity of the Equis also plays a part in the attraction between prospective mates, save among the Darkmanes, whose females only respect physical power and aggression in their mates. Equis have no concept of privacy as pertaining to the act of love, which further marks them as common beasts in the eyes of most Talislantans.

Gossiping, storytelling, mating, and running are the main pastimes among the Equis, who spend the rest of the time eating and sleeping. Darkmanes also take sadistic pleasure in bullying weaker herd members, brawling, and tormenting the small animals they hunt.



## EQUUS CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'2" to 6'0" tall, 80-160 lbs.; Skin and hair dyed purple; bestial features; wild gray eyes.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -3	PER +3	WIL +4
CHA -3	STR +4	DEX +3
CON +2	SPD +6	
CR +2	RC -10	MR -3

**Hit Points:** 35

**Skills:** Brawling +3, Culture (Equus) +5, Culture (select one) +1, Laborer +4, Language (Low Talislan - basic), Language (Equan - native), Stealth +2, Survival (forest, steppes or tundra) +4, Swim +2.

**Special Abilities:** Kick does DR8; Bite does DR2 (darkmane only)

**Quirks:** Immune to Cold (snowmanes only), Thick Skin

**Open Paths:** None (Equus begin play with only their racial skills and quirks).

**Starting Equipment:** None

The need for secrecy around two-leggers is instilled in young Equus from birth, and maintaining the illusion that they are mere animals is considered a source of pride and amusement.

## RELATIONS

Wild Equus experience little beyond the limited scope of their life in the herd and have little desire to do so, but it is not entirely unusual for curious young Equus to grow bored and allow themselves to be "captured" by two-leggers, in order to experience life beyond the herd.

In the minds of those Equus from herds that serve as mounts or beasts of burden for two-leggers, they lead a life of luxury and excitement compared to the life they would live in the wild. In fact, these Equus erroneously believe that they have the better end of the deal than the two-leggers, which, if nothing else, demonstrates that although Equus are sentient, they are far from being as intelligent as they like to believe themselves to be.

## RELIGION

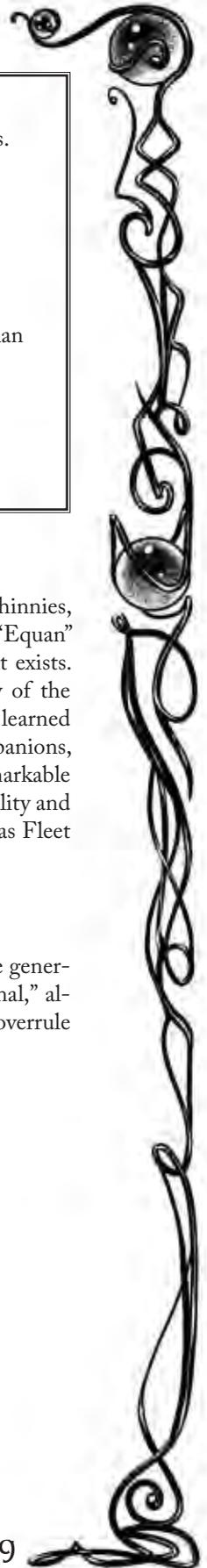
The concepts of magic and religion are alien to the Equus, who consider such pursuits to be entirely too cryptic and time-consuming. Death is regarded as part of "the way of things" and is to be expected but not feared. When an Equus dies, its family and herd friends pause to grieve briefly in silence over the fallen corpse, before moving on. Darkmanes gloat or grieve over the fallen, depending on their loyalties, and fights break out between these rivals in such circumstances.

## LANGUAGE

The Equus language is characterized by whinnies, nick-ers, and head motions, and is called "Equan" by the few Talislan scholars even aware it exists. Those Equus who can speak Talislan, or any of the other humanoid tongues they might have learned through observing their two-legger companions, do so with remarkable clarity, as well as remarkable bluntness. Equus names reflect certain personality and physical traits of the Equus in question, such as Fleet Runner, Twisted Mane, and Stern Hoof.

## ADVENTURERS

When traveling with two-leggers, Equus are generally content to play the part of "dumb animal," although they will not allow this charade to overrule their sense of self-preservation.



## 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.

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.

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 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



## FARAD CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'8" to 6'6", 100-200 lbs.; Flint-gray skin, stoney visage, coal-black and narrow eyes, beards in twin braids bound with silver fastenings (*males*).

**Base Attributes:**

INT +1	PER +1	WIL +2
CHA +0	STR -1	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 19

**Skills:** Culture (Farad) +5, Language (High Talislan - native), Merchant +2, Deception +1.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Literate, Rich

**Open Paths:** Acolyte (Avar), Aristocrat, Magician, Merchant, Neophyte Magician, Priest (Avar), Slaver, Spy, Urban.

**Starting Equipment:** Elaborate headress, voluminous robes, broad sashes, velvet boots, all hung with ornate tassels, fringes & colored beads (*males*); long silken gown and veils, necklaces of silver loops, rings on each finger (*females*); curved dagger; coin purse with 250 gl in Farad Sul; 250 gl in trade goods.

possess a capacity for cold-blooded, emotionless behavior that is matched only by the soulless logic of the barbaric Harakin.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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.

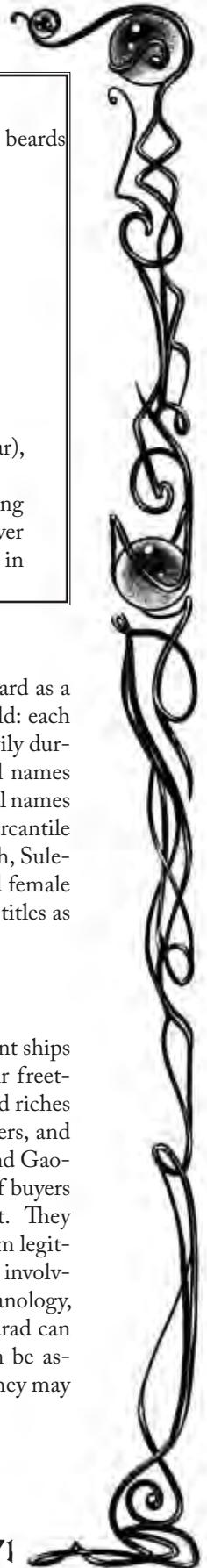
Farad wizards tend to be pragmatic by nature. Most have little interest in the arcane arts, but study magic only to further their desire for wealth and power.

## 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 Nageeth, Sulemar of the House of Zorastin, etc. Male and female nomenclature is distinguishable only by such titles as Madame or Sir.

## ADVENTURERS

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 Quan 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. As such, Farad can be found throughout Talislanta and one can be assured that there is profit to be had wherever they may be found.



# GNORL

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.

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 *Thystram's Collectaena*).

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



## GNORL CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 3' to 4' tall, 60-80 lbs.; Wrinkled, dark-brown skin, deep-set, glowing eyes, wizened features, squat physique, always female.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +2	PER +1	WIL +2
CHA -1	STR -2	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +2

**Hit Points:** 18

**Skills:** Culture (Gnorl) +5, Culture (select one) +2, Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (Gnorl secret tongue - native), Arcane Lore, Cryptography, History or Herb Lore +4.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Darkvision; Literate, Rhabdomancy

**Open Paths:** Healer, Herbalist, Initiate Witch, Magician (Cryptomancy), Neophyte Magician (Cryptomancy), Rural, Savant, Talismaner, Witch.

**Starting Equipment:** Voluminous robes, veiled headress, colorful scarves and sashes; assorted rings, bracelets and necklaces; wooden short staff, belt pouch containing incense; locked, leather-bound tome; satchel; 2 leather scroll cases; collection of art, trinkets and antiques valued at 80 g.l.

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."

## RELATIONS

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.

## RELIGION

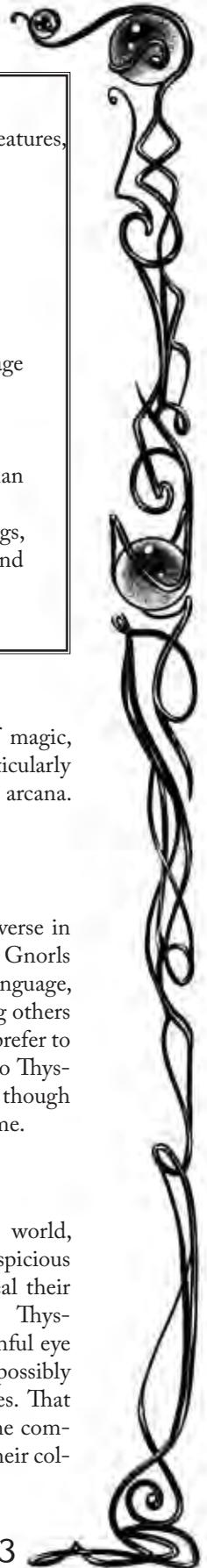
Gnorls are known to be practitioners of magic, and are said to covet rare magical tomes, particularly those that describe secret rituals or long-lost arcana. Their religious beliefs, if any, are unknown.

## LANGUAGES

When dealing with outsiders, Gnorls converse in a heavily-accented dialect of Low 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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. That said, Gnorls may occasionally be found in the company of adventurers, ever looking to expand their collection of secrets.



# GREENMAN

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.

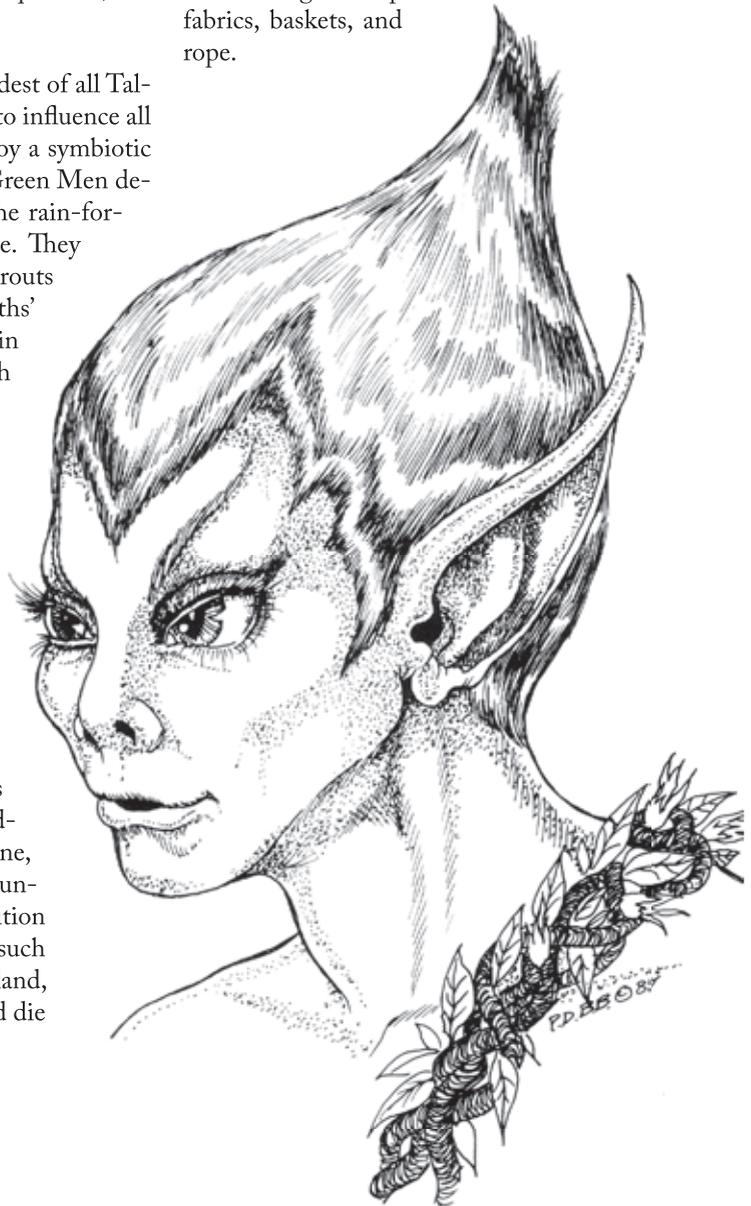
The origins of the Green Men are uncertain. Some believe that the species evolved naturally. Others claim that the Green Men were created by the Archaen sorcerer, Viridian. Green Men themselves do not appear to know the answer to this question, nor does it seem to concern them.

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.

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.

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.

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.



## GREENMAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 3' to 3'6" tall, 40-50 lbs.; Mossy green skin and hair, bright yellow eyes.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +3	PER +2	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR -4	DEX +3
CON +0	SPD +3	
CR -4	RC -3	MR +0

**Hit Points:** 10

**Skills:** Culture (Greenman) +5, Language (Sign - basic), Language (Plant secret tongue - native), Herb Lore +2, Traps +1 (Plant-based).

**Special Abilities:** Influence Plants +3

**Quirks:** Terrain Familiarity (jungle)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman (plant-based), Artist (landscaping, topiary, etc.), Healer, Herbalist, Rural.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth and vest of soft woven mosses; D'Oko tree house.

## RELATIONS

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, Rajinnar, 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.

## 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.

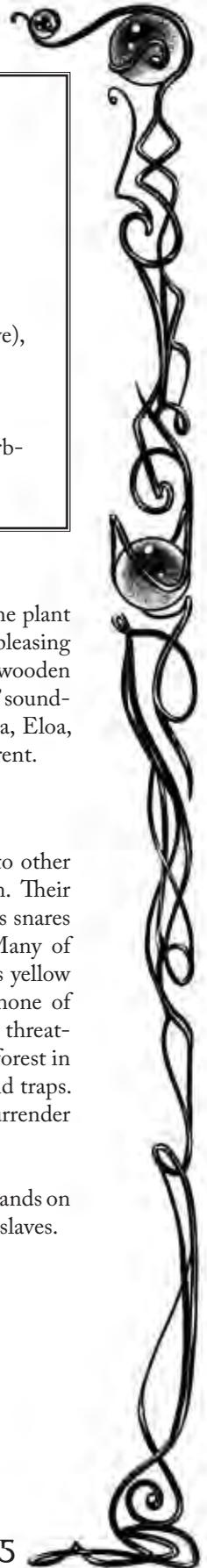
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

Greenmen found outside of their ancestral lands on the Dark Coast are invariably slaves or freed slaves.



## HADJIN / HAJAN

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.



## HADJIN / HADJAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'-6'6" tall, 140-180 lbs.; Pale green skin and hair, golden eyes, slender build, skin daubed with colored powders.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +1	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR -1	DEX +0
CON -1	SPD +0	
CR -3	RC -3	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 18

**Skills:** Culture (Hadj) +5, Language (High Talislan - native), Administrator +1, Antiquarian +1, Etiquette +4, Fashion (Hadj) +6,

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** *Hadjin:* Highborn, Literate, Wealthy; *Hajan:* Benefactor, Literate, Rich

**Open Paths:** Aristocrat, Artist, Diplomat, Litigator, Urban.

**Starting Equipment:** Layered robes; upward-sweeping cap; long velveteen gloves; scented fan;

*Hadjin:* d20 slaves; 4 silvermanes and carriage; property and possessions as per Wealthy Quirk;

*Hajan:* implements for roles as chef and valet; ledger book; coin purse with 100 gl. in assorted currency.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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 ances-

tors, 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.

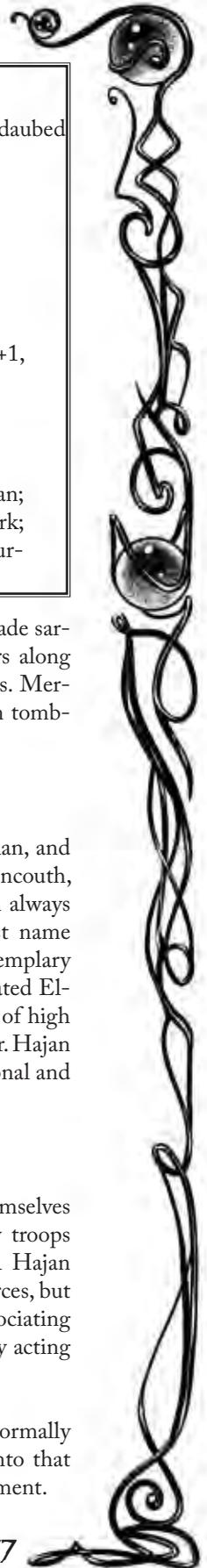
## LANGUAGE

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 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

Hadjin or even Hajan adventurers are normally unheard of although one might be forced into that lifestyle while seeking further social advancement.



# 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.



## HARAKIN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'-6'6" tall, 140-220 lbs; Gray skin, hard features, lean and rugged, black pigments painted around eyes.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +1	WIL +3
CHA -2	STR +2	DEX +0
CON +5	SPD +0	
CR +3	RC +3	MR -2

**Hit Points:** 30

**Skills:** Culture (Harakin) +5, Language (Sign - native), Language (Low Talislan - native), Survival +4, Weapon (sm. blades) +2, Weapon (Tarak) +1 or Weapon (thrown) +1 or Weapon (crossbows) +1.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Terrain Familiarity (tundra and alpine)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Chieftain, Gladiator, Hussar (Dractyl), Tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth (males, rough fur or leather tunic (females); cowl; high boots and heavy gloves of dractyle leather; fur cloak; Khu; Jang or Tarak or Krin; shoulder pouch.

*Harakin who follow the Hussar Path may exchange the Mounted Combat Quirk with Aerial Combat and must take a Dractyl as their mount.*

## RELATIONS

The warrior clans of Harak are known to range as far as the Quan 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.

## 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.

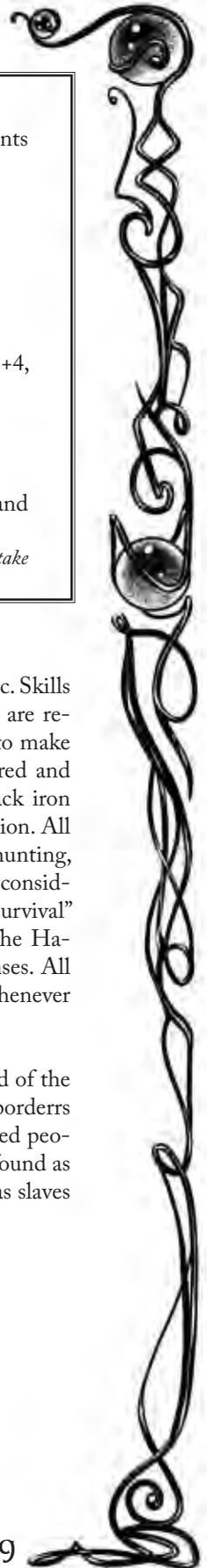
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

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. The Harakin have no armies, fortifications, or defenses. All members of the clan are expected to fight whenever the need arises.

Occasionally, individual Harakin grow tired of the harsh life of Harak and venture beyond their borders to explore and exploit the lands of the civilized peoples of Talislanta. Some few harakin can be found as far away as Zandu and Faradun, most often as slaves or gladiators in the combat pits.



# IMRIAN

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.

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).

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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



## IMRIAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'-6'6", 200-280+ lbs.; Yellow-green scaly skin, coated with translucent slime, webbed hands and feet, double row of sharp teeth, muscular, sloping shoulders.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -1	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA -3	STR +3	DEX -3
CON +2	SPD -1	
CR +2	RC +2	MR -3

**Hit Points:** 28

**Skills:** Culture (Imrian) +5, Language (Piscine- native), Language (Low Talislan- basic), Swim +6, Appraiser (slaves) +1.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Semi-Aquatic, Terrain Familiarity (swamp)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Captain, Hunter, Merchant, Sailor, Scout, Slaver, Talismaner, Tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth of kra hide; necklace of brass ring currency; capture pole; water skin filled with brine; 20 g.l. in assorted currency; 10 g.l. worth of Imrian brass rings.

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.

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 Rajinnar and Faradun.

## 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.

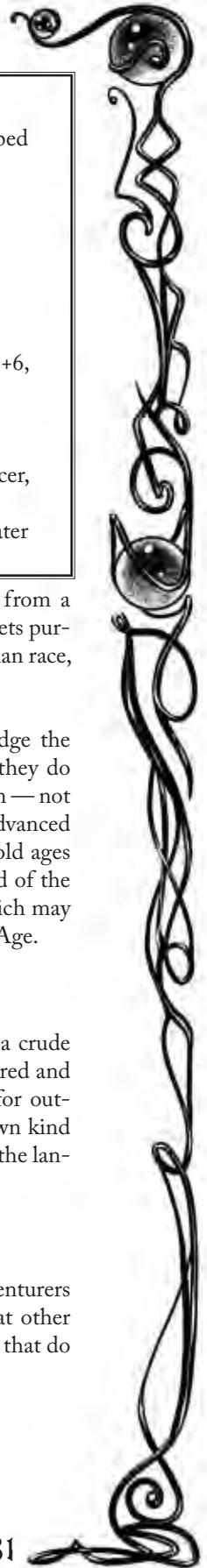
Those Talislantan scholars who acknowledge the existence of the Imrian tablets believe that they do indeed contain priceless historical information — not relating to the Imrians, but of an ancient and advanced civilization that sank beneath the waves untold ages ago. There are thought to be several thousand of the coral slabs in the city of Kragan, many of which may contain priceless secrets from the Forgotten Age.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

Imrians are seldom found in parties of adventurers due to their nasty disposition and habits that other races find to be grotesque. Some few imrians that do take up adventurings are typically outcasts.



# ISPASIAN

The Ispasians are a folk of slender physique, lemon-yellow skin and expressionless features. They dress in robes of fine silkcloth, upon which are indicted elaborate sigils representing their respective family crests.

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.

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 cir-

cular 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.

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 manage the Empire's finances; discretion is the watchword in all their transactions.

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.

## RELATIONS

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 CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'10" to 6'4"; 100-180 lbs.; Lemon-yellow skin, slender physique, expressionless features.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +3	PER +1	WIL +2
CHA +0	STR -2	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR -1	RC -1	MR +0

**Hit Points:** 19

**Skills:** Culture (Ispasian) +5, Culture (Quan) +5, Culture (Kang) +1, Language (Quan - native), Language (High Talislan - native), Merchant +2.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Literate, Wealthy

**Open Paths:** Aristocrat, Diplomat, Litigator, Merchant, Spy, Urban.

**Starting Equipment:** Fine, yet understated silkcloth robe; jewelery; ledger books; small collection of antiques; well-appointed, upscale apartment or house in Ispasia; d20 slaves (Monad, Vajra and Mandalan predominantly); 2500 gold lumens in assorted currencies.

## RELIGION

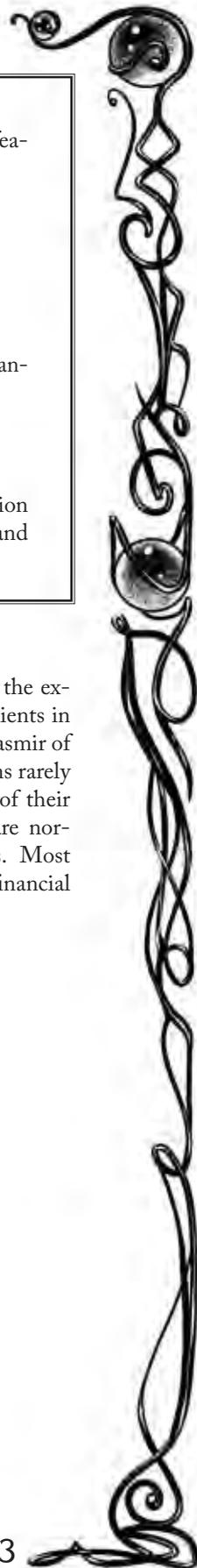
Ispasians have no religion; the concept does not interest them. Few of their people are known to practice magic. Instead, they prefer to hire magicians when in need of such services. The dead are placed in jade and gold sarchophagi, rich yet tasteful in design, and laid to rest in their family's mausoleum.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

Ispasian agents are known to travel across the extent of Talislanta, and are believed to have clients in such far-distant lands as Faradun, Raj, and Kasmir of the Seven Kingdoms, among others. Ispasians rarely seek adventure preferring instead the safety of their homes. When they do venture out, they are normally surrounded by mercenaries and guards. Most are either scholars seeking information and financial secrets.



# KHARAKHAN GIANT

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.

The Kharakhan are descended from a nameless tribe of Wild Folk who were extant 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.

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 Kharakhan's 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 humanoid 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 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 war-

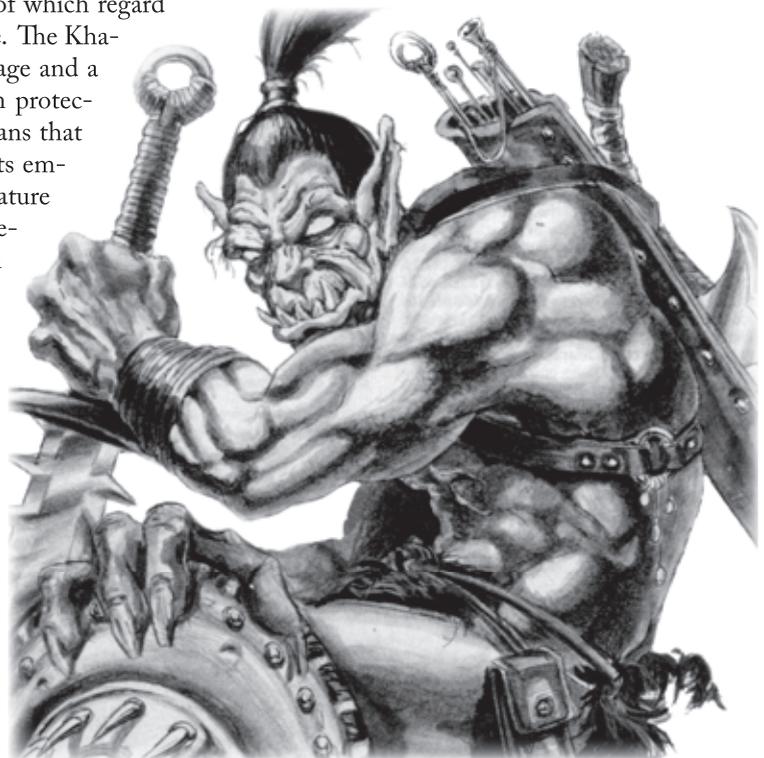
like folk by preference. When they are tending their young or with friends these massive folk can be surprisingly gentle.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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.



## KHARAKHAN GIANT CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 10' to 15' tall; 1000-12000 lbs; Dusky, gray-black skin, massive physique, savage features, hair tied in long queue.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -3	PER +2	WIL +6
CHA -2	STR +8	DEX -4
CON +9	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC +1	MR -3

**Hit Points:** 50

**Skills:** Culture (Kharakhan) +5, Language (Low Talislan (dialect) - native), Language (Drakken Glyphs - fluent), Brawling +2, Survival (Wilderlands) +2.

**Special Abilities:** Punch attack DR6 +STR; must use giant-sized weapons & armor or two-handed normal-sized weapons in one hand.

**Quirks:** Literate (Drakken runes), Scent (only applies to detecting the scent of Men), Thick Skin

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Bandit, Bodyguard, Chieftain, Gladiator, Healer, Hunter, Hussar, Nomadic, Salvager, Talismancer, Teamster, Warrior

**Starting Equipment:** loincloth; sandals; armor of boiled landlizard hide.

## LANGUAGE

Kharakhan speak an ancient and obscure dialect of Low 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.

## ADVENTURERS

Kharakhan adventurers are becoming increasingly more common as their numbers dwindle. Ever searching for new lands and new resources for their people, a number of Kharakhan have taken to exploring extensively. Most search the Wilderlands of Zaran but a few have been spotted as far away as Yrmania, Zandu, the Seven Kingdoms and even Faradun.



# MALUM

Malum are spectral beings who are known to inhabit the forboding region known as the Shadow Realm. It is thought that they hail originally from a lower dimension and that they are related to the undead being known as Shadow Wights. Tall and preternaturally thin, Malum resemble humanoid shadows, with eyes like smouldering white coals. Being sensitive to light, they cover their bodies from head to foot whenever they leave their dark domain.

Malum are supernatural entities who possess certain powers and abilities that mere shadowwights do not. These include the ability to learn Magic and other skills, as well as the ability to take on corporeal form at will. Malum cannot drain the life-force of living beings, nor do they need to do so to sustain themselves.

Like shadowwights and other spiritforms, Malum were once living beings. Once passing from the lands of the living, their spirits made the long voyage to the Underworld. However, something about them drew the attention of Death. Great infamy or acts of heroism, no one can say for sure what will draw Death's baleful eye. Some sorcerers petition for this state in order to continue their magical studies beyond death, while some heroes offer themselves to Death's service in exchange for a loved one being returned to life. However it happens, those taken by Death are consigned to spend eternity as spectres, and to serve death tirelessly.

Malum are an eerie folk who exhibit a morbid fascination with death, black magic, and the Occult. They are drawn to crypts, ruins, and ancient battlefields, where they may spend hours communing with the spirits of the departed, studying relics, or simply absorbing the atmosphere of death and decay that hangs like a pall over such places.

Malum are less fond of associating with living beings, with whom they generally prefer to avoid prolonged contact. When they must interact with such entities, Malum usually waste few words and complete their transactions as quickly as possible. Malum traders are notorious for their brevity, never engaging in the sort of haggling that is common among folk such as the Djaffir, Farad and Orgovians.

Malum have no such qualms about associating with Black Savants, with whom they enjoy rather cordial relations. No doubt this is because unlike most humanoid races, Black Savants are not truly alive.

Death rarely interferes in the affairs of the Malum, a condition which the Malum seek to maintain by paying an annual tribute of soulstones to their dark master. In return, the Malum of Talisanta are allowed to pursue their interests in the soul-trade, so long as its traders do not interfere with the normal passage of souls to the Underworld.

## RELATIONS

Like Death, the Malum claim to be neutral as regards all other creatures and beings. The Malum of the Shadow Realm gener-



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## MALUM CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'6" - 7'6", weightless or 110-160 lbs. when corporeal. Eyes like smoldering white coals. Appears as a tall, thin shadow when incorporeal, or as a black-skinned, spidery humanoid when not. In both forms, hair and loose clothing are blown about by an aetheric wind, even when there is no breeze to be felt.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +2	PER +3	WIL +2
CHA -1	STR +0	DEX +1
CON +0	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC +0	MR +2

**Hit Points:** 18

**Skills:** Arcane Lore +5, Culture (Malum) +5, Language (Elder Tongue- native), Soul Binding +2.

**Special Abilities:** May see invisible or astral creatures; immune to unenchanted weapon; damaged by magical light (DR equal to spell level);

**Quirks:** Aura of Death, Darkvision, Incorporeal, Literate, Shadowstep, Sunblind.

**Open Paths\*:** Enchanter, Magician, Neophyte Magician (necromancy or wizardry), Savant, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Shadowsilk robe and hood, choice of two shadowsteel weapons, soul cage, spirit-catcher, spellbook bound in bone, bone scroll-case containing extra dimensional maps, 200 gl in various currencies, black diamonds and soulstones.

\* *Malum need not take a background Path. Any weapons received from Paths are made of Shadowsteel.*

ally avoid any involvement with the machinations of other races and nations.

The Malum generally enjoys good relations with the Black Savants, with whom they have certain mutual interests. Not the least of these is the recovery of countless Thane souls stolen from the tomb-city of Necron many centuries ago, and never found.

## RELIGION

Malum culture is steeped in black magic, necromancy, and the study of death. Malum scholars are experts on the ruins, cemeteries, and burial rituals of other realms and cultures. In fact, Malum regard all burial places as hallowed ground, and seek to preserve them from thieves and vandals.

Malum shadowwizards are practitioners of necromancy and wizardry. They are likewise known for an obsessive interest in spirits and the Underworld.

Malum enchanters are renowned for their talents, which include the making of soulstones, enchanted cloth called shadowsilk, and the magical metal called shadowsteel.

Malum artifacts, apparel, and weapons exhibit an elaborate, if somewhat morbid, sense of design. Malum architecture features elements derived from mausoleums, tombs, and cenotaphs. Malum ships are

draped in black, and resemble nothing so much as massive funeral barges.

Malum weapons and armor are exceedingly well-made, and are decorated with ornate scrollwork and symbology. Fashioned from the shining black metal known variously as shadowsteel or Malum, these items are said to be quite beautiful, in a macabre sort of way.

## LANGUAGE

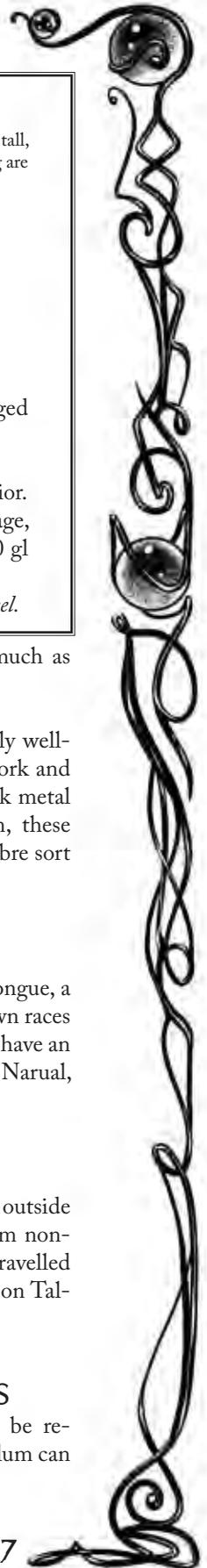
Malum converse and write in the Elder Tongue, a language common to some of the oldest known races in existence. Common Malum names tend to have an archaic flavor, such as Orantheus, Malorean, Narual, Chandaros, etc.

## ADVENTURERS

The Malum are very rarely encountered outside of their citadel in the Shadow Realm. Malum non-playare characters are likely to be better travelled in the lower dimesnions than they would be on Talislanta itself.

## NOTE TO GAMEMASTERS

It is *strongly* recommended that Malum be reserved as non-player characters only. PC Malum can quickly overwhelm a game.



# MANGAR

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.

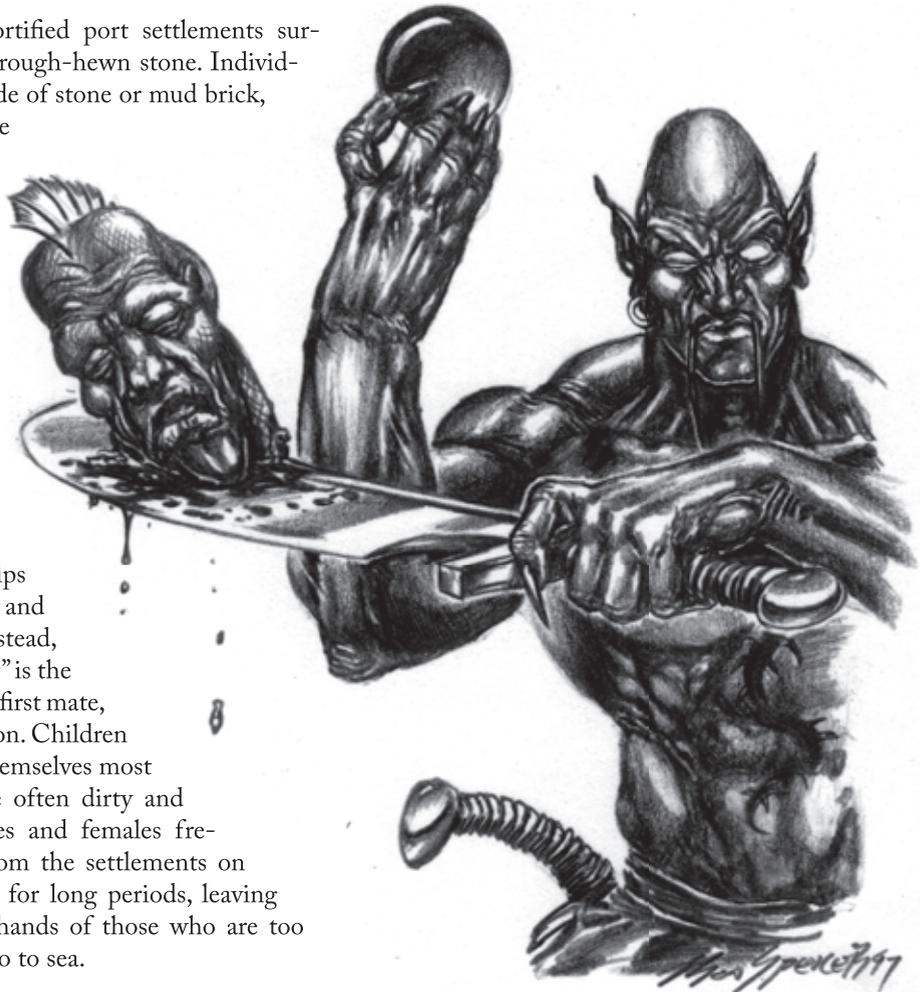
Mangar claim descent from the Baratus, a race of fierce, sky-roving pirates extant during the Archaen Age. Their claims may or may not be true, though it has been noted that Mangar also bear some resemblance to the Oceanians.

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.

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



## MANGAR CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'8" to 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 and arms.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +1	WIL +0
CHA -2	STR +1	DEX +0
CON +2	SPD +0	
CR +2	RC +1	MR -1

**Hit Points:** 25

**Skills:** Culture (Mangar) +5, Language (Sea Nomad - native), Language (Sign - native), Language (Low Talislan - fluent), Brawling +1, Pilot (Carrack) +1.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Good Balance or Natural Climber

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Captain, Master Craftsman, Sailor, Talismancer, Wandering.

**Starting Equipment:** High boots; loose pantaloons; blouse (females only); brass armabands; earrings; belt sash; hide pouch for ska-wae dice; coin purse with 50 gl in assorted currency.

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 will invite the most evil sort of misfortune.

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".

## REALTIONS

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.

## RELIGION

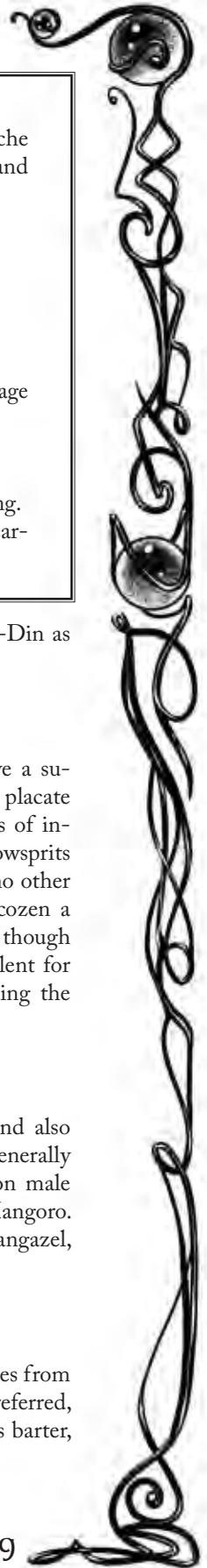
The Mangar bow before no god, but have a superstitious fear of sea and air elementals. To placate these entities they sometimes burn offerings of incense from brass censers hung from the bowsprits of their carracks. Aside from this, there are no other rituals or observances. Mangar sometimes cozen a 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.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.



# 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.

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 head-hunters, but shape-changers.

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.

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.

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.



## MANRA CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'10" to 6'4", 110-170 lbs.; Gray-Green skin, gray-brown topknot, slender build.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +1	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR +0	DEX +1
CON +5	SPD +0	
CR +0	RC +1	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Manra) +5, Language (Chanan dialect - native), Linguistics +1.

**Special Abilities:** Shapechange +1 (*see Chapter 3 - New Skills & Abilities*)

**Quirks:** Terrain Familiarity (jungle)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Chieftain, Guide, Healer, Herbalist, Hunter, Scout, Shaman, Shamanic Student, Spy, Talismancer, Tribal.

**Starting Equipment:** Abbreviated garments of woven plant fibers; necklaces of dried flowers, woven vines, beads and feathers; whipsash worn around waist; pouch for herbs; 40 gl in herbs and precious stones.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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 represent 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.

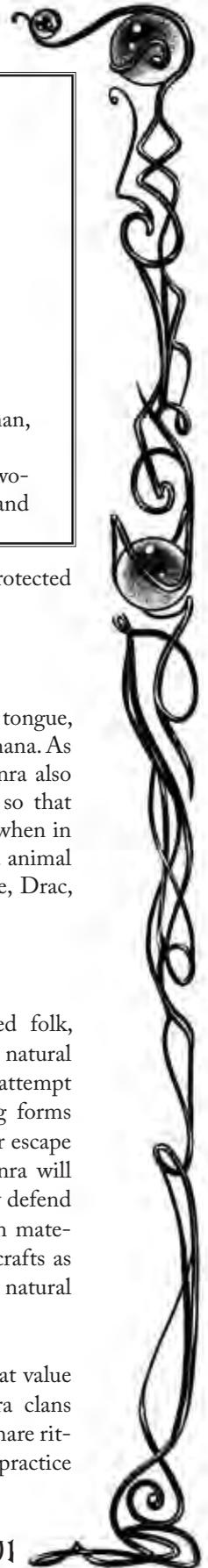
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

Manra generally prefer to avoid civilized folk, whose ways they regard as destructive to the natural environment. 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. 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.

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.



# 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.

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.

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.

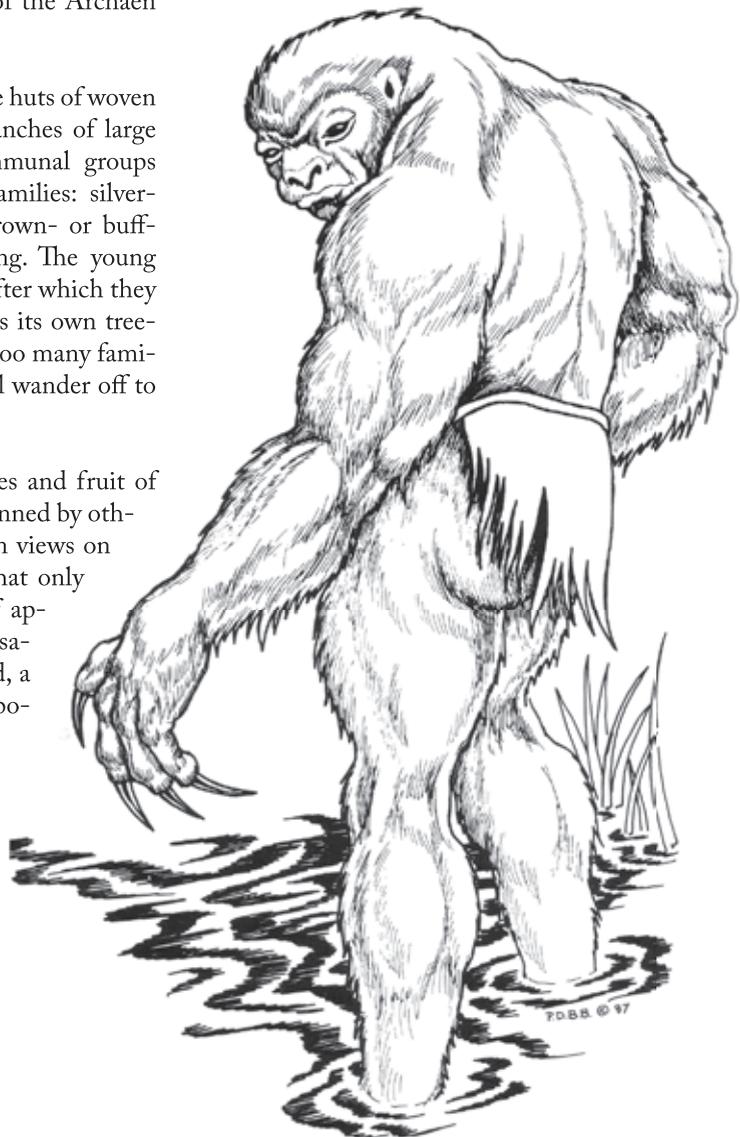
Mogroth subsist on the bitter leaves and fruit of giant mung-berry trees, which are shunned by other creatures. Biased towards their own views on the subject, the Mogroth maintain that only those of refined tastes are capable of appreciating the mung tree's distinctive savor. Mogroth are especially long-lived, a condition attributed to the slow metabolism of these creatures.

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.

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.

Mogroth erect simple defenses against predatory beasts around their settlements, but otherwise have



## MOGROTH CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 7'6" to 8'2", 450-650 lbs.; Body covered with thick coat of brown or buff-colored fur; sloth-like features.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -3	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR +5	DEX +1
CON +5	SPD -2	
CR +1	RC +0	MR -4

**Hit Points:** 34

**Skills:** Culture (Mogroth) +5, Handicraft (artificer - tapestries) +1, Language (Low Talislan - native), Mining (dredging) +1.

**Special Abilities:** Claws do DR2

**Quirks:** Brachiation (SPD +1), Natural Climber, Terrain Familiarity (swamp)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Chieftain, Guide, Herbalist, Master Craftsman, Peddler, Rural,

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth neckalce of woven grasses; shoulder pouch with collection of pretty objects; 45 gl in amber and quaga.

no organized military of defense. They will band together if their settlements are threatened, particularly if Imrians are involved.

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.

## RELATIONS

Mogroth do not regard themselves as a consolidated race or nation, and have no formal relations with other peoples or nations. An amiable people, Mogroth have great animosity only for the race of Imrians.

## 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.

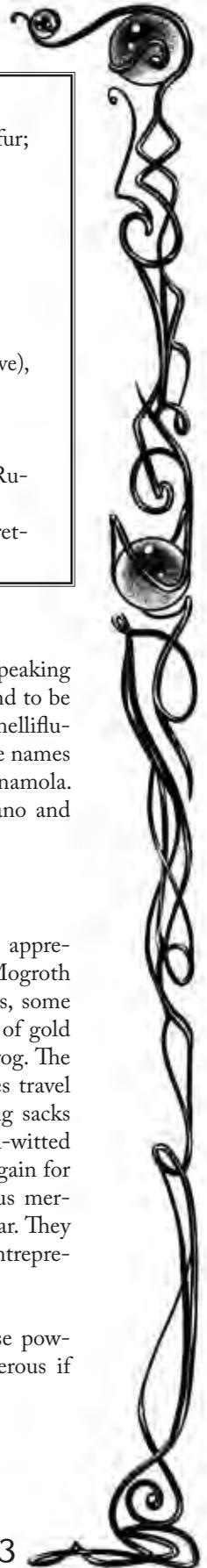
## LANGUAGE

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 Mamonamololo.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

While they generally abhor violence, these powerful creatures can become extremely dangerous if driven to anger.



# MONAD

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.

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.

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, Rajinar, and the Quan 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.

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).

## RELATIONS

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.



## MONAD CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 7' to 7'6", 400-700 lbs.; Striated black and white skin, hairless, tiny cranium, immense torso and limbs.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +0	WIL -5
CHA +0	STR +8	DEX -4
CON +9	SPD -3	
CR +0	RC +0	MR -4

**Hit Points:** 40

**Skills:** Culture (Monad) +5, Laborer +9, Language (Sign - native dialect).

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Mute, Single Minded, Slave Mentality, Tireless.

**Open Paths:** Rural, Urban.

*Monad characters begin play with a single background Path only.*

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth, sandals, cloak, 5 gl in assorted currency.

## 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.

## 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.

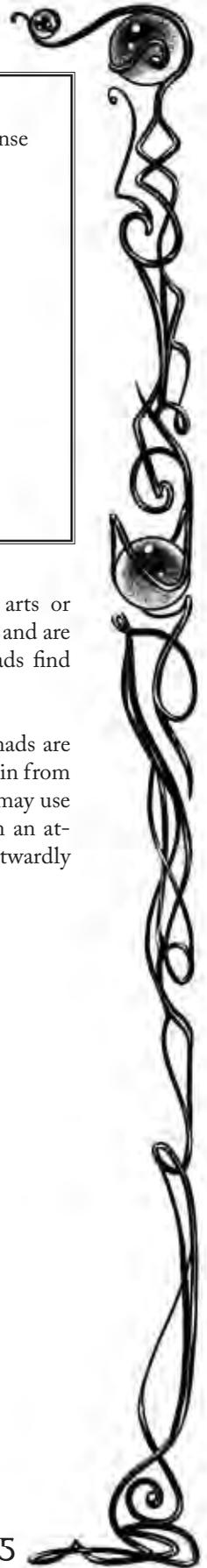
## ADVENTURERS

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.

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.

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.

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.



## 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.

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.

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.

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.

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



## MONDRE KHAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6' to 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.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -1	PER +2	WIL +0
CHA -2	STR +2	DEX +2
CON +2	SPD +1	
CR +3	RC +3	MR -2

**Hit Points:** 24

**Skills:** Brawling +2, Culture (Mondre Khan) +5, Language (Chanan - native), Language (Sign - native), Survival (forest) +2.

**Special Abilities:** Claws inflict DR2.

**Quirks:** Natural Climber, Thick Skin

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Bandit, Chieftain, Hunter, Scout, Talismaner, Tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Hide loincloth; 12 caltrops; hide pouch; 50' rope and grapnel, tinderbox; 20 gl in gold dust, ivory or captured items.

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.

## REALTIONS

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.

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.

## RELIGION

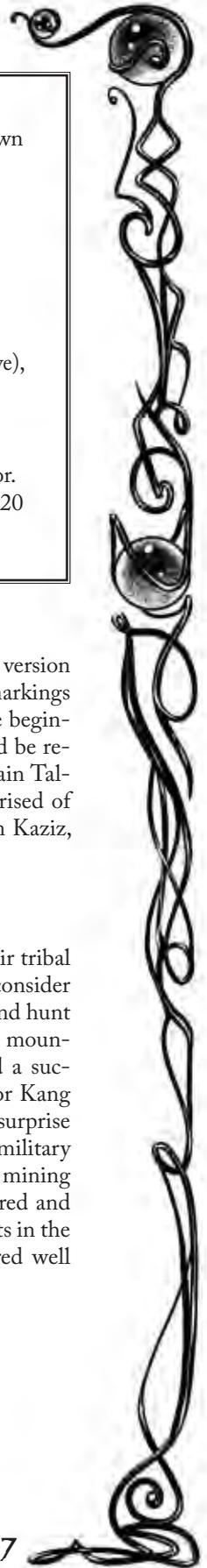
The Mondre Khan show no signs that they practice, or have any concept of, any sort of organized religion. Neither do they seem to know anything of magic, though some believe that they have the intellectual capacity to learn such talents if given the opportunity. The dead are eulogized, then cast into the communal fire.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

Mondra Khan are rarely found beyond their tribal lands. The Kang (and their Quan masters) consider the Mondre Khan to be akin to wild beasts, and hunt them down like animals. Holed 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.



# MOORG WAN

The Moorg-Wan are squat, four-legged humanoid 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.

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.

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.

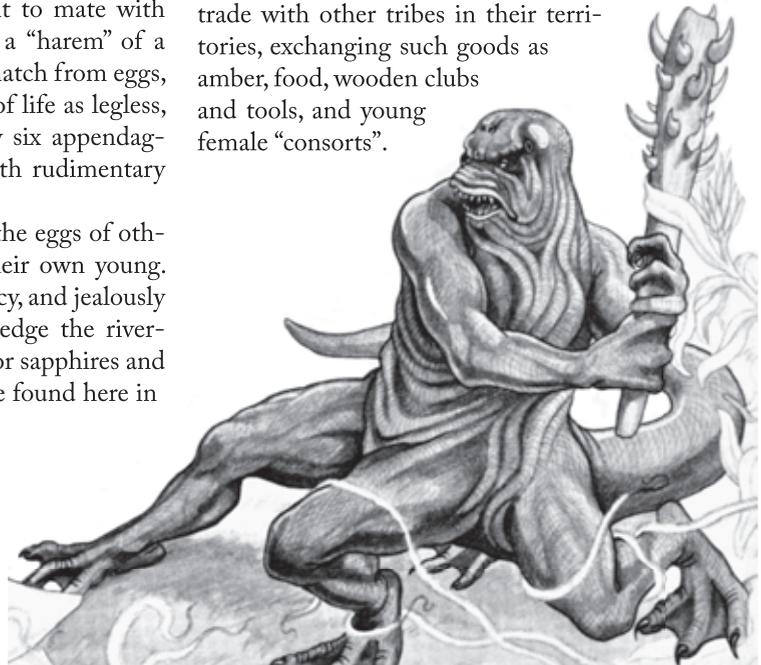
Moorg-Wan eat plants, mollusks, the eggs of other creatures, and – on occasion – their own young. They consider the lotus plant a delicacy, and jealously guard their supplies. Their tribes dredge the riverbanks for amber and mine the mud for sapphires and other semi-precious stones, which are found here in abundance.

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.

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.

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.

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".



## MOORG WAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6' to 6'4", 300-460 lbs.; Large folds of brown skin, four legs, heavy tail, toad-like features, webbed and clawed hands and feet.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -3	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA -2	STR +4	DEX -3
CON +2	SPD +2*	
CR +2	RC +0	MR -1

\* SPD +2 in mud or water

**Hit Points:** 28

**Skills:** brawling +1, Culture (Moorg Wan) +5, Language (Moorg-Wan - native), Language (Sign - fluent), Survival (swamp) +4.

**Special Abilities:** Claws inflict DR4, Tail inflicts DR6

**Quirks:** Amphibious, Multiple Limbs, Thick Skin, Terrain Familiarity (swamp).

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Chieftain, Engineer (mud mining), Gladiator, Hunter, Talismaner, Tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Sack with cord; Thorn dagger; hide pouch with 20 gl in sapphires, amber and other assorted stones.

*Note: Moorg Wan must select Weapon (hafted two handed) as their first Weapon skill received from Paths.*

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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.

## LANGUAGE

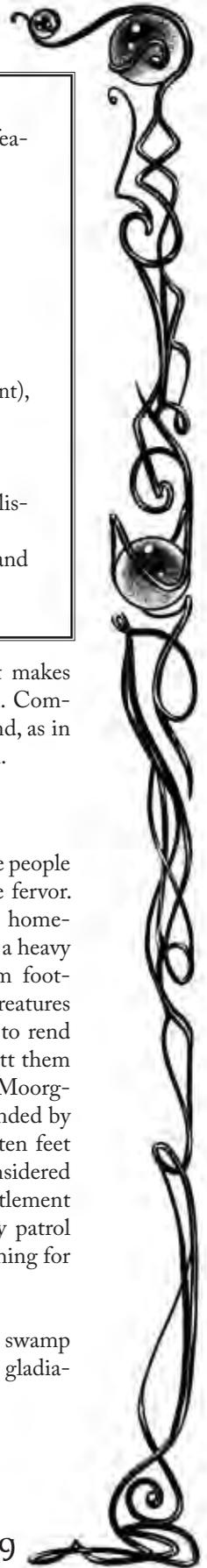
The Mud People have their own language, a crude tongue punctuated by much slurping, gurgling, and frothing at the gills, which is said to be almost impossible for non-aquatic beings to replicate. They also communicate by a version of sign that is somewhat

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.

## ADVENTURERS

Moorg-Wan are a belligerent and aggressive people who guard their territories with considerable fervor. and are rarely found outside their traditional homeland. 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.

Those Moorg Wan found beyond their swamp homes are typically slaves, escaped slaves or gladiators.



# 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.

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 Rajinnar.

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.

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 spirit-forms. 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.

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.



## NAGRA CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'2" to 6', 80-160 lbs.; mottled gray-green skin; black fangs, peaked skull; tiny, ebony eyes.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +2	WIL +0
CHA -2	STR +1	DEX +2
CON +5	SPD +1	
CR +2	RC +2	MR +2

**Hit Points:** 24

**Skills:** Culture (Nagra) +5, Language (Chanan - native), Language (Sign - native), Language (Low Talislan - basic).

**Special Abilities:** Can run up to 30 miles per day with chance of exhaustion

**Quirks:** Spirit Tracking, Terrain Familiarity (jungle).

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Guide, Hunter, Scout, Shaman, Shamanic Student, Talismaner, Tribal, Wandering.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth (males); tunic (females); sivian fur cloak; ankle and wrist bands of woven fibers; exomorph or trakus fang earrings; spirit jar; 20 gl in assorted currency.

*Nagra with Weapon skills prefer the blowgun and spear.*

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.

## RELATIONS

The Nagra bear an undying hatred of the Kang, whose ancestors drove their people out of the Quan 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.

## 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.

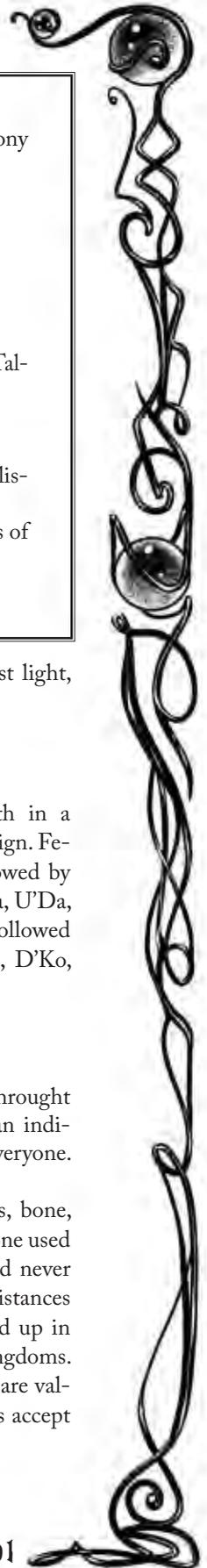
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

Nagra spirit trackers are in high demand throughout Talislanta for their unique ability to track an individual purely by the spirit essence that trails everyone.

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.



## 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 loin-cloths of animal hide, and wear necklaces of humanoid teeth and bones.

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.

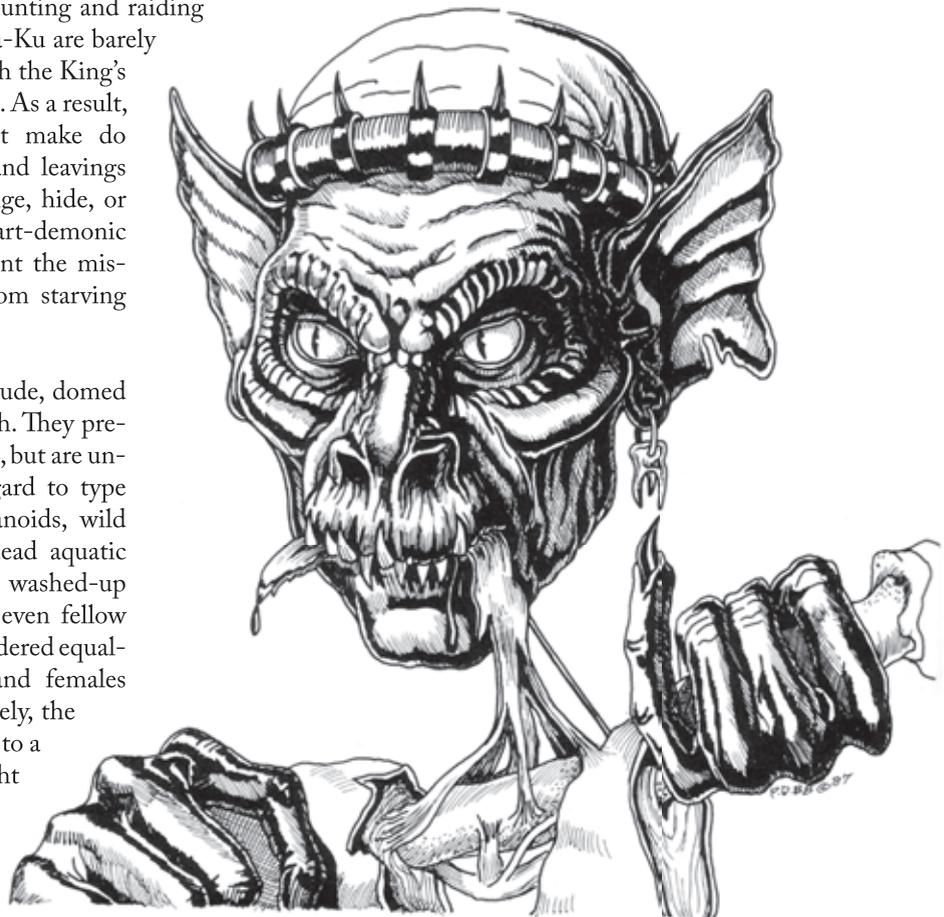
The Na-Ku are cannibals who prey on other humanoids. Like termites in a hive, the Na-Ku exist solely to satisfy the desires and urges of their ruler - the horribly obese Na-Ku King. At his behest they go forth in their canoes to hunt for food, slaves, and consorts, whom they feed to their king. Despite 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.

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).

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



## NA-KU CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5' to 5'6", 90-130 lbs.; Oily, indigo-blue skin, yellow eyes, skull-like visage, serpentine tail, hunched torso.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -2	PER +0	WIL -1
CHA -4	STR +1	DEX +0
CON +2	SPD +0	
CR +2	RC +2	MR -3

**Hit Points:** 18

**Skills:** Culture (Na-Ku) +5, Language (Chanan - native), Pilot (canoe) +2.

**Special Abilities:** Prehensile tail

**Quirks:** Obedient (to Narug), Terrain Familiarity (jungle)

**Open Paths:** Hunter, Herbalist (*known as Witch Doctors among the Na-Ku*), Tribal.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth of animal or humanoid hide; necklace of humanoid teeth and bones; bone dagger; dugout canoe.

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## RELIGION

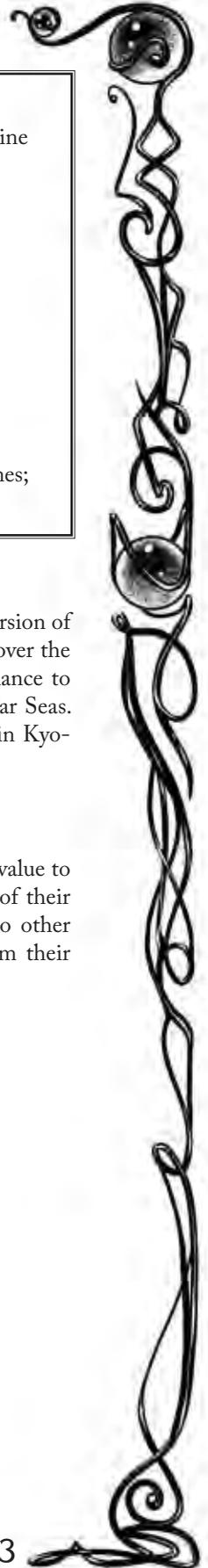
Superstitious and ignorant by nature, the Na-Ku are in awe of magic. They revere their horrible King as a god, and obey his decrees and the commands of his witchdoctors without question. Na-Ku witchdoctors act as seers and spiritual advisors, but rarely possess actual spell-casting abilities. Dead Na-Ku are viewed as food by all live Na-Ku.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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 and are almost never found far from their macabre island home.



# OCEANIAN

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.

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.

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.

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 patterns of avir, the position of the moons and stars, and a hundred other possibilities.

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.



## OCEANIAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5' to 6', 100-200 lbs.; Olive-green skin, dark or sea green hair, slender build.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +0	WIL +2
CHA +0	STR +1	DEX +1
CON +2	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC +2	MR +0

**Hit Points:** 22

**Skills:** Culture (Sea Nomad) +5, Language (Sea Nomad - native), Swim (canoe) +6.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Aquatic Combat, Good Balance

**Open Paths:** Acolyte (*replace Order: Invocation with Order: Elementalism(aquamancy)*), Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Artist, Captain, Enchanter, Engineer, Healer, Hussar (zaratan), Magician, Master Craftsman, Musician, Neophyte Magician (aquamancy), Peddler, Sailor, Talismaner, Urban, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Vests of iridescent scales; loincloth of rainbow kra hide; necklace of colorful shells; air bladder; coin purse with 30 gl in radiants.

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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.

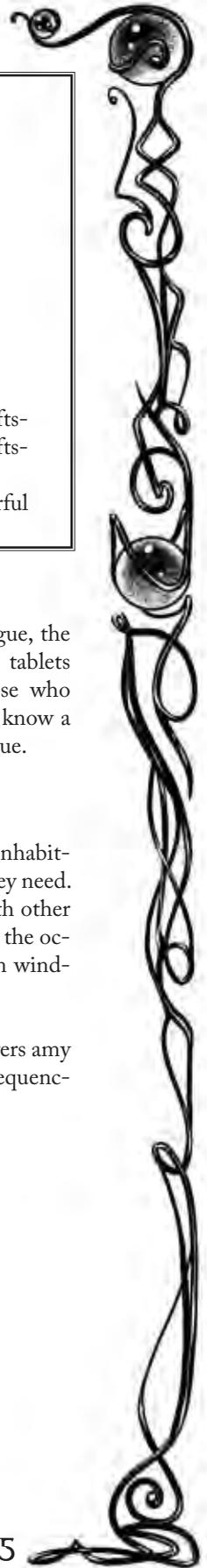
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

Without GM approval, Oceanian adventurers may never set foot on dry land without dire consequences.



# PARTHENIAN

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.

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 salvage from the sunken city of Aurantium, either to acquire treasure or to find some lost item or artifact.



The Parthenians are rumored to sail the unknown waters that stretch far to the west, across regions which many Talisantans 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.

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 Talisanta.

## PARTHENIAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'8" to 7', 180-220 lbs.; Bodies entirely of bronze, "hair" of braided wire, devoid of gender differences..

**Base Attributes:**

INT +2	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA -1	STR +2	DEX +0
CON +2	SPD -1	
CR +2	RC +0	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 24

**Skills:** Culture (Parthenian) +5, Language (Archaen - native), Pilot (trireme) +2.

**Special Abilities:** Does not eat, sleep or age (although periodic lubrication is required)

**Quirks:** Disease Immunity, Mind Shield, Night Vision, Poison Immunity (all), Thick Skin (PR3)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Captain, Engineer, Master Craftsman, Merchant, Sailor, Salvager, Savant, Technomancer, Wandering

**Starting Equipment:** Shimmering yellow cloak, vest with appearance of boiled sea dragon hide, fine mesh breaches (all actually of flexible metallic cloth); 100 gl gold ingot.

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.

## RELATIONS

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 Talislandan government, group, or individuals.

## 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.

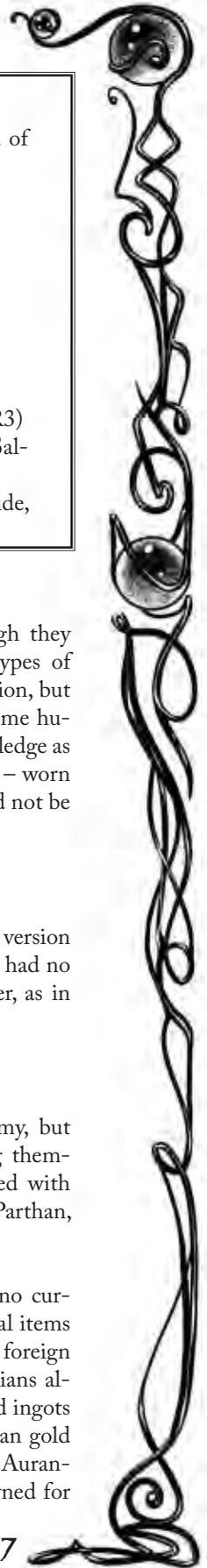
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

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 Auran-tium and the hulls of sunken ships, is renowned for its purity.



# QUAN

The Quan are a sallow-skinned folk known for their haughty demeanor and gluttonous appetites. They dress in the richest apparel, adorn themselves with jewelry, and exhibit the lofty airs and delicate sensibilities normally associated with royalty.

The Quan are the descendents of a barbaric people related to the ancient Mazdaks. Using military skill and guile they conquered the remnants of the Mazdak Empire, but as time passed they have descended into complacency.

They are an unexceptional race, possessing little in the way of intelligence or creativity, but being sufficiently aggressive and cunning to rule an empire. The Quan do not work, but simply oversee the various peoples that their ancestors conquered, who together supply them with all their needs. Even the lowliest Quan dress in costly silk garments, the elite of their kind being notable for the most extravagant and garish costumes: elaborate head dresses festooned with baubles, capes of such length that they must be carried by attendants, and so forth. Jewelry of the most ostentatious sort is considered a mark of distinction and elegance, and obesity a sign of wealth and success. From birth, the Quan are attended hand and foot by slaves, who feed them, bathe them, and carry them about on cushioned palanquins.

Quan society is governed by a rigidly enforced caste system which divides the populace into distinct classes. In descending order, these are: the

Grand Elite (the Emperor of Quan and his family), the High Elite (Quan of favored status), the Elite (all other Quan), the Honorary Elite (non-Quan, granted upper class status as a reward for exceptional service; only pure-blood Quan may ever advance beyond this rank), Luminaries (seven separate orders of ascending rank by which non-Quan may advance in status), Kang, Mandalan, Sunra, Vajra, and undesirables (thieves, miscreants, and foreigners).

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

Despite an outward appearance of civility, the Quan rule their empire with merciless precision. Most criminal offenses are punishable by death, a variety of cruel methods being employed to achieve the desired result.

Individuals accused of breaking the law are typically hauled before a Kang magistrate and sentenced without trial. As it is impossible for individuals to bring charges of any sort against a person of higher rank or social status, injustice is rife among the less privileged



## QUAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5' to 6', 1800-300 lbs.; Pale skin, bloated and corpulent physique, unhealthy appearance.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +2	PER +0	WIL -3
CHA -3	STR -1	DEX -1
CON -2	SPD +0	
CR -2	RC -2	MR -2

**Hit Points:** 16

**Skills:** Administrator +2, Culture (Quan) +5, Fashion (Quan) +5, Language (Quan - native), Language (High Talislan - native).

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Obese, Wealthy (x2)

**Open Paths:** Aristocrat, Urban

**Starting Equipment:** Rich apparel (robes, slippers, etc.), costly jewelry of all sorts, a palatial estate including 2d20 slaves, makeup case; coin purse with 1000 gl in Quan Emperors.

classes. Those seeking to elude the Quan's brand of justice are hunted down by Kang trackers and their beasts, which are said to be most efficient.

## RELATIONS

Although they tend to be distrustful of strangers, the Quan are not entirely averse to doing business with foreigners. Imrian coracles sometimes sail to Jacinth to buy or sell slaves, and merchants from Djaffa, Farad and the Seven Kingdoms compete for trade contracts in the cities of Hadran and Shonan. No foreigner may travel across the Empire without first obtaining an official permit, however. Issued in the form of a lead tablet stamped with the Emperor's seal, these devices are available at Hadran and Jacinth, and cost upwards of one thousand gold lumens apiece.

## RELIGION

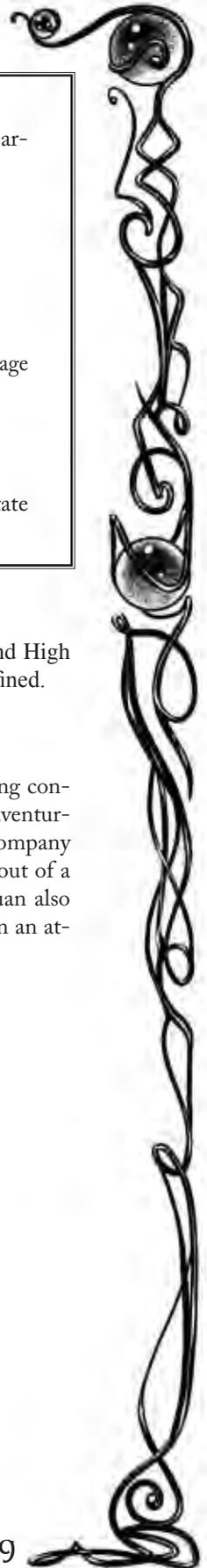
The Quan have never been a religious people, the concept of worship being without interest to these folk, who consider themselves akin to gods. The Quan inter their dead in lavish tombs and mausoleums.

## LANGUAGE

The Quan speak both the Quan tongue and High Talislan, but prefer the latter, as it is more refined.

## ADVENTURERS

There is no known instance of a Quan being considered anything remotely resembling an "adventurer" but a rare few have been known to accompany their servants on various missions, normally out of a paranoid fear of being duped. Soem few Quan also occasionally embark on dangerous journeys in an attempt to relieve boredom.



# RAHASTRAN

The Rahastrans are a tall and dark-skinned folk who carry about them an air of mystery and magic. They 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.

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.

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 af-

fairs 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



## RAHASTRAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'8" to 6'4", 130-190 lbs.; Dark complexion, black hair, bright blue eyes, angular build.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +2	PER +3	WIL -2
CHA -2	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +1	SPD +0	
CR +0	RC +0	MR +2

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (select one) +5, Gambling +1, Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (Archaen - fluent).

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Lucky

**Open Paths:** Cartomancer, Con Artist, Gambler, Pick Pocket, Wandering.

**Starting Equipment:** Cloak, gloves, breeches, cap and long coat of blue fustian, carved amethyst pendant, Zodar deck in intricate silver case, belt and bandoleer; traveler's satchel, 20 gl in assorted

or her Rahastran parent, the Rahastran will agree to teach the young one the secrets and traditions of the Zodar.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## RELIGION

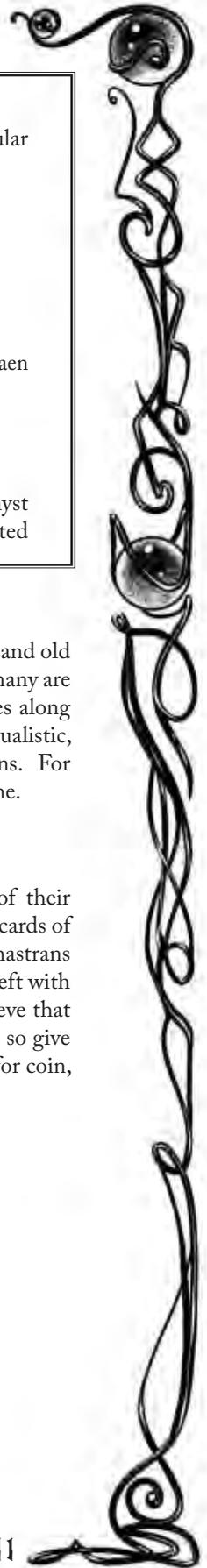
For Rahastrans the Zodar is religion, magic, art, and craft. They turn to the cards for spiritual guidance, and ascribe sentient virtues to their cards, which they claim are imbued with divinatory powers by the higher spirits. Able to foresee the means of their death in the cards, Rahastrans often prepare a will indicating how their possessions are to be divided among their chosen heirs and successors. Most prefer to be cremated along with their cards.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

Rahastrans consider themselves masters of their own fate, their actions influenced only by the cards of the Zodar deck. 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. Rahastrans tell fortunes for coin, barter, or if the mood strikes them, for free.



# RAJAN

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.

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 Rajinnar. In 404 the Rajan tribes united under a chieftain called the Khadun, and conquered the other desert peoples of Rajinnar.

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.

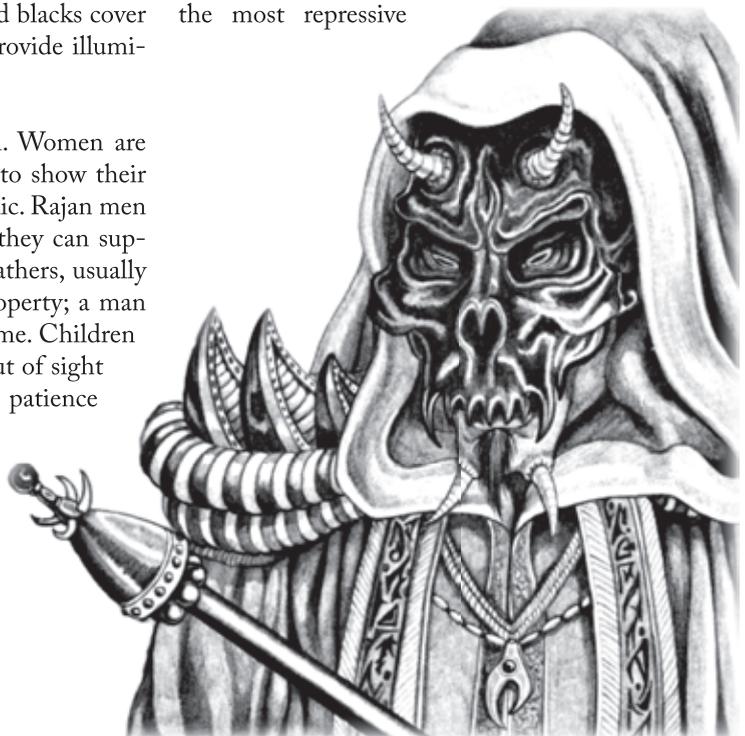
Rajan society is dominated by men. Women are totally subservient, and are forbidden to show their faces or any part of their bodies in public. Rajan men are allowed to take as many wives as they can support. Wives are "bought" from their fathers, usually at age thirteen, and are considered property; 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 Black Mystic Cult for training. Most will become warriors, others necromancer-priests, according to their abilities.

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 Rajinnar.

The Khadun is the absolute ruler of Rajinnar, and High Priest of the Black Mystic 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 Rajinnar; he passes judgement on individuals who have committed serious offenses. Under his iron rule, Rajinnar is among the most repressive



## RAJAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'4" to 6'4", 100-200 lbs.; Dark brown skin, wiry build, black hair, blood-red eyes, horn-like protrusions from chin and forehead.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA -2	STR +0	DEX +0
CON +1	SPD +0	
CR +0/+2*	RC +0	MR +0/+2*

\*Rajan characters may select either CR +2 or MR +2

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Rajan) +5, Doctrines (Black Mystic Cult) +4, Language (Rajananin - native), Weapon (small blades) +1.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Terrain Familiarity (desert)

**Open Paths:** Acolyte (Black Mystic Cult), Assassin, Enchanter, Inquisitor, Magician, Neophyte Magician (necromancy), Nomadic, Priest, Slaver, Spy, Urban, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Dark gray cloak; veiled turban or headress; loose fitting garments bound with cords; darkmane hide boots; Rajan dagger, coin purse with 20 gl in assorted currency.

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

Rajinnar remains the primary military threat to the other kingdoms of this region. The Rajans continue

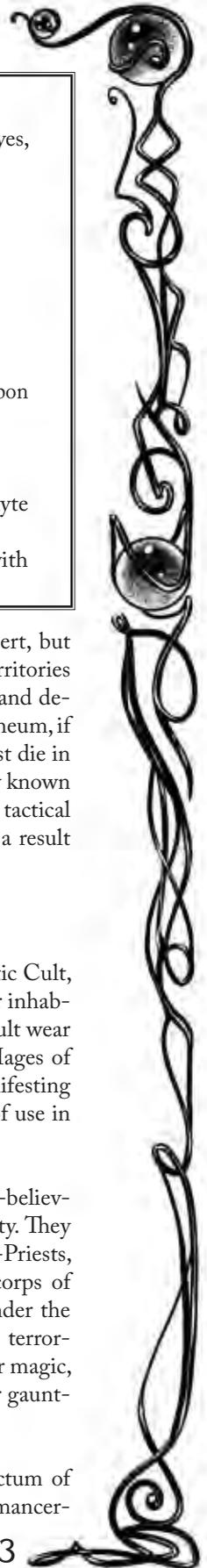
to covet the ore-rich sands of the Red Desert, but have thus far been unable to wrest these territories away from the Dracartans, whom they envy and despise. The Khadun has sworn to crush Carantheum, if every man, woman and child in Rajinnar must die in the attempt. As his generals are unfortunately known more for their fanatical obedience than their tactical abilities, some observers speculate that such a result is within the realm of possibilities.

## RELIGION

The Rajan tribe is ruled by the Black Mystic Cult, just as the Rajans are the masters of the other inhabitants of Rajinnar. The necromancers of the cult wear dark vestments and skull-like iron masks. Mages of greatest power are reportedly capable of manifesting a third eye in the center of their foreheads, of use in detecting invisible or spirit presences.

The Rajans believe that by killing non-believers, they make converts for their morbid deity. They have been taught this by the Necromancer-Priests, the Death-mages who also train the elite corps of religious assassins known as the Torquar. Under the command of the Khadun, the Cult exports terrorism to many lands. The Torquar are known for magic, and for their skill with the da-khar (a leather gauntlet equipped with retractable metal claws).

The Temple of Death in Irdan is the sanctum of the Black Mystic Cult. Here, the Necromancer-



Priests of are said to consort with the spirits of the deceased, hoping to exhume lost magical secrets of the Forgotten Age.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

Under the auspices of their assassin-mages, Rajinnar 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 Quan Empire’s history of expansion and conquest, Rajinnar may also have some reason for concern in this direction.



## THE OTHER TRIBES

Though the masters of this country are the Rajans, four other nomadic tribes make their homes here. All are related in some manner to the Rajans: the warrior Aramut, the mountain-dwelling Zagir, the giant Shadinn, and the despised “mongrel” Virds.

The Aramut and Zagir tribesmen closely resemble the Rajans, but are shorter in stature, lack chin-horns and favor less elaborate attire. Their homeland, the

## ARAMUT / ZAGIR CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5’2” to 5’10”, 90-190 lbs.; Dark brown skin, wiry build, black hair, blood-red eyes, horn-like protrusions from forehead.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0/+0	PER +0/+1	WIL -1/-1
CHA -2/-2	STR +1/+0	DEX +0/+1
CON +1/+1	SPD +0/+0	
CR +1/+1	RC +0/+1	MR +0/+0

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Rajan) +5, Language (Rajanin - native), Ride +1 (Aramut only), Survival (alpine) +2 (Zagir only), Weapon (lance) +1 (Aramut only).

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Terrain Familiarity (desert), Mounted Combat (Aramut only).

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Archer (Zagir only), Bandit, Chieftain, Hunter, Hussar (Aramut only), Master Craftsman, Nomadic, Scout, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Dark gray cloak; loose fitting garments; land lizard hide boots; coin purse with 10 gl in assorted currency.

arid mountains of Zagiran, was conquered by the Rajans toward the end of the third century.

The Virds, a people of mixed ancestry, are devoid of any single set of definable characteristics. The Rajans consider them expendable, and send them to carry out suicidal attacks against enemies.

Virdinnar was conquered by the Rajans in the early part of the fourth century. The nomadic Virds tend herds of land lizards, durge, and other creatures.

The Shadinn resemble the Rajans, but are giants,

averaging seven feet in height. They live in tent settlements scattered across the southern desert, which is also inhabited by sand demons, satada and desert kra. Shadinnar was conquered by the Rajans at the beginning of the fourth century.

## SHADINN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'8" to 7'4", 300-450 lbs.; Dark brown skin, black hair, blood-red eyes, horn-like protrusions from chin and forehead, clawed hands.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -2	PER +0	WIL +2
CHA -2	STR +5	DEX -2
CON +4	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC +0	MR -3

**Hit Points:** 28

**Skills:** Culture (Rajan) +5, Language (Rajanin - native), Torture +2, Weapon (2 handed hafted) +2.

**Special Abilities:** Claws do DR4.

**Quirks:** Terrain Familiarity (desert)

**Open Paths:** Bodyguard, Gladiator, Hussar, Inquisitor, Nomadic, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Executioners mask; loincloth and sandals; spiked straps (all black leather); Shadinn Axe; shoulder pouch; 30 gl in assorted currency.

## VIRD CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5' to 6', 90-160 lbs.; Lines and creased skin of dark hue, sparse dark hair, blood-red eyes, clawed hands and feet.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -2	PER +1	WIL +1
CHA -2	STR +1	DEX +0
CON +2	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC +0	MR -3

**Hit Points:** 20

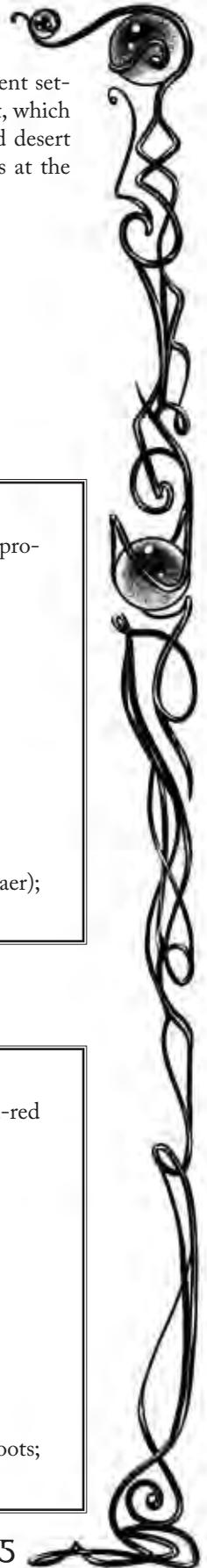
**Skills:** Culture (Rajan) +5, Language (Rajanin - native), Weapon (any one) +2.

**Special Abilities:** Claws do DR2.

**Quirks:** Terrain Familiarity (desert)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Bandit, Nomadic, Peddler, Teamster, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Dark gray cloak; veiled turban, loose fitting garments; land lizard hide boots; coin purse with 5 gl in assorted currency.



# RASMIRIN

The Rasmirin trade their history to a time after the crash of the great sky-city of elande,. Their legends tell of being forced into bondage by their alleged betters and made to endure the long march across the north. Despite their subtle attempts to deride the journey and return to the warmer climes of their former home, their enslavers pressed them north, using the Rasmirin to do the work of carrying all of the refugees' supplies and wounded. When the march did stop for a rest, the nobles forced the Rasmirin out to hunt, but when they brought back wild game demonstrating their superiority over the wilds, their "betters" took the choicest spoils and claimed that it was their right.

The final indignity came on the shores of the Midnight Sea when one of the nobility thought to speak for all of the survivors, pledging their souls to whatever god would aid them. No one asked the opinions of those who had ensured the safety of the people.

As a result, the Rasmirin have long worked against those they see as their betrayers. Rebellion through simple means was the only way that they could act against Borean and his puppets, the Mirin. The only way, that is, until they began to worship Aberon.

Many Talislantans see the Rasmirin as anarchists, and while it is true that they seek to overthrow the government of L'Haan and have sought aid in doing so from such sources as the Farad, the Quan, and even the Rajans, most Rasmirin simply desire a society where the individual is more important than the society itself. If those who are weaker decide to follow a strong leader, that is their right, but they must be allowed the choice, something unavailable not only in L'Haan, but in their beliefs, other nations as well.

As a result of their beliefs, the Rasmirin have been exiled from L'Haan to the barren rocks of the Out-cast Islands. However, the Rasmirin continue to be discovered by the Mirin back in L'Haan and exiled to the islands. At the same time, Rasmirin continue to sneak back into L'Haan to recruit, influence, and sabotage. The unwillingness of the people of L'Haan to submit these traitors to capital punishment may one day be their eventual downfall. The Rasmirin are in most respects exactly like their more benevolent cousins, the Mirin. However, such similarities end when it comes to culture and society.

## RELATIONS

It is often difficult for Rasmirin to establish any new settlements. Despite their power, they are few in number and in order to construct a dwelling sizable enough to protect against attacks from northern predators while simultaneously defending the builders from those same dangers requires a greater force than those who wish to leave a city-state can muster. Furthermore, it is often difficult for the Rasmirin to journey too far from their homes. The routes of travel



## RASMIRIN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'8" to 6'6", 110-210 lbs.; Bright blue skin, hair as fine and white as gossamer, statuesque figure, features painted with cult marking.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +1	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA -1	STR +1	DEX +0
CON +2	SPD +0	
CR +0/+2*	RC +0	MR +0/+2*

\*Rasmirin characters may select either CR +2 or MR +2

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Mirin) +1, Culture (Rasmirin) +5, Deception +2, Language (Elder Tongue - native), Language (Sign - fluent).

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Immune to Cold, Literate

**Open Paths:** Acolyte (Aberon), Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Assassin, Con Artist, Enchanter, Inquisitor, Magician, Master Craftsman, Neophyte Magician, Priest, Savant, Scout, Spy, Urban, Wandering, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Cloak, headress and boots of frostwere hide; shoulder satchel; coin purse with 45 gl in blue diamond chips and ivory.

*\*Any weapons received from Path selection are constructed of adamant.*

south are treacherous and many of those who rule over the fortresses are loath to commit the few and precious ice schooners that the Rasmirin have stolen or repaired. Despite their often grandiose plans and schemes, many of the Rasmirin remain disorganized and separated. Because of these facts, the Rasmirin have not yet achieved their aims or spread their dark faith to the south.

Given their penchant for destruction, it is little surprise that the Rasmirin have tried on more than one occasion to barter with the Ice Giants or locate the Ice King. By and far the vast majority of these attempts have ended in failure and the death of one or both of the parties involved.

## RELIGION

The Rasmirin are to large extent practitioners of black witchcraft. Through their beliefs and practices they seek the aid and guidance of an entity known as Aberon, a quasi-elemental creature that calls itself the "Ruler of All Demons." Unlike the Mirin, the Rasmirin believe in the individual's triumph over the adversities of nature. Indeed, they feel that to be successful one should force nature to be bent to the will of the individual. Many Mirin believe the Rasmirin to be a strange anomaly, a rejecting of the protecting kindness of Borean; however, the history of the Ras-

mirin goes back further than they think.

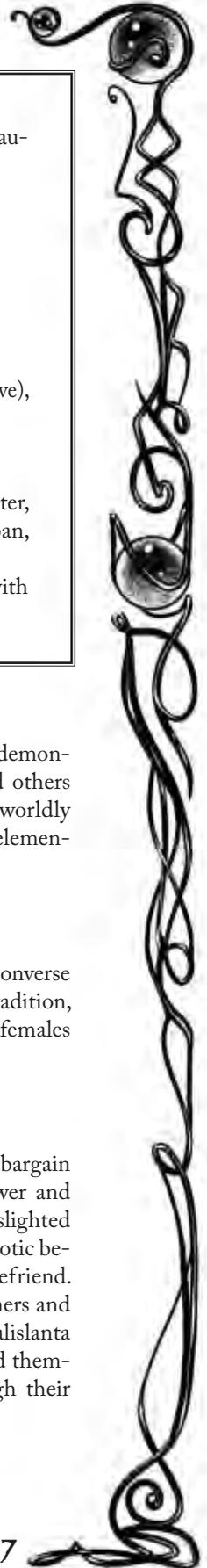
The Rasmirin do not see themselves as demon-worshippers, despite claims by the Mirin and others to the contrary. In their eyes, Aberon's otherworldly servants are merely the avatars of destructive elemental forces.

## LANGUAGE

Like their Mirin cousins, the Rasmirin converse in the Elder Tongue. Contrary to Mirin tradition, male names typically begin with an M while females names always begin with an X.

## ADVENTURERS

The Rasmirin are known for attempting to bargain with demonic forces in their search for power and revenge over those whom they perceive have slighted them in the past. This, and their generally cahotic behavior makes the Rasmirin a hard people to befriend. That said, the Rasmirin are consummate schemers and many Rasmirin agents operate throughout Talislanta under disguise. Rasmirin operatives often find themselves in the company of adventurers though their companions rarely know their true identities.



# SATADA

Powerful reptilian bipeds, Satada possess sinuous necks and scaled leathery hide of a light sandy hue. Long forked tongues flicker between their fanged jaws, scenting the air, and baleful golden eyes glare out from beneath a thick ridge of scaled bone. Ivory claws adorn hand and foot, and a heavy muscular tail lashes the ground behind, as long as the Satada is tall. Only weapons and packs adorn their otherwise naked bodies.

An ancient and malefic race, Satada are believed to be the progenitors of the Saurans and possibly the mutated descendants of the great Drakken, who once ruled the continent. The renowned naturalist, Thys-tram, claimed to have traced the origins of the species as far back as the Time Before Time, though this may be an exaggeration. For their part, the Satada have legends of a time when they were masters of the surface world, until they were usurped and cast down by the "Lightbearers" to dwell beneath the ground.

These reptilian predators are found in hot, arid regions from Kasmir and Sindar of the Seven Kingdoms to the Red Desert and the Graylands of the Quan Empire. The great range of these nomadic creatures is due to their utilization of the extensive maze of subterranean tunnels known as the Underground Highway.

Satada organize themselves in clans of between 25 and 100 individuals, including immature hatchlings, and a slave population of surface dwellers equal to approximately ten percent of the clan's numbers.

The clans wander the Underground Highway, surfacing briefly only to hunt, raid, and capture slaves before moving on again. Slaves are shackled and forced to serve the Satada as beasts of burden, menial laborers, and livestock.

Parties of Satada make regular sorties to the surface world, purposefully frequenting trade routes throughout the continent's arid regions, as these are recognized as rich sources of food, slaves, and useful goods. Satada prey on any given route for only a few days before moving on again, lest travelers become too wary to be easily ambushed. They are patient and opportunistic, and they will readily hunt any nearby animal they think they can tackle, preferring to strike with the element of surprise. Despite the claims of certain scholars, they recognize no other creatures as kin and bear an ancient hatred for all other intelligent life forms, feeding with equal relish on both warm and cold-blooded prey, including humanoids.

Prey is either eaten raw or cut into portions and smoked over a lava flow. Underground streams and lakes provide the Satada with adequate access to water.

Satada customarily settle most minor disputes with tests of strength, such as wrestling bouts. However, major disputes may result in a challenge being issued, usually in the form of a duel. Duels to the death are traditionally fought on a ring of boulders placed to encircle a pool of lava.

Satada make no discrimination on the basis of gender, and each clan is ruled by the most cruel, ruthless, and cunning of their number; although physical power and prowess are respected, Satada recognize the superior role of



## SATADA CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 7'-7'6", 300+ lbs. Reptilian features, pale sand-colored scaly hide, powerful build, heavy tail, claws and fangs, forked tongue, golden eyes

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +1	WIL +2
CHA -6	STR +4	DEX +2
CON +5	SPD +1	
CR +2	RC +2	MR -3

**Hit Points:** 28

**Skills:** Brawling +2, Culture (Satada) +1, Language (Sauran dialect - native), Oratory +1..

**Special Abilities:** Bite or Claws (DR 2); Tail (DR 4, may be used to simultaneously defend from rear assault).

**Quirks:** Susceptibility to Cold, Thick Skin

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Bandit, Gladiator, Hunter, Master Craftsman, Scout, Tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Leather harness, loincloth, backpack; coil of rope; assorted tools.

a calculating mind and the success it can garner. This chieftain usually appoints the most skilled warrior as their second, thereby cementing their position.

Satada appreciate but one art form: storytelling. It is customary for these reptilians to recount tales when at rest, including stories of notable deeds or failures, parables that highlight Satada virtues, and legends of the past. Although they practice no visual art forms, they are reasonably skilled smiths and artificers, fashioning implements and weapons of fair quality from crude ore and the loot from raids. Lava pools are used as ready-made forges when need be.

## RELATIONS

In the Satada view of things, there are only Satada, prey, and those things best avoided--anything a Satada raiding party cannot overcome. They clash infrequently with Subterranooids, Gnomekin, Vajra, and Darklings, as well as rival Satada clans.

## RELIGION

Satada consider themselves superior to all other life forms, and they regard belief in any higher being as indicative of personal weakness; humbling oneself to another is unthinkable in Satada culture. The arcane arts are roundly despised as the unnatural tools that the Lightbearers used to drive the Satada from the surface world.

The Satada spurn and mock death, believing that only the weak and unfortunate welcome it. As a re-

sult, death is regarded as a failure and as something to be inflicted upon others.

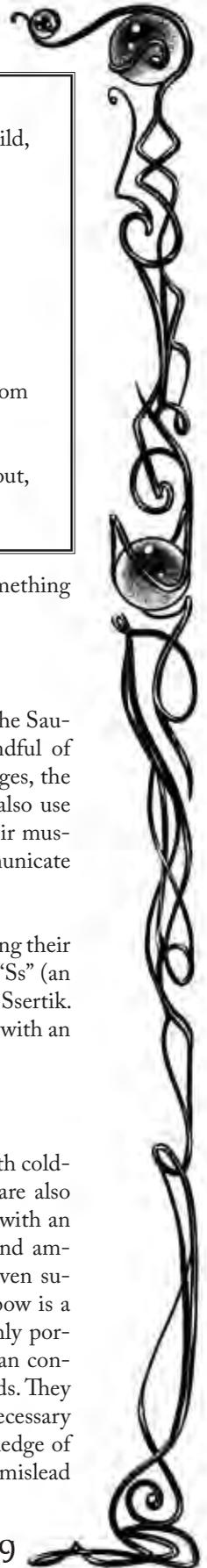
## LANGUAGE

Satada converse in an ancient variation of the Sauran tongue, and they may also speak a handful of words from common surface-dweller languages, the better to order the clan's slaves about. They also use a form of signaling, wherein they thump their muscular tails upon the ground in order to communicate over short distances.

Satada names are sibilant and harsh, reflecting their serpentine tongue. Male names begin with "Ss" (an extended hiss), such as Ssishtuk, Ssakir, and Ssertik. Female names begin with a short "S" and end with an longer "ss": Sashiss, Sarass, and Suultiss.

## ADVENTURERS

Satada are formidable opponents, being both coldly aggressive and physically powerful. They are also alarmingly swift and intelligent combatants, with an arsenal of natural weapons. Their patience and ambush skills can enable them to take down even superior targets, and their trademark capture-bow is a fearsome weapon. In melee, they utilize highly portable weapons that can easily be wielded in an confined tunnel, favoring daggers and shortswords. They eschew armor as uncomfortable and unnecessary given their natural defenses, and their knowledge of the Underground Highway permits them to mislead or evade practically any pursuer.



# SAURAN

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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 CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'6" to 7', 350-450 lbs.; Scaly rust-brown hide, reptilian features, clawed hands and feet, powerful jaws lined with rows of sharp teeth, heavy tail.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -2	PER +0	WIL +1
CHA -2	STR +5	DEX -2
CON +3	SPD -1	
CR +2	RC +1	MR -2

**Hit Points:** 30

**Skills:** Brawling +1, Culture (Sauran) +5, Handicraft (Weaponer, Armorer or Artificer) +2, Language (Sauran - native).

**Special Abilities:** Claws do DR2, Bite does DR4

**Quirks:** Cold Susceptibility, Heat Resistance, Poison Immunity (Raknig venom), Thick Skin

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Bandit, Gladiator, Guide, Hussar (land dragon), Master Craftsman, Scout, Shamanic Student (dragon totem), Shaman, Talismancer, Teamster, tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Abbreviated garments of furs and hides, red iron bracers and dragon icon, choice of Sauran War Axe or War Whip, hide belt pouch with 30 gl in uncut firegems.

## 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.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.



# 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.

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.

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.



## SAWILA CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'4" to 6', 80-140 lbs.; Pale white skin, slightly built, mane of colorful plumes along head and neck.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +2	PER +2	WIL +0
CHA +3	STR -2	DEX +1
CON -2	SPD +1	
CR -2	RC -2	MR +2

**Hit Points:** 18

**Skills:** Culture (Sawila) +5, Dance +3, Language (Chanan - native), Language (Sign - native), Music (singing) +2.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Spell Weaving

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Artist, Courtesan, Chieftain, Healer, Magician, Master Craftsman, Musician, Neophyte Magician (natural magic), Talismaner, Tribal.

**Starting Equipment:** Costume of colorful feathers; combs made of sea dragon scales; necklace of seeds and shells; feather fan, wind chimes.

## RELIGION

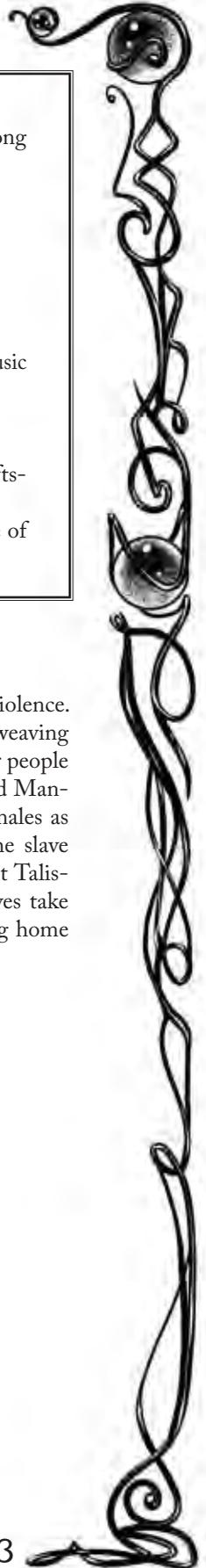
The Sawila practice a form of natural magic called spell-weaving, which consists entirely of verbal and somatic elements. They worship Arial, an elemental spirit of the wind whom they envision as a winged Sawila of great beauty, and her consort, Makk, spirit of the sea. They claim to have derived their 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.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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. Due to the slave trade, many Sawila may be found throughout Talislanta and many freed or escaped Sawila slaves take up a life of adventuring rather than returning home and risking capture again.



# SNIPE

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.

Snipes are a highly evolved species of mollusk of uncertain descent. Their closest relatives may be the giant mollusks of the Dark Coast region.

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.

Snipes are intrigued by the doings of other creatures who dwell in their domains and elsewhere, about whom they like to gossip (see sidebar). They 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

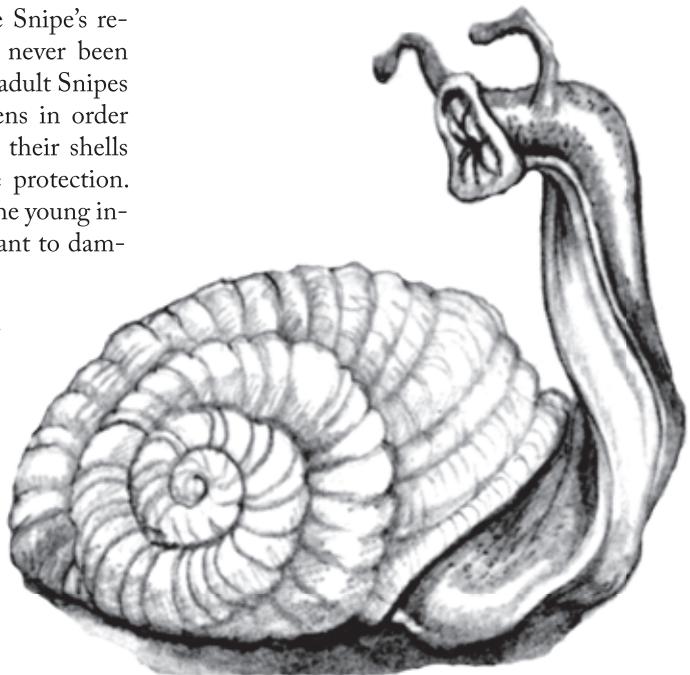
of humanoids, who they think look naked without shells.

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.



## SNIFE CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 3' to 4' diameter, 100-200 lbs.; Mollusk, spiraling shell of glistening calcinate, 3'+ eye-mouth stalk, fin.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +3	PER +4	WIL +2
CHA +2	STR -4	DEX -1
CON +3	SPD -3*	
CR -3	RC -10	MR +0

\* May swim through mud of water at SPD +2.

**Hit Points:** 16

**Skills:** Culture (Snipe) +5, Culure (any two) +1, Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (High Talislan - native), Survival (swamp) +3, Swim +10.

**Special Abilities:** Shell provudes PR7; +5 to Stealth in mud; +4 to resistance rolls vs. magic.

**Quirks:** Terran Familiarity (swamp)

**Open Paths:** Musician (singing), Savant, Wandering.

**Starting Equipment:** None

## 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.

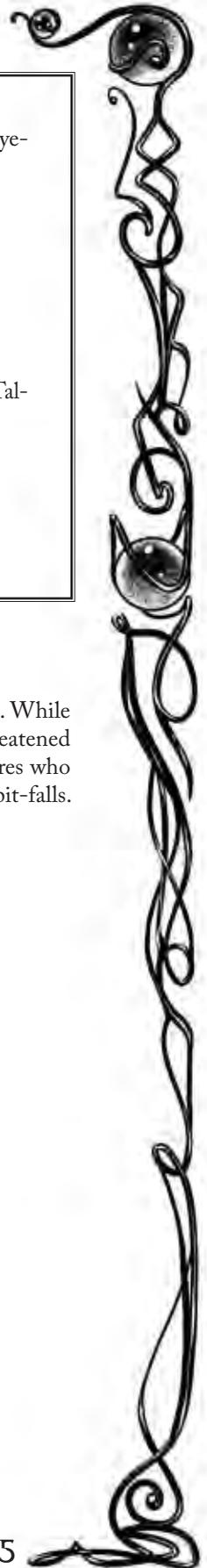
If threatened, Snipes burrow into the mud. While they are not violent in nature, if seriously threatened Snipes will sometimes tunnel beneath creatures who mean them harm, creating cave-ins and pit-falls. They have no weapons.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.



# 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.

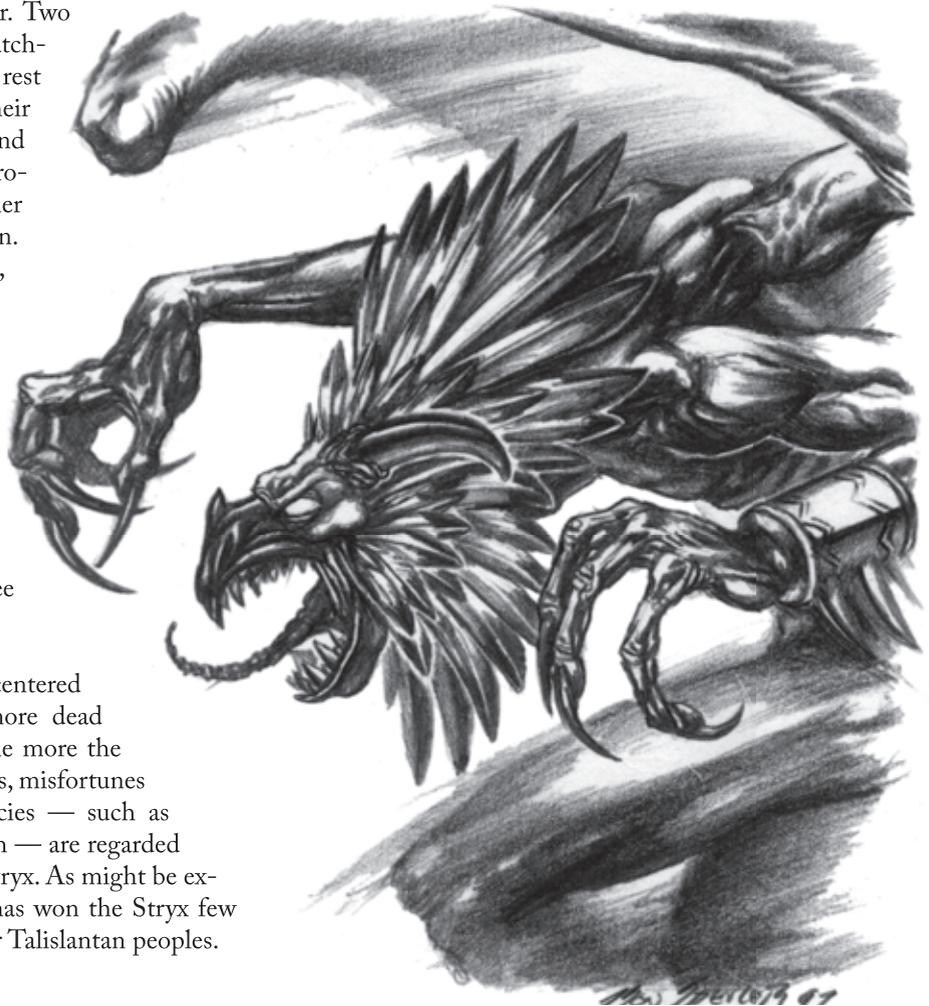
The Stryx are a mutated species of Aeriad that has degenerated over the course of several thousand years. They are believed to have come to Talislanta long ago, from a distant land.

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.

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.

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.

Preoccupied with scavenging for carrion, Stryx have little appreciation for the arts. Their music



## STRYX CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'10" to 6'2", 140-180 lbs.; Covered in dark gray or black feathers, 20+ foot wingspan, clawed talons, horns, mishapen vulture-like features, hunchbacked or stoop-shouldered physique.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +2	WIL +0
CHA -3	STR +0	DEX -2
CON +1	SPD -1*	
CR +1	RC +0	MR +0

\* *May Fly at SPD +6.*

**Hit Points:** 18

**Skills:** Culture (Stryx) +5, Culture (Ur) +2, Language (Northron - native).

**Special Abilities:** May detect carrion by scent (range 5 miles); Talons inflict DR2

**Quirks:** Aerial Combat, Sunblind

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Archer, Bandit, Magician, Neophyte Magician (necromancy), Scout, Wandering, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Animal hide loincloth; torso harness of leather; black iron bracers; necklace of uncut semi-precious stones; coin purse with 15 gl in assorted currency and gemstones.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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.

## LANGUAGE

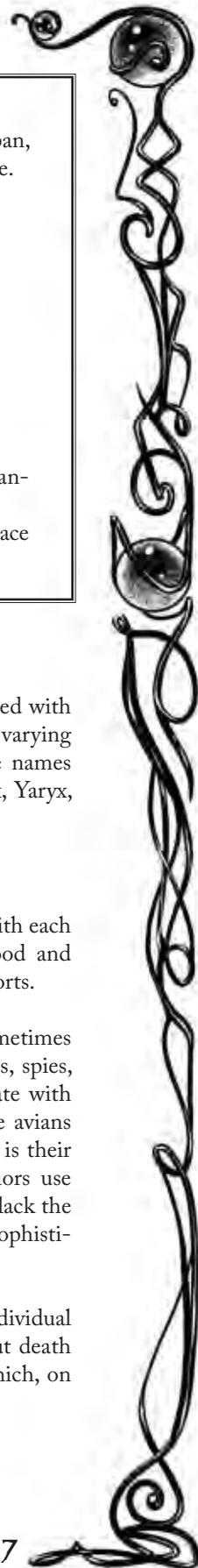
Stryx speak a form of Northron interspersed with harsh, squawking sounds used to convey varying shades of emotion. Stryx favor two-syllable names ending in "yx". For examples: Naryx, Koryx, Yaryx, Zaryx, and Saryx.

## ADVENTURERS

The various Stryx clans sometimes trade with each other for weapons, tools, and scavenged food and possessions. Stryx covet shiny objects of all sorts.

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.

Beyond their racial alliances, many individual Stryx leave their bleak homeland seeking out death and carrion wherever it might be found (which, on Talislanta, is pretty much everywhere).



## 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 Quan 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.

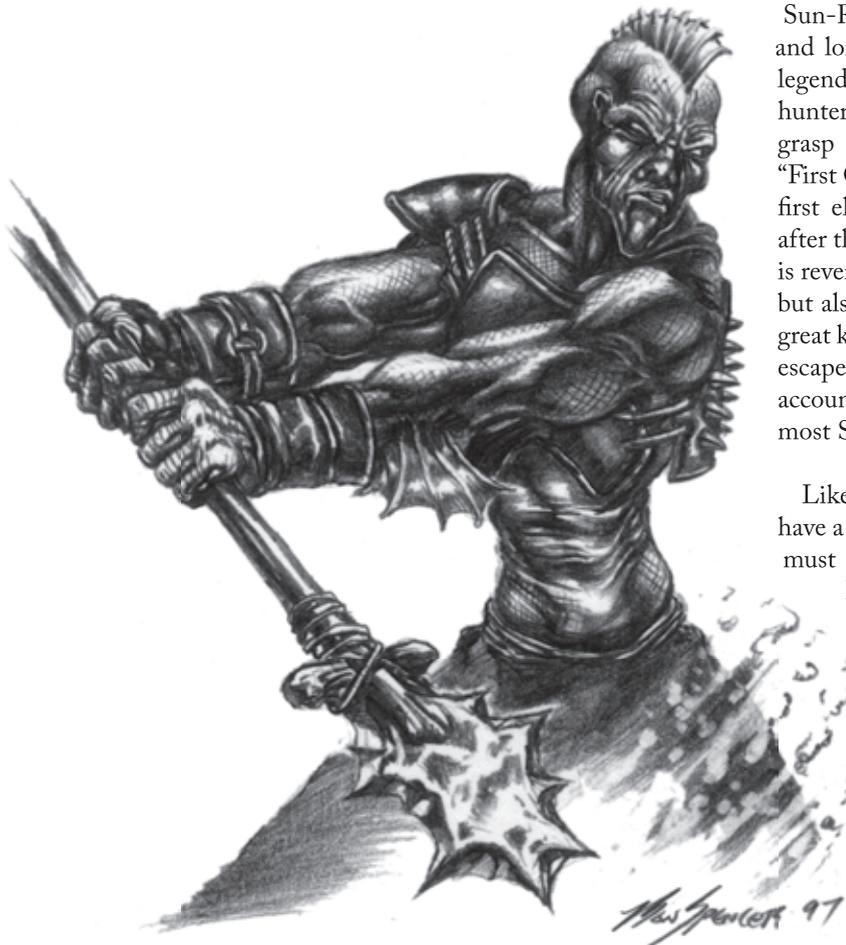
The Sun-Ra-San are the descendants of an ancient race of seafarers who once spanned the waters of the Far Seas. They may also be related to the Batrachians, a race of amphibious creatures now thought to be extinct. The tribes escaped from the Eastern Lands in time to avoid subjugation by the Quan, and fled to the Scimitar Isles, where they now live much as their ancient ancestors did before the time of The Great Disaster.

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 after-life; 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.

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.



## SUN—RA—SAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6' to 6'4", 150-220 lbs.; Skin covered with fine silvery scales, deep blue eyes.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +1	PER +2	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR +1	DEX +0
CON +1	SPD +0*	
CR +2	RC +2	MR +1

\* *May Swim at SPD +4.*

**Hit Points:** 22

**Skills:** Culture (Sun-Ra-San) +5, Fishing +3, Language (SunRaSan - native), Language (Sign - fluent), Pilot +3, Swim +10.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Aquatic Combat, Semi-Aquatic

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman (artisan), Captain, Gladiator, Magician, Master Craftsman, Neophyte Magician (aquamancy), Peddler, Sailor, Salvager, Tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth and boots of rainbow kra hide; kra scrimshaw case with sea charts, quill pens, crystal vial of ink, coin purse with 30 gl in assorted curreny, perals and scavenged treasure.

\* *Sun-ra-San characters must select Weapon (polearm) as one of their Weapon skills acquired from Paths.*

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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 Quan Empire, are said to fear these folk and

what they represent to their people.

## RELIGION

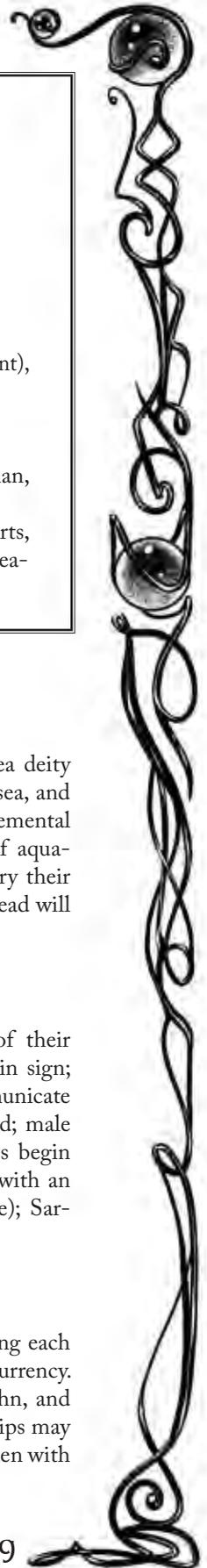
The Sun-Ra-San worship an elemental sea deity named Aqus. They have a great love of the sea, and revere the Moonfish as an avatar of their elemental deity. Priests of the sect are practitioners of aquamancy. Like the Sunra, the Sun-Ra-San bury their dead at sea, believing that the spirits of the dead will be reborn as moonfish.

## 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).

## ADVENTURERS

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.



# THIASIAN

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.

The Thiasians are believed to be descended from the same root-stock as the Thaeicians, 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).

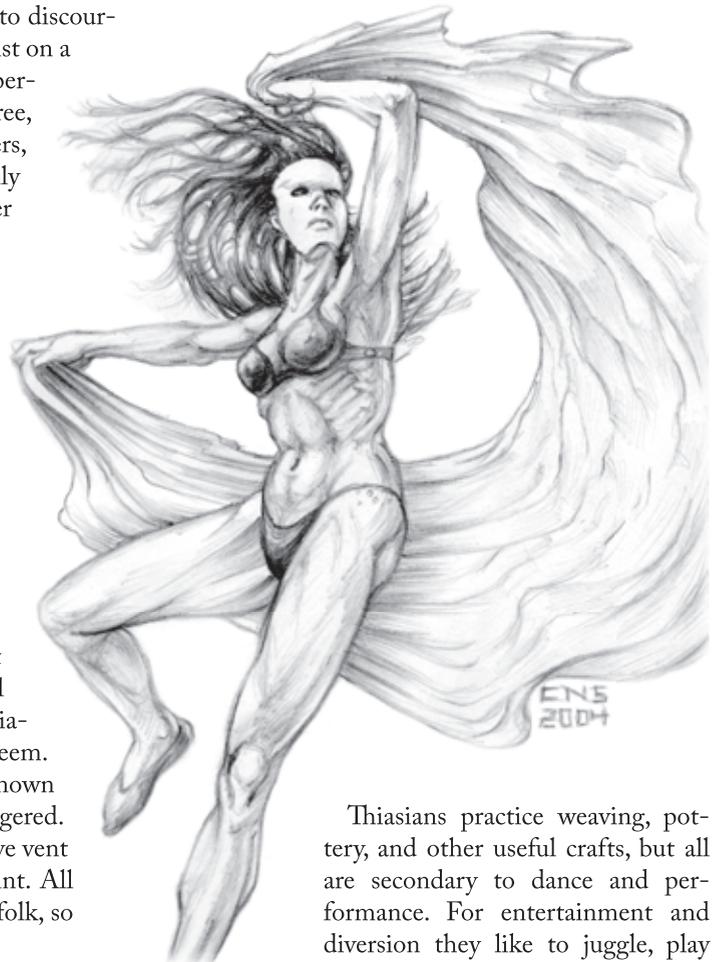
Thiasians are hunter-gatherers who live in fanciful dwellings constructed of woven vines, sea shells, and bits of colored coral. Each communal abode houses a single extended family. These dwellings are well-hidden and scattered about the isle, in order to discourage raids by Imrian slavers. Thiasians 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.

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.

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.



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

## THIASIAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5' to 6', 80-170 lbs.; Violet skin, black hair, lithe and slender physique, attractive features.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +0	WIL -1
CHA +1	STR +0	DEX +3
CON +1	SPD +2	
CR +0	RC +2	MR +2

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Thiasian) +5, Language (High Talislan - fluent), Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (Thaecian - fluent) Performing Skill of Choice +2.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Attractive

**Open Paths:** Acrobat, Artist, Archer (throwing knives), Courtesan, Musician, Pickpocket, Rural, Wandering.

**Starting Equipment:** Costume of colored silkcloth, expressionless white vizard; balls of woven vines; jugglers pins; two throwing knives; assorted additional props; 10 gl in assorted currency.

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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”.

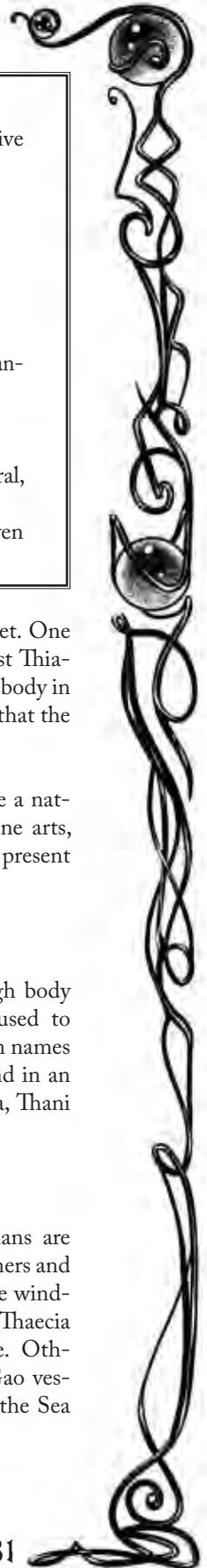
Like the Thaecians, Thiasians seem to have a natural aptitude for magic. Few study the arcane arts, however, and so such innate talents as may be present generally go undeveloped.

## 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).

## ADVENTURERS

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 known to join the crews of Gao vessels, attracted by the flamboyant lifestyle of the Sea Rogues.



# 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.

The Ur are a savage race who settled in the Urag 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.

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.

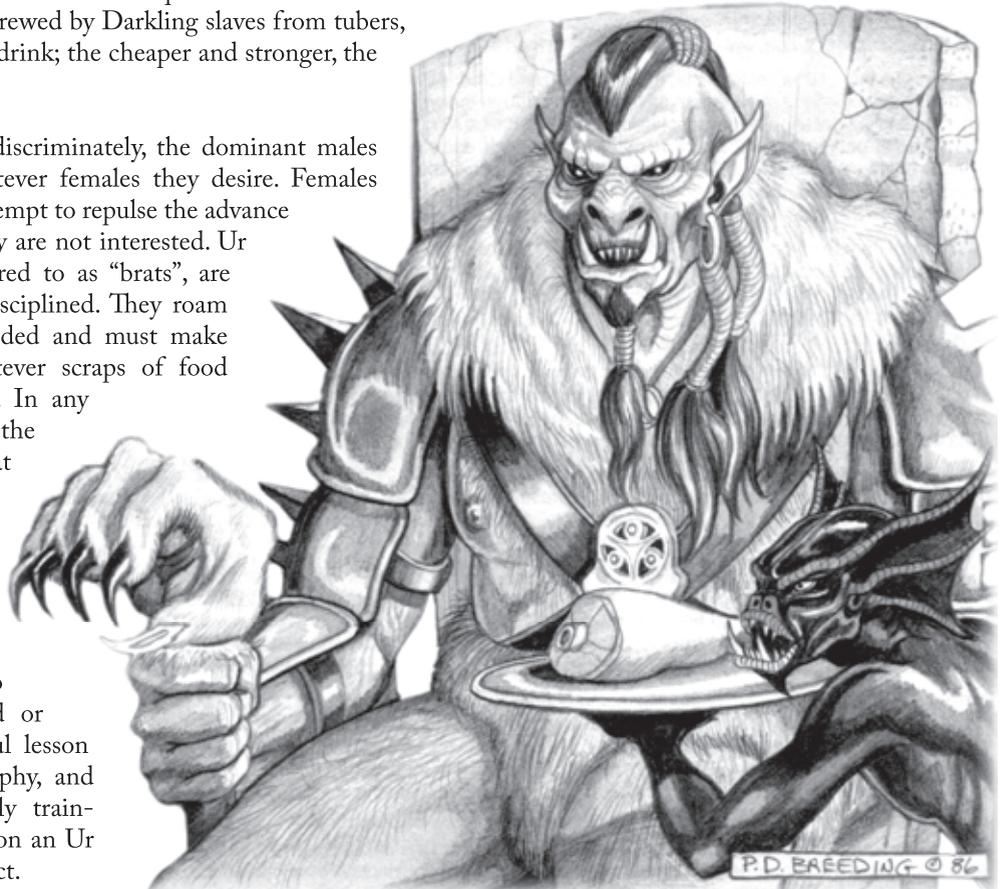
Ur mate indiscriminately, the dominant males choosing whatever females they desire. Females must often attempt to repulse the advance by force if they are not interested. Ur children, referred to as “brats”, are wild and undisciplined. They roam all over untended and must make do with whatever scraps 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.

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.

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).

Ur have no tradition of music, art, or dance. They force Darkling slaves to play and dance when in the



## UR CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 7' to 8', 500-600 lbs.; Yellow-green 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.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -2	PER +0	WIL +0
CHA -2	STR +6	DEX -2
CON +6	SPD -1	
CR +2	RC +1	MR -1

**Hit Points:** 34

**Skills:** Brawling +2, Culture (Ur) +5, Language (Northron - native), Language (Low Talislan - basic).

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Night Vision, Read Emotions

**Open Paths:** Alchemical Adept\*, Alchemist\*, Apprentice Craftsman (artisan - siege), Bandit, Bodyguard, Chieftain, Engineer, Gladiator, Hussar (ogriphant), Inquisitor, Shamanic Student, Shaman, Siege Engineer, Slaver, Teamster, Urban, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth, cloak and boots of yaksha fur; necklace of teeth, black iron arm bands; coin purse with 30 gl in assorted currency.

*\*Ur Alchemist have access to the Distill Poison and Concoct Explosives alchemical Quirks only.*

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

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.

## RELIGION

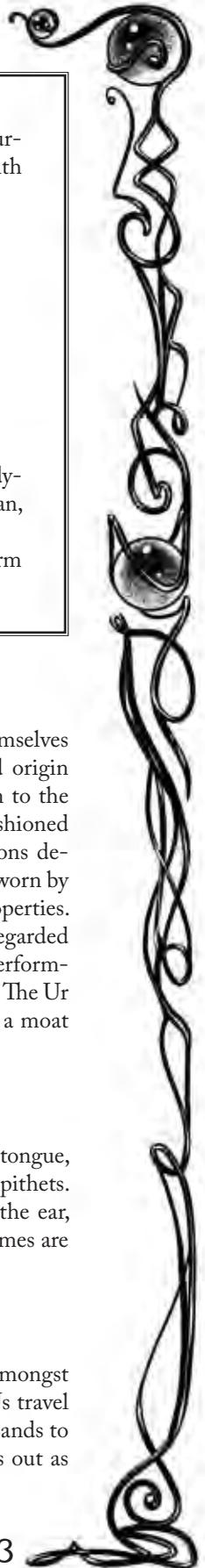
The Ur have no gods, but prostrate themselves before immense stone idols. The nature and origin of these monstrous effigies is unknown, even to the Ur themselves. Scholars believe they were fashioned long before the Ur clans settled in Urag. Icons depicting these three-eyed idols are sometimes worn by 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.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

The Ur clans are constantly at war, either amongst themselves or with their neighbors. Many Us travel south to the Seven Kingdoms and Western Lands to seek their fortunes, usually hiring themselves out as mercenaries.



# WHISP

Whisps are tiny slender humanoids, four to six inches in height. Genderless creatures, they have large iridescent butterfly wings, a shock of vividly colored hair, long sinuous tails, and only three digits on each hand and two toes on each foot. Their features are impish and expressive, with large sapphire or emerald eyes, wide mouths, and long pointed ears. They eschew attire of any sort.

Whisps are a race of minor plant elementals from the Green World who are voluntarily born of plants into corporeal form in order to experience physical existence. There are three known sub-species: Woodwhisps born of trees and shrubs; Waterwhisps born of aquatic plants, and Nightwhisps, those born of fungi and other plants preferring dark and shadowed areas.

Whisps are native to forests and woodlands across the continent, most notably Astar and Silvanus, where they dwell in small tribal units amid the boughs of the trees.

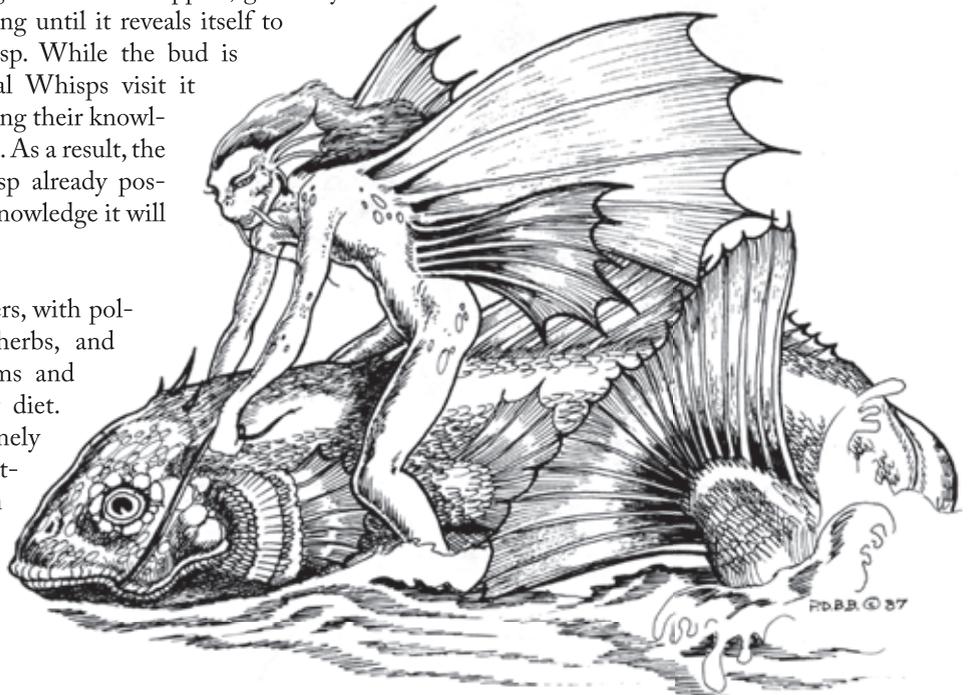
The birth of a new Whisp—a process called “*budding*”—is a communal affair, with the local tribe gathering on the branch of a tree and coaxing the minor elemental to grow forth. Over a period of several weeks, a fresh green bud will appear, gradually growing and unfurling until it reveals itself to be a newborn Whisp. While the bud is developing, the local Whisps visit it continually, whispering their knowledge and secrets to it. As a result, the newly budded Whisp already possesses much of the knowledge it will need to survive.

Whisps are foragers, with pollen, nuts, berries, herbs, and certain edible blooms and fungi forming their diet. They are also extremely fond of cakes, sweetmeats, and blossom nectar, all of which they will go to insane lengths to acquire.

Those Whisps native to Astar have an almost symbiotic relationship with the Muses. Recognizing the semi-elemental nature of their tall, butterfly-winged compatriots, Whisps, being considerably more mature and practical than their larger cousins, have adopted the mantle of guardianship. They gather food, provide protection, and even raise and teach the Muse children. In return, the Muses provide the Whisps with stimulating telepathic visions, companionship, and aid on tasks that require someone of considerably larger stature to perform. So strong is this partnership that individual

Whisps crave companionship and excitement, and although they are considered wiser and less mischievous than other Whisps, they are still possessed of boundless curiosity and a penchant for practical jokes. These traits can be somewhat hazardous to their health, given their complete lack of subtlety and disregard for such niceties as privacy and ownership.

If irritated or bored, Whisps can be excruciatingly sarcastic and can even display great ferocity if threatened or cornered. Much like newborn children, Whisps experience all of their emotions as overriding extremes.



## WHISP CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 4"-6", 2-3 oz. Slender and diminutive build, genderless, large blue or green eyes, large pointed ears, wide expressive mouth, long sinuous tail, iridescent butterfly wings; *Woodwhisp*: green or brown skin, shock of green hair; *Waterwhisp*: green or blue skin, shock of green hair; *Nightwhisp*: black skin, shock of deep blue hair.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +1	PER +0	WIL -2
CHA +1	STR -6	DEX +8
CON -1	SPD +8*	
CR +1	RC +1	MR +3

\* *in the air. SPD -3 on the ground.*

**Hit Points:** 6

**Skills:** Culture (Whisp) +5, Culture (Muse) +5, Language (Northron - native)

**Special Abilities:** All Whisp-sized weapons are DR1. All Whisps receive a +6 bonus to defense as they are difficult to hit due to their small size.

**Quirks:** Aerial/Aquatic Combat, Terrain Familiarity (forest or aquatic), Natural Telepathy, Night Vision (nightwhisps only), Semi-Aquatic (waterwhisps only).

**Open Paths:** Archer, Guide, Healer, Herbalist, Hunter, Magician, Neophyte Magician (natural magic), Pickpocket, Rural, Scout.

**Starting Equipment:** Small woven pouch; material for traps; nutshell full of soporific plant toxin; no wealth (unless carrying it for a Muse companion).

## RELATIONS

Whisps view the world as a vast and exciting place, full of beauty and danger. Despite this, few leave their beloved forest homes, save in the company of a traveling Muse. They love and respect Muses, but consider other races to be equal parts fascinating and silly; most other races, for their part, view Whisps as pests, and some even resort to whispbane, serpentine or other means of deterrence. Woodwhisps have little to do with their Waterwhisp cousins, whom they consider too mercurial, and have a fierce rivalry with their Nightwhisp kin, whom they consider too cruel.

## RELIGION

Although not religious, Whisps are respectful of older, larger, elemental spirits and are innately magical themselves. Due to their bond with their native Green World, they all instinctively know a dint or two of natural magic, although these abilities may be improved with practice and experimentation.

The concept of death as a final state is alien to these immortal beings, as they believe that the spirit cannot be destroyed and that physical death is therefore not a tragedy in any way. They believe that Muses

also live on in the Green World, although they do partake in Muse funeral rites in order to ease their companions' suffering.

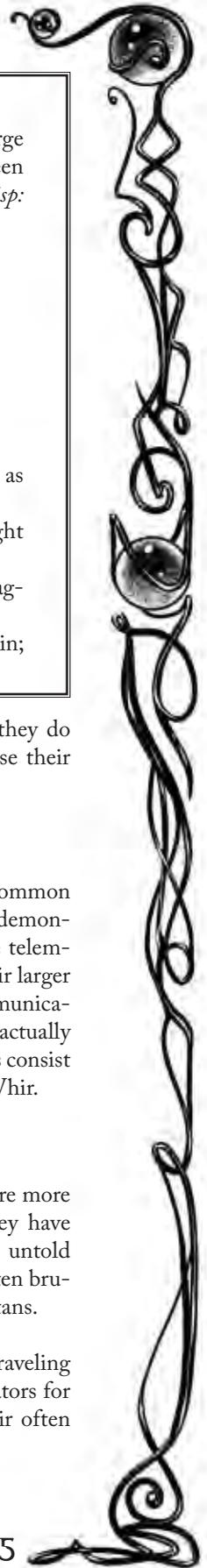
## LANGUAGE

Whisps speak whatever language is most common to the area in which they dwell, but they also demonstrate a notable aptitude for interpreting the telepathic communications of Muses. Unlike their larger kin, Whisps show no disdain for verbal communication; in fact, getting a Whisp to shut up can actually prove something of a challenge. Whisp names consist of a single syllable, such as Migg, Glif, and Whir.

## ADVENTURERS

Despite their diminutive stature, Whisps are more than capable of fending for themselves. They have waged sporadic war on the sniper bugs for untold years, for reasons neither side recalls, their often brutal clashes going unnoticed by other Talisnantans.

Whisps will usually accompany Muses traveling beyond the bounds of Astar, acting as translators for them and doing their best to look after their often distracted charges.



# 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 loincloths 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.

The ancestors of the Vajra once dwelled beneath the Opal Mountains and Vajran Hills, in the northern part of what is now the Quan 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.

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".

Vajra are normally quiet and introspective by nature; "as solid and enduring as stone", as they say.



## VAJRA CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 4'8" to 5'4", 140-200 lbs.; Bodies covered with overlapping orange-brown plates; squat, barrel-like torso, heavy limbs.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +1	PER -1	WIL +2
CHA -1	STR +2	DEX +0
CON +4	SPD -1	
CR +1	RC +0	MR +0

**Hit Points:** 28

**Skills:** Culture (Vajra) +5, Culture (Quan) +3, Language (Quan - native), Mining +5.

**Special Abilities:** Plated skin equals PR3

**Quirks:** Burrow, Keen Hearing, Night Vision,

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Engineer, Master Craftsman, Miner, Rural, Siege Engineer, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth; wide belt for tools; ceremonial cloak; shoulder pack with assorted tool.

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).

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## RELIGION

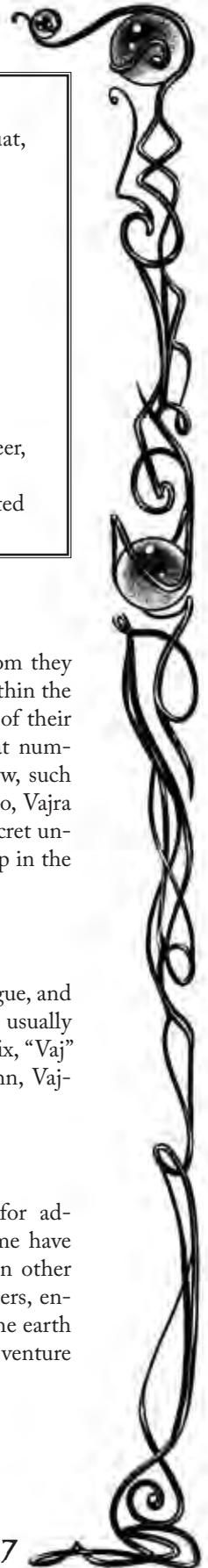
Vajra revere the earth goddess, Terra, whom they regard as the Great Elemental that dwells within the world of Archaeus. Prior to the subjugation of their people, Vajra would gather together in great numbers and offer prayers to their goddess. Now, such practices are forbidden by the Kang. Even so, Vajra priestesses are said to still hold services in secret underground shrines. Vajra bury their dead deep in the earth, their ancestral home.

## 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.

## ADVENTURERS

Not many Vajra have the opportunity for adventure. Treated as slaves by the Kang, some have escaped their servitude and may be found in other nations of Talislanta, usually serving as miners, engineers and architects. Their knowledge of the earth make them sought after when one needs to venture beneath the ground.



# 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.

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.

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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



## VERDIR CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 6'6" to 7', 150-175 lbs.; Grass-like skin, elongated cranium, mane of yellow-green leaves, gangly build.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +0	PER +1	WIL -1
CHA +2	STR -1	DEX +2
CON -1	SPD +0	
CR -2	RC +0	MR +0

**Hit Points:** 18

**Skills:** Culture (Verdir) +5, Language (Plants - native), Survival (forest) +4.

**Special Abilities:** Natural camouflage provides +6 bonus to Stealth in forests.

**Quirks:** Terrain Familiarity (forest)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman (artificer), Artist, Guide, Herbalist, Musician, Talismaner, Tribal.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth of woven grass; bracelets and necklace of woven vines; garlands of blossoms (females); various tools' musical instrument (bellflowers, wind chimes, reed flute, etc.); gourd of pollen and plant dyes.

*\*Verdir alchemical adepts may not take the Craft Alchemical Materials quirk.*

have no formal relations with outsiders. A rival race of plant-folk, the Arborin, are hostile towards the Verdir.

## 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.

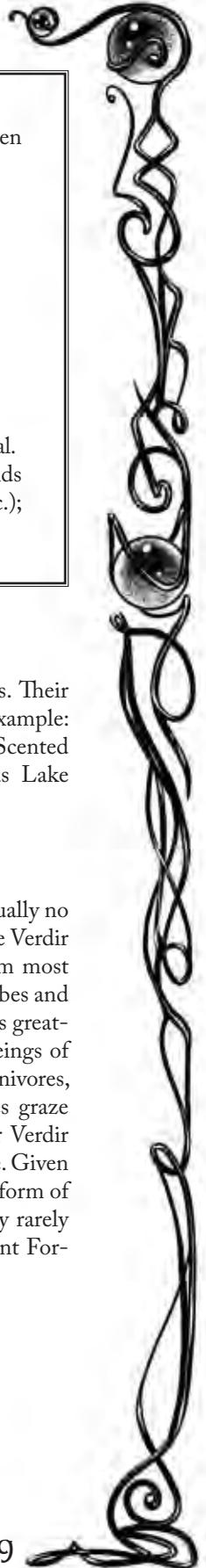
As part of their rituals Verdir paint themselves with multi-hued pollens and plant-dyes, with wildly colored results. They also enjoy painting flowers and leaves in different colors, weaving necklaces and garlands, and creating topiary "sculptures" in various unusual, abstract shapes. Verdir music is 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.

## ADVENTURERS

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. Verdir are only rarely encountered beyond the edges of the Aberrant Forest.



# 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.

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.

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.

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).

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.

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 CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5' to 6', 120-220 lbs.; Metallic gray skin, flat features, squat physique, six-fingered hands with two thumbs each.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +1	PER +2	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR +1	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD -1	
CR +1	RC +2	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Culture (Yassan) +5, Culture (Dracartan) +3, Handicraft (select one) +2, Language (High Talislan - native), Language (Nomadic - native).

**Special Abilities:** Technomancy +1

**Quirks:** Exceptional Manual Dexterity, Literate (technomantic schematics)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Engineer, Master Craftsman, Merchant, Siege Engineer, Technomancer, Urban.

**Starting Equipment:** Hooded yellow tunic and breeches (both with utility pockets); heavy leather boots, leather gloves, red iron strongbox for tools; coin purse with 50 gl in assorted currency.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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.

## 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

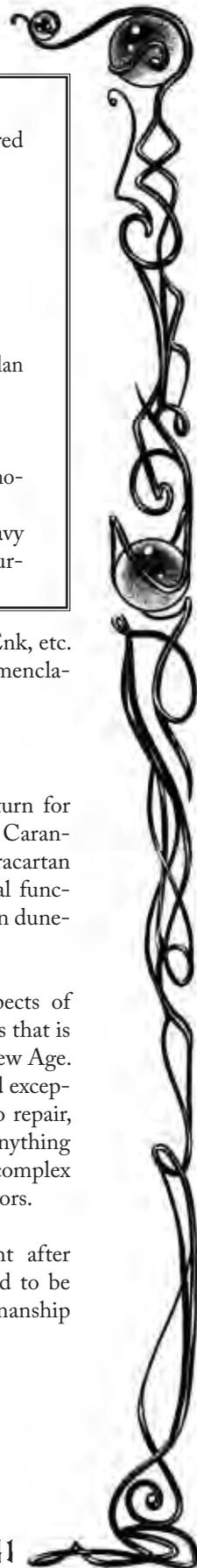
have but a single syllable: Ome, Yan, Ang, Enk, etc. There is no difference in male or female nomenclature.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

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.

Yassan Technomancers are highly sought after tradesman across Talislanta. Yassan fees tend to be high, but the speed and quality of their workmanship are unsurpassed.



# 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.

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

Both the northern and southern Yitek tribes are on good terms with the Djafir 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.



## YITEK CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'6" to 6'4", 85-185 lbs.; Dark brown skin and hair, lean and wiry build, angular features.

**Base Attributes:**

INT +1	PER +2	WIL +0
CHA +0	STR +1	DEX +0
CON +0	SPD -1	
CR +1	RC +2	MR +1

**Hit Points:** 20

**Skills:** Antiquarian +2, Culture (Yitek) +5, Cryptography +1, Language (Nomadic - native), Language (Sign - native), Language (Low Talislan - fluent).

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Night Vision

**Open Paths:** Nomadic, Peddler, Salvager, Scout, Teamster.

**Starting Equipment:** Veiled headress; loose-fitting robes of woven gauze; belt pouch, shoulder staxchel; pickaxe; shovel; pry-bar; leather map case; coin purse with 40 gl in assorted currency.

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.

## 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.

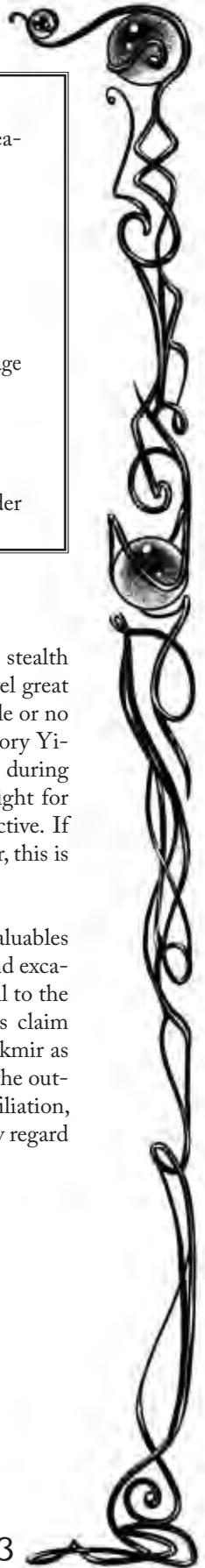
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

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, Kashmir, and the outpost of Karfan. Regardless of tribe or band affiliation, Yitek will not deal with the Farad, whom they regard as swindlers.



# YRMANIAN

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 dreadlocks daubed with colored pigments. For clothes, the Wildmen employ rude loincloths, with arm- and leg-wrappings made from strips of hide.

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.

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.



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 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.

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.

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

## YRMANIAN CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'6" to 6'2", 130-230 lbs.; Light brown skin, bestial features, deep-set eyes, fangs, shaggy hair worn in braids and dreadlocks doubled with colroed pigments.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -6	PER -4	WIL +6
CHA -4	STR +2	DEX +2
CON +4	SPD +0	
CR +1	RC +2	MR +0

**Hit Points:** 25

**Skills:** Culture (Yrmanian) +5, Doctrines (Yrman) +5, Language (Sign - native), Survival (forest) +1.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** Addiction (skullcap), Poison Immunity (skullcap)

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsman, Chieftain, Hunter, Talismaner, Tribal, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth, arm and leg wrappings; pouch for skullcap.

evidenced by cave paintings and impromptu sculptures of wood or stone.

## RELATIONS

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.

## 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.

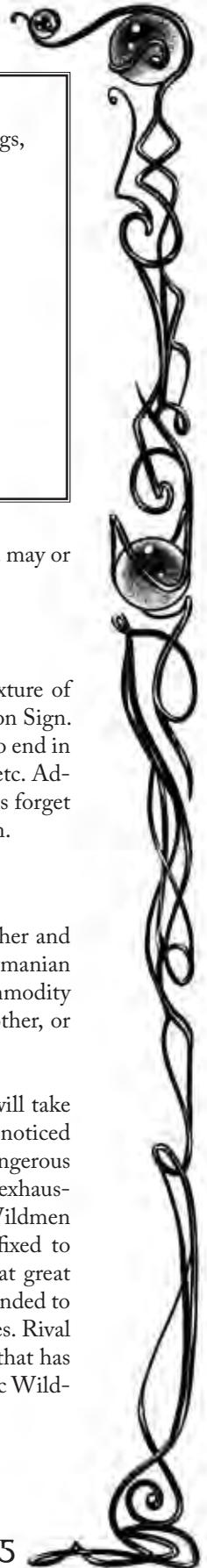
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

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.

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.



## 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.

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.

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.

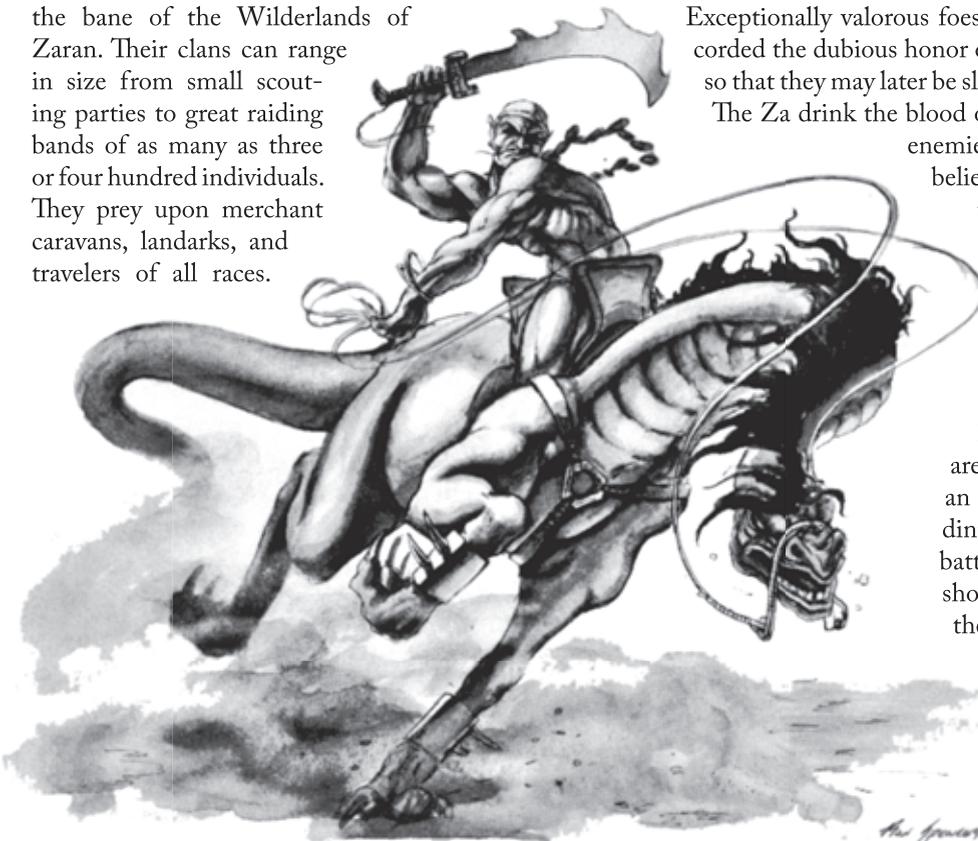
Though females are an integral part of the clans, Za society is male-oriented. Za males may take as many wives as they can attract; skilled warriors and successful bandits carry the most esteem among Za women. Wives who possess skills that the Za deem useful – such as riding, swordsmanship, bowmanship, 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.

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).

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



## Za CHARACTERS

**Appearance:** 5'6" to 6', 90-190 lbs.; Pallid yellow skin, lethargy 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.

**Base Attributes:**

INT -1	PER +1	WIL -1
CHA -2	STR +2	DEX +0
CON +4	SPD +0	
CR +2	RC +0	MR -2

**Hit Points:** 25

**Skills:** Culture (Za) +5, Language (Low Talislan - native), Language (Sign - native), Ride (equus) +3.

**Special Abilities:** None

**Quirks:** None

**Open Paths:** Apprentice Craftsmen, Archer, Bandit, Chieftain, Hussar, Nomadic, Scout, Teamster, Warrior.

**Starting Equipment:** Loincloth; tight hide chest binder (females); harness of studded land lizard hide; bands of reptile hide on head and upper arms; wristblades; whipsash; necklace of hammered black iron disks; coin purse with 20 gl in assorted currency.

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.

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.

## RELATIONS

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.

## RELIGION

The Za have no religion or god. They know nothing of magic, but have great faith in the ancient leg-

end 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.

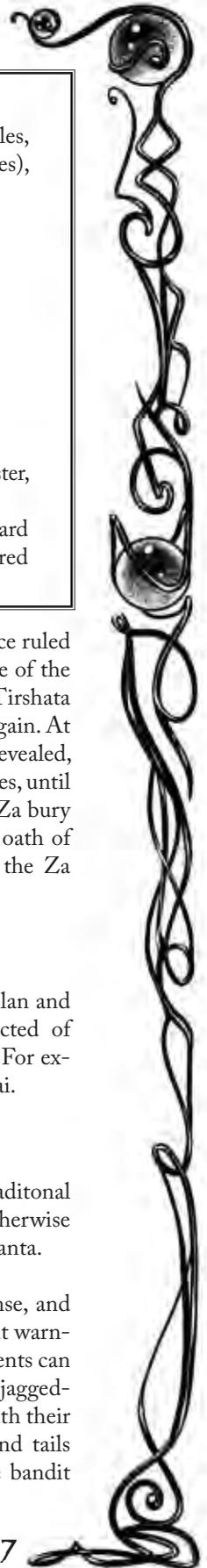
## LANGUAGE

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.

## ADVENTURERS

Za can often be found beyond their traditional tribal lands, normally either raiding or otherwise causing trouble for the civilized folk of Talislanta.

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 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.



# NEW SKILLS & QUIRKS



## MAGICAL SKILLS

### SOUL—BINDING

Soul-Binding is the practice of imprisoning a soul or spirit in a black diamond. The result is a soulstone, a crystal possessed of magical properties, valued throughout the lower planes. This requires an MR + Soul-Binding roll with a Degree of Difficulty equal to the level of the spirit. Any spirit may be used; mortal souls, elementals, even animal spirits.

Once the spirit is bound to the soulstone, the soul-binder can then bind the soulstone to various items to imbue them with certain powers or properties of the captured presence.

The primary component of a soulstone, the black diamond, must be of a carat weight equal to the level of the desired enchantment, i.e., a level 12 enchantment requires a 12 carat soulstone. In addition, the spirit within must have an appropriate affinity for the enchantment in question (see Spiritual Affinities.)

Binding a soulstone an item to create an enchantment requires an MR+ Soul-Binding roll with a Degree of Difficulty equal to the level of the enchantment being applied. The time required to create a soul-bound item is measured in days; 1 day per level for a limited enchantment, 3 days per level for a continuous enchantment.

The guidelines for Soul-Binding are similar to Enchantment as described in Chapter 5, including the

7-item limit. However, a single soul-bound item can contain more than one power, though the enchantment levels are added together.

For example, a crown that adds +2 to INT and +1 to MR would be a level 15 enchantment and would take 45 days to complete. If the spirit is meant to animate the item or interact with the world in other ways (such as spellcasting) the Summon Mode is used, forcing the spirit to perform three services per day.

*Example: Azradem, a crafty Malum, makes a deal with a mortal spellcaster, giving him knowledge and power in exchange for his soul upon his death. The mortal's highest skill was his Summon Mode, at +9, and thus his spirit is considered to have an Ability Level of 9. Azradem, using a 16 carat black diamond, makes his Soul-Binding roll with a Degree of Difficulty of 9.*

*Now to begin the enchantment.*

*Azradem plans to bind this soulstone to a shadowsteel ring. The soulstone will support up to a level 16 enchantment, though no single effect can be greater than level 9, the level of the spirit. Azradem enchants the ring to give the wearer +3 to spells of summoning (Enchantment level 9), and shroud the wearer in magical shadows (Illusion level 1, +6 levels for magnitude 2, "bright as a campfire", though in this case it is "dark enough to blot out a campfire".) This is a level 16 enchantment, the most this soulstone can take. After 48 days Azradem fails his Soul-Binding roll with a Degree of Difficulty of 16, shattering the soulstone and freeing the grateful mortal into the hands of Death.*

Soul-Binding is practiced throughout the lower planes and is also known among the Malum of Talislanta. Rumours abound of individual dark magicians with this skill, particularly among the Rajans.

**Training Period:** 100 weeks

**Attribute Modifier:** MR

*Note: At the GM's discretion, Soul Binding may be added to the list of Preferred skills available to the Enchanter Path.*

### SPIRITUAL AFFINITIES

Why do entities from the lower realms desire mortal souls? Why are some souls more valued than others? The answer lies in the practice of Soul-Binding and the concept of spiritual affinities.

Mortal souls and other spiritforms bear affinities for various concepts, based on their nature, or the skills, abilities, or inclinations they had in life, or in the manner of their passing. A smith would have an affinity for the concepts of strength, endurance, and craftsmanship, for example. A healer would have an affinity for the concept of empathy. Someone burned at the stake would have an affinity for the concept of fire. A river elemental would have an affinity for the concept of water.

The practice of Soul-Binding taps into the energy of the soulstone, using those affinities to create magical effects. A hammer with the soul of a smith bound to it could grant the wielder a bonus to Artificer rolls, or a bonus to Strength. A circlet with the soul of a healer might grant the user an empathic sense for living creatures. A sword with the soul of a fire victim might blaze with those same killing flames. A ring with a river elemental might confer water breathing.

The level of the spirit is generally the highest skill level or attribute it possessed in life, and this number is used to determine the level of enchantment possible with that soul. A warrior with weapon skills of +15 could be used to make a 15th level enchantment (such as adding +5 to an appropriate weapon skill.)

It is for this reason that the souls of sorcerers are valued most highly. A sorcerer's soul could have an affinity for virtually any enchantment the binder desires.

## 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.

Basic use of the Technomancy skill includes use of a technomantic actuator, reading of technomantic schematics, structural analysis and the design, modification and repair of simple technomantic devices, and other mechanical devices such as siege engines, traps, and conveyances. More advanced uses of the Technomancy skill are possible but these also require that the character possess specific Quirks.

**Training Period:** 100 weeks

**Attribute Modifier:** INT

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

### 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. Each additional five feet radius or 10 foot range increases the base difficulty by 1.

**Restrictions:** Greenman race only

**Attribute modifier:** WIL

### SHADOWSTEP

Shadowstepping is a skill mastered by Malum-shadowwarriors, through which they control their corporeality to a degree of precision and speed that allows them to perform several unique feats, such as becoming noncorporeal for just an instant to evade an incoming attack, or shadowstepping through an opponent to suddenly appear at his or her rear (receiving +5 to attack the following round).

**Training Period:** 50 weeks

**Restrictions:** Malum race only

**Attribute Modifier:** DEX



## 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.

**Restrictions:** Manra race only

**Attribute modifier:** WIL

## QUIRKS

### AMPLIFIED SPELL

Characters with this Quirk have studied one particular spell at length and have effectively doubled the normal effects of this spell. Players should select one of their known spells. Whenever cast, this spell it now automatically has the maximum possible effect (maximum amount of damage done, maximum number of hit points healed, etc.) on even a Partial Success on the Action Table.

**Training Period:** 20 weeks

**Restrictions:** INT +2

### AQUATIC COMBAT

This Quirk allows the character to fight while submerged in water without penalty, a skill learned by many amphibious and aquatic folk such as Imrians, Sunra and Moorg Wan and those cultures familiar with aquatic terrain such as the Oceanians. Characters using aquatic combat may make diving attacks, adding their STR and SPD as modifiers to Damage Rating.

**Training Period:** 40 weeks (half for aquatic races)

**Restrictions:** None

### AURA OF DEATH

Characters with this Quirk have a pervasive aura of death around them. Living creatures in their presence suffer an eerie feeling and suffer a -2 penalty to WILL while animals and creatures with INT -5 and below will seek to flee from the aura whenever possible.

**Restrictions:** Malum race only

## BRACHIATION

The character with this Quirk may swing from branch to branch among the trees at full SPD.

**Restrictions:** Mogroth race only

## BURROW

The character may burrow through earth at a rate of 5 feet per round (technically SPD -4.5).

**Restrictions:** Vajar race only

## COLD SUSCEPTIBILITY

Characters with this Quirk do not function well in cold temperatures. They suffer a -2 penalty to all Action Table rolls in cold climates and also take double the normal damage from cold-based attacks.

**Restrictions:** None

## CONSTRUCT CLOCKWORK

This Quirk allows a character with the Technomancy skill to design and construct clockwork devices, ranging from toys, timepieces, and music-players, to replacement limbs and automatons.

Clockworks are generally powered by an internal soulstone, though some may rely on springs and require occasional rewinding. Those that use a soulstone cannot be enchanted, but those relying on springs can. Clockworks are capable of limited activity, performing a single task or set of tasks.

Type	Difficulty	Cost to construct*
Simple devices	-2	500 gl
Advanced devices	-10	2,250 gl
Complex devices	-15	5,000 gl
Soul-bound	-20 or	50,000 + gl
Automatons	more	

\*Costs listed are for soulstone clockworks. Halve cost for spring-driven devices.

Simple devices include music boxes, a figurine that reads a poem or sings a song, or a clockwork pet that follows the owner and performs three tricks. Simple devices take one week to construct.

Advanced devices include toy soldiers that march into battle with each other and scream in mock pain when “killed”; a clockwork head, mounted over the door, that speaks a greeting and announces visitors; an automaton scribe that copies words from one page to another. Advanced devices take four weeks to construct.

Complex devices include household servants that can obey simple commands, chess-playing automatons, and devices to replace lost limbs. Complex devices take six months to construct.

Soul-bound Automatons are devices designed to allow the soulstone within to actually take control, as though it were possessed. Since the soul-bound automaton is controlled by the spirit of the soulstone, it needs no programming and can act of its own free will.

Any clockwork device can be soul-bound, though the most common types are humanoid in form. Some are made to be killing machines, with heavy armor and a variety of magical and alchemical weaponry. Some are designed to “cheat death”, allowing a wealthy Tarteran to have a clockwork body designed to house his or her soul after death. Soul-bound automatons are very rare, and take ten years or more to construct.

**Training Period:** 100 weeks

## CONSTRUCT TECHNOAURAL DEVICES

This Quirk allows a character with the Technomancy skill to design and construct technoaural devices.

Technomancers are knowledgeable in the field of acoustics, and are adept at the design and construction of devices which can be used to amplify, deaden, or re-direct sound. These technoaural devices require no power source, and may take the form of elongated tubes, horns, or baffles, typically made of lightweight red iron or red iron alloys. Dracartan temples utilize elaborate technoaural systems to dampen sound and suppress unwanted noise. The Yassan are also skilled at designing spy systems—networks of tubes concealed within the walls of a room or even an entire building, which can be used to eavesdrop on individuals without their knowledge. A technoaurism device can increase a character’s PER rolls by up to +5. Devices can also be created that will cause a pen-

alty to PER attempts of others. The DoD to create such a device is -2 for each plus or minus the device provides.

**Training Period:** 40 weeks

## CONSTRUCT TECHOMANTIC WEAPONS

This Quirk allows a character with the Technomancy skill to design and construct technomantic weapons.

One of the more advanced uses of the Technomancy skill includes the creation of technomantic weapons. These could include a myriad of devices. Each device has some clockwork mechanism and moving parts. Only ranged technomantic weapons can be produced and may be created to provide up to +5 to either attack rolls or damage with the weapon. The DoD to craft such devices is -3 for every +1 bonus the weapon provides. Alternatively, the technomancer can create a ranged weapon that utilizes thaumaturgical essences and does area effect damage. These weapons do DR8 (fire or cold damage) in a 10 foot radius, have a range of 50 feet and take a full round to reload. The DoD to craft such a weapon is -10. All technomantic weapons take one week to create and cost 1d20 x 100 gl in parts and equipment.

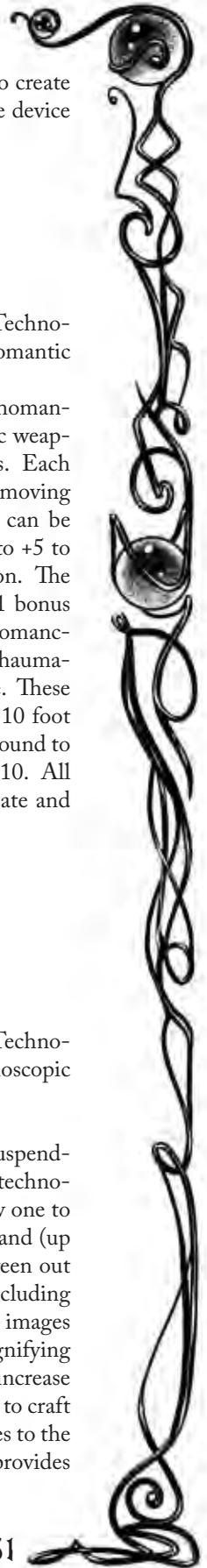
**Training Period:** 100 weeks

**Attribute Modifier:** INT

## CONSTRUCT TECHNOSCOPIC DEVICES

This Quirk allows a character with the Technomancy skill to design and construct technoscopic devices.

By carefully arranging lenses of red glass, suspended by fine chains within a circular frame, the technomancers are able to build devices which allow one to view distant objects as if they were close at hand (up to 100x magnification). Special lenses to screen out certain factors are theoretically possible, including devices to spot intruders (by singling out the images of living beings) or to see at night (by magnifying moonlight). Devices can be created that will increase a character’s PER rolls by up to +5. The DoD to craft such items is -2 for each +1 the device provides to the users PER. The DoD to create a device that provides darkvision when worn is -10.



One popular use of this skill is the creation of scopes for some ranged weapons. Elite Dracartan Desert Scouts are known to employ Yassa-constructed technoscopic scopes on their hurlants, thereby increasing the accuracy of their weapons.

**Training Period:** 40 weeks

## 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. 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. In game terms whenever a Vajra is placed in a situation of extreme stress they must make a successful WIL roll. Failure means the Dark Fire has been released. Vajra with the Dark Fire receive a +5 to STR and CON and gain 2d20 temporary hit points. The Dark Fire lasts for 2d20 rounds at which time all benefits disappear and the Vajra must make a successful CON roll. Failure on this roll brings the Vajra to zero hit points immediately.

**Restrictions:** Vajra race only

## DRUHK MUSIC

Druhk Shamans learn a unique method of playing their war drums or bone flutes that instills Druhk warriors with ferocity and fearlessness. When a character with this Quirk uses their Music skill while employing a drum or bone flute, all allied Druhk will continue to fight even if afflicted with incapacitating wounds (until reaching -10 hit points).

**Restrictions:** Druhk race only

## EXCEPTIONAL MANUAL DEXTERITY

The Yassan are known for their incredible manual dexterity. Yassan characters have a DEX +9 for the purposes of any roll involving manual manipulation of objects.

**Restrictions:** Yassan race only

## FAST

Characters with this Quirk may survive up to six weeks without food or water before suffering penalties.

**Restrictions:** Araq race only.

## HEAT RESISTANCE

Characters with this Quirk are accustomed to extreme temperatures and do not take any penalties from exposure to heat. Additionally, they take half damage from fire and heat based attacks and spells.

**Restrictions:** Sauran race only.

## INCORPOREAL

A number of entities, including the malum of the Sahdwo Realm, are incorporeal, or capable of becoming such. When incorporeal, an entity cannot be harmed by physical force, and cannot be physically held or restrained. Likewise, an incorporeal entity cannot exert physical force upon its surroundings or other material entities.

Incorporeal entities can only be affected by other incorporeal and aethereal beings, magical energies, spells, and substances such as black adamant and shadowsteel. For example, if an incorporeal creature is struck by a +1 weapon made of some ordinary metal, only the +1 of magical enchantment actually causes damage: the physical substance of the sword simply passes through the being's form, leaving it unharmed.



Incorporeal entities do not walk or fly, but rather float, unaffected by gravity or surfaces. Physical Attributes remain unchanged when in incorporeal form.

**Restrictions:** Malum race only

## KEEN HEARING

The characters sense of hearing is particularly sharp. The characters receives a +3 bonus to PER when it comes to sounds.

**Restrictions:** None

## LINGUIST

Callidian characters all possess this Quirk which allows them to speak and understand any language.

**Restrictions:** Callidian race only

## LUCKY

The character is blessed with exceptional luck and may receive a +1 luck bonus to any single die roll up to twice per day.

**Restrictions:** None

## PHEROMONES

This Quirk allows Batrean females to seduce and beguile the males of almost all known humanoid species (with the exceptions of male Batreans and imrians) through the scent of their pheromones. Those males who smell these pheromones must make a successful WIL roll to resist any suggestion made by the Batrean female. Failure indicates the victim will acquiesce to anything asked of him short of doing permanent damage to himself.

**Restrictions:** Batrean females only.

## RHABDOMANCY

Gnorl Rhabdomancers, in their quest for secrets, consult with oracles, research in dusty libraries, and travel to strange locales. This Quirk allows a Gnorl character to perform possibly the strangest method of gathering information: the Rhabdomantic ability to commune with spiritforms.

Through their knowledge of herb lore, Rhabdomancers summon the spirits of the dead using magical fumes created by the burning of rare herbs and powders. It is said that the spirits are always present, and that the fumes only weaken the “veil” between the planes. The ingredients used range from uncommon to rare, and are mixed with rare waxes and resins to make candles. Within Gnorlwood, Rhabdomancers can gather much of what they need. Each spirit is unique, and it takes a great deal of trial and error to formulate a mixture which has the resonance to exactly correspond to a desired spirit. To use the Rhabdomancy Quirk, the Gnorl character must make a successful PER roll.

A Gnorl Rhabdomancer may commune with only one spirit. The obscurity of the information sought acts as the Degree of Difficulty, as determined by the GM. The further into the future events are forecast, the murkier the future becomes.

Event	DoD
Forecast event less than 24 hours in the future	-5
Forecast event 1-2 days in the future	-7
Forecast event 3 days in the future	-10
Forecast event 4 days in the future	-13
Each additional day distant	-5
Forecast the destiny of someone well known to you	-10

Forecast the destiny of someone known to you by reputation	-15
Forecast the destiny of a newborn child	-20
Forecast the destiny of someone you have only just heard of	-30

**Restrictions:** Gnorl race only

## READ EMOTIONS

Character may read the emotions of those up to 20 feet away at PER +6

**Restrictions:** Ur race only

## 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.

**Restrictions:** Sawila race only

## 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. This Quirk allows the Nagra character to use the Tracking skill to follow spirit trails left by all creatures.

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.

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

**Restrictions:** Nagra race only

**Attribute Modifier:** PER

## 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. Bodor characters may discern the truthfulness of the spoken word with a successful PER roll.

**Restrictions:** Bodor race only

## SPIRIT BOND

Chromids also have a unique ability called Spirit Bonding. Once in a Chromid's life they are able to bond with another living creature. This act actually merges the spirit of the Chromid with that of another creature in such a way as to form a permanent bond between the two. Similar although more profound than the Melding ability found among the Mirin, with concentration, a Chromid can actually see through the eyes and hear the thoughts of its Spirit Bond.

The selection of a spirit bond is of great spiritual importance to a Chromid and once a bonding is complete, another bond can never be established. Many choose to bond with Iron Dragonfly. Others often choose the hulking Shathane or stealthy Exomorph as a spiritbond and these creatures serve as protectors of entire tribes of Chromids. Spirit bonded creature maintain their own will and faculties but will never act to harm the bonded Chromid. Chromid and bond may communicate telepathically and often share emotions and thoughts as if they were their own. To successfully create a Spirit Bond, a character must make a successful opposed WIL roll.

**Restrictions:** Chromid race only

# MORE PATHS



## ACROBAT

A specialized form of entertainer, the acrobat has honed his or her agility and dexterity to its utmost. Specializing in feats of balance, agility and coordination, Acrobats typically find employment among travelling bands of entertainers.

While most Acrobats perform as gymnasts and high wire acts, many also specialize in feats of contortion or animals acts (vaulting over charging land lizards, balancing atop a galloping Equis, etc.)

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 3 years.

**Attribute Adjustments:**

DEX +1 / DEX +1 / DEX+1

**Skill Ranks:** 12

**Preferred Skills:** Acrobatics, Climbing, Dance, Evade, Legerdemain, Stealth, Swim.

**Available Quirks:** Ambidextrous, Fame, Good Balance, Nimble Fingers, Pain Tolerance, Quick Reflexes, Soft Landing, Swift.

**Starting Equipment:** Loose fitting pantaloons and vest; quarter staff; coin purse with 20 g.l. in assorted currency.

## CARTOMANCER

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 Talis-lantans 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.

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. 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."

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 5 years.

**Attribute Adjustments:**

MR +1 / INT+1 / MR +1

**Skill Ranks:** 12

**Preferred Skills:** Arcane Lore, Gamecraft, Gambling, Haggle, Language (any two), Legerdemain, Mode (any), Ride (Equis).

**Special Features:** Cartomancers receive the Order (cartomancy) Quirk at no cost.

**Available Quirks:** Hobby, Literate, Magical Item, Windfall.

**Starting Equipment:** Zodar deck; hooded cloak; coin purse with 47 g.l. in assorted currency.

## CHIEFTAIN

Rulers of the primitive tribal groups and clans throughout Talislanta, the Chieftain is the law personified in a tribal setting. In some tribes, the office of Chieftain is attained through merit or combat. In others, such as the Sawila, the seat is hereditary.

Chieftains vary in their approach to leadership. Some lead through fear and intimidation such as the various Ur clan chiefs while others are more enlightened and lead their tribes selflessly. Player character Chieftains must work with the GM to determine why a Chieftain is adventuring away from their people. It could be the Chieftains tribe was destroyed or scattered or perhaps the PC Chieftain as been usurped by a rival.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 6 years.

**Attribute Adjustments:**

CHA +1 / WIL +1 / CHA +1

**Skill Ranks:** 12

**Preferred Skills:** Administrator, Coerce, Diplomacy, History, Oratory.

**Available Quirks:** Commanding Voice, Fame, Literate, Strong Willed.

**Starting Equipment:** sign of leadership (mantle, scepter, etc.); weapon of choice; 50 g.l. in assorted trade goods.

The following races from *A Player's Guide to Talislanta* have Chieftain as an Open Path: Ahazu, Dhuna, Djaffir, Gryph, Jaka, Jhangaran, Orgovian.

## INQUISITOR

Inquisitors ply their trade throughout the lands of Talislanta but it is perhaps the Aamanians that are best known for this profession.

Inquisitor are masters at acquiring information be it through a network of spies and informants or be it via torture, blackmail and intimidation.

Whether working at the Halls of Penance in Aamahd or the slave pits of Rajinnar, Inquisitors are feared and respected across Talislanta.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 5 years.

**Attribute Adjustments:**

INT +1 / WIL +1 / CHA +1

**Skill Ranks:** 12

**Preferred Skills:** Anatomy, Coerce, Deception, Interrogate, Streetwise, Weapon (sm. blades)

**Available Quirks:** Benefactor, Commanding Voice, Literate, Pain Tolerance, Poison Immunity, Single Minded, Strong Willed.

**Starting Equipment:** implements of torture, mask or cowl; leather apron and gloves; coin purse with 45 g.l. in assorted currency.

The following races from *A Player's Guide to Talislanta* have Inquisitor as an Open Path: Aamanian, Kang.

## SIEGE ENGINEER

There is rarely a time when a war of some sort is not raging on Talislanta. Siege Engineers are the masters of the massive engines of war used by the various nations and factions of Talislanta.

Be it a simple catapult or ballista to the massive Kang War Dragons or Ur Scourges, Siege Engineers are trained in the construction, repair and operation of the massive weapons.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 5 years.

**Attribute Adjustments:**

RC +1 / RC +1 / RC +1

**Skill Ranks:** 12

**Preferred Skills:** Artillerist, Climbing, Conveyance, Engineer (siege engines), Ride, Signal, Tactics, Weapon (any one).

**Available Quirks:** Single Minded, Tireless, Tough.

**Starting Equipment:** leather armor; weapon of choice; siege weapon and dray animals (GM's discretion).

The following races from *A Player's Guide to Talislanta* have Siege Engineer as an Open Path: Aamanian, Arimite, Danuvian, Dra-cartan, Kang, Thrall,

## SLAVER

Slavery is a fact of life across Talislanta, and slaves are found everywhere, even in areas where it is technically illegal (like the Seven Kingdoms).

In fact, the Talislantan economy is reliant on slaves and slave labour and while capturing and selling slaves can be a risky business venture, there are many who ply this dangerous but lucrative trade.

Most slavers work in large groups, overwhelming primitive tribes with speed and numbers. Some few work alone, taking single captives to market.

Perhaps the best known slavers in the world are the amphibious Imrians who are perhaps the largest suppliers of slaves on Talislanta.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

**Attribute Adjustments:**

WIL +1 / CON +1 / WIL +1

**Skill Ranks:** 12

**Preferred Skills:** Administrator, Appraiser (slaves), Coerce, Conveyance, Haggle, Language (any one), Merchant, Ride, Survival (select one), Underworld, Weapon (any one).

**Available Quirks:** Benefactor, Commanding Voice, Literate, Tough, Windfall.

**Starting Equipment:** d20 slaves (GM's discretion), manacles, chains and cages; land lizard and wagon; coin purse with 68 g.l. in assorted currency.

The following races from *A Player's Guide to Talislanta* have Slaver as an Open Path: Aamanian, Arimite, Zandir.



## SPY

Ubiquitous across the face of Talislanta spies are employed by governments, mercantile groups and secret organizations throughout the civilized lands.

Masters of treachery and espionage, Spies uncover the secrets of the rivals and enemies of their patron. The vast majority of Spies ply their trade up close by infiltrating their target's organization but a rare few employ magical means to uncover vital information.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 4 years.

**Attribute Adjustments:**

PER +1 / CHA +1 / PER +1

**Skill Ranks:** 12

**Preferred Skills:** Acting, Analysis, Bribe, Cultures, Cryptography, Deception, Espionage, Evade, Fashion, Language (any), Lip Reading, Search, Signal, Stealth, Streetwise, Swim, Weapon (sm. blades).

**Available Quirks:** Acute Sense, Benefactor, Literate, Light Sleeper, Single Minded.

**Starting Equipment:** Four disguises; dagger; coin purse with 56 g.l. in assorted currency.

The following races from *A Player's Guide to Talislanta* have Spy as an Open Path: Aamanian, Arimite, Cymrilian, Mandalan, Sarista.

## TECHNOMANCER

Masters in the secret arts and sciences of mechanical devices, only the Yassan and Parthenians still have an understanding of the art of the Technomancer.

The field of Technomancy combines certain practical arcanologies and methods that are believed to date back to the Forgotten Age. Knowledge of Technomancy has been passed down to each succeeding generation by the early ancestors of the Yassan (and each iteration of the Parthenians); there are no written treaties on the subject.

Technomancers are involved in the construction, analysis, repair and manipulation of magically powered mechanical items and, while most numerous in Carantheum and Cymril, can be found in the employ of nations and wealthy mercantilists continent-wide.

Each time this Path is followed the character ages 7 years.

**Attribute Adjustments:**

INT +1 / DEX +1 / INT +1

**Skill Ranks:** 12

**Preferred Skills:** Conveyance (carts & wagons), Disable Device, Engineer, Haggle, Handicraft (any), Sabotage, Technomancy, Traps, Weapon (technomantic weapons).

**Available Quirks:** Ambidextrous, Benefactor, Construct Clockwork, Construct Technoaural Device, Construct Technomantic Weapon, Construct Technoscopic Device, Literate, Magical Item, Nimble Fingers, Single Minded, Specialist, Tireless.

**Starting Equipment:** red iron strongbox with technomancer toolkit; technomantic actuator; coin purse with 56 g.l. in assorted currency.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## 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. Following each item are the relevant modes and time required by an Enchanter to create the item.

**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:** Divination

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -10

**Type:** Continuous    **Time required:** 10 wks

**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:** Enchantment

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -3

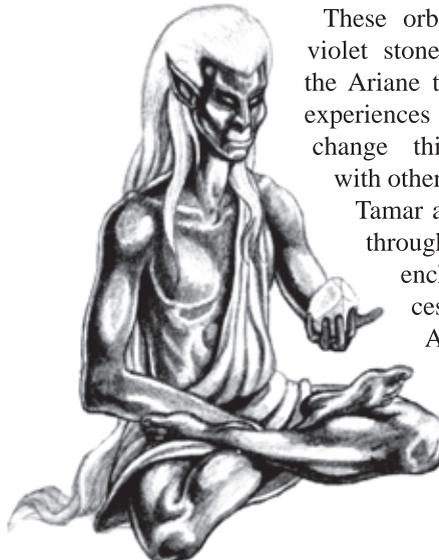
**Type:** Continuous    **Time required:** 3 weeks

**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.

*Only Ariane mystics know the secrets of manufacturing a tamar and they are never sold.*

#### 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.

**Skill:** Talismancy

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -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 Degree of Difficulty:** -3

**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 pro-



cess 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 SPD +6 for short periods of time. Due to their small wings, Aeriads accelerate less rapidly than a Stryx or Gryph.

**Mode:** Move

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -5

**Type:** Continuous      **Time required:** 5 wks

**Minimum value:** 2,416 g.l.

#### CHANAN RAKE

A favored magical weapon of Chanan witchmen, the Rake is in fact an enchanted and mummified claw of an omnivrax. The weapon is wielded like a club and the magically sharpened claws cause deep cuts that cause additional necrotising damage (DR+3)

**Skill:** Enchantment

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -9

**Type:** Continuous      **Time required:** 9 wks

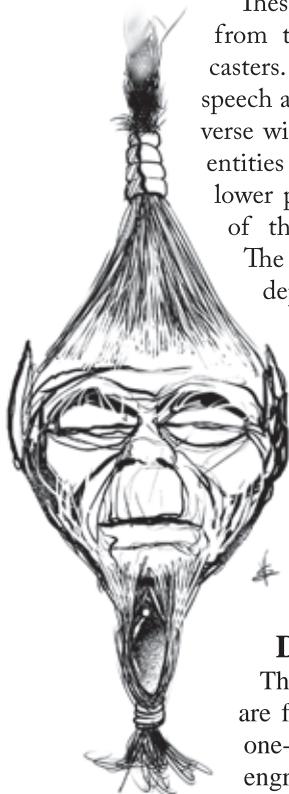
**Minimum value:** 1250 g.l.



**CHANAN 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:** Conjunction  
**Spell Level:** variable  
**Type:** Limited T i m e  
**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 (+6 to resist) that have been placed on tombs, crypts, and ancient ruins.

**Mode:** Ward  
**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -3  
**Type:** Continuous   **Time required:** 3 wks  
**Minimum value:** 4,804 g.l.

**DJAFFIR FETISH MASKS**

These devices, made of cured aht-ra hide, ward against the magical mode, Influence (+4 to resist Influence mode spells). 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 Degree of Difficulty:** -2  
**Type:** Continuous   **Time required:** 2 wks  
**Minimum value:** 4,804 g.l.

**DRUHK BONE FLUTE**

These bone flutes are employed by Druhk shamans to strike fear into the hearts of their foes. targets must make a WIL roll to resist, subtracting the fluet player's WIL or suffer a penalty of -1 on all die rolls for as long as the music is played.

**Mode:** Influence  
**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -3  
**Type:** Continuous   **Time required:** 3 wks  
**Minimum value:** 800 g.l.

**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:** Transmutation  
**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -9  
**Type:** Limited   **Time required:** 9 wks  
**Minimum value:** 1,520 g.l.

**FARAD PROTECTIVE CHARMS**

These devices are usually made of gold, silver or ivory and may resemble small locket engraved with magical sigils or glyphs. There are



several types, each of which confers magical protection from specific ailments or conditions such as sea sickness, jungle fever or romantic influence (+2 to resist).

**Mode:** Ward

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -1

**Type:** Continuous    **Time required:** 1 week

**Minimum value:** 100 to 500 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.

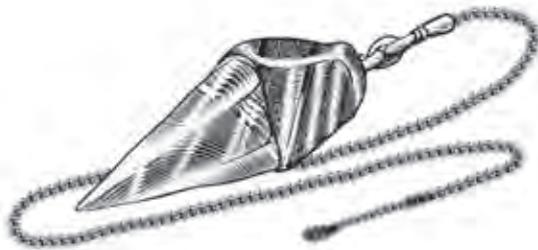


**Mode:** Enchantment

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -6

**Type:** Continuous    **Time required:** 6 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.

**Skill:** Talismancy

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -5

**Type:** Limited    **Time required:** 5 wks

**Minimum value:** 40 g.l.

### KASMIRAN KEY

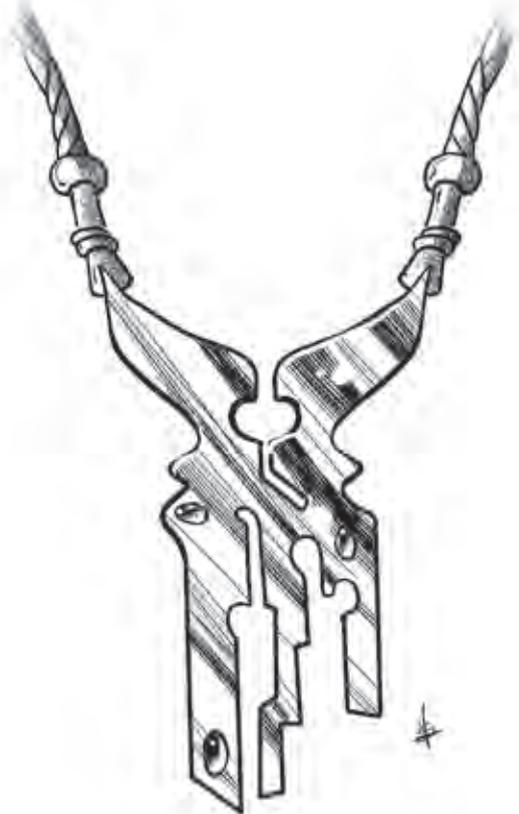
These intricate looking keys are designed by the TrapMages of Kasmir. When inserted into a lock, the key magically transforms itself to fit granting the user a +5 bonus to their Locks skill roll.

**Skill:** Enchantment

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -15

**Type:** Limited    **Time required:** 15 wks

**Minimum value:** 2550 g.l.



### 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.

**Skill:** Ward mode

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -5 or -10

**Type:** Continuous      **Time required:** 5 or 10 wks

**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.

**Skill:** Divination

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -4

**Type:** Limited      **Time required:** 1 week

**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.

**Skill:** Talismancy

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -5

**Type:** Continuous      **Time required:** 5 weeks

**Minimum value:** 37 g.l.



### MASK OF BREATHING

These kras skin masks are typically enchanted by Oceanian Aquamancers. The masks contain a supply of conjured air that enables the wearer to breath under water for up to one hour.

**Mode:** Conjuration

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -5

**Type:** Continuous      **Time required:** 5 weeks

**Minimum value:** 1371 g.l.

### MUSE ENCHANTED INSTRUMENTS

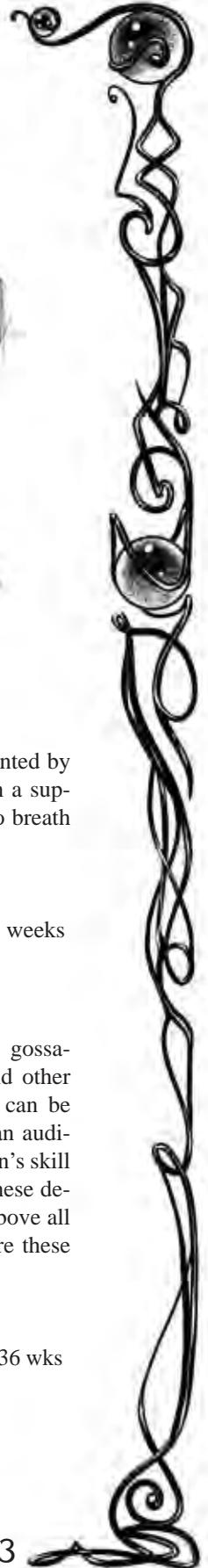
The Muses of Astar create enchanted gossamer harps, trioles (three-stringed harps), and other stringed wooden instruments, all of which can be employed to effect emotional responses in an audience; add the item's spell level to the musician's skill rating. Only skilled musicians can employ these devices. Bodor value the Muse's instruments above all others and will go to great lengths to acquire these items.

**Mode:** Enchantment

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -3 or -6

**Type:** Continuous      **Time required:** 18 or 36 wks

**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 Degree of Difficulty:** -3

**Type:** Limited

**Time required:** 9 days

**Minimum value:** 145 g.l. (at least five times this amount for non-Nagra)



**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:** Divination

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -3

**Type:** Continuous

**Time required:** 3 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.



**Skill:** Divination

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -10

**Type:** Continuous

**Time required:** 10 wks

**Minimum value:** 9,600 g.l.

**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:** Conjuraction (for gateways) and/or Divination (for scrying)

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -20

**Type:** Limited

**Time required:** 20 weeks

**Minimum value:** 16,000



**RAJAN DEATH MASK**

These blak iron masks are employed by the necromancer-priests of the Rajan Black Mystic Cult and are said to confer favor in the form of a +2 bonus on reaction rolls with spirit entities originating from the lower planes.



**Mode:** Influence  
**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -6  
**Type:** Continuous **Time required:** 6 weeks  
**Minimum value:** 7,500 g.l.

### REVENANT BOOTS

These magical boots are often conferred upon top operatives in the Revenant Cult of Arim. These high, subtle leather boots grant the wearer a +5 bonus on all Stealth skill rolls.

**Skill:** Enchantment  
**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -15  
**Type:** Continuous  
**Time required:** 15 wks  
**Minimum value:** 6,880 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.

**Skill:** Divination  
**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -4  
**Type:** Continuous **Time required:** 4 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.

**Skill:** Alter mode or Talismancy  
**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -3  
**Type:** Continuous **Time required:** 3 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 or beasts of burden. The icons are not totally foolproof—the subject is allowed to roll versus WIL rating at a penalty of -2 to resist—and so should be employed with caution.

**Skill:** Influence  
**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -4  
**Type:** Continuous **Time required:** 4 weeks  
**Minimum value:** 4210 g.l.



**SAWILA WIND CHARMS**

These intricate devices, constructed of resonant rainbow kra 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 melody that causes those to hear it to become peaceful and friendly.

**Mode:** Influence

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -6

**Type:** Triggered      **Time required:** 7 weeks

**Minimum value:** 3321 g.l.

**SEEING STONES**

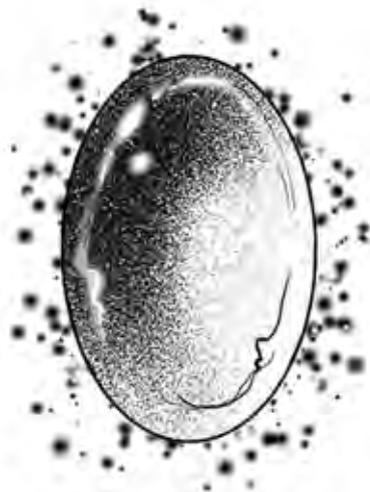
These six to twelve inch orbs of olished crystal ate used as communications devices by the Kasmir, farad, Cymrilians, Quan and others. Seeing stones permit visual and audio contact from one orb to another at ranges of up to twenty miles. The devices are activated by voice command and may be linked together to form communications networks of up to seven orbs. A seeing stone can only be used three times per day, each for a maximum of ten rounds.

**Mode:** Divination

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -20

**Type:** Limited      **Time required:** 8 weeks

**Minimum value:** 8500 g.l.

**SOUL STONE**

Among the most coveted of artifacts, soulstones are black or blue diamonds imbued with the spirit essence of a creature or being. Most soulstones are cut like gemstones, with numerous facets and a variety of shapes. Some are polished smooth and shaped like globes, eggs, or teardrops. Soulstones are priced according to their size (carat weight) and quality (a combination of the affinities and properties of the spirit contained within). While soulstones imbued with the essence of intelligent beings are generally worth more than those of semi-intelligent entities, quality is largely subjective, based on the preferences of the buyer.

**Mode:** Conjunction

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** variable

**Type:** Coniuous      **Time required:** variable

**Minimum value:** Prices per carat range from 100-500 g.l. Exceptional quality (such as an affinity for magic, high skill or attribute levels, etc.) can increase the value of a soulstone by anywhere from ten-fold to a hundred-fold..

**STRYX OBSIDIAN ORB**

These devices resemble crude versions of the standard seeing stones but generally have an effective range of under 5 miles. Stryx necromancers are reputed to utilize more potent versions of this item to converse with entities from the lower planes. Like seeing stones, these devices can on be used three times per day.

**Mode:** Reveal mode

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -5

**Type:** Limited      **Time required:** 15 days

**Minimum value:** 7321 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:** Divination

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -15

**Type:** Continuous      **Time required:** 15 wks

**Minimum value:** 14,480 g.l.

**THAECIAN ORB**

Thaecian orbs are ambergalss spheres that may be imbued with illusory scenes and images that can be viewed by the holder. Only the Thaecians know the secret of creating these enchanted items.

**Mode:** Illusion

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -6 minimum

**Type:** Triggered      **Time required:** 7 wks minimum

**Minimum value:** varies

**UR CLAN ICON**

These three-eyed stone images are often worn as medallions by Ur shamans who claim the icons cause confusion among their enemies. This effect works at a range of 20 feet; targets must make a WIL roll to resist, subtracting the icons level from the roll. The icons are far from uniformly efficacious, thanks primarily to the dubious talents of the Ur shamans who make these devices.

**Mode:** Influence

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -1 to -10

**Type:** Continuous      **Time required:** 1-10 wks

**Minimum value:** 250 g.l. + 100 per level

**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:** Enchantment

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -1

**Type:** Limited      **Time required:** 3 days

**Minimum value:** 555 g.l.

**ZODAR DECK (ENCHANTED)**

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. Enchanted decks are often found in the employ of Rahastran Cartomancers and grant the Cartomancer a +1 bonus to all Cartomancy spell rolls.

**Mode:** Enchantment

**Spell Degree of Difficulty:** -1

**Type:** Continuous      **Time required:** 1 week

**Minimum value:** 350 g.l.

**THAUMATURGIC CREATIONS**

This section includes the various elemental substances that are created through the pseudo-magical art of thaumaturgy. Players and Gms should keep in mind that this ancient art is little understood in the New Age. Dracartans are the sole culture with any understanding of most thaumaturgic substances. Phantasians, once great thaumaturges in their own right, have all but forgotten this lost art and are now only able to distill dream essences.

Each substance is listed with the Degree of Difficulty modifier for its creation along with the value and time required to produce the typical yield. An essence accumulator and caduceus are required in the creation of all thaumaturgic substances.

**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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -5 to -20 (depending on the specific substance)

**Yield:** one dram **Time required:** 1 hour/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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -10

**Yield:** one dram **Time required:** 2 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 Dra-

cartans 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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -10

**Yield:** one dram **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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -6

**Ingredients:** blue diamond, silver, and black iron.

**Time required:** two hours

**Cost of materials:** 4 g.l.

**Minimum value:** 8 g.l.

### ALCHAHEST

Talislantian 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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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.

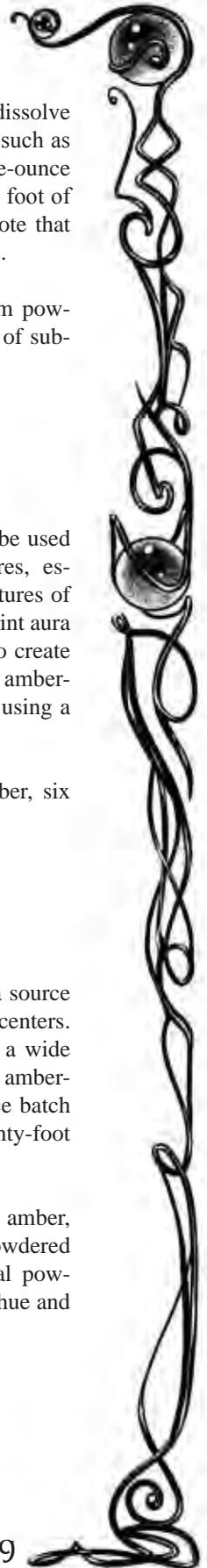
**Degree of Difficulty:** -5

**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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -5

**Ingredients:** Eight ounces of powdered 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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -7

**Time required:** 7 days

**Cost of materials:** 1 g.l. (buyers provide their own quicksilver vial)

**Minimum value:** 113 g.l.

**ELIXIRS****APHRODESIAIC ELIXIR**

Promotes feelings of desire unless a successful WIL roll is made. Each dose lasts one hour.

**Dose:** one ounce      **Degree of Difficulty:** -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      **Degree of Difficulty:** -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      **Degree of Difficulty:** -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      **Degree of Difficulty:** -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.

**ORANGE FUNGUS**

When touched or shaken, orange fungus multiplies rapidly, growing in size for one minute after which it is 5 times as large as it originally was. Used intelligently, orange fungus can burst open doors or chests. Used unintelligently, it can make quite a mess.

**Dose:** one ounce      **Degree of Difficulty:** -5

**Ingredients:** One ounce of orange fungus

**Time required:** n/a

**Cost of materials:** 50 g.l.

**Minimum value:** 50 g.l.

**POISON ANTIDOTE**

Reverses the effects of any poison or toxin, provided the antidote is delivered in time.

**Dose:** one ounce      **Degree of Difficulty:** -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**

Made from the crushed flowers of the morphius plant, this 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      **Degree of Difficulty:** -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      **Degree of Difficulty:** -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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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 Rajjinar. 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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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 insidious 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.

**Dose:** one ounce

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -2

**Ingredients:** Twelve drams of crag spider venom or raknid venom.

**Time required:** one day

**Cost of materials:** 120 g.l.

**Minimum value:** 128 g.l.

### SKULLCAP

Taken in minute quantities of one dram or less, this mushrpp, can cause highly irrational and even violent behaviour lasting up to one hour. A successful CON roll means the character is irrational but not out of control. A full dram or more will cause swift and painless death in most cases, usually within one or two minutes. Even a successful CON roll does DR1 per round for the next d20 rounds.

**Dose:** one dram

**Degree of Difficulty:** -7

**Ingredients:** Six drams of Skullcap mushroom

**Time required:** two days

**Cost of materials:** 38 g.l.

**Minimum value:** 222 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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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.

## POWDERS

### ENHANCEMENT POWDER

Enhancements are pigments that can be used to change the color of an individual'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 altered by additional enhancements.

**Dose:** one ounce

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -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

**Degree of Difficulty:** -2

**Ingredients:** 6 drams of gold dust and 6 drams of powdered black iron.

**Time required:** four hours

**Cost of materials:** 1 g.l.

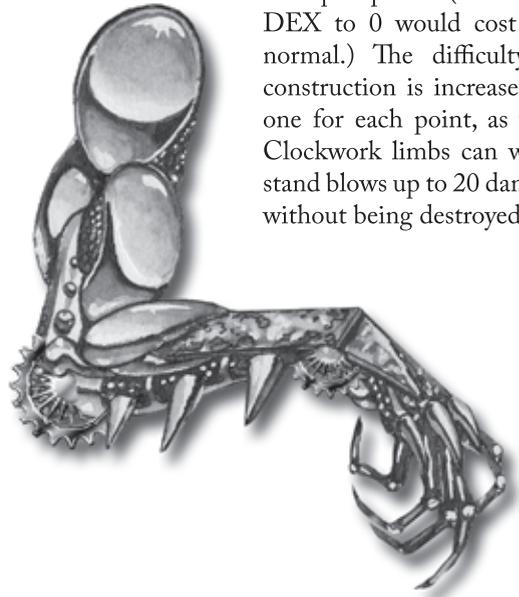
**Minimum value:** 5 g.l.

# TECHNOMANTIC ITEMS

**CLOCKWORK LIMB**

Though uncommon, it is not unknown for a wealthy or well-connected Talislantans to replace a lost limb with a technomantic prosthetic.

Clockwork arms and legs have the following attributes by default: STR 0, DEX -4, SPD -2. The attributes can be increased by doubling the construction cost per point. (Increasing DEX to 0 would cost 16x normal.) The difficulty of construction is increased by one for each point, as well. Clockwork limbs can withstand blows up to 20 damage without being destroyed.



**Degree of Difficulty:** -16

**Time required:** variable

**Minimum value:** 200 g.l.

**CLOCKWORK MECHANISMS**

Clockwork mechanisms come in many forms and types, including animated miniatures (soldiers, toys, dolls, etc.); mechanisms that are capable of speech (talking heads, mouths, automaton-scholars, etc.); large mechanisms called "machina" (iron warriors, war spyders, iron dragons, etc.), and all sorts of curios and oddities such as: clockwork imps that really fly, clockwork songbirds that sing, automaton-artistes



programmed to draw or paint pictures, music boxes that open to reveal miniature orchestras or dancers, puzzle-boxes that unfold at the touch of a latch or button, and mechanical servants that dispense aperitifs, sweetmeats, and so forth. Rarest and most costly of all are enchanted mechanisms, which are imbued with spell-like magical properties and/or effects.

Clockwork mechanisms were quite common during the Archaen Age but are no very rare. Though they are often delicate and/or difficult to maintain, these items are valued by merchants, arcanologists, and collectors, who offer handsome fees for mechanisms of the rarest, most unusual, and/or most useful type.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -2-30

**Time required:** variable

**Minimum value:** 200 g.l.

### 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 quin-

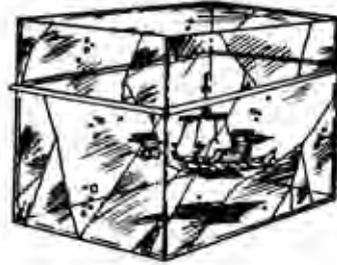


tessence. The Phantasians employ a similar type of device to accumulate distillations of sentiments and dream essence, the elusive stuff of which dreams are made.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -12

**Time required:** 21 days

**Minimum value:** 6000 g.l.



### 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.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -30

**Time required:** one hundred days

**Minimum value:** 10000+ g.l.

### RADIAN CRYSTAL

Radian crystals are translucent stones that range in color from pale blue to deep violet. Rare and exceedingly valuable, these crystals are a potent source of arcane energy. They are commonly used to power windship levitationals, but are also said to have other uses to those who know how to employ them.

Radian crystals can be found throughout the Omniverse, but are extremely rare. Throughout much of the Aeteric Sea and lower dimensions, the leading suppliers of this valuable commodity are the Zoab,

whose empire was built upon the radian crystal trade. Though their knowledge of radian crystals is limited to windship applications, the Zoab have access to a large supply of these stones, the source (or sources) of which is a well-kept secret.

Radian crystals are usually sold or traded only in uncut form. In order to utilize the power contained within, the stones must be inscribed with intricate sigils and runes. If inscribed incorrectly, the crystals are rendered worthless. Radian crystals can be damaged by magic, hard impacts, and by energy-draining creatures such as erx and void monsters.

**Minimum value:** 4000 g.l.

### TECHNOMANTIC ACTUATOR

This multi-purpose tool is used by Yassan Technomancers, and is believed to be based on old Archaean 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 effectively by characters with the Weapon (Technomantic Actuator) skill.

**Degree of Difficulty:** -20

**Time required:** sixty days

**Minimum value:** 4000 g.l.

### TECHNOMANTIC TOOLKIT

Technomantic 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.

**Minimum value:** 160 g.l.

### 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.

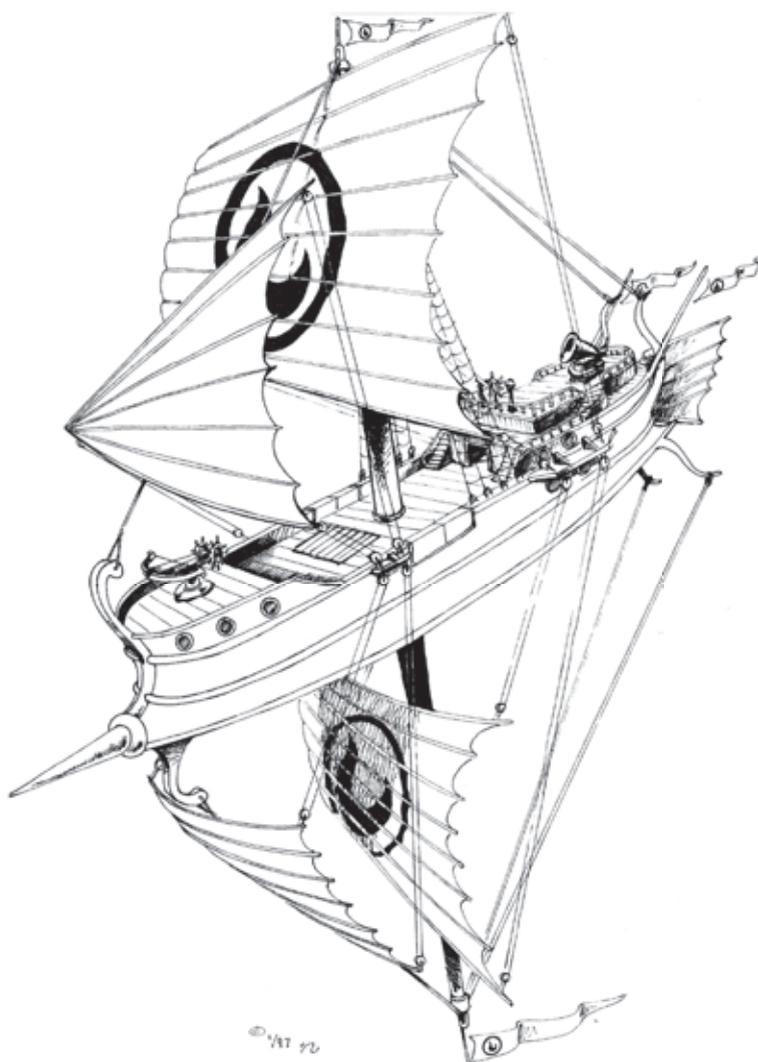
**Degree of Difficulty:** -24

**Time required:** 10 days

**Minimum value:** 4000 g.l.



# CONVEYANCES



Talislanta is a fantasy world unlike any other. One of the things that has always set it apart from other fantasy worlds is its plethora of strange and wondrous modes of conveyance. From the magnificent windships of Cymril to the massive Kharakhan War Wagon to the functional Imri-an coracle, characters in a Talislanta game have no shortage of means of getting from Point A to Point B.

These rules provide an integrated system for resolving the movement and combat of the many forms of conveyance on Talislanta.

## SPEED

Every conveyance has a top SPD listed. This value is simply the maximum SPD the conveyance is capable of moving in a single round. A conveyance's current speed can range anywhere between -5 and its top speed.

Conveyances drawn by creatures have a top SPD equal to the SPD of the animal pulling the conveyance minus 3.

*For example, an Equus-drawn carriage would have a top SPD of +5 (an Equus is normally SPD +7).*

## SPD MODIFIERS

The speed at which a conveyance is traveling imposes a modifier on all Conveyance or Pilot rolls to operate the conveyance.

### SPD Handling Modifiers

SPD	Action Table Modifier
+1 to +5	+0
+6 to +10	-2
+11 to +15	-4
+16 to +20	-6
+21 to +30	-8
+31 to +40	-10
+41 to +50	-12

## CHANGING SPEED

A pilot or driver can change the speed of his conveyance once each round as a free action (i.e without incurring any multiple action penalty). All conveyances have an acceleration and deceleration value. The listed number is the value for moderate acceleration or deceleration—how much a pilot can speed up or slow down at moderate risk of losing control of the conveyance. Low acceleration/deceleration is half the listed number, high acceleration/deceleration is twice the listed number, and extreme acceleration/deceleration is four times the listed number.

Accelerating and decelerating require a Pilot or Drive Action Table roll. The Degree of Difficulty modifier depends on how fast the pilot/driver is attempting to accelerate or decelerate. The Action Table roll is also modified by the conveyance's current speed, before applying the effects of acceleration or deceleration. The roll is also modified by the conveyances MAN rating.

## SPD CONVERSIONS

SPD	Ft/Rd	MPH
-5	0	0
-4	10	1
-3	20	2
-2	30	3
-1	40	4
0	50	6
1	100	11
2	150	17
3	200	23
4	250	28
5	300	34
6	350	40
7	400	46
8	450	51
9	500	57
10	550	63
11	600	68
12	650	74
13	700	80
14	750	85
15	800	91
16	850	97
17	900	102
18	950	108
19	1000	114
20	1050	120
21	1100	125
22	1150	131
23	1200	137
24	1250	142
25	1300	148
26	1350	154
27	1400	159
28	1450	165
29	1500	171
30	1550	176

Acc/Dec	DoD
Low	+10
Moderate	+0
High	-10
Extreme	-20

*For example, an Ice Skiff has an acceleration of +4 and a deceleration of -2. The pilot can increase the conveyance's SPD by +2 at low acceleration, +4 at moderate acceleration, +8 at high acceleration and +16 at extreme acceleration. The Ice Skiff is at a full stop and the pilot decides on extreme acceleration to accelerate the Skiff to SPD +11 in a single round. This results in a -20 Degree of Difficulty penalty being applied to the Action Table roll. There is no modifier for speed, since the conveyance is at SPD -5 before the effects of acceleration are applied. The Skiff has a MAN +2, so the Action Table roll would be further modified by +2.*

## STUNTS AND MANEUVERS

In addition to changing speeds, pilots (and drivers) can also perform a wide range of maneuvers in their conveyances. Maneuvers require a Pilot or Drive Action Table roll, and the modifiers for the conveyance's current speed and handling rating are always applied to the roll. See the table below for a list of maneuvers and their Degree of Difficulty modifiers.

### TURNS

If you're using a map grid to track conveyance movement, the grid provides eight simple "compass points" by which to measure turns and direction of travel. Using the compass analogy, we can call these points north, northeast (diagonal), east, southeast (diagonal), south, southwest (diagonal), west, and northwest (diagonal). A "one-point" turn is any turn from one compass point to the next compass point, for example, from "north" to "northeast."

**Soft Turn:** This is any turn up to a 45° angle. On the map grid, it's a one-point turn.

**Sharp Turn:** This is any turn between a 45° angle and a 90° angle. On the map grid, it's a two-point turn.

**Extreme Turn:** This is any turn between a 90° angle and a 135° angle. On the map grid, it's a three-point turn.

**Bootleg Turn:** This is any turn between a 135° angle and a 180° angle. On the map grid, it's a four-point turn. Your conveyance's speed is automatically 0 after you complete a bootlegger turn. You have to accelerate to get back up to speed in your new direction of travel.

### AVOID HAZARD

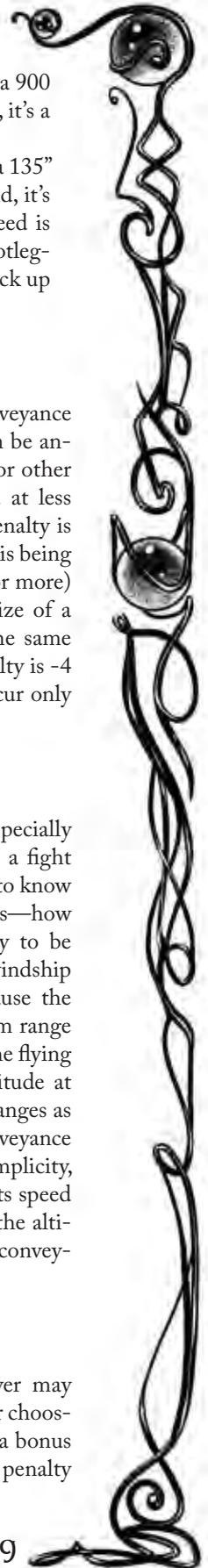
A hazard can be anything that the conveyance could possibly hit during the round. This can be another conveyance, a tree, rock outcropping or other debris. If the conveyance is being operated at less than ½ the conveyance's SPD rating, a -2 penalty is applied as the DoD. Whenever a conveyance is being operated at more than ½ its top SPD, a -4 (or more) penalty is applied to avoid a hazard. The size of a hazard will also play a role. For hazards the same size or smaller than the conveyance, the penalty is -4 while hazards larger than the conveyance incur only a -1 penalty to avoid.

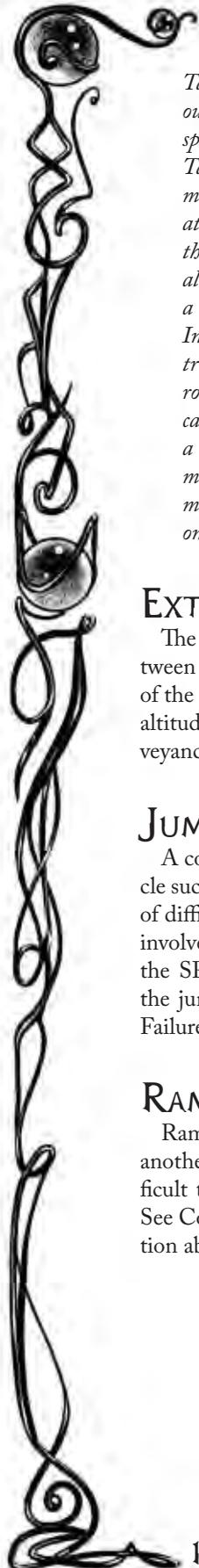
### CLIMB/DIVE

In most conveyance sequences, it's not especially important to track altitude. For example, in a fight between two windships, you really only need to know the distance between the two conveyances—how much of that distance is vertical isn't likely to be an issue. Altitude can be an issue when a windship is engaged with a surface conveyance, because the windship can essentially dictate the minimum range between the two. In these cases, the pilot of the flying conveyance should simply announce his altitude at the beginning of the scene then track any changes as it develops. By executing this maneuver, a conveyance can climb or dive at an angle up to 45°. For simplicity, assume the conveyance moves forward half its speed and gains half its speed in altitude (or loses the altitude in the case of a dive). Obviously, surface conveyances cannot perform this maneuver.

### EVASIVE MANEUVERS

By taking evasive maneuvers a pilot/driver may make a Pilot/Drive roll with a penalty of their choosing. On a full success or better they receive a bonus to their defense equal to the reverse of the penalty they chose for their evasive maneuver stunt.





*Tanevar (Pilot +4) is trying to smuggle red iron out of Crantheum in his Land Barge when he's spotted by a Dracartan Duneship (Pilot +4). Tanevar has initiative and opts to take evasive maneuvers and elects to take a -6 penalty to the attempt. He rolls an 18 on the Action Table and this is modified by his Pilot skill and elected penalty for a total of 16 (18 +4 - 6 = 16), giving him a success and therefore a +6 bonus to his defense. In the following round, the Dracartan ship then tries to gain position by making an initiative roll against Tanevar. The Dracartan's Pilot skill cancels out Carey's and so its would have been a straight d20 roll had not Carey taken evasive maneuvers. As it stands though, the Dracartan must now roll with a -6 penalty to gain position on Carey and act first in the round.*

### EXTREME CLIMB/DIVE

The conveyance climbs or dives at an angle between 45° and 90°. The pilot may choose how much of the conveyance's speed to expend gaining or losing altitude, but it must be more than half. Surface conveyances cannot perform this maneuver.

### JUMP

A conveyance may attempt to jump over an obstacle such as another conveyance or culvert. The degree of difficulty is always at the GM's discretion and will involve the length of the jump attempted as well as the SPD and MAN of the conveyance attempting the jump. This is an incredibly risky maneuver as a Failure or Mishap could prove catastrophic.

### RAM

Ramming one's conveyance into another is not a particularly difficult task but can prove suicidal. See Collisions below for information about the results of a Ram.

### REGAIN CONTROL

Whenever a character fails a Pilot/Drive skill roll, they have essentially lost control of their conveyance and cannot take any further actions other than to attempt to regain control. To regain control, the Pilot/Driver must make a successful skill check with a degree of difficulty determined by the GM and based on the situation that caused their loss of control in the first place.

### TAKEOFF/LAND

Part of everyday operation of any windship but, nonetheless, one of the more difficult aspects of operating these types of conveyances.

## CONVEYANCE ACTION TABLE ROLLS

When a pilot or driver fails a maneuver, a number of different things can happen. On a Partial Success, the pilot may complete the maneuver anyway but partially lose control of the conveyance thereby requiring another Pilot or Drive roll the following roll to regain control of the conveyance. The following are some examples of the possible effects of a Partial Success on the *Action Table*:

**Slip:** The conveyance slips sidewise, loses traction or swerves slightly. The conveyance completes any Maneuver the pilot was attempting and moves its current speed. However, the pilot suffers a -2 penalty

Stunt	DoD
Avoid Hazard	-20 to +5
Climb/Dive	+0
Evasive Maneuvers	variable
Extreme Climb/Dive	-5
Extreme Turn	-10
Jump	-5+
Ram	None (normal Pilot/Drive roll)
Regain Control	-1+
Soft Turn	+10
Sharp Turn	-5
Takeoff/Land	-4

on all maneuvers until he makes a successful Pilot check to regain control.

**Slide:** The conveyance almost slides out of control. The conveyance only moves half its current speed and completes any attempted maneuver only halfway. If the pilot or driver attempted an extreme or sharp turn, he only manages a soft turn. If he attempted a loop or roll, he manages only a half-loop or half-roll. If he was steering to avoid an obstacle, he still clips or sideswipes it. Gamemaster's should not that in the case of a Jump maneuver, there are no Partial

Successes; either the driver jumps the obstacle or he doesn't. On a Failure, the attempted maneuver did not succeed and the conveyance may skid or spin out or it may collide with another conveyance or obstacle. The following are examples of results of a Failure roll on the *Action Table*:

**Skid:** The conveyance's speed drops by 10 and it skids one to the right or left (GM's discretion). This could potentially bring the conveyance into contact with another conveyance or obstacle. If so, it collides (see Collisions below). If the pilot was attempting a



## COLLISIONS

If a conveyance crashes into something, it will immediately sustain damage based on its current speed and the size of the object or conveyance it collides with.

The base damage caused by a collision to both the moving conveyance and the object it strikes for ground and water based conveyances is equal to the conveyances SPD +20. In the case of aircraft, the base damage is equal to 10 times the SPD of the conveyance. When dealing with spacecraft collisions, the base damage is equal to 20 times the SPD of the conveyance.

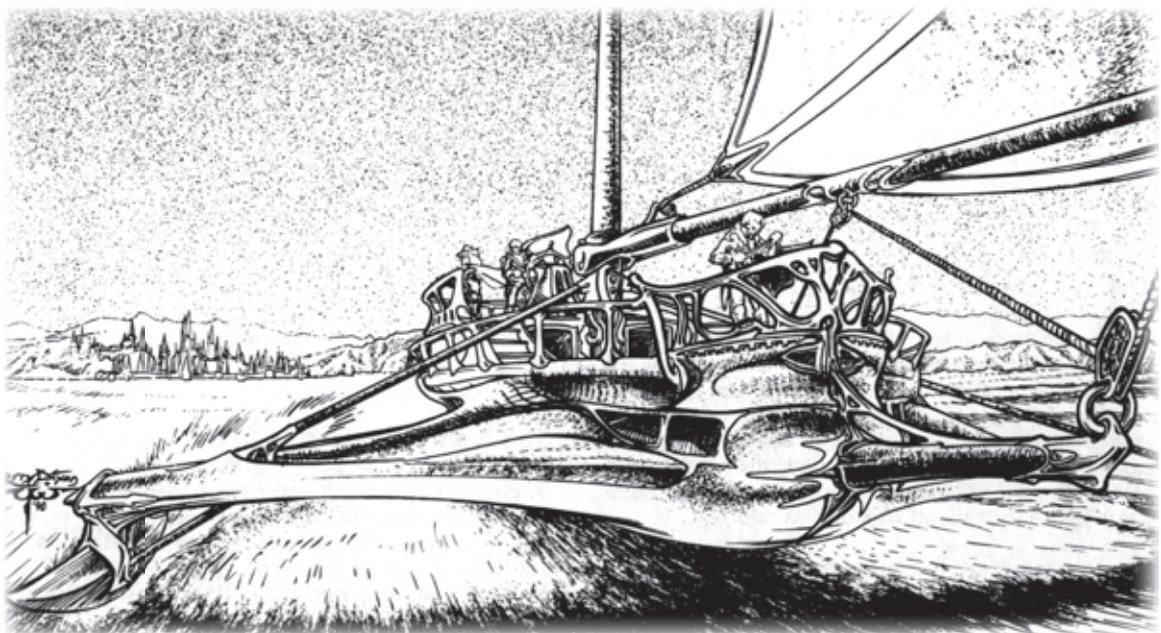
However, if the conveyance crashes into a moving object, such as another conveyance, the Games Master must determine the total speed of the impact and use that as the base damage of the collision instead. If the two conveyances are moving directly towards each other, add their speeds together for the purposes of determining collision damage. If they are moving in the same direction, use the difference of the speeds and if they are moving at angles to one another, use the highest speed.

Passengers in a conveyance that collides or crashes take half the damage actually dealt to the conveyance, after accounting for the conveyance's PR. Passengers who make a successful CON *Action Table* roll take half of this damage.

specific maneuver, it fails completely. The conveyance's speed continues to drop by 10 and it skids again each round until either the pilot or driver makes a successful Regain Control roll on the Action Table, the conveyance drops to SPD -5 or it crashes into something. If an aircraft's speed drops below SPD +20 (except on takeoff or landing) it stalls and loses 5,000 feet of altitude each round. The pilot suffers a cumulative -2 penalty per round on all maneuvers until he makes a successful Pilot roll to regain control.

**Spin:** The conveyance goes into an uncontrolled spin. The conveyance's speed drops by 10 and it moves in a random direction. This continues each round until the pilot makes a successful Pilot roll on the *Action Table* to regain control, the conveyance's speed reaches -5 or it crashes into something. If an aircraft's speed drops below SPD +20 (except on takeoff or landing) it stalls and loses 5,000 feet of altitude each round. The pilot suffers a cumulative -4 penalty per round on all maneuvers until he makes a successful Pilot roll to regain control.

**Collision:** The pilot loses control of the conveyance and it crashes into a nearby conveyance or obstacle. If there are multiple targets available, the GM should choose the nearest or select one randomly. If there are no nearby targets—such as in open air or space—the conveyance goes into a spin (see above).



# CONVEYANCE COMBAT

In the Talislanta game, vehicular combat is fast and furious. Rather than dealing with all the nitty, gritty minutia, Talislanta instead uses an abstract system not unlike that used for the more common melee and ranged combat experienced by player characters.

Essentially, when engaged in conveyance combat, the conveyance itself can be viewed as a character with attributes like DEX and CON replaced by conveyance attributes like MAN and HUL.

Combat between conveyances function almost identically to normal, character vs. character combat. There is an initiative phase, players state the intent of the characters who are piloting the conveyance, manning the weapons, etc.. The GM then assigns penalties or bonuses and the combat is resolved by a roll on the Action Table.

## ENCOUNTER DISTANCE

Before combat can begin between conveyance, they must first be aware of each other. Use the following guidelines to determine appropriate encounter distances based on the terrain in which the encounter occurs:

Terrain	Distance
Smoke, Heavy Fog	25 ft
Jungle, Dense Forest	50 ft
Light Forest	100 ft
Scrub, Brush	200 ft
Open	400 ft

These rules for spotting allow you to establish the encounter distance for visual contact.

## COMBAT INITIATIVE

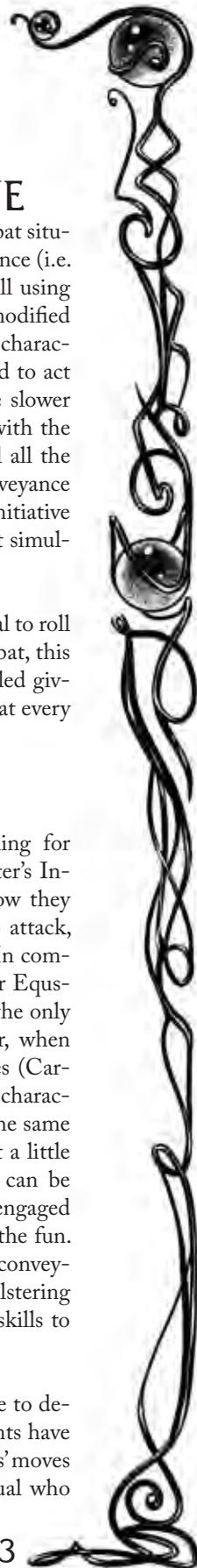
At the beginning of any Conveyance Combat situation, each combatant in control of a conveyance (i.e. the pilot or driver) makes an *Action Table* roll using their respective Pilot or Drive skill ratings modified by the MAN rating of their conveyance. The character with the highest Initiative total is 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. In conveyance combat, only the Pilots or Drivers roll for initiative but all characters within their conveyance act simultaneously.

Unlike character combat where it is optional to roll for initiative each round, in conveyance combat, this is a requirement. Each round initiative is rolled giving pilots a chance to turn the tables of combat every few seconds.

## STATING INTENT

Again, as in regular combat, before rolling for Combat all characters must state his character's Intent. Pilots and Drivers inform the GM how they want to position their conveyance (move to attack, evasive maneuvers, loop or hard bank, etc.). In combats involving smaller craft like windskiffs or Equis-drawn carriages, the Pilot or Driver may be the only character engaged in the combat. However, when talking about some of the larger conveyances (Car-racks, Windships, Duneships, etc.) several characters may be engaged in combat activities at the same time. This tends to make conveyance combat a little more complex than normal combat, but it can be very fun as well, as multiple characters are engaged and not sitting idly by as the pilots have all the fun. Non-piloting characters may participate in conveyance combat by controlling weapons and bolstering defenses with magic, using their handicraft skills to perform makeshift repairs, etc.

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. In all cases, any characters making an Attack roll (i.e. in control of a ship's weapons) should act last in the sequence as other characters' actions may provide her with bonuses or penalties to her roll.

## DETERMINING BONUSSES AND PENALTIES

After the player indicates their actions and describes the character's Intent, the Gamemaster determines if any bonus or penalty will be applied before the player rolls on the Omni Table.

The following actions will provide bonuses or penalties to a spacecraft engaged in combat:

### PILOTING

Pilots may engage in some fancy maneuvers in an attempt to provide a bonus to attack or defense of their conveyance. The MAN rating of the conveyance is used to modify the Pilot or Drive skill roll. A Success on a Pilot *Aviation Table* roll will provide a +1 bonus to either the conveyance's Attack or Defense (character's choice). A Critical Success provides a +2 bonus to defense or attack.

### SPOTTING

A Successful PER roll by characters actively trying spot an enemy will provide +1 bonus to the Attack roll of the character in control of the conveyance's mounted weapons. A Critical Success provides a +2 bonus to the attack roll.

### TECHNOMANCER

One of the most important crew members on a windship or other advanced conveyance that relies on windfunnels and levitationals is the ship's technomancer. A Successful Technomancy roll will provide +1 bonus to the Pilot's initiative roll on the next round. Technomancers will also be busy during combat repairing damage to spacecraft, etc.

## THE COMBAT ROLL

The character in control of any weapon mounted on the conveyance or using a personal ranged weapon is the character that actually makes the Action Table roll to see if an Attack is successful. After totaling up all the bonuses received from the actions of other characters aboard, the player makes a normal attack roll on the Action Table.



## JUDGING THE RESULTS

After the player rolls, the GM will interpret the Action Table result, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding the action, and other factors. Combat actions intended to cause damage are treated identically to normal character vs. character combat as detailed in the *Player's Guide to Talislanta*.

## CONVEYANCE REPAIR

A successful Handicraft (artisan) skill roll will repair 2 Hit Points of damage per round. Conveyances that have suffered heavy damage may require a period of repair at an appropriate dry dock or similar repair facility. Repair 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 repair in such instances is up to the GM to decide, based on the nature and extent of the damage received.

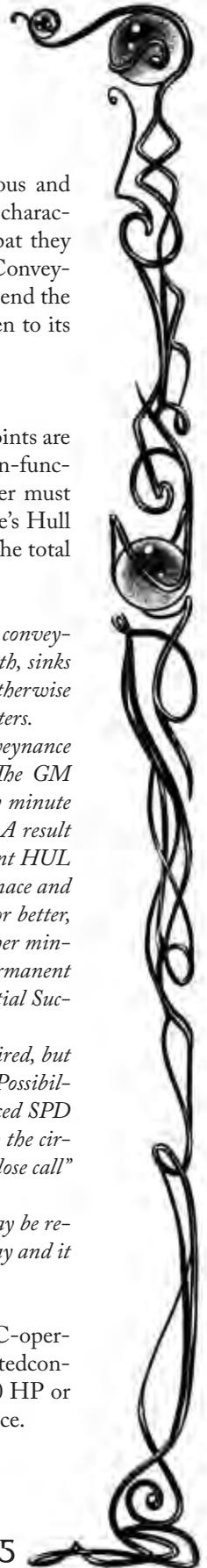
## CONVEYANCE DESTRUCTION

Conveyance Combat can be very dangerous and GMs are advised to play it very carefully. If a character does something stupid in a normal combat they may lose a limb or possibly be killed but a Conveyance Combat that goes horribly wrong could end the lives of the entire group so care must be given to its execution.

Conveyances reduced to zero or less Hit Points are rendered incapacitated and are essentially non-functioning. Should this happen the Gamemaster must roll on the *Action Table*, using the conveyance's Hull Rating and current Hit Points as modifiers. The total will yield one of the following results:

- ◆ **Mishap:** *barring a miracle of some sort, the conveyance falls from the sky in a ball of fiery death, sinks rapidly to the bottom of the ocean or is otherwise smashed to pieces. Time to create new characters.*
- ◆ **Failure:** *things are looking grim. The conveyance is falling apart around the character(s). The GM will need to make another HUL roll every minute at a cumulative penalty of -1 per minute. A result of failure or worse on any of these subsequent HUL rolls results in the destruction of the conveyance and death as above. A result of partial success or better, and the conveyance holds together for another minute. At best, the conveyance will suffer permanent damage of some kind (as per a result of Partial Success).*
- ◆ **Partial Success:** *the conveyance can be repaired, but will suffer some sort of permanent damage. Possibilities include a reduced HUL rating, a reduced SPD rating or some other damage appropriate to the circumstances surrounding the conveyance's "close call" (GM's ruling)*
- ◆ **Full or Critical Success:** *the conveyance may be repaired completely, at the rate of 2 HP per day and it will suffer no permanent damage.*

These rules should be reserved only for PC-operated conveyances or important NPC-operated conveyances. Any other conveyance reduced to 0 HP or less can simply be considered destroyed at once.



# CONVEYANCE ATTRIBUTES

Like normal player characters, all conveyances have a standard set of attributes that represent their strengths and weaknesses. These attributes include:

## MANEUVER (MAN)

Similar to DEX for a PC, MAN measures the maneuverability of a conveyance. MAN also affects a conveyance's ability to avoid incoming attacks and is used as a modifier to some Pilot skill rolls.

## HULL (HUL)

HUL is akin to CON in a normal character. It is a measure of the durability and endurance of a conveyance's hull or chassis. Like in normal combat, HUL checks are required when a conveyance is reduced to 0 HP.

## SPEED (SPD)

SPD measures the maximum velocity of a conveyance during combat or other tactical situations. The SPD rating listed the maximum SPD for land and aerial conveyances and the normal cruising SPD for naval vessels. Seagoing craft may add up to +4 to this rating given optimal weather conditions (taliwind, smooth oceans, etc.)

## ACCELERATION (ACL)

ACL is a measure of the conveyance's acceleration ability. While the SPD attribute measures a conveyance's top speed, ACL measures the amount a conveyance can accelerate in one round. *For example, a Wqindship with a SPD +20 is currently travelling at SPD +10 and has an ACL +2. That means the character can increase the SPD of this conveyance by +2 per round to a maximum of +20.*

## DECELERATION (DCL)

DCL is a measure of the conveyance's deceleration ability. While the SPD attribute measures a conveyance's top speed, DCL measures the amount a conveyance can decelerate in one round. *For example, a Land Ark travelling at +12 with an DCL of +1 will take 12 rounds to come to a complete stop (SPD 12 -1/rd)*

## SIZE

All conveyances have a Size (SIZ) category that can play a part in combat and other maneuvers. The various size categories are as follows:

SIZ	Approx. Length	Example
Small	7 to 12 ft	Rajan Chariot
Medium	13-24 ft	Windrigger
Large	25 to 50 ft	Kang War Dragon
Huge	51 to 200 ft	War Wagon
Colossal	201+ ft	Oceanus

Conveyances of the same size category receive no bonuses or penalties to attack or defense based on size. For each category a target conveyance is from the attacking conveyance, the attacker receives a +1 bonus to Attack rolls. Similarly, for each category a target conveyance is from the attacking conveyance, the defender receives a +1 bonus to defense. This means small conveyances receive bonuses to both Attack rolls and to defense when in combat vs. larger conveyances. Likewise, larger ships will have a more difficult time hitting smaller vessels while they themselves are often easy targets for the smaller (and often faster) conveyances.

## OTHER ATTRIBUTES

Conveyances also have hit point, protective ratings, etc. and these attributes are used identically to the way they are applied to player characters. It should be noted that while it might seem that most conveyances have a fairly low HP totals, they may only be harmed by siege weapons, magic or the environment. In other words, Under normal circumstances, normal weapons do no damage to conveyances.

# TALISLANTAN CONVEYANCES

## BARGE FORT

HUL +6                      MAN -4  
 ACL +1                     DCL +1  
 SPD +2

**Attacks/Damage:** 4 heavy ballistae DR20; 2 Light ballistae DR 15

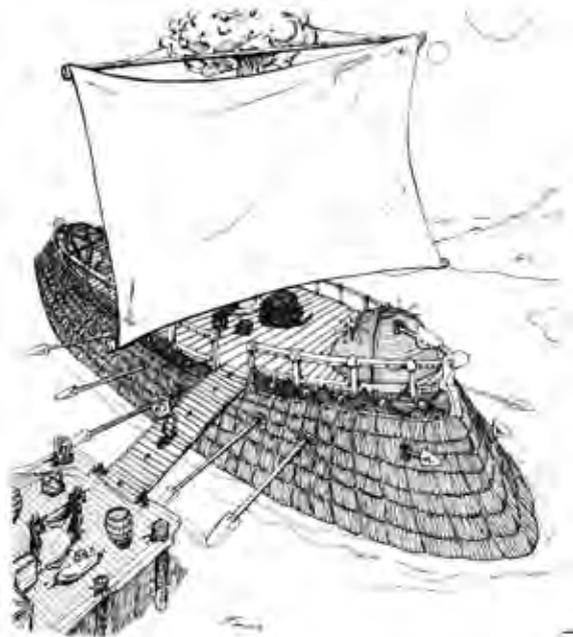
**Crew:** 24

**Hit Points:** 160

**Armor:** PR4

**Size:** Large (up to 60' in length; up to 25' wide)

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 (PR+8 for ramming purposes).



## CARGO BARGE

HUL +4                      MAN -6  
 ACL +1                     DCL +1  
 SPD -1

**Attacks/Damage:** None

**Crew:** 6-10

**Hit Points:** 65

**Armor:** PR +1

**Size:** Large (up to 60' in length; up to 25' wide)

A staple on most rivers across the continent, cargo barges are used to transport goods up and down rivers. Slow and ponderous, barges are often left to float with the current downriver while linen sails or tow lines attached to teams of Erd, Durges or Ogriphants are used to travel up river.

## CARRAK

HUL +4                      MAN -2  
 ACL +2                     DCL +1  
 SPD +6

**Attacks/Damage:** 4 light ballistae DR15

**Crew:** 32+

**Hit Points:** 100

**Armor:** PR3

**Size:** Huge (up to 120' in length)

The Mangar carrak 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.

## CARRIAGE

HUL +0                      MAN +0  
 ACL +2                      DCL +2  
 SPD As mount -3  
**Attacks/Damage:** None  
**Crew:** 1-10  
**Hit Points:** 40  
**Armor:** PR +1  
**Size:** Medium (up to 20' in length)

Carriages are essentially large covered, four-wheeled carts used to transport people and not cargo. They are normally equipped with internal seating for up to 6 (with additional seats for crew on the exterior). Some carriages have been converted to serve as mobile residences with the internal seating being replaced by a bed and living quarters. The Sarista are well known to travel the continent living from their carriages and wagons.

## CART

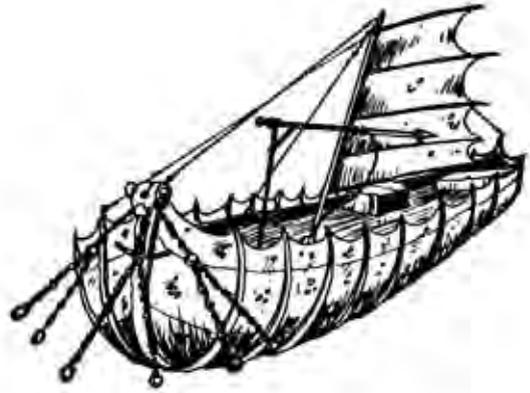
HUL -2                      MAN -2  
 ACL +2                      DCL +2  
 SPD As mount -3  
**Attacks/Damage:** None  
**Crew:** 1-2  
**Hit Points:** 20  
**Armor:** None  
**Size:** Small (up to 10' in length)

Carts are small, two-wheeled conveyances used to transport both people and goods. They are typically open to the elements and are most often used to traverse relatively short distances.

## CORACLE

HUL +0                      MAN -6  
 ACL +1                      DCL +1  
 SPD +2 (as Kra -3)  
**Attacks/Damage:** None  
**Crew:** 8-10  
**Hit Points:** 80  
**Armor:** None  
**Size:** Huge (up to 80' in length)

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

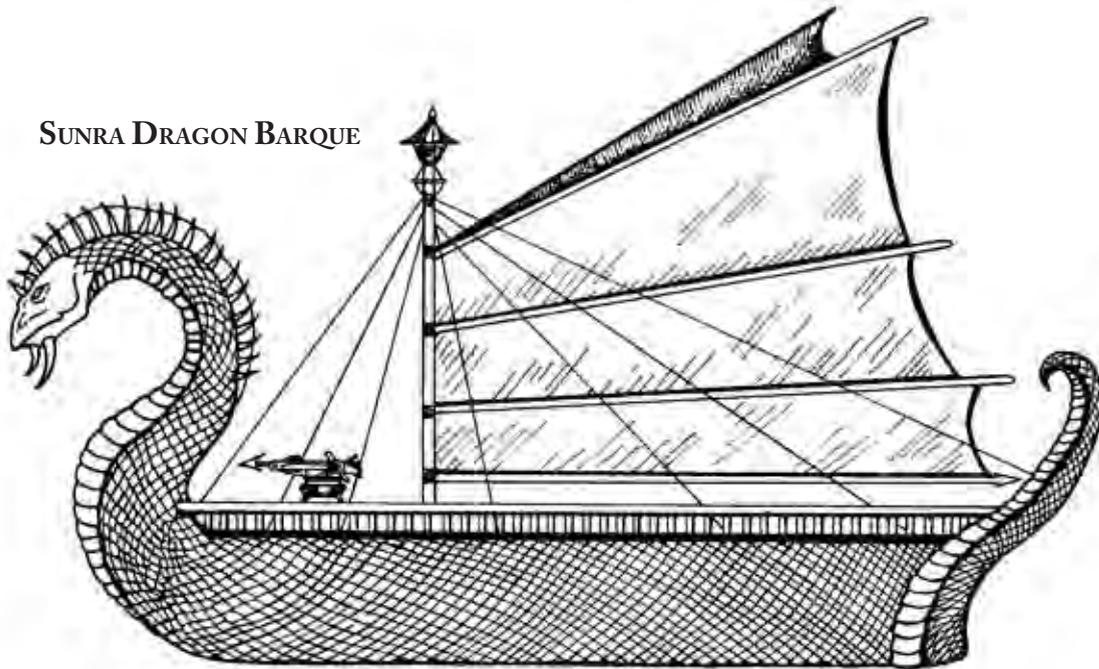


kra, which serves as the ship's frame, and the kra's tough scaly hide, which serves as the ship's hull. The largest of these ships have fore or aft castles. Teams of chained kra provide impetus to the vessel, regardless of prevailing winds, though they are neither very swift nor maneuverable. The flexible construction of these vessels is an advantage in rough seas.

## DRAGON BARQUE

HUL +4                      MAN +1  
 ACL +3                      DCL +2  
 SPD +4  
**Attacks/Damage:** Dragon's Fire DR44; 2 heavy ballistae DR20  
**Crew:** 40+  
**Hit Points:** 140  
**Armor:** PR6  
**Size:** Huge (up to 120' in length)

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 Quan 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" (range: 100'). The ship's armament also includes a pair of heavy ballistae, which can be employed as harpoons.

**SUNRA DRAGON BARQUE****DRAY**

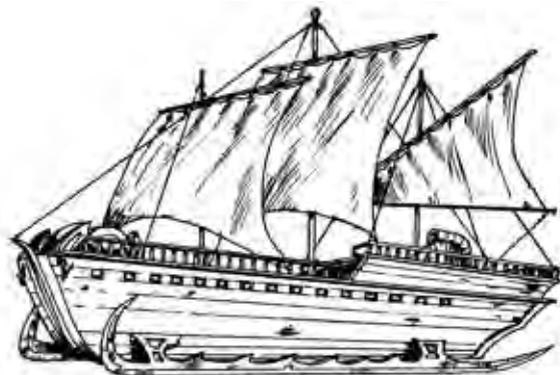
HUL +5                      MAN -5  
 ACL +1                      DCL +1  
 SPD As mount -3  
**Attacks/Damage:** None  
**Crew:** 1-2  
**Hit Points:** 40  
**Armor:** None  
**Size:** Medium (up to 24' in length)

Drays are heavily reinforced wagons used to transport cargo. A typical dray is equipped with sleeping quarters for up to 2 people.

**DUNESHIP**

HUL +5                      MAN -3  
 ACL +1                      DCL +2  
 SPD +4  
**Attacks/Damage:** Merchant duneships carry no arms, military craft have: 2 heavy ballistae DR 20; one ships hurlant DR30.  
**Crew:** 40+  
**Hit Points:** 140  
**Armor:** PR3 (military PR6)  
**Size:** Huge (up to 100' in length)

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 fore-castle, 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.



## GALLEY

HUL +2                      MAN -1  
 ACL +1                      DCL +2  
 SPD +3

**Attacks/Damage:** 2 light ballistae DR 15 or 2 heavy ballistae DR20 or

**Crew:** 60+

**Hit Points:** 100

**Armor:** None

**Size:** Large to Huge (up to 120' in length)

Galleys are perhaps the most common ocean-going craft in Talislanta. Since the vast majority of seaman fear navigating the open seas, Galleys hug the coastline, often putting into shore during bad weather or rough seas. Galleys are propelled by banks of oars normally manned by slaves.

## ICE SCHOONER

HUL +3                      MAN +0  
 ACL +2                      DCL +1  
 SPD +5

**Attacks/Damage:** 2 light ballistae DR 15; light catapult DR20

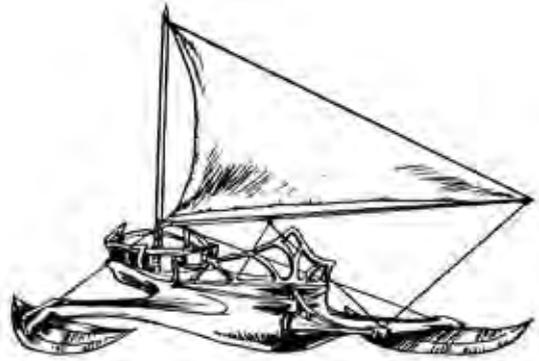
**Crew:** 30+

**Hit Points:** 100

**Armor:** PR2

**Size:** Huge (up to 80' in length)

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.



## ICE SKIFF

HUL +0                      MAN +2  
 ACL +3                      DCL +1  
 SPD +10

**Attacks/Damage:** Light ballista DR15

**Crew:** 6

**Hit Points:** 45

**Armor:** None

**Size:** Large (up to 40' in length)

These swift, sail-powered vessels are smaller versions of the Ice Schooner. Most are used as courier and scout vessels by the Mirin military and are perhaps the fastest land-based conveyances on the continent.

## LAND ARK

HUL +5                      MAN -5  
 ACL +1                      DCL +1  
 SPD +3

**Attacks/Damage:** 2 light ballistae DR 15; 1 heavy ballista DR20

**Crew:** 12+

**Hit Points:** 140

**Armor:** PR 4

**Size:** Huge (up to 100' in length)

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.

**LAND BARGE**

HUL +4                      MAN -5  
 ACL +1                     DCL +1  
 SPD +5  
**Attacks/Damage:** 1 light ballistae DR 15  
**Crew:** 6+  
**Hit Points:** 100  
**Armor:** PR 2  
**Size:** Huge (up to 70' in length)

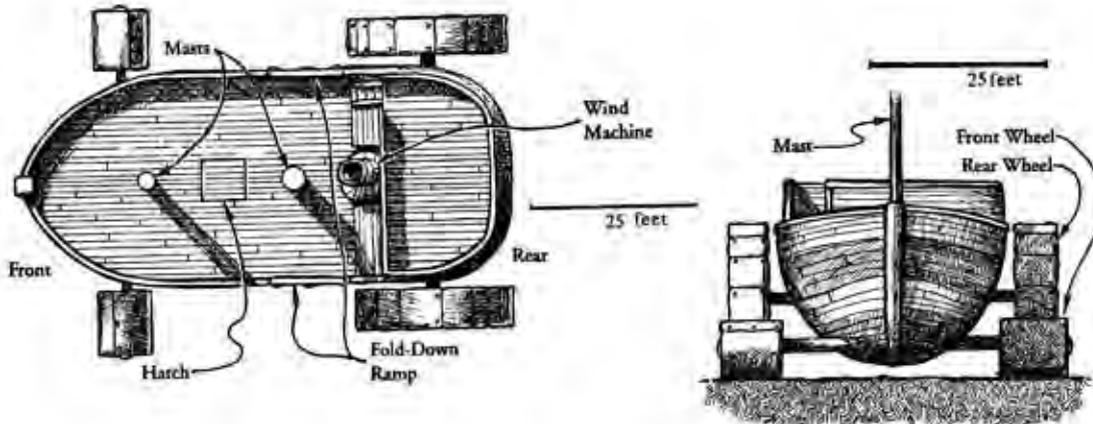
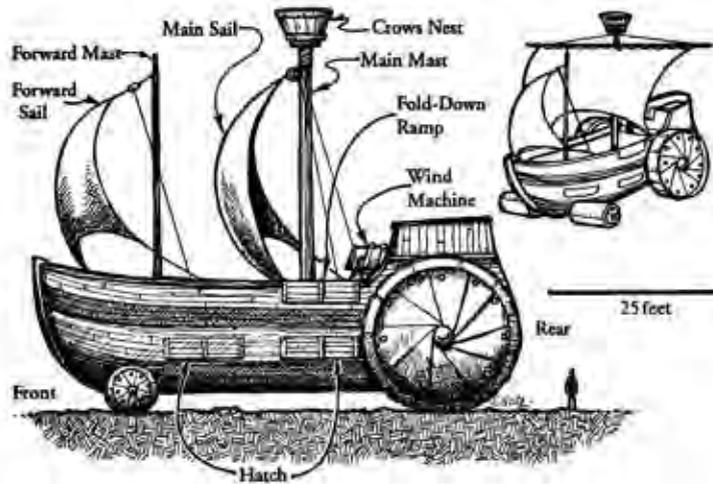
These wheeled sailing vessels are similar to land arks, save that they are notably lower, narrower, and slightly shorter, making them effective goods haulers. Like land arks, they also use sails and wind machines to provide propulsion, but feature 3 pairs of mid-sized ironclad wheels.

**LAND RIGGER**

HUL -1                      MAN +0  
 ACL +3                     DCL +2  
 SPD +7  
**Attacks/Damage:** None  
**Crew:** 2-4  
**Hit Points:** 40  
**Armor:** None  
**Size:** Medium (up to 20' in length)

The smallest wheeled sailing vessel available, land riggers are swifter and much more maneuverable than land arks or barges, and are also considerably less expensive. While they also use a sail and wind funnel, they only have a cargo capacity of 1,500 lbs., and 3 ironclad wheels (one in front two in the rear).

Land Barge



**MERCHANT SHIP**

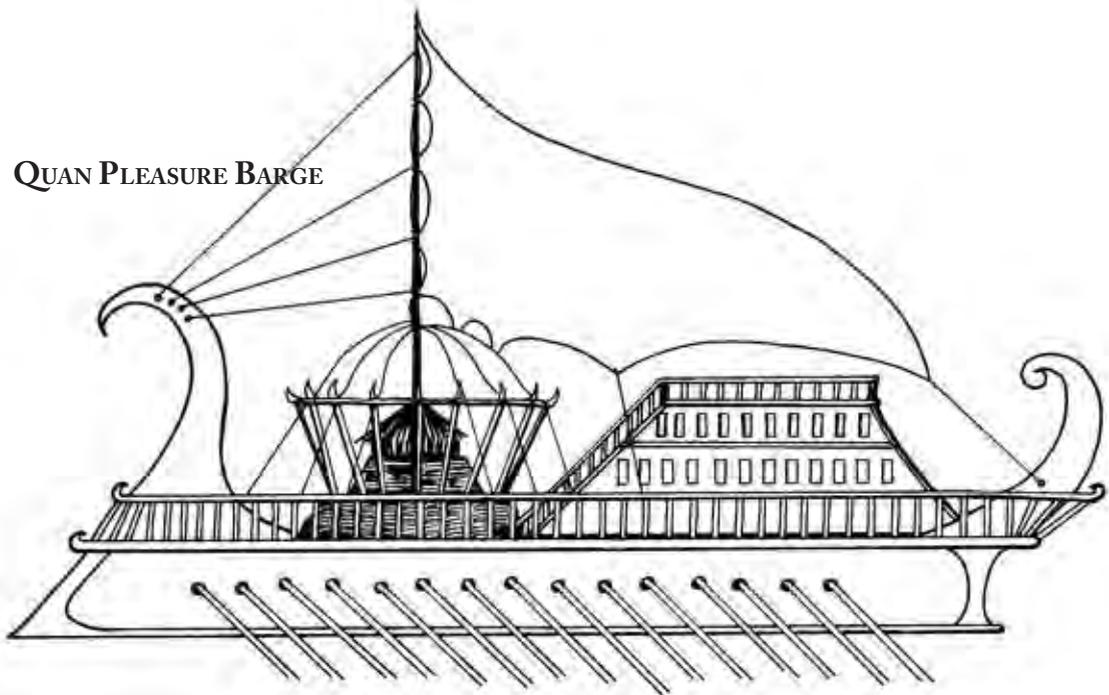
HUL +0                      MAN -3  
 ACL +1                      DCL +1  
 SPD +4  
**Attacks/Damage:** Light ballista DR15  
**Crew:** 24+  
**Hit Points:** 90  
**Armor:** None  
**Size:** Huge (up to 100' in length)

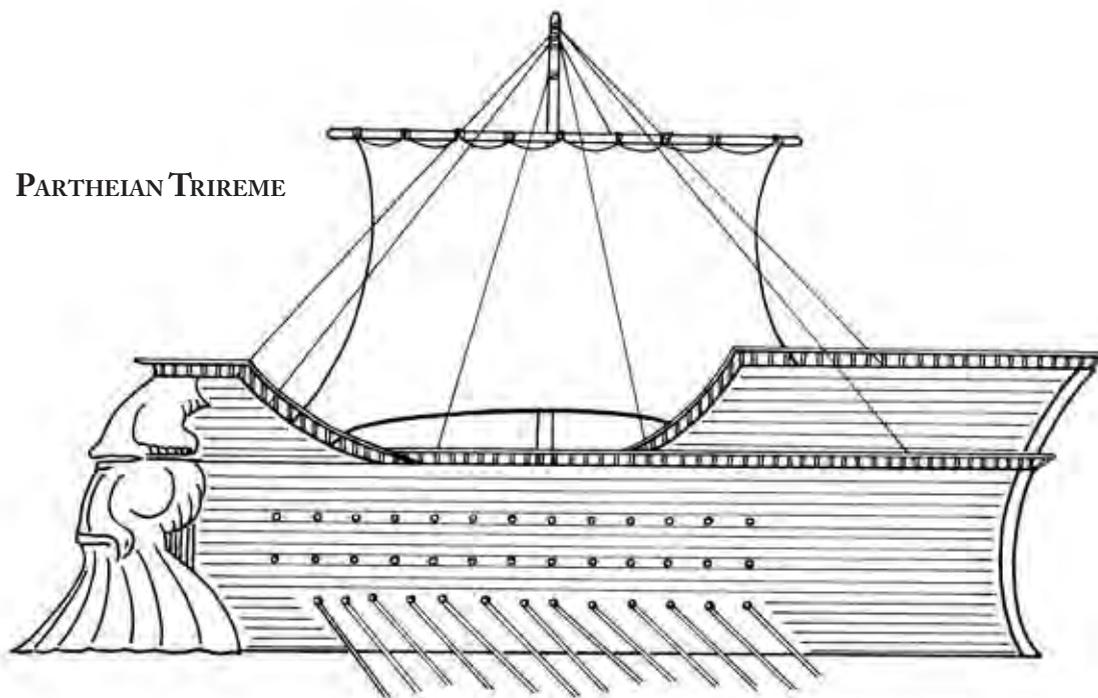
Sail-powered ocean going vesseles often used to transport cragos over great distances. Because of the ubiquitous fear of the open sea, merchant ships are less common in Talislanta than galleys. Found most often int he service of Farad mercantile interests, many merchant ships have been reequipped and pressed into service by the sea rogues of Gao Din.

**PLEASURE BARGE**

HUL +5                      MAN -1  
 ACL +1                      DCL +1  
 SPD +2  
**Attacks/Damage:** 4 Light ballista DR15  
**Crew:** 85+  
**Hit Points:** 160  
**Armor:** None  
**Size:** Huge/Colossal (up to 240' in length)

The pleasure barges of the Quan are waterborne craft of exceeding beauty, designed and built by some of the most skilled artisans on the continent. It is not unknown for Quan nobles to send Ispasian emissaries to such far-distant lands as Zandu, Cymril, Hadj and even Thaecia in order to obtain services of the very best craftsmen. Only the finest materials are used in the making of these vessels, some of which are valued at up to half-million gold lumens.

**QUAN PLEASURE BARGE**

**PARTHEIAN TRIREME****RAFT**

HUL -4                      MAN -6

ACL +1                      DCL +1

SPD -3

**Attacks/Damage:** None**Crew:** 1+**Hit Points:** 15**Armor:** None**Size:** Medium (up to 20' in length)**REED BOAT**

HUL -4                      MAN -1

ACL +1                      DCL +1

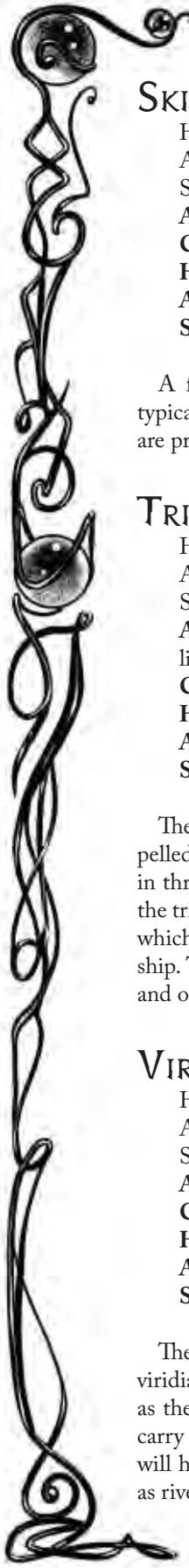
SPD +0

**Attacks/Damage:** None**Crew:** 1+**Hit Points:** 15**Armor:** None**Size:** Small (up to 16' in length)

Most often used to transport people and cargo across rivers or up and down river short distances, rafts consist of little more than planks or logs streped together and propelled by emans of a long pole.

Primarily found in the swamps of Jhagaran and Mog, the locals use these canoes constructed from reeds to navigate the fetid swamps.





## SKIFF / PUNT

HUL -3                      MAN -1  
 ACL +1                     DCL +1  
 SPD +0

**Attacks/Damage:** None

**Crew:** 1+

**Hit Points:** 20

**Armor:** None

**Size:** Small (up to 12' in length)

A flatbottom open boat of shallow draft. Skiffs typically have a pointed bow and a square stern and are propelled by either oars or sail.

## TRIREME

HUL +8                      MAN -3  
 ACL +2                     DCL +2  
 SPD +3

**Attacks/Damage:** 3 Fire throwers DR25; 4 light ballistae DR15

**Crew:** 24+

**Hit Points:** 125

**Armor:** PR 6

**Size:** Huge (up to 100' in length; 40' in width)

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.

## VIRIDIA BARGE

HUL +6                      MAN -4  
 ACL +1                     DCL +1  
 SPD -1

**Attacks/Damage:** None

**Crew:** 6-8

**Hit Points:** 80

**Armor:** PR +2

**Size:** Huge (up to 75' in length)

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.

## WAGON

HUL +0                      MAN -3  
 ACL +1                     DCL +1  
 SPD +4

**Attacks/Damage:** Light ballista DR15

**Crew:** 24+

**Hit Points:** 70

**Armor:** None

**Size:** Huge (up to 100' in length)

Wagons are common conveyances in the cities and towns of Talislanta. They consist of 4 wheels and a bed for cargo with a bench seat for the driver and 2 passengers up front. Typically pulled by one or more Erd or Durge, wagons can have either an open or enclosed cargo bed.

## WAR CHARIOT, KANG

HUL +2                      MAN +0  
 ACL +2                     DCL +1  
 SPD +3 (Strider SPD minus 3)

**Attacks/Damage:** Wheel blades DR6

**Crew:** 6

**Hit Points:** 30

**Armor:** PR 4

**Size:** Small (8' to 10" in length)

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; use the driver's Conveyance (wagons) Skill Rating for wheel-attacks.

**WAR CHARIOT, RAJAN**

HUL +1

MAN -1

ACL +2

DCL +1

SPD +4 (Equus minus 3)

**Attacks/Damage:** Wheel blades DR5**Crew:** 3**Hit Points:** 25**Armor:** None**Size:** Small (5' in length; 4' in width)

The armies of Rajinnar employ equus-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.

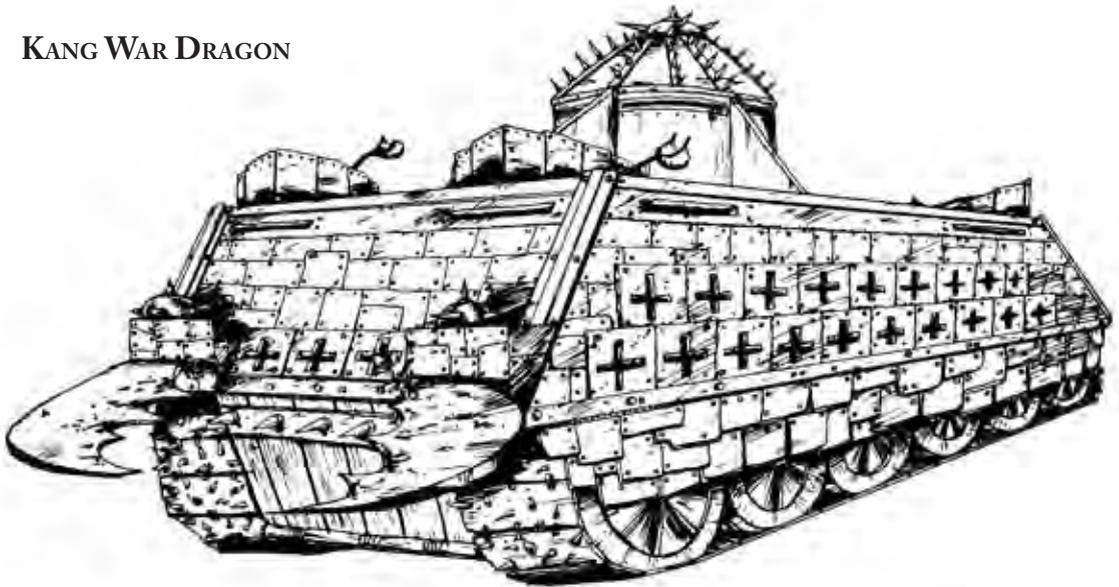


RAJAN WAR CHARIOT



KANG WAR CHARIOT

## KANG WAR DRAGON



## WAR DRAGON

HUL +5                      MAN -4  
 ACL +1                      DCL +2  
 SPD +0

**Attacks/Damage:** 2 Fire throwers DR24; scything blades DR24

**Crew:** 16

**Hit Points:** 70

**Armor:** PR8

**Size:** Large (up to 30' in length)

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.

## WARSHIP

HUL +2                      MAN -2  
 ACL +1                      DCL +1  
 SPD +4

**Attacks/Damage:** 2 Light ballista DR15; 1 heavy ballista DR20

**Crew:** 24+

**Hit Points:** 110

**Armor:** PR2

**Size:** Huge (up to 100' in length)

Similar in design to the typical Farad merchant ship, these watercraft have been reinforced and armed for battle. Primarily used to accompany trade convoys, Faradun has a fleet of these ships at its disposal and several have also been captured and pressed into service by the Gao sea rogues.

**WAR WAGON**

HUL +2                    MAN -5  
 ACL +1                    DCL +2  
 SPD +0

**Attacks/Damage:** 5 heavy ballistae DR20; 1 light ballista DR15

**Crew:** 10

**Hit Points:** 90

**Armor:** PR6

**Size:** Large (up to 50' in length)

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.

**WINDRIGGER**

HUL -3                    MAN +2  
 ACL +3                    DCL +1  
 SPD +6

**Attacks/Damage:** None

**Crew:** 1-6

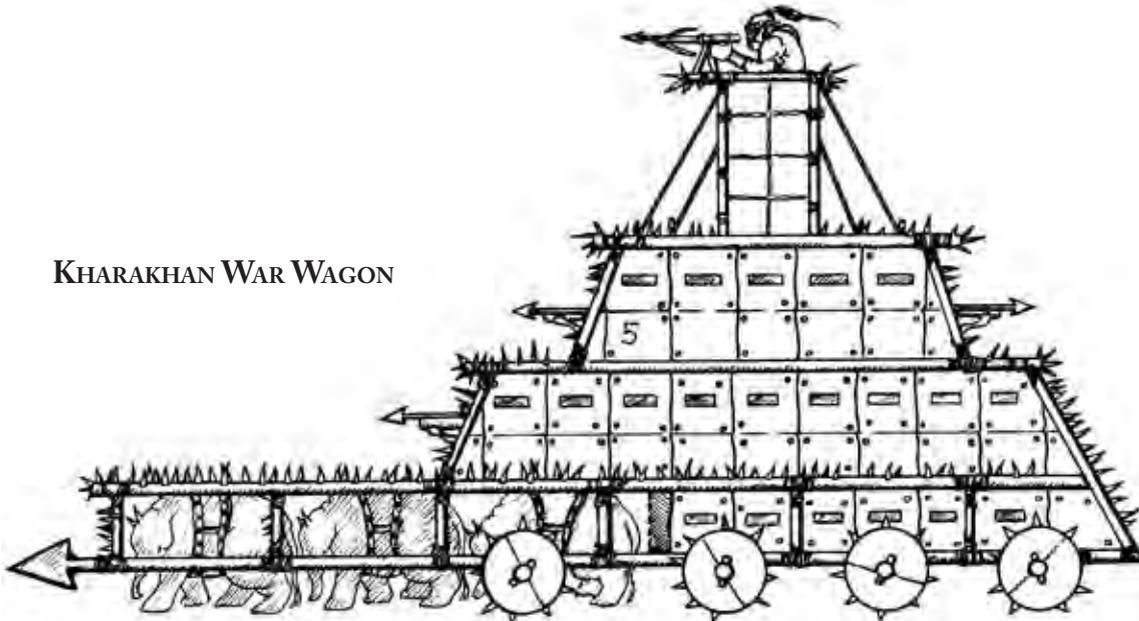
**Hit Points:** 60

**Armor:** None

**Size:** Medium (up to 20' in length)

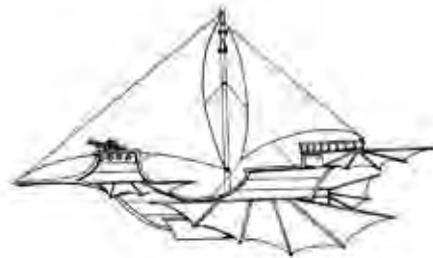
These craft were originally intended for use as life-boats on larger vessels, such as the aerial warships employed by the Phantasians. The ships proved to be quite versatile and were soon adapted to other purposes as well. Windriggers are swifter and much more maneuverable than windships, and they are considerably less expensive. They have a cargo capacity of only about 1,500 pounds, however, and are not particularly sturdy or stable in flight.

**KHARAKHAN WAR WAGON**

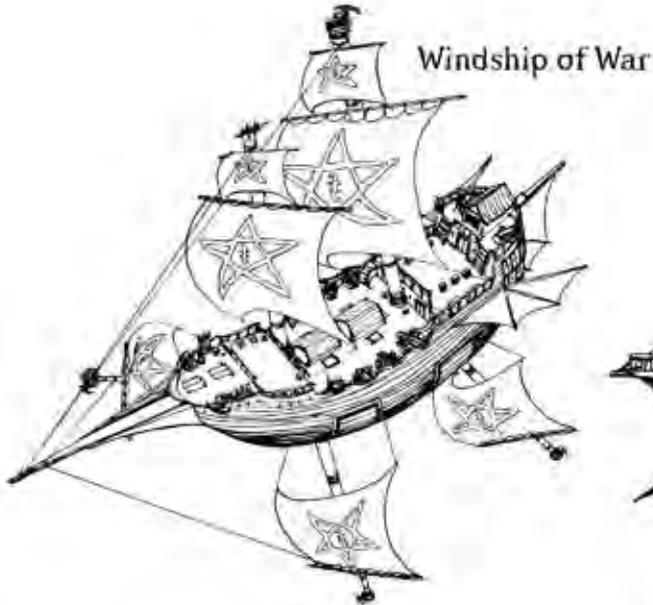




Windrigger



Windskiff



Windship of War



Windship

## WINDSKIFF

HUL -1                      MAN +0  
 ACL +2                      DCL +1  
 SPD +5  
**Attacks/Damage:** Heavy ballista DR20  
**Crew:** 10  
**Hit Points:** 80  
**Armor:** None  
**Size:** Large (40' in length; 15' in width)

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 forecabin and three small cabins within the aftcastle. The standard crew consists of an aerial captain, a first officer, a windpilot, and seven Cymrilian swordsmages.

## WINDSHIP

HUL -1                      MAN -2  
 ACL +1                      DCL +1  
 SPD +4  
**Attacks/Damage:** 2 Light ballista DR15  
**Crew:** 32+  
**Hit Points:** 90  
**Armor:** None  
**Size:** Large (up to 100' in length)

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 and Phantasians. 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.

## WINDSHIP OF WAR

HUL +1                      MAN -3  
 ACL +1                      DCL +1  
 SPD +4

**Attacks/Damage:** 4 Light ballista DR15; 4 heavy ballistae DR20

**Crew:** 150+

**Hit Points:** 120

**Armor:** None

**Size:** Huge (up to 175' in length; 40' in width)

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.

# TRAVEL RATES

## OVERLAND TRAVEL

Conveyance	Road	Open	Rugged	Very Rugged
Aht-Ra <sup>1</sup>	35	35	25	20
Carriage	50	35	15	--
Cart	25	20	10	--
Dray	25	25	15	5
Duneship	50	100	20	5
Equs <sup>1</sup>	40	40	20	15
Ice Schooner	--	120	--	--
Ice Skiff	--	160	--	--
Land Ark/Barge	80	50	25	--
Land Dragon	30	30	30	25
Land Lizard / Mangonel Lizard	25	25	20	15
Land Rigger	100	70	--	--
Loper	30	30	25	20
Orgiphant	25	25	20	10
Palanquin/Litter	15	10	5	2
Siege Engine (light)	20	15	10	--
Siege Engine (heavy)	15	10	5	--
Strider	30	30	25	15
Wagon	25	25	10	--
Walking	20	20	10	5
War Chariot (Kang)	30	25	15	10
War Chariot (Rajan)	30	25	15	--
War Dragon	25	25	25	15
War Wagon	50	40	15	5



## AIRBORNE TRAVEL

Travel Mode	Favorable Conditions	Unfavorable Conditions
Avian Humanoid (Gryph, etc.)	100	20
Crested Dragon	80	60
Dractyl	60	40
Windrigger	220	30
Windship	200	75
Windskiff	200	60

## WATERBORNE TRAVEL

Travel Mode	Favorable Conditions	Unfavorable Conditions
Barge Fort	60	30
Cargo Barge	20	10
Carrak	200	100
Corracle	90	45
Dragon Barque	160	80
Galley	80	40
Merchant Ship	125	60
Pleasure Barge	25	15
Raft	10	5
Reed Boat	25	12
Skiff/Punt	60	30
Trireme	120	60
Warship	100	50

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.

## OVERLAND TRAVEL

\* +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.

## AIRBORNE TRAVEL

Favorable conditions indicate clear weather and mild winds or tailwinds. Unfavorable conditions indicate high winds, heavy precipitation and/or restricted visibility.

## WATERBORNE TRAVEL

Favorable conditions indicate calm seas and favorable winds. Unfavorable conditions include headwinds, strong currents, navigational hazards, etc. Sail-powered craft have the advantage of being able to travel 24 hours per day while galleys can only achieve the same thing by carrying twice as many galley slaves as are used at any one time. On the other hand, sailing ships are at the mercy of the winds. Sail-powered craft have a movement factor of zero when becalmed.

# WAR !



## WARFARE IN TALISLANTA

War is a fact of life in Talislanta. The raids of the Imrian slavers, the continual conflict between L'Haan and the Ice Giants of Narandu, the expansion of Rajinnar and the Quan Empire—all of these situations may involve adventurers in large scale combat, requiring a means of quickly determining an outcome.

The following is a basic Mass Combat System which can be used to resolve conflicts of any size, from a small skirmish to massive engagements involving tens of thousands of troops.

## STAGING MASS COMBAT SCENARIOS

Mass Combat scenarios can be played on a table top or other flat surface, using a map made of hex or graph paper. Terrain features and/or fortifications can be drawn directly on the map, while Units may be represented by paper “counters”, with important information (such as Unit type, Mass Combat Rating, Movement Rate, and troop strength) printed on one side.

Unlike individual combat, Mass Combat engagements take place on a large scale. Battles may last for hours, or even an entire day (GM's ruling, based on the type of battle being fought).

The Gamemaster sets the stage for all Mass Combat scenarios, providing any information required preliminary to the actual battle (such as troops arriving on the scene, weather conditions, etc.). When all is in order, the battle may commence.

## MASS COMBAT BASICS

- 1) List all Units that will be taking part in the battle.
- 2) Determine the Mass Combat Rating (MCR) for all attacking and defending Units.
- 3) Compare the MCRs of the two opposing forces. The difference is applied as a modifier (positive, negative, or “zero”), as per standard combat.
- 4) Apply Special Combat Modifiers according to the circumstances of battle.
- 5) To simulate the assault, roll a d20 on the Action Table. Note that a single roll represents the actions of both the attacker and the defender.

The GM determines the results of the attack, then additional rolls are made to determine Morale, and Character Fate. Surviving units may withdraw from the field or muster their forces for another assault.

## UNITS

Whereas standard combat is fought on an individual level, Mass Combat takes place between large groups of combatants, referred to as units. A unit is defined as any group of creatures or individuals that functions as a single entity, for purposes of attack, defense, movement, etc. While a unit may be comprised of a variety of different character or creature types, it is best to separate units according to race/nationality, basic level of ability and type (mounted, light infantry, etc.).

## MASS COMBAT RATING (MCR)

A unit's basic strength is represented by its Mass Combat Rating (MCR). The procedure for determining a unit's MCF as follows:

- 1) Find the average Combat Rating for members of the unit.
- 2) Find the average Magic Rating for members of the unit.
- 3) Add modifiers for Weapons, Armor, and Mounts, as applicable.
- 4) Total 1, 2, and 3 to arrive at the unit's Mass Combat Rating.

## WEAPON FACTOR

Weapon Factor is determined by the general type of weaponry (natural or otherwise) employed by a unit, and its basic damage capability. *For example, a unit armed with spears (DR8) receives a bonus of +3 to its MCR.*

Optionally, Units which employ more than one type of weapon (such as an archer unit which also carries short swords) may be given more than one Weapon Factor. For mixed units employing several different weapon types, the Gamemaster may simply estimate one average Weapon Factor for the entire group.

Weapon Damage	Modifier
1-4	+1
1-6	+2
1-8	+3
1-10	+4
1-12	+5
1-20	+6
Light-Medium Siege Weapons	+7-8
Heavy Siege Weapons	+9-10
Enchanted Weapons	add +1 (per +1 rating)



## ARMOR FACTOR

Armored Units receive a bonus to their MCR, according to the protective value of their equipment, as follows:

Type	Modifier
None	0
Hide/padded cloth/fur	1
Land Lizard hide	2
Chain Mesh/Dragon hide	3
Full garde	+3
Plate mail	+4
Battle armor (full suit)	+5
Enchanted armor	add +1 (per +1 rating)

## MOUNTS

Mounted units receive bonuses to their MCR as follows:

- 1) Determine the mounts MR as you would for a unit; i.e.. add Combat Rating + Weaponry (nee...4 or otherwise) + Armor.
- 2) Add the steed's MCR 10 the Units MCR to arrive at a single figure for the Mounted Unit

## PRE-GENERATED RATINGS FOR MOUNTS

The following is a list of a cis soeces of creatures which are employed as mounts in Taisiantan warfare, including pre-generated stats for each ma-rfs average MCR (unbarded) and Movement Rate (Move).

Type	MCR	Move
Aht-Ra	4	7-8
Behemoth	13	6
Dractyl	8	6
Duadir	11	8
Equs	5	8-9
Land Dragon	18	4
Land Lizard	7	5
Loper	7	7
Mangonel Lizard	9	6
Og riphant	10	4
Strider	5	8

Tarkus*	10	8
Zaratan	17	6

\* Tarkus are not mounts. However, they are trained to fight side-by-side with members of Kang Tracker Units, and so add to the effectiveness of these Units

### EXAMPLE: DETERMINING A UNIT'S MCR

The following is an example of how to determine a Unit's Mass Combat Rating. The unit chosen for this example is a contingent of 3rd level Thralls: armed with greatswords, wearing full garde, and mounted on Mangonel Lizards. The MCR of this unit is determined as follows:

Units average CR	+5
Weapon Factor	+5 (greatswords)
Armor Factor	+3 (full garde)
Mounts' CR	+3
Mounts Weapon Factor	+5 (nat. weaponry)
Mounts' Armor Factor	+2 (natural armor)
<b>Total MCR</b>	<b>+22</b>

## MIXED UNITS

While it is easier to separate Units according to one type, it is necessary on occasion to create Units which are comprised of many different types of creatures and/or beings. To do so requires the following procedure:

- 1) Determine the MCR of each different type of creature in the Mixed Unit.
- 2) Add all the MCR totals and divide by the number of different types included in the Mixed Unit. This figure represents the Mixed Unit's MCR.

*Note: For a Mixed Unit to qualify for any additional Combat or Special Modifiers, at least 50% of their total number must qualify. For example, for a mixed unit to receive a +1 bonus for "Avian vs non-avian", at least 50% of the total force must be fliers.*

## MOVEMENT RATE

Movement in Mass Combat is determined by a Unit's average Speed Rating, adjusted to suit the expanded scale of Mass Combat scenarios. While Movement Rates have been provided for mounts and the Listing of Unit types, the Gamemaster will need to know how to determine this information when creating Mixed Units or other types of Units not covered in this book.

The formula for determining Movement Rate is:

*Movement Rate = 5 hexes per turn, plus or minus 1 hex per 2 points of SPD.*

*Example: An infantry Unit comprised of Mud People warriors has a Speed Rating of +2 in water or swamp, and -2 on dry land. Its Movement Rate is 6 in watery environs (5+1) or 4 on dry land (5-1.4).*

*Note: Movement is halved over rough terrain.*

## SPECIAL COMBAT MODIFIERS

The following is a list of special modifiers which may be applied to Mass Combat Action Table die rolls. *Note: these modifiers are not added to MCR totals.*

The Gamemaster determines the appropriate modifiers according to his or her appraisal of the conditions for battle. All modifiers are cumulative.

Superior force	+2 per +1 odds differential
Morale	+1-5 (according to unit type)
Defender in Defensive position	+1-20 (GM ruling)
Siege engines	+1-20 (GM ruling)
Command	+1-4
Magic	+1-4
Tactical Advantage	+1-4
Special Advantages	+1-4 per advantage
Hardship	-1 MCR/day
Missile Weapons	<i>special</i>

## NOTES ON COMBAT MODIFIERS

### SUPERIOR FORCE

Units which outnumber their opponents by at least two- to- one receive a bonus on Mass Combat die rolls. This bonus is based on the odds differential, as follows:

- 1:1 odds no bonus (even odds)
- 2:1 odds = +2 bonus
- 3:1 odds = +3 bonus
- 4:1 odds = +4 bonus
- 5:1 odds = +5 bonus etc.

## MORALE

A combination of psychology and training, morale is a factor which may turn the tide of battle or allow an inferior force to de-feat a superior one. Bonuses for Morale are determined accord-ing to Combat Rat-ing and general type, as follows:

Untrained (CR:0)	-1
Green (CR:1)	+0
Regular (CR:2-4)	+1
Veteran (CR:5-10)	+2
Elite (CR:11+)	+3

### ADDITIONAL MORALE MODIFIERS

Disgruntled/unmotivated	-2
Erratic/undisciplined	-1
Fanatic/savage	+1
Loyal to leader/cause	+2
Mercenary	+1/-1
Ordinary	+0

*\* According to pay/circumstances.*



### ACTION TABLE RESULTS MORALE

**Mishap** - Broken. Troops dispirited. All survivors lay down their arms and surrender. Characters may attempt to escape by rolling for Fate on the Action Table.

**Failure** - Routed. Troops flee in disarray and cannot be rallied.

**Partial Success** - Shaken. Troops' confidence is shaken. Moral at -1 next turn.

**Full Success** - Hold. The Troops hold fast.

**Critical Success** - Rally. Troops rally around their Commander. Attack/Defend at +1 next turn. Troops make Morale check at +2 bonus next turn.

### DEFENSIVE POSITIONS

A Defensive Position is defined as any place, natural or man-made, which could provide cover of some sort for a force of defenders. Units receive a bonus on Mass Combat die rolls when protected by cover. This bonus can range from +1-20, according to the type and extent of the cover provided by the position.

#### MODIFIERS FOR DEFENSIVE POSITIONS

Open terrain:	0
Tall grasses, light vegetation:	+1-2
Light forest:	+3-4
Heavy forest:	+5-10
Wood/thatch structures:	+3-6
Stone/earthen structures:	+5-12
Castle/fortress:	+ 10-20
Small ship/conveyance:	+2-3
Large ship/conveyance:	+4-5
Armored ship/conveyance:	+6-7

### ACTION TABLE RESULTS CHARACTER FATE

**Mishap** - The character is seriously wounded and/or disabled (GM's option) and is taken prisoner by the enemy, left for dead on the battlefield, lost, etc.

**Failure** - The character suffers damage equal to 1/2 the normal HP and has been captured by the enemy.

**Partial Success** - The character suffers damage equal to 1/2 their normal HP.

**Full Success** - The character is alive and well with only minor, insignificant damage.

**Critical Success** - The character is alive and unharmed and gains something of value: a prisoner, plunder, an artifact/enchanted weapon, information about the enemy, glory in battle, a promotion in rank, etc.

### SIEGE ENGINES

Siege engines include catapults, ballistae, firethrowers, siege towers, etc. The Vajra of Quan, the Arimites, and the Ur clansmen are experts in the use of siege machines, and utilize them in large numbers.

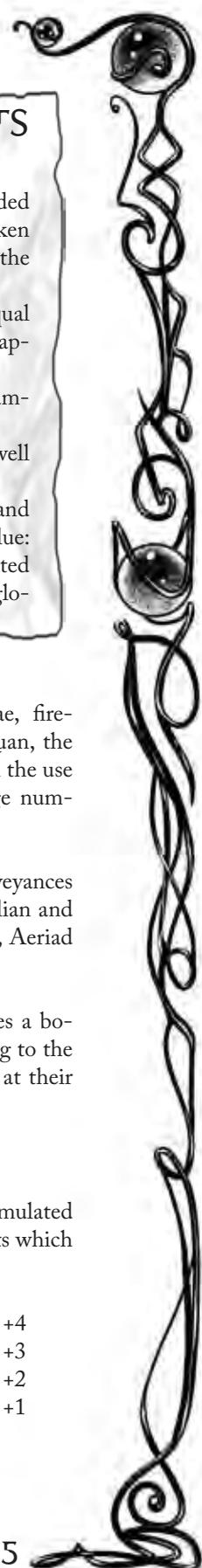
Also included in this category are all conveyances which can be used in battle, such as Cymrillian and Phantasian windships, Dracartan duneships, Aeriad barge-forts, Kharakhan war wagons, etc..

Units equipped with siege engines receives a bonus of +1-20 or Mass Combat rolls according to the type and number of engines that they have at their disposal.

### MAGIC

The effect of magic on Mass Combat is simulated by awarding the following modifiers for Units which include spell casters of an) sort:

Unit comprised entirely of spell casters	+4
3/4 of Unit are spell casters	+3
1/2 of Unit are spell casters	+2
1/4 or less are spell casters	+1



## ACTION TABLE RESULTS – MASS COMBAT

**Mishap** - Attacker loses 3/4 MCR. Defensive positions secure. Attackers must make a Morale roll at -5 penalty to determine the status of survivors. Attacking characters must each roll for Fate at a -5 penalty; Defenders roll Fate at +4.

**Failure** - Attacker loses 1/3 MCR and must check Morale at -2 penalty. Defensive positions secure. Attacking characters roll for Fate at -2; Defenders roll Fate at +2.

**Partial Success** - Stalemate. Defensive positions jeopardized but still secure. Both sides take minor casualties and must make Morale checks. All characters roll for Fate at +4.

**Full Success** - Defender loses 1/2 MCR and must check morale at -2 penalty. Defensive positions breached. Attacking characters roll Fate at +2 bonus; Defenders roll Fate at -2 penalty.

**Critical Success** - Defender loses 3/4 MCR and must check Morale at a -5 penalty. Defensive positions overrun. Attacking characters roll Fate with +4 bonus; Defenders roll Fate with -5 penalty.

## COMMAND MODIFIER

A charismatic and forceful Commander is capable of leading an army to victory, perhaps even when faced with overwhelming odds. It is not the Commander's Combat Rating which matters, so much as his/her Command skill. Bonuses for a Commander's skill are as follows:

Skill Level/Modifier

1-5 = +1

6-10 = +2

11-14 = +3

15+ = +4

*Note: If the commander of the defending force also has the Command Skill, an identical subtraction is made from the attacker's die roll.*

## TACTICAL ADVANTAGE

Units can gain advantages according to the types of tactics which they employ, as follows:

Attack/defend from above	+1
Rear assault vs an engaged opponent	+2
Surprise attack	+2

## SPECIAL ADVANTAGES

The Gamemaster may assign additional +1 modifiers according to the Special Advantages which some

units may have over the opponents. Some examples include:

- \*Avian vs non-avian (except in enclosed spaces)
- \*Aquatic vs non-aquatic (in seas, swamps, rivers, etc. only) Unit is faster than opponent
- \*Units stationed in homeland or on friendly soil
- \*Unit with Night Vision fighting in darkness
- \*Weather/climate favors one Unit over another
- \*Unit bolstered by the presence of a renowned hero/leader

## HARDSHIP

Units which are subject exposure, thirst, starvation, or similar hardships suffer a minimum penalty of -1 MCR per day (Game master's ruling). Forces stationed in a Defensive Position are protected to some extent and may take precautions against long sieges by stockpiling provisions (based on the availability of supplies).

## MISSILE WEAPONS

Troops armed with spears bows, or other missile weapons gain a *free* attack on the initial phase of combat against non-missile troops. For this type of attack consider any die result of 10 or less to be a miss. If both the attacker and the defender have missile-armed units standard Mass Combat procedure may be used. Note that Units comprised entirely of spell casters may launch missile-type spell attacks in this manner.

## EXAMPLE OF THE TALISLANTA MASS COMBAT SYSTEM

The example chosen is the Battle of Ikarthis; an incident which occurred during the BeastWars of the early New Age. In this engagement, an army of Beastmen regulars (average ability level of 2) laid siege to the Seven Kingdoms' outpost of Ikarthis.

The defenders consisted of a Mixed Unit of veteran Borderlands Troops (average ability level: 3), led by a Thrall Commander named Rakk (Command skill level 9). A Windship manned by Cymrilian Swordmages (ability level 3) arrived after the battle had commenced.

### ATTACKERS

The attacking force was comprised of a single Unit of 600 Beastmen (average ability level 2= +2 MCR), armed with spears and short bows (Weapon Factor: +3 MCR), wearing leather armor (Armor Factor: +1 MCR), and mounted on unarmored Darkmanes (Mounts: +5 MCR). They outnumber the defenders of Ikarthis by 6:1 (modifier of +6 MCR), and receive an advantage of +1 for attacking at night (the Beastmen have Night Vision). They have no siege engines, but carry makeshift ladders with which to scale the walls (additional +1 advantage).

**Total MCR: 18**

### DEFENDERS

The defenders of Ikarthis consist of a mixed Unit of approximately 100 Thrall, Arimite, Danuvian, Blue Aeriad, and other veterans (average ability level 3: +3 MCR). They are armed with a variety of weapons, including heavy crossbows, short bows, light catapults, Aeriad dart-throwers, etc. For purposes of simplicity, the GM figures the average damage rating of the Unit's weaponry, and gives them a Weapon Factor of +4. The Borderlands troops wear various types of armor, mostly of medium weight, so the GM gives them an Armor Rating of +2 (equal to chain mail). They are defending in a Defensive Position (+10), and are led by a Thrall commander with a Command Skill rating of level 9 (+2).

**Total MCR : 21**

If the defenders of Ikarthis can hold out until day-break, they will be re-enforced by a contingent of

100 Cymrilians (average ability level 3: +3), wearing chain mail (Armor Factor: +2). Half of their number are Swordmages (Magic modifier of +2), and they will be arriving in a windship armed with light ballistae (Weapon Factor: +6). The windship receives an additional advantage for attacking from above (+1).

**Total MCR: 13**

### THE BATTLE BEGINS

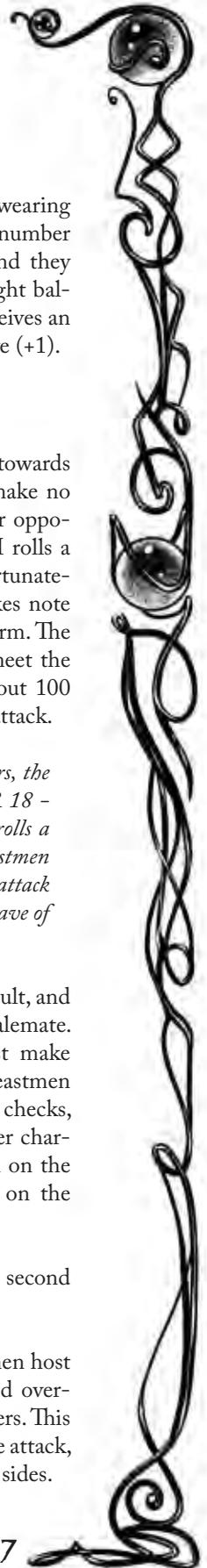
*The First Assault:* The Beastmen advance towards the fortress under cover of darkness. They make no attempt at stealth, but hope to surprise their opponents with a lightning-swift strike. The GM rolls a d20 vs the PER of the outpost's sentinels. Fortunately for the defenders, a keen-eyed Gryph takes note of the approaching horde and sounds the alarm. The defenders man the battlements in time to meet the first wave of Beastmen. At a distance of about 100 feet, the Beastmen launch a missile weapon attack.

*GM's Notes:* Despite their superior numbers, the Beastmen attack at a penalty of -3 (MCR 18 - Defender's MCR 21 = -3). The GM first rolls a d20 for the missile weapon attacks: the Beastmen roll a 5 (minus 3 =2), indicating that the attack has no effect. In the next instant, the first wave of Beastmen has reached the walls of Ikarthis.

Next, the GM rolls for the Beastmen's assault, and gets a 13. The modified die result = 10; a Stalemate. Both sides take minor casualties, and must make Morale checks. In this instance, both the Beastmen and their opponents make successful Morale checks, and are able to Hold. If there were any player characters involved in the battle, they would roll on the Character Fate column at +4, as indicated on the Mass Combat Table Key.

The Beastmen withdraw, to re-group for a second attack.

*The Second Assault:* Once again, the Beastmen host rides forth, attempting to scale the walls and overwhelm the defenders by sheer force of numbers. This time they do not attempt a preliminary missile attack, but surround the outpost and attack from all sides.



*GM's Notes: On the second turn, the GM rolls an 18 for the Beastmen; a result of -1/2 MCR (Defender). The Beastmen have breached the outpost's defenses, and are battling the defenders from atop the walls. The defenders suffer losses of 50%, and their MCR is reduced by half (to 10). Even so, the Thrall commander, Rakk, rallies his troops (i.e. his troops pass the required Morale check at -4), and the defenders still Hold.*

### CYMRILIANS TO THE RESCUE

Just as dawn breaks, a Cymrilian windship arrives on the scene. It attacks the Beastmen army from the rear (+2), taking them by surprise (+2). With these additional modifiers, the Cymrilians now have a MCR of 17: even odds, against their bestial foes.

*GM's Notes: The GM rolls a 12, and the Beastmen suffer a loss of 50% casualties. Their Morale roll is a woeful 3; broken and dispirited, the remaining Beastmen throw down their arms and surrender. The battle is over.*



## LISTING OF UNIT TYPES

The following is a list of pre-generated first-level Unit types which can be used for Mass Combat scenarios. The Gamemaster can use this list as a quick reference source, or as a guide for designing new types of Units; for higher ability level Units, increase MCR accordingly.

The format used to describe each Unit is as follows:

**Unit Type:** Basic make-up of the Unit.

**Wpn:** Type of weaponry carried by members of this Unit.

**Armor:** Type of armor (natural or otherwise) worn.

**Movement:** Average Movement rate, or type of mount ridden.

**MCR1:** Mass Combat Rating at ability level 1. Includes average bonuses for Attribute Ratings and Skill Rating.

**Comments:** Additional modifiers or other factors.

Unit Type	Wpn.	Armor	Move	MCR1	Special
Aamanian Crossbowmen	H. Crossbow	chain mail	5	8	Fanatic
Aamanian Heavy Infantry	Spear/mace	chain mail	5	6	Fanatic
Aamanian Heavy Cavalry	spear/mace	plate mail	equus	12	Fanatic, barded mount
Aamanian Inquisitor	flail	chain mail	5	6	Fanatic, Spell caster
Aamanian Warrior-Priest	broadsword/ mace	plate mail	5	10	Fanatic, Spell caster/warrior
Aeriad Botanomancers	staff	none	5	3	Spell caster

Aeriad Scouts	dart-thrower	leather	6	5	Avian (gliding), advance scouts
Ahazu Warrior	gwanga	none	5	6	+2 for double attacks, never surrender
Aramut Lancer	spear	leather	aht-ra	5	Fanatic
Araq Mounted	spear/axe	hide	duadir	16	No loyalties, -11 w/out duadir
Ariane Mounted Archer	Ariane bow/mace	none	equus	9	Spell caster
Ariane Scouts	Ariane bow/mace	none	5	5	Spell caster
Arimite Archer	short bow/mace	leather	5	5	Mercenary
Arimite Artillerist	siege wpn/mace	leather	0	9-11	Mercenary
Arimite Knife-Fighter	throwing knives	leather	5	5	Mercenary
Beastmen Plainsriders	spear/sword	hide	equus	9	+1 vs wounded foe
Batrean Warriors	club	none	4	6	Undisciplined
Chana Warriors	spear	none	5	4	Undisciplined
Chana Witchmen/women	staff/dagger	none	5	4	Spell caster, wrist viper (+1)
Cymrilian Magician	staff	none	5	4	Spell caster
Cymrilian Warrior Mage	longsword	chain mail	5	7	Spell caster/warrior
Darkling Light Infantry	spear/sling	none	5	4	Undisciplined, erratic
Danuvian Cavalry	spear/sword	plate mail	equus	14	Mercenary
Danuvian Swordswomen	longsword	plate mail	6	9	Mercenary
Demon, Night	broadsword	hide	6	10	Avian, +2 for double attacks
Demon, Sea	spear/trident	hide	7	11	Aquatic (-2 on land)
Dhuna Witch-folk	bow/dagger	leather	5	5	Spell caster
Djaffir Cavalry	bow/scimitar	leather	A h t - ra	8	Mounted archer
Djaffir Wizard	staff/dagger	leather	5	5	Spell caster
Dracartan Artillerist	siege hurlant	scail mail	0	9-11	Loyal to King
Dracartan Desert Scout	hurlant	scail mail	A h t - Ra	12	Loyal to King
Dracartan Thaumaturge	caduceus/knife	chain mail	5	5	Spell caster, Loyal to King
DrukH Hillman	spear/knife	leather	5	5	Erratic, savage
DrukH Shamans	knife	leather	5	4	Erratic, Spell caster, savage
Enim	giant club	hide	4	12	Can cast spells
Farad Slave Mongers	Flail	chain	5	5	Mercenary
Farad Wizards	staff	chain	5	6	Mercenary, Spell caster
Ferran Bandits	sling/spear	leather	7	4	Undisciplined

Gao Sea Rogues	dueling sword	none	ship	5	Undisciplined
Giant, Kharakhan	maul/axe	plate mail	2	12	Usually w/War wagon
Gnomekin Artillerist	It. catapult	leather	2	12	Loyal to homeland/family
Gnomekin Warriors	sling/sword	scail mail	5	6	Loyal to Homeland/family
Gryph Airborne	crossbow/duar	leather	8	8	Avian
Harakin Warclansmen	krin/tarak/jang	leather	dractyl	14	Savage
Ice Giant Warriors	club	as chain	2	10	Loyal to ruler
Imrian Slavers	cap.pole/flail	hide	4	6	Amphibious (+2 in water)
Jaka Warriors	bow/longsword	hide	6	5	+1 to +4 with trained beasts
Jaka Cavalry	bow/longsword	hide	equs	9	Scout, tracker
Jhangaran Marsh Hunter	bow/spear	none	strider	9	Undisciplined
Jhangaran Mercenary	javelin/knife	leather	strider	10	Mercenary, undisciplined
Jhangaran Outcast	rock/stick	none	5	2	Erratic
Kang Elite Cavalry	g re atsword	battle armor	strider	17	Elite, +1-3 wpn/armor
Kang Regular Cavalry	spear/mace	plate mail	strider	14	Regulars
Kang Tracker	crossbow/sword	leather	5	6	+10 w/Tarkus
Mandalan Mystic Warrior	parry/capture	chain	6	5	Warrior-Spell caster
Mangar Corsair	cutlass	leather	ship	6	Undisciplined
Mirin Artillerist	siege wpns.	chain mail	0	9-11	Immune to cold, serve aboard ice ships
Mirin Tundra Scout	sword/bow	chain mail	5	6	Immune to cold
Mirin Witch/Warlock	staff/bow	chain mail	5	5	Immune to cold
Mogroth	club	hide	3	7	Undisciplined
Mondre Khan Warrior	bow/rasp	hide	5	5	Stealth (+1 sneak attack)
Moorg-Wan Warrior	bwan	hide	4	7	Semi-aquatic (+1 in water)
Muse	none	none	5	1	Natural Telempath
Nagra Spirit Trackers	blowgun/spear	furs	5	5	Stealth, tracker (+1)
Na Ku Warrior	spear	hide	5	5	Undisciplined, savage
Oceanan Militia	flange-bow	leather	5	5	Regulars
Oceanan Sea Cavalry	spear, fl. bow	as per chain		23	Loyal to Homeland
Orgovian Traders	star-thrower	leather	Loper	11	Undisciplined
Parthenian Artillerists	cat./ballista	leather	ship	9-11	Seaman
Parthenian Traders	3-pointed spear	leather	ship	6	Seaman
Phantasian Astromancers	staff	chain	5	4	Spell caster
Phantasian Guardians	longsword	plate mail	5	8	Warrior-Spell caster
Rajan Assassins	da-khar, garrotte	chain mail	6	5	Assassin. (+2 sneak attack/infiltrate)
Rajan Heavy Cavalry	spear/sword	plate mail	equs	13	Fanatic
Rajan Necromancer	staff/dagger	chain mail	5	6	Spell caster

Raknid Warriors	claws/stinger	plate	5	9	Fanatic (instinctive)
Raknid Workers	claws	plate	1	10	Fanatic (instinctive)
Rasmirin Warlocks	staff/sword	chain mail	5	6	Warrior-Spell caster
Sarista Rogue	knife/sling	none	5	3	Sometimes used as scouts
Satada Warrior	cap. bow/sword	hide	6	7	Skilled climbers (+1 siege/ mountains)
Sauran Dragon Rider	war axe	plate mail	drag- on	28	Mounted on armored Land Dragon
Sauran Priestess	axe	none	4	6	No spell casting ability
Saurud Heavy Artillerist	h. siege wpns.	plate & hide	0	14-17	Primarily for defense of settlements
Saurud Heavy Infantry	war whip	plate & hide	3	10	Used as shock troops
Sawila Witch/Warlock	none	none	5	1	Spell weaver
Shadinn Executioners	axe	chain mail	5	8	Veteran, Fanatic
Shadinn Heavy Cavalry	war axe/spear	plate mail	I. liz- ard	16	Fanatic, on armored land lizards
Sindaran	alchemicals	leather	5	6	High intellect (+1 for strategy)
Stryx Warrior	polehook	leather	5	5	Avian, undisciplined
Sunra Mariner	spear	leather	5	5	Semi-aquatic (+2 in water)
Tanasian Wizard	longsword	chain mail	5	6	Warrior-Spell caster
Thaecian Enchanter/ess	staff	none	5	4	Spell caster
Thrall Heavy Cavalry	greatsword	full garde	m. liz- ard	20	-9 w/out mangonel lizard
Thrall Hunter	bow/sword	garde	strider	13	Stealth, scout (+1)
Thrall Light Infantry	spear/sword	full garde	5	9	Regulars or better
Thrall Light Cavalry	bow/sword	full garde	strider	14	Regulars or better
Ur	club	plate mail	4	11	Siege commanders
Vajra	iron spear	plate & hide	4	10	Siege +2 (undermine)
Vird Infantrymen	javelin/scimitar	leather	5	5	Fanatic, Undisciplined
Yassan Technomancer	elemental act.	leather	5	6	Siege (+1)
Yitek Nomads	scimitar/bow	leather	aht-ra	9	Sometimes serve as scouts
Yrmanian Wildmen	r'ruh	none	5	3	Extremely Erratic (-2), savage
Za Bandit Cavalry	sword/bow	none	equs	9	Undisciplined
Zagir Archers	bow/scimitar	leather	5	5	Fanatic
Zandir Archers	bow/sword	chain mail	5	6	Regulars or better
Zandir Light Cavalry	bow/sword	chain mail	equs	11	Regulars or better
Zandir Swordsmage	sword/dagger	chain mail	5	6	Warrior-Spell caster
Zandir Swordsman/woman	dueling sword	chain mail	5	6	Regulars or better

# SIEGE ENGINES

## BATTLE TOWER

These massive towers of spanoak are typically pulled by a team of ogriphants and then pushed into position on the battelfield by soldiers or slaves. The towers are covered in hides and iron plates to defend the many warriors within. Battle towers are pushed up to defensive walls where bridges are dropped from the top platform allowing the army within to pierce the defenses.

**Size:** Up to 120' in height

**Speed:** -4 (towed by ogriphants)

## BOMBASTION

A simple yet ingenious engine of war employed by the Ur in their many internal and external wars. The Bombastion is designed to launch a missile over walls, attacking those hidden in their fortresses. typical ammunition includes any of the many forms of poisons and toxic wastes that are the bi-products of the Ur despoilation of Urag. Toxic substances are loaded



into stppored ceramic sphers and loaded into the Bombastion. Since misfires that coat the Bombastion crew in toxic slag are not uncommon, the Ur typically leave the operation of Bombastions to their Darkling slaves.

**Size:** 25' in length

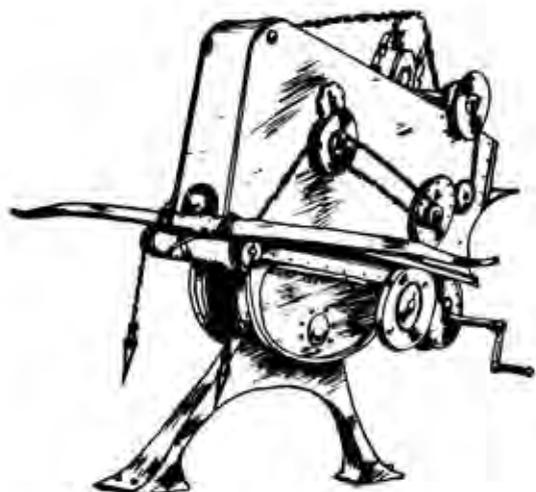
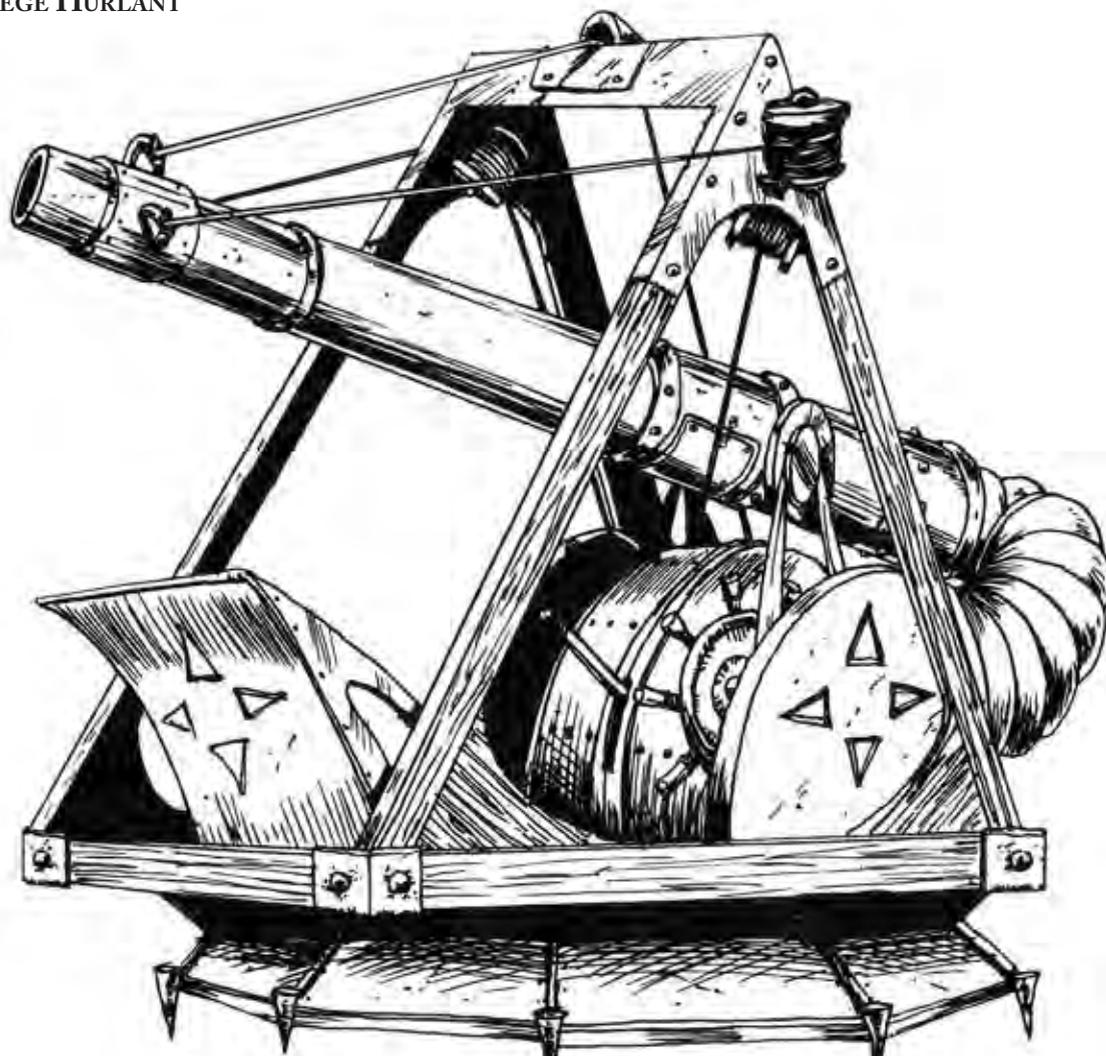
## FIRE—THROWER

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 "Arimate fire", is notoriously difficult to extinguish.

**Size:** 25' in length

**Speed:** Up to -4 if towed by ogriphants

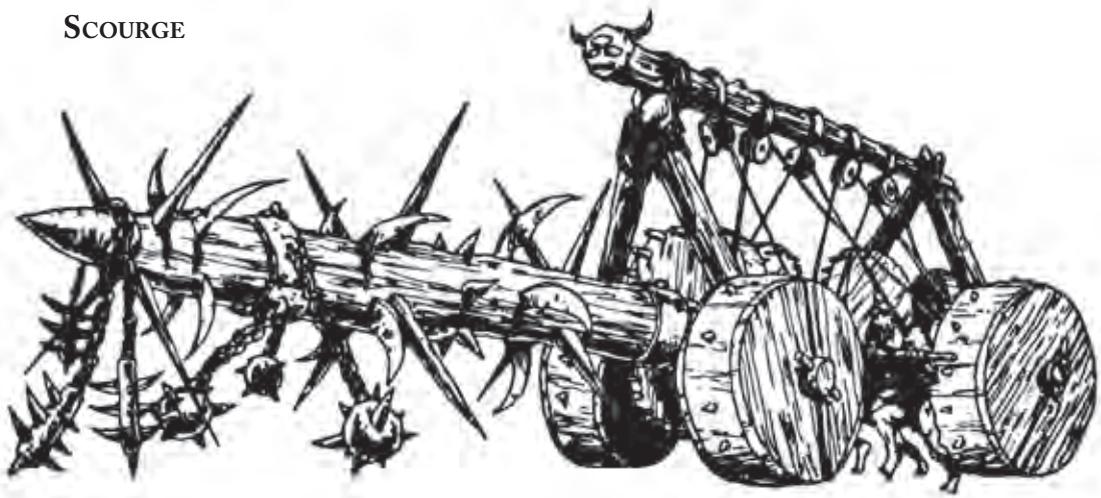


**SHIP'S HURLANT****SIEGE HURLANT****HURLANT**

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).

SCOURGE



LINE BREAKER CATAPULT

These massive engines of destruction were designed by a Yassan master Technomancer for the City State of Danuvia. Mounted on massive stone towers along the walls of Danuvia, these siege engines consist of a pair of catapult arms that fire in unison, launching one hundred pound black iron spheres connected by an immense chain. The projectiles tend to roll along the ground after they strike, mowing down men and

animals with their connecting chain. The Viragos of Danuvia boast that the recoil of the Line Breaker would topple an ordinary tower.

**Size:** 24' in length

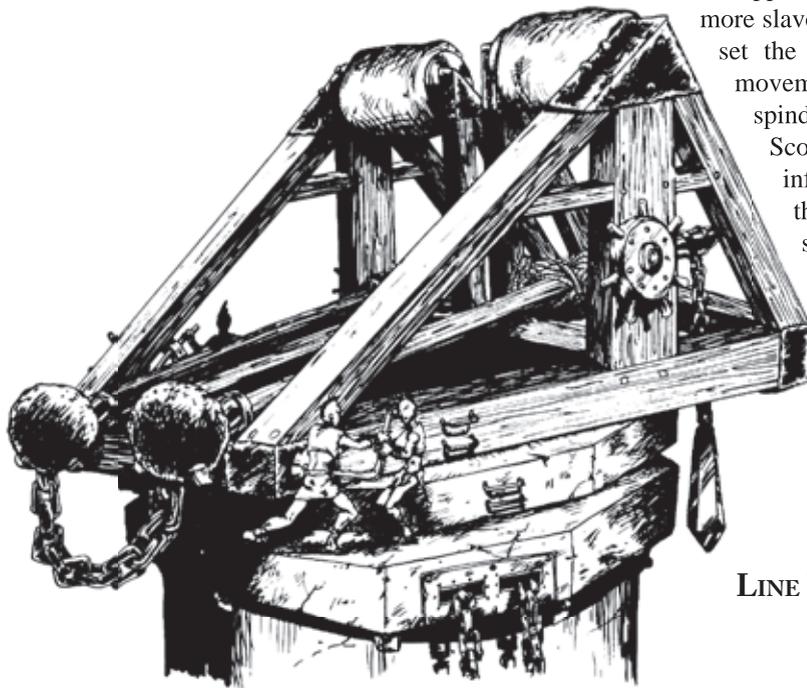
SCOURGE

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:** -3



LINE BREAKER CATAPULT

## SPRINGAL

A siege weapon used by the armies of Rajinnar 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.

## 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.
Battle Tower	n/a	20+	n/a	n/a	500 g.l.
Bombastion	16 <sup>1</sup>	6	500'	4	200 g.l.
Catapult, heavy	25	6+	1,000'	10	300 g.l.
Catapult, light	20	4+	500'	5	175 g.l.
Catapult, Line Breaker	30	6+	500'	10	650 g.l.
Demi-springal	15	3	100'	3	75 g.l.
Fire-thrower	25 <sup>2</sup>	8+	500'	8	1,000 g.l.
Hurlant, ship's	20 <sup>1</sup>	6	600'	6	2,000 g.l.
Hurlant, siege	35 <sup>1</sup>	4	1,200'	9	5,000 g.l.
Scourge	20	40+	—	—	500 g.l.
Springal	20	3	200'	5	185 g.l.

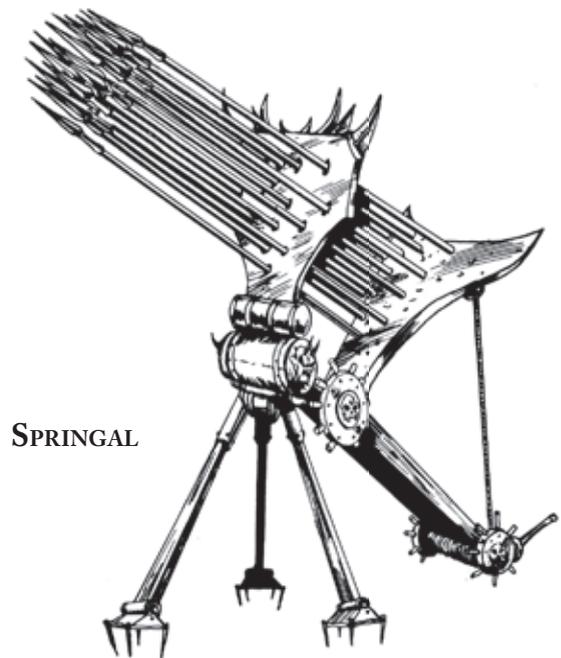
### Key

<sup>1</sup> Type of damage determined by contents of missiles.

<sup>2</sup> 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.
Bombastion bomb	10	40 g.l.
Demi-springal darts (one volley)	10	5 g.l.
Fire-bomb (fire-thrower missile)	20	10 g.l.
Line Breaker Ammunition	200	175 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	—



SPRINGAL

## CHAPTER EIGHT

## RELIGION &amp; THE OMNIVERSE



## SEVEN KINGDOMS RELIGIONS

## THE TREE OF LIFE

The Tree of Life is the aerie of The Creator, a winged, genderless humanoid with dazzling plumage in all the colors of creation, who soars through reality, bearing the seeds of the Tree of Life, and planting them so that new life may grow. The Tree of Life is Creation itself, and the foundation of all things; Its many branches the paths of life, Its many leaves the infinite possibilities of existence. Doctrine Aeriad faith promotes reverence for, and defense of, the natural world, and the belief that The Creator's gifts should be used wisely. Worship is conducted with song, for the Aeriad state that The Creator soars so high It may not always see those far below, but can always hear skyward praise.

## SYMBOLOLOGY

A Tree is the most potent of Aeriad symbols, reflecting the Tree of Life. Every tree is a reminder of their faith, and seeds are symbolic of new life and beginnings, and often worn as jewelry by the Aeriad.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** "The Day of Seeds" is held on the 1st of Ardan, and celebrates the onset of spring and the new life it brings. The 49th of Drome marks the equinox, celebrated as "The Day of Trees," when those plants that started life in the spring months start to reach maturity. The 1st of Talisandre is the "Harvest of the Silver Moon," celebrating the beginning of the

week long viridia harvest, praising the Creator and Viridian for their gifts.

**Temples:** Large open-air chambers, amid the boughs of trees, serve as temples where the Aeriad gather to sing. These are naturally grown from tree itself, usually a span-oak or viridia, and are decorated with garlands of flowers that are encouraged to grow within, around, and without the structure. This open structure allows Aeriad hymns to be sung skyward unimpeded, and their songs, which sound remarkably like the warbling of birds, can be heard for miles.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

Viridian is the only luminary of the Aeriad faith, and is held in great esteem and reverence for his many botanomantic observations, and useful creations, such as the viridia tree, whispbane, and yellow stickler. Viridian was a famed magician of the Forgotten Age, in actuality a magical simulacrum of the esteemed Koraq, and had green skin and grass-like hair.

## CLERGY

**Duties:** Creativists lead their local community in songs of worship, and act as counselors and healers, as well as advising on matters pertaining to the wise use and protection of the environment. They are also especially respected for their calming influence on the more aggressive Blue Aeriad.

**Restrictions:** Aeriad Creativists face few restrictions, save that they promote the tenets of their faith, and aid their fellow Aeriad selflessly. A calm and reasoning nature is necessary to fulfil their duties effectively, with the result that it is almost unknown for Blue Aeriad to become Creativists.

**Raiment:** Creativists wear rainbow-colored viridia fabric robes, dye their plumage in multi-colors to better reflect the appearance of The Creator, and bear botanomantically-created living staffs that continually sprout fresh leaves and scented blossoms.

**Ranking:** The Aeriad have a greater respect for wisdom and knowledge than age, and their Creativists turn to the colleague with the most appropriate knowledge, skill or expertise in any given situation.

**Magic:** Aeriad Creativists practice Natural Magic that is in tune with the world around them. In fact, there are numerous areas throughout Vardune that aid the use of Natural Magic, including every Creativist temple. Acolytes of The Tree of Life replace Order: Invocation with Order: Natural Magic and the Modes Divination, Transmutation and Ward are preferred skills.

**Resources:** The Aeriad priesthood is supported by the two Aeriad councils and their local community, all of whom provide for whatever basic needs their local Creativists may require.

## THE DUALITY

Many Sindarans have faith in “The Duality”—the Sindaran concept of The Creator—who they view as a representation of the ultimate melding of Mind and Spirit. Their faith is much more abstract than most races can easily fathom, and worship is too strong a definition for their philosophy. They believe that the Mind is the font of Reasoning, while the Spirit is the font of Understanding, and that only when the two merge to create The Duality can the ultimate truths of existence be truly realized. They envision The Duality as truly ephemeral and formless, just like thought, spirit and energy. It cannot be understood, nor does it possess traits that mortal minds can comprehend. It is quite simply the unseen energy of the universe and all things. The Sindarans do not practice their faith as an organized religion, nor do they gather together for such purposes as prayer. All are expected to find

their own path, and engage their own spirituality by pondering the mysteries of all things.

## THE MAGISTER

In general, few Cymrilians have any interest or belief in religion, being much more concerned with the workings of magic, or day-to-day life. This lack of interest means that less than ten percent of Cymril's populace actively profess belief in any deity, but of those that do, nearly all follow The Magister, the Cymrilian concept of The Creator. The Magister is regarded as a being of mutable race and gender, demonstrating the mutability of magic. The use of magic is the ultimate expression of Creation, using the energy of the universe itself to form and transform in a near infinite variety of ways. Creation is Magic, and Magic is Creation. Both spring from the arcane energy of The Magister - the embodiment of Magic who conjures forth all things. The Magister is viewed as the ultimate neutral, and therefore unapproachable, for Magic and Creation are neither good nor evil, they simply are. The search for magical knowledge is said to bring enlightenment, as greater understanding of magic grant insight into the universe and Creation as a whole.

## DOCTRINE

The Order of The Magister is particularly tolerant of other faiths and beliefs, preferring to pursue its own path of arcane knowledge. Given the view of The Magister as a neutral entity, followers try to remain aloof of events in the mundane world, and avoid interfering in events, except to promote the use, acceptance, understanding and research of magic.

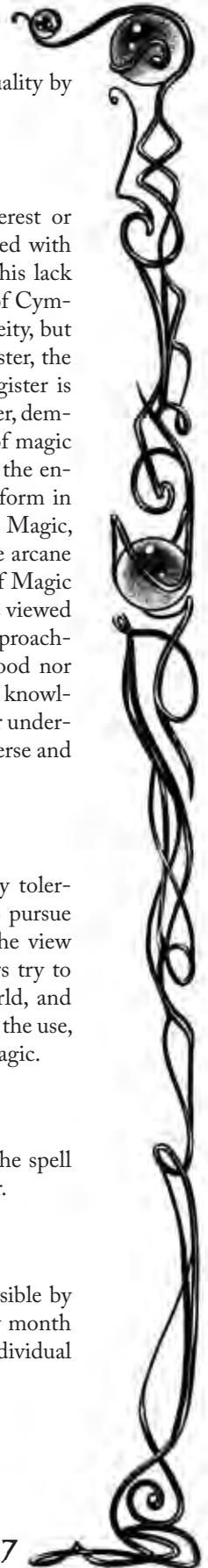
## SYMBOLOLOGY

The seven-pointed star, as the symbol of the spell matrix, is used as the symbol of The Magister.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** Every “High Day” - date divisible by 7 - is marked by a liturgy. The 49th of every month is also marked by a service dedicated to an individual luminary as follows:

Ardan	The Enchantress
Drome	Koraq
Jhang	Sylan
Laeolis	Xanadas



Phandir      Cascal  
 Talisandre    Arkon  
 Zar            Rodinn

**Temples:** The Order of The Magister's temple in Cymril is constructed like a seven-pointed star lying on the ground, with the seven points serving as inward-looking halls of pews spaced evenly around a central hub. This central hub serves as the focus of all ceremonies, bearing a circular rostrum that projects a large illusory image of the speaker. The rostrum and pulpit actually levitate 2-feet into the air, and slowly revolve during services. The temple itself is composed of green crystal, enchanted so that soft-colored lights glow within the walls, and is carved on nearly every surface with runes of magical significance.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

The Order of The Magister reveres many of the great mages and sorcerers of the past, such as Koraq, Arkon and the Enchantress, noting that these great Archaens possessed a more perfect understanding of magic than their descendants. As such, they must also have had greater knowledge of all life's mysteries and were therefore more enlightened.

## CLERGY

**Duties:** Acolytes of The Magister may be of either gender, are not required to be chaste, and do not actively seek converts, believing instead that those searching for enlightenment will seek them out, although they do actively promote the use and acceptance of magic. They have few taboos, but must refrain from magical practices that could galvanize public opinion against magic. The Order of The Magister does provide magical aid to Cymril's populace, typically in the form of healing services, but does so to increase the appreciation and acceptance of magic, and gather funds from donations, rather than out of any sense of altruism.

**Raiment:** All Acolytes wear necklaces bearing a seven-pointed star of green crystal, although these are increasingly ornate as they gain in rank. Their robes are tailored from enchanted spangalor, constantly swirling with color, and cut with the traditional Cymrilian high collar, and they bear enchanted staves during ceremonies, carved with magical runes, and topped with seven-pointed stars of green crystal, enchanted to glow softly with an inner light.

**Ranking:** The Magister's priesthood organizes itself using the same structure as the Archaen Cabal, with the ranks ranging upward from Apprentice, through Initiate, Adept, and Master.

**Magic:** Acolytes of The Magister do not practice Invocation, following the basic precepts of Wizardry instead. Acolytes of The Magister replace Order: Invocation with Order: Wizardry and the Modes Conjunction, Enchantment and Ward are preferred skills.

**Resources:** The Order is expected to support itself for the most part, and does this by taking donations from its parishioners, and using magic to aid the local community. In addition, the governing body of Cymril provides a reasonable donation, recognizing that the Order encourages the acceptance and use of magic.

## TERRA

The worship and belief in Terra is universal among the Gnomekin, and colors their very existence, personality and society, influencing the way they behave, and the way they view the world. They believe Terra is a living entity; an elemental of vast proportions that forms the world itself. The earth is Her flesh, the rocks Her bones, the waters Her blood, and the air Her breath. She provides shelter, food, water, and the very ground upon, within, and above which all things live. She is benign and loving: the ultimate mother, providing for all life. All living creatures are Her children, even if they do not realize it, and children should reciprocate Her love, treating Her with care and respect. They must use Her gifts wisely, for abusing Terra is detrimental to everyone, as the Gnomekin believe that the combined abuses - in the form of excessive deforestation, strip-mining and pollution, etc. - could actually kill Terra. For all Her power She is largely at the mercy of Her children, which is another reason why She must be cherished and guarded. The Gnomekin believe that the Womb of Terra is within the earth itself, and that because they dwell there they are truly Her children. Crystals are the Tears of Terra, and among Her greatest gifts: symbols of Her love, and the pain She suffered when birthing all life.

## DOCTRINE

Friendship, tolerance, selflessness, and a reverence for the natural world are expressions of Terra's benevolence, and Gnomekin strive to embody these traits. A humble manner is the ultimate expression of respect for Terra, showing that no one is truly superior or favored in Her eyes. All beings are equal, and although some must assume the burden of rulership, true rulers exist to serve their people, mirroring Terra's devotion to Her offspring. The act of birth is sacred, symbolic of the Mother, and children are to be taught with love, respect and freedom. Unnatural birth control wastes

the gift  
Terra  
has



bestowed, and shows a lack of respect for life. The pain of childbirth, and the trials and tribulations it creates help people to understand Terra better, and is yet another reason why children are sacred, and childbirth is encouraged.

## SYMBOLOLOGY

Terra is recognized by no specific symbol, though the colors of brown and green are symbolic of Her.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** None. All days are considered equally holy in the worship of Terra.

**Temples:** The Daughters believe you can pray to Terra anywhere, although areas of great natural beauty (such as caves or grottoes filled with glowing crystals) are sacred. They prefer to conduct their simple services underground, as they believe this is "within Terra's womb."

## CLERGY

**Duties:** All Gnomekin clergy of Terra are female, and call themselves "Her Daughters". These Daughters of Terra seek to increase the appreciation and communion with nature in those around them, as well as promoting the tenets of their faith, and providing services as healers, midwives, and counselors. While they avoid gender prejudice, for all are beloved of Terra, it is felt that females

under-

stand Her best, being intimately connected to creation in a way no male could ever completely appreciate.

**Raiment:** The Daughters of Terra wear simple brown, hooded robes, belted at the waist with plaited vegetation, and all bear a roughly heart-shaped chunk of emeralite crystal on a leather thong around their necks, so that it hangs near their heart.

**Ranking:** All beings are considered equal in the eyes of followers of Terra, although Terra's Daughters respect the opinions of those who are older or wiser.

**Magic:** The Daughters of Terra practice Crystalomancy rather than Invocation, revering crystals as one of Terra's gifts. They believe that plaguing Terra with requests for further boons would be selfish and disrespectful. (*there are no Gnomekin Acolytes of Terra*)

**Resources:** The Daughters of Terra are not so much an organized church as a loosely organized cult. They eschew the collection of material wealth beyond that necessary for survival, and provide their aid and guidance with no expectation of reward. However, all Gnomekin are willing to help the Daughters in any way they can, providing them with food, shelter and protection.

## ANCESTER REVERENCE

Thralls revere and acknowledge their most accomplished ancestors as fine examples of Thralldom that an individual can aspire to, but do not worship them, or believe that their ancestors are spiritual entities. Thralls have no illusions about their origins as a race of neomorphs created by ancient sorcerers, and have no belief in a higher being of any variety. The greatest deeds of a tribe's ancestors are tattooed on all members of that tribe for all future generations, and great heroes of the present receive recognition in the same way. In this way, the various tribes always remember their most notable ancestors, and aspire to be remembered the same way themselves.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

While not saints and luminaries in any religious or spiritual sense, every Thrall tribe has a number of esteemed figures in its history.



## NATURE REVERENCE

Muses admire the beauty of nature that surrounds them, and the spirits that provide such beauty, but they do not worship in any sense of the word. They simply revel in and enjoy the bounty that nature has given them.

## EASTERN LANDS RELIGIONS

While the overlords of the Eastern Lands, the Quan, have little use for religion, the other races that populate their Empire have a variety of beliefs.

### ZORIAH, THE RED GOD

Worship of Zoriah, the Red God of War, is the state religion of the war-like Kang, who pray to Him for courage, strength, and victory. All battles are the domain of Zoriah, who is depicted as a giant male Kang of fearsome aspect, clad in ornate crimson battle armor, with a floor-length queue of black hair adorned with spiked silver rings, twin daggers at His belt, and a savage falchion clenched in His fist. Zoriah cares nothing for praise or supplication, valuing only Khir and conflict. The Kang state that they sprang up where Zoriah's blood struck the ground when He was wounded waging a war among the gods that is said to continue still. Those who fight with skill and courage in Zoriah's name will fight alongside Him in the afterlife, earning great glory. Cowards are destined to spend the afterlife as the mindless steeds of the glorious warriors.

### DOCTRINE

Zoriah's faith requires that followers strive to act with courage and Khir. Cowardice - a term that also encompasses the use of magic and stealth, as well as flight from combat—is regarded as the most heinous of sins, redeemable only by ritual suicide or a suicidal battle against seemingly impossible odds. Those who draw a weapon in Zoriah's name are forbidden to resheath it if the weapon has not tasted blood first, even if it must be the warrior's own.

### SYMBOLOLOGY

Zoriah's symbol is a spiked circle—representing the spiked silver rings He wears on His queue - and His color is crimson.

### WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** “The Feast of the Red God” is celebrated on Jhang 1st, and is marked by large-scale bouts of ritual combat and other martial contests, as the Kang celebrate the glory of conflict in Zoriah's name.

**Temples:** The Red Temple in Hadran is a stout, brutal fortress, clad in red iron, surrounding a central vaulted hall bearing a giant red iron statue of the Red God. It serves as both a monastery and training ground for the members of Zoriah's clergy, but all Kang recognize the field of battle as Zoriah's holiest shrine.

### SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

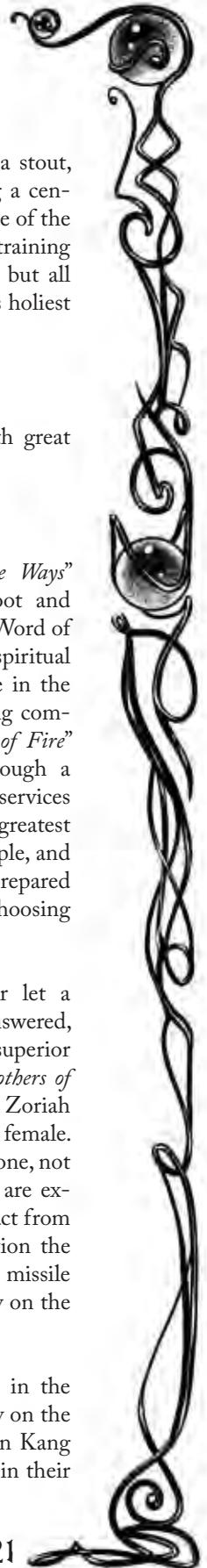
None, although those Kang who die with great Khir are highly regarded.

### CLERGY

**Duties:** Warrior-priests learn “*The Nine Ways*”—Kanquan, Dagger, Falchion, both on foot and mounted, Tactics, Strength of Will, and the Word of Zoriah—and walk “*The Paths of Blood*”, the spiritual path wherein the warrior-priest seeks battle in the outside world. Zoriah's clergy serve the Kang community by performing the ritual “*Baptism of Fire*”—passing each newborn scrug briefly through a flaming censer—for all Kang, and funerary services for the greatest of war heroes. The Empire's greatest kanquan masters also reside in the Red Temple, and those seeking their harsh tuition must be prepared to make a sacrifice of their master-to-be's choosing—monetary or otherwise.

**Restrictions:** Warrior-priests must never let a challenge to their martial skills pass unanswered, nor must they ever show fear in the face of superior opposition. They refer to themselves as “*Brothers of Zoriah*,” although this is misleading because Zoriah cares not if His warrior-priests are male or female. They have no clan allegiance, and bow to no one, not even the Red God Himself. However, they are expected to remain chaste and let nothing detract from their pursuit of martial perfection. In addition the warrior-priests refuse to use any non-thrown missile weapons, stating that all weapons should rely on the strength of the warrior.

**Raiment:** Warrior-priests receive kanjiko in the form of a spiked circle displayed prominently on the forehead, and are also the only individuals in Kang society permitted to wear spiked silver rings in their



queues. They carry the twin dragon-pommel daggers used by all Kang, but theirs have the clan markings burned away, signifying their lack of allegiance. Zoriah's color is reflected in the crimson of their garb, and the red iron battle armor they wear.

**Ranking:** None. All warrior-priests regard each other as brethren, although the more experienced members serve to train the others.

**Magic:** None. Zoriah expects His followers to pursue the path of the true warrior, relying solely on their own skill-at-arms and courage. They are expected to stand on their own two feet and earn Zoriah's respect.

**Resources:** All Kang donate 10% of their pay to the Red Temple, in return for which all new born scrugs are ritually baptized, and great heroes are given grand funerals. The Red Temple also accepts donations and servitude from those Kang seeking to study Kanquan under the greatest masters of the art. All funds and services are used to keep the temple running, and equip, train, feed and house the warrior-priests. Individual warrior-priests walking The Paths of Blood, support themselves by hiring out their martial skills.

## TERRA (VAJRA)

Similar to the Gnomekin worship of Terra, faith in Terra is common to all Vajra. They state that Terra is a great elemental who dwells deep within Archaeus, and formed the Vajra from the molten rock of Her heart. Although regarded as a devoted, compassionate mother, the Vajra recognize that Terra can be wrathful, sundering the very earth of Her home with rage, sending Her molten blood forth to consume and destroy. Like the Gnomekin, the Vajra also abhor the abuse of the earth, but they are far more likely to take direct action to combat such problems, at least when their young are not at risk.

## DOCTRINE

Offspring are valued as gifts from Terra, and most Vajra strive to bear as many younglings as possible. Unfortunately, it is these very younglings, developing in their cocoons, that the Kang use to hold the Vajra in bondage. Vajra work to embody the virtues of Terra, to be as placid, enduring, strong and resolute as stone, and as fruitful and nurturing as earth. However, they recognize that they were formed from magma, and although their outer bodies have cooled, they state that a heart of burning magma still resides deep within each of them. They call this "*The Dark Fire*", and strive to keep it in check, for when they give vent to their wrath, they enter a destructive fury, dying when they calm, all their heat expended. The Dark Fire provides them with warmth, but they know it can kill.

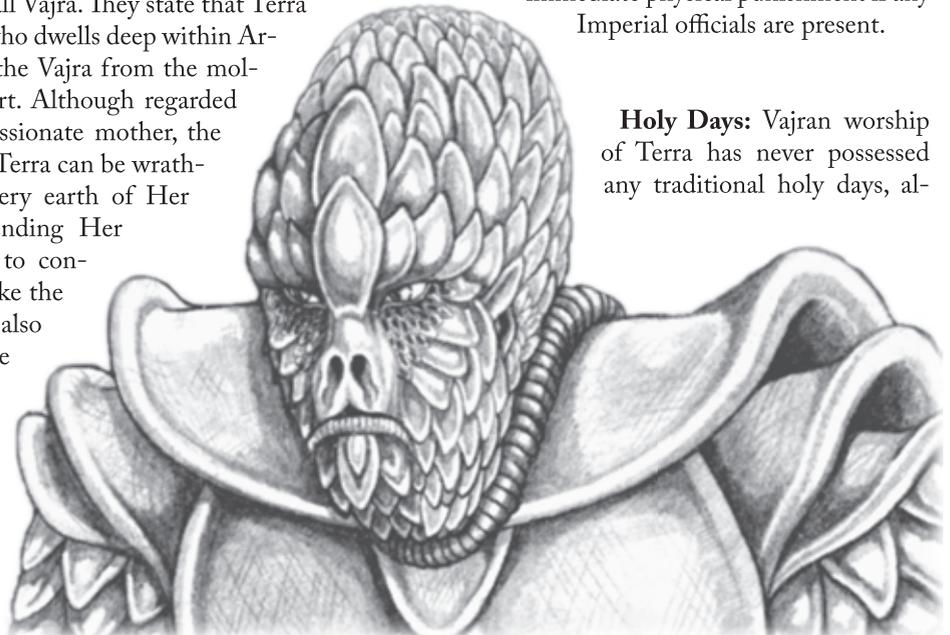
## SYMBOLOLOGY

There is no symbol associated with the Vajra worship of Terra, as all stones, and the very earth itself, are constant reminders of Her. All Vajra wear brown cloaks of moss-felt during services devoted to Terra, and never wear cloaks at any other time.

## WORSHIP

Sadly, open worship of Terra has been outlawed by the Quan, and even invoking Her name results in immediate physical punishment if any Imperial officials are present.

**Holy Days:** Vajran worship of Terra has never possessed any traditional holy days, al-



though the priestesses do play a major part in the guidance of their people on Ardan 36th, “The Day the Earth Wept”, when they remember their subjugation by the Quan in 82 N.A., and pray for a future of freedom.

**Temples:** None. The Vajra continue to hold clandestine services in numerous deep caverns lit with magma streams or falls, but believe you can pray to Terra anywhere within the earth, although deeper locations are closer to Her.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

None.

## CLERGY

**Duties:** Terra’s priestesses are the spiritual leaders of their people, and provide all Vajrans with guidance, and whatever other aid they can.

**Restrictions:** Like Vajran society, Vajran religion is matriarchal, and all clergy of Terra are female, although they are not expected to remain chaste; bearing life is one of Terra’s greatest gifts.

**Raiment:** Terra’s priestesses wear soft brown moss-felt robes under vestments of hammered iron and copper disks (PR: 4), and a necklace of polished stones, but only during ceremonies so as to avoid unwelcome attention by the Kang and their Quan overlords.

**Ranking:** Priestesses of Terra always defer to those of greater experience.

**Magic:** Terra’s priestesses practice Geomancy rather than Invocation, a field of magic they believe Terra created for them. However, they treat the earth with respect, and cast all of their spells in Terra’s name, although their usage of magic has been severely curtailed by their faith’s outlaw status. Vajran Acolytes of Terra replace Order: Invocation with Order: Elementalism (Geomancy) and the Modes Conjunction, Move and Ward are preferred skills.

**Resources:** As the Vajran faith in Terra is illegal within the Quan Empire, the priestesses maintain a low profile. They are aided in this by other Vajra, who do what they can to aid their spiritual leaders.

## DARKNESS

The Chana believe that this world is an illusion, a test of the soul that determines their worthiness to return to the “Real World”, a place of eternal and comforting darkness where they will be reunited with their true selves, never to know pain or hunger again. The path back to the Real World is preordained, discovered by conversing with the spirits of the dead, who are said to dwell at the crossroads between the False and Real Worlds. If the individual Chana follows the preordained path correctly, he or she will enter the Real World when they die. Failure means that the Chana reincarnates back into the False World, as a Chana, and must begin anew. Those witchdoctors that converse with the spirits state that strife is the path to the Real World.

## DOCTRINE

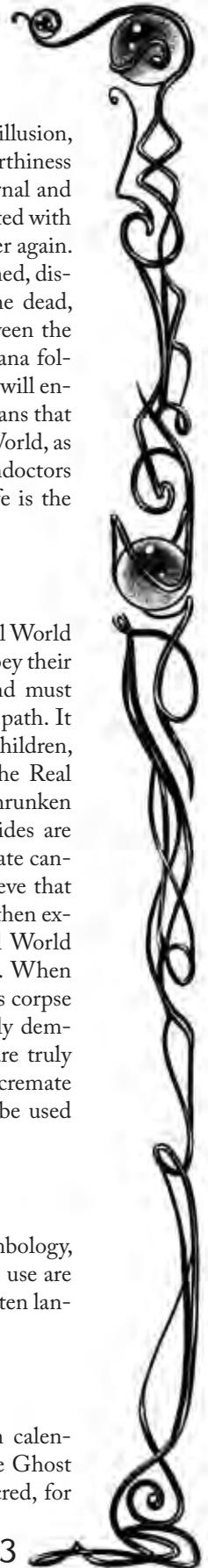
The dedicated pursuit of entry into the Real World is all that matters to the Chana. The Chana obey their witchdoctors as the voices of the spirits, and must ensure that they do not inhibit any Chana’s path. It is for this reason that they continue to bear children, enabling Chana who have failed to enter the Real World, to reincarnate and try again. The shrunken head fetishes - “fetches” - used as spirit guides are always those of foreigners, who the Chana state cannot reach the Real World anyway. They believe that these foreigners are actually blessed, for they then exist at the crossroads, and can view the Real World they would never have witnessed otherwise. When creating a fetch, the Chana eat the foreigner’s corpse in front of the head’s dead eyes, ceremonially demonstrating that its ties to the False World are truly severed. For their part, the Chana always cremate their dead, ensuring that the body can not be used in enemy rituals.

## SYMBOLOLOGY

Chanan worship of Darkness has no symbology, although the arcane symbols they sometimes use are thought to be derived from an ancient, forgotten language.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** Two dates in the Talislantan calendar - “Pandaemonium” on Zar 6th, and “The Ghost Moon” on Laeolis 49th - are considered sacred, for



## THE DRAGON CULT OF SATHA

Satha is the great dragon-goddess who gave birth to all reptilian species from drac to winged viper, dragon to land lizard. Greatest of all Her children are the Saurans, for She gifted them with intellect and set them as warders of their animal brethren. The Saurans were birthed from Her fiery womb and even now demonstrate a tolerance for such heat. She tests Her chosen children, strengthening them with adversity, forcing them to continually prove their worthiness for the gifts She has granted them, including the ability to forge red iron, and invoke the powers of wrath, strength, and control over reptiles that are focused into icons. Satha is depicted as a vast winged dragon of fearsome aspect, crimson scaled with fire in her eyes and maw.

### DOCTRINE

The devoted Saurans of the Dragon Cult must overcome all of life's struggles, proving their courage, strength, and aggression, but must temper these forces with the intellect they alone were granted. As warders of their less intelligent cousins, the reptiles of Talislanta, the Saurans must protect them from unnatural depredation whenever possible, especially the continent's few dragons, those of Satha's brood that most resemble Her divine countenance.

### SYMBOLOLOGY

A stylized dragon's head is Satha's symbol, crimson is Her color, and red iron and fire Her elements. The Saurans believe that the twin suns are symbols of Satha, the Greater Sun representing Her womb, while the Lesser Sun represents Her heart.

The enchanted icons the priestesses produce for their clan are always shaped like Satha's head, or stamped with Her likeness.

### WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** "Satha's Fire" is celebrated on the Phandir 49th, as the conjunction of the twin suns in the noonday sky represents the unity of Satha's womb and heart that is said to have resulted in the birth of the Saurans.

on these dates it is believed the veil between the Real World and the False World are weakened, better enabling witchdoctors to communicate with spirits and perform their rituals.

"The Conjunction of the Twin Suns" on Phandir 49th is considered an unholy day for the Chana, for the twin suns, sources of light antithetical to the Chanan love of darkness, seem to merge their power making the veil between worlds impossible to pierce.

**Temples:** None.

### SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

None.

### CLERGY

**Duties:** Witchdoctors serve their tribe by creating and conversing with the fetches used as spirit guides, and conveying the edicts of the spirits to their fellow tribesmen.

**Restrictions:** All Chanan witchdoctors are male, and may only take the female Healers as wives.

**Raiment:** Chana witchdoctors all wear several grisly fetches at their belts, but are otherwise indistinguishable from their fellow tribesmen.

**Ranking:** Each tribe's witchdoctors base their ranking on how much power they wield, both magical and influential.

**Magic:** Chana witchdoctors practice Shamanistic magic.

**Resources:** The Witchmen provide for their witchdoctors, in recognition of the guidance and services they provide. They often have apprentices who perform their menial duties, in return for instruction.

**Temples:** There are no temples erected in honor of Satha, but active volcanoes are considered the holiest of places, acting as the site of burials and large gatherings.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

None.

## CLERGY

**Duties:** The Dragon Cult rules Sauran society, with each clan being led by a High Priestess, who in turn is served by lesser priestesses and a male battle chieftain. The priestesses perform many duties for their clan; ruling on legal matters, fashioning enchanted dragon icons, reading omens, offering advice, and healing the sick and wounded, as well as performing rituals of birth and death.

**Restrictions:** The clergy of the Dragon Cult is exclusively female, although the priestesses are permitted to marry and mate, thereby increasing the number of Satha's children.

**Raiment:** Satha's priestesses wear ritual vestments of dragon hide, bone, and red iron stamped with Her mien, carry red iron staves topped with icons shaped like Satha's head, and bear ceremonial red iron daggers shaped like a dragon's claw.

**Ranking:** Age determines rank among the Dragon Cult priestesses, although those individuals who do not display the courage, strength, aggression, and intelligence demanded by Satha will quickly be replaced.

**Magic:** The Dragon Cult practices Invocation magic, drawing power directly from Satha. However, the power they do have access to is strictly limited to the Transmutation, Influence, and Enchantment Modes, all of which they use with a

+1 bonus, and may only be used in the creation of magical icons. Sauran priestesses are incapable of using their magical abilities to cast spells.

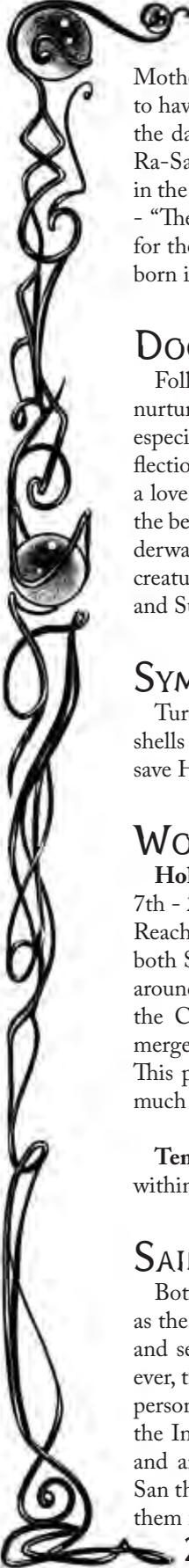
**Resources:** Sauran society as a whole supports the Dragon Cult, offering complete devotion and support.

## AQUS

Aqus is depicted as a water elemental of vast proportions, with the upper body and head of a Sunra, and a lower body and legs like the long sinuous tail of a moonfish. Worshipped by both the Sunra and their free brethren, the Sun-Ra-San, Aquus is the embodiment of both sea and ocean, displaying gentleness, calm reflection, and deep wisdom, but also possessed of the rage and power of a storm at sea. The undulating waves of Aquus' waters reflect the ups and downs of life.

The Inland Sea is said to be the primordial wellspring from which all life sprang, its tranquil nurturing waters incubating Aquus' seed, leading the Sunra and Sun-Ra-San to refer to it as the





Mother of Life. Even the land dwellers are believed to have crawled from the waters of the Inland Sea at the dawn of time. The souls of the Sunra and Sun-Ra-San dead are destined to reincarnate as moonfish in the Inland Sea, causing both peoples to view death - "The Deep Waters" - with a mixture of reverence for the return to the womb, and horror for being reborn in captive waters.

## DOCTRINE

Followers of Aqus are expected to cherish and nurture the waters that provide life, food, and shelter, especially the primeval womb, the Inland Sea. Reflection, and wisdom are to be pursued, leading to a love of learning. Songs are sung in praise to Aqus, the beauty of which can only be truly appreciated underwater, and paeans of thanks are offered to those creatures of the sea that give their lives that the Sunra and Sun-Ra-San may live.

## SYMBOLOLOGY

Turquoise is considered Aqus' color, and pearls and shells are sacred to Him, though He has no symbol save His likeness.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** The Septenarial Concordance, Zar 7th - 20th, is known to the children of Aqus as "The Reaching Waters," and marks a holy period among both Sunra and Sun-Ra-San. At that time, the tides around the continent are at their highest point, and the Coral City of Isalis becomes completely submerged, clearing it of occupation for a brief period. This period is marked by many songs to Aqus, and much contemplation on slavery and freedom.

**Temples:** None. All services to Aqus are held within or under the water, close to the nearest shore.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

Both the Sunra and Sun-Ra-San revere moonfish as the reborn avatars of their dead who bear wisdom and serenity from beyond The Deep Waters. However, the Sun-Ra-San cannot revere the moonfish in person due to their renegade status, nor can they visit the Inland Sea, facts that cause them much distress and anger. In addition, the Sun-Ra-San hold Sur-San the Fire-Giver as a luminary and hero, for he led them from bondage under the Quan.

## CLERGY

**Duties:** Priests of Aqus serve their people by leading them in song, performing the Merging of Souls ceremonies, acting as seers, healers, and navigators, as well as lending aquamantic aid and teaching the word of Aqus.

Aqus' priests among the Sun-Ra-San also perform the necessary paeans over the body of every sea dragon that they slay, thanking Aqus and the dragon's spirit for giving of themselves. That the Sunra are prohibited from the hunting of sea dragons is a source of much shame.

**Restrictions:** Priests may be of either gender, and are encouraged to use all the gifts Aqus has granted them.

**Raiment:** Only the Sun-Ra-San are free to bear the traditional symbols and attire of Aqus' devoted, their priests wearing simple robes, boots, and head-dress of rainbow kra hide, and wearing amulets of carved scrimshaw bearing the likeness of Aqus. The Sunra priests are forced to wear robes and headbands of Mandalan silk cloth, and are forbidden to display any icons of Aqus on pain of death.

**Ranking:** Rank among Aqus' priests is determined by majority vote, and is free of corruption.

**Magic:** Priests of Aqus learn the arcane arts of Aquamancy, but always treat their environment with respect. Acolytes of Aqus replace Order: Invocation with Order: Elementalism (Aquamancy) and the Modes Conjunction, Move and Transmutation are preferred skills.

**Resources:** The Sunra and Sun-Ra-San support the priests of Aqus as messengers of their god, and grant them great respect.

## CREATOR (MANDALAN)

The Mandalans are a spiritual and philosophical people, regarding religion as a purely personal affair. They believe in a celestial creative force that is the source of all things, but their belief is abstract at best, for they do not attribute this creative force with any recognizable values, such as intellect, gender, appearance, or even a name, although use of the word "Creator" is considered broad enough. Because they believe that all things possess a spirit that is but a fragment of the vast energy that forms The Creator, they take pains to avoid killing at all costs, for all entities are part of the whole, and every action has a consequence that affects many others things, like a pebble causing ripples in a pond. Only those creatures that are not part of the natural order, such as the undead, may be freely dispatched without fear of causing Creation harm. For these reasons, the Mandalans are loath to take any action without care and consideration, especially anything proactive. Thought and introspection are the cornerstones of their worldview, and they meditate to clear the mind and transcend the flesh, striving to reach a state of emptiness and ultimate calm where they experience complete unity with all creation.



## DOCTRINE

To kill is a terrible deed, for it damages creation. Because of this, pacifism is the true way, and conflict, if unavoidable, should always be a reaction, using the attacker's own aggression to defeat them. All actions should be considered, and harmony of thought and action should be fostered, for even if the body is inhibited, the spirit and mind are always free and indomitable. Mandalans will only utilize harmonious magics, such as Mysticism and Natural Magic.

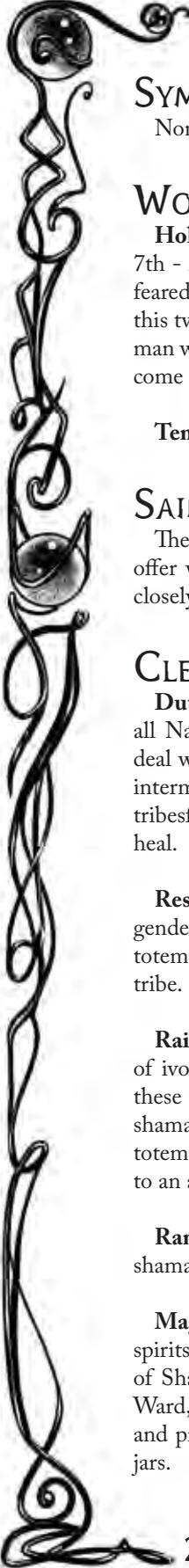
**Temples:** None, although many carefully sculpted groves aid in the use of meditation, Mysticism, and Natural Magic.

## THE SPIRIT WORLD

The Spirit World permeates the Real World, though few save the Nagra can perceive the beings that exist in the periphery. Born with the curse of astral vision, the Nagra can see the insubstantial entities that surround them, witnessing the spirits of the living and the dead, both malignant, primal, and benign. They place great faith in the spirit jars they wear, for these Ward off the mystic predators that feed on spirits and fill the Nagra's very heart with the chill of terror. Nagra shamans can contact the spirits, gaining their advice and wisdom, though there is always a risk that the spirit is deceitful, evil, or twisted. Those spirits most eagerly sought for their wisdom and aid are the primal totem spirits of beasts, for they will provide aid to a shaman in exchange for loyalty.

## DOCTRINE

Silence is a high virtue, for it permits the Nagra to more easily withdraw into themselves and focus on overcoming their terror of the horrors that stalk the periphery, as well as granting them the concentration needed to better filter the views of the Spirit World from those of the Real World. To steal or destroy a spirit jar is the greatest taboo, for it removes the individual Nagra's protection, leaving them vulnerable. Doing so is punishable by a swift and brutal death. When a Nagra dies, their spirit jar is opened, allowing the spirits imprisoned within it to fly free once again, their obligation now over.



## SYMBOLGY

None.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** The Septenarial Concordance, Zar 7th - 20th, is called "The Harrowing," and is greatly feared, for the Spirit World is far more active during this two week period. During this time, no sane shaman will contact the Spirit World, and the Nagra become even more withdrawn and uncommunicative.

**Temples:** None.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

The Nagra recognize the many animal totems that offer wisdom or aid, especially revering those most closely linked to their tribal shaman.

## CLERGY

**Duties:** Nagra shamans craft the spirit jars that all Nagra wear, counsel the young on how best to deal with their horror of the "things" they see, act as intermediaries between the Spirit World and their tribesfolk, and use their powers and skills to help and heal.

**Restrictions:** Nagra shamans may be of either gender, and face no restrictions beyond those their totem may require of them, and their duties to their tribe.

**Raiment:** All Nagra shamans bear carved wands of ivory or bone called "nagus," and often enchant these to Ward against malign spirits. In addition, all shamans bear several fetishes indicative of their allied totem, such as a necklace of feathers for one devoted to an avir totem.

**Ranking:** None. Nagra tribes possess but a single shaman, plus one or two apprentices.

**Magic:** Drawing their power from totems and spirits, all Nagra shamans practice the arcane art of Shamanism, and always learn the Enchantment, Ward, and Reveal Modes, the better to interact with and protect against spirits, as well as to create spirit jars.

**Resources:** Each shaman is supported and provided for by their tribe, in return for the services they provide.

## SHAPE-CHANGING

Shape-changing is a sacred gift, for with it comes the ability to experience life in many guises and forms, thereby gaining a greater appreciation and understanding of the natural world. Each form represents unique spiritual characteristics, such as the freedom of the avir, the patience of the bush, the power of the shathane, and the placidity of the erd. When an outer form is adopted, the inner spirit is changed with it, enabling the Manra to comprehend, not only the peculiarities of a different form, but the drives and instincts of that form. With these experiences come wisdom, and a great appreciation of the natural world. Taking the forms of evil or unnatural lifeforms is considered abominable and unthinkable, for the unwholesome and unnatural spiritual changes that would be wrought by such a physical change, would taint and corrupt the spirit of the Manra. It is for this reason no Manra will ever adopt the form of a Chana, for not only do they fear that it would taint them, but they fear that should they come to understand their enemy, they might lose the will to fight them.

# WESTERN LANDS RELIGIONS

## ORTHODOXY

The governing religion of Aaman, Orthodoxy centers around the unwavering worship of a single supreme entity known as Aa. Considered all-encompassing, and all-powerful, Aa is given such appellations as Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Ever-Watchful. Aa is depicted as an unblinking eye, radiant with light, with a pupil of purest silver. Orthodoxy is the basis of Aaman's theocracy, and is the foundation and reason behind every aspect of Aamanian culture. The Hierophant, head of the Orthodoxist cult, is also the national leader of Aaman, and is considered to be a being of such spiritual purity that he receives the word of Aa directly.

The strictures of Orthodoxy are recorded in the Omnival, the cult's single book of the law, of which no copies are made, and the Hierophant is the sole curator. Consisting of 11 iron-bound volumes, the

Omnival is said to contain all of the answers to all of the questions in existence, as well as cult regulations, and 100 proscriptions against infidels, heretics, and witches. It is said that, "What the Omnival does not teach, the true Orthodoxist need not know", though few Aamanians know anything of its contents beyond those passages and laws the cult's priesthood relays to them.

## DOCTRINE

Orthodoxy states that only by casting aside such fetters and distractions as individualism, color, and the pursuit of pleasure, can an individual hope to remain free of temptation, and therefore free of sin. Only the spiritually pure can truly hope to pass Aa's unwavering scrutiny and enjoy the bliss of oneness with Aa in the afterlife, watching the sinful suffering the torment of Aa's wrath.



Spiritual purity, called Mana, is measured in units called aalms, and the bliss an Orthodoxist experiences in the afterlife is commensurate with the number of aalms they acquire throughout their life. Aalms are accumulated through services to the cult, and via various cult-sanctioned activities, including various pilgrimages.

Strict religious castes determine how far removed an individual is from spiritual purity, and are, in order from lowest to highest, the Slave caste (heretics, captured enemies, etc. used for all dangerous and odious labors), the Low caste (farmers, laborers, vendors, and military conscripts), the Aspirant caste (the Orthodox clergy, the elite military, and the mercantile guilds), the Monitor caste (the Hierophant's representatives), and the Hierophant himself.

Each caste, with the obvious exception of the Hierophant himself, is broken down into 10 levels, separated by 100-aalm increments, and an individual can only move up a caste if they acquire the requisite 1,000 aalms required to achieve all 10 levels of their current caste, and successfully petition a Monitor. Pitifully few members of the Low Caste have ever achieved entry into the Aspirant caste, though it is the hope of many. Children are born into the lowest level of their father's caste, or in the case of Monitors, into the lowest level of the Aspirant caste.

Anything that could tempt the faithful to sway in their devotion to Aa, is sinful and vile, condemned and forbidden, including laughter, art, intoxicants, improper behavior, performances of anything save cult-approved hymns, and practically everything considered normal and enjoyable by most civilizations. Even speech is vigorously regulated and structured, so as to avoid improvisation or vulgar word usage. In order to remove such distractions, and foster oneness in body and spirit, Orthodoxists use bald nettle extract to remove all facial and bodily hair, eschew personal ornamentation, and often bleach their skin with astringents. Modest, formless attire, dyed a uniform white, is the only permitted dress.

Orthodoxy is preached aggressively in order to maintain the faith of existing cult members, and convert the hordes of infidels beyond Aaman's borders, although voluntary conversion is rare, because Orthodoxist proselytizing takes the form of furious admonishment. Forcible conversion, by means of In-

quisitorial torture, is also acceptable. The unredeemed may be slain without malice in order to reduce any corrupting effect they might have on the faithful, said to be conversion by the sword.

Absolute obedience of cult superiors, including higher level members of the same caste, is expected, and the heretics who make the mistake of questioning a superior can expect to face a loss of aalms, and a penance that often includes the forceful purging of their sin by the Knights of the Hooded Veil.

Tolerance of any faiths or beliefs beyond the worship of Aa, is heretical, for all other gods are false and duplicitous. Witchcraft is among the foulest of sins, and practitioners of the arcane arts are regarded with a jaundiced eye as the likely, often unwitting, servitors of the Shaitan and other fell spirits. Warlocks and witches must be made to recant their evils, or cleansed by fire and sword.

## AALMS

Followers of the Orthodox faith earn their aalms, the markers of their Mana, in a variety of ways.

Per Year of Devotion to Aa (being a fully-aware follower of the faith, beyond age 16): 5 aalms

Per 10 g.l. or Equivalent Donated to the Cult: 1 aalm

Sanctioned Pilgrimage: 10 aalms per location visited

Proven Report of Sin: 1-10 aalms (depending on the seriousness of the sin reported and proven)

Conversion of an Infidel: 5 aalms (if conversion was voluntary), 2 aalms (if conversion was involuntary), 1 aalm (if conversion was by the sword)

Miscellaneous: Aalms may also be awarded by Monitors for exceptional conduct, unusual services to the Cult, superior work, etc. although such awards seldom exceed 1-5 aalms.

## SYMBOLOLOGY

The symbol of Aa is a single, unblinking eye, often depicted radiating spikes in a star formation. The Eye of Aa is the only motif permitted in Aaman, and occurs everywhere, carved into walls, displayed as statuary, adorning all cult holdings, and displayed in every household shrine. All such iconography must be produced in direct accordance with cult mandate, and is strictly regulated.

White is the only sanctioned color, with black being reserved solely for minimal use by the cult proper. All other colors are expressly forbidden by the cult.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** Every High Day is marked with a compulsory mass of praise to Aa, wherein the Archimages exhort the faith of the congregation, display the power of Aa with Invocation, and lead chants of Orthodox dogma and slogans. Droning chants, the only form of music permitted by the faith, are performed at the beginning and end of each mass.

“Judgement Day” is held on the 49th of Zar, and is the most important day in the Orthodox calendar. It is on this day that every Aamanian’s aalm total, recorded throughout the year by the local Monitor, is made known, and any increase in level or caste, officially noted. These results are publicly announced at the local shrine or temple.

**Temples:** There are innumerable temples and shrines to Aa scattered throughout Aaman, each an exercise in rigid minimalist design, each perfectly square in dimension. White stone and marble, accented with a modicum of black, are the only building materials permitted. Each temple has at its center, a large open hall featuring an elevated preaching dias over which a single, large Eye of Aa gazes.

Every home in Aaman has a small shrine at its center, displaying a cult-approved Eye of Aa icon.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

Although there have been many martyrs to the Orthodox faith, these figures are never worshipped, for such would be regarded as blasphemous. However, martyrs are held as exemplary examples of faith, and their stories are used to inspire the faithful.

## PILGRIMAGE

Four locations are held as holy by the Orthodoxy, and regular cult-sanctioned pilgrimages see the faithful undertaking journeys of great peril, physical and spiritual, to reach them. These sites are:

👁 The Red Desert of Carantheum, said to be stained by Aa with the blessed blood of the cult’s martyrs.

👁 The Sea of Glass in Faradun, said to be the crystallized green blood of a Shaitan slain by Aa in prehistory.

👁 The Watchstone on the Plains of Golarin, said to be an incomplete stairway to the heavens, created with arrogance and hubris by the ancients, and severed by Aa as a result, for only Mana can guarantee ascent unto Aa.

👁 The Well of Saints in the Volcanic Hills, said to flow with the all the tears of pain and sorrow ever shed by the faithful.

Pilgrimages are led by low-level Monitors, and guarded by small cadres of Defenders of the Faith. Prospective pilgrims must pay 5 g.l. per site they wish to visit, plus an additional 1 s.p. per day of journey for the food, drink, guidance, and protection.

## CLERGY

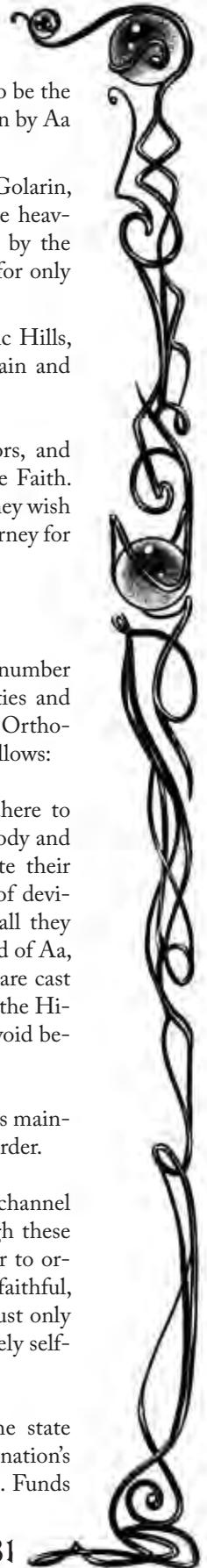
The Orthodoxist Cult is comprised of a number of distinct Orders, each with their own duties and responsibilities, although all members of the Orthodoxy have certain elements in common, as follows:

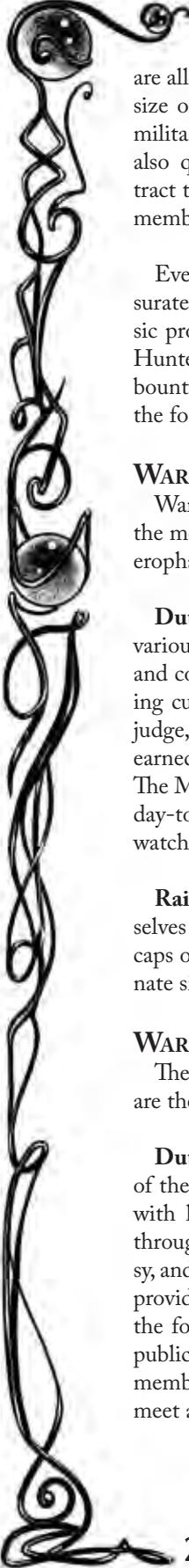
**Restrictions:** All Cult members must adhere to the principles of obedience and oneness in body and spirit, and openly and fervently demonstrate their piety. They are to be ever-vigilant for signs of deviance, heresy, and weakness of faith among all they encounter, and must strive to spread the Word of Aa, whenever possible. Temptations of the flesh are cast aside, and vows of chastity upheld, with only the Hierophant being considered pure enough to avoid being stained by a lack of chastity.

**Ranking:** The hierarchy of caste and level is maintained throughout the Cult, irrespective of Order.

**Magic:** All members of the cult are able to channel their faith in Aa to perform miracles, though these powers of Invocation vary greatly from order to order. Use of Invocation serves to inspire the faithful, and aid the cultist in his or her tasks, but must only be used with thanks to Aa, and never for purely selfish or trivial reasons.

**Resources:** Because the Orthodoxy is the state religion and governing body of Aaman, the nation’s tax wealth and manpower are at its disposal. Funds





are allocated by the local Monitors depending on the size of their local populace, and such necessities as military presence. Donations from the faithful are also quite substantial, so many temples vie to attract the most desirable and influential congregation members.

Every member of the cult is paid a salary commensurate with their caste and level, and enjoy the basic provisions provided by their monasteries. Witch Hunters sometimes earn additional funds from bounties, although such rewards are usually given in the form of aalms.

#### WARDS OF THE EVER-VIGILANT

Wards of the Ever-Vigilant are the cult's Monitors, the most powerful members of the cult after the Hierophant himself, and are a caste unto themselves.

**Duties:** Monitors are the ruling prelates of the various districts of Aaman, charged with organizing and coordinating cult activities in their area, allocating cult funding, performing duties as lawgiver and judge, and recognizing and recording all the aalms earned or lost by individuals living in their district. The Monitors also routinely and covertly observe the day-to-day lives of their local populace, constantly watchful for sin.

**Raiment:** Wards of the Ever-Vigilant attire themselves in brilliant white robes, cloaks, and pointed caps of fine fabrics with silver stitching, and bear ornate silver Eye of Aa symbols.

#### WARDS OF THE LIGHT OF FAITH

The Archimages, the Wards of the Light of Faith, are the main priests of the Orthodoxy.

**Duties:** The cult's Archimages are the preachers of the cult, and the curators of the temples, charged with leading the faithful in prayer, inspiring them through mass, counseling them against sin and heresy, and watching the heavens for signs from Aa. They provide displays of Aa's power, the blessings of Aa in the form of miracles and healing, and are the most public and approachable face of the cult; the only cult members the majority of Aamanians can expect to meet and interact with.

**Raiment:** Wards of the Light of Faith wear white robes, white mitres, and Eye of Aa icons on silver chains.

#### KNIGHTS OF THE DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH

The Defenders of the Faith are the warrior-priests of the Orthodoxy, the elite combatants and commanders of Aaman's significant military force.

**Duties:** Defenders of the Faith are charged with many duties. Not only do they form elite units in times of war, but they serve the common soldiery as commanders and chaplains. They guard the cult's temples, serve as bodyguards to Monitors and other high-ranking cult officials, and lead pilgrimages, serving as priests and protectors of the faithful as they trek through heretical lands. Sometimes they even accompany Witch Hunters when particularly dangerous quarry is involved. The most skilled and pious of the order's (level 9-10) members join the Knights of the All-Seeing Eye, the Hierophant's personal bodyguard, and are answerable solely to the Hierophant himself.

**Raiment:** When performing their duties, Defenders of the Faith don distinctive white-lacquered, black iron battle armor of scales, breastplate, and winged helm, with white cloth skirt and cloak. They arm themselves with a white-lacquered iron shield bearing the Eye of Aa, and a heavy, spiked iron mace. Knights of the All-Seeing Eye are equipped with the finest armor and weaponry available to the Orthodoxy, much of it enchanted with blessed Invocation, wear black cloth with silver stitching rather than the usual white, and silver holy symbols on their shields. When not attired in battle dress, the Defenders of the Faith wear white breeches, tunics, and hoods, heavy white leather gloves and boots, and white tabards bearing the Eye of Aa in black stitching.

#### KNIGHTS OF THE HOODED VEIL

Feared by even the most devoted Orthodoxist, the Knights of the Hooded Veil are the cult's Inquisitors.

**Duties:** Skilled and dispassionate interrogators, executioners and torturers, the Hooded Veils are charged with purging the blight of sin and heresy from those sent to their care in the Halls of Penance, using whatever means are necessary. They extract

confessions, determine the truth as the cult sees it, and are the crucible within which flagging faith can be made to burn more brightly. They also serve to reinforce the faith of the populace through fear, for few are willing to risk contravening cult doctrine when a visit to the Hooded Veils is the typical outcome.

**Raiment:** The Hooded Veils conceal their identities behind white hooded veils, formless white robes, pointed caps, and gloves, not to protect themselves, but to administer cold, faceless justice. They pride themselves on their ability to remain spotless, however messy an interrogation or cleansing may be.

### KNIGHTS OF RETRIBUTION

All specific enemies of the cult, as well as known practitioners of witchcraft, are recorded on the List of Injunction, a virtual death sentence, for the Knights of Retribution, the cult's Witch Hunters, are dispatched to track down and capture or eliminate those recorded therein.

**Duties:** Knights of Retribution are the cult's bounty hunters, skilled at dealing with magic-using foes, as well as more mundane ones. They range the continent of Talislanta in pursuit of their quarry, and are among the few Aamanians considered able to resist the temptations and sins of the outside world. When tracking particularly powerful opponents, they are accompanied by an appropriate number of Defenders of the Faith, over whom they are given complete, overriding command.

**Raiment:** A witch hunter can be recognized by his white, travel-stained, wide-brimmed hat, and iron staff bearing the Eye of Aa, as well as his battered white leather armor, although Knights of Retribution have been known to disguise themselves when necessary, even to the extent of allowing their hair to grow.

### THE ORDER OF HOSPITALERS

The Hospitalers are the cult's most skilled healers.

**Duties:** Aamanian Hospitalers are able to use skills mundane and miraculous to heal, and bring comfort to the weak, sick, and injured of the faithful. They perform their duties in exchange for donations, and are often requested as midwives.

**Raiment:** The healers of this order are veritably swathed in a thick, white, form-concealing hood, veil, and robe, wear white gloves and boots, and bear simple, white-lacquered holy symbols.

### THE ORDER OF ICONS

Crafts-priests of the Orthodoxy, the Iconographers are the creators of the cult's many holy symbols, and other trappings.

**Duties:** Following strict cult guidelines, members of the Order of Icons in Aabaal, labor to produce the arms, armor, holy symbols, and artifacts of the faith, ensuring such items are spiritually pure. When called upon to do so, they craft items enchanted with Aa's blessings.

**Raiment:** Iconographers wear heavy white robes, and thick white leather aprons, gloves, and boots, the Eye of Aa branded onto the apron and the back of each glove. They are usually well-muscled from a life at the forge.

### THE ORDER OF RELIQUARIES

Cult-sanctioned merchants and buyers, the Reliquarians dwell in the Abbey of Andurin.

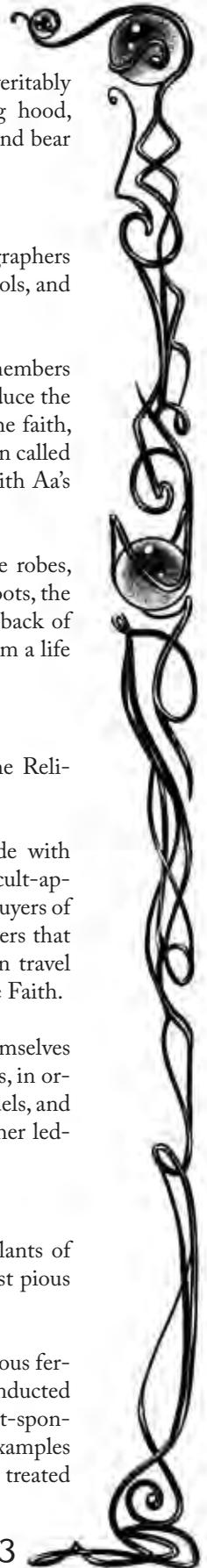
**Duties:** The Reliquarians oversee all trade with infidels, as well as the sale and purchase of cult-approved icons and artifacts. They also serve as buyers of artifacts or relics from beyond Aaman's borders that might prove of benefit to the cult, and often travel abroad to do so, escorted by Defenders of the Faith.

**Raiment:** Reliquarians virtually swathe themselves in white robes, hoods, capes, boots, and gloves, in order to avoid too much contamination by infidels, and are known to carry cult-stamped, white-leather ledgers.

### THE ORDER OF FLAGELLANTS

Practically insane in their zeal, the Flagellants of Aalm are given a wide birth by even the most pious of Orthodoxists.

**Duties:** Those followers of Aa whose religious fervor proves uncontrollable or dangerous, are inducted into the Order of Flagellants, essentially a cult-sponsored sanatorium wherein they can serve as examples of ultimate faith and self-sacrifice, and can be treated



somewhat by the constant repetition of dogma, and the self-inflicted purifications of flagellation, and such discomforts as scrupulum.

**Raiment:** Flagellants wear white robes of the coarsest cloth, and often go barefoot. They bear knotted leather whips, wear wooden holy symbols bleached white, and bear the scars of ritual self-abuse. All bear the intensity of their insanity in their eyes and faces, though they are kept shorn and ruthlessly scrubbed and bleached.

## FORTUNA AND DEATH

Playfully revered and mocked respectively, Fortuna, fickle goddess of luck, and Death, grim entity marking the end of existence, are staples in the mythology and tales of the gypsy folk. Despite their obvious differences, Fortuna and Death serve much the same function in Sarista mythology, being both representative of chance, fortune, and misfortune.

## DOCTRINE

In the tales of some Sarista families, Fortuna is said to have created the world for the Sarista people, although this is used primarily to justify their more larcenous pursuits. Other Sarista families uphold that Silvanus was once a barren wasteland, before Fortuna overturned the land, breathing life into it, and giving it to the Sarista, her children. In some way, all Sarista accord Fortuna the role of Creator, if only because all occurred by chance.

Despite their obvious differences, Fortuna and Death serve much the same function in Sarista mythology, being both representative of chance, fortune, and misfortune, elements of some small obsession to the Sarista, as evidenced by their love of gambling, betting, and gaming.

Fortuna, depicted in Sarista tales as lovely but fickle, is said to smile and frown on the Sarista with equal measure, gifting them with the experiences of changing fortunes, and ensuring they take full advantage of good fortune when it does come their way. Though they believe it is best to move on when Fortuna frowns, they even regard poor luck as valuable, for it makes them appreciate the good times all the more.

Of course, the Sarista believe it is an important and beneficial challenge to cheat ill-fortune as much as possible, adding a little spice to the game of life in the process. In no way is this better reflected than their playful mockery of Death. Death is depicted as a hilarious and bumbling fool, inevitable only because even his fortunes change under the gaze of Fortuna. Cheating Death proves you are truly alive, demonstrates a profound appreciation for life, and shows a lack of fear of the inevitable. While others may fear Death, the Sarista do not, and when at last the clumsy oaf catches up with them, they show their defiance by being buried upright, attired in the brightest of colors.



## SYMBOLOLOGY

Fortuna is often associated with Talisandre, the silver moon, as well as silver coins, while Death is often associated with Zar, the black moon, although the Sarista have no specific symbols for either of them.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** Famed for their many festivities, the Sarista tendency to party increases during the month of Talisandre as the silver moon, face of the Fortuna, smiles down upon her people. If anything, Sarista parties become even more frequent and raucous during the month of Zar, when the face of Death glowers down, for the Sarista are even more driven to demonstrate their love of life, and scorn of the Inevitable One.

**Temples:** There are no true temples or shrines to Fortuna, who is said to exist within any chance endeavor. However, a handful of small Sarista families, most likely influenced by their Dhuna cousins, pilgrimage at the onset of Talisandre, to visit the Laerna Stones, several ancient, 10-ft. tall runestones, arranged in the triangle, point westwards towards the Azure Ocean, and there tell tales in honor of Fortuna and mockery of Death.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

There are no true Sarista saints or luminaries, though the especially lucky are said to be favored by Fortuna, and are accorded some respect as a result, albeit seldom long-lasting, for the Sarista know all too well that the goddess' favors are usually capricious.

## PARADOXY

The state religion of Zandu, Paradoxy promotes the unfathomable mystery of existence, and the belief that the ultimate questions of reality are unknowable. The Paradoxist religion is comprised of two primary components: The Book of Mysteries, and The Ten Thousand.

The Book of Mysteries is a lengthy cult manifesto that contains over 100,000 questions, and no answers, ranging from the ridiculous to the sublime. The Ten Thousand is a huge pantheon comprised of a baffling array of divinities encompassing every conceivable sphere of influence, and are invoked, cursed, or ignored as suits the individual and situation.

In-keeping with Zandir individualism, many Paradoxists believe that pondering the mysteries of existence can bring insight, and are worth pursuing, if only because considering unanswerable conundrums is preferable to being bored. Just as many Paradoxists, however, state that considering the mysteries of life can only result in confusion, and is a waste of time better spent enjoying existence.

## DOCTRINE

Paradoxism has no specific doctrine, but its nebulous outlook and flexibility do engender certain behaviors. Because it does not preach a strict path to enlightenment, or even that enlightenment may necessarily exist, and because it encompasses so many religious entities, without paying any particular credence to any of them, followers of Paradoxism tend to be tolerant of other religions, if only because they believe no one knows the truth anyway. However, this also means that many Paradoxists find great amusement in any who claim to know the utter truth, and may even mock the most dedicated religious individuals as deluded and arrogant; another cause of the bad-blood between Zandu and the zealous Orthodoxists of neighboring Aaman.

Zandir often use The Book of Mysteries — typically a pocket or abridged edition — when looking for advice or the answer to a tricky dilemma, picking a random question from the text and trying to apply any thoughts it raises to the problem in hand.

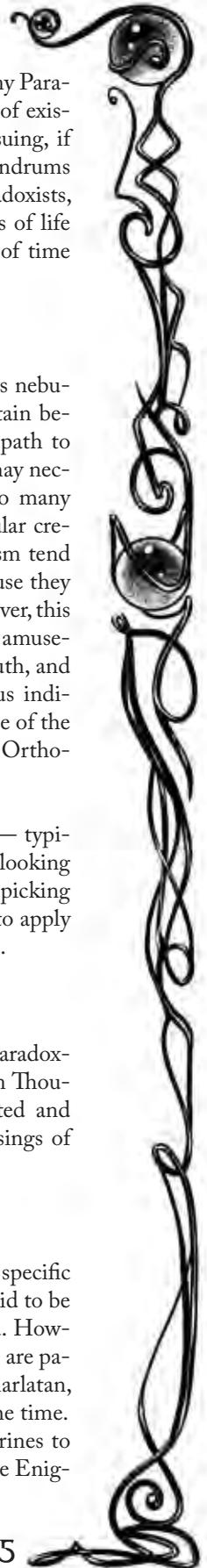
## SYMBOLOLOGY

There is no symbology associated with Paradoxism, although individual members of the Ten Thousand may have unique symbols, often created and sold as cult icons to those desiring the blessings of that entity.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** The Paradoxist faith has no specific holy days, although every day of the year is said to be holy to at least several of The Ten Thousand. However, very few Zandir could say which entities are patrons of which days without consulting a Charlatan, and even Charlatans seldom know most of the time.

**Temples:** There are no true temples or shrines to Paradoxism, with the possible exception of the Enig-



ma Tabernacle in Zanth. This large structure boasts a gilded dome set atop five hundred narrow pillars, each carved with two hundred questions from The Book of Mysteries. Zandir visit the Tabernacle for inspiration, or more commonly to meet romantic liaisons. However, despite this lacks of temples, there are a number of Paradoxist-run establishments in such cities and Cymril and Danuvia, offering “the delights of Paradoxism” to outsiders in the form of prostitution, intoxicants of all varieties, and various other entertainments. These establishments are often quite popular, even if they do nothing to actually spread the faith of Paradoxism.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

The Ten Thousand forms an astounding pantheon of luminaries, pagan gods, spirits, and Zandir versions of gods worshipped elsewhere. Few Zandir worship any single member of The Ten Thousand, and fewer still can name more than a handful of the pantheon, save perhaps for the Charlatans. Even the Charlatans seldom know a great many of The Ten Thousand, and have been known to make up new luminaries on a whim, attributing this to divine inspiration. In all cases, Zandir pay but lip-service to The Ten Thousand, invoking, praising or cursing the pantheon as a whole, or the most appropriate individual entity they know of, in any given situation. Although the vast majority of The Ten Thousand are seldom, if ever remembered, a small number are particularly popular and well-regarded or reviled:

### SAINT ARAH THE HEDONIST

#### - PATRON OF SEXUAL INDULGENCE

This hermaphrodite was the most famed prostitute of ancient Badijan, and is depicted as a beauty of ambiguous gender. Zandir invoke His/Her name when they desire sexual potency.

### VALOROUS TIMAEN

#### - SAINT OF SWORDSMANSHIP

Depicted as a dashing Zandir with a razor-keen dueling sword, and sharper tongue, Valorous Timaen is invoked as a witness to duels, and to bring luck, skill, and panache to combat.

### GALENGOG THE STERN

#### - GOD OF LAW

Galengog is portrayed as a steely-faced male Zandir, wearing an eyepatch, and bearing an executioner's sword in one hand, and a small tome of law in the other. It speaks volumes for Zandu's legal system that Galengog's name is cursed more often than it is praised.

### PANOPLY

#### - THE CREATOR

The Zandir interpretation of The Creator so popular in other faiths, Panoply represents absolutely everything, good, bad, or otherwise, in the omniverse, and is imagined as an ever-changing cloud of matter, embodying all forms, colors, scents, textures, and emotions, beyond all mortal ken.

### ORINTHUS THE INEBRIATED SAGE

#### - GOD OF BENEFICIAL DRUNKENNESS

A pot-bellied, disheveled scholar, with a twinkle of knowing in his eye, a smile on his face, and a barrel under his arm, Orinthus is toasted when drinking, supposedly bringing about pleasurable befuddlement, and insights unavailable when sober.

### RILIARMA THE FORSAKEN

#### - SERPARIAN SAINT

A famed beggar on the streets of early Zandu, Riliarma earned great respect among her peers for her protection and training of young Serparian children. She was deemed a saint after giving up her life while saving many young beggars when they were caught in a conflagration.

### QUALMARR THE HEART-STEALER - DEITY OF LOVE

Fickle, fleeting, and possessed of no form save emotion, Qualmarr is the stealer of hearts, who brings love, and all its rapture and heartache with Its touch. Qualmarr is praised, invoked, and cursed in equal measure, for love can be a gift or curse.

### THE NAMELESS TRICKSTER

#### - PATRON OF DECEPTION

Wearer of many masks and forms, the Nameless Trickster is patron of all deceptions, from lies to illusions, concealment to self-delusion. It can cloud the mind and senses, and is paid lip-service by thieves, con-men, and illusionists among others.

**PEERLESS YOLANDA****- GOD OF MUSIC**

A being of sound, Yolanda is the omniversal maestro, and the creator of music that can stir the emotions of mortals. Troubadours, other musicians and singers, and instrument-makers, all seek Yolanda's attention.

**DOMINO THE FICKLE****- SPIRIT OF FORTUNE**

An entity half-black, half-white, Domino is the caprice of chance, the patron of luck bad and good. All chance is Domino's purview, and as a result It is invoked or cursed by many in all walks of life, as good or bad luck is needed or befalls them.

**THE RELENTLESS BLADE****- SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE**

Said to be a dagger at the heart of the omniverse's rage, The Relentless Blade is invoked when vengeance is sworn or desired, whether just or otherwise, or cursed when vengeance is thwarted. Invoking The Relentless Blade is a sign of utter enmity.

**SAINT ISHARI****- SAINT OF HEALING**

A kindly spirit with strong but soft hands, and a comforting presence, Saint Ishari strives to bring healing, both physical, mental, and emotional, to those that need it, but is regarded as somewhat weak and easily banished by the dread entity Mortis the Grim, the Zandir interpretation of Death.

**CARASCAS THE ARCHMAGE****- GOD OF MAGIC**

Carascas is worshipped as the creator of the arts arcane, and the conductor of the energies that comprise all magics. A being of utter neutrality, Carascas is obviously paid service only by those seeking to learn, or utilize, magic.

**MERGANTIR THE DEEP****- GOD OF THE SEAS**

An oceanic giant, part Archaen, part Sea Dragon, Mergantir is a fearsome entity, responsible for the waves upon which Talislantans sail. He guards the secrets of the deep, and his tempestuous nature may nurture or destroy. Zandir's sailors often try and placate Mergantir, or curse His name.

**CLERGY**

**Duties:** The Charlatans, the seers of the Paradoxist faith, generally embody and espouse the virtues of Paradoxism as much as possible, although this promotion of the faith and freedom of expression varies greatly depending on the individual Charlatan in question. Charlatans do provide free, often contradictory advice to anyone seeking it — and many that aren't — in the form of questions from The Book of Mysteries. They may also be employed to perform entertaining blessings, weddings, funeral rites, etc. although they must be paid for these services.

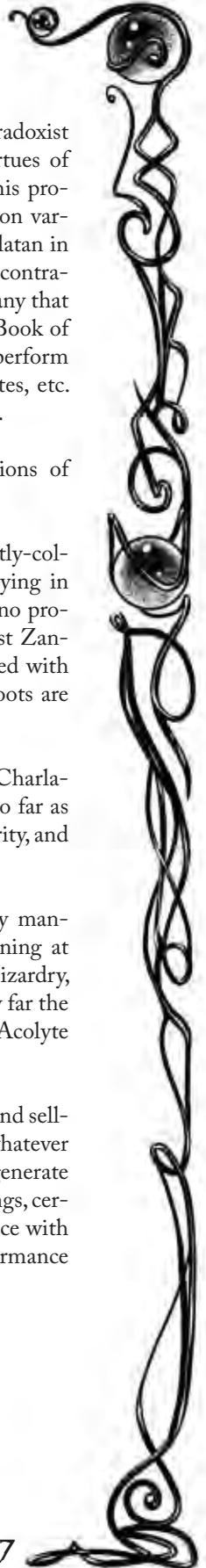
**Restrictions:** Charlatans face no restrictions of any kind.

**Raiment:** Zandir Charlatans wear brightly-colored and individualized cassocks when studying in the Paradoxist Seminary in Zanth, but have no proscribed dress outside the Seminary. Like most Zandir, Charlatans are just as likely to be obsessed with fashion, and brocade cloaks and curl-toed boots are currently in vogue in Charlatan circles.

**Ranking:** There are no ranks among the Charlatans, each of whom is given respect only in so far as he or she can convince others of their superiority, and maintain their interest.

**Magic:** Those Charlatans that successfully manage or bother to pick up some magical training at the Paradoxist Seminary inevitably learn Wizardry, because it is the easiest Order to learn, and by far the most versatile. There is no such thing as an Acolyte of Paradox.

**Resources:** Charlatans subsist by creating and selling cult icons and elixirs, as well as trading whatever magical talents they may possess. They also generate additional revenue by performing rites, blessings, ceremonies, etc. receiving donations in accordance with how flamboyant and entertaining their performance is.



## NOMAN

The bogeymen of the Western Lands, Drukh are greatly feared, their very name used to scare children. In the eyes of the Drukh, it is good and right that they be feared, for this shows they are respected, and that their allegiance to Noman, ruler of the Nightmare Dimension, is well placed.

## DOCTRINE

Noman blessed the Drukh, granting them the Songs of Madness, melodies reminiscent of the disquieting wails of the hungry rocks and vicious trees of his home plane. The Drukh, alone of all races, were chosen to serve at Noman's side in the afterlife, to inspire His fear in the living, and flay the fear from their own souls. All Drukh are exposed to the Songs of Madness from birth, inuring them to the fear the songs inflict.

Drukh uphold that the outward display fear and pain are the manifestations of inner weakness, and that anything that would alleviate fear and pain, such as pity or compassion, serve only to foster these stains on the soul. True purity and strength are only achieved when fear and pain are mastered, and pity and compassion rejected.

Torture is a holy rite, reserved for those who have mastered ordinary pain and fear, and therefore a mark of great respected to the individual tortured. It serves to further strengthen the individual's ability to overcome pain and fear. Torture to the death is truly sacred, for souls thus severed immediately attain afterlife in the Nightmare Dimension, serving at Noman's side. The weak, those governed by pain and fear, are cast into the Void upon their passing. Should they be Drukh, they are dishonored, wiped from the tribe's collective memory, and no longer spoken of.

To kill a foe outright is a mark of disrespect; to leave that foe whimpering, ruled by their own weakness, is to consider them less than nothing. A respected foe is to be honored by torture, while the truly respected are tortured to death so that they might serve Noman.

To die a natural death, free of pain and suffering, is an abomination, for such a peaceful passing does not open the gateways to the Nightmare Dimension, and thus prevents the soul from reaching Noman. The el-

derly and soon-to-die are therefore given the dignity of torture to the death, that they may achieve their rewards in the afterlife, and strengthen Noman's legions.

## SYMBOLOLOGY

There is no symbology associated with the Drukh worship of Noman, though the Drukh bear many ritual scars and bodily mutilations in his name.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** Though the Drukh hold all days to be equally worthy of devotion to Noman, "The Ghost Moon" on the 49th of Laeolis, "Pandaemonium" on the 6th of Zar, and "The Septenarial Concordance" of 7th-21st of Zar, are well regarded, for these periods of the cause of much fear among Talislanta's weaker peoples.

**Temples:** There are no temples or shrines to Noman; anywhere there is pain, suffering, torture, and fear, is a blessed place for the Drukh, and should a place not exist, they will create it.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

The Drukh worship none save Noman, though they respect many predatory totems, such as the exomorph, and omnivrax, totems capable of granting unto them powers of strength, ferocity, and savage cunning.

## CLERGY

**Duties:** Drukh shamans are the leaders of their people, drawn from amid the most fearless and savage of the tribe, and harshly trained to channel Noman's blessed songs on flutes carved from the bones of their enemies, and to conquer an animal totem, and draw upon its power. They read the often cryptic omens that Noman sends them, and act as the lawgivers of the tribe. They may heal, in order that the blessings of torture may be extended.

**Restrictions:** The shamans face no restrictions beyond those of all Drukh, but are expected to continually prove their greater purity and strength.

**Raiment:** Like all Drukh, the shamans stain their hair and skin purple with barb-berry juice, and dif-

fer from their tribesmen only in that they bear the carved bone flutes upon which they play the Songs of Madness.

**Ranking:** There are no ranks among the shamans, though the weaker always defer to the stronger.

**Magic:** Drukh shamans draw power from the fiercest of totems, using Shamanism to do so.

**Resources:** Drukh shamans have the command of loyalty of their tribe, but possess no resources beyond those available to the Drukh, and indeed, spurn any such luxuries as signs of weakness.

## DESERT KINGDOM RELIGIONS

### JAMBA

Jamba is an enigmatic and unfathomable deity, who has spoken but once to His people, when he led his humble priest, Astramir, into the Red Desert in 207 N.A., and directed him to the fabled seventeen Ruby Tablets, and the lost secrets of thaumaturgy they contained. Armed with this ancient lore, the Dracartans were able to forge a new life of prosperity for themselves, leaving their nomadic existence behind, and settling in the Red Desert at the behest of Astramir, who became the first King of Carantheum. Jamba has not made His presence known since He spoke to Astramir.

### DOCTRINE

Jamba has laid down no law for His people, but the priesthood of Jamba strive to promote the strength of community spirit among the Dracartan people. The only true stricture in the faith is the forbiddance of noise in Jamba's temples; a regulation ensures that, should Jamba speak once again, He will not go unheard.

It is considered heinous to question Jamba's silence, and lack of involvement with His people, for He is beyond the understanding of mere mortals, and in giving the lore of thaumaturgy to His people, He has done more than any but the ungrateful could ask for.

### SYMBOLOLOGY

Although Jamba's form is beyond the comprehension of Man, He is represented by a triangle of scarlet, point upwards, representative of both the Ruby Tablets, Red Desert sands, and symbol of thaumaturgy.

### WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** "The Festival of Jamba" is held on 28th Talisandre, commemorating the revival of the lost art of thaumaturgy when Jamba led Astramir to the Ruby Tablets. A great feast is held in Dracarta, paid for by the King or Queen of Carantheum. Duneship races are held outside the city walls, and there are numerous displays of thaumaturgic skills, various sporting events, and masses held at dawn and dusk.

"The Dawn of Triumph" is held on 7th Jhang, when the Dracartans thank Jamba for their decisive victory over invading Rajans in 500 N.A., celebrating with a festival around the red iron-plated form of the captured Khadun at the center of Dracarta's city square.

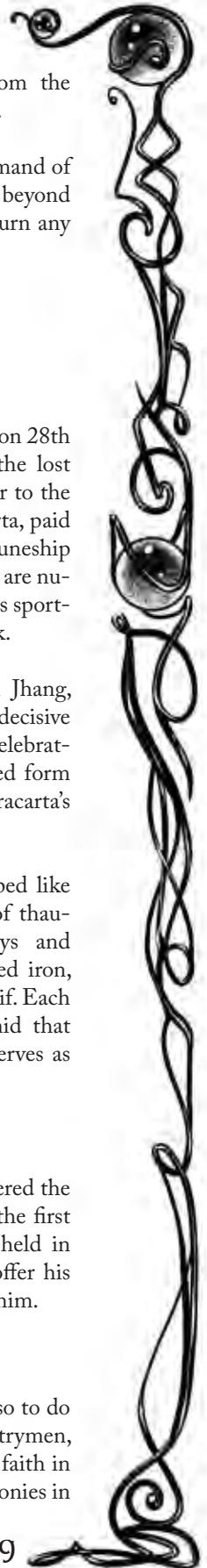
**Temples:** Jamba's temples are always shaped like three-sided pyramids, formed from blocks of thaumaturgically solidified red sand. Archways and simple decorations are crafted from solid red iron, and inscribed with a recurring triangular motif. Each temple contains a polished red iron pyramid that stands in the center of the main hall, and serves as the focal point of every ceremony.

### SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

Astramir, as the hand of Jamba that uncovered the lost arts of Thaumaturgy, a priest of Jamba, the first thaumaturge, and King of Carantheum, is held in high regard by the Dracartan people, who offer his name praise and thanks, but do not worship him.

### CLERGY

**Duties:** As Jamba once aided His people, so to do the priests strive to serve their fellow countrymen, upholding the laws of their nation, inspiring faith in their fellows, performing blessings and ceremonies in



Jamba's name, healing the sick, and providing aid and comfort to the needy. His priests also watch the heavens, ever vigilant for a sign or omen from Jamba.

**Restrictions:** Either gender may serve in Jamba's priesthood, and all are expected to remain chaste, devoted solely to Jamba and His people. As noise is forbidden in Jamba's temples, members of His priesthood learn the silent language of Sign, enabling them to communicate without breaking the holy taboo.

**Raiment:** Priests of Jamba wear simple unadorned robes and capes of red linen, with a conical red cap, and red iron triangle symbol. They bear short red iron rods topped with a red pyramid icon during ceremonies praising Jamba. The current High Priest is distinguishable only by the more ornate pyramidal rod he carries during ceremonies.

**Ranking:** Jamba's clergy have no set ranks, with the exception of their High Priest, who is always the most senior and experienced member of their number. The High Priest is responsible for allocating tasks to the other priests, based on need, and relevant experience, and also acts as the main spokesperson for the faith in Carantheum.

**Magic:** Jamba's priests do not possess magical skills, save for those they might take it upon themselves to learn (especially thaumaturgy), because Jamba does not provide them with such powers, or any other sign of His existence.

**Resources:** The priesthood of Jamba exists on the generous donations it receives from the Dracartan populace. It does not charge for any of its services, or for the good works it performs in the local community, the Dracartans are faithful people, and gladly offer what they can to the priesthood, as a mark of faith, respect, and gratitude.

## THE HEPTOGENITOR

The Yassan revere The Creator as "The Heptogenitor", a cosmic craftsman who forges all things from up to seven Primal Components: Logic, Emotion, Spirituality, Ego, Talent, Experience, and Substance. They believe It has no form that can be easily understood by mortal beings.

## DOCTRINE

The Yassan faith is not an organized one, and does not possess any clergy or strictures, although the Yassan believe they should use the gifts they have been given to work to the best of their abilities, never shying from toil. To do otherwise would be to squander a Component The Heptogenitor saw fit to invest in you.

They give praise and thanks to a being they see as the ultimate engineer, and express gratitude for their existence.

## SYMBOLOLOGY

The Yassan represent The Heptogenitor with the symbol of a seven-pointed star, symbolic of the seven Primal Components.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** Each Yassan household gathers at their shrine every High Day to give brief thanks and praise to The Heptogenitor.

**Temples:** There are no temples to The Heptogenitor, but each Yassan home houses a small shrine containing a beautifully crafted seven-pointed star sigil.

## THE NOMAD OF THE STARS

Djaffir revere The Nomad of the Stars — usually referred to as "The Nomad" — who is their concept of The Creator. They believe The Nomad wanders the universe, leaving creation in His wake, and watches over his fellow travelers of the mortal variety. He is said to have given all men free will, allowing them to chose their own path in life. The Djaffir also believe that The Nomad is not always present, for His wanderings take Him far across the universe. They view The Nomad as a desert nomad caked with the glittering dust from the stars, and believe that comets mark His passing through the heavens.

## DOCTRINE

Central to the Djaffir philosophy of The Nomad, is the principle of freedom, and each individual's right to make their own way through the universe. Anything that impedes this is to be despised, and for this

reason magic that can influence behavior is regarded as the most foul magic there is.

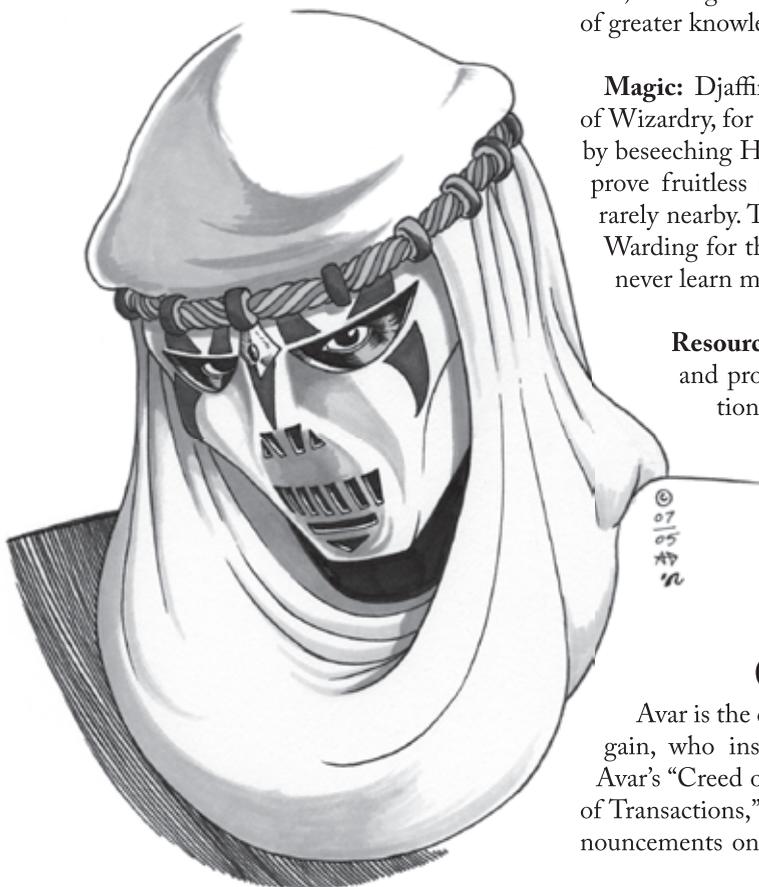
## SYMBOLOLOGY

The comet is the symbol of The Nomad.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** The Nomad's wizards hold but a single holy period called "Nomad's Return" every seven years, lasting from 46th Zar to 4th Ardan. During this week of every seventh year, a great silver comet blazes through Talislanta's firmament, believed to be the Nomad come to look over His children, and is a period of great celebration. It last appeared in 616 N.A.

**Temples:** There are no temples to The Nomad, for He is seldom there, and permanent structures go counter to His — and the Djaffir's — constant wanderings. Omens are discussed at fireside gatherings.



## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

None.

## CLERGY

**Duties:** Due to the fact that The Nomad is seldom present, His priests — called "Wizards" — believe they must act in His absence, creating the fetish masks that protect against "the magic that conquers the soul", healing their people, and interpreting the omens and signs that The Nomad leaves.

**Restrictions:** Due to The Nomad's love of freedom, His wizards have no restrictions on gender or chastity.

**Raiment:** Djaffir wizards attire themselves no differently than their fellow tribe-members, but many have stylistic representations of comets stitched on the forehead of their fetish mask, and bear a comet-shaped amulet.

**Ranking:** There are no ranks among Djaffir wizards, although they will generally acquiesce to those of greater knowledge or experience.

**Magic:** Djaffir wizards practice the magical arts of Wizardry, for they would not burden The Nomad by beseeching Him for magical aid, and such would prove fruitless given the fact that The Nomad is rarely nearby. They specialize in Enchantment and Warding for the creation of fetish masks, and will never learn magic of the Influence mode.

**Resources:** Djaffir wizards are supported and provided for by their tribe in recognition of the services that they provide, especially the creation of fetish masks, and their healing talents, both of which are provided for free. AVAR,

## AVAR THE GOLDEN GOD

Avar is the deity of material riches and personal gain, who inspires the accumulation of wealth. Avar's "Creed of Greed" is contained in the "Tome of Transactions," a book that contains advisory pronouncements on trade practice, heavily weighted in

favor of the seller's personal gain, and general doctrines that encourage the attainment of wealth. The Golden God is depicted as an obese smiling male Farad with gold skin — usually sitting cross-legged on a cushion — bedecked in luxuriant clothing and jewels.

## DOCTRINE

Wealth is to be attained by any means necessary, however dishonorable, and financial success is the only true success. Avar's followers believe that trade is life, every decision bears its own profits and costs, and that financial success leads to enlightenment. Wealth makes an individual's life more comfortable, and is therefore the only true measure of happiness. The excessive hoarding of wealth is considered an unholy and despicable practice, because wealth is meant to be enjoyed and displayed in order that others realize how enlightened and fortunate you are. Two of the most popular quotes from the Tome of Transactions are "Gold is good." and "The road to enlightenment is paved with gold."

## SYMBOLOLOGY

Avar's symbol is a circle of gold, representing coin.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** "The Accounts of Ascension" are held on 49th Zar every year, and the week leading up to this date is dominated by the tallying of each merchant-priest's final financial worth for the year. Those who have achieved the requisite fortune of 500,000 g.l. are then ordained as Monopolist-Priests.

**Temples:** Avar's temples are great halls of polished marble, capped with gold-plated domes, and decorated with extensive gilt. At the front of each hall is a large gold statue of Avar, clothed in robes of real silk, with real gemstones in his many rings, and two large gemstones for his eyes. Needless to say, the statues are always heavily guarded and warded with both magical and mundane traps. Those attending services must pay the customary 5 g.l. each upon entry.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

The greatest merchants of Faradun's history are given great esteem as luminaries of the faith, especially the fabled Hamshir of House Klamath who

purportedly made his fortune by selling sand to the Rajans.

## CLERGY

**Duties:** Merchant-priests are paid to handle funerary arrangements, and hold the monopoly on the gold-chased coffins that wealthy Farad favor for their burials. Avar's clergy also perform several freelance advisory roles, including the provision of financial advice, and information on how best to safeguard a tomb from thieves, in exchange for a hefty fee, of course.

**Restrictions:** Priests of Avar are not restricted by gender or chastity, but must strive to accumulate wealth at all costs, and promote the same behavior among others.

**Raiment:** Merchant-priests of Avar wear clothing identical in style to that of most Farad merchants, with the exception that their garments must always be predominantly gold in color. Higher ranks in the priesthood are always marked by far more luxuriant and extravagant attire. Monopolist-priests (those that have attained the greatest wealth) also bear carved walking sticks topped with a pure gold icon of Avar with jeweled eyes.

**Ranking:** Merchant-priests of Avar have but one measurement of rank: wealth. The wealthier you are, the more recognition you receive, and the holier you are deemed to be. They are always expected to accede to those who are better off than they are. Monopolist-priests are the leaders of the cult, and only accept individuals that have acquired at least 500,000 g.l. into their ranks.

**Magic:** Avar bestows magic upon His most devoted followers, though they must prove constantly prove their worth by making quantities of money commensurate with the power of the magic He will provide. Losing money is a sure way to lose His magical support. Merchant-priests practice Invocation, with a +2 bonus to the Influence and Conjure modes, but a -2 penalty with the Summon and Move modes.

**Resources:** The temple of Avar is extremely wealthy, and generates a great deal of capital from the generous donations by Farad traders who hope Avar will bless them and bring them good fortune,

and their own mercantile enterprises. The temple creates innumerable holy gold icons, which it sells to the populace for a substantial profit, and also performs rites and blessings, given an appropriate fee. A further avenue of resources is the initiation and training period that all clergy of Avar must undergo, and which must be paid for by the prospective priest at a cost of 1,000 g.l. Beyond the funds generated by the church itself, nearly every merchant-priest makes their own additional fortune by trading, as do other merchants.

## DEATH

The Rajans regard Death as a stern and inevitable entity of great power, who brings about the end of all living things. The worship of this dread entity is organized by The Black Mystic Cult, and both cult and nation are ruled by a necromancer-priest bearing the title of Khadun, who is worshipped as the earthly manifestation of Death. Death is said to be faceless and formless, utterly incomprehensible to mortals.

## DOCTRINE

The Rajans believe that death results in ascension to a better life, where the faithful attain power, wealth, revenge, and the means to satiate all their desires. They believe that their harsh existence on Talislanta is punishment for the sins of their ancestors, and that death is the only release. The Black Mystic Cult indoctrinates all members of Rajan society, influencing them to openly accept and embrace their own demise, ready to lay down their lives for their leaders with the knowledge that they will be rewarded in the afterlife. All infidels who do not praise Death are enemies of the cult, and must be forcibly

“converted” by murder and execution. Men are closer to Death than women, for Death is male, and does not create life. As such, women are inferior to men, must bow to their husbands’ wishes. Death in all its forms is a matter for rejoicing, especially the death of non-believers.

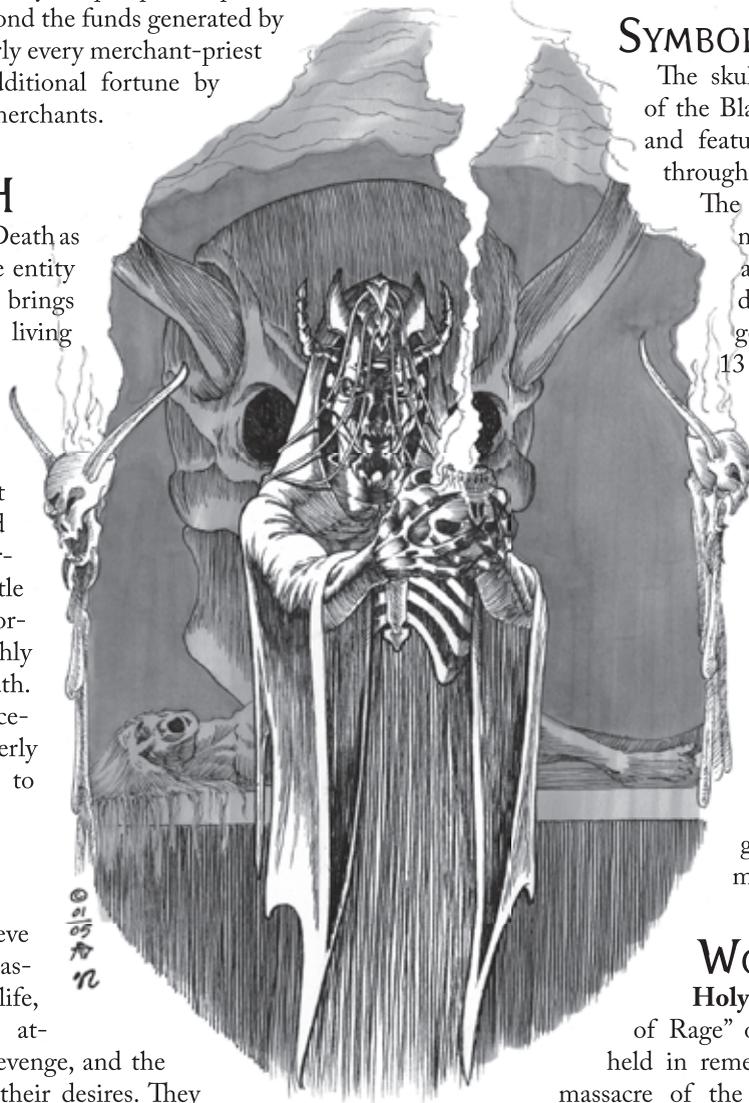
## SYMBOLOLOGY

The skull is the symbol of the Black Mystic Cult, and features prominently throughout Rajinnar.

The only colors permitted by the cult are black, red, dark gray, and gold. The number 13 is regarded as holy, which is why the Khadun’s High Council is composed of 13 necromancer-priests, why there are 13 Shadinn executioners in the Temple of Death, and why Rajinnar’s military is organized along multiples of 13.

## WORSHIP

**Holy Days:** “The Day of Rage” on 7th Jhang is held in remembrance of the massacre of the Rajan invasion force by the Dracartans in 500 N.A. As with all Rajan holy rituals, the main focus is elaborate sacrifice. However, on this date only Dracartan captives are sacrificed, gathered over the year leading up to this date, them released in the center of Irdan amid the gathered populace who then set upon the Dracartans in a frenzied vengeful mass and tear them limb from limb with their bare hands.



*“The Opening of The Third Eye”* celebration starts on 6th Zar and ends on 13th Zar. This week-long event celebrates the formation of the Black Mystic Cult, with sacrificial masses being held hourly every day and night. The last hour on the night of 13th Zar culminates with “The Dance of Death” when dancers in iron death masks plunge blindly amid drug-addled worshippers, slaying indiscriminately with ceremonial axes, swords, and daggers.

**Temples:** The Temple of Death in Irdan is the base of the Black Mystic Cult, and is a huge ominous edifice of dark stone, carved all over with skulls. The interior is decorated with the skulls and bones of the dead that have been bound together with gold to form sacrificial altars, holders for the ever-burning braziers, archways, and pillar decoration. Great firepits are also located in the main hall into which the bodies of infidels are thrown, dead or alive.

## SAINTS AND LUMINARIES

None.

## CLERGY

**Duties:** Necromancer-priests perform numerous ceremonies of burial and worship, such as the Dance of Death, maintain a strict control and enforcement of the nation’s harsh laws, constantly extol the virtues of Death, and keep Rajinnar’s substantial military operative.

**Restrictions:** As women are inferior to men, only men are permitted to enter the priesthood of the Black Mystic Cult, or become Rajin. Both Rajin and Necromancer-priests are bound by strict vows

of chastity, remaining devoted solely to Death, and avoiding the creation of life.

**Raiment:** Necromancer-priests wear cloaks, robes, hoods, gloves, and boots of dark gray, cover their faces with black iron death masks, and carry iron staffs topped with death’s heads.

**Ranking:** The Khadun heads the cult, and is served by a High Council of 13 necromancer-priests who ensure his decrees are carried out. 13 lower-ranking necromancer-priests serve each member of the High Council. Rank in the clergy is increased or decreased according to personal ability, the favor, or otherwise, of the individual’s immediate superior, and infrequent assassinations.

**Magic:** The necromancer-priests and Rajin of the Black Mystic Cult are the only individuals in Rajinnar permitted to practice the arcane arts. They both use Necromancy, with its intimate connection to death, although only the necromancer-priests are also permitted to use Invocation, drawing dire magics from their faith in Death. When using Invocation, they have a +2 bonus to all uses of the Attack and Summon Modes, but suffer a -2 penalty when using the Defend and Heal Modes.

**Resources:** The Black Mystic Cult is the ruling body of Rajinnar, and as such it receives extensive taxes, revenues from trade with Faradun, monies from the sale of cult paraphernalia, and extensive donations from fanatical worshippers. Necromancer-priests are the clergy of the cult, and form the ruling body of Rajinnar.

# A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE OMNIVERSE

The Omniverse is a term used to represent the sum total of all the planes of existence. The ancient Archaens viewed the Omniverse as a sphere, with the Green World at the core, the material planes of Primus surrounding it, the higher planes extending upwards into infinity, and the lower planes extending below. Others describe the Omniverse as a vast aetheric ocean, with the various planes as islands and continents.

## THE ELEMENTAL PLANE

Also called the Green World, the Elemental Plane is the heart of the Omniverse, and the source of creation: the birthplace of every mountain, every tree, and every living creature. The Green World resembles a verdant paradise where every thing - from the greatest trees and mountains, to the humbles plants and pebbles - is a living, sentient being. It is inhabited by elementals of every type, including air, earth,

fire, water, wind, dust, stone, mud, and so on. Passage through the Green World can present numerous difficulties, particularly to those who do not know and obey the laws of nature.

## THE MATERIAL PLANE

Surrounding the Green World is the Material Plane, or Primus, as the Archaens called it. Here the substance that was born in the Green World collects and shapes the myriad worlds where life exists. Primus is comprised of an uncountable number of suns, moons, stars, worlds, realms, and realities, all surrounded by the infinite vastness of the Aethereal Sea (q.v.). The myriad worlds of Primus exist in a variety of shapes and forms. Some, such as Talislanta, are flat disks surrounded by a watery ocean, allowing one to sail off the edge of the world and into Aethereal Sea. Other worlds, such as the Midnight Realm, have no true oceans. Instead, the land simply ends where the Aethereal Sea begins.

Those worlds closest to the Spheres (q.v.) are collectively known as the Upper Planes, where love and life are held in the highest regard. There are sometimes called the Heavenly Realms. Those farthest away, closer to the Demonrealms and the Void are called the Lower Planes, where selfishness and greed are much admired qualities, and the weak perish. This

is where the Midnight Realm and the other worlds briefly described in this book are located. The Middle Planes fall in the grey area between, which is where Talislanta can be found.

## THE AETHEREAL SEA

Also known as the astral plane, the Aethereal Sea is a veil of formless grey and blue mists. It fills the vast distances between the worlds of Primus and between the planes themselves. It is not a literal sea, though like a body of water it has currents, tides, and storms. It is possible to sail the Aethereal Sea in a windship, or on any other aerial or watergoing conveyance or creature. Some creatures possess a natural ability to navigate the Aethereal Sea; those who do not possess such capabilities will need an astromantic globe and the proper charts, or they will almost certainly become lost.

A variety of entities make their home in the Aethereal Sea, either floating along the currents or nesting among the countless islands, oases, and fragments of forgotten realities that may be found scattered across its depths. Phasms, erx, disembodied spirits, creatures from the Dreamrealms, lost souls, Ebonite trading vessels, broodwyrms, ghost ships, void dragons, and a host of other encounters are possible here.



## ON THE AETHERAL SEA

"Beyond the edge of the world lies a vast and amorphous cloud of aetheric mists, known to the Ancients as the Aethereal Sea. Scattered across its endless expanses is an uncountable number of landmasses, or realms, each a world unto itself. Like the moons and stars they appear to travel across the night sky, tracing patterns and aspects of magical significance.

The mists of the Aethereal Sea conceal these other realms from us, as we in turn may well be concealed from them. Some are visible to us as suns and moons of varied color and size. Others are dark as night, and can not be seen without the aid of magic. A rare few are located on other planes of existence, and can only be viewed through the presence of interdimensional rifts or portals. Some say the heavenly bodies we know as the seven moons are anomalies of this sort.

As to our own world, it is merely one of many realms adrift in the Aethereal Sea: a great disk, its landmasses surrounded by ocean, its waters cascading off the edges to merge with the surrounding mists (hence, the legends of sailors falling off the end of the world, which many regard as superstition). Other realms may well appear much the same, or they exhibit attributes and properties that defy our own concepts of natural law.

In ages past, the true nature of the Aethereal Sea was known, and ships are said to have traveled between these isolated realms. But the passage of time, and the ravages of the terrible cataclysm known as the Great Disaster, have all but obliterated the ancient lore.

Of all those who live, I am one of the few who possess such knowledge, which I have pieced together from fragments of ancient manuscripts, scrolls, and tablets. On the basis of my research, I can fully believe that should one sail a windship beyond the edge of the world, he would find himself flying amidst the vast expanses of the Aethereal Sea itself. Should he possess the necessary coordinates, and the skill to pilot a windship though the amorphous mists, he might well be able to sail to any of the Unknown Realms, or even beyond. Without these, it is likely that he would become lost in the Aethereal Sea, there to drift forever, and to die of starvation, or madness."

-- an excerpt from the widely spurned text, "The Deceptive Mists: Our Ignorance of Reality," penned by the Cymrilian scholar Chaladane, just prior to his incarceration in an asylum for the insane.

## THE DREAMREALMS

Amid the Aethereal Sea are the Dream Realms: an infinite number of fantastic realms where Reality is entirely subjective, and anything that can be imagined or dreamed can come true. The Dreamrealms are said to be divided into two different regions: the Dream Dimension above, and the Nightmare Dimension, below. Some say the Dream Dimension is ruled by Dreamweaver, and the Nightmare Dimension, an entity known as Noman. Others say the two are one and the same, the only distinction being the point of view of the observer.

Within each of the two Dreamrealms are countless dreamscapes, each created from the dreams and nightmares of one of the worlds of Primus. The inhabitants of these dreamscapes range from visions of incredible beauty to horrors such as few minds can endure. Indeed, travelers to the Dreamrealms should be wary. For here, anything that can be dreamed or imagined can come to pass.

## THE SPHERES

Above the Aethereal Sea are the planes known as The Spheres, or The Heavens. These include:

**The Silver Sphere:** beyond the Silver Gates lies this peaceful realm, which exhibits a flawless, polished and unreal semblance. Here dwell the spirits called Paramanes, who seek to gain entrance to the Radiant Sphere (q.v.) by performing worthy deeds: guiding lost souls, protecting innocent astral travelers, and giving spiritual aid to petitioners on Primus. Paramanes appear to be idealized versions of the bodies they wore in life.

**The Golden Sphere:** a heavenly plane permeated by warm, golden light. Here, in a great amber castle, live the Illuminus - the keepers of the Eternal Records, which are said to contain all the secrets of the Omniverse (it has been suggested that the Illuminus may, in fact, be Paramanes seeking to purify themselves through this service). No mortal beings are allowed entry to the Golden Sphere unless accompanied by a Paramane or other higher spirit.

**The Radiant Sphere:** this brilliant realm is home to the spirit beings known as the Archons, entities

revered for their benevolence and wisdom by the inhabitants of many millions of worlds. At the center of this region is The Light, a shimmering Intelligence to which all higher forms are drawn. The Light is known by many names, including Creator.

**The Crystalline Sphere:** this plane is comprised of innumerable realms, each a reflection of the mind of its single, primary resident: typically, a higher spirit-form, or Deity. Each world is a paradise of one sort or another, the specifics of which depend on the expectations of each Deity's loyal followers. Also found here are the spirit beings known as the Forgotten Gods - deific entities who have faded from the memories of mortals.

## THE LOWER PLANES

Below the Green World lay the Lower Planes: the lands of the Dead, of Devilkind, of Demonkind, and other denizens of the dark. Those who would travel to lower planes can do so by sailing the Aethereal Sea, or by passing through the gates of The Threshold to the Midnight Realm: the crossroads of the lower planes.

## THE UNDERWORLD

This dark and dreary plane is dotted with graveyards, burial mounds, tombs, mausoleums, catacombs, and cenotaphs. Here, the souls of the dead come to receive judgement, crossing the Sea of Eternity to the Forever Road, and the Halls of Death. Here, each soul comes to stand before the dread entity known as Death, ruler of the Underworld.

At the northern region of the Underworld stands a vast citadel known as Omnus: an ancient library where it is said all of our days are written, past and future. Here presides the spectral being known as Destiny, or "The Author of Fate." It is said that, if one can pass the Nine Gates of Omnus (each more formidable than the last), then Destiny can be petitioned for a glimpse of the future.

## OBLIVION

This fiery volcanic plane is the place where Diabolus and his fellow devils were consigned by the Archons, who cast them out of the higher planes aeons ago. Here, the greatest of their number dwell in

bleak stone castles that extend high into the noxious atmosphere. The lesser ones toil in mines, pits and dungeons, or hide away in holes and crevices.

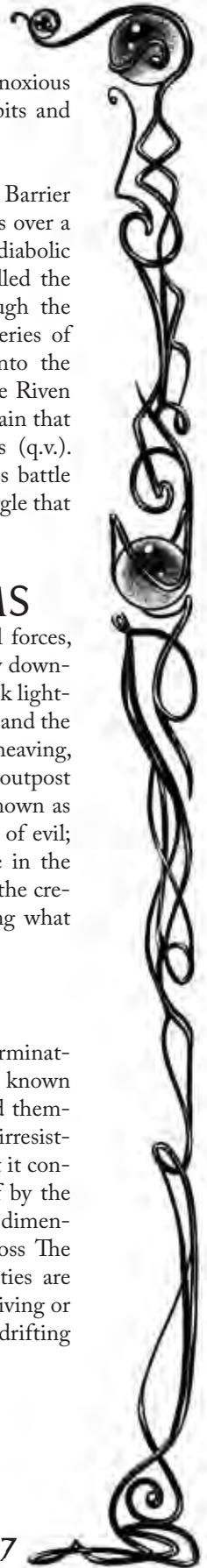
Oblivion is surrounded on all sides by the Barrier Wall, an immense stone structure that stands over a thousand feet in height and is guarded by diabolic sentries. Two pairs of great iron portals, called the Ebon Gates, allow access and egress through the Barrier Wall. The Upper Gates lead to a series of tunnels through which ascends upwards into the Underworld. The Lower Gates open into the Riven Lands, a torturous and chaotic stretch of terrain that separates Oblivion from the Demonrealms (q.v.). Here, the armies of devilkind wage ceaseless battle against mindless hordes of demons, in a struggle that is doomed to go on until the end of time.

## THE DEMONREALMS

This is a region of chaotic, anti-elemental forces, where the dregs of the Omniverse sift slowly downwards into the nothingness of The Void. Black lightning rends the poisonous skies, the seas burn, and the ground breaks away into floating masses of heaving, dripping sludge. Here, in this tenuous last outpost of existence, dwell the destructive entities known as demons. Some say they are the very essence of evil; others, that they merely fulfil their purpose in the Omniverse, functioning as a balance against the creative energy of elementals, forever destroying what the elementals eternally create.

## THE VOID

The Void is a mass of swirling blackness terminating in a central nucleus of negative energy known as The Dark. Individuals or entities who find themselves in The Void will be drawn slowly but irresistibly towards The Dark, which engulfs all that it contacts. Masses of negative energy, thrown off by the whirling nucleus, occasionally penetrate the dimensional fabric or are propelled outwards across The Void. Known as Void Monsters, these entities are extremely dangerous. Other manifestations, living or not, may also be encountered in this realm, drifting slowly downward into The Dark.



## ABOUT THE PASSAGE OF SOULS

Normally, whenever a living thing dies, its soul departs the body and begins the long passage to the Land of the Dead. Alone and unfettered, it drifts downwards through the Aethereal Sea, until at last it arrives at the shores of the Underworld.

During its passage the soul appears as a glowing orb of light, measuring just a few inches in diameter. Upon arriving on the shores of the underworld, it gains the semblance of a spectre, appearing as a ghostly version of the creature or being that it was in life.

Usually, an individual's possessions are left behind on death, along with the body. However, there are certain burial rituals that enable a soul to travel to the Land of the Dead accompanied by any possessions it was buried with. This can include such items as burial shrouds, coins, artifacts, food and drink, and even guardians intended to protect the soul on its journey.

Rituals designed to ensure safe passage to the Underworld generally require the deceased to be buried in a funerary vessel of some sort. A vessel can take the form of a boat, barge, or other type of waterborne craft, or even a funerary urn, tomb, or other edifice. Any guardians that are to accompany the deceased must be dead, and must be interred with the deceased in the funerary vessel. In some cultures, both the body of the deceased and those of its guardians may be protected by talismans, runes, or other devices.

If the burial ritual is performed correctly, the vessel and its contents will pass from the realm of the living into the Aethereal Sea, and then to the Sea of Lost Souls. As long as it suffers no mishaps, the funerary vessel will arrive at the shores of the Underworld within thirteen days.

There are some who believe that anything given over to the dead on one of the worlds of Primus becomes part of the Underworld. This includes not just the souls of the dead, but also such things as graveyards, tombs, burial vestments, and coins. Places and items given over in this way do not disappear from Primus; rather, a spirit version of each comes into existence in the Underworld, becoming a part of the Land of the Dead.

## ON THE NATURE OF LIFE, DEATH, AND RENEWAL

In the Talislantan Omniverse, reality can be likened to a river that flows from creation (the Green World) to destruction (the Void). That which we call reality lies along the length of that river.

The key to understanding this river is in the nature of aetherium, the substance that makes up the astral plane. Aetherium is the beginning and the end of everything; every stone, every river, every falling beam of light, is shaped from raw aetherium, given form by thought. It is the essence from which is woven the tapestry of reality. It is also the raw material of magic, the substance of spirits, and the essence of life itself.

The elementals of the Green World shape the raw aetherium into the substance of what we call reality. The Archons of the Silver Sphere guide and direct this creation, channeling it according to the will of the Creator, though a few have been known to choose a different path. (See the Shaitan.)

Mortals can shape aetherium as well, though only in a limited manner. Spellcasting, mysticism, and other types of magic are one way. Another is through dreams. Though no single dreamer can do much, a world of dreamers can shape the aetheric currents around that world, giving rise to a unique dreamscape. This dreamscape then becomes a part of the Dreamlands.

When anything dies or is destroyed on Primus, it appears to decay, wear away, and crumble to dust. In truth, its essence passes from Primus into the lower depths of the Aethereal Sea, then downwards to the Demonrealms. Here, the entities we know as Demons break down the essence, so that it may then pass on to the Void.

In the Void, all that was created in the Green World, used on the worlds of Primus, and broken down in the Demonrealms is at last consumed. Here the substance and energy is absorbed, to be transformed back into the aetherium, and distributed back into the Omniverse through of the stars themselves. Such is the Cycle of Life, Death, and Renewal in the Omniverse.

# APPENDIX A



## 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

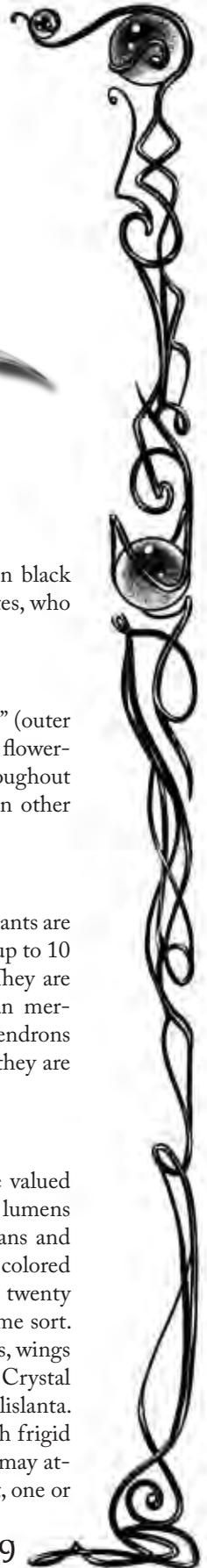
An extract derived from this plant's "cowl" (outer leaf) is of use as a poison antidote. The small flowering plant is found in woodland regions throughout Talislanta, typically under rotting logs and in other shady places.

### 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 Quan 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 spider 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 engi-

neers, blue iron is available only from the Quan 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 ogriphiant. 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 times 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 Quan 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.

**SILK CLOTH**

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 wyrm, which can be trained to follow colored patterns on a loom, thereby "weaving" bolts of finished silkcloth of great beauty and intricacy. A wyrm 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**

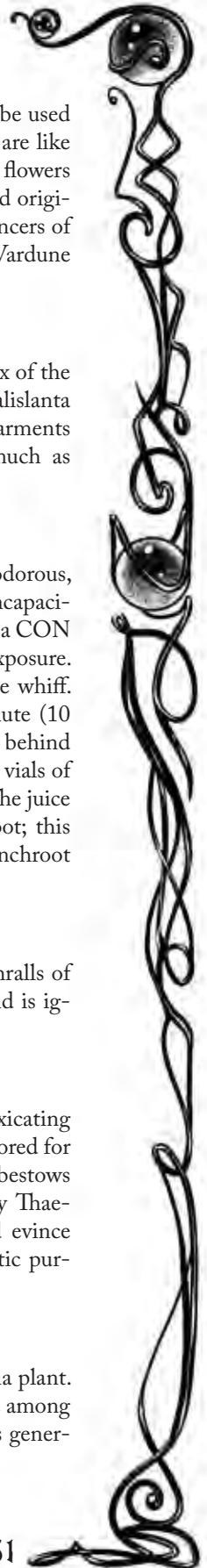
This powerful liquor is a favorite of the Thralls of Taz. Fire-ale is served in black iron mugs and is ignited prior to drinking, hence its name.

**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 Thaesian 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 white-wood for use in the making of staves and bows.

**WILLOWOOD**

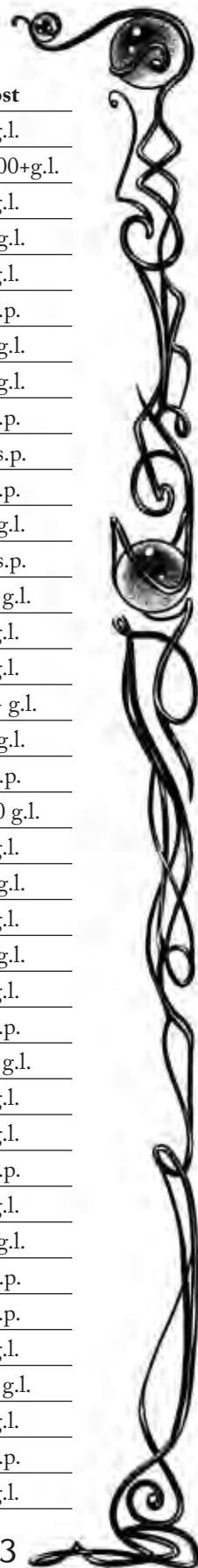
The flexible twigs of the willowood are used in the weaving of baskets, mats, and furnishings of various sorts. The tree, with its characteristic hanging foliage, is native to the banks of rivers, lakes, and swamps.

## 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.

Type	Unit	Cost
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.



# 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.

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)

<b>Ingredient</b>	<b>Properties/Uses</b>	<b>Cost (Unit)</b>
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)



Ingredient	Properties/Uses	Cost (Unit)
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

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.

*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.*

## 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.
Kharakhan guard	1,250 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.



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