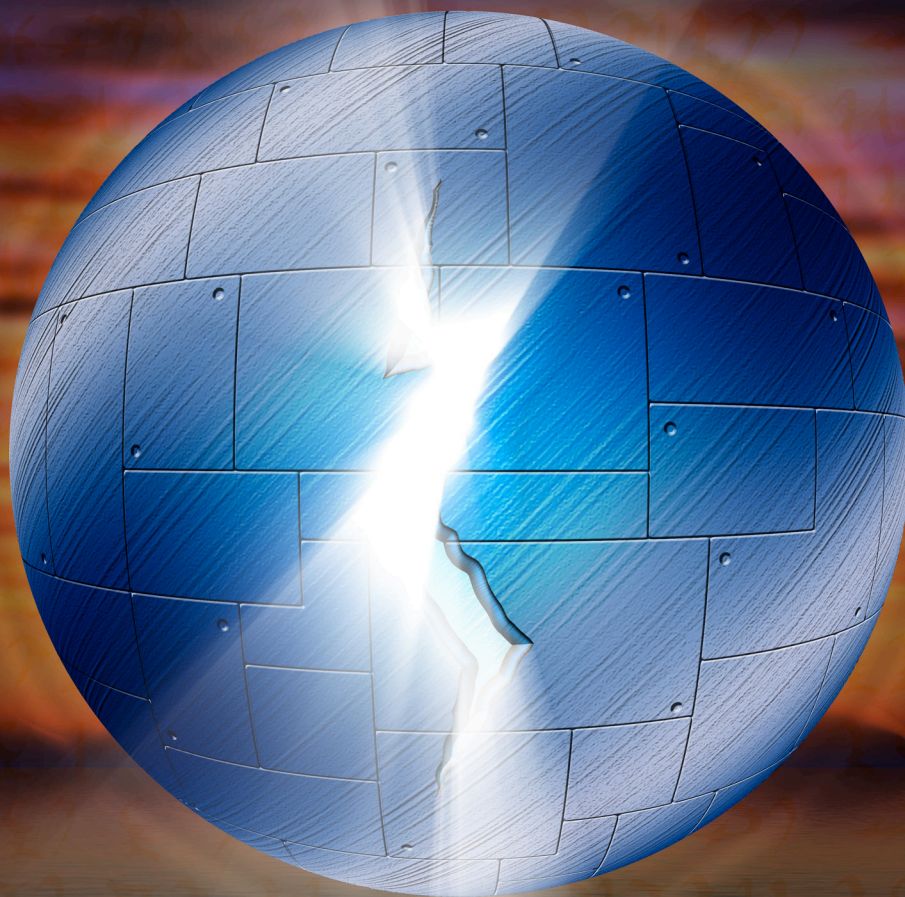


Codex Magicus

The Orb Revealed



A SUPPLEMENT FOR THE
TALISLANDA FANTASY ROLEPLAYING GAME

Talisanta Codex Magicus

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TALISLANTA

FANTASY ROLE PLAYING GAME

Codex Magicus

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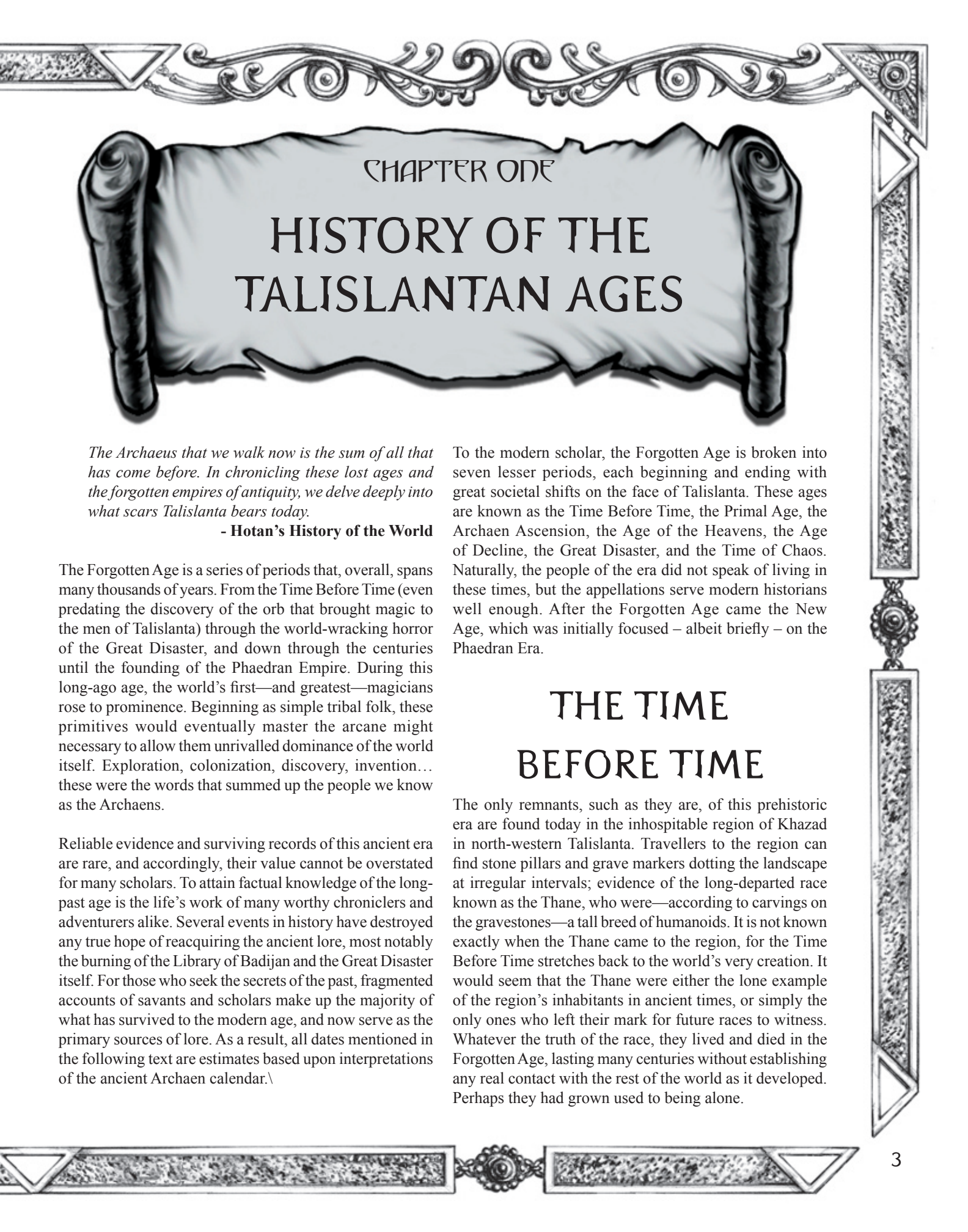
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CHAPTER ONE

HISTORY OF THE TALISLANTAN AGES

The Archaeus that we walk now is the sum of all that has come before. In chronicling these lost ages and the forgotten empires of antiquity, we delve deeply into what scars Talislanta bears today.

- Hotan's History of the World

The Forgotten Age is a series of periods that, overall, spans many thousands of years. From the Time Before Time (even predating the discovery of the orb that brought magic to the men of Talislanta) through the world-wracking horror of the Great Disaster, and down through the centuries until the founding of the Phaedran Empire. During this long-ago age, the world's first—and greatest—magicians rose to prominence. Beginning as simple tribal folk, these primitives would eventually master the arcane might necessary to allow them unrivalled dominance of the world itself. Exploration, colonization, discovery, invention... these were the words that summed up the people we know as the Archaeans.

Reliable evidence and surviving records of this ancient era are rare, and accordingly, their value cannot be overstated for many scholars. To attain factual knowledge of the long-past age is the life's work of many worthy chroniclers and adventurers alike. Several events in history have destroyed any true hope of reacquiring the ancient lore, most notably the burning of the Library of Badijan and the Great Disaster itself. For those who seek the secrets of the past, fragmented accounts of savants and scholars make up the majority of what has survived to the modern age, and now serve as the primary sources of lore. As a result, all dates mentioned in the following text are estimates based upon interpretations of the ancient Archaen calendar.

To the modern scholar, the Forgotten Age is broken into seven lesser periods, each beginning and ending with great societal shifts on the face of Talislanta. These ages are known as the Time Before Time, the Primal Age, the Archaen Ascension, the Age of the Heavens, the Age of Decline, the Great Disaster, and the Time of Chaos. Naturally, the people of the era did not speak of living in these times, but the appellations serve modern historians well enough. After the Forgotten Age came the New Age, which was initially focused – albeit briefly – on the Phaedran Era.

THE TIME BEFORE TIME

The only remnants, such as they are, of this prehistoric era are found today in the inhospitable region of Khazad in north-western Talislanta. Travellers to the region can find stone pillars and grave markers dotting the landscape at irregular intervals; evidence of the long-departed race known as the Thane, who were—according to carvings on the gravestones—a tall breed of humanoids. It is not known exactly when the Thane came to the region, for the Time Before Time stretches back to the world's very creation. It would seem that the Thane were either the lone example of the region's inhabitants in ancient times, or simply the only ones who left their mark for future races to witness. Whatever the truth of the race, they lived and died in the Forgotten Age, lasting many centuries without establishing any real contact with the rest of the world as it developed. Perhaps they had grown used to being alone.

Khazad bears markings of the Thane even today, in the form of the ancient city now referred to as Necron, and the scattered “warning stones” that dot the landscape here and there. These pillars seem to mark places where great battles or events took place in the Time Before Time, though exactly what the Thane were trying to relate with these faded etchings is lost to the past. Some evidence of demonic figures remains on a few of these pillars, but nothing is conclusive. What is known for certain is that the Thane were occultists with a great deal of interest in the lower planes, and they assembled a minor fleet of black-hulled sailing vessels that plied the waters near the north and west coasts of Khazad. Standing stones littering the beaches of Morbid Isle attest to some presence on the small island to the north as well, but most of the lore pertaining to the Thane comes from Archaen writings dating thousands of years after the Time Before Time, and nothing can be considered certain.

ECHOES OF THE PAST

CITY OF THE DEAD

Necron is a sprawling city with alien architecture and a past shattered by both the passing of time and the Great Disaster. The legends of this city —located somewhere in north Khazad and buried under the sands of the region—tell

of an entire people mummified and buried within their ancient capital. What treasures of a long-forgotten age could adventurers come across if they located an entrance down into Necron?

What few records of the Thane survive speak of a race that dealt with demons and had a vested interest in dark arcane arts, so what relics and ancient wonders would such a people produce? Do these dark wonders still lie in the depths under the desert? And of course, what of the tales that speak of the city’s inhabitants living on as spectral undead, or mummified in the hope of one day awakening once more?

THE STANDING STONES

The grave markers and standing stones of the long-forgotten Thane are notoriously faded and difficult to decipher. For adventurers traveling to the desolate land of Khazad, any but the most cerebral characters are going to find little of interest in the etchings that do remain. Grave-robbers are likely to find mummified corpses interred at these sites, perhaps buried with trinkets and items that have somehow survived thousands of years without corruption. Perhaps all there is to be found is the dust of ancient bones.

However, what if the markings of some of these stones can



The Black Savants

It is a rare historian that dedicates many years of his life to wandering the desolate realm of Khazad in the search for knowledge, but some of the most learned adventurer-scholars that make the journey believe they have chanced upon a potential link between the ancient Thane and the occult order of Neferatus; the Black Savants.

Of course, the island of Neferatus is barred to all outsiders, and few people even know the Black Savants exist, let alone have the years of knowledge behind them to make the connection. The link is tenuous at best, formed from sightings of black-hulled ships sailing the seas around Khazad, etchings and carvings upon the pillars that resemble what rare and priceless lore has been acquired about the Black Savants, and a general assumption that the two races are purported to be similar in appearance; i.e. tall, exceptionally gaunt humanoids.

Some of the ancient lore points to the Thane colonizing the region of Talislanta now called Khazad and creating Necron in order to survive a coming apocalypse (thought to be no less than the Great Disaster itself). If this is true, it would certainly explain why the Black Savants – a magical order unknown to most Talislantans – has a vested interest in the entombed city. It stands to reason that even now the dark spellcasters are seeking artifacts of their lost imperial glory...or perhaps working on a way to restore their mummified brethren to life.

be deciphered? It is all too easy to imagine that the stone pillars tell of ancient battles or the locations of hidden settlements, but could it be possible that others form a “map” of sorts to locate the lost city of Necron? Or what if the carvings have endured throughout the millennia and still tell of an ancient ritual once used to summon and bind a powerful demonic entity from the lower planes? It is wholly possible that some of these pillars were left as markers for traditional locations for ritual summonings, and scraps of history show the Thane in a very dark and unwholesome light.

WAILING MOUNTAIN

In south Khazad, a colossal mountain range is dominated by the twisting, spiral crag called Wailing Mountain. This edifice of grey basalt is named for the ululating moans and deep cries which seem to emanate from its uppermost

reaches. Skeptical scholars attribute these noises to the rushing of the wind through the many twists, caves and hollows in the mountain’s body, while those with a more preternatural explanation point to an ancient Phaedran legend involving an archimage binding a powerful Shaitan somewhere within the mountain.

Perhaps neither of these explanations is true. Littered around the foothills of the crags surrounding the Wailing Mountain—and at the base of the gigantic spire itself—are several Thane standing stone markers. Whether a scholar might still be able to decipher the faces of these stones is debatable, but it seems the Thane also had reasons to avoid (or draw attention to) the Wailing Mountain, even in the centuries before the story of the bound demon was first told.

THE PRIMAL AGE

In the Time Before Time, an otherworldly vessel of alien origin fell to the world and crashed into the untouched wilderness of western Talislanta. It lay there for an unknowable amount of time, perhaps centuries, perhaps millennia, before it was finally chanced upon by the primitive barbarian tribes of the era. A group of these tribal hunters entered the wreckage of this gigantic icon from the sky, and within its strange walls they discovered the single most important item in Talislantan lore: an orb of unknown material. This crystalline sphere contained the secrets and capacity to teach an alien knowledge to those that possessed the orb.

That knowledge—never before seen in the world—was magic.

The tribal people declared the makers of the crashed “icon” to be gods, and the orb to be a gift from these sky-dwelling deities. With primitive abandon, the tribes established stone menhir circles and dolmen structures of religious reverence to what history now calls the Forgotten Gods. And so magic and religion began in Talislanta, though they were—as things of this era—performed, revered and harnessed in little more than a primal state.

Years, perhaps centuries, passed. For reasons modern scholars can only guess at, the growing tribe moved their nomadic clans south and left what few primitive hamlets

they had established to found a settlement in what is now south-western Aaman. This settlement would eventually rise to become the enigmatic city of *Arcanopolis*, the City of Secrets. In this age, it was merely a walled fortified village by the banks of the Axis River, most likely established where the hunting was plentiful, the fishing was prosperous, and founded in the spirit of keeping other tribes away from the precious orb. These simple tribal folk were the ancestors of the Archaens, the mightiest magicians ever to walk the face of Talislanta, and known to history as the Keepers of the Secret Lore.

In the Primal Age, the magic practised by the tribe was probably an animistic clash of shamanism, nature-based witchcraft and idol worship. With their newfound faith in the Forgotten Gods and the slowly unlocking power of the orb to fuel their rituals, the tribe began to expand into new lands. At first this proceeded much as could be expected, involving little more than savage and small-scale battles between barbarian tribes. The soon-to-be Archaens, with the hubris of many truly faithful and more-developed cultures, referred to the other tribes as the "Sub-Men".

By the end of the first millennium after the discovery of the alien vessel and the orb, the early Archaens had conquered and laid claim to lands as far east as the Wilderlands, and established a second settlement one day destined for greatness, the walled city of *Phandril*, in what is the modern-day city-state of Hadj. And here, for a time, the dreams of expansion and development died. To the east were no more barbaric Sub-Men tribes, but a new race entirely. And the creatures known as the Drakken did not sit idle when the Archaen warriors came.

ECHOES OF THE PAST

THE STONE CIRCLES

In what is now known as Werewood, in the west of Talislanta, travelers can find dozens of dolmens, menhirs and haphazardly-placed stone circles. These are the ancient monuments that the early Archaen tribespeople erected to honor the Forgotten Gods, once used in primitive rituals and whatever rites of shamanic reverence the primitive tribes performed.



Carved idols, primitive tools and fallen dolmens have been exhumed in southern Werewood, though what few adventurers risk the perils of the deeper forests have reported a significant increase in stones that still stand. In a region of the Werewood known as Witchwood, the dolmens are rumored to be used by the Dhuna witchfolk and are referred to among their culture as “witch gates”.

THE ALIEN SHIP

Perhaps the most important piece of evidence in all Talislantan history is, sadly, still undiscovered by any since the ancient Archaens. The alien vessel that the tribes first came across is now popularly believed to be of extra-dimensional origin; the Sindarans particularly seek to prove that the vessel was of Neurian make, perhaps no small part because they are of Neurian descent themselves. Few other scholars are as fervent in their pursuit of the lost vessel as a Sindaran loremaster. Before the current theory, many scholars and casual students of history alike were content to believe the ship was from a world beyond Archaeus.

Any characters that chance across some of the remains of this wondrous artifact have literally stumbled into the discovery of—not just a lifetime—but *several* lifetimes. Pieces of alien metal, unknown items with unfathomable function, unnatural gemstones or materials that may have served a purpose for the vessel...the possibilities are endless. However, when it comes to examining these treasures or selling them on, the explorers will have a hard time. Few scholars have the wherewithal, in-depth knowledge and access to ancient tomes to accurately gauge whether some unknown item really *is* part of the alien vessel. Those that do have the facility to evaluate the explorers' claims (most likely a dedicated Sindaran historian) might be tempted to do anything at all in order to preserve the find for themselves, even if it means the initial finders must be killed in order to silence them. After all,

Fragments of the Vessel

Pieces of the crashed ship are easily identifiable by the unusual rainbow-colored highlights they emanate. To date, few fragments of the wreckage have been found. The largest discovery was uncovered in south-western Urag and now resides within the crystal city of Cymril. The Lyceum Arcanum has famously offered vast rewards in the past for authentic wreckage from the alien vessel, with sums of money reaching 10,000 lumens for the largest pieces.

The Orb

Presumably lost to the ages and the savagery of the Drakken, the Archaen Orb – even in fragments – remains the most valuable artifact on the face of Talislanta. Somehow, by a process now lost to the world, the Archaen Orb contained the secrets of magic and was the direct source of the Archaen Codex and the Nine Books of Knowledge.

A relic-hunter that came across a shard of the Orb, let alone the whole and undamaged object, could march into the Lyceum Arcanum and name his price. Consequently, the dangers surrounding the treasure-seekers would be high. The adventurers carrying the artifact would be in possession of the most valuable item in the world, and it is obvious that other factions would attempt to “relieve them of their burden” by

if the Archaen Orb was pulled from the hull of the vessel by primitive barbarians, what other wonders might an enlightened scholar hope to find?

THE RUINS OF ARCANOPOLIS

As rare as any lore on the Forgotten Age can be, several historical texts agree on one aspect of the City of Secrets' eventual fate; it was razed by the Drakken, who apparently boasted that they didn't leave a single stone standing atop another. It was destined to rise as a vast settlement, but at the fall of the city in the Second Millennium only a few centuries after its' founding, the precious green stone used in its construction was apparently carted away by the conquering Drakken to be used elsewhere. This theory remains little more than the conjecture of historians, but it goes some way to explaining why the ruins of such a sprawling city have never been found.

Wherever the true resting places of this ruined city might be, the Archaen Orb lays there still—or, at least, its shattered remains. Other artifacts at the site are likely to be evidences of the rare green stone used in the city's construction, dolmens, idols and stone altars used by the ancient Archaens in their primitive shamanistic worship, and stone tablets perhaps still showing the writing of the ancient people when they were at the apex of their power before the Great Disaster.

Anyone prowling around the long-lost ruins can also expect to find magic items based on practices of witchcraft and animism, or discarded weapons and armor of the reptilian Drakken invaders.

THE FALLEN CITY OF PHANDRIL

Standing for two thousand years before its eventual abandonment and destruction by the Sub-Men tribes in the Third Millennium, Phandril was the second of the Archaen settlements that would eventually rise to greatness from a humble founding in the Primal Age. In fact, if the legends are correct, it put Arcanopolis in shadow; Phandril prospered and grew, while the City of Secrets lasted a mere few hundred years in comparison.

During its long history, Phandril underwent numerous restorations and reconstructions to suit the styles, fashions and architectural aesthetics of successive eras. To gaze upon the city in its infancy was to look upon sandstone polished to beauty by elemental magics. To set eyes upon Phandril at the height of its ascension was to witness an entire city of towers and sky-docks plated with precious metals, so that the entire settlement glittered and shone under the light of suns and moons.

It was apparently a varied and cosmopolitan city, and a home for those who wished to learn and prosper through the acquisition of knowledge. Accordingly, it became renowned for its magicians and enchanters, for almost every magical innovation the Archaens developed was said to come from the Phandre, including the first windships that moored in the beauteous sky-docks of the city's towers.

The only structures to survive the city's eventual destruction were the colossal mausoleum towers that served as mass tombs for the Archaen dead. The Sub-Men marauders clung to superstitions of curses and haunting if they defiled the tombs of the Phandre, evidently believing that misfortune and chaos would fall upon the spirits of their own ancestors. Later ages saw the coming of more "civilized" races to the region that lacked both the morality and superstition to keep them from grave-robbing. The tombs that had stood untouched for centuries were plundered in the New Age when the Phaedrans sold them to the Haddin for a massive (and private) sum. Many of these towering mausoleums can be found in the present day, though some have toppled to the ground or lean at odd angles due to erosion or structural damage from the Great Disaster. Around either the tomb-towers or the city remnants, explorers and adventurers can expect to find, whole or shattered Phandre glass sarcophagi, wondrous magical items and even children's toys from the height of the city's greatness, or parts that once comprised an ancient windship.

Relics of the Phandre

The Glass Sarcophagi of Phandril's nobles are exceptionally valuable, though the exact value depends on the period of origin that the coffin dates from. Primal Age sarcophagi are usually from the emerald, jade, ruby and amethyst "periods", and are valued at approximately 6,000 gold lumens to collectors of antiquities. From the age of the Archaen Ascension, the periods of carnelian, amber, turquoise, topaz and opal are worth 4,000 lumens. Sarcophagi from the Age of Heavens are rarer, but worth less because of their relatively recent construction. These are made from tourmaline, sapphire, aquamarine, onyx or crystal, and are valued at around 2,000 gold lumens.

Clearly, grave-robbing in modern day Haddistan can be a lucrative trade.

THE ARCHAEN ASCENSION

THE FIRST WAR

Though historians name the Second Millennium as the Archaen Ascension, it was not a clear and unopposed rise to dominance. For the first centuries of the era, the developing Archaens waged war against the reptilian Drakken, though the weaker humans met with little initial success against the numerous and physically powerful lizard-creatures. The First War reached its climactic apex with the Archaen assault upon the Drakken citadel of Golarin. The Watchstone (a mountain spire which had unhindered views of the entire plains region around Golarin) was a traditional sentry point for the Drakken. It was here that the reptilian sentinels spotted the oncoming horde of Archaen soldiers: enough men to raze the city if it stood without reinforcement.

But the Drakken did call for reinforcements—dragon-riders raced to the fortress-city of Kharakhan and the Archaens were viciously crushed in the pincer movement of two reptilian armies. The First War was over, ending in brutal and bitter defeat as the Drakken poured across the land in pursuit of the routed Archaens. The final indignity



was the destruction of Arcanopolis and wiping all known traces of the City of Secrets from the face of Talislanta. The survivors of the First War fled to Phandril with what precious knowledge and possessions they could carry. The Orb was forever lost, perhaps even destroyed, though the refugees of Arcanopolis carried with them the lore of the alien artifact, transcribed in a tome known now as the *Archaen Codex*.

In Phandril, city of magicians and invention, the Archaen people remained behind towering walls and healed the wounds of the First War. Over the following decades the humans refined their magical arts further and forged a lasting alliance with the Sub-Men tribes based upon a mutual hatred of the Drakken. The alliance was apparently an uneasy one and took a great deal of time to forge, but the end result was the offering of the Archaens' eternal friendship and the rights to the fertile lands of the plains surrounding Phandril. In return, the Sub-Men would raise armies of their own and join with the Archaens in the assault upon the Drakken nation.

And so began the second war; the Last Dragon War.

THE LAST DRAGON WAR

After an indeterminate number of years had passed, the united Archaen and Sub-Men armies marched against the Drakken. This time the wizards of Phandril were prepared, and wracked the spire of the Watchstone with terrible storms to shroud the views of the sentinels stationed there and prevent dragon-riders from relaying messages to other outposts. With the advantage of surprise and concealed numbers, the invading humanoids stormed the city of Golarin, slaughtering defenders and innocents alike. The Drakken that sought to flee to Kharakhan were hunted down and killed by Sub-Men beast-riders that swarmed around the region after the initial assault.

Within days of Golarin's fall, Kharakhan suffered a similar fate. What few Drakken remained fled the land, apparently by virtue of a land bridge that no longer exists, which once connected the mainland to an unknown and uncharted southern continent.

Drakken Relics

The oversized weapons and armor of the Drakken warriors are of little use to humanoids, and the Drakken's lack of magic means that their relics are of no value to arcanologists. However, as curios, these relics can bring up to a thousand gold lumens depending on their condition. The large six-inch coins of beaten silver that served the reptilians as currency can warrant as much as a hundred lumens from some collectors, especially if their condition hasn't marred the dragon imprint pressed into both sides. Though the great glyphstones that once stood as tall as towers are now broken and strewn across the Kharakhan wastes, fragments that still sport the strange indentations of Drakken writing are valuable to many scholars – provided that the discoverer is able to physically bring the piece to the buyer, of course. Lastly, curious “war medals” have also been found; seven-pointed stars carved from 100 carat firegems that seemed to have been attached to great chains and worn around the necks of the giant Drakken. These are valued at the carat weight of the firegem itself.

In a matter of weeks, the Last Dragon War was finished, and the humanoid races were rulers of Talislanta.

THE ASCENSION

Peace grew between the Archaens and the Sub-Men tribes for centuries. Though the barbarians remained primitive and advanced little over the years, the Archaens pioneered new arcane arts such as wizardry, enchantment and alchemy, all the while spreading their burgeoning civilization across the face of the continent. Explorers became colonists, colonists founded settlements, and settlements expanded to become the vast cities of the newly-established Four Nations, as well as Torquar, Jalaad, Ashann, Numenia, Osmar, Kasran and Xambria which existed as independent city-states. This was the true beginning of the Archaen Age, when rapid advances in both invention and magic raised the humanoid races of Talislanta out of their primal and savage past. The Archaen Empire was born, and magical learning became open to anyone who displayed the talent, desire or dedication necessary to learn the new arts that emerged from the arcane colleges. Enspelled and enchanted items of magical and alchemical construction were commonplace; such was the glory of the growing Empire.

Gradually the belief in the Forgotten Gods began to wane, and cults centered around the worship of a single divine entity began to flourish. The most powerful of these cults were the Numenians and the Torquarans, whose followers would come to rule the rival religious city-states of

Numenia and Torquar. The Numenians were idolaters who revered the god Ikon, placing a great deal of belief in the power and holiness of enchanted objects. The Torquarans were black magicians who employed ritual invocation to consort with extra-dimensional entities, summoning “visitors” to provide them with knowledge and power. Each regarded the other as heretical faiths, with the Numenians regarding the Torquarans as deluded fools simpering after the lore of aliens and demons, while the Torquarans considered their enemies as blinded in their strict worship of common objects as divine.

THE DARK BIRTH

At some point toward the end of the first thousand years of Archaen rule, a powerful occultist who was a member of the royal family of Torquar bore the child of a shaitan named Zahur. The child of this union was a horned, demonic creature and suffered the loathing of all who saw it. History names the creature *Drax*, though no known records tell whether this was the creature's true name or an embellishment of scholars.

What is cited clearly in several surviving records is that before it reached adolescence, Drax murdered its mother, took control of her castle and surrounding lands, and elevated itself to the exalted status of monarch. Taking the title Necromancer King of Torquar, Drax studied black and foul arts at the feet of its father Zahur, mastering the monstrous ability to create creatures merged from the bodies of several other beings. Many of the dark-hearted cultists that made up the ruling theocracy of Torquar saw great promise in their new monarch's prowess, and aided the Necromancer King in creating a vast army of magical hybrids. The soldiers of this army were the twisted and maddened results of a magic never seen before in Talislanta; made from the merged flesh and minds of captured Sub-Men, wild beasts and lesser demonic entities, these ravaging hordes were turned loose upon the city-states that shared borders with Torquar.

But darker tidings were on the horizon. Phandril remained aloof from the coming storm, refusing to share its innovations and arcanology. It was in this era that the first windships were designed and saw use in the skies over Talislanta. It was also the era where the Archaen Ascension took another violent turn.

WAR OF THE FOUR NATIONS

Disputes over territorial boundaries between the rulers of the Four Nations festered and turned into skirmishes.

Following the initial bloodshed, the monarchs of the region soon declared open war against each other. Evenly-matched as they were, the city-states plunged headlong

into conflict and emerged utterly devastated only a few short months later. Though the War of the Four Nations would irrevocably change the face of Talislanta, it was a brief conflict for all its savagery. In the aftermath, hybrid raiders from Torquar picked the ruined cities clean of all remaining worth, and wiped the land clean of sentient life. There remain to this day, fragments in certain tales told to children and references in historical prose that tell of how Drax delighted in the slaughter.

THE EMPIRE FALTERS

The Torquarans violated the ancient treaty with the Sub-Men, reclaiming the many thousands of acres of fertile plainsland once granted to the tribes. The Sub-Men, enraged at the betrayal, declared war against all the descendents of the early Archaeans.

In the years that followed, Drax was replaced by its apprentice Narishna. Conflicting tales tell of the devil-prince fleeing to another plane of existence after it angered the shaitan hierarchy, simply passing away of age, and in some stories, even being assassinated by Narishna herself who sought the power of the throne. Whatever the truth of the matter, the apprentice's reign was never destined to be a long one. Narishna instigated a pogrom of genocide against all non-Torquaran sentient creatures, claiming them to be inferior species who must be denied the right to evolve further. The Torquaran kingdom became ruthlessly obsessed with genetic purity, killing thousands of the pacifistic Xambrians and the Sub-Men who waged war against the treachery of Drax's nation.

The Numenians sat idle for perhaps a decade or more before finally taking action against the genocidal armies of Torquar. The ruler of the city-state, archimage Solimorrion I, eventually condemned the actions of Narishna's troops and vowed to bring the Necromancer Queen down. Torquaran necromancers cast a murrain upon the entire region of Numenia, poisoning crops and threatening to starve the people to prevent a more costly war. Solimorrion met with his council one last time, and went to war himself, challenging Narishna personally in magical combat, to prevent any more death and destruction tainting the land.

He succeeded, triumphing in a duel of arcane might that must surely rank as one of the mightiest unleashes of energy in history, and at great personal cost. Narishna died that day, but Solimorrion was never seen again.





And still, through all this, Phandril remained independent and untouched. In fact, it continued to expand, develop and advance. Around this time, the great arcanologist Koraq pioneered the magical path of sorcery, which he shared with all those who showed an interest in his work. Meanwhile, the continent slipped into chaos and disorder, threatening to halt the Archaen Ascension altogether. Numenia, bereft of its arcane ruler, eventually fell to the rampaging Sub-Men. Torquaran society fell apart once the black magicians of the necromancer cult disbanded. Bitter infighting and the death-dealing Xambrian wizard-hunters spelled the end for that particular order. The final doom for the nation of Torquar came when the hybrid armies—now uncontrolled and leaderless—joined forces with the marauding Sub-Men and sacked the city of Torquar itself.

Though Phandril had remained outside any conflict, it played host now to the remaining rulers of the Archaen city-states as they convened a vital meeting. No longer did the rogue actions of the Torquaran nation threaten minor instability; now the Archaen Empire itself stood on the precipice of annihilation. Seven master magicians were elected to serve as the new governing body of the Empire, known to history as the **Archaen Cabal**. These

were Koraq the sorcerer, his wife; the sorceress Sytan, the wizard Rodinn, the magician Arkon, the illusionist Cascal, the savant Xanadas and an enchantress whose name remains lost within the pages of history.

The Archaen Cabal decreed that the city-states would be abandoned and ceded to the Sub-Men, in formal recognition of the ancient contract between the two peoples, and as additional recompense for the depravity of the Torquaran nation. The council also decreed that the Age of the Heavens had begun, and that the Archaens would no longer dwell upon the ground, but live in the sky itself.

ECHOES OF THE PAST

GOLARIN, THE DRAKKEN CAPITAL

Golarin was the greatest of the Drakken cities. Before its razing by the Archaens and Sub-Men, it was an immense cyclopean structure constructed from giant blocks of black porphyry, quarried in the Onyx Mountains and carried to the site by dragons. Though the reptilian creatures that populated the city were utterly bereft of magic, the Drakken were not dull-witted beings and if records are true, they were

The Saurud

Travelers in the Kharakhan Wastes, where much of the Drakken civilization was once centered before its usurpation, have been known to come across small-numbered nomadic bands of giant reptilian creatures picking through the ruins of fallen settlements or simply eking out an existence on the barren plains. For those few that have witnessed these demi-giants and have a deep knowledge of history, it is all too tempting to insist that these Saurud, whether they are progenitors of the Sauran or not, are clearly the last remaining descendants of the Drakken.

But are they? Few scholars and even fewer adventurer-explorers have the insightful grasp of historical evidence to make the connection, and among those that do, opinion is understandably divided. There exists precious little indication of the Drakken's true biology, but what evidence has survived the ages is conflicting and comes from the pens of different savants, philosophers and scholars. Few agree exactly on any one factor, from the height of these creatures to the number of limbs they possess, and in one instance, whether they are hot or cold-blooded. These Saurud might indeed be the last vestiges of the ancient Drakken, or they could be no more than an echo of the once-great race, descended from their bloodlines but bearing little similarity to the apparently keen-minded and gigantic lizard-men.

skilled architects. The stone walls of Golarin apparently stood over a hundred feet in height and were sloped and strengthened to repel any siege engine warfare.

The Drakken culture that the Archaens expunged at its height was a thriving and innovative caste society. The reptilians had developed the ability to work iron into weapons and tools, were students of primitive astronomy, and used a complex written language comprised of many thousands of symbols. Drakken script was three-dimensional; different meanings were indicated by the varying depths at which the symbols were carved into stone or impressed upon metal.

It is not known for certain exactly where Golarin once stood, though some surviving histories claim that one (perhaps even all) of the Four Nations city-states was founded upon the ruins. The Watchstone still stands to this day, though the colossal mountain is mentioned in conflicting tales as "close to Golarin" and "within a days' dragon-flight," which makes the exact location of the fallen Drakken capital a vague mystery. Any explorers who do manage to find the ruins might chance upon the remains of the black porphyry

city walls, silver coins stamped with the serpentine symbols of Drakken currency, discarded iron weapons made to fit inhuman hands, and even the Tomb of the Great Dragon Orrix, whose mummified remains are (in some historical conjectures) said to lie "beneath the ruins of a dragon-man city."

THE FORTRESS—CITY OF KHARAKHAN

According to an unnamed Archaen savant that pried into the history of the Drakken, Kharakhan was reputed to be an eyesore for any creature that gazed upon its walls. Serving the reptilians as a fortress first and a training ground second, the citadel was designed for military purposes and without any thought for aesthetics. Constructed from durable red-veined rock most likely carted over many leagues from the Volcanic Hills, Kharakhan was spread out across what is now known as the Kharakhan Wastes in a "permanent army camp" layout. Large training halls and armories were ringed by barracks and storage buildings, which were in turn surrounded by earthworks, trenches, low walls and the makeshift buildings erected when overpopulation became an issue. In addition to being unsightly in the extreme, it seems that Kharakhan covered a vast span of territory, with each individual cluster of buildings taking up several acres alone. The exact number of these clusters remains unknown, as little evidence

of their existence remains beyond scattered and eroded walls that have only managed to last as long as they have due to the rich red iron ore deposits in the veined stone. Colossal statues of rearing, roaring dragons still mark the gathering places of the vast settlement, though the years have not been kind and the icons are eroded in some cases, missing limbs in others, and in more than one instance, completely reduced to large piles of rubble. Fragments of lore scavenged from the ruins of Drakken settlements seem to suggest that these statue were more than mere icons or decoration, but were supposed to be honored entities that would somehow defend the reptilian creatures from attack. Clearly, if the stories are true, then the stone dragons failed in their duty, though how such a feat would be possible for a society completely bereft of magic is a mystery to all.

Perhaps half of the central citadel still stands in the modern age, though it is a barren and lifeless domed structure that is structurally unsound due to earthquakes and erosion. What is noteworthy about the central dome complex is that the underground catacombs are mostly untouched by the

ravages of time and the coming of other civilizations. This immense subterranean system of caverns and tunnels once served as both storage for additional supplies and a vast training ground for Drakken warriors. Though it was looted by the Archaens and Sub-Men when their armies overran the reptilians, it is likely that many relics, curios and items of historical interest remain there, under the earth, waiting for a daring explorer to brave the tunnels that have no doubt become infested with all manner of subterranean wildlife and—if the stories are true—the spirits of long-dead reptilian beings.

THE FOUR NATIONS

After the fall of Golarin and the rise of the Archaen Empire, the city-states of the Four Nations were founded upon the ruined site of the sprawling Drakken capital. According to some tales, the foundation stones of all four cities were raised from the rubble of Golarin, and the first centuries of construction saw the Archaens using the wreckage of the Drakken city as raw materials. It seems that for some reason now lost to the ages, the four cities were located on the cardinal points of the Golarin ruins. Along with the principal reason for this placement, history has also confused the exact locations of each settlement, so it is unknown which of the four cities was located in the north, south, east and west. Golarin itself spanned hundreds of miles in every direction. With a city that size, it is easy to see how smaller Archaen settlements could so easily rise from the ruins.

Some of the reused black porphyry walls still stand in the modern age, though they are now nothing more than a hollow reminder of ancient wars and Torquaran treachery. Whatever damage the War of the Four Nations inflicted upon the settlements, the hybrid armies of the Necromancer King were certain to pick the bones clean. Ironically, though much of the lore originating from the Four Nations is forever lost to scholars, the sizeable ruins still offer up some of the secrets of the past. The marauding armies of Drax's hybrid creatures were meticulous in their slaughter and the plundering of money, weapons and material valuables, but they ignored more scholarly treasures when they looted the war-torn cities.

The Phaedrans explored the cities in the early part of the New Age, and claimed to discover a surprising number of stone tablets and surviving scrolls that reveal both the mundane and magical lore of the cities. These relics tell of a monarchical system of hereditary succession within the Four Nations, and it is hinted that the four ruling families

The Nine Books of Knowledge

Once these books graced the personal library of a now-forgotten ruler of the Four Nations. The *Nine Books* contained a complete transcription of the arcane secrets stored within the great orb from which the *Archaen Codex* was also derived. The *Codex* appears in various places through history, as learned men and women seek to protect it from war and disaster and carry it to different places of safety. The Nine Books, despite their import and value being above even the *Codex*, were sealed in an underground vault and subsequently lost during the War of the Four Nations.

These priceless artifacts have never been recovered, despite numerous attempts by such interested parties as the Aamanian Orthodoxists, the Rajans, and the Cymrillians, to name just a few. The Lyceum Arcanum has offered a reward of 500,000 gold lumens for the recovery of these ancient texts, and quarter of a million lumens for the ninth book *alone*, which is believed to have contained the lost chapter on sorcery that was never recorded (or somehow deleted) within the *Archaen Codex*.

were all descended directly from the same bloodline. Other tablets tell of the fortified palaces of the rulers, with each boasting underground vaults protected against thieves by magic and supernatural guardians. If this is true and not a mere child's fable of the glory of kings, then it stands to reason that these vaults remain under the earth and stone in the New Age. Phaedran explorers have mounted many expeditions to the various regions, but have found no trace of any way to gain entrance to these hidden subterranean chambers.

Relic hunters brave enough to venture into the Beastmen infested region can return home laden with treasure if they explore the ruins of the Four Nations. Even if the tablets are incorrect about the wondrous artifacts they speak of, the ruins are still home to a great deal of discarded utensils and tools of both mundane and magical craft. Valuable ancient lore can be found in the form of preserved scrolls or stone tablets. For those adventurer-scholars with an eye for the greatest treasures, according to the Phaedran who possessed the original tablet, the vaults are said to contain never-before-seen artifacts such as the "blade of the First King, the "gilded tomb of Irkhan", the "elixirs of life and true healing" the *Nine Books of Knowledge*, and a host of other unspecified and lesser treasures.

TORQUAR

Even the passing of millennia is not enough to completely remove the evil of Torquar from the face of the world. South of the Kharakhan Wastes, the ruins of this malignant and chaotic city-state stand as silent monument to the most sinister and depraved nation in Talislantan history. Modern-day Rajans claim to be descended from the Torquarans, though scholars are divided over the veracity of the claim. Some insist that it is more likely that the ancient diabolists created the Rajan's ancestors as a slave caste.

The Torquaran reputation for indulging in all manner of diabolism, necromancy and demonology is well-founded in the annals of history. If accounts are true, then the city of black magicians and devilry even looked the part, restructured and reshaped from its original founding by Drax in order to appeal to whatever twisted aesthetics appealed to the dark whims of the Necromancer Kings. Walls of red-veined black basalt ringed the city, barbed with spikes and ivory horns atop the battlements and parapets. Scholars point to the walls that remain and the spaces where great iron portcullises would have stood, and speculate that just as much of Torquaran's defenses seem to be based on keeping its inhabitants inside as they are designed to keep invaders out. Many smaller sections of the city were walled off into isolated compounds, no doubt to keep slaves or prisoners from escaping.

Little of Torquar still stands beyond a series of crumbling black-stone towers, defaced, blackened statues and irregularly positioned walls. Occultists and relic-hunters have had millennia to pick the bones of the city in the search for forbidden lore, and in many cases the treasures discovered would have better remained forgotten. What artifacts remain in the ruins of Torquar frequently possess lingering curses or dark enchantments. Beside the treasures within the surface wreckage, there exist a great many subterranean tombs, prisons and vaults, where significant items might be found. In addition to any mundane tools at the site, region-specific items that can still be found by keen explorers are ritual tools and weapons (sacrificial daggers, chalices, etc.) torture devices such as spiked manacles or racks, and preserved tablets and tomes dealing with demonic subjects and the shaitan hierarchy.

A disturbing remnant of the past comes in the form of the Essence extractors of the city. While Archaen extractors were magical devices of incredible capability, siphoning

Cursed Relics of Torquar

Cursed items have a curious way of seeming all too useful and valuable at first, though their true nature is soon revealed once they have been taken. The arcane hierarchy of this most foul of cities were known to dabble in all manner of black magical practices, from necromancy to demonology and diabolism. The written works and ritual tools employed in their dark rites often contained terrifying curses, imprecations and maledictions, many of which were used to coerce summoned creatures into service or bring suffering to the enemies of Torquaran. Some of the books that still exist today are dangerous to even look at, while the ritual implements are hazardous to touch, and so items from this city-state will have an understandably limited market – though those who care to own such items will usually pay handsomely (and discreetly) for them.

energy and transmuting it into types of Essence usable by the magicians of the empire, evidence has come to light that the Torquarans had extractors dedicated to siphoning pain, fear, and grief and turning it into usable magical energy. This method, coupled with the abundant evidence of sacrificial rites to please Zahur and other shaitan, could explain the method by which the victims of the Necromancer Kings were trapped within "soulstones" and offered as gifts to devils. Black magicians in the New Age would pay untold sums for access to items such as these, which would serve as princely gifts to shaitans of any era.

JALAAD

A paradox among the former bastions of the Archaen Empire, the city of Jalaad has not completely fallen into disuse. Located near the Zaran Mountains, the domed ruins of Jalaad were once the center for scholarly activity in the Empire; housing the greatest number of colleges, universities, libraries and scholar-guilds of any Archaen city. Constructed of uniform white marble and inlaid with blue jade and lapis lazuli, the squat buildings have seen generations of tomb-raiders, explorers, archaeologists and even Za bandit groups camping out in their cavernous halls. Beyond shards of rare blue jade or mundane items left behind by the Archaens and Sub-Men, there is little to be scavenged any more.

What is certainly worthy of note is the Library of Jalaad, also known as the Dome of Scrolls, which is a cavernous hall with a breathtaking stained-glass ceiling depicting scenes of great Archaen innovations such as the architecture of other cities and the faces of great magicians of the

Forgotten Age. This entire building is protected by powerful ward enchantments and remains almost completely intact. The Dome of Scrolls is inhabited and guarded by a large group of Callidians, descended from a cabal of cryptomancers. These enigmatic beings have endeavored to protect the trove of lore stored in the Library of Jalaad, and any who wish to walk the aisles of the Dome of Scrolls must obtain their permission first. These sentinels take a very grim view of those who attempt any vandalism or theft upon the site, and are ever-wary of the presence of necrophages, who come here to gnaw upon the bones of the dead housed in ancient mausoleums outside the city limits.

OSMAR

Osmar represents perhaps the richest pickings of the fallen Archaen city-states. The five towers that made up its distinctive skyline still stand in the present day, though they are now home to tribes of Beastmen who claim the region to the east of the Dead River as their territory. Explorers and treasure-hunters that are capable of overcoming the beastmen are likely to find a horde of artifacts and ancient relics from the Archaen Ascension. Unlike many other settlements, the Sub-Men did not take control of Osmar when the Archaens took residence in their sky cities. Some historians cite a long-forgotten curse upon the city for this lack of habitation, while others point to the city's history as a haven for artificers and enchanters, who engineered some kind of spell to seal away the treasures that could not be carried into the sky.

Overrun by beastmen, Osmar today is a crumbling shell of its former glory. The mystically-aligned walls, once laid in the shape of a pentacle to enhance some unknown magical process within the city, have mostly fallen to ruin. Whereas the city was once the primary source of magical weapons, armor and enchanted goods for the ruling Phandre caste of Phandril (and indeed, all of the Empire), it is now a beast-populated domain where savages stalk the ruins in search of glorious treasures in order to gain dominance over each other. The curiously well-equipped beastmen often carry outdated and clearly antique weapons or exquisitely-made armor of times past, and Osmar remains a treasure trove for those seeking blades of distinctive Osmaran blue iron, enchanted wands or staves, and magical tools and toys that would have been commonplace in the homes of the city's long-dead residents.

Blue Iron of Osmar

The Osmarin weaponsmiths of the Archaen Ascension were unsurpassed in their craft, and were renowned for both their fine suits of enchanted battle armor and the distinctive runeswords with blades of blue iron. Even now, the spell-enhanced blades of these weapons are considered superior to the finest Zandir swords, and sell for 2-5 times the price of comparable enchanted weapons. Most of these Archaen Runeswords resemble longswords, and the blue blades are inscribed with runes of magical significance. They are enchanted to cause additional damage up to +5, and were also imbued with as many as three spells, each of which could be used once per day. The level and type of these spells is said to have varied with the designs of individual creators, and some of them were so jealously guarded that powerful ward spells were placed on the weapons to prevent theft.

Battle armor was similarly rune-engraved and enchanted up to +5, with each component custom-built to fit the owner and additionally enhanced with protection against elements or magical attack. Intact suits sell for 2-5 times the market price for equivalent enchanted battle armor, though even helms or breastplates retain a great amount of value.

ASHANN

Perhaps the most visually unusual of the Archaen city-states was the settlement of Ashann, situated in what is now the Wilderlands of Zaran not far north of the nation of Raj. In the speech of the locals, it is simply referred to as "the Old City." Before the Great Disaster, Ashann was a curiously-constructed settlement of deep-blue basalt, formed in the shape of seven concentric rings that spanned a diameter of just over two miles. The walls were over a hundred feet thick, housing stores, libraries, homes, storage buildings – and in the top layer of each ring– aeries and observatories by which the ancient Archaens monitored the play of the stars in the night sky. Of all the imperial settlements, Ashann was most noted for its astromancers, for it was founded on a site of augural importance, and the unique ringed shape of the city was designed with certain (now unknown) astral significances and divining rituals in mind.

Today, Ashann is the home to wild animals that hunt in the ruins of the ravaged circles, for the rings of the city were reduced to rubble in many places by the Great Disaster. Portions of the rings still stand, and it may be possible to ascertain the exact significance of the once-great structure by calculating where the buildings once stood. The city is

also home to the so-called “Wanderers of Ashann” —tall, shrouded figures that pick among the ruins, seemingly searching for something within the walls of the fallen rings. Conflicting scholarly assumptions have also speculated that the Wanderers were once citizens of Ashann, and ghost through the ruins in a grim vigil over the remains of long-dead ancestors.

NUMENIA

The “city of faith” was built into the side of the southernmost peak of the Maruk Mountains, overlooking what was once a vast rich and fertile plain. In the era of the Archaen Empire, the Numenians were a people of religious devotion and theology, and the temples, cathedrals and monasteries of their city were renowned across the world for their ornate beauty. The high priests of Numenia were likewise renowned for their ability to call upon the Divine in order to work miracles of wondrous power, though it is likely that the passing of time has exaggerated many of these holy magics far beyond their original effect. The most catalogued example of Numenian faith was apparently the construct called Ikon. This being of worked metal and precious stones was shaped in the image of the Numenian god; Ikon himself, and was described in surviving accounts as “watching over the city of faith” and “able to speak in any sentient tongue”. Other abilities are ascribed to the “giant idol” though it becomes increasingly unclear which have a basis in fact and which are embellishments.

Numenia was damned to decline when the war with Torquar turned malicious and foul magic became involved. The surrounding lands were poisoned by the mages of the Necromancer King, and though Torquar was eventually defeated when the archmage Solimorrion killed Narishna, Numenia was overrun by the Sub-Men soon after in their uprising against the Empire. During the Great Disaster, the city suffered wracking earthquakes and was buried by the leveling of the surrounding mountains. The smashed ruins of Numenia are thought to exist today under the city-state of Maruk, though this is primarily down to the supposed ancestral ties claimed by the Marukan people and their “Numenian forebears.”

Should any explorer chance upon the crushed remnants of the once-beautiful city, breathtaking marble icons, prayer wheels, temple artifacts and the tombs of Numenian Priest-Kings await rediscovery. Most valuable of all would be the construct of Ikon, assuming that the idol has survived intact for all these centuries.

XAMBRIA

In several ancient texts and various historical sources, the city of Xambria is referred to with awe and admiration as the “Jewel of the Empire”. It was a city renowned for its great beauty and attitudes towards culture, with colleges of musicians, artists and scholars flourishing behind the white marble walls of every building. Lush city parks spilled out into the tree-lined, white-paved boulevards, and large, multi-layered hanging gardens served as the centerpieces and meeting areas for each district. Of all the lost Archaen cities, Xambria remains the one most often seen in artistic interpretations that have managed to survive to the present day.

The Xambrian people were notoriously pacifistic, and had little defense when the city was sacked by the hybrid creations of Torquar. Their magical aptitude was mostly limited to mysticism, which they appear to have learned from contact with the reclusive Ariane, if the few remaining records are correct. Upon the city’s defeat, thousands of Xambrian prisoners were marched across the plains to be sacrificed in the fire pits of Malnagar, in honor of the shaitan Zahur. As the Xambrian people tottered on the brink of extinction, the forces of Torquar attempted to deliver the final blow by returning to Xambria, methodically tearing the city down into rubble, and poisoning the surrounding land with magical diseases and by salting the soil so that nothing could grow in the region again.

KASRAAN

The city-state of Kasraan was a mercantile hub for the Archaen Empire, despite its far western location near what is now called the city of Danuvia. Kasraan was a wealthy and prosperous settlement, and the related tales speak of “streets paved with gold” and “towers of jade that reached the sky”. While it would be an exaggeration to suggest that every resident family was involved in trade and business, it is commonly accepted among research scholars that Kasraan was home to a disproportionate number of courier



Kasiran Iron Dragons

These armored conveyances were used extensively during the latter Archaen Ascension to protect trade goods against marauding Sub-Men tribes and wild beasts. The largest known example measured over a hundred feet in length and two dozen feet in height. They were powered by enchanted crystals which apparently required constant replenishment, which would explain why these hulks powered down forever when the Sub-Men rebellion broke out.

A few of these giant artifacts might still lie buried under the rubble of the old cities, but the only complete example rests in repose within the vaults of the Lyceum Arcanum. A Kasiran Iron Dragon in good working order would no doubt be coveted by scholars and collectors alike, and could bring as much as 100,000 gold lumens.

guilds, trading cartels and merchant alliances. It seems clear that a popular profession in Kasraan was providing escort and transport services between Archaen city-states, and surviving tablets name the leaders of many organizations as “merchant princes”.

Initially, trade would have been conveyed in traditional caravans. By the end of the Archaen Ascension and the uprising of the Sub-Men, these wagons were replaced by gigantic armored vehicles forged and built in the shape of metallic land dragons in an attempt to fight off barbarian attacks.

The catacombs under the palatial estates of the so-called merchant princes of Kasraan are allegedly filled with treasures beyond compare, though it remains to be seen if any of these vaults still exist underneath the ruined wreckage of the surface city. Kasraan lore also states that the rulers were mummified and entombed within their money vaults though the reasoning is unclear. Postulations range from simple greed and superstitious belief that the wealth would transfer to the next life, to the possibility of a powerful curse allowing the dead merchant princes to rise and destroy any who sought to plunder their resting places. These vaults are purported to be sealed by complicated mechanisms requiring no small amount of luck, skill and the right combination of magical “key” items in order to gain entrance.

On the surface, Kasraan is a ruined city with nothing to offer. Underneath, perhaps a thousand fortunes lay untouched.

THE AGE OF THE HEAVENS

The Third Millennium of recorded history began with the announcement given by the Archaen Cabal in the city of Phandril. In this meeting, new laws were codified and passed, with the understanding that no spellcaster would violate these ethical guidelines without severe punishment. Most crucial amongst these new rules was the First Law; prohibiting direct conflict between magicians. The Code of Order is listed in various sources as a list of either 13 or 33 laws that would govern the behaviour of the mightiest spellcasters, preventing the vast spread of corruptive influence that infected Torquar and went on to drive the Sub-Men into revolt. Directly related to the malice of the Necromancer Kings was the Sixth Law; a decree that the Spell of Summoning was now heavily regulated and elaborate safeguards must be set in place with Cabal-ordained witnesses and advisors present for any contact with demonic entities.

With the decree that the cities upon the ground were to be abandoned, a tumultuous century began with barely suppressed hostilities between the Sub-Men and Archaens as the former waited three generations for the latter to leave the settlements as promised. Within days of the meeting of the Cabal, construction began on the first sky city; Aeon. By the end of the first hundred years of the Third Millennium, the old cities were abandoned and the Archaen people rose above the war-ravaged land of Talislanta. Scattered pockets of dissidents, rebels, exiles and outcasts remained on the ground, to eke out an existence as best they could; deprived of the luxuries and magical gifts of those who now dwelled in the sky. The Age of Heavens had begun in earnest, no longer a declaration but a reality.

Though historians have been known to chronicle this period of the Empire as the Golden Age, it is clear from the surviving writings of the Archaens that the people of the era referred to their time as the Age of the Heavens. Naming aside, the period marked a vast surge in intellectualism, discovery and magical innovation. New forms of magic were created and older arcane arts refined almost to perfection. New sky-cities were created at great speed, aided by the unrivalled sorcerous powers that the mages of the Empire now commanded. Further advances came with each generation. The savant Hotan began to ponder

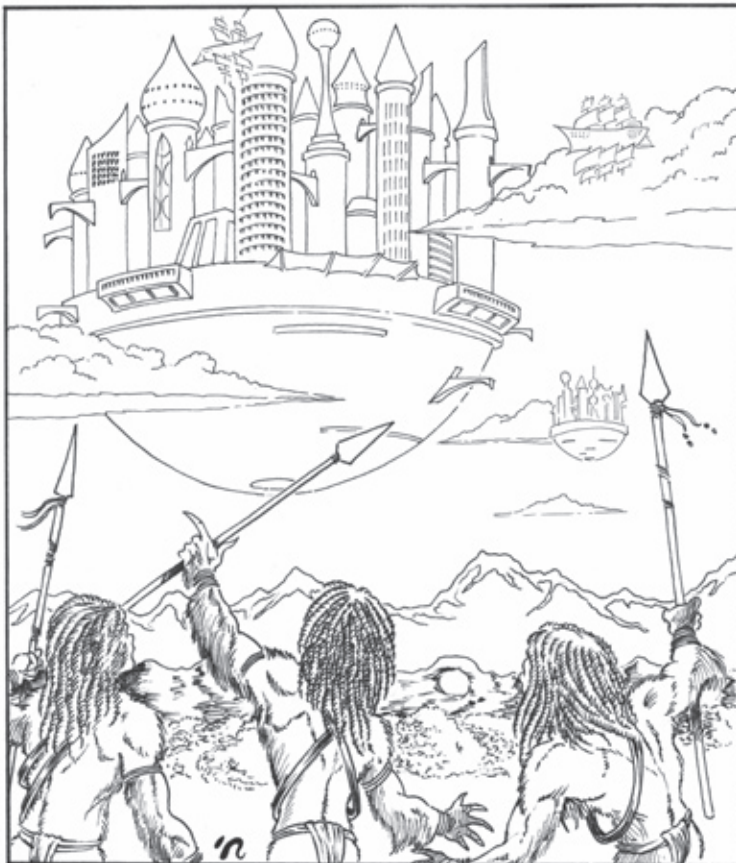
and unravel the metaphysical geography of the Omniverse, while the illusionist Cascal explored the boundaries of perception and reality. Explorers and brave windship captains ventured across the seas to visit uncharted continents beyond Talislanta, returning with holds laden with unknown gems, exotic beasts and magical herbs and news of other sentient life on Archaeus.

Chief among the other intelligent beings was the contact the Archaens had with the Neurians; an extra-dimensional race whose ship had crashed on the continent of Simbar. These aliens had no knowledge of magic, but were masters of a strange metaphysical discipline called technomancy, which was unknown to the Archaens. They dwelled in Aurantium, a fabulous city where every building was plated with pure gold, and they were skilled in the making of complex mechanisms such as automatons. The Archaen-Neurian alliance grew quickly, and the two peoples began to explore the possibilities offered by inter-dimensional travel.

The Archaens discovered other continents; Celadon and Altarus among them, and established colonies there to further the glory of the world-spanning Empire. The floating citadel of Imperion was created purely for the purpose of studying the life forms indigenous to Celadon, while the settlements of Randun and Kharistan were founded upon the surface of Altarus in order to run “war games” between the two cities. Many Archaens grew to love the thrill of watching the inhabitants of the two cities warring against one another, and their pleasure was magnified by the endless supply of troops in the form of neomorphs; artificial creatures bred in the thaumaturgic laboratories of the sky-cities and the two Altarian settlements.

THE CITIES IN THE SKY

The exact number of Archaen sky-cities is unknown, because of the difficulty of accurately dating records from the era and the fates of the individual cities after the Great Disaster. They are covered briefly here because (for all their historical significance) there is precious little evidence of their existences in Talislanta today. Lore regarding the individual architecture and creations of the cities is rare, confusing to modern scholars, and often conflicting in



nature. Even the power crystals that kept the cities aloft are barely mentioned in the tomes salvaged from the era, and any information on these “enchanted engines” would bring a tidy price if offered to the right scholars.

AEON

Aeon, the first city, was created using thaumaturgical processes; essence accumulators siphoned the very energy of the aether of Archaeus and refined it for use as a raw material in the city’s creation. Magic on this scale is unprecedented in the New Age, and Aeon itself apparently *dissolved* during the Great Disaster; the city was reduced to its base elements and simply disintegrated, killing the hundreds of thousands of people that lived there. Scholars have postulated that items of non-thaumaturgic creation might yet be discovered at the site where the city succumbed to the Great Disaster, though even that location is unknown. If it is ever confirmed, it is likely that any remaining items would be in the form of mundane tools, enchanted rune-weapons or memory-crystals, which contain the memories and dreams of the Archaens and were often given as gifts between friends and lovers.

LOCUS

Locus was originally the meeting place of the Archaen Cabal, though records state that a city of great decadence and vice spread around the central dome. The city itself was severed from the world in the Great Disaster and was hurled into the aether by the forces involved in the cataclysm.

POMPADOS

Pompados was under the dominion of the vain and proud Phandre; the once-rulers of the great city of Phandril. Built to be the twin city of Aeon, Pompados also dissolved in the Great Disaster, shedding all items of non-thaumaturgical make to the Red Desert below. Records tell of many citizens escaping the gradual dissolution, fleeing to windships and making abrupt landings in Mog, Jhangara and even the Thaecian Isles. The Dracartans are believed to have recovered some of the most precious lore of the city, and possess primitive copies of Essence Accumulators, though many tablets of arcane lore and the *Archaen Codex* itself have long since been sealed away in the vaults of the Lyceum Arcanum.

ELANDE

Elande was apparently a city of modest proportion, designed to serve as a retreat for spellcasters and scholars who wished to immerse themselves in the pursuit of arcane arts. It was either ruled by a group called the One Hundred, or for ritual reasons, only a hundred magicians were allowed within the city at any time. Historical records conflict on the matter. Anyone coming across the ruins of Elande would discover a horde of magical lore and artifacts written and fashioned by the greatest scholars of the Archaen Empire. Some texts from the other cities refer to the "Archaeus Project" taking place here, where the magicians attempted to preserve specimens of every single race in magical stasis for exhaustive study. When Elande began to lose altitude in the Great Disaster, much of the learned citizenry was forced to abandon their great works and flee by windship. Certain tales and stories point to the Baratus massacring many of the fleeing scholars, though this is unfounded by evidence and remains a legend. What seems much more likely is some kind of tie between the survivors of Elande and the floating citadel of Cabal Magicus on the isle of Phantas. The sky-city itself is supposed to have eventually drifted down to crash onto Alcedon, the flying island.

Orbs of Arcanalysis

These devices were created by the Phandre of Pompados during the Age of the Heavens and sold throughout the sky-cities. The typical orb resembled a two-inch diameter sphere of transparent crystal and was employed in the manner of a lens. Used in conjunction with the skill Arcanalysis, the orbs were effective in determining the type, level, duration and probable effect of any form of spell or enchantment. Orbs of Arcanalysis functioned with regard to visible or invisible spell manifestations, enchanted artifacts, symbols or any other form of magic. The time required to complete an analysis is ten rounds, with the effective range limited to one foot.

FARNIR

Farnir remains in legends today because of its curious exports and eventual fate. It was apparently a city with many magicians guilds dedicated to the search for eternal life and beauty, though according to salvaged lore, the buildings themselves were often plain and unadorned. Many of the elixirs that granted the Archaens longevity and good health were developed and refined here, as were the mystic enhancements that altered the bodies of the residents and sculpted them into people of great beauty. Farnir itself was supposed to have plunged into a cloud of freezing vapor when the Great Disaster struck, and scholars speculate the entire city and its residents (and, of course, their alchemical laboratories...) remain either trapped in magical stasis or frozen in solid ice many miles under the surface of the frozen land of Narandu.

EYRITHRIA

Eyrithria is often referred to by remaining lore as the "city of folly". Apparently the Archaen Cabal – or one of the subsequent incarnations of this august gathering – ordered the construction of a great sky-fortress which would be populated by trained war-mages and soldiers who would serve as protectors of the Empire...despite the fact that the Archaen people held no ground-based territory to speak of and had no enemies capable of assaulting the sky-cities. On the continent of Altarus, where the city is believed to have dissolved in the Great Disaster, there no doubt exists a vast horde of ancient rune-bearing weapons that fell from the sky, gigantic battle dragons of iron and stone, and perhaps even the descendants of the many neomorphic soldiers that served on the city.

SHALIHAN

Of Shalihan there remains no trace at all. This city was the home of the illusionist and philosopher Cascal, though it was more renowned in the era of the Empire for its decadent pleasure domes where skilled illusion-weavers could make any clients' dreams come true – for an exorbitant fee. Shalihan was constructed of so much artifice and illusion that it is believed the entire city vanished out of existence when the Great Disaster wracked the world.

ECHOES OF THE PAST

RANDUN & KHARISTAN

Established on the continent of Altarus, these two neomorph colonies were nothing more than capital cities for the “war games” conducted by the Erythrians. Populated by neomorph soldiers and commanders, each citadel was a fortress bristling with weapons and war engines. Between the two cities, above a blood-soaked swathe of land, the Archaens conducted their tactical games and contests between generals as the neomorph races slaughtered each other on the plains below. When the Great Disaster wracked the world, the Erythrians were destroyed and the artificially-created beings of Randun and Kharistan were left masterless.

The ruins of both citadels stand today, though they are far from their former impregnable glory. The ruins are now effectively deserted, though strange shadows and shapes can be seen flitting about the ruins when explorers investigate the fallen cities. Various magicians and scholars postulate that the twin citadels emanate virulent, poisoning magics; a legacy from the toxic weaponry used so many centuries ago.

Among the wreckage of this somewhat saddening culture are the massive rusted hulks of Erythrian war engines such as iron scorpions, siege golems, battle dragons and others. Curiously-shaped discarded weapons from long-dead neomorph armies exist in abundance, as do items such as containers of enchanted liquids to be used as weapons of war, and alchemical toxins and gases.

IMPERION

A modest-sized floating citadel, Imperion was located above the continent of Celadon. It was a research colony established by the Archaens of Pompados with two main factors in mind: it would serve as the principal source of rare herbs, plant produce and exotic animals to sell to the people of the empire, and it would serve as a comprehensive

laboratory for the creation of new types of hybrid plants and creatures through the process of biomancy.

Apparently due to mismanagement and incompetence at the highest levels, the operation proved disastrous even in the earliest stages. Specimens of a deadly biomantic hybrid known as manraks escaped from the facility and destabilized the local ecology beyond repair with their predation and breeding. Foolish knee-jerk reactions then caused the creation of the crysalids, another hybrid designed to combat and control the outbreak of manraks. Unsurprisingly, minimal research resulted in chaos among the local regions, and both species ran amok, rendering countless other species extinct in a matter of years. Later failed experiments produced similar “remedies” which had similar effects on the environment.

When the Great Disaster wracked the world, Imperion's levitationals failed and drifted downward, crashing into the land its scientists had long ruined. The survivors of the impact were soon slaughtered by the predatory insectoid manraks that they had unleashed upon the surface years ago. Tales tell that some managed to adapt to a life in the harsh area, though this is extremely unlikely.

Scavengers seeking to pick Imperion's bones could chance across any number of relics that have lain untouched for millennia; biomantic texts, laboratory apparatus, specimens frozen in stasis, enchanted and mundane luxury items – all could still exist, hidden under centuries of plant growth as the land tries to erase all trace of the meddling Archaen scientists.

AURANTIUM

This city is notable because it was not an Archaen sky-city or colony, but the capital of an alien race that lived on the continent of Simbar. These Neurians, castaways from a distant dimension, had crash-landed on Simbar long before its discovery by the Archaen explorer Nauticus. When he reached the distant continent to the north of Talislanta, he beheld a fabulous city where each building was literally plated with solid gold.

The Neurians were an advanced race of dual-encephalons, and they possessed knowledge of a form of metaphysics completely unknown to the Archaens, which they called technomancy. Using this knowledge, the Neurians had perfected the art of metallurgy, constructing wondrous automatons and other elaborate metallic apparatus capable of feats that the Archaens could only achieve with magic. In turn, the Neurians found magic incomprehensible, though

Neurian Automaton

These mechanisms were constructed in a variety of forms, each with a specific purpose. The most common were humanoid in shape, which the Neurians used as servitors. These automatons were used to record data or perform tasks deemed too menial, difficult or dangerous for living beings. Less commonly, automatons were built to resemble other creatures such as steeds, though it was the Archaens who were most fond of curiosities and prestigious items of this sort. A functioning Neurian automaton might be valued at up to 70,000 gold lumens, depending on its capabilities.

they had developed a mental discipline that allowed them to harness the faculties of their twin brains.

In the name of exploration, the Neurians had constructed submersible vessels crewed by hundreds of humanoid automatons, which they sent forth to probe the surrounding waters for signs of intelligent life and other land masses. These submersibles had not reached Talislanta far to the south, primarily because an intelligent aquatic species known as Hydrans frequently preyed upon them.

Over the course of the Neurian-Archaen alliance, which came about after Nauticus' voyage and the resulting exodus of many scientists to dwell within Aurantium, the two cultures shared many of their secrets. The Archaen end of the deal was kept by the continuous shipping of gold to be used in the expansion and upkeep of Aurantium, by the sharing of windship arcanology, and the pledge to help the Neurians construct a vessel capable of interdimensional travel in order that the aliens might find a way to return to their home. This latter project languished for centuries, mostly in part to Archaen greed and the desire to learn all they could before the aliens ever left this plane. Eventually, two prototype vessels were completed.

When the Neurians predicted the Great Disaster through technomantic analysis, they knew the time to flee the coming chaos was upon them. Though the Archaens, blind to the warnings, remained within Aurantium as it sank below the waves, the interdimensional vessels departed in time to escape the end of the Skyborne Empire and the pains of the world. The Archaens that managed to flee the sinking city of Aurantium likely did so in rafts and seaworthy vessels. The descendents of these survivors are known today as Oceanians. Several Neurian automaton vessels also escaped, and they are known today as the

Parthenians, named after the island on which they settled after Simbar sank beneath the waves.


Of the fleeing Neurian vessels, only the following is known. One of the ships is said to have passed into an interdimensional nexus and disappeared into the Continuum. The other apparently suffered some kind of malfunction and crashed somewhere on Talislanta – most likely in the Northern Sea (now the Lost Sea).

The sunken city of Aurantium is believed to still contain Neurian technomantic apparatuses, automatons and incredibly vast quantities of gold and silver. The Neurian ship that allegedly crashed on Talislanta has never been found, but it is thought to contain a variety technomantic and magical artifacts, enchanted crystals and items of unknown purpose.

THE AGE OF DECLINE

Just as the Age of the Heavens was triggered by a meeting of the Archaen Cabal, so to was the following millennium, named by historians as the Age of Decline. Sometime in the centuries after the establishment of the sky-cities, hundreds of representatives converged upon the Cabal's meeting in Locus and demanded that the Code of Order be amended and rectified. The proposed amendments were all in favor of granting more freedom and imposing fewer restrictions upon those who wished to experiment with the arcane arts. The art of the era that deals with this dramatic event shows hundreds of robed representatives shouting and pointing at the seven mages of the Cabal, who are seated and appear both serene and saddened in equal measure. No matter the truth of the artists' impressions, what occurred in this meeting shook the Empire from its course of prosperity and innovation, and led the way down the path to eventual decadence and ruin. The representatives of the sky-cities announced that the rulers of each settlement had voted together in order to limit the Archaen Cabal's authority. No longer would the Code of Conduct stifle their creative outlets.

Some legends state that the Archaen Cabal, unmatched in their power, wisdom and experience, resigned their posts in disgust. Others state the unified representatives exiled the Cabal by force, though this seems unlikely and any such stories are probably the result of a misguided chronicler.



The new Archaen Cabal was elected from the ranks of the representatives, and they soon fell into petty infighting and selfish pursuit of magic with various levels of disregard for the safety of the realm. Over the following thousand years, gates were once again opened to other realms without restriction, magicians bred neomorph slave-creatures for their own amusements, and the culture of learning and advancement became one of corruption. It was not a rapid change, but it was a definite one. When the members of the first Archaen Cabal spoke out against the worst of the magical horrors being unleashed, they were shouted down by the new authority figures, disgraced through scandal, and in one instance, assassinated.

At some point close to the middle of the Fourth Millennium, an Archaen windship was caught in a raging storm and forced to land on the southern coast of Talislanta. Here a sea-faring race of Sub-Men known as the Baratus captured the stricken ship and forced the crew to teach them the ways of running such a vessel. Over the next few decades, the Baratus became the bane of the Archaen skies, amassing a fleet of captured and jury-rigged windships, and frequently crippling trade between the cities for seasons at a time.

In the following centuries, the decadent practices of Farnir, Shalihan and Erythria bloomed like cancers in the heart of the Empire. Armies of thaumaturgically-born slave-soldiers butchered one another for the amusements of Archaen generals, while the wealthiest of the sky-city folk turned to massive degrees of cosmetic enhancement, or hallucinogenic herbs and illusory indulgences that became more real and more satisfying than real life. The Archaen people ceased to grow and innovate, and now began to stagnate. New inventions and arcane developments were purely in the fields of giving pleasure; satisfying ever more demanding nobility who sought to prolong their lives and their beauty.

THE LAST WARNING

Toward the close of over a thousand years of what historians now call the Age of Decline, a contingent of Neurians came to the sky-city of Locus and petitioned the Archaen Cabal for a meeting. What was disclosed at this strange council remains unknown and will likely never be uncovered. Historians and scholars have pieced together their own ideas, but the lore of the era (and the following years) is understandably fragmented at best and non-existent at worst. It seems safe to assume that the Neurians issued a warning about the possibility of a cataclysm devastating Archaeus. Theories as to the exact nature of the event

range from the Neurians demanding tribute to appease them from invading, right through to the possibility that the unrivalled unleashing of magic in the era had destabilized the dimensional fabric that separated the Archaen reality from other, alternate realities. Some legends also cite that the Neurians were exiled from Archaen lands after this fateful meeting, though the veracity of these tales can never be tested. The Neurians left the sky-city and returned to Aurantium.

A few short years later, the world ended.

THE GREAT DISASTER

Perhaps the Thane knew what was coming; it might explain why an entire city is hidden under the earth and its inhabitants seemingly put into ritual repose. It certainly lends credence to the possibility that these beings believed they would be safe from the cataclysm and revived one day. Perhaps the Neurians also knew; for such prescience would explain the meeting with the Archaen Cabal and the construction of the Neurian Arks, which are referenced often in the remaining lore of their people as their last hope of escaping “before the end”. Perhaps many others knew and made efforts to save themselves as best they could in the final years of Archaen dominance. It stands to reason that if they were successful then their descendants live today, carrying on their ancient bloodlines in the new era and remaining unaware of their true heritage.

The Archaeus did not know what was coming, despite their near-infinite power over the world. This lack of knowledge was a failing from ignorance, pride and selfishness, and they paid for their stubborn vanity when the Great Disaster struck and wiped the Empire from the face of Talislanta. The magical cities either dissolved, exploded, crashed or were hurled into space by the wrench of magical force storming across Archaeus. Whatever the exact reason for the Great Disaster, it did not just topple the Archaen people from their pedestal of dominance: it destroyed them utterly. What few survived the dissolution and destruction of the sky-cities were easy prey for the barbaric races and ferocious predators of the ground.

Scholars have pinpointed most of history’s most momentous occurrences to this moment; the red sun split in two, burning and boiling planets as the twin suns settled into gravitational balance once more. Seven new moons appeared in the night sky. Continents were jarred from their tectonic plates,



with Simbar plunging beneath the cold ocean waves for all time, while the land of Alcedon was torn from the world and cast into the atmosphere in orbit around Archaeus. Magical unleashings raged across the face of Talislanta, breaking mountains to dust and forming new crags where the plates of the land smashed together again. The North Sea drained away, leaving an arid crater that is known today as the Lost Sea. Climactic changes swept across the world as raw energy bled out of the world from invisible wounds, which also created many mutations and aberrations among living beings.

No matter the cause, no matter the reason – the world as it was had been destroyed. And as sentient beings emerged from the wreckage of the world, having survived the destruction of civilization itself, the dark age of Talislanta began.

THE TIME OF CHAOS

With the Great Disaster laying waste to the world, the fall of the Archaen Empire and the extinguishing of the light of magical learning, the people of Talislanta regressed and formed primal, barbaric societies. It was an era of ignorance, violence and superstition. The remnants of the Sub-Men tribes battled constantly, warring for food, territory, and sometimes merely out of hatred. The neomorphs and Archaens that had survived the destruction of the Empire were frequently the targets of the Sub-Men hunting parties, and these conflicts sapped their numbers further.

After an unknowable time of bloodshed and violence, a war-leader rose from the ranks of the Sub-Men, calling himself the Tirshata. Quite how this mysterious warrior managed to unite the tribes is unknown, but under his influence the Sub-Men banded together and drove the last remaining Archaens deep into the region now known as Werewood. In this age of turmoil and slaughter, and with



no sky-cities or windship fleets overhead, the Sub-men had finally conquered all of Talislanta. But their relative glory was short-lived.

When the Tirshata (whom historians name as female or male depending on the source) vanished without a trace, the Sub-Men scattered once more and took to battling one another. Far to the west, a nomadic band of primitives who unknowingly shared bloodline-descent from the Phandre, located skeletal remains of a crashed windship. Within the rotting hulk lay many treasures of the sky-city Pompados. One of the artifacts was the *Archaen Codex* itself.

Just as the Archaen primitives had chanced across the crashed alien vessel and claimed the secrets of magic from its bones, these barbarians took the lore of magic with them and started the cycle anew. The ancient Archaens had constructed Arcanopolis to house their greatest secrets, and their actions had commenced the first age of civilization upon Talislanta. Within time, these new primitives would do the same, founding Phaedra and ushering in a new era of enlightened thought. History came full circle, and the Age of Chaos slowly gave way to the Early New Age, also called the Phaedran Age.

THE PHAEDRAN AGE

Historians cannot predict the exact year when the New Age of Talislanta began, but there is an irresistible symmetry to the tale all the same. Most current thought places the beginning of the New Age at the founding of the Phaedran city-state, ushering in a new era of civilization, enlightenment and rediscovery of the forgotten lore.

It is one of history's great ironies. Phandril had fallen millennia ago, yet destiny's turning wheel had presented the primitive descendants of the city's once-great ruling caste, the Phandre, with the chance to rise with a new civilization. From this clash of fate was born the city of Phaedra at the beginning of the New Age.

The Phaedrans revived the study of the arcane arts, though sexist practices within the new order excluded women from many positions of magical authority (and in some cases, from learning the art entirely). The Phaedrans codified laws, established systems of government, set up the notions of free speech and organized religion...and from the ashes

of disaster arose a new time of lore and learning. Lost secrets were rediscovered and forgotten stories were retold. The dark age of Talislanta was truly fading in the light of enlightenment, and as the generations passed, the Phaedran controlled the powers that the Archaens themselves had once mastered. The Phaedrans prospered and expanded. Soon, with the extension of their dominion over what is now known as the Western Lands, the Phaedran Empire was officially recognized.

With the development of so many faiths and religious paths, strife soon took hold of segments of the Empire. The rival Orthodoxist and Paradoxist cults rose and gained prominence, though their close balance in popularity effectively prevented either from claiming outright sway over the Phaedran people. A power vacuum in the monarchy, coupled with the warring religious cults prompted a group of experienced wizards to step in and halt the conflict before it could further destabilize the Empire and erupt into civil war. The Phaedran Council of Elders (as was the magician cabal's public name) restored order by placing a moderate upon the imperial throne to hold the rank of Wizard King. They chose Kabros, once an apprentice of the famous Mogendrake and now regarded as a magician of great ability and versatility in the art of diplomacy. Kabros was not a foolish man; he saw the Phaedran Empire was on the verge of collapse and warned the Council of Elders that though he would endeavor to save the imperial state, he was confident in the eventual end of the Phaedran rise.

He was all too correct. Twenty years later, religious uprisings and riots gripped the capital of the Empire, and Kabros resigned with a stirring speech given to the Council. He informed them that the end was coming; coming soon, and that they were all advised to flee before the ruling caste – still referred to as the Phandre – were brought down as scapegoats. It is believed that Kabros left that very day, heading for the Thaecian Isles. He was never seen again.

Foolishly, the Council of Elders ignored their ruler's warning and attempted to rule the empire in his stead, by appearing in public disguised as the departed Wizard King. This ruse lasted only a decade, before the Orthodoxists seized the opportunity amongst all the confusion and assumed control of the government. Dissenters, agitators and opposing recruiters were rounded up and imprisoned in the penal colony of Gao-Din. The Paradoxists responded by literally attacking the district of Badijan, and in resulting chaos the Library of Badijan was burned to the ground. In this moment in history, in one dark day of religious conflict, most of the lore of the Phaedran magicians was

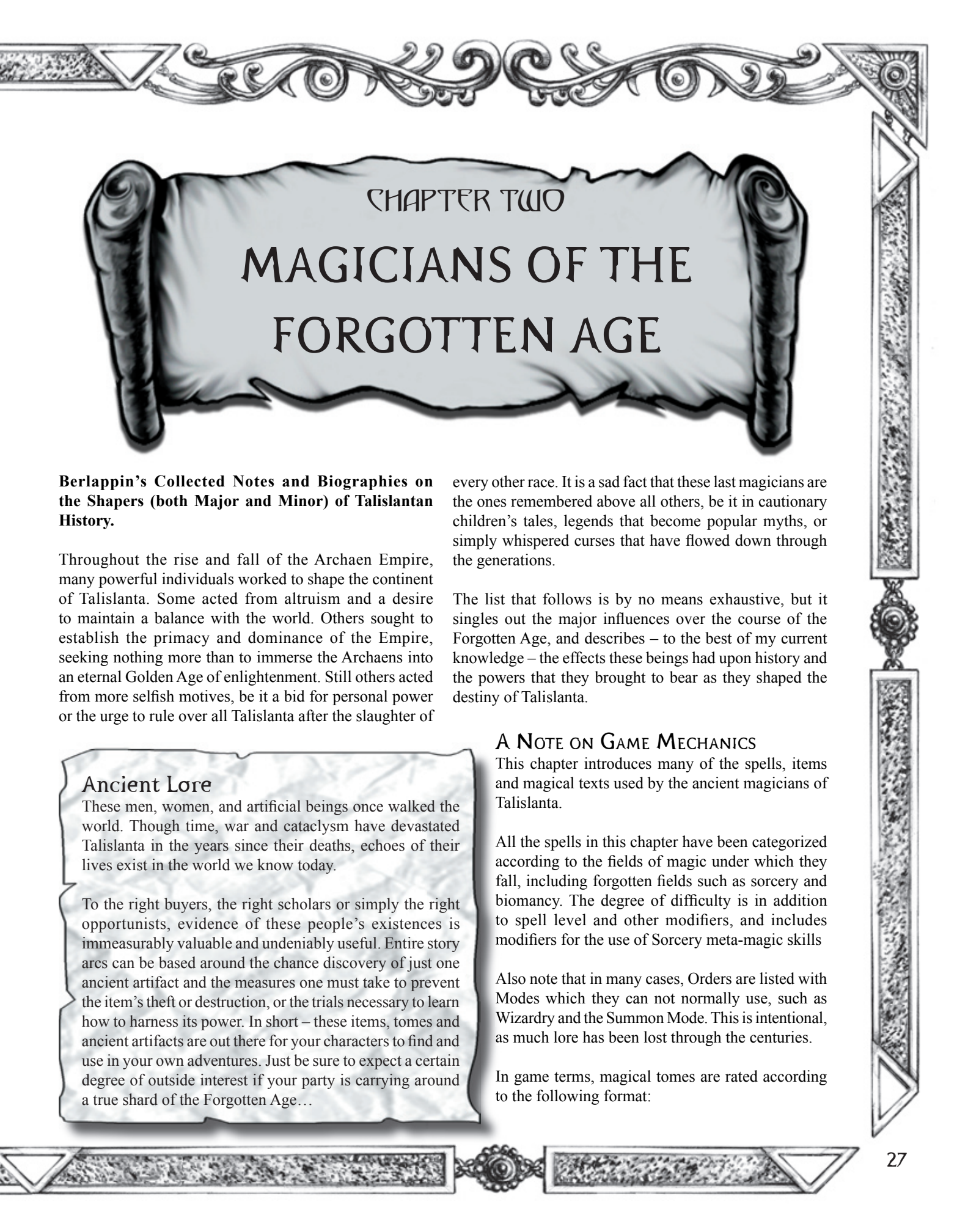


lost forever. And so began the Cult Wars, a series of bloody coups and skirmishes that would last four hundred years and serve as the death knell for the once-great Phaedran Empire. History, already seen as having a sense of irony, had repeated itself once more.

A group of Phandre magicians fled to the east at the beginning of this epic conflict. With them they carried the Archaen Codex to safety, for there was no greater treasure on the face of Talislanta. Another, shorter, dark age began. Magic was once again reduced to little more than the most rudimentary spells and incantations.

Approximately six hundred years after the founding of Phaedra (calculated as 603 by modern historians)

Cymrillians opened a sealed vault in the cavernous basement complex under the Lyceum Arcanum. There they discovered the Archaen Codex, which had been hidden there centuries ago by one of the Phandre, who had become the first Wizard King of Cymril. With the rediscovery of the book, fate's wheel spun once again, and the new Age of Discovery continues to the present day.



CHAPTER TWO

MAGICIANS OF THE FORGOTTEN AGE

Berlappin's Collected Notes and Biographies on the Shapers (both Major and Minor) of Talislanta History.

Throughout the rise and fall of the Archaen Empire, many powerful individuals worked to shape the continent of Talislanta. Some acted from altruism and a desire to maintain a balance with the world. Others sought to establish the primacy and dominance of the Empire, seeking nothing more than to immerse the Archaens into an eternal Golden Age of enlightenment. Still others acted from more selfish motives, be it a bid for personal power or the urge to rule over all Talislanta after the slaughter of

every other race. It is a sad fact that these last magicians are the ones remembered above all others, be it in cautionary children's tales, legends that become popular myths, or simply whispered curses that have flowed down through the generations.

The list that follows is by no means exhaustive, but it singles out the major influences over the course of the Forgotten Age, and describes – to the best of my current knowledge – the effects these beings had upon history and the powers that they brought to bear as they shaped the destiny of Talislanta.

Ancient Lore

These men, women, and artificial beings once walked the world. Though time, war and cataclysm have devastated Talislanta in the years since their deaths, echoes of their lives exist in the world we know today.

To the right buyers, the right scholars or simply the right opportunists, evidence of these people's existences is immeasurably valuable and undeniably useful. Entire story arcs can be based around the chance discovery of just one ancient artifact and the measures one must take to prevent the item's theft or destruction, or the trials necessary to learn how to harness its power. In short – these items, tomes and ancient artifacts are out there for your characters to find and use in your own adventures. Just be sure to expect a certain degree of outside interest if your party is carrying around a true shard of the Forgotten Age...

A NOTE ON GAME MECHANICS

This chapter introduces many of the spells, items and magical texts used by the ancient magicians of Talislanta.

All the spells in this chapter have been categorized according to the fields of magic under which they fall, including forgotten fields such as sorcery and biomancy. The degree of difficulty is in addition to spell level and other modifiers, and includes modifiers for the use of Sorcery meta-magic skills

Also note that in many cases, Orders are listed with Modes which they can not normally use, such as Wizardry and the Summon Mode. This is intentional, as much lore has been lost through the centuries.

In game terms, magical tomes are rated according to the following format:

Difficulty: The degree of difficulty entailed to master the text in question. Unless stated otherwise, it takes no less than seven weeks to master any of the lost books of magic.

Experience: The experience point value gained from reading this book. This award is in addition to any bonuses to abilities that may be derived from mastery of the text.

Value: The estimated monetary value of the book if it were sold in Cymril. Factors that affect a book's worth can include its age, condition, edition, usefulness and avowed scarcity.

ARCHIMANDIUS

Saviour of the Landborne

Archimandius holds a place in history for his skill as a seer of the future and as a man with a strong sense of right and wrong. When the Archaen Empire took flight in the Age of the Heavens, Archimandius was evidently disgusted at the abandonment of the neomorphs and hybrids left on the ground below. He petitioned the Archaen Cabal with the motion that these creatures, artificially-constructed as they were, deserved the chance to rise to greatness with the Archaens. He demanded that the people of the Empire – especially his fellow magicians – take responsibility for the lives they had created and the races they had brought to the world below.

His requests were refused, for as wise as the Archaen Cabal was, their jurisdiction was over the sky-cities and the laws of the Skyborne Empire. Mistakes and successes of the past equally had no right to be part of the new order. Disgusted with the council's decision and the attitudes of his magician brethren, Archimandius returned the ground and walked among the neomorphs and hybrids.

Here history becomes entangled between fact and fiction. Archimandius either ruled over several tribes as a kindly and just leader, or took no responsibility at all and spent many years refining his visions of a coming destruction. Ancient accounts found in the library at Cymril have lent evidence to both possibilities, and state that he was revered by the common folk of the era. Even now, the Sarista gypsies talk of his courage and wisdom, and some nobles and warriors who admire his honorable ways have been known to wear Archimandius' image in the form of rings or necklaces made in his likeness. What is known for certain is that eventually, after centuries

of life, Archimandius predicted the coming of the Great Disaster and led thousands of his followers to a place of safety. Again, conflicting lore confuses the exact location, citing "a world in the sky" and "above the mountains" in a great deal of poetical prose. Evidence seems to point to Castle Sanctum on Alcedon, and it would be likely that the descendents of the original refugees revere Archimandius as some kind of ancient saviour. Perhaps he even lives there still? Whatever the case, anyone coming across relics or lore of Archimandius' life will be carrying no less than actual evidence of a man who was a messiah to many folk. The value of such evidence cannot be overstated.

ARKON

First of the Seven

Arkon was originally a member of the One Hundred; the resident rulers (or entire population, depending on which records you believe) of the sky-city Elande. History paints him as an unstable man; a creative genius bordering on mania. In the records of his fellows he is described as being addicted to no less than six alchemical narcotics of his own invention, though Arkon's own surviving works reveal very little of such indulgences.

Arkon was one of the seven magicians chosen to rule and safeguard the Skyborne Empire from within the original



Archaen Cabal. The works of Koraq the Sorcerer speak highly of Arkon's talents in debate and reasoning, naming him as one of the few beings that could comprehend the basic principles of Koraq's *Theories of Magic and Anti-Magic*. Indeed, it seems even Arkon's peers recognised that the man was a genius whose intellect was such that only the most advanced, untested (and naturally, often dangerous) experiments or concepts could maintain his interest. Arkon was not a man who labored at the mundane, or even the "mere" brilliant. His arena was in innovations and arcane conceptualization on a level perhaps only Koraq himself could understand and relate to. Envious genius even in the vaunted "golden age" and serious addiction issues meant that Arkon had few real friends. Perhaps this is true of most visionaries.

The great sorcerer Koraq goes on to speak of Arkon's legendary successful magic innovations...and spell-craftings that backfired with arcane splendor. One particular event stands out from the more "mundane" explosions, when the unpredictable Cabal-member accidentally transmuted his friend Koraq's entire floating laboratory – and Arkon's own body – into shimmering crystal. Koraq explains that this resulted in "a lifelong ban from stepping foot on my property again, though Arkon seemed thrilled at what he called the 'beautiful damage' to his body. I am given to understand it increased his popularity among the local noblewomen."

In addition to being an avid bibliophile who keenly collected thaumaturgical works from a great many scholars, various sources credit Arkon with the creation of several dozen original spells that still exist in some form today, and some of the most powerful enchanted artifacts ever to see use on the face of Talislanta. Clearly, despite whatever faults he may have possessed, Arkon was a man of near-unrivalled mental ability and power. Much of his work was lost in the Great Disaster, but what remains should be handled with care; the ancient magician had little regard for his personal safety and experimented with dangerous concepts. Any of his enchanted items would be worth a fortune, though few would be likely to sell such an artifact if they could harness its powers.

ARTIFACTS

Arkon's Pharmacopaeus: This artifact dedicated to indulgence was an enchanted device that served as Arkon's personal "stash" of alchemical wares. The device resembled an ornate silver snuffbox decorated with fine scrollwork and raised symbology. By pressing the symbols in a certain sequence, a one-dram quantity of any of the

following alchemical powders could be made to appear within the box:

✿ *Euphorica*, a synthesis of pure pleasure. Side effects include impaired reflexes (-1 DEX) and lowered inhibitions (-1 WIL).

✿ *Arkon's panacea*, a powerful stimulant that increases strength and endurance (+1 STR and CON) for one hour; side effects include nervousness (-1 DEX) and irritability (-1 INT).

✿ *Tantalus*, a powerful aphrodisiac.

✿ *Prismatica*, a potent hallucinogen that yields wildly colorful visions.

✿ *Meta-morphius*, a depressant; in large doses, a soporific that enables the user to sleep off the effects of other drugs.

Arkon's Pharmacopaeus can be used seven times in any 24-hour period. It is valued at 30,000 gold lumens.

Arkon's Ring: This ring of intertwined silver filaments is enchanted with a 10th-level version of the spell *Arkon's Impermeable Web*. The spell is activated by touching the ring.

Arkon's Wand: This slender wand is made from seven narrow bands of silver twisted in a tight spiral around a center rod of blue crystal and imbued with a 10th-level version of the spell *Arkon's Twister*. The wand emits a powerful vortex of magical forces that can be used to entrap a single Man-sized subject within a whirlwind of arcane force. The speed at which the victim is made to spin can be controlled by the caster as explained in the spell description.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Arkon's Logbooks: Approximately a dozen of these logbooks are said to exist, each originally bound in pebbly grey exomorph hide and stamped with a stylised bronze lightning bolt – Arkon's personal sigil. The logbooks describe in detail many of Arkon's more unusual and dangerous experiments, several of which employ potentially lethal procedures. The most notable of these is Arkon's formula for enchanting a magic wand in just 48 hours. At least three of these books contain appendices with Arkon's personal spells detailed within.

Difficulty: -8 to -14

Experience: 1-2 each.

Value: 2,000 gold lumens for originals, 400 for copies.

ANCIENT SPELLS

Surveillance

This spell was created by either Koraq or Arkon; accounts differ as to which of the two first perfected this enchantment. It allows the caster to employ any crystal ball, mirror or other reflective surface as a magical scrying device. When cast, the enchantment allows the magician to view any single individual, creature or area up to 10 x 10 x 10 feet, and allows the caster to see what is transpiring in the area being studied. The caster must have firsthand knowledge of the intended subject for the spell to be effective. The range is unlimited but the spell has no interdimensional capability.

Magical Field: Wizardry (reveal)

Difficulty: -9 (tractus)

Range: Unlimited

Duration: 1 minute (-1 to difficulty per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: None, though magics that negate the effects of scrying devices can be used to counter this spell.

Arkon's Impermeable Web

This spell creates an impassable mesh of interconnecting lines of force that may be used to entrap enemies or as a barrier against hostile creatures or interlopers. The shape or form of the web is up to the caster to determine, with the maximum area of mesh created by the spell limited to 10 x 10 feet per caster level. Note that a web, once cast, cannot be moved or altered, and can only be rendered null by means of an appropriate counterspell. To cast the spell, the magician must recite Arkon's words of warding while tracing in the air the general shape to which the web is supposed to conform.

Magical Field: Wizardry (ward)

Difficulty: -16 (qualitas + tractus)

Range: 10 feet per spell level

Duration: 11 minute (-1 to difficulty per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: None. Escape from an Impermeable Web is possible only by individuals or entities who possess intradimensional capabilities. Even incorporeal entities cannot penetrate a magical barrier of this sort.

Arkon's Seeker

This spell allows the caster to locate any single living individual, creature, or being, provided the caster knows the specified target's name. The spell's range is unlimited, though the enchantment has no intradimensional capabilities and may be nullified by magics that are designed to counter spells of detection. To activate the spell, the caster takes

a wand, sword, or other pointed object in hand marks one end and utters Arkon's divination mantra. Then, speaking aloud the name of the subject, the caster tosses the object in the air. When it lands on the ground, the object will indicate the direction in which the subject can be found. It is well to note that the enchantment is not an indicator of distance, however.

Magical Field: Wizardry (reveal)

Difficulty: -9 (tractus)

Range: Unlimited.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Magic Resistance: None, though magics that negate the effects of scrying devices can be used to counter this spell.

Arkon's Twister

This spell allows the caster to entrap a foe in a powerful vortex of magical forces. It is cast by speaking Arkon's words of command and gesturing at the intended target with a circular motion. The speed at which the victim is made to spin can be controlled by the caster as follows:

Intensity One is sufficient to cause extreme vertigo and relieve the victim of handheld objects and items secured in pockets, pouches, and so on.

Intensity Two is sufficient to hurtle the victim ten feet per level in any direction; inflicting corresponding damage upon impact with any solid surface.

Intensity Three creates an arcane vortex of such velocity and force that it will propel the victim through the dimensional fabric and into another plane of existence of the caster's choice.

Magical Field: Wizardry (move)

Difficulty: -10 (qualitas)

Range: 10 feet per level

Duration: 5 rounds (-1 to difficulty per extra round)

Magic Resistance: Roll versus DEX to dodge the vortex. The caster may attempt to entrap the victim once per round, until the vortex expires or is dispelled; this requires the caster to concentrate on the vortex, however.

CASCAL

Second of the Seven

Another of the founding members of the Archaen Cabal, Cascal was an illusionist of unparalleled ability and the author of numerous spells and texts on the arcane arts. Indeed, his Codex Magicus still sees wide use by magicians of the New Age. His greatest achievement was the founding and rule of the sky-city Shalihan, the wondrous city where illusions and reality were one and the same. Surviving lore

is sketchy on whether he was assisted by his “consort”; (it is unknown exactly when she was created) a female after-image of the magician himself, called Miraja.

Most illusionists could not expect a great deal of attention or respect from their co-workers, for it was sometimes seen as a more frivolous and wasteful path of study than the other magical paths. Some texts written by masters of other arcane learning even deride the art as nothing more than a way to acquire material wealth and indulge in vices. However, Cascal provides history’s exception to this rule, for he enjoyed prosperity and popularity above most of the Empire’s magicians, and it was not solely because of his position within the Archaen Cabal. In fact, his works and texts were lauded by the literati of the Empire, being especially well-received in the cities of Pompados and Aeon. His theories on reality and perception gained many adherents, while spectators and clients alike marvelled at his illusions. However, it seems apparent that such acclaim had an adverse affect upon Cascal, for his later years saw a significant decline in the quality and popularity of his written works.

Cascal’s final work (which proved to be his undoing among his peers) was titled *The Voice of the World*. It was a collection of prophecies attributed to deceased magicians who allegedly contacted Cascal from beyond the grave. After its publication, the illusionist was cast out of polite society as a writer of bad fiction who had finally begun to believe his own ephemeral creations over reality. He spent the rest of his life in Shalihan, surrounding himself in what was allegedly the most elaborate and wondrous palace of illusion ever conceived.

ARTIFACTS

The Three Mirrors: These three enchanted mirrors were among Cascal’s most inspired creations. The first mirror, *Reflections of Belief*, allegedly showed the viewer as he perceived himself. The second mirror, called *Reflections of Impression*, was rumored to show the viewer as he was perceived by another individual that he named. The third mirror’s exact properties are unknown in the New Age, though the name *Reflections of Truth*, is still spoken of among certain scholars.

Cloak of Reflection: This elegant silk cloak was invested with a 10th-level version of the spell Cascal’s Reflective Aura. When activated by a word of command, the cloak envelops its wearer in a flickering, shimmering aura of light that confers protection against spells of illusion, hallucination, visual attack forms, and radiated or prismatic

light. Spells or other visual attack forms are reflected back upon the attacker.

Duration: 10 rounds.

Magic Resistance: None. Note that Cascal’s Protective Aura cannot be used in conjunction with any other protective shield or aura. In appearance, this aura resembles other magical auras, though with a definite sense of power in the flickering light.

Cloak of Shadows: This cloak of black spanglor was imbued with a 10th-level version of the spell Cascal’s Shadow Dimension. When activated by a whispered word of command, the cloak envelops the wearer in an extradimensional space that resembles an area of darkness or shadow. The wearer may step into this space and look unseen upon the surrounding area, or hide one or more objects within the extradimensional space, as desired. The area can be entered or exited at will for the length of its duration. Individuals or objects that remain within the area after the spell’s duration has lapsed will be trapped in this area of “non-space” until they can be retrieved or can escape by magical means.

Duration: 100 rounds.

Magic Resistance: The Cloak of Shadows radiates an aura of enchantment, and may be differentiated from ordinary shadow by the fact that it is not dispersed by light. Magical illumination will negate the magical properties of the Cloak of Shadows, causing its contents to be revealed.

Cascal’s Prism: This one-inch crystal polyhedron is enchanted with a 10th-level version of the spell Cascal’s Transfixation. The spell functions automatically when the the prism is removed from its rune-inscribed leather pouch.

Range: 100 feet

Duration: Indefinite; transfixation lasts for three hours after subjects stop gazing into the prism.

Magic Resistance: Roll versus PER at a penalty of -10 in order to resist the disorientating effects of the spell.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Prismatization: A two-volume masterwork on the theory and nature of illusions that solidified Cascal as the true master of his chosen craft. Volume 1 contains the spells Transfixation, Reflective Aura, Shadow Dimension and Numenous Veil, and a host of notes and explanations detailing the art of subterfuge through illusion and methods of hiding sensory information from the five senses. Volume 2 is a more slender tome, containing the spells Rainbow Bridge and Illusory Arcana, as well as the great magician’s

secret procedure for the creation of enchanted prisms. The latter volume covers in detail a variety of visual effects used to enhance the depth and clarity of illusory images.

Difficulty: -10

Experience: 2 each

Value: 10,000+ gold lumens.

Virtual Illusions: Completed at the beginning of his meteoric rise to fame and fortune (and then responsible for a great deal more of his wealth, critical acclaim and popularity) Cascal's treatise on the subject of virtual illusions is regarded as the authoritative book on the subject, unsurpassed even by Miraja's *Limitations of Virtual Illusions*. Most notably, the book's artwork is in the form of three-dimensional virtual holograms that project upwards from the pages. Though Cascal shared the contents of the book with several of his peers, he still remained in the grip of paranoia regarding the book's theft. The writings upon the pages are written in ciphers, but not of the mundane pen and ink variety. Instead, the script is illusory in nature, and if the book is opened without first speaking a secret word of command, the contents of the pages simply vanish before the reader's eyes. Practitioners of wizardry able to master the text gain proficiency in the spell Cascal's Virtual Illusion.

Difficulty: -10

Experience: 3

Value: 100,000 gold lumens

Magique: It is commonly believed by those in the know that *Magique* is a reflection of Cascal's mental instability in his later years, when the excesses of his life had taken their toll and he was left alone and friendless in Shalihan. The book mirrors *Virtual Illusions* in appearance, down to the fine gold leaf upon the cover, though no magic to date has managed to reveal any writing on the blank pages. To ardent collectors, the book might fetch a tidy price as a curiosity, though it remains unknown if the book is worthless or ciphered with a skill too advanced to decode.

Codex Magicus: This is a reference text of general utility, widely regarded as one of the best and most thorough volumes on magic ever produced. The text covers the basic principles for apprentices, initiates, and adepts up to level twelve, with each successive chapter covering more complex materials and concepts. The usual method for studying this book is to master one chapter per level of ability; advanced students of the occult sciences may attempt to master two chapters per level. It is not possible for magicians to gain experience points by mastering chapters that are rated at a lower level than their current level of ability.

Difficulty: -1-12; each chapter increases in degree of difficulty by one

Experience: 2 per chapter; see text for restrictions

Value: 100-1,000 gold lumens, depending on which edition of the book is being appraised; there are ten known editions. The long-lost original copy, if found, would not sell for less than 100,000 gold lumens.

ANCIENT SPELLS

Cascal's Illusory Arcana

This spell allows the magician to cast an illusory version of any spell he or she knows or has seen at least once before. The concept, as envisioned by Cascal, is unique in that it allows the magician to create the appearance that he or she is casting a real spell rather than an illusion. Thus, the magician can cast an illusory Spell of Elemental Fire, Arkon's Impermeable Web, Rainbow Bridge, or whatever. Should the victims fail to resist the enchantment, they will believe that the illusory spell is real. If the spell being mimicked is one that would, if real, cause damage to the victims, those who fail to resist the illusion will believe that they have suffered harm. Victims who have been "killed" by Illusory Arcana can indeed die of heart failure caused by shock. Note that a roll versus CON is allowed to determine if the subject can survive a "fatal" attack.

The level of spell effect is determined by the level at which Cascal's Illusory Arcana is cast. To activate the spell, the caster performs the motions of the spell being mimicked, but utters the syllables of Cascal's Illusory Arcana. The illusory quality of the enchantment is such that it will appear to observers that the real spell is being cast.

Magical Field: Wizardry (illusion)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: Per mimicked spell

Duration: Per mimicked spell

Magic resistance: Roll versus PER as per a common spell of illusion. Note that reflective spells or mirrors can be used to turn the illusory effects of the spell back on the caster. Also note that intended victims of an illusory version of a spell of illusion receive two magic resistance rolls.

Cascal's Numinous Veil

This spell allows the caster to render unintelligible any form of writings, inscriptions or symbols. Only the caster will be able to decipher writings disguised by this illusory effect, the duration of which is indefinite. The spell will affect approximately one square foot or one page of writings per level. To activate the enchantment, the caster waves a hand, wand, or staff over the designated writings while reciting

Cascal's cogent phrases.

Magical Field: Cryptomancy (illusion)

Difficulty: -15 (tempus)

Range: 1 foot.

Duration: Indefinite, or until dispelled.

Magic Resistance: Roll versus PER as per a common spell of illusion; success means that the individual will notice that the affected writings have been tampered with. The Numinous Veil must be dispelled before the affected writings can be read, however.

Cascal's Rainbow Bridge

This spell allows the caster to refract light through any enchanted prism, producing a multicolored bridge of solidified light particles. The bridge requires no means of support *per se*, but must span an area between two relatively solid things; a Rainbow Bridge cannot simply terminate in midair. The Rainbow Bridge can be up to 10 feet wide, and may extend up to the range limit of the spell. To activate the spell, the caster must have an enchanted prism on hand. Placing the prism at the point from which the bridge is to extend, the caster speaks Cascal's incantation, causing the Rainbow Bridge to emanate from the prism.

Magical Field: Wizardry (illusion)

Difficulty: -13 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: 50 feet per level _1 per extra 10 feet)

Duration: 5 minutes (-1 per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: None. A counterspell or a spell of darkness will disperse the bridge. A Rainbow Bridge is otherwise impervious to damage, though it can be distorted by reflective spells or mirrors.

Cascal's Reflective Aura

This spell allows the caster or designated recipient to be enveloped in a shimmering aura of light that confers protection against spells of illusion, hallucinations, visual attack forms and radiant or prismatic light. Spells or other visual attack forms are reflected back upon the attacker. Note that a Reflective Aura protects only against spells or attacks directed at the beneficiary of the enchantment; the aura does not allow the beneficiary to detect illusions. Illusory creatures or objects comprised of magical light cannot penetrate a Reflective Aura, though light from normal sources can. To activate the spell, the caster executes a secret sign and speaks Cascal's incantation.

Magical Field: Wizardry 9ward)

Difficulty: -5 9qualitas)

Range: Tocuh

Duration: 1 minute (-1 per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: None. Note that Cascal's Reflective Aura cannot be used in conjunction with any other

protective shield or aura. In appearance, Cascal's magical aura resembles other magical auras.

Cascal's Shadow Dimension

This spell enables the caster to create an extradimensional space within the confines of any area of darkness or shadow. The caster may step into this space and look out unseen upon the surrounding area, or hide one or more objects within the extradimensional space, as desired. In either case, the size of the area of shadow must be large enough to act as a doorway for the caster or designated objects; the extradimensional space itself is limitless in area. To activate the spell, the caster waves a hand over the area of shadow to be used in the enchantment and utters Cascal's incantation. The Shadow Dimension may then be entered or employed as desired.

A Shadow Dimension may be entered or exited at will for the length of its duration. . Individuals or objects that remain within the area after the spell's duration has lapsed will be trapped in this area of "non-space" until they can be retrieved or can escape by magical means. Individuals or objects left in a Shadow Dimension tend to drift towards the Void, and may not be found in the same place where they were left. If desired, the caster may designate any single creature or being as the recipient of the spell.

Magical Field: Cryptomancy

Difficulty: -10 (qualitas)

Range: 10 feet (qualitas)

Duration: 1 minute (-1 per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: None. A Shadow Dimension radiates an aura of enchantment, and may be differentiated from ordinary shadow in that it is not dispersed by light. A Spell of Radiance will cause a Shadow Dimension to dissolve, revealing its contents.

Cascal's Transfixation

This spell allows the caster to produce a burst of kaleidoscopic colors. The stabbing beams of light produced by this enchantment impinge upon the ocular nerves of the intended victim, causing confusion and disorientation. In essence, the victim is rendered dazed and unable to think or take action until the spell's effects wear off. To activate the spell, the caster holds forth any sort of crystal prism, gemstone or other reflective article. The caster then speaks Cascal's dazzling word of power, causing a brilliant burst of colors to fly forth from the object in hand and strike the intended victim.

Magical Field: Wizardry (influence)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: 10 feet (-1 per extra 10 feet)

Duration: 1 round (-1 per extra round)

Magic Resistance: PER Roll - 1/2 the spell level. Note that creatures or beings that are blind or do not possess optical organs cannot be affected by Cascal's Transfixation. Conversely, creatures or beings who possess night vision or are sensitive to light suffer a -4 penalty to resist this spell.

Cascal's Virtual Illusion

This spell enables the caster to create a virtual illusion, an imaginary image that in all important respects appears to be real. Virtual illusions differ from common spells of illusion in that they profoundly affect the viewer's perception of reality. Virtual objects or structures feel solid to the touch; virtual illusions of creatures or persons are capable of interaction with real individuals, and can be touched, fought or embraced. Yet while viewers may believe they are climbing a virtual set of stairs, they are actually walking in place. When reclining on a virtual illusion of a cushioned divan, a character may actually be lying on the floor. If attacked by illusory enemies, victims experience pain, though their wounds are not real; if "killed" they lose consciousness and remain in a comatose state until the virtual illusion of death is dispelled.

A Virtual Illusion spell can be used to create up to 10 x 10 x 10 feet of illusory objects, materials or creatures per level; for example, a first-level spell could be used to create 10-12 humanoid figures of average size, a small furnished room, a palanquin with bearers, and so forth. Player characters who intend to employ this spell must describe the particulars of the virtual illusion in detail to the gamemaster before rolling to determine the results. A result of partial success will yield a common spell of illusion, devoid of virtual properties, though with the extended duration.

The caster must have first-hand knowledge of anything he or she wishes to portray as a virtual illusion, or the results will be unconvincing; in game terms, apply a +1-10 bonus to magic resistance rolls at the gamemaster's discretion. The power of this spell is otherwise limited only by the caster's imagination, and should not be underestimated. The sky-city of Shalihan and all its inhabitants are said to have been created solely of virtual illusions, the only real element of the city being the large floating disk that served as its foundation.

Magical Field: Wizardry (illusion)

Difficulty: -30 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: 10x10x10 per spell level

Duration: Indefinite, or until dispelled.

Magic Resistance: Roll versus PER at a penalty of -10, but only after making physical contact with the virtual illusion. If the result is anything less than full

success, the subject will be totally convinced that the virtual illusion is real, and will continue to believe this until the illusion is dispelled.

Reverse: Used to dispel a virtual illusion.

DRAX

The First Necromancer King

The being that rose to become the first Necromancer King of ancient Torquaran was no mere mortal, if legends are to be believed. Drax was reputedly sired by the rebel Shaitan Zahur; an entity exiled and reviled by the rest of the devilish hierarchy. From his dark father's unholy teachings, Drax laid the foundations and formed the basic principles for all black magic as we know it. If this was his single achievement, Drax would still be deserving of his place in history, but there was so much more to come over the course of the Necromancer King's reign.

Torquaran expanded aggressively, with armies of neomorphs and hybrids that stormed across the face of the world, subjugating no less than half of Talislanta and threatening to annihilate all who opposed it. Some histories seem to paint Drax as the half-Archaeon son of Zahur, while the works of some of the more obscure cults of the Forgotten Age paint the Necromancer King as the avatar or "living icon" of the rebel shaitan. These latter accounts also point to a prophecy that Drax would one day return to Talislanta, though not in the same form as his previous incarnation.

Conflicting records aside, it seems it was only through the intervention of the principal member of the shaitan hierarchy, Diabolus, that Drax's reign was finally brought to an end. Rather than lose in the inevitable battle against Diabolus the Lord of Devils, Zahur transported himself and his progeny to some far-off dimension. Perhaps they rule there now? Now that is a sickening thought, to say the very least. Certainly his name remains a curse word throughout the ages, employed in the most foul and obscene imprecations. Drax's writings are considered wholly, utterly cursed.

What lore of the black magician remains in the New Age are among the most dire and accursed works ever to grace a page: mind-rending incantations, blasphemous maledictions, unholy symbols inked in loving script...each book spells out magic of such incredible dark power that to comprehend them invites insanity, and for lesser minds, perhaps death. The spells he wrought upon the world were so tuned to Drax's own twisted mind that no other could



grasp the unholy precepts within them. After his exile, even his apprentice Narishna found no use for Drax's writings. After breaking the wards around his ex-master's chambers, Narishna fled from the sanctum, ordering that Drax's works should be sealed in molten iron and cast into the depths of the sea.

Who can speculate on what kind of ill-luck or foul events would befall anyone knowingly or unknowingly in possession of the Necromancer King's works? I shudder to think, and I recoil from the notion that the North Sea, now the Lost Sea, is the resting place for these works and that they could be brought into use one more.

MAGICAL TEXTS

The Lost Works: In the long history of Talislanta, no written works have ever been regarded with such trepidation as the writings of Drax. Each of the nine volumes was ritually bound in the flayed skin of his own relatives, in a bid to both remove them from the path of succession and increase the diabolic power of the rites that cursed the books. The contents of the books have long been debated, though they are believed to contain specific information on the subject of blood sacrifices, black magic rituals and similarly grisly means of obtaining the services of shaitans and other extradimensional entities. It is known that Drax preferred such methods to priestly observation, which he referred to as "base subservience". In the only known extract from the *Lost Works*, Drax is quoted as writing, "The sacrifice of living beings is an efficient means of obtaining literal diabolical power. Souls can be obtained at no great expense, and serve as the greatest inducement to the denizens of the lower planes. For they hunger too, though not as we do, and they must be fed."

Difficulty: -6

Experience: 3 points per volume each takes 3 months to master

Value: 25,000 gold lumens

The Maleficium: This tome radiates a tangible aura of magic, and is considered one of the most dangerous black magical texts in existence. Individuals who so much as touch a copy of this book must roll versus WIL to resist the desire to open it and peer within. The dark secrets contained within the *Maleficium* are sufficient to twist the mind of the beholder; roll versus magic rating at a penalty of -13, or the viewer is incapacitated by terrifying hallucinations that persist until counterspelled. Black magicians who are able to comprehend this blasphemous text without suffering such consequences may gain a considerable degree of occult knowledge, though perhaps at the expense of their mortal souls; the book serves as the cult manifesto of those who

revere Drax as a dark demigod.

Difficulty: -13

Experience: 20

Value: 150,000 gold lumens, but only to those who are foolish enough to deal in cursed merchandise of this sort.

THE ENCHANTRESS

Third of the Seven

The Enchantress is referred to in some texts in a disparaging light, for the vanity of her “nameless” title. Historical records also indicate that she was perhaps the most beautiful woman of the Age of the Heavens and the Age of Decline, and her public appearances generated the kind of interest usually enjoyed by true-blooded monarchs. Her personal works, what few survive, speak of a desire to remain aloof from the Archaen Cabal and the populace of the Empire in an attempt to appear more than an object of desire. She also cites that her title was not a simple vanity to keep men from knowing her name, but a deserved reference; there truly was no greater magician when it came to the art of enchanting.

While in the service of the Archaen Cabal, the Enchantress was known to collate huge folios of her listed spells, which she would ward with the most powerful of her own incantations. Such was the potency of her magic that even today, thousands of years after her death, the wards she placed remain unbroken and the works remain unfound. Any relic or text from her hands that is now studied in the

New Age is done so because she either warded it weakly, or simply did not care if it was discovered. Her true secrets remain just so; truly secret.

With the dissolution of the Archaen Cabal, the Enchantress retired to her personal floating pavilion above Eros Isle. If stories are true, she entertained – and eventually turned away – hundreds of suitors who met with her disapproval. A story with a nameless author, *The Heart of the Enchantress*, has come down through the years and speaks of the woman’s great vanity. After a thousand suitors had been cast aside, a hooded figure presented the Enchantress with a “magic mirror” that would reveal her true love. After the gift was delivered and the hooded man left, the Enchantress was shocked to gaze upon her own visage in the mirror’s polished surface. The mirror was smashed and its shards thrown into the ocean below, though the hooded figure was never seen again. Some tales seem to suggest it was Cascall, who the Enchantress famously rejected as a suitor, though others point to the prankish devilry of the magician Zanillo, ever-jealous that he was passed over for appointment to the Archaen Cabal.

ETZEL

The Precocious Master

When she was only fourteen, Etzel was described by the great Koraq as “a genius, though at the maturity level of a three-year-old.” She was the youngest of all Archaen master magicians, though her genius is less surprising considering her parentage and upbringing. Daughter of the sorceress Syllan, (and though her father’s identity was apparently never confirmed, speculation that it was another Cabal-member ran rife) Etzel was raised with a clear understanding of the Archaen Cabal’s works, interacting with each magician as she grew to adulthood and acquiring knowledge from them all with precocious fervor.

Surprisingly, considering the prodigy’s clear genius and advantageous upbringing, accounts of her magical achievements are rare in the extreme. She was rumored to have kept a journal, though what is contained within its pages – or whether it even exists today – is unknown. No original spells are attributed to her, and no treatises on magic or reality bear her name.

What has filtered down the centuries are reports of her temper tantrums that often took the form of malicious spells cast at her superiors and servants. Her first instructor is said to have spent a year sealed in a glass jar after being





transformed into a crystal moth, and one of her neomorph palace servants was banished to the lower planes for some insignificant mistake. Following a series of these distressing incidents, Sytan consigned her daughter to an enchanted palace on the astral plane, where she could wreak no further havoc while in fits of pique. Planar scholars have made it a point to suggest that Etzel might live there still.

HOTAN

The Great Savant

Regarded as the greatest savant of his age, perhaps the most fastidious known to date, Hotan walked the world in search of one thing: knowledge. He was a man that wanted to *know*, and often merely reading about something in the works of others simply didn't satisfy him. More than this, he wanted to know about things that still remained undiscovered, mysteries that were unsolved and places that were unexplored. His voracious appetite for knowledge led him to visit with the Sub-Men tribe known as the Ariane. From these beings Hotan claimed that he came to understand the mystical arts of transcendancy, and was able to reincarnate into the same bodily form at will.

The man who wanted to know everything was now, for all intents and purposes, immortal.

He spent the better part of his many incarnations travelling, accumulating lore and compiling a comprehensive history of Talislanta civilization. Obviously, completion of this goal

continues to elude him, and he finished one of his folios with the words "Barring the end of Archaeus, should the world itself die, I see no prospect for the completion of this endeavor." One can surely sympathize with such words.

It is believed by some that the savant Xanadas, the wizard Absinthe, and the renowned Thystrum were all incarnations of Hotan. The modern-day chroniclers of Xanadas refuse to lend any credence to that supposition, though they insist that Hotan lives to this day. Stubborn New Age literati aside, if Hotan did still walk the face of Talislanta, he'd find himself even further from completing his masterwork. The spread of civilization is a glorious ballet of enlightenment, but chronicling it is an increasingly difficult feat.

MAGICAL TEXTS

The Ariane Chronicles: This work was penned after Hotan dwelt for many years within the maze city of Altan, home of the Ariane mystics. During this time, he was allowed to study the great obelisk within which stores the cumulative memories and experiences of the Ariane people. This book contains transcriptions from the obelisk imbued within pages fashioned from thin sheets of violet stone. The contents can be "read" simply by running a finger across the surface of the stone. Individuals who study this text for a minimum of fourteen days receive a +1 bonus on the skills Talislanta History and Metaphysical Doctrines (mysticism), plus the experience points indicated.

Difficulty: -7

Experience: 3

Value: 75,000 gold lumens

The Book of Mysteries: In this famous work Hotan first put forth his concepts of the meaning of life and the cosmos explaining his theories on reincarnation and the "vital spirit". The Ariane Elders are said to have admired this book. Though the story that their people first learned the arts of transcendancy from this work has been proven false. Ariane editions of the book are traditionally imbued within polished orbs of blue stone known as tamar. Standard versions of the text are available in several different languages. Individuals who master this book gain a bonus of +1 with regard to the skill Metaphysical Doctrines.

Difficulty: -1-20; the book contains twenty chapters, each increasing in level of difficulty.

Experience: 1 per chapter, with a minimum of one week to master each.

Value: Tamar have no monetary value among the Ariane, each of whom is given his or her own personal stone at birth. Archaen transcriptions of the text

commonly sell for upwards of 20,000 gold lumens and are now very rare. Hotan's original text was lost ages ago, and is valued at over 50,000 gold lumens.

History of the World: This is an incredible series of 148 brass-bound volumes each covering a different period of Talislanta history. The first 121 volumes have never been found, and are regarded as valuable collector's items should they ever be uncovered. The known texts are considered useful by historians, scholars and savants, though Hotan's long-winded accounts of the renowned individuals of the day occasionally grate on the nerves. Characters gain a +1 bonus to the skill Talislanta History per volume studied.

Difficulty: -5-9, with the lost volumes believed most complex.

Experience: 2 per volume.

Value: 100-400 gold lumens apiece for known volumes, ten times this for lost volumes.

Theosophy: A comparative study of religions and cults across the span of time, this book is an invaluable general reference for mystics, savants, and theologians. Specific information on the beliefs and customs of numerous Talislantan cults and sects can be found within this heavy, silver-bound tome. Individuals who master this text gain a +1 bonus with respect to the skills Arcane Lore and Metaphysical Doctrines.

Difficulty: -7

Experience: 5

Value: 25,000 gold lumens for first edition copies; all others are valued at 1,800 gold lumens.

ILSE

The Stealer of Spells

Some accounts insist that Ilse was born in Torquaran, and her life there colored her perceptions on what was acceptable magic. Conflicting histories say that she was actually created by Sytan, to serve as an understudy and companion for Etzel, the sorceress' daughter. Still other sources (and there are a surprising number on the topic) state that Ilse was nothing more than Etzel's "avatar", serving as a way for the banished troublemaker to return to Talislanta.

Whatever the truth of her origin, Ilse gained notoriety by judicious use of various charms and seductions. From a powerful shaitan named Nargul she learned the Six-Fold Spell of Fascination, which she used to steal the secrets of the many magicians she took as lovers. It is said that she

spied on the simulacrum Viridian by posing as an obsidian moth, and deduced the means by which he magically influenced plants. From the race of whisps, she stole an astounding number of beguiling cantrips, glamours and enchantments.

When her trespass was finally discovered by Viridian, he spared her life and, amusingly enough, Ilse was transformed into a purple thornrose. Viridian thought, quite rightly, that the heart-rending beauty of the violet-blood petals, offset by the lethally poisonous thorns on the stems, matched Ilse's duplicity all too well.

Whatever relics can be recovered today from Ilse's hoard are unsurprisingly nothing more than the stolen items of other magicians.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Ilse's Lost Folios: The folios of the treacherous Ilse, containing dozens of purloined spells and alchemical formulae, are avidly sought by collectors of magical paraphernalia. Though the originals are probably lost forever, copies of excerpts from Ilse's notebooks are known to exist. Each will generally contain a single cogent spell or formula, though some few may yield an additional surprise or two in the form of an ancient master's lore now lost to the world. Forgeries, typically quite worthless, are unfortunately more common than authentic copies.

Difficulty: -4-8

Experience: 1-2 each

Value: 200-1,200 gold lumens

ANCIENT SPELLS

Six-Fold Spell of Fascination

This potent spell, stolen from the shaitan Nargul, enables the caster to entrance any individual using the most clever and devious magics. Individuals who have been charmed in this fashion will be utterly fascinated by the caster, and will reveal anything or perform any favor in order to gain the caster's approval. To activate the spell, the caster must have the subject's attention; the caster then performs six subtle motions of the hands, eyes and facial features while speaking to the subject. The spell takes approximately 10 rounds to cast.

Magical Field: Witchcraft (influence)

Difficulty: -10 (qualitas)

Range: 5 feet

Duration: 1 minute (-1 per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: PER roll -1/2 the spell level. If this roll is successful, the subject will perceive a

faint aura of magic in his or her proximity. Unless subjects suspect that they are being charmed and take precautions of some sort, such as averting their gazes, walking away or uttering a counterspell, the entrancement will take effect whether or not the resistance roll is successful.

KORAQ

Fourth of the Seven

Unrivalled in his genius and mastery of the magical arts, Koraq developed and codified countless – literally, *countless* – spells in his lifetime, which spanned at least one thousand and six hundred years. In fact, owing to the nature of his work with interdimensional travel, the sorcerer's death has never been established with any proof. Besides discovering and refining interdimensional travel, Koraq is renowned for pioneering the field of sorcery and subsequently authoring over two hundred volumes, folios and treatises on the myriad planes of existence. Perhaps his greatest accomplishment (and certainly his most cerebral) was his *Theory on Magic and Anti-Magic*, which stands to the present day as the definitive work on the principles and foundations of quantum magic.

Unfortunately, the theories and equations defined within the pages of his works were of such complexity and advanced nature that they were indecipherable to even his closest peers – only Arkon, it seems, had the drive and the ability to understand Koraq's works. The two masters maintained a friendly rivalry, but at no point in Koraq's writings is he ever shy of praise regarding his unstable visionary counterpart.

Koraq's mental faculties were such that he could create spell matrices in his head; his improvisations were remarkable and so prolific that he resorted to employing a Neurian automaton named Ovid in order to record the many magical theorems and calculations he would devise on any given day. His retreat and seclusion within the floating sanctum of Paz came when his obsession with the theory of trans-temporalization led to the dissolution of his relationship with the sorceress Sytan. Hints of scandal at the time apparently mentioned the illegitimacy of Etzel's birth also triggering the end of the marriage.

Koraq is recorded on several occasions as insisting he lived two or more lives; each mostly identical to the others, though in different dimensions. When not feverishly creating spells or devising new theories, Koraq was known



to brood upon the boredom his “this life” in comparison to others he had led. Interestingly, as a historical footnote, the Wizard King of Phaedra called Kabros claimed direct descent from Koraq and was known to sign the sorcerer's name to his own writings.

ARTIFACTS

Ovid, the Automaton: The mechanical humanoid, who was referred to as Ovid, was a gift from the Neurians in return for the valuable help Koraq provided in teaching arcanology to the aliens of Simbar. Ovid served as a tireless recorder of the copious amount of sorcerous data that Koraq recorded each day in the course of his work. This material was stored within the automaton's sensorium and later transcribed into written form. It was within the purview of Ovid's talents to serve not only as scribe but also as editor; thus, conflicts between the author and his mechanical servant were not uncommon. Ovid was a vast repository of arcane knowledge, and if found intact would be valued at over 300,000 gold lumens.

Pocket Compendium: Koraq created this device as an adjunct to magical research. His pocket compendium resembled a crystal cuboid 4 x 3 x 1 inches in size, engraved with intricate symbology. This device served as a portable cyclopedia of sorcerous formulae and quantum magical theorems, with the data accessed by pressing various symbols in combination. The procedure was purported

to be so complex as to baffle even Koraq's contemporary Arkon, who apparently once claimed that it would be simpler and faster to travel to the ancient library at Jalaad and search through the archives. The compendium is valued at around 50,000 gold lumens, though finding a buyer with the skills to unlock the item in any kind of order will be no easy feat.

Amulet of Warding: This amulet was made of amberite crystal and gold, and inscribed with protective symbols. It was invested with a 10th-level version of the spell Interposing Shields. When activated by a secret word of command, the amulet creates ten disk-shaped shields of arcane force that encircle the wearer, moving automatically to intercept and nullify attacks by missiles, weapons, hostile creatures or beings, and magical missiles. This item could be worth up to 8,000 gold lumens to the right buyer.

Anti-Magic Talisman: This item resembled a brass periapt, and was one of Koraq's most treasured personal effects. It was imbued with a 10th-level version of the spell Anti-Magic Aura. When activated by touch, the talisman envelopes the wearer in a shimmering aura of antimagical energy that will confer protection from hostile magics of all sorts, though with the drawback of nullifying all previous enchantments, shields, auras, veils and other self-affecting spells the magician might have been employing. The Anti-Magic Talisman is likely to fetch at least 10,000 gold lumens either with personal collectors or the Lyceum Arcanum in Cymril.

Omniscient Orb: Koraq allegedly made several of these spherical pendants, which were fashioned in the shape of a golden eye and enchanted with a 10th-level version of the spell Ultra-Sensorium. When not in use, the golden eyelid remains closed. When activated by touch, the eye opens, employing the spell within. One of these artifacts could be worth as much as 3,000 gold lumens.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Arcanologia: Koraq's treatise on arcanology is considered his most lucid and accessible work. The "book" was made in the form of a polyhedron two inches in height, fashioned from a translucent crystal. Each of its ten facets reveals a different aspect of arcanology, from identifying spell matrices to modifying matrix components in order to achieve specific objectives. The information contained within a single facet takes an average of seven weeks to master, and yields a bonus of +1 to the sorcery skill of Arcanology. As many as twenty copies of the Arcanologia are known to have been created, though most seem to have been lost during the Great Disaster. The only three found

to date were damaged, and some of the facets rendered unreadable. It is feared that undiscovered copies may turn out to have similar defects.

Difficulty: -10

Experience: 2 per facet

Value: 8,000 gold lumens per intact facet.

Quantum Magic: Regarded by its author as his greatest achievement, Koraq's thesis on quantum magic may well be the most convoluted and complex of all the master theoretician's works. It is a compilation of dizzying concepts that none but the most gifted minds could ever hope to fathom. Even such worthies as Sylan and Arkon were incapable of comprehending the work, if the records of the Archaen Cabal are anything to go by. No more than three copies of this work were ever produced, each bound between translucent planes of blue crystal. Their exact value cannot be agreed upon; Sindaran collectors have offered rewards in excess of half a million gold lumens for the recovery of a single copy. To anyone capable of comprehending these writings, this might seem a small price indeed; mastering this book will increase the reader's basic magic rating by +2.

Difficulty: -40

Experience: 20

Value: 500,000+ gold lumens.

Theory of Magic and Anti-Magic: Perhaps the most brilliant and comprehensive (and immensely baffling) study ever written on the occult sciences, Koraq's tome is considered the definitive authority on the nature of magic. So incredibly complex is some of the text that fully 90% of all copies known to exist are in part incorrectly translated, rendering them next to useless; only by spending a minimum of one month studying a copy of the book can a reader determine if that particular text is flawed. Individuals who master this book gain a +1 increase in magic rating.

Difficulty: -20

Experience: 10

Value: 1,000 – 12,000 gold lumens, depending on the age and condition of the volume. Flawed copies are worth perhaps one-tenth the appraised value, primarily as curios.

The Silver Matrix: Koraq's highly-regarded text explains the procedures for creating the artificial lifeforms known as simulacrum. The sections on vat techniques, matrix construction and common errors to be avoided are alone worth the price of the book. Individuals who successfully master the text earn a +1 bonus when using the advanced skill Create Homonculus to fashion a simulacrum.

Difficulty: -13
Experience: 5
Value: 3,000+ gold lumens.

ANCIENT SPELLS

Aura of Spell Negation

This spell, though not always attributed to Koraq, is credited to the great sorcerer more often than not. When cast, it envelops the magician or a designated beneficiary in an invisible aura of magical energy that will negate any single use of magic directed against the caster, regardless of the level of the enchantment. The aura confers protection against all types of magic, including other auras, the effects of symbols, spells, magical manifestations or anomalies, and magical weaponry. In the latter case, the magical properties of the weapon will be negated by the aura, but its nonmagical physical capabilities will apply as normal. Note that the aura and its protective properties are dispersed immediately following the first contact with any kind of magic, or in the event that the beneficiary attempts to cast a spell while protected by this enchantment.

Magical Field: Cryptomancy (ward)
Difficulty: -10 (qualitas + trigger effect)
Range: Touch
Duration: Passive duration is 1 minute (-1 to Difficulty per extra minute); once contact with magic is made the spell ceases to function.
Magic Resistance: None.

Anti-Magic Aura

This spell allows the caster to be enveloped in a shimmering aura of antimagical energy that will confer protection from hostile magics of all sorts. Spells directed against the beneficiary of this enchantment dissolve upon contact with the antimagic field and are rendered ineffective. The aura does not confer protection from spells such as Arkon's Impermeable Web, which affects the caster's surroundings, or from spells of influence or illusions.

The employment of an Anti-Magic Aura is not without certain drawbacks. While enveloped in an aura, a magician can cast no other self-affecting spell. Further, the casting of an Anti-Magic Aura cancels all previous enchantments, shields, auras, veils, and so forth that magician may have been employing. Also of concern is that a miscast Anti-Magic Aura can result in a temporary loss of spellcasting abilities or the inadvertent "de-magicking" of one or more enchanted items on the caster's person.

Magical Field: Wizardry (ward)
Difficulty: -10 (qualitas)

Range: Self
Duration: 1 minute (-1 per extra minute)
Magic Resistance: None. It is perhaps interesting to note that, in terms of outward appearance, it is impossible to tell Koraq's Anti-Magic Aura from the enchantments of Cascad, Viridian and Zanillo.

Arcanalytical Modulation

Not actually a spell, but rather a sorcerous technique, Arcanalytical Modulation enables the sorcerer to modify or neutralize any form of enchantment by altering the parameters of its matrix. An orb of arcanalysis, used in conjunction with the skill Arcanalysis, is essential to the use of this technique. Note that the Difficulty is based on which Sorcerous Skill is being used (Tempus, Tractus, or Qualitas), and is further modified by the level of the enchantment that is to be modified, or at a greater level if the sorcerer wishes to increase the level and effects of the enchantment being modified.

Magical Field: Sorcery
Difficulty: -10, -14 or -20 minus target spell level
Range: 1 foot
Duration: 10 rounds per level; it takes 10 rounds to modify a single aspect (level, duration, effect, etc.) of a matrix.
Magic Resistance: None.

Counterstroke

This spell allows the caster to divert hostile magics away from an intended target or subject by means of a deflective shield of antimagical energy. The countering shield will unerringly deflect any single bolt, beam or burst of magical origin, including those made of eldritch, elemental or mystical energy. To activate the spell, the caster points in the direction of the hostile magic and utters Koraq's words of antimagical power.

Magical Field: Wizardry (ward)
Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)
Range: Self (-1 per extra 10 feet)
Duration: Instantaneous
Magic Resistance: None. It should be noted that hostile magics countered by means of this spell are not dispersed or dispelled, but merely deflected in a random direction. The gamemaster should roll a d20 to make this determination, as follows:

- 1 – 5 = deflected upward
- 6 – 10 = deflected downward
- 11 – 15 = deflected left
- 16 – 20 = deflected right

Darkening Veil

This spell allows the caster to negate the effects of any type of crystal ball, seeing stone or spell of surveillance. The enchantment will cause any scrying device directed against the caster and his or her associates to cloud over and darken, effectively spoiling attempts of this nature.

Magical Field: Wizardry (ware)

Difficulty: -6 (tractus + tempus)

Area: Self (-1 per 10 foot radius)

Duration: 1 hour (-1 per extra hour)

Magic Resistance: None

Interposing Shields

This spell allows the caster to create a number of disk-shaped shields of magical force that encircle the caster, moving automatically to intercept and nullify attacks by missiles weapons, hostile creatures or beings, or magical bolts, darts and so on. The glowing shields also possess reflective qualities that are proof to radiant light and heat but do not confer protection against illusions, mists, gases, dusts, spells with a wide area of effect, or psychic energies. The spell produces one shield per level, each of which will serve to thwart a single attack; contact with any of the attack forms listed will cause a shield to burst into shards of light. To activate the enchantment, the caster recites Koraq's words of warding with the right hand upraised in a gesture of arcane significance. The shields appear at once and hover about the caster.

Magical Field: Wizardry (defend)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: 1-2 feet

Duration: 5 rounds (-1 per extra round)

Magic Resistance: None

Perdurable Enchantment

A direct application of the Sorcerous skill Tempus, the Perdurable Enchantment is a technique whereby the sorcerer may extend the duration of any of the following types of enchantments: Magical gates and dimensional openings; any illusion or illusory effect not of instantaneous duration; magical mists or trap-type effects; conjured, summoned, or metamorphosized beings. In order to be effective, the Perdurable Enchantment must be used on a spell that is already in effect. The duration of the target spell is increased as per the rules for Tempus in the section on Sorcery (pg 106). For every 3 levels of Difficulty, increase the base time unit of the target enchantment as follows:

Rounds - Minutes - Hours - Days - Months - Indefinite

Example: Darkening Veil has been cast, with a duration of 2 hours. Five minutes later, Koraq's Perdurable Enchantment is used on the Veil, at a penalty of -13 (-10

base, -3 for one step up the scale). The spell now has a duration of 2 days, with 5 minutes used up already.

To activate the spell, the caster must recite Koraq's formulae, an endeavor that takes a minimum of 10 rounds to complete. The enchantment may be used only once on a given spell, unless the degree of change is increased (in other words, you cannot use it twice at -13 to move the units twice. The second used would have to be at -16 or higher.)

Magical Field: Sorcery

Difficulty: -10 (-3 for each step on the time scale)

Range: 1 foot

Magic Resistance: None. It should be noted that a miscast magic of this nature can cause disruptions in the temporal fabric, resulting in grievous consequences for the caster, such as premature aging, loss of vitality, displacement in time, and so on.

Spell of Transference

This complex spell enables the caster to create an opening into a neutral dimension nexus, step within, and emerge in another locale of the caster's choice. Distance is not a factor; if so desired the caster may even use this spell to gain access to another dimension, though such attempts engender additional risk. It is not possible, however, for the caster to use this spell to travel to any locale he or she has not previously visited, or has not at least scrutinized by means of a crystal ball or seeing stone. The caster must concentrate fully while effecting the transference, for the slightest distraction may cause the caster to become disorientated while seeking the exit to the dimensional nexus; roll versus intelligence if such an occurrence is likely, with failure indicating that the caster exits at a location determined at random by the gamemaster rather than at the intended location.

Spell failures or magical mishaps are a particular annoyance when casting a Spell of Transference, and can lead to the inadvertent creation of dimensional rifts, vortexes, temporal displacements, and other inconveniences. Also, while the caster stands within the dimensional nexus, there is a 1 in 20 chance that he or she will encounter wandering beings of extradimensional origin, or fellow travellers of one sort or another.

If desired, the caster may also bring other creatures or beings along, though each additional lifefrom increases the degree of difficulty inherent in this spell by an additional -5 penalty. To activate the spell, the caster must have in his or her possession and enchanted crystal that acts as a focus for Koraq's spoken incantation.

Magical Field: Wizardry (summon)

Difficulty: Varies according to intended destination, as indicated on the following table:

Another continent	-5
Another world	-10
Another solar system	-15
Another galaxy	-20
Another plane	-25

Range: 10 feet

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

Ultra-Sensorium

This spell increases the subject's sensory capabilities to a remarkable degree, allowing the beneficiary of this enchantment to see invisible, astral or ethereal presences or objects, detect illusions by touch, discern even the subtlest odours or scents, hear whispered conversations or other faint sounds, and detect magical emanations by sight. The recipient of the ultra-sensorial capabilities will also be invested with a type of "sixth sense" that will alert the individual if he or she is being watched by unseen agencies of any sort. To activate the spell, the caster places his or her right hand upon the forehead of the intended subject and speaks Koraq's incantation.

Magical Field: Wizardry (reveal)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas + tractus)

Range: Maximum range for all but the tactile ability is 500 feet (-1 per extra 100 feet)

Duration: 1 minute (-1 per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: None, though an unwilling recipient can void the enchantment by evading the caster's touch. It should be noted that individuals affected by this spell are highly susceptible to damage by extreme sensory stimuli; in game terms treat this as a -10 penalty to resist the effects of loud noises, noxious vapors, extremely bright lights, or spells that cause effects such as these.

MAGIAN

Investigator into the Supernatural

Magian was an arcanologist of keen perceptions and shrewd logic, credited with unravelling numerous mysteries and conundrums. It was Magian that discovered several plots and elaborate pranks performed by the rogue magician Zaniillo, including one involving the scandalous dismissal of Rodinn from the advisory council in the city of Pompados.

Magian's surviving works consist of a great many texts written in the investigator's trademark coded script. This cryptic and fragmented style of writing has remained unbroken throughout all attempts at translation, numbering

pictograms, hieroglyphics, equations and alternate alphabets among its lettering. More legible (if a trifle melodramatic) accounts of the investigator's dealings were penned by his apprentice and assistant, Nastow. These reports allow the reader a comprehensive look into Magian's incisive mind, and several footnotes make reference to even the great Koraq admiring Magian's investigative techniques.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Magian's Casebook: This compilation was authored by Nastow, and his trademark admiration for his employer is detectable in some of the seemingly exaggerated accounts of Magian's dealings. Despite this flaw, the text is interesting and instructive, and the individual cases detailed within the tome provide many practical examples of how arcanological principles can be used to solve such quandaries as missing persons, hauntings, instances of demonic possession, theft, magical arson, murder, and conspiracy. Individuals who study this text for a minimum of seven weeks earn a bonus of +1 on the skill Arcanology.

Difficulty: -7

Experience: 3

Value: 50,000 gold lumens.

Magian's Notebooks: Twenty-one in number, these loose-bound folios contain insights, observations and methodologies credited to the famed arcanologist. Any one of these books would be worth a small fortune were it not that Magian's writings are completely unintelligible, and are obscured by watermarks, stains, accumulated grime and, of course, degradation from age. As such, they are practically impossible to read. It has been speculated that, if there was some way to render these books legible, the information gleaned from them would be sufficient to improve the reader's skill in Arcanology by +2. Unfortunately, no-one has yet found a way to transcribe these texts to a more readable format. To date, six of the twenty-one folios have been recovered, while it is believed that a full ten were destroyed during the burning of the Library of Badijan.

Difficulty: -7 to read a legible version, if there were one available.

Experience: 2 each

Value: Only 2,000 gold lumens apiece, due to ruined condition.

MALDERON

The Modest Master

Misconceptions abound regarding Malderon. Such was his modesty and unassuming nature that he left an indeterminate mark upon history; many of his achievements have been attributed to other magicians and in some cases, outright claimed by other spellweavers. Such is the confusion around the exact dates of his life that many scholars believed he was a magician of the New Age, until the Cymrillian discovery of the Archaen Codex revealed that Malderon had been involved in notable correspondences with members of the Archaen Cabal, and on numerous occasions had assisted them in experiments.

Malderon was apparently a fickle and inconstant fellow, for what texts do speak of his refer to a man with a thousand pastimes all demanding his attention. He dabbled in horticulture, wrote extensively on the subject of pseudo-psychic phenomena, travelled infrequently and irregularly, and amassed a sizeable collection of varying styles of headwear, ranging from Forgotten Age relics to Sub-Men ritual crowns. The majority of his works seem to have been lost to time, and what remains is of little interest beyond its vague merit to Forgotten Age anthropologists. Malderon's most obvious legacy is the collection of hats and helms that is still proudly displayed in the Museum of Antiquities in Cymril.

ARTIFACTS

Malderon's Cabinet: This device was constructed from eleven rare hardwoods from the continent of Celadon. The cabinet measured five feet in height, three feet in width, and one foot in depth, yet was capable of holding a quantity of material equal to a storeroom ten times this size. This seemingly miraculous feat was made possible by a form of enchantment that caused any nonliving thing placed within the cabinet to be reduced to a tenth of its normal size. Removing any article from the cabinet caused it to expand to its original size. Malderon was said to have kept a large collection of books, wizardly paraphernalia, his wardrobe, and a selection of fine liquors inside his cabinet which has never been found. This artifact is valued at 75,000 gold lumens, not including the possible contents within.

Malderon's Hat Collection: Malderon's hobby of collecting headwear became something of an obsession in his later years. Though his peers attributed this odd predilection to advancing senility, there was a method to Malderon's apparent madness, for many of his hats

possessed useful magical virtues. The following hats are on display in the Lyceum Arcanum in the crystal city of Cymril, though many more are believed to exist. Various types included in his collection are as follows:

Weatherproof: This hat emanates an elemental aura that protects not just the wearer's head, but also his or her entire body from the effects of any type of inclement weather. It is valued at 6,000 gold lumens.

Inconspicuous: This wide-brimmed hat is imbued with a minor enchantment that allows the wearer to blend into any crowd (-5 to detect), and is an effective deterrent against spies and bill collectors. It is valued at 8,000 gold lumens.

Thinking Cap: This conical hat increases the wearer's powers of intellect (+2 INT). It is valued at 12,000 gold lumens.

Charismatic: This flamboyant hat is charged with a glamour that enhances the wearer's overall appearance and presence (+2 CHA). It is valued at 4,000 gold lumens.

Watch: This hat increases the wearer's powers of perception and general alertness (+2 PER). It is valued at 6,000 gold lumens, partly due to the elaborate gold weave used in its creation.

Magician's Hat: This hat contains a pocket dimension, and will hold up to 5 x 5 x 5 feet of materials. Objects stored within can be retrieved by removing the hat, reaching in and bringing forth the desired item. It is valued at 10,000 gold lumens.

Adjustable Hat: This can be made to expand or contract on command to fit any head size. Aside from this, the hat possesses no other known virtues. It is valued at 500 gold lumens, primarily as an antique curiosity.

Magic Mirrors: These enchanted dressing mirrors were always made in pairs, each of which was enchanted with the spell Malderon's Magic Portal. One mirror serves as an entrance, and the other as an exit. It is not possible to enter and exit from the same mirror, as these devices only function as one-way portals.

Range: By touch

Duration: Indefinite

Magic Resistance: Roll versus PER to detect a Magic Portal and thereby avoid entering it by accident. It should be noted that a damaged Magic Mirror may transport individuals at random to strange and unknown locales.

Magic Pipe: This ornate pipe, carved from a sea dragon's fang, is imbued with a 10th-level version of the spell

Unbreakable Rings. When filled with dry herbs of any sort and lit, the pipe produces up to ten magical smoke rings that may be directed to encircle and confine any creature, being or object. The maximum diameter of the rings cannot exceed twenty feet.

Magic Vial: This device is a brass vial three inches in height with a stopper made of green glass. The inside of the vial is invested with a 10th-level version of the spell Malderon's Mists. When the glass stopper is removed, a quantity of mist is produced that can be made to cause one of the spell's effects. The quantity of mist created cannot exceed 10 x 10 x 10 feet. The mists are stationary, though the magical vapors can be moved or dispersed by winds. The color of the mists is variable, according to the caster's designs.

MAGICAL TEXTS

The Enchanter's Omnibus: This valuable compendium is considered the best practical reference on the creation of enchanted items of all sorts. Individuals who master the text gain a +1 increase in the skill Enchant Items and receive the same bonus when attempting to research new magical items.

Difficulty: -10

Experience: 3

Value: 200-2,000 gold lumens, depending on the age of the edition; *The Enchanter's Omnibus* has seen many printings, and is a fairly common magical text.

ANCIENT SPELLS

Magic Portal

This unusual spell allows the caster to create a magical door that may range in height from 1-8 feet and in width from 1-4 feet, at the caster's discretion. The portal may appear as a common wooden or metal door, a curtain, or even a mirror. Exactly where a magical portal will lead is up to the caster to determine. The choices include:

1. Nowhere. This was Malderon's rather quaint name for the Void, a dark dimension with no substance. While Malderon claimed that he often hid here to avoid the unwanted attentions of peddlers and visiting relatives, individuals who do not possess the ability to travel from one dimension to another will become trapped in the Void if they pass through the one-way door.

2. Through any solid or semisolid substance, including stone, earth, wood, metal, glass, sand, mud and so on. In this instance, the depth of the opening behind the door is limited to ½ foot per level.

3. To any location where the caster has previously placed another Magic Portal, thus allowing the spell to

serve as a magical means of travelling from one location to another.

All Magic Portals are one-way doors that can only function either as entrances or exits, as the caster determines. To activate the spell, the caster traces the outline of a door in the desired location and utters Malderon's incantation.

Magical Field: Wizardry (summon)

Difficulty: -8 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: 1 foot per level

Duration: Duration is normally limited to one hour per level. Such is the utility of this spell that magicians often use Koraq's Perdurable Enchantment to create Magic Portals of long-lasting duration, forming a convenient means of access to various places.

Magic Resistance: Roll versus PER to detect a Magic Portal and thereby avoid entering it by accident. It should be noted that a miscast Magic Portal can lead to unpleasant consequences of various sorts, including interdimensional rifts and gates into bizarre locales.

Dispose

This practical spell produces an extradimensional hole into which the caster may dump unwanted trash or other items. The hole can then be closed at the caster's command, and its contents will be dumped into extradimensional space. The diameter of the hole cannot exceed two inches per level of the spell.

Magical Field: Wizardry (summon)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: 1 foot

Duration: 1 minute (-1 per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: None

Retrieve

Evidently Malderon often found he had left his home and forgotten to bring along some small but important article; at least, such a tale would explain this curious spell. When cast, this enchantment conjures forth a magical creation resembling a servitor imp, which may be dispatched to retrieve the forgotten item at once. The conjured imp travels through extradimensional space and can move at a rate of up to ten miles per round. The maximum weight of the article to be retrieved cannot exceed twenty pounds. It is important to note that the imp will not retrieve any item that is not actually owned by the caster.

Magical Field: Wizardry (summon)

Difficulty: -5

Range: Casting range is 1 foot; the imp's range is a circle of 20 miles in diameter per level of the spell, centered on the caster. Should the caster move beyond the spell's maximum range, the retrieved item will be lost in extradimensional space.

Duration: 1 round per level

Malderon's Mists

This spell enables the caster to create a quantity of magical mists than can be made to cause one of the following effects:

Obscure Vision: The mists created will be impenetrable by any means of detection, including scrying devices.

Sleep: Individuals who fall victim to these mists cannot be awakened until the effects of the enchantment wear off or are countered by magical or alchemical means.

Forgetfulness: Individuals who fall victim to these mists will become confused and disorientated, unsure of who they are, where they are, or what they were doing prior to the mists. Until the mists' effects wear off or are dispelled, such victims will be unable to remember any previously known skills, talents, or abilities requiring conscious thought. For all intents and purposes, they will have a skill rating of 0; attribute scores or natural abilities are not affected by this enchantment.

The quantity of mists created by this spell cannot exceed 10 x 10 x 10 feet. The mists are stationary, though the magical vapors can be moved or dispersed by magical or nonmagical winds. The color of the mists is variable according the caster's designs. To activate the spell, the caster gestures with both hands while reciting Malderon's incantation.

Magical Field: Wizardry (conjure)

Difficulty: -8 (qualitas + tractus)

Range: 50 feet (-1 per extra 10 feet)

Duration: 1 minute (-1 per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: Roll versus CON to resist magical sleep and forgetfulness.

Obedient Servant

This spell conjures forth a magical servitor of humanoid semblance that can be instructed to perform menial household chores or pack and move possessions, equipment, or other items, as desired. The items to be moved can be loaded aboard a conveyance or steed, tucked into a closet or cabinet, and so forth. The servitor can lift up to one hundred pounds and moves with considerable alacrity, neatly packing one bag, satchel, drawer or chest full of items per round. It is not capable of speech or independent action. It is noted in Malderon's accounts that Zanillo apparently used this spell when the rogue magician rifled tombs and vaults for valuable treasures.

Magical Field: Wizardry (move)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: The servitor manifests at the caster's side.

Duration: 5 rounds (-1 per extra round)

Unbreakable Rings

This spell enables the caster to conjure one or more unbreakable rings of magical energy that may be directed to encircle and confine any creature, being or object. The enchantment yields up to one ring per level, the maximum diameter of which cannot exceed two feet per level. To activate the spell, the caster points at the designated targets of the spell and utters Malderon's activating incantation.

Magical Field: Wizardry (move)

Difficulty: -10 (qualitas)

Range: 50 feet (-1 per extra 10 feet)

Duration: 5 rounds (-1 per extra round)

Magic Resistance: Roll versus DEX to dodge the rings and escape the effect.

Undo

This spell is regarded as one of the most practical cantrips ever devised. In essence, this spell will undo almost anything that has previously been done; it can dispel a spell of lesser level, mend a rip or a tear, put something that was broken back together, unravel something that has gotten tangled, unlock a lock, untie something that was tied, erase something that was written, or undo the result of a minor error or mishap. The spell cannot turn back time or cause something that did happen to "not happen"; it can merely undo the effects of whatever happened. Malderon warned against careless use of this spell, particularly at higher levels, while using this cantrip in an attempt to repair a tear in a new pair of silk breeches, the wizard inadvertently caused the entire garment to unravel in a pile of thread.

According to Malderon, the level at which this spell is cast determines its general degree of efficacy, which the wizard rated as follows:

Level	Capabilities
1-5	Limited to very minor matters only.
6-10	Limited to matters of below average complexity.
11-15	Limited to matters of average complexity.
16-20	Limited to matters of above average complexity.
21-29	Limited to matters of great complexity.
30+	Most everything else, though miracles should not be expected.

Magical Field: Wizardry (heal)

Difficulty: -0 to -15 (qualitas)

Range: By touch

Duration: Indefinite

MIRAJA

The Perfect Creation

Scholars of the Archaen Empire know Miraja as the after-image of the illusionist Cascal, created from his shadow to be his female counterpart and assistant. Cascal himself describes her in many of his works as the most intricate and skilful illusion ever created, and though he was clearly never one for modesty, Miraja was a being whose very existence spoke of her creator's skill. Not only capable of independent thought (which was a common enough effect when performed by illusionists in the Forgotten Age) Miraja possessed astonishing beauty and was the intellectual peer of many Archaen master magicians. Her own illusions were dazzling in their complexity, vision and scope, she devised original spells by the score, and was purported to have authored several tomes on the subject of virtual illusions – each text was regarded as a masterpiece in its time. Though lost since the Great Disaster shook the world, in recent years fragments of Miraja's work is surfacing once more and even these shards of lore stand as testament to her brilliance on the field of magic.

Interestingly enough, several Archaen master magicians wrote treatises with Miraja as the subject matter. These texts relate that Miraja believed herself to be the “real” illusionist, while Cascal was merely *her* after-image. The magicians' do not agree on the veracity of her claims, but they do make reference to Miraja making statements regarding her “illusion” and how he was created as a way for her to escape the prejudice against female magicians. Quite why a woman would reduce herself from a position of apparently mild prejudice to the position of an artificial being with no life force and no rights at all beyond any created object is a leap of logic I am not qualified to make.

ARTIFACTS

Miraja's Veils: These seven gossamer veils were each imbued with one of the properties of the spell Miraja's Illusory Veils. The veils function like the spell in all respects save one; their effects last until the veils are removed. The Dance of the Diaphonous Veils, which is practised by the Batreans of the New Age, may be attributed to legends about these articles. A complete set of veils is valued at 20,000 gold lumens.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Limitations of Virtual Illusions: This intriguing manuscript is quite unique, since it is the only book written by an illusory being. Cascal certainly promoted this view,

though Miraja claimed that Cascal was the illusion, not herself. Whatever the case, the text contains a great deal of useful information regarding the creation of virtual illusions, as well as the practical limitations of the form and a list of common problems that should be avoided. Chief among these, in the author's estimation, was “the creation of any virtual persona based upon an erotic fantasy or love interest; such figments, invested with a disproportionately large portion of their creator's emotions, may come to regard themselves as actual rather than illusory beings.” Given the discrepancies in accounts of the true natures of Miraja and Cascal, this would seem to be sound advice. Magicians who master this instructive text receive a bonus of +1 with regard to the casting of the spell Cascal's Virtual Illusion.

Difficulty: -10

Experience: 5

Value: 200,000 gold lumens

ANCIENT SPELLS

Illusory Veils

This spell allows the caster to adopt one “veil” of illusion per level of enchantment, or to do the same for a designated beneficiary. Each veil is a separate illusion that must be penetrated or dispelled before the subject's true nature can be determined. The seven illusory veils are:

Sex: The subject's gender can be altered or disguised.

Size: The subject's height and weight can be made to appear up to 50% greater or smaller, as desired.

Race: The subject's race and outward appearance, including facial features, hair color, and skin color and texture, can be magically disguised, though the subject's basic bodily shape (biped, humanoid, quadruped, avian) cannot be altered.

Age: The subject's age can be made to appear 50% younger or older.

Apparel: The subject's clothing can be magically altered or disguised as desired.

Voice: The subject's manner of speech, including accent, inflection, pitch and resonance, can be magically disguised, though the language the subject is speaking remains unchanged.

Charisma: The subject's overall presence can be magically disguised, causing him or her to appear more or less imposing or authoritative. In game terms, the subject's charisma rating can be temporarily altered by +/- 1-5.

Magical Field: Wizardry (illusion)

Difficulty: -8 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: By touch

Duration: 1 hour (-1 per extra hour)

Magic Resistance: None, though an unwilling recipient can avert being disguised by rolling versus DEX to avoid the caster's touch.

NARISHNA

Black Wizard of Torquar

Apprentice to Drax, the half-shaitan Necromancer King, Narishna eventually rose to the position himself when his master was carried away to a distant dimension by the rebel demon Zahur. Narishna continued Drax's reign of terror over the world, though his own hold on the throne was to be a shorter one than his predecessors'. Untold thousands of innocent beings, including nearly the entire Xambrian race, died as sacrifices in the fire pits of Malnagar, or as offerings in Narishna's dungeons, where the Black Wizard trafficked with demonic entities from the lower planes.

Diabolists both then and now hold conflicting views of Narishna. Some cults revere him as a visionary and genius who dared to consort with Zahur, a shaitan despised by the traditional demonic hierarchy. More traditionalist diabolists regard Narishna with contempt for his rogue dealings, citing that for all his power he missed out on true opportunities to deal with more influential demons. Both factions have stories regarding Narishna's eventual downfall, and whether or not his death at the hands of Solimorrior I was actually due to the machinations of Diabolus, the ruler of the shaitan and greatest rival of Zahur.

The remnants of Narishna's foul thoughts are recorded today in a tome known as the *Tormentia*; a massive, iron-bound book containing some of the most despicable and loathsome incantations, summonings and maledictions ever devised. It is a disturbing thought that copies exist of the *Tormentia*, even if they are merely fragments of the whole work.

MAGICAL TEXTS

The Tormentia: One of the more infamous works on black magic, within the pages of this black iron-bound tome lurk the most insidious curses, maledictions, and imprecations, some of which may pose hazardous to the incautious caster. Several chapters are devoted to the necromancer's favored techniques for the torture and interrogation of enemies. Individuals who master these techniques earn a +1 when using either skills Interrogate or Torture. The *Tormentia* also contains a number of formulae for the concoction of

exotic poisons and venoms.

Difficulty: -9

Experience: 5

Value: 5,000+ gold lumens. Copies stamped with Narishna's personal sigil are worth four times this amount.

ANCIENT SPELLS

The Black Mists of Malnagar

This dread incantation allows the caster to create a virulent cloud of black magical vapors. The volume of mist created by the spell is limited to one cubic feet per level, and the shape of the cloud is determined according to the caster's designs; grasping hands, snaking tendrils and anthropomorphic forms are especially popular. The caster can cause the black vapors to issue forth from any point within the spell's range. The mists are stationary unless the caster decides otherwise; by concentrating, the caster can cause the mists to change form, move up to ten feet per round in any desired direction, seep under doors or through keyholes, and so on.

The Black Mists can be made to cause any of the following magical effects:

Paralysis: Roll vs Will to resist

Blindness: Roll vs Per to resist

Strangulation: One victim per level can be targeted, within the range limitations of this spell. Damage is DR8.

Magical Field: Necromancy (move)

Difficulty: -8 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: 50 feet (-1 per extra 10 feet)

Duration: 5 minutes (-1 per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: Roll versus SPD to elude the mists. Note that as long as the caster maintains concentration, he or she may direct the mists to attack victims once per round for as long as such individuals remain within the range of the spell's effects. If the caster is distracted from concentrating on the spell, the mists will dissolve into nothingness.

Unending Torment

This spell enables the caster to unleash one barbed dart-like projectile per level at any single subject. The magical darts cause one point of damage apiece, and will penetrate any type of nonmagical armor or hide. Even a one-point wound will incapacitate a victim with excruciating agony, leaving a dismal burning and throbbing pain that lasts indefinitely or until a cure or counterspell can be obtained. The aptly named Unending Torment is both unrelenting and, to a certain degree, debilitating; victims suffer a penalty of -1

per each point of damage on all rolls until such time as a cure can be affected.

Magical Field: Necromancy (attack/heal)

Difficulty: -8 (qualitas + tractus)

Range: 50 feet (-1 per extra 10 feet)

Duration: See above

Magic Resistance: Roll versus DEX to dodge the magical darts. A shield may also be used to parry the projectiles. This spell is a favorite among Rajan assassin-mages, who find this enchantment has numerous practical applications.

NAUTICUS

Famed Explorer

Celadon, Temesia, Simbar, Altarus, Thanatus. These names, these vast swathes of land, might be unknown to many people of Talislanta, but it was Nauticus who first discovered these continents when he circumnavigated the world of Archaeus in his windship, the *Voyager*.

Nauticus was known for keeping meticulous (and wordy) logs of his travels across the fact of Archaeus, copies of which were later printed and sold across the Skyborne Empire. It is believed that some of his adventures were sensationalized in order to increase sales, though even the most mundane of his journeys was more than enough to enrapture a scholar with an eye for discovery.

Unfortunately, the man who made first contact with both the Neurians of Simbar and the Thane of Thanatus died in most ignoble circumstances. Some cite sabotage, others speak of the carelessness of age, but whatever the reason, Nauticus is believed to have perished when the *Voyager*'s levitationals failed and the windship fell from the sky to crash into the ground below.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Atlas of Archaeus: This rare tome is bound in sea dragon hide with brass fittings. The atlas contains maps of all seas, oceans, and major land bodies extant during the latter part of the Forgotten Age, plus notations on wind and sea currents. Though numerous copies were produced, none have ever been found. This book is currently one of the most sought after of ancient volumes; even incomplete texts would bring a high price.

Difficulty: -5

Experience: 4

Value: 100,000 gold lumens for a complete text, or 10,000+ for portions of text, if still legible.

RODINN

Fifth of the Seven

History remembers Rodinn best for his stark warnings about dire events to befall the Archaen Empire. These warnings were ignored by the second Archaen Cabal, which goes some way toward explaining why so powerful and arcane an empire was so ill-prepared for the Great Disaster.

Rodinn fell a long way before he finally died in disgrace as the “*Mad Wizard*” of Talislanta. From the heights of fame and respect as a great thaumaturge and a member of the Archaen Cabal, upon the dissolution of the original seven members, he went on to serve as the royal thaumaturge at the right hand of the Wizard King of Pompados. It was here he warned of the dangers that excessive use of magic might have on reality itself, though his theories were disregarded by his peers. His tenure in the post of royal adviser ended when scandal broke out involving Rodinn as a potential usurper to the throne, seeking to seduce the Wizard King's wife and install his own progeny upon the royal throne of Pompados. Many years after his banishment to the ground, it was subsequently proven that the entire scandal had been orchestrated by Rodinn's rival, the malice-driven Zaniilo.

Upon the surface of Talislanta, Rodinn's decline from greatness finished in devastating embarrassment. Though he was credited with devising numerous obscure thaumaturgical formulae, odd enchantments and creating unusual enchanted items to assist in day-to-day living, Rodinn considered his finest achievement to be the concoction and quantifying of the magical substance known as quintessence. Surviving notes cite the magician's belief that it could stimulate growth and health among living beings if applied in a certain, tightly-controlled manner. Whether by accident or by design (making suicide a possibility), Rodinn apparently released vast quantities of the thaumaturgic substance into the region surrounding his woodland home, with unfortunate results. Vast tracts of territory were destroyed, permanent alterations took place in the Talislantan ecology nearby, and Rodinn himself was killed in the process.

A dark end indeed for one who might have saved the world.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Experimental Thaumaturgy: Prior to his exile from the sky-city of Pompados, copies of Rodinn's renowned text were distributed to other thaumaturges. The contents,



considered radical by his peers, must in hindsight be regarded as nothing less than prescient. Rodinn anticipated the processes used to create neomorphs, and correctly identified and isolated over a hundred different types of vital essences. His assessment on the moral implications of creating neomorphs, the nature of the soul, and the responsibilities inherent in the creation of artificial life forms were largely ignored, though no less instructive.

If there is a flaw in this work it may be in the formula indicated for the creation of quintessence, which some believe would create a highly unstable substance, due to a minor mathematical error. It was this mistake, some even say, that led to the Great Disaster. While adequate precautions should be taken in this regard, Rodinn's text is highly valued by thaumaturges of the New Age. Fewer than half a dozen copies are believed to have survived the Disaster, though others may lie undiscovered in the wreckage of Phaendre windships that crashed into the swamps of Mog while en route to the Thaecean Isles.

Difficulty: -10

Experience: 5

Value: Original – 40,000 gold lumens, Copies – 9,000 gold lumens

ANCIENT SPELLS

Instant Sobriety

This minor enchantment allows the caster to negate the effects of intoxicants of any sort, rendering the beneficiary sober and alert. The enchantment enjoys a vast reputation among magicians as an effective treatment for hangovers. To activate the enchantment, the caster snaps his or her fingers and speaks a single word.

Magical Field: Wizardry (heal)

Difficulty: None, though a penalty of -1 to -10 may be applied against the caster if he or she attempts to employ this spell while intoxicated.

Range: 1 foot per level

Magic Resistance: None

Reverse: Rodinn warned against using this cantrip as a counterspell for recreational purposes, citing the unpredictable nature and duration of magically induced intoxication.

Sumptuous Repast

Widely acclaimed as one of Rodinn's finest creations, this spell allows the caster to conjure a full meal including main course, two side dishes, and liquid libation of the caster's choice, all sufficient to feed on Man-sized creature or being per spell level. The enchantment's epicurean limitations are somewhat modest, though not embarrassingly so; costly delicacies and rare vintage wines are beyond the capabilities of this spell, but the qualities of food and drink produced can generally not be faulted, and the portions are reasonably generous. Rodinn himself was partial to the green wine, rainbow kra with capers, spiced quince garnishes, and fresh fruit from the jungles of the Dark Coast. From a nutritional standpoint, the meal is more than adequate, though overindulgence can lead to gastric distress, intestinal disorders, and obesity; Rodinn recommended that the spell be employed for personal use no more than three times in a given week. To activate the spell, the caster spreads wide both hands over the area where the meal is to be served and recites Rodinn's incantation.

Magical Field: Wizardry (conjure)

Difficulty: --3 (tempus)

Duration: 1 hour or until the food is consumed (-1 per extra hour)

Magic Resistance: None. It is important to note that a miscast spell may yield tainted or spoiled food, among other unsavoury effects.

SOLIMORRION I

Slayer of Narishna

Though there was a succession of archmages – a literal dynasty, if you will – that bore the name Solimorrion, each has paled in comparison to the impact the first of the line had upon history. They also pale when their abilities and power are contrasted with Solimorrion I, though that is to be expected considering the life achievements of this particular man.

History tells us that the first of the dynasty was a prophet of high repute. As high priest of the Numenian symbolators, he embodied the virtues of kindness and piety one would expect from the religion, and was known for his great breadth of knowledge without a shred of vanity coloring his dealings with people of any rank or social station. Indeed, in a curious gesture of humility, Solimorrion claimed to have received his knowledge from divine sources, but never made claims of superiority on the matter. Texts that speak of his life and his tenure as high priest tell of a man dedicated to making the right choices to benefit his followers and causing no offence to anyone. Clearly a peaceful, benevolent scholar. This is a strange aspect to mention, considering that Solimorrion would later be singly responsible for the death of the most loathed magician of the era; Narishna, the Black Wizard.

Many religions in the New Age claim at least some minor link to Solimorrion's principles, and some claim a tighter kinship in the name of direct descent from the ancient Numenian faith. It is clear from one broad glance at current religion that some of these so-called ties are little more than misinterpretations of the great magician's prophecies, no doubt subtly twisted to suit the needs of others.

The works that have survived down the ages include symbologies, cosmologies, bestiaries and evidence of some of the most potent spells ever devised. Unfortunately, none of Solimorrion's efforts have been recovered whole, and many more are nothing more than copies and translations, but what shards remain do indeed point toward a man of incredible mental acuity.

The Phaedrants, at the dawn of the New Age, credited Solimorrion with the authorship of the definitive book on self-enlightenment, *The Seven Paths to Knowledge*. Others claim that no such book exists. Clearly, the discovery of such a text would be among the most valuable finds imaginable.

Ironically enough, because of Solimorrion's piety, his much-vaunted divine favor, and his well-documented association with beings from higher planes of existence, some priests, astrologers and archmages view the ancient high priest as a demigod. Indeed, his name, when twined with certain incantations, is still used to ward against devils, demons and lower spiritforms.

Solimorrion apparently met his end when he confronted and killed the Black Wizard of Torquaran. It is recorded that he went to this duty with a heavy heart, unable to bear any longer the suffering created by Narishna and his armies.

ARTIFACTS

Solimorrion's Ring: This ring bore the personal sigil of Solimorrion I, who used it as a seal, impressing it upon the covers of all his books and documents. Writings protected by this potent ward emanate a tangible aura of magic, an invisible field of energy that prevents them from being touched by unauthorized persons and is harmful to devils of all sorts (d20 damage if touched). Only individuals of true faith can handle items protected by the Seal of Solimorrion; others will be repelled by the invisible aura. Solimorrion's original ring is valued at 100,000 gold lumens by theosophists and collectors. A dozen rings were created for use by Solimorrion's most trusted priests; each of these is valued at 50,000 gold lumens.

Solimorrion's Star: Solimorrion I was also known to wear a sacred medallion in the form of seven-pointed star, which he claimed was anathema to devils of all types. It was reported that no devil could bear to gaze upon this sacred symbol without experiencing grave discomfort in the form of -5 on all die rolls within 20 feet of the medallion. The medallion is believed to have contributed to Solimorrion's defeat of Narishna, the Black Wizard of Torquaran. This artifact is valued at 250,000 gold lumens, and remains one of the most sought-after items in Talislantan history.

ANCIENT SPELLS

The Seven Secret Symbols of Power

This spell allows the caster to employ one of Solimorrion's seven secret symbols, which are effective versus demons, devils, shadowforms, and other extradimensional origin. The seven symbols are:

Banishment: Exiles the subject forthwith to a dimension of a caster's choice.

Stasis: Immobilizes the subject within a glowing matrix comprised of lines of pure force.

Freedom: Releases the subject from any bonds, fetters, or any other form of restraint, including charms, spells of influence, banishment, imprisonment, or an oath, provided the caster is the one who bound the subject into the oath.

Oath: Binds the subject to honour any pact or arrangement agreed to prior to the casting of the symbol. Failure to uphold the terms of the agreement will cause the subject to experience the most excruciating agonies, followed within seven days by death or dissolution.

Confinement: This symbol is used to capture and confine a designated subject in a prison of magical force, which can be made to take any form desired; mazes, brass vessels, gemstones, glass cages, and subterranean cells are among the more popular choices.

Protection: Creates a ten-foot radius circle of protection around the caster and up to six companions and creatures. This circle can be made impervious to one of the following: demons, devils, malign spiritforms, or magic. The circle is stationary.

Guardian: This potent symbol wards any room, doorway, portal, archway, or magical gate from entrance by any save the caster or individuals specifically designated as welcome within. The guardian is a paramane (see sidebar), an entity comprised of magical energy whose level is determined by the level of symbol. It is capable of speech, and resides within the area it is consigned to protect, held there by the symbol's magic. If approached, the guardian will repulse trespassers with a burst of magical energy.

Duration for each of the Seven Secret Symbols is permanent, subject to appropriate countermagics. To activate the spell, the caster stands, arms spread apart, and traces the symbol in the air or upon a solid surface while invoking Solimorrion's secret words of power; the process of tracing the symbol creates an atmospheric turbulence that may take the form of gusts of air, flashes of light, or rather noticeable disturbances in the area of the caster. A symbol's area of effect projects outward in a 10-foot diameter circle.

Magical Field: Cryptomancy (variable)

Difficulty: -15 (tempus + qualitas)

Range: Cast by touch; effective range is a 10-foot diameter circle

Duration: Indefinite

Magic Resistance: It is possible to avoid the effects of a symbol by staying out of the area, of effect or moving out of range of a magician who is casting the symbol; roll SPD in the latter case.

Solimorrion's Chains

This spell allows a caster to bind a subdued or captured foe in chains of glowing magical force. The chains render the prisoner unable to use magics or spells of any sort, and cannot be broken by physical means, though they can be broken by force of will. Solimorrion's Chains can only be cast upon an individual or creature who has been subdued, confined or held fast in some manner, or who has willingly surrendered to the caster.

Magical Field: Invocation (ward)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 minute (-1 per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: Roll versus WIL to break the magical chains of force. The level at which the spell is cast is applied as a negative modifier for this roll, and only one attempt may be made to resist.

Hieroglyph

This spell allows the caster to inscribe a symbol representing any type of beast or humanoid being upon any solid surface. Should an unauthorized person or creature approach within twenty feet of the hieroglyph, a life-sized version of the depicted creature or humanoid will appear and bar the way. The level at which the hieroglyph is cast determines the level of the conjuration and its total hit points. The hieroglyphic creature will abilities commensurate with a real creature of similar level, but will disappear once the spell's duration has lapsed or if it is destroyed. A counterspell versus symbols can also be used to cause the dissolution of the creature. Once cast, Hieroglyph will retain its powers indefinitely, until such time as someone activates the enchantment.

Magical Field: Cryptomancy (summon)

Difficulty: -5 (trigger effect)

Range: Touch

Duration: Spell effects last for 1 minute (-1 per extra minute)

SYLAN

Sixth of the Seven

Besides the Enchantress, Sylan was the only other female member of the Archaen Cabal – no real surprise in such a sexist society. Sylan could not be denied respect, however, for she was a magician of surpassing ability, and earned first the admiration, then the love, of Koraq himself. Their relationship dissolved with the birth of the child prodigy Etzel, for neither Koraq nor any other man that Sylan had lain with would admit responsibility for the baby.

It is recorded in more than one account of the Archaen Cabal's history that the birth of her daughter and the events surrounding it were crucibles that turned Sylan into a bitter and short-tempered woman.

In later years, Sylan enjoyed great success with her campaigns to recognize the legitimacy and rights of female magicians, who had previously been regarded as inferior to their male counterparts and more closely monitored when formulating spells. Modern arcanologists also attribute the creation of all-female neomorph race to the sorceress Sylan, drawing the conclusions from the notes that have survived to the New Age, and speak of experiments involving biomorphic selection and artificial insemination. It is conceivable, perhaps even likely, that the descendants of these experiments live on today as the Danuvian race.

Also credited with numerous spells of her own devising and several written works, Sylan is mentioned most often in the notes of Arkon and Koraq for her fierce dislike of the crystal-bodied visionary, who was a close friend of her lover. She apparently regarded him as one of the more chauvinistic examples of mankind, and rumours abound that at one point, Arkon's alleged metamorphosis into a woman was down to Sylan's idea of teaching him a lesson in courtesy.

ARTIFACTS

Syran's Tiara: The sorceress Sylan earned many enemies over the course of her tenure in the Archaen Cabal, with jealous rivals and prejudiced male magicians openly coveting her position and her arcane secrets. To protect herself, Sylan created an enchanted tiara made of gold and silver that rendered her proof from all forms of magical influence, mind probes, and even illusions. The value of this item is estimated at 200,000 gold lumens, a somewhat inflated figure, perhaps, but one that reflects the great rarity of any article possessed by Sylan.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Biomantics in Theory and Practice: This tome contains a clear and concise explanation of the field of study known as biomancy. Also featured are formulae, for the design of several basic somatypes that may be used as templates for the creation of neomorphs. No instructions are provided for the creation of specific types, however, as the text was primarily intended to serve as a primer for neophytes and individuals who master the text gain a rudimentary knowledge of biomancy. First editions were bound in cobalt-blue spangol and are so rare as to be almost

unknown; even the Lyceum Arcanum of Cymril does not have on in its collection. A dozen copies of the second edition, comprising fully half the total known number of these texts in existence, were destroyed during the burning of the Library of Badijan in the year 113 of the New Age.

Difficulty: -10

Experience: 3

Value: 8,200 gold lumens.

Women and Magic: This book is identifiable by a scarlet cover embossed with golden sigils. Sylan, known as a defender of the rights of female magicians, wrote this early in her tenure on the Archaen Cabal. It was her contention that the male magicians of Archaeus had conspired to keep their female counterparts from attaining the recognition and influence that was rightfully theirs. She claimed that magicians such as the Enchantress, Miraja, and herself were the equals of any male magician, and cited as evidence many examples of their achievements. Among these were examples of Sylan's own spells, plus rare enchantments created by such female magicians as Lircolais, Dujune, Gyre, and others long since forgotten.

The publication of Sylan's book was met with indifference by most male magicians, who generally regarded it as a radical feminist tract of little intrinsic merit, thereby proving Sylan's point. Few copies were produced, and the book quickly faded into obscurity. In the New Age, Sylan's book is among the most sought after of arcane works, for it is believed to contain many forgotten spells, the majority of which can be found nowhere else.

Difficulty: -10

Experience: 5

Value: 150,000 gold lumens

ANCIENT SPELLS

De-Magick

Syran evidently found this all-purpose spell a great utility when exploring ancient ruins and crypts. This spell can be used to temporarily suspend the effects of any type of symbol, aura, magical barrier, enchanted item, or ward. The suspension lasts for only one round, after which the de-magicked subject will once again regain its previous capabilities. The de-magicking properties of this enchantment work equally well upon all forms of magic, with the level at which the spell is being cast determining the extent of its effectiveness.

Magical Field: Wizardry (ward)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: 1 foot

Duration: 1 round

Magic Resistance: Play as a resisted roll, comparing the level of the subject that is to be de-magicked as a negative modifier with the level at which the spell is cast.

Re-Magick

This spell enables the caster to restore spent charges from any enchanted item. In order to be effective, the spell must be cast at the same level as the item that is to be re-magicked. One spent charge can be restored per each casting of this spell, up to the item's maximum number of charges.

Magical Field: Wizardry (enchant)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: Touch

Duration: Indefinite, or until the charge is spent once more

Instantaneous Transport

This spell, written jointly by Sytan and Koraq, enables the caster to travel instantly from one locale to another, or to transport another individual. The maximum distance that may be covered cannot exceed 100 miles per spell level. The point of arrival must be well known to the caster; if not, he or she may materialize in an inconvenient or even dangerous location. Note that only one person can be the beneficiary of this spell. The spell can only be cast by touch, and has no interdimensional capabilities.

Magical Field: Wizardry (summon)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: 100 miles per spell level

Duration: Instantaneous

Magic Resistance: None, unless the subject is unwilling; in this case, roll versus DEX to avoid being touched.

THAUMASTE

Creator of Life

Thaumaste is rightly hailed as true genius in the realm of biomancy, for it was through his art that several neomorph species were brought into existence. No other man in Talislantan history can claim success in the sheer amount of life brought to the world. Though he was regarded as a mediocre spellcaster in other paths of study, Thaumaste was unparalleled in his chosen field of expertise. From his laboratories on Pompados, he designed and bred many forms of species for the amusement and gratification of his clients, who paid him lavish sums to meet their needs. The Bodor, Monads, Thiasians and Yassan all appear to descend from Thaumaste's original creations, and many more share similar, if less obvious, links to the great biomaner.

His greatest authorial achievement came in the publication of his accumulated (and no doubt heavily edited) notes, in a compendium detailing the various processes used to create neomorphs. Copies of this text are rare and understandably worth a fortune. Even the Lyceum Arcanum does not have access to a complete text, and the custodians of the lore vaults would pay handsomely for the completion of their copy.

MAGICAL TEXTS

The Neomorphica: Regarded in its day as the ultimate reference work on the subject of neomorphs, The Neomorphica provides detailed instructions on the creation of artificial lifeforms using the principles of biomancy. Over three dozen neomorphic types are described, along with the corresponding formulae required to create such organisms. A valuable addition is the index of essences, which includes notes on synthesizing a number of subtle variations on common types. As mentioned, a complete copy of the work has never been found, though some fragments of the text may be sufficient to bestow upon the reader a rudimentary knowledge of the skill Create Neomorph. Other less revealing portions of the text are still valued as curios.

Difficulty: -12

Experience: 4

Value: Full copy - 32,000 gold lumens, Fragments - 800-2,300 gold lumens

VIRIDIAN

Koraq's Artificial Counterpart

Like Miraja (or Cascal, depending on which story you believe) Viridian was not a true person, but rather an artificial being. In this instance, the being was a simulacrum created by Koraq in his own likeness and imbued with an intellectual matrix modelled upon in the great sorcerer's own extraordinary mental faculties. However, a curious flaw in the process caused Viridian to prefer the company of plants to that of people; a peculiar trait that led the simulacrum to adopt a green-skinned, grassy-haired appearance, and eventually drove him to dwell alone in a palatial botanical garden of his own design. Yet so alike were creator and creation that the two were said to share a portion of the same consciousness.

Though he was a prolific designer of original spells, Viridian's true renown emanated from his creation of over a hundred distinct species of plantlife, from trees to grasses

and shrubs. Many continue to flourish in the present age, such as the yellow stickler, contrary vine, whispbane and the viridia plant. Many of his creations were “archived” in the Archaeus Project, and it might be possible to reintroduce any extinct types of plantlife if the ruins of Elande were ever uncovered.

Viridian also wrote extensively on the subject of hybrid and sentient plants, notably claiming to have bred the race called Green Men from cuttings. His writings are understandably treasured by botanists, botanomancers, horticulturists and naturalists, particularly in Vardune in the Seven Kingdoms, where Viridian is regarded as something of a national hero by the Aeriad. The most comprehensive collection of Viridian’s work can be found in that nation today, within a sealed vault in the capital of Vashay.

ARTIFACTS

Viridian’s Seeds: The simulacrum’s preference for the company of plants to men is well-known, and to this end, Viridian devised numerous species of plantlife to keep him company, or for the amusement of his other plant companions. At Koraq’s request Viridian sent several dozen phials of seeds to Paz, Koraq’s floating domus. Mysteriously, some never arrived, and were apparently lost in transit. The rogue magician Zanillo remains a prime suspect regarding the missing seeds, which have never been found to this day. A single phial of seven seeds, identifiable by Viridian’s seal engraved upon the lid, is valued at 10,000 gold lumens, more if the contents of the phial prove particularly rare or unusual.

MAGICAL TEXTS

The Florilegium: Viridian’s masterful compendium features a comprehensive listing of all known plant types and their properties and attributes, plus specific recommendations on the care, transplanting and cultivation of the most useful varieties of herbs, plants, shrubs and trees. In its original format, the *Florilegium* was a single, immense volume weighing close to one hundred pounds. Subsequent editions were produced in more manageable sets of four volumes. Volumes 1, 2 and 3 are general reference works (+1 increase in the skill Agriculturalist per each volume mastered); Volume 4 contains formulae for the creation of hybrid plant species (+2 bonus to magic rating for the botanomantic spell Botanomantic Hybridization). Since Viridian was Koraq’s simulacrum, his works are similarly complex and difficult to master.

Difficulty: -5 for the first three volumes, -10 for the fourth

Experience: 3 per volume

Value: 10,000+ gold lumens per volume; the original, single-volume text is so rare that a copy may command more than 100,000 gold lumens.

The Green World: This uncanny book offers truly rare insights into the elemental world of plants. The text includes a listing of sub-elemental types, with information on the attributes and tendencies of the most common sorts. The most unusual feature of the book is a forty-page chapter filled with maps of the various regions within the Green World, each a mind-boggling maze of lines, symbols and inscriptions. Individuals who successfully master the complex text and accompanying charts will be able to travel throughout the Green World without fear of becoming lost or disoriented.

Difficulty: -10

Experience: 5

Value: 3,000-12,000 gold lumens, depending upon age and condition.

Theoretical Botanomancy: This is the seminal work on the magical field of botanomancy, covering the basic spells, concepts and teachings on the subject. It is an invaluable reference to both the neophyte and to the experienced botanomancer alike, which is no surprise considering the author of the work. A small number of first editions were produced and are believed to have contained 1-3 exceedingly rare spells. Mastery of the text takes 14 weeks and yields a +1 increase in the field of botanomancy.

Difficulty: -8

Experience: 2

Value: Up to 120,000 gold lumens in Vardune, and about half this value elsewhere. Volumes containing rare spells can bring an additional 20,000 gold lumens.

Ancient Spells

Elemental Aura

This spell allows the caster to be enveloped in a shimmering aura of elemental energy that confers protection against nonmagical forces of an elemental nature, including extremes of heat or cold, fire, drowning, mists, gases, winds, plant or animal secretions or exhalations, and so forth. An Elemental Aura does not afford protection from physical attacks, mystic forces, or magical energy, nor is it proof from illusions.

Magical Field: Natural Magic (ward)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 hour (-1 per extra hour)

Magical Resistance: None. Viridian’s Elemental Aura cannot be used in conjunction with any other aura or

shield. In appearance, the aura resembles other magical auras, specifically those designed by Koraq.

Green World

This spell allows the caster to pass into the elemental plane and to converse with the sub-elemental entities that dwell within all manner of plantlife. By traversing the “inner space” of this dimension, the caster can cover a correspondingly great distance on the material plane; according to Viridian’s computations, one mile on the elemental plane is equal to one hundred miles on the material plane. If desired, the caster may bring one additional individual along per every five spell levels. To activate the spell, the caster speaks Viridian’s enabling incantation; a pattern of magical forces will appear, converging into an aperture leading into the Green World.

Magical Field: Natural Magic (summon)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: 1 foot per level

Duration: The entrance remains open for one minute (-1 Difficulty per extra minute), unless the caster opts to close it before the time elapses.

Magic Resistance: None. Individuals using this spell should be aware that the Green World is populated by numerous elemental entities, some few of which may exhibit hostile intentions towards intruders who venture into their domains without clear permission.

XANADAS

Last of the Seven

The greatest savant and clairvoyant of the first Archaen Cabal – making him one of the greatest savants of all time – Xanadas served as the Cabal’s chronicler, recording all events of note for posterity. Xanadas’ work also involved detailing and perfecting several forms of divination, apparently including the use of the enchanted Zoda deck. It is known that he often performed auguries for both the Archaen Cabal and private clients, and is believed to have worked with Rodinn in predicting both the Age of Decline and the Great Disaster.

With the dissolution of the first Archaen Cabal, Xanadas abandoned the sky cities and isolated himself from his peers within his mountaintop sanctum atop the spire of Mount Mandu. Here, he chronicled the events of the Fourth Millennium, assisted by a small cult of devoted followers, and continued to support himself by performing private divinations for other Archaens in exchange for supplies or gold. As the years passed, he grew increasingly frustrated and disillusioned with the decline of the empire, and he is

recorded as leaving Talislanta before the Great Disaster, after telling his followers that he would one day return. The descendants of these loyal loremasters and chroniclers continue to maintain their lonely vigil to the present day, recording the history of Talislanta while they await the return of their master.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Chronicles of the Second and Third Millennia: Each volume of this series of twenty massive tomes covers a single century of Talislantan history. Xanadas himself did none of the writing, but dictated the text to his loyal followers, who performed the immense and laborious task of inscribing and illustrating each page of the script. The original copies remain in the archives of the Temple of the Seven Moons, which resides atop Mount Mandu. They are available for study to serious historical scholars, though one must travel to the temple in order to make arrangements to view the texts. Each volume requires fourteen weeks of uninterrupted study to master, and yields a bonus of +1 on the scholarly talent Talislantan History.

Difficulty: -7

Experience: 2 per volume

Value: Originals – 12,000 gold lumens per volume, Copies – 300-1,200 ea. Depending on antiquity

ZANILLO

The Malicious Rogue

Noted in conflicting accounts as the contemporary, the apprentice, and in one case the brother, of Rodinn, Zanillo was a magician who gathered renown for his elaborate pranks and scandals. Rodinn and the others of the Archaen Cabal seemed to have considered him little more than an infantile charlatan, yet Zanillo is known to have amazed many magicians by recording his own spells in a code so abstract and convoluted that none could decipher them. Clearly there was some arcane skill behind his appearance of the spiteful prankster, despite the fact that he used his magical talents to do little more than fleece the gullible and engineer the downfall of his more talented rivals.

Zanillo apparently rankled at being refused entry to the original Archaen Cabal, and it is recorded in several journals and accounts that he became a staunch ally of the blind and ignorant second incarnation once the original members had stepped down. They evidently forgave Zanillo for his crimes and faults, even when Magian proved to the council that Rodinn’s scandal was a fiction created by the childish prankster out of spite and jealousy.



Despite a host of works, the only one to ever reach anything approaching acclaim was *Legerdemain*, which was essentially a collection of cantrips, petty tricks and related banalities; one might suppose it is invaluable for the more pathetic elements of criminal society, but it is certainly of no value to a true magician beyond its worth as an antique.

Zanillo likely died in Locus during the Great Disaster, when the city and its ruling council of pretenders were hurled into space by the storm of magical energy. I doubt any living being shed a tear at his loss.

Magical Texts

Legerdemain: The fabulous Zanillo, charlatan supreme of ancient times, authored this eccentric tome. The text is written in no less than eleven different ciphers, ranging in degree of difficulty from level 2 to level 20. Each of the book's five chapters contains some of Zanillo's catnips, tricks, tips, or banalities; the charlatan was especially fond of practical jokes. *Legerdemain* is considered an invaluable handbook for charlatans, mountebanks, rogues, and other miscreants, and as such is in great demand. Not surprisingly, given the book's subject matter, fraudulent copies of

Zanillo's work proliferate in many regions.

Difficulty: -1-20, varying according to the type of cipher used.

Experience: 5 per chapter.

Value: 100-2,000 gold lumens, depending on the quality of the edition; *Legerdemain* has been produced in numerous formats, some of especially slipshod quality.

ANCIENT SPELLS

Aura of Enhancement

This minor enchantment allows the caster to magically improve the perceived value of any relatively small item or article of clothing. The illusory quality of this enchantment causes the affected article to appear of the highest quality, and consequently more valuable. One article may be enhanced per spell level, and the duration is one hour. To activate the enchantment, the caster must touch the designated item or items while reciting Zanillo's enhancing cantrip.

Magical Field: Wizardry (illusion)

Difficulty: -6 (tempus)

Range: Touch

Duration: 5 hours

Magic Resistance: Roll versus PER to determine the true value of the enchanted items.

Reverse: The reverse of this spell, called Zanillo's Mundane Aura, causes affected items to appear to be of unexceptional or low quality, and is of some use in disguising the true worth of valuable items.

Clever Exchange

This minor enchantment allows the caster to conjure a replica of any small handheld item and substitute it for the original item. To activate the enchantment, the subject must touch or brush up against the item to be pilfered, perform a secret hand gesture, and mumble Zanillo's brief cantrip; the false item will be exchanged for the real item in the wink of an eye. If the caster also possesses the thieving skill *Swipe*, add his or her skill level as a bonus when casting this spell.

Magical Field: Wizardry (conjure or move)

Difficulty: -3 (tempus)

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 hour

Magic Resistance: Roll versus PER, but only if the victim of the exchange is closely watching the caster. If distracted in any way, the victim does not get a chance to perceive the exchange. The conjured item radiates a faint magical aura, and can be identified as a fake if subjected to magical or alchemical analysis. It will dissolve when the spell's duration has elapsed.

Extravagant Flourish

This enchantment allows the caster to create a variety of illusory effects intended to enhance his or her personal appearance, presence or seeming capabilities. Types of effects are:

Brilliance: The caster seems to radiate a charismatic glow.

Eloquence: The caster's manner of speech seems to suggest that he or she is a person of distinction, suave and sophisticated compared to common folk.

Sortilege: The caster seems to emanate an aura of magic and mystery.

Flamboyance: The caster's overall appearance is artificially enhanced, giving him or her the look of a dashing adventurer.

In game terms, the enchantment confers a bonus of +1 CHA per level of the spell with regard to the specific effect only; a caster enhanced by the sortilege effect may be admired by those who regard magicians in a favorable light, held in awe by those who fear magicians, or despised by those who bear ill will towards magicians.

Magical Field: Wizardry (illusion)

Difficulty: -3 (tempus)

Range: Self

Duration: 5 minutes

Magic Resistance: Roll versus PER to discern the true qualities of the caster.

Phantasmal Felon

This useful cantrip allows the caster to conjure a diminutive, implike entity that can be directed to unlock or undo locking mechanisms, fastenings, bolts, and so on. The phantasmal felon will undo one such device per level of the spell at the rate of one mechanism per round. To activate the enchantment, the caster must approach within arm's length of the item to be unlocked execute a secret hand gesture, and utter Zanillo's activating cantrip.

Magical Field: Wizardry

Difficulty: -5

Range: 1-3 feet

Duration: one round per level

Magic Resistance: None, though certain spells or devices can be employed to foil the phantasmal felon.

Pocket Dimension

This spell enables the caster to turn any pocket, purse, sack or other aperture up to one foot in diameter into a magical opening leading into an extradimensional space. The space will be large enough to hold up to ten pounds per spell level of any type of goods or items that can fit through its opening. As the items stored within are actually in another dimension, the bearer of the pocket dimension is never encumbered by their weight or bulk. The duration of a pocket dimension is twenty-four hours, during which time items may be added or removed as desired. Articles left within the extradimensional space after the expiration the spell will be lost.

Magical Field: Wizardry (summon)

Difficulty: -11 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 day

Magic Resistance: None. If miscast, this spell may yield unhappy consequences. Zanillo himself was once assaulted by a horrific entity that emerged from a slipshod conjuration of a pocket dimension.

ZORION

Commander of the Warrior-Mages

Rather melodramatically, the ruler of Erythria took upon himself the title “Warlord”, though the Skyborne Empire engaged in no wars of note and the conflict of the era was no more than directing armies of specially-bred creatures against each other in “war games” for the amusement of sky-citizens. Zorion, despite his penchant for melodrama, was also a shrewd businessman. He lobbied the Archaen Cabal – the second, weaker incarnation of the august governing body – and petitioned that his warrior-mages be recognised as the official protectors of the sky-cities. When this was granted, Zorion was in the unique position of governing a powerful and profitable monopoly over all aspects of the military. Over the course of his life, he was credited with the design of over thirty engines of war, such as various types of siege dragons, flying battle dragons, iron scorpions and many others that have long since been forgotten and now lie as rotting hulks under centuries of neglect.

In reality, it is likely that Zorion did little more than sponsor or supervise such projects, and construction was handled by skilled artificers, alchemists and thaumaturges. Despite never achieving glory in war – and never seeing actual battle – the “Warlord” became something of a celebrity to the people of the empire, and statues of Zorion striking a noble and defiant pose in fiery red armor and a crested helm were a common sight in the sky cities.

Of note in the New Age is the peculiar beliefs of the Kang, who venerate an entity called Zoriah as a god of war. It seems likely that this is a misinterpretation of the deeds of Zorion, with the Kang being yet another neomorph race bred by the Archaens.

MAGICAL TEXTS

The Crimson Magister: This set of three books, bound in red iron and inscribed upon plates of hammered brass, was authored by Zorion himself, rather than the team of ghost-writers that usually labored to create works under his name. Written in sparse and unadorned prose, the set serves as a practical manual of magical warfare. Each volume covers a different subject area; Volume I contains the known spells of Erythrian battle magic, Volume II describes various types of land-based war machines and tactics, and Volume III covers aerial warships and tactics. These books were created to withstand the rigours of combat, and were standard issue for all Erythrian commanders. Most were

evidently lost when the sky citadel of Erythria was ruined in the Great Disaster, though a few copies may still be found scattered across the ancient ruins that litter the continents of Talislanta and Altarus.

Difficulty: -5

Experience: 5

Value: Originals: 9,000 gold lumens, Copies: 1,500 gold lumens

ANCIENT SPELLS

Battle Aura

This spell encases the caster in a full suit of battle armor comprised of shimmering arcan energy that confers +1 OR per spell level from magical bolts, enchanted weapons, and all forms of physical attack. The aura’s protective capabilities last for the duration of the spell or until counterspelled. A Battle Aura is similar to enchanted armor in function, but has no weight and does not restrict movement. The color of the armor is up to the caster to decide, though only solid or metallic colors may be used. Multiple color schemes, patterns, or “invisible armor” are not possible.

Magical Field: Erythrian Battle Magic (defend)

Difficulty: -8 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: Self

PR: +1 per spell level

Magic Resistance: None. Note that a Battle Aura does not confer protection against spells of influence, illusions, or psychic forms of attack.

Barrage

This spell allows the caster to create a number of spherical projectiles comprised of arcane force that can be hurled at distances of up to 500 feet or more. The spheres explode on contact with any solid surface or object, inflicting damage equal to the spell’s level in a 10-foot diameter. One sphere can be created and hurled each round per level of the spell.

Magical Field: Erythrian Battle Magic (attack)

Difficulty: -11 (tractus + tractus + qualitas)

Range: 500 feet

Duration: 1 round per level

Magic Resistance: Roll versus SPD to flee the blast area and take no damage; a result of a partial success means the intended target takes half the total damage.

Forceblade

This spell allows the caster to create a blade of ambient magical force that can be made to manifest in the caster’s hand or in an empty sheathe or scabbard, as desired. The

blade can be made to take the form of any normal-sized sword or knife, with the size of the weapon having no relations to the amount of damage that it is capable of causing. A forceblade is solid, but has no weight and is nonencumbering. On a successful hit, a forceblade causes damage equal to the spell level + STR bonus, as applicable. Another version of this spell, called Forcehammer, allows the caster to create a maul of glowing energy, with the same damage applied when attacking.

Magical Field: Erythrian Battle Magic (attack)

Difficulty: -8 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: Self

Duration: 5 minutes

Magic Resistance: None, though enchanted and nonmagical armor confers protection as per their normal ratings versus a forceblade.

Forcebow

This spell allows the caster to create a crossbow of arcane force that is capable of firing one arcane energy bolt per round. Each bolt is capable of causing damage equal to the spell level. The forcebow automatically reloads each time it is fired for the duration of the spell.

Magical Field: Erythrian Battle Magic (attack)

Difficulty: -6 (tractus + tempus)

Range: 500 feet (-1 per extra 100 feet)

Duration: 5 minutes

Magic Resistance: Roll DEX to dodge. A result of a partial success means the target takes half damage. Bolts from a forcebow can also be parried with a shield.

Forceshield

This spell allows the caster to create a handheld shield of glowing arcane force that can be used to block or parry magical bolts or nonmagical attacks. A Forceshield is capable of withstanding up to 20 points + 1 per level of the spell, without breaking. Any attack that causes damage beyond the Forceshield's maximum rating will cause the shield to shatter.

Magical Field: Erythrian Battle Magic (defend)

Difficulty: -8 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: Self

Duration: 5 minutes

Zorion's Last Stand

This spell was created to be used only in the most desperate situations, such as when the caster is surrounded by enemies on all sides or otherwise faced with overwhelming odds. When cast, the spell produces a barrage of arcane bolts that emanate outwards in a 50-foot diameter circle from the caster, forming a starburst pattern. The bolts will cause damage equal to the spell level to all within the area of effect, including individuals friendly to the caster and inanimate objects, provided they are in range.

Magical Field: Erythrian Battle Magic (attack)

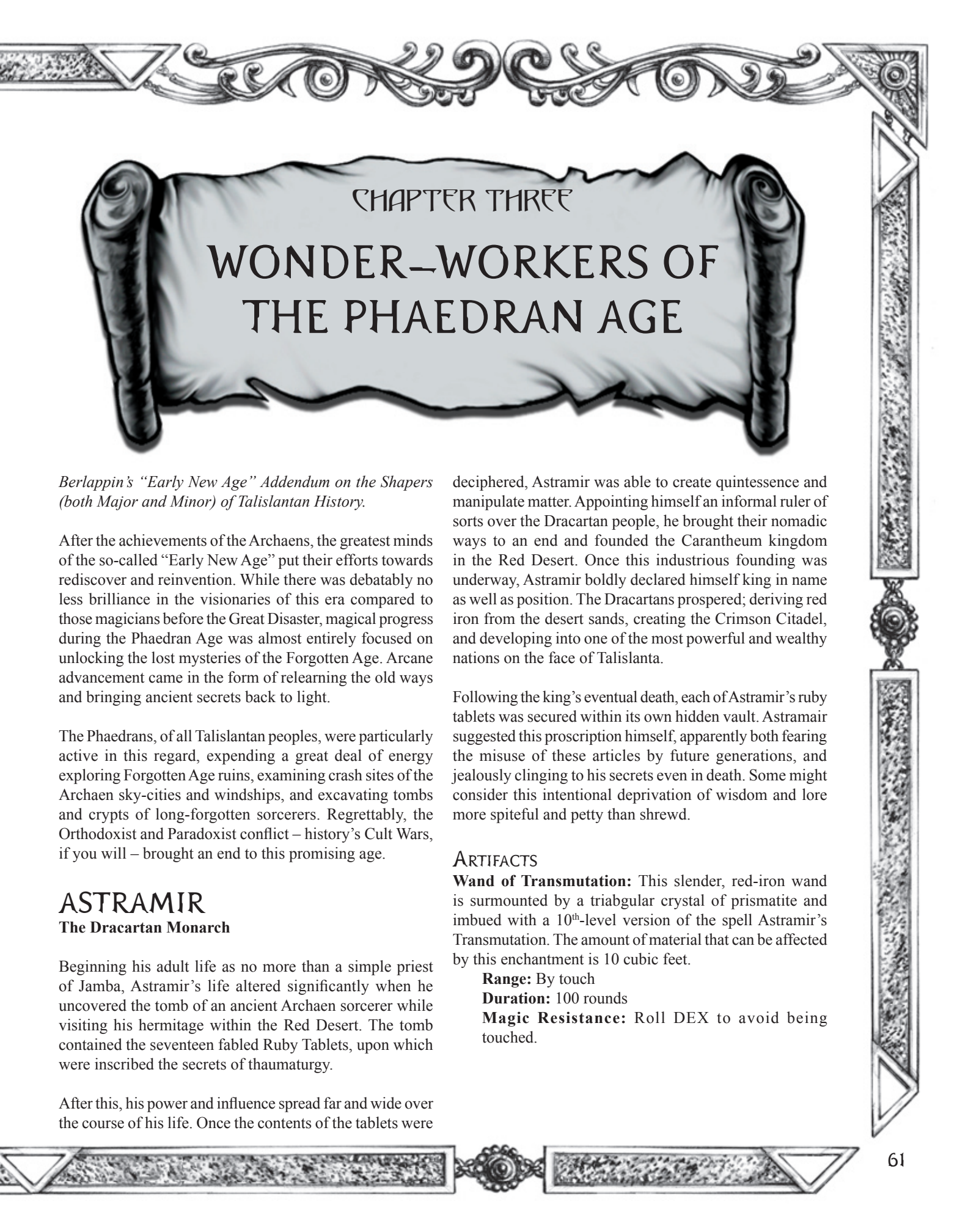
Difficulty: -6

Range: 50-foot diameter surrounding the caster

Duration: Instantaneous

Magic Resistance: Roll versus DEX at -1 per level of the spell to dodge the bolts. A partial success means that target takes half damage from the bolts.





CHAPTER THREE

WONDER-WORKERS OF THE PHAEDRAN AGE

Berlappin's "Early New Age" Addendum on the Shapers (both Major and Minor) of Talislantan History.

After the achievements of the Archaens, the greatest minds of the so-called "Early New Age" put their efforts towards rediscover and reinvention. While there was debatably no less brilliance in the visionaries of this era compared to those magicians before the Great Disaster, magical progress during the Phaedran Age was almost entirely focused on unlocking the lost mysteries of the Forgotten Age. Arcane advancement came in the form of relearning the old ways and bringing ancient secrets back to light.

The Phaedrans, of all Talislantan peoples, were particularly active in this regard, expending a great deal of energy exploring Forgotten Age ruins, examining crash sites of the Archaen sky-cities and windships, and excavating tombs and crypts of long-forgotten sorcerers. Regrettably, the Orthodoxist and Paradoxist conflict – history's Cult Wars, if you will – brought an end to this promising age.

ASTRAMIR

The Dracartan Monarch

Beginning his adult life as no more than a simple priest of Jamba, Astramir's life altered significantly when he uncovered the tomb of an ancient Archaen sorcerer while visiting his hermitage within the Red Desert. The tomb contained the seventeen fabled Ruby Tablets, upon which were inscribed the secrets of thaumaturgy.

After this, his power and influence spread far and wide over the course of his life. Once the contents of the tablets were

deciphered, Astramir was able to create quintessence and manipulate matter. Appointing himself an informal ruler of sorts over the Dracartan people, he brought their nomadic ways to an end and founded the Carantheum kingdom in the Red Desert. Once this industrious founding was underway, Astramir boldly declared himself king in name as well as position. The Dracartans prospered; deriving red iron from the desert sands, creating the Crimson Citadel, and developing into one of the most powerful and wealthy nations on the face of Talislanta.

Following the king's eventual death, each of Astramir's ruby tablets was secured within its own hidden vault. Astramir suggested this proscription himself, apparently both fearing the misuse of these articles by future generations, and jealously clinging to his secrets even in death. Some might consider this intentional deprivation of wisdom and lore more spiteful and petty than shrewd.

ARTIFACTS

Wand of Transmutation: This slender, red-iron wand is surmounted by a triabgular crystal of prismaticite and imbued with a 10th-level version of the spell Astramir's Transmutation. The amount of material that can be affected by this enchantment is 10 cubic feet.

Range: By touch

Duration: 100 rounds

Magic Resistance: Roll DEX to avoid being touched.

MAGICAL TEXTS

The Thaumaturge's Opus: This excellent reference work was penned by Astramir at the height of his career as the greatest of Dracartan thaumaturges. The text expounds on the basic principles behind the use and synthesis of essences and the basic metaphysical nature of substance and matter, subjects that are incomprehensible to all but the most comprehensive thaumaturges. Individuals trained in the field of thaumaturgy can gain a +1 increase in their ability by mastering this text. Others will find the book utterly lacking in any practical utility.

Difficulty: -10

Experience: +5

Value: 2,000-5,000 gold lumens, depending upon age and condition. Generally speaking, only thaumaturges and scholars with an interest in the field will wish to acquire this book.

THAUMATURGIC TECHNIQUES

Astramir's Thaumaturgic Analysis

This thaumaturgic technique is a more advanced version of the Quantative Analysis as performed by modern Thaumaturges in Talislanta. This allows the user to identify any substance or mixture, thereby determining its true properties. This serves as an infallible detector of poisons and toxins or the effects of an unidentified potion, among its many other practical applications. The thaumaturge must first isolate a quantity of the substance to be identified; a phial, tongs, spatula, or appropriate container of any sort will suffice for this purpose. This done, the caster waves the caduceus over the isolated sampling and recites Astramir's thaumaturgic formula, yielding a prismatic pattern that the caster may study and thereby deduce the desired information. The higher the level at which this spell is cast, the more detailed the information that can be derived will be. The analysis takes ten rounds to complete.

Magical Field: Thaumaturgy

Magic Resistance: None. Astramir's Thaumaturgic Analysis will reveal if a substance radiates magic, but is of no use in identifying or categorizing the possible applications of enchanted items.

Astramir's Transmutation

This application of Thaumaturgy allows the user to transmute the nature of any non-magical substance or material from liquid to solid, solid to liquid, solid to gas, and so on. The amount of material that can be affected by this enchantment is limited to 1 cubic foot per level of Difficulty. Thus to affect a grown man would entail a -12 Difficulty. The technique has no toxic or harmful qualities

per se, and yields unusual effects when used upon living creatures, as follows:

A living entity transmuted into gaseous or liquid form is normally able to maintain integrity and control over its substance.

A gaseous being can hover and float above the ground.

A liquefied being can seep into narrow cracks and crevices.

A solidified creature or being, transmuted to a variety of rigid carbon compounds, gains an increased resistance to damage as if wearing plate armor, but suffers a corresponding loss of mobility (-4 reduction in SPD, DEX and combat rating).

To activate the spell, the caster touched the subject with a thaumaturgic caduceus and utters Astramir's thaumaturgic word of alteration.

Magical Field: Thaumaturgy

Range: By touch

Duration: 1 minute (-1 per extra minute)

Magic Resistance: Roll versus DEX to avoid being touched. Note that incorporeal entities, having no substance, cannot be affected by this technique)

CERENE

The Snow Queen

Born during the Time of Chaos, Cerene entered the Phaedran Era as ruler of the kingdom of L'Haan on the shores of the Sea of Ice. Her people were called the Mirin; a hardy folk who looked to their queen to provide magical protection against the savage hordes of ice giants that populated the region. The people of L'Haan were also altered by Cerene's magic in order that they might adapt to their harsh environment, and were bestowed with immunities to the effects of cold and ice.

Cerene herself presided over a rebirth of magical and alchemical thought, reviving interest in the works of certain Archaens. It is believed she acquired her powers from chancing across one or more Archaen tombs or windships that had come to earth in the frozen lands. Her enemies reviled her as a cold-hearted monster, though she was obviously considered a saviour by the Mirin.

Cerene still lives to this day, evidently sustained by some kind of Archaen magic that she has neglected to share with the wider world.



ANCIENT SPELLS

Cerene's Ice Castle

This spell enables the caster to conjure an enchanted castle of ice. The amount of construction that can be created is limited to 10 x 10 x 10 feet per level. The ice castle can be created in any architectural style desired, and may include gates, arrow slits, machiolations, or towers as desired. Enclosed areas can be created, though adequate ventilation must be provided if living beings are to occupy this structure, or asphyxiation will result in 2d20 rounds. Each 10-foot section of the wall is capable of withstanding 100 points of damage before being breached.

Magical Field: Aquamancy (conjure)

Difficulty: -9

(tractus + tempus)

Range: Limited to the area surrounding the caster; when this spell is cast, the ice castle will manifest around the caster.

Duration: 1 hour

(-1 per extra hour)

Magic Resistance: None

MAGICAL TEXTS

Ice Castles: This is a manual for the creation of enchanted ice castles and palaces, authored by the white witch Cerene after many years of mastery in the field. The book contains many useful ideas, as well as general information on architectural concerns related to the design and construction of many different types of ice structures. Individuals who study this valuable handbook receive a +2 bonus on the spell Cerene's Ice Castle.

Difficulty: -5

Experience: 2

Value: 50,000 gold lumens for first editions, 600-800 for later editions.

KABROS

Koraq's Inheritor

Kabros, ever-prolific in the authorship of arcane texts, is probably the most highly regarded Talislantan magician of the New Age. His works are, in many cases, considered the authoritative texts on the subjects they speak of, and copies, transcripts and even excerpts of them are the foundations of many a magician's personal library.

Kabros was the last of the Phaedran Sorcerer Kings, and remains one of the only spellcasters ever to master the abstruse concepts of the great Koraq; indeed, Kabros names the renowned Archaen mage as an ancestor and inspiration. But despite his obvious genius, Kabros' intellect was rarely

turned to the development and design of new spells. The Sorcerer King clearly expended the greater part of his energies upon his writings, producing folios, texts, essays and treatises on a number of occult subjects, in addition to countless formulae, theories and symbols in various stages of completion, that the gifted mage apparently hoped to complete one day as time permitted.

Interestingly enough, Kabros might still be alive today. The eruption of the Cult Wars forced Kabros to move to less chaotic climes, and he was reportedly last seen some 400 years ago on the island of Thaecia.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Guide to the Lower Planes: This 30-volume set is considered the authoritative work on the subject of the lower planes. Each of the books in the series various aspects of the darkest regions of the Omniverse, including specific information on the region's physical makeup, topography, indigenous entities and organisms, and so on. The first eleven volumes are feared lost; the remaining nineteen volumes are exceedingly rare. Certain of the dark regions described in Kabros's guide are unique, and are mentioned nowhere else in occult literature.

Difficulty: -10-16

Experience: 5 per volume

Value: Volumes 12-30 are valued at 25,000 gold lumens apiece; the earlier, lost volumes would surely be worth 4-5 times this figure.

Treatise on Interdimensionality: This seventy-page paper was written by Kabros when he was still an apprentice. The text contains a perfect transcription of Koraq's Spell of Transference, which Kabros analyzes in detail, suggesting minor modifications that may be used to more accurately determine coordinates while in a dimensional nexus. The treatise is a brilliant work in its own right; spellcasters who study the text gain a bonus of +1 whenever they employ any spell with interdimensional capabilities.

Difficulty: -17

Experience: 5

Value: 7,000+ gold lumens, depending on age and condition.

Worlds Beyond Worlds: These 20 weighty tomes describe many of the parallel worlds of the material plane, including information on the world's physical makeup, indigenous flora and fauna, topography, and – where known – its history and legends. The books are considered an invaluable aid to the aspiring interdimensional traveller, and as such are greatly coveted by magicians. Kabros's work was

undoubtedly inspired by Codex Magicus, which contains a brief and far less compelling listing of various known parallel worlds.

Difficulty: -15

Experience: 3 per volume

Value: 5,000-10,000 gold lumens, depending on the age and condition of the volumes.

MORDANTE

Darkest Master of the New Age

Undoubtedly accomplished in the black arts, Mordante rose to the position of advisor to the Kral of Faradun and was a diplomat renowned for his not-so-veiled threatening demeanour. Interestingly, Mordante fancied himself a descendant of some of history's foulest sorcerers, the Torquaran rulers. If his claims to an ancient legacy ended there, one could perhaps forgive his vanity, but Mordante also insisted that he was a reincarnator, and had actually walked Talislanta as a monarch of Torquar in ages past. Some scholars point to lore that dates back to the Forgotten Age, where the last ruler of Torquar was indeed an apparently minor black magician by the name of Mordante.

Forgive my doubts, but it seems somewhat suspect that so many egotistical black magicians must insist that they are directly descended from some evil necromancer in times past. Mordante takes this cliché one step further, to its (frankly illogical) conclusion. He is not simply descended from these ancient evils – he is *one of them*.

Indeed.

Whatever his origins, Mordante's career as a diplomat was made much easier because his reputation as a coldly psychotic murderer preceded every one of his state visits. At the height of both his power and his social climb, his political enemies were reported to be loath to even to speak his name for fear of attracting his attention. Beyond this reputation of terror, Mordante's accomplishments were multifarious. He personally devised nearly two dozen searing attack spells, catalogued entire volumes of curses and maledictions, and authored several texts on some of the harshest and darkest aspects of black magic.

This particular black magician eventually disappeared from history following rumours that he was the target of Xambrian wizard hunters. Of course, such troubles would not inconvenience so mighty a "reincarnator" as Mordante.



ARTIFACTS

Rings of Summoning: These black iron rings bear the personal sigil of Mordante and were inscribed with occult symbols that indicated their specific nature. There are several different types, each imbued with one of Mordante's summoning spells. All can be activated by speaking a word of command, thereby calling the summoned creature to serve the wearer. The level and type of the rings determine their exact properties.

Duration: 10 rounds regardless of type.

Magic Resistance: None

MAGICAL TEXTS

The Black Grimoire: Perhaps the definitive modern work on black magic, Mordante's *Black Grimoire* explains all concepts associated with the dark arts, including the casting and removal of curses, the basics of summoning rituals, and communing with entities from the lower planes. The *Black Grimoire* is a superior practical guide for the aspiring black magician, and as such is an inherently dangerous work to delve into in a casual fashion. Its value as a general reference is such that magicians of many sorts employ the book as a research tool.

Difficulty: -9

Experience: 5

Value: 1,000-6,000 gold lumens, depending on which edition is being appraised. The earliest editions were

known to contain one or more of the spells Mordante used to summon pseudo-demons from the Nightmare realms.

The Necromantium: This infamous series of volumes describes in lurid detail the horrid practices of the Chana Witchfolk, the cannibal witch doctors of Pana-Ku, and other primitive magicians and necromantic cultists. There are reputed to be nine volumes in the series, each of which may present certain hazards to the incautious reader; three former librarians at the Lyceum Arcanum in Cymril are reported to have met untimely ends while perusing volume 6 of the Necromantium. The book has since been locked away in the institute's lower levels. Individuals who master any of these dark tomes gain an increase of +1 per volume in the skill Primitive Enchantment.

Difficulty: -13

Experience: 3 per volume

Value: 10,000+ gold lumens each for Volumes 3-5, twice this for Volumes 6-7 which are now quite rare. Volumes 1 and 2 are presumed lost.

ANCIENT SPELLS

Mordante's Dark Harbinger

This spell allows the caster to summon a harbinger imp, a lesser entity from the plane of Oblivion commonly employed as a bearer of ill fortune and evil omens. The harbinger imp will deliver any verbal message or relatively small item weighing up to one pound given to it by the caster. Distance is not a factor, though a harbinger imp will be reluctant to venture beyond the astral plane unless it is promised a sizeable reward.

To activate the spell, the caster traces a symbol in the air and recites Mordante's incantation. The harbinger imp will appear, awaiting its commands. The caster need only inform the harbinger imp of the identity and general location of the individual or creature for whom the message is intended, and it will be off. Note that this spell takes ten rounds to cast, though no special preparations are required to effect the summoning.

Magical Field: Invocation (summon)

Difficulty: -6

Range: Limitless

Duration: 10 rounds, sufficient time to give the harbinger imp instructions and send it on its way.

Magic Resistance: None. If miscast, Mordante's Dark Harbinger may yield consequences similar to an improperly cast Spell of Summoning.

Mordante's Frightful Minion

This spell allows the caster to summon a barbed horror, a lesser entity normally found only in the Nightmare Dimension. The barbed horror can be commanded to visit a phobia upon a designated victim, or to conceal itself in any room, alcove, chest, hole, or other area large enough to allow it to enter; a one-foot diameter opening is required for the imp-like entity to gain entry. In the former case the barbed horror will adopt an astral form and affix itself to the victim's aura. In the latter case, the horror will take material form, and will attack any intruder, designated subject, or random victim that approaches within one foot of its hiding place.

To activate the spell, the caster traces a symbol in the air and speaks Mordante's incantation. The barbed horror will appear, awaiting its commands. As these horrid creatures are not particularly mobile, the caster should summon the minion near the spot where it is to be hidden. A barbed horror will remain in hiding indefinitely, until such time as it is impelled to attack. Note that this spell takes ten rounds to cast, though no special preparations are required to affect the summoning.

Magical Field: Invocation (summon)

Difficulty: -6

Range: Limitless

Duration: Indefinite

Magic Resistance: None. If miscast, Mordante's Frightful Minion may yield consequences similar to an improperly cast Spell of Summoning.

Mordante's Nightmare Visions

This spell allows the caster to summon a number of fantasms, minor entities from the Nightmare Dimension known for their ability to cause fear. The fantasms may be commanded to attack and terrorize any subject or subjects designated by the caster. In order to activate the spell, the caster must burn a mixture of one dram of incense and one of black mushroom or black lotus while chanting Mordante's incantation. The fumes and spell forces together will induce a magical sleep that will render the caster insensible for one hour, meanwhile enabling him or her to extend a psychoc summons into the Nightmare Dimension. One fantasm per level will answer the caster's summons and respond to his or her commands. The caster will be able to visualize all that transpires, and can direct the fantasms to attack any subject or group of subjects desired. Range is unlimited, though interdimensional control of the summoned fantasms is not possible. Only level one fantasms will respond to the summons. Note that this spell takes ten rounds to cast, though no special preparations are required to effect the summoning.

Magical Field: Invocation

Difficulty: -6

Range: Limitless

Duration: 1 round per level

Magic Resistance: None. If miscast, Mordante's Nightmare Visions can lead to dire consequences, including terrifying nightmares, possession, or the direct intervention of the horrific entity known as Noman, ruler of the Nightmare Dimension.

Mordante's Nocturnal Menace

This spell allows the caster to summon a nightstalker, a frightful lesser entity from the Nightmare Realm capable of attacking living creatures on the material plane by invading their dreams in astral form. The spell is particularly useful, as there is no need to observe the strictures and procedures normally associated with summoning spells. Mordante's name alone is enough to compel the nightstalker to obey, by reason of a pact struck between these creatures and the black magician himself. In accordance with this pact, a nightstalker can only be summoned after dark.

To activate the spell, the caster traces a symbol in the air while speaking Mordante's arcane incantation. The nightstalker will appear as a cloud of acrid vapor, awaiting the caster's command. The caster need only inform the nightstalker of the chosen victim's identity and location, and it will obey. Note that this spell takes 10 rounds to cast, but requires no special preparations beforehand.

Magical Field: Invocation (summon)

Difficulty: -6

Range: Limitless

Duration: 1 round per level

Magic Resistance: None. If miscast, Mordante's Nocturnal Menace may yield consequences similar to an improperly cast Spell of Summoning.

Mordante's Unseen Agency

This spell allows the caster to summon a fiend, an insidious minor entity from the Nightmare Dimension notable for its ability to blend unseen into darkness or shadow. A fiend will usually serve only as a spy, observing the intended subject or subjects for up to one day per level of the spell, then reporting back to the caster. If promised a sizeable reward, a fiend may additionally consent to steal an item for the caster, but only if it can do so without great risk to itself.

To activate the spell, the caster traces a symbol in the air and recites Mordante's incantation. The fiend will appear, awaiting its commands. The caster need only inform the fiend of the subject's identity and general location, and it will obey. Note that this spell takes ten rounds to cast, though no special preparations are required to effect the summoning.

Magical Field: Invocation (summon)

Difficulty: -6

Range: Limitless

Duration: 1 round per level

Magic Resistance: None. If miscast, Mordante's Unseen Agency may yield consequences similar to an improperly cast Spell of Summoning.

Mordante's Winged Servant

This spell allows the caster to summon a bat manta, a winged creature from the astral plane. The bat manta will consent to carry the caster and any other individuals, creatures, goods, or equipment weighing up to a total of one half-ton to any location on the plane to which it was summoned. It can travel up to one hundred miles in an hour's time, and will serve for one hour per level of the spell. If left unattended for any length of time, a bat manta may return to its home plane. A level four bat manta will always respond to this summons.

To activate the spell, the caste traces a symbol in the air and recites Mordante's incantation. The bat manta will appear, awaiting its instructions. Note that this spell takes ten rounds to cast, though no special preparations are required to effect the summoning.

Magical Field: Invocation (summon)

Difficulty: -12 (tempus)

Range: Limitless

Duration: 1 day

SASSAN

The Unstable Fire-Mage

Historical and biographical works that mention Sassan generally refer to him as an extravagant and foppish individual whose only talents lay in the arcane arts. Some texts also indicate that Sassan bordered on mental instability, particularly in the sense that he suffered from pyromania. No legal charges were ever brought against the magician, however; at least, none that have survived on record.

Sassan became renowned primarily because of an oversensitive attitude. When he found himself disparaged or slighted by his peers, he would endeavor to challenge his detractors in formal arcane duels. As a keen designer of flame-born offensive spells, Sassan was rarely defeated by these other mages, and became something of a popular socialite in Pheadra because of his proven prowess.

Eventually, in response to political pressure and rumored underhand dealings, Sassan was appointed "emissary"

to the Volcanic Hills region – noted for its lack of civilised population. Some sources cite this as the mage being "appointed to undertake an expedition", however. Whichever the truth of the matter, it is believed that Sassan met his end at the hands of the warlike Sauran tribes, and in absentia, his works were declared illegal. Illicit copies of his spells are still available through certain black market traders, and are much prized by magicians of many professions.

ARTIFACTS

Wand of Fire: This device resembles a wand of brilliant red iron encrusted with seven small firegems. It is invested with a 10th-level version of the spell Sassan's Fiery Motes. When activated by a secret word of command, the wand can be made to project up to 20 white-hot darts of magical fire that can be dispersed among as many as ten different targets. Each fire-mote will cause 2 points of damage to any living creature or combustible object that it strikes.

Range: 100 feet per level

Duration: Instantaneous

Magic Resistance: Roll versus DEX to dodge the motes. A result of partial success means the intended victim takes half damage, 1 point per mote.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Pyromantic Magic: This book offers rare insights into the concept of magical combustion. Certain of the experiments detailed within are rather dangerous, and should not be attempted by unskilled magicians. Copies of the first edition contain spells Sassan's Fiery Motes, and Pyromania, which were omitted from later editions.

Difficulty: -9

Experience: 5

Value: 30,000 gold lumens for authentic copies of the first edition; 10,000 gold lumens for later versions of this text.

ANCIENT SPELLS

Fiery Motes

This spell enables the caster to hurl a number of white-hot darts of magical fire up to a distance of ten feet per spell level. The total number of creatures or beings that can be targeted by the fire-specks is limited to a maximum of two per spell level, exactly the quantity of motes produced by the spell. If desired, less than the maximum number motes can be created, or the total quantity of motes can be directed at a lesser number of targets. Each fire mote will do two points of damage to any living creature or combustible

material it strikes. To activate the spell, the caster first speaks Sassan's incantation, then points with the left hand at each of the designated targets, sending forth a fusillade of fiery motes.

Magical Field: Pyromancy (attack)

Difficulty: -5 (qualitas)

Range: 50 feet

Duration: Instantaneous

Magic Resistance: Roll versus DEX to dodge the motes for no damage. A result of a partial success means the intended victim takes half damage per mote.

Pyromania

This spell causes any nonmagical item or substance to burst into flame at the caster's command. The magical flames produced will consume a one cubic foot quantity of any combustible material, even water, per every five rounds. The spell will not harm living creatures. The flames produced by this enchantment subside the moment the spell's duration has expired, but are otherwise extinguishable only by magical means. To activate the spell, the caster points with the left hand towards the intended target and utters Sassan's special word of power.

Magical Field: Pyromancy (conjure)

Difficulty: -10 (qualitas)

Range: 50 feet

Duration: Instantaneous

Magic Resistance: None

SHALADIN

The Renowned "Trapmage"

Shaladin was a Kasmiran magician of very focused (some might say *limited*) interests and talents. Showing very little skill at almost all kinds of magic, he evinced an unrivalled mastery over the ability to create wards. So focused was his ability that he claimed he was something of an artist in the area, he dedicated his entire life to refining the various processes and effects he created.

His detractors (of which there were no shortage, it seems) claimed he created no innovations of his own, instead using the salvaged lore of early Kasiran artificers, which Shaladin had apparently uncovered in some hidden tomb or vault. Shaladin never any credence to these claims and ignored them totally.

Over the course of his incredibly long and prosperous life, Shaladin created the profession of trapmage and served as royal vizier to three Kasmiran Kings, accumulating

both wealth and honours before his eventual death at age 173. Following his last wishes, he was interred within an elaborate crypt of his own design somewhere under the Red Desert, that boasted no fewer than a hundred individual traps and wards, all intended to preserve his secrets from unworthy thieves. Some histories go on to say that Shaladin's most vehement rival and detractor, Valtiere, managed to breach the wards around the tomb and loot the magician's body. Others reference this tale simply as an embellishment of biased scholars.

ARTIFACTS

Shaladin's Impregnable Vault: Shaladin designed this vault to be impervious to the best attempts of thieves. The basic design called for an outer shell of solid black iron, one foot thick and plated with adamant. The door, of similar construction, was equipped with a puzzle lock of eleven stages, six of which were trapped with some of Shaladin's most devious mechanisms. Inside was a second vault, similar in construction to the first, though smaller and with a different puzzle lock and traps. The original plans called for a third vault inside the second one, though it was the opinion of Shaladin's peers that this was overkill. A complete set of diagrams for an Impregnable Vault is valued at over 15,000 gold lumens.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Trapsmith's Compendium: There are two versions of this useful manual, which includes schematics, mechanical diagrams, and detailed notes pertaining to hundreds of different traps, wards and perils, many now believed to have been of ancient Kasiran design. The original version was written by Shaladin and was a superior reference work for trapmages; +1 increase in related skills for individuals who master this text. The second version is a somewhat less comprehensive manual for thieves, supposedly written by the vaunted criminal Valtiere, Shaladin's lifelong nemesis. The primary focus of this book is on a variety of methods used to deactivate or otherwise neutralize Shaladin's mechanisms. Individuals who master this version of the text gain a +1 increase in the skills Lockpicking and Disarm/Detect Traps. Both books are valuable references, particularly Shaladin's first edition, a few copies of which contain transcriptions of one or more of his spells.

Difficulty: -6 (Both versions)

Experience: 5 (Both versions)

Value: 100-2,000 gold lumens, depending on age and condition. First editions of Shaladin's unaltered text are exceedingly rare and may sell for up to 80,000 gold lumens.

ANCIENT SPELLS

Dimension Warp

This spell allows the caster to create an instability in the dimensional fabric, a warp that can range upwards in size from one inch to ten feet in diameter. Individuals, creatures or objects that make contact with such a warp will be sucked in and hurtled at random across the Omniverse. Subjects drawn into a warp usually suffer spatial displacement in the form of removal to another plane of existence. On rare occasions, however, a warp may spin a subject out of time, resulting in a temporal displacement or removal to another era or period in time. In either case, the duration of the displacement is indefinite. Only by locating the warp's exit point and using a counterspell can a displaced individual effect a return to his or her usual plane or time.

A Dimension Warp may be cast anywhere; in a doorway, a room, outdoors, in a chest, upon the opening of a bottle or container, and so on. Its size is irrelevant; even a one-inch warp is capable of drawing in almost anything that makes contact with it. Dimension Warps are stationary, and are barely discernible by the faint aura of distortion they emanate. To activate the spell, the caster makes an arcane gesture and speaks the nine words of power. The awesome forces generated will create a hole in the dimensional fabric, the size of which can be determined by the caster.

Magical Field: Wizardry (summon)

Difficulty: -17 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: 1 foot

Duration: Indefinite

Magic Resistance: Roll versus PER to notice the warp in time to avoid contacting it; warps radiate a strong aura of magic that can sometimes be "felt" at distances up to five feet.

Alarums & Diversions

This minor enchantment allows the caster to place a special ward upon any door, chest, container or item. If the protected item is touched by any unauthorized person or entity, including a phantasmal felon, the ward is activated, yielding one of the following effects:

1. A sound like a great gong being struck is heard.
2. An illusory spectral face of the caster's choice appears and utters an angry warning, up to seven words of the caster's choosing.
3. A nearby door designated by the caster slams shut and locks.
4. The sound of approaching footsteps is heard.
5. The warded item appears to burst into flame, an illusory effect.
6. Any single nonharmful effect devised by the caster will occur.

On additional effect can be produced every two spell levels (i.e. add one effect at levels 3, 5, 7 etc.). To activate the enchantment, the caster waves a hand over the object or item to be warded and utters Shaladin's incantation.

Magical Field: Cryptomancy (illusion or move)

Difficulty: -14 (tempys + trigger effect)

Range: Cast by touch; effective range is a 10-foot diameter circle

Duration: 5 days (-1 per extra day)

Magic Resistance: None. Note that items warded in this manner radiate a faint aura of magic.

Machinatus

This minor enchantment enables the caster to place a secret ward upon any room, hall, or enclosed area. If an unauthorized individual or creature trespasses into the protected area, the ward is activated, yielding one of the following effects:

1. A conjured harbinger imp appears to warn the caster or another individual that trespassers have entered the area.
2. A door is automatically locked or unlocked.
3. One trap mechanism of any sort located within 1000 feet of the protected area is set, reset, or otherwise activated. As part of the Machinatus, an automaton may be activated by this means.

One additional effect can be produced per 3 levels of the spell.

Magical Field: Cryptomancy (summon)

Difficulty: -17 (tractus + tempus + trigger effect)

Range: The spell's effects encompass a 1,000-foot diameter circle

Duration: 24 hours

Magic Resistance: None. Note that areas protected by this ward radiate a faint aura of magic.

Rogue's Lament

This spell allows the caster to place a minor ward upon any door, chest, container, book, or other item. If an unauthorized person or entity, including a phantasmal felon, touches or attempts to open the protected device, the intruder will suffer one point of energy damage per spell level; a one-point shock is sufficient to vaporize a phantasmal felon. The shock will also cause numbness and pain in the intruder's hand or other appendage, rendering the affected member useless for 24 hours. The ward retains its charge indefinitely until contacted by an intruder; upon discharging its energy, the ward ceases to function. To activate the enchantment, the caster passes a hand over the designated device while speaking Shaladin's cantrip.

Magical Field: Cryptomancy (attack)

Difficulty: -11 (tempus + trigger effect)

Range: Cast by touch

Duration: The spell's effects are instantaneous; its properties remain in effect for 24 hours per level

Magic Resistance: None

THYSTRAM

Savant of Phaedra

In the city of Phaedra, Thystram enjoyed wide acclaim for his authorship of several dozen useful compendia on a variety of subjects. He was often hired of short periods as an official chamberlain and tutor by many noble Phandre families, though scholars of more recent years are less uniform in their praise of Thystram's gathered lore, which some is rife with minor errors and conjecture. It seems that any claims that this man was a reincarnation of the great Xanadas seem somewhat misplaced, given this new development.

Though Thystram was credited with the development of few spells, copies of his magical compendia are greatly coveted for their accurate transcriptions of spells and formulae lost since the Forgotten Age.

ARTIFACTS

Glossolary: This talisman resembles an earring shaped like a cornucopia or funnel made from copper. Imbued with a 20th-level version of the spell Thystram's Glossolalia, it allows the wearer to comprehend to converse in unfamiliar tongues or dialects of any sort. To activate the Glossolary, the wearer speaks a secret word of command. This device can be used up to seven times a day.

Duration: 200 rounds (20 minutes)

Magic Resistance: None

Rod of Stasis: This useful device, which resembles a slender wand of translucent green crystal, was imbued with a 20th-level version of Thystram's Spell of Stasis. When activated by means of a secret command word, the rod can be used to preserve in stasis any living organism, including all manner of plants, animals and even humanoid beings. The enchantment produces an effect not unlike suspended animation, rendering the subject immobile and bringing to a halt all metabolic processes. The stasis is in no way harmful to the organism; in fact, the spell can be used to "preserve" victims of poison, disease or other maladies until such time as a cure or remedy can be applied.

Range: By touch

Duration: 24 hours per level

Magic Resistance: Roll versus DEX to avoid being touched by the rod.

Orb of Analysis: This crystal orb is invested with the spell Thystram's Proximate Analysis. When activated by a secret command word, the orb allows the wielder to identify with a reasonable degree of accuracy any living creature or organism simply by viewing it through the orb. The analysis takes ten rounds to complete. A flaw in the activating spell matrix devised by Thystram regrettably causes the orb to be less than 100 percent reliable. Still, the device will provide information as accurate as that derived by the original spell.

Range: 100 feet

Duration: 10 rounds

Magic Resistance: None, though inaccurate or unreadable information may be yielded if the organism moves out of sight range, is partially obscured, or is under an enchantment of some sort.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Collectanea: This massive tome is widely regarded as a practical guide for the aspiring naturalist. The book contains hundreds upon hundreds of entries on the flora and fauna of Talislanta, some perhaps less accurate in all details than others. Certain scholars have claimed that more than a few of Thystram's notations appear to be imaginary in nature, or else were written under the influence of strong intoxicants. Despite such drawbacks, the tome is not without value. Individuals who dedicate 12 weeks to mastering the text gain an increase of +1 in the skills Identify Flora and Fauna, Naturalism, and Agriculturalist. An abridged edition, released in Zandu in 579, is a good deal more common and hence less expensive than the previous two editions.

Difficulty: -7

Experience: 3

Value: 250 gold lumens for the recent abridged version. First and second editions, when available, sell for ten to twenty times this figure.

ANCIENT SPELLS

The Spell of Stasis

This spell is of exceedingly practical use to the aspiring naturalist, for it allows the caster to preserve in stasis any living organism, including all manner of plants, animals, and even humanoid beings. The enchantment produces an effect not unlike suspended animation, rendering the subject immobile and bringing to a halt all metabolic processes. The stasis is in no way harmful to the organism; in fact, the spell can be used to "preserve" victims of poison, disease or other maladies until such time as a cure or remedy can be applied. Thystram also found the enchantment of use in the subdual of predatory creatures, hostile natives, and such relatively minor annoyances as peddlers and bill collectors. To activate the spell, the caster points at the intended subject

and utters the arcane formula, sending a wavering beam of magical energy in the direction indicated.

Magical Field: Natural Magic (ward)

Difficulty: -16 (qualitas + tempus)

Range: 10 feet (-1 per extra 10 feet)

Duration: 1 day (-1 per extra day)

Magic Resistance: Roll versus DEX to dodge the beam. Note that a miscast Spell of Stasis can yield any number of unfavorable consequences for the caster, his or her associates, or any lifeforms in the immediate area.

Glossolalia

This spell, which Thystram probably copied from an ancient codex, allows the caster or a designated beneficiary of the enchantment to converse in unfamiliar tongues or dialects of any sort. To activate the spell, the caster touches the recipient's head with his or her right hand while reciting the incantation allegedly authored by Thystram.

Magical Field: Cryptomancy (reveal)

Difficulty: -3 (tempus)

Range: By touch

Duration: 1 hour

Magic Resistance: None

Proximate Analysis

This spell enables the caster to identify with a reasonable degree of accuracy any living creature or organism. A flaw in the spell matrix devised by Thystram regrettably causes the enchantment to be less than entirely reliable; this perhaps explains the somewhat erratic entries in Thystram's *Collectanea*. Still, the spell will unerringly reveal three of the basic following four determinations:

1. The organism's basic type, such as demon, devil, humanoid, plant, fungus, reptile, mammal, hybrid, and so on.
2. The organism's basic nature, such as predator, parasite, herbivore, omnivore, and so on.
3. The organism's primary capability or most notable feature, such as favored form of attack or defense, means of locomotion, and so on.
4. One or more secondary capabilities, associated with the designated organism, such as an attribute score, armor rating, or other relatively minor feature.

To activate the spell, the caster must be within sight of the organism to be analyzed while executing a series of motions with the hands and uttering Thystram's incantation. A matrix of lines and images is produced, which the caster may study and thereby deduce such information as the enchantment will yield. The gamemaster rolls a d4 to

determine which category of information is *not* revealed by the spell. The analysis takes 10 rounds to complete.

Magical Field: Natural Magic (reveal)

Difficulty: -3 (tractus)

Range: Sight

Duration: 1 minute

Magic Resistance: None, though inaccurate or unreadable information may be yielded if the organism moves out of sight, is partially obscured, or is under an enchantment of some sort.

URMAAN

Necromancer King of Raj

Urmaan claimed to be the reincarnation of the Black Wizard of Torquar, Narishna himself. Exhibiting many common, violent traits attributed to the long-dead mage, Urmaan served as the first and only Necromancer King of Raj. Under his merciless rule, Raj was founded upon the blood and bones of countless slaughtered nomadic tribes of the south-eastern desertlands. When his fledgling nation was well and truly on the rise, he also created the Torquar (named for the ancient society); an elite cult of Raj's military dedicated to the occult arts, assassination and torture.

Urmaan's major accomplishments in the arcane arts are mainly in the area of gathering and transcribing ancient black magic works for use in the New Age. At his command, hundreds of tombs, mausoleums and crypts were breached and looted, yielding an uncountable trove of ancient stone tablets, scrolls, carvings, images and artifacts. The



Necromancer King had this treasure horde delivered to a stronghold in the Jade Mountains, where Urmaan's forty most-skilled acolytes spent half a century studying and transcribing tomes and spells, and harnessing the magical powers of the antique items of the Archaens. At the end of this fifty-year period, Urmaan entered the sanctuary and appraised the hundred and forty volumes of work the apprentices had compiled, in addition to the three thousand chests and cases of arcane goods.

History fades into silence on just what happened next, but it seems likely that Urmaan murdered his acolytes to prevent them from threatening his position, and sealed the sanctuary forever, after removing what became known as *Urmaan's Transcripts*.

MAGICAL TEXTS

Urmaan's Transcripts: The hundred and forty-odd volumes of archaic magic Urmaan had transcribed for his pleasure have never been found. Incomplete copies, possibly smuggled out of Rajanistan before Urmaan sealed the transcripts away in his hidden vaults are reputed to exist. The contents of these books are unknown, though it is believed that many contain fabulous secrets, including knowledge suppressed in ancient times by the archmage Solimorrion I.

Difficulty: -3

Experience: 1 per volume

Value: Upwards of 10,000 gold lumens apiece.

CHAPTER FOUR

NEW MAGIC

RULES

The new magic rules presented here should be considered to supplant those in 4th edition Talislanta. While you are free to ignore them and continue using the magic system as presented there, this book and future supplements will be using these rules.

Why the change? The magic system presented in 4th edition Talislanta was wonderful, and added a great deal of free-wheeling versatility and creativity to the role of a magician in any Talislanta game. However, it didn't mesh with the original concept of magic in modern Talislanta. Magicians do not start off their career knowing hundreds of spells, charms, and cantrips. One of the driving goals of the modern magician is to uncover spells from the Phaedran Empire and the Archaen Age. Allowing the player to, in effect, make up new spells on the fly took away a great deal of the impetus for that.

SPELL DEFINITIONS

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

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

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

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

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

GUIDELINES FOR SIDE EFFECTS

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

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

To determine the level of effect of any side-effect, use one-third the spell level. The side effect level of a level 9 spell would be 3. If a side effect is sense-affecting (such as shedding light), treat the side effect as an Illusion with the effect rating becoming levels. In all cases, side effects are up to the GM to determine, using common sense.

Some example side effects:

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

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

♦ *A Wizard uses the Alter mode to enchant a sword with bonus damage. The side effect of this (and most Wizardry spells) is a glow. Treat the side effect level as levels of Illusion. Every three side effect levels affords one level of magnitude (see the description of the Illusion Mode for details.) If the enchantment was 9th level, the side effect would be level 3, which is enough for a magnitude-1 glow, “equal to a torch” according to the Illusion rules. If the enchantment was 3th level, the side effect level would be 1, which would barely be a flicker of candle light.*

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

CASTING SPELLS FROM WRITTEN WORKS

Written spells can be written in one of two ways, detailed or brief. The detailed version of a spell, such as is found in spellbooks, contains all the background, esoteric information needed for learning, researching, or enhancing a spell. The brief version, on the other hand, contains no extraneous information, merely the basic instructions for spellcasting. A modern-day analogy would be a thick math textbook compared to a crib sheet for a math test.

Spellbooks contain more than just the spells themselves. They are repositories of magical knowledge. Each spell includes notes from the author, scribbled diagrams of arcane energies, a history of unusual events that have occurred in its use, tips on how to avoid or lessen mishaps with that

spell, and more. It is for this reason that a spellbook is required when performing spell research or enhancing a spell. While it is possible to cast a spell directly from a spellbook, it is not easy because the spell is not laid out in a simple, easily-read format. Using a spellbook affords a +3 bonus to the casting roll, but requires 1 minute (10 rounds) to cast the spell.

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

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

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

The standard spellbook is roughly 400 pages, and each spell takes a number of pages equal to its Base Difficulty plus enhancement levels, if any. Arcane logbooks are spellbooks with just enough pages for a single spell. A brief, scroll-like spell entry takes 1 page.

Scrolls generally contain a single spell, though additional spells can be written on longer scrolls. Each spell after the first adds an additional round to the casting time due to having to scroll through to find the desired spell.



NEW OPTIONAL MAGIC RULES

CHANGES TO AREA EFFECT SPELLS

Dodging a spell that has an area effect is more difficult than dodging one that is a bolt or otherwise single-target. For every 1' radius the target receives a -1 to any rolls to evade the spell.

CHANGES TO HEALING

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

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

CHANGES TO WARD

Wards can be any spell level, rather than always level 10.

Wards are not absolute protection. A ward has an Armor Rating equal to 2 per spell level, and any damage that exceeds the Armor Rating damages the ward itself, not the protected person or object. Damage done to the ward reduces its Armor Rating by the same amount.

For example: A Rasmirin suffers a magical mishap while summoning a pyrodemon. He quickly activates his amulet which is enchanted with a level 10 ward against demons, five foot radius. This provides an Armor Rating of 20. Since the demon cannot do more than 20 points of damage with its normal attacks, it will not be able to break the barrier that way. If, however, the Pyrodemon can inflict 22 points with a bolt of fire, then the first successful attack would inflict 2 damage to the ward, weakening it to 18. The next successful attack would use inflict 4 damage on the ward (22 damage against the new Armor Rating of 18), reducing it to 14. The third attack would inflict 8 damage on the ward, reducing it to 6. The fourth attack would shatter the ward and leave the Rasmirin defenseless, though he would have had four rounds to prepare.

STARTING KNOWN SPELLS

Magician characters begin the game with a number of spells for each Mode equal to that Mode's rating. e.g. Coryx, a Stryx necromancer, has 3 modes at +2 each. He takes Attack, Heal, and Summon. He can choose six spells for his starting spellbook, two attack spells, two healing spells, and two summoning spells. Astrimar, a Cymrilian Magician, has 6 modes in Wizardry at +3 each, and 5 modes in Pyromancy at +1 each. His starting spellbook contains 23 spells, consisting of 18 wizardry spells (3 per mode) and 5 Pyromancy spells (1 per mode).

The starting spells may be chosen from the examples provided later in this chapter, or (at the GM's discretion) original spells may be created by the player.

ACQUIRING NEW SPELLS

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

- ▶ Studying a spellbook, a magician can learn the spells there. The base time is 1 day plus 1 day per Base Difficulty of the spell.
- ▶ Magicians can teach one another their known spells. The base time is the same time as studying from a spellbook, but in this case the roll uses the higher skill rating of the two.
- ▶ Learning a spell from a scroll or similar device has a base time of 3 days plus 3 days per Base Difficulty of the spell.
- ▶ Researching the desired spell directly has a base time of 2 weeks plus 1 week per Base Difficulty of the spell. (See the section on Spell Research.)
- ▶ In all cases, when learning a spell that has any enhancement levels (see the section on Enhanced Spells), add the enhancement levels to the Base Difficulty for purposes of time required.

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

On a mishap, treat it as a spellcasting mishap. On a failure, the magician must continue studying the spell for another

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

For example: Oriolus, a Zandir Charlatan, has come across the spell Glitterheal (a 4th level healing spell) on a scroll. His MR is +3 and his Heal Mode is +3, so he has a total of +2 to his roll to learn it (3+3-4). After 15 days of studying the scroll and practicing it, he rolls a 4, which after adding his +2 modifier is a partial success. He has made progress, and after another 15 days he may roll again, this time with a +7 to the roll. Until he learns the spell he may still use the scroll to cast the spell (see "Casting Spells from Written Works" above.)

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

BUYING SPELLS

Certain centers of magical study, such as Cymril, Zandu, and Dracarta, offer common spells on the open market. These spells range between 100 and 400 gold lumens, depending on the spell and the demand. Spells that have been enhanced through painstaking research by another magician are worth much more, if they are sold at all. In other lands, spells are available on the black market if they can be purchased at all, and prices can be ten times as much or higher.

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



NEW MAGICAL ORDERS

ASTROMANCY

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

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

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

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

ADVANTAGES

Not unlike Natural Magic, Astromancy tends to be more efficacious in open spaces. When the Astromancer is under (or in) the open sky, the GM may award a casting roll bonus of +2 to +5 depending on the circumstance (in a city street might yield a +2 while being upon a mountain top might receive the full +5).

LIMITATIONS

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



MODES

Not Available: Conjure, Transform

Bonuses: Reveal +3, Move +3

Penalties: Heal -3, Illusion -3

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

Transform Effects: N/A

Summon Effects: Like Mystics, Astromancers have the special ability to use the Summon Mode as a means of leaving their physical body and moving about on the astral plane (see the "Astral Projection" spell, below). Unlike Mystics however, Astromancers may not use the this Mode for any other purpose (no summoning of spirits, etc.)

ENCHANTMENT

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

- ☆ A broach infused with Astromantic energy that brings good fortune to the person wearing it (+1 to all skill rolls due to good luck)
- ☆ An enchanted Astrolabe that gives the Astromancer a +3 bonus to all astrology or navigate skill rolls.
- ☆ An enchanted stone infused with the powers of the purple moon of Ardan that, when surreptitiously placed upon another person will cause that person to fall deeply in love with the Astromancer.
- ☆ Sword of Zar: An enchanted sword infused with the powers of the red moon of Zar. The sword gives off a red luminescence in a 30 foot radius.

SAMPLE ASTROMANCY SPELLS

Astromantic Shield (Defend)

Duration: 5 rounds

Range: Self

Casting Modifiers: - 10 (10th level)

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

Astromantic Influences

Suns

The Greater Sun: Strength, power, self-confidence

The Lesser Sun: Aid, assistance, cooperation

Moons

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

Drome (orange): Magic, power, weather

Talisandre (white): Fortune, luck

Zar (black): Death, decay, darkness

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

Phandir (green): Destiny, mystery, the unknown

Astromantic Bolt (Attack)

Duration: Instant

Range: 50 feet

Damage: 10hp

Casting Modifiers: -10 (-10 damage)

By channeling the power of the twin suns, the Astromancer directs a bolt of energy at a target of his choosing. This bolt cause deep burning pain in any victim so struck.

Homeward Star (Reveal)

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Casting Modifiers: -7 (-10 sense, +3 order bonus)

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

Astromantic Sight (Reveal)

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Self

Casting Modifiers: -9 (-12 twelfth level, +3 order bonus)

This spell allows the astromancer to see astral and ethereal presences.

Astromantic Divination (Reveal)

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Self

Casting Modifiers: -7 (-10 tenth level, +3 order bonus)

Astromantic Divination allows the astromancer to determine whether a specific course of action is likely to yield favorable results. Only those things which happen under the open sky of Archaeus can be taken into account. Thus, the spell wouldn't predict that the caster may be attacked by sea monsters, or trapped in underground caves.

The level of the spell should be used as a ruler in deciding how accurate and helpful the insight will be. For example, a 5th level divination might yield only general information, such as, "The future is obscure, but it seems that a major thunderstorm is heading this way" For a 10th level divination the result might be more specific, as in "Signs indicate that going around that rocky outcropping would be wise as there appear to be a gang of beastmen lurking in the area." A 20th level divination might yield more detailed information, like "Fortune would shine on attacking the group of beastmen now while the bicker and fight amongst themselves", while at 30th level the GM might really get specific, as in "By using your Sunburst spell you will effectively blind the beastmen making victory almost certain"

Sunburst (Illusion)

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Casting Modifiers: -6 (-1 1st level, -5 duration)

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

Sign of Strength (Alter)

Duration: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Casting Modifiers: -20 (-20 broad alteration,

By invoking the power of a constellation that represents a strong hero or creature (the Drakken constellation for example), the Astromancer infuses this mythic strength into any target he touches. For the duration of the spell, the recipient receives a +4 bonus to their STR.

Sign of Drome (Ward)

Duration: 5 minutes

Range: 10 foot radius

Casting Modifiers: -14 (-10 tenth level, -4 duration)

This spell creates an amber sphere of light 10 feet in radius, which remains in effect for the duration of the spell. While having no effect on mortal creatures, this ward prevents has an armor rating of 20 against all demonic creatures and prevents them from crossing into the sphere. (see new Ward rules above). During the month of Drome, this spell is cast with a +2 on the casting roll.

Sign of Jhang (Alter)

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 5 foot radius

Casting Modifiers: -14 (-10 broad alteration, -4 range)

This moon sign creates a sphere of crimson light in a 5 foot radius around the caster. Anyone within the area of effect receives a +2 to their CR—this applies to friends and enemies. During the month of Jhang, this spell is cast with a +2 on the casting roll.

Sign of Zar (Illusion)

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 10 foot diameter sphere

Casting Modifiers: -14 (-10 tenth level, -4 duration)

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

Sign of Phandir (Conceal)

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Casting Modifiers: -10 (-10th level)

By summoning strength from the moon Phandir, the astromancer creates a sphere of green light 10 feet in diameter which lasts the duration of the spell. All scrying attempts must against this sphere suffer a -10 difficulty penalty. During the month of Phandir, this spell is cast with a +2 on the casting roll.

CREATIVE CANTRIPS

Magic, in particular spellcasting, is one of the cornerstones of the Talislanta setting. The great masters of the past wove enchantments so potent that modern magicians can but marvel at their achievements. Even so, latter day magicians are still capable of producing wondrous magics, though these are but a pale shadow of the past.

With magic being of such importance to the game, it is worth making it that bit more exotic, and enriching the roleplaying experience in the process.

The Talislanta magic system actively permits and encourages players and GMs to create their own, unique, imaginative spells, and presents fantastic opportunities for the creative individual.

However, creating a spell, especially on the spot, can prove daunting for some players, and as a result, many spellcasting descriptions in-game can become seem dull or cliched. This need not be the case, for creating a memorable spell requires but a little thought, and is easier than might at first be believed.

Here is a step-by-step guide:

INTENT

When creating a new spell, the first thing to do is decide precisely what you want it to achieve. This might be as simple as “Hurt my enemy at range”, or as involved as “Steal the keys from the guard’s belt and place them in my grasp”.

BASIC IDEA

Taking your Intent, and the restrictions of your Order into account, think for a moment of how it might be achieved. Take a moment to consider what the spell could possibly do. In the case of one designed to cause injury, think what things can hurt someone. For example, being cut, impaled, burnt, bludgeoned, frozen, crushed, or electrocuted.

DESCRIBING THE SPELL

Suppose you decide that you want your enemy to burn in a ball of flame (in essence the classical “Fireball”). Well, now you have the idea, you can go on to describe the spell itself. Just by considering each of the following components of a spell’s description, you can make it far more unique:

APPEARANCE

What exactly does the spell look like? What substance forms the physical aspect of the spell? A Fireball, for example, need not look like a simple ball of flame. It could like a flaming winged skull, a fiery fist, incandescent heart, or glowing phoenix. It’s still a fireball, but it need not look so basic. Also consider the color or colors of the spell; where magic is concerned you need not adhere to the expected. Why not make the fireball green, blue, purple or even pink? Giving the spell an unusual appearance is entirely permissible, providing it makes no change to the effect of the spell (in this case, burning someone).

Another part of the spell’s appearance is its motion. If the spell has to cover a distance, how does it do so? Does it erupt, or does it travel? Following the fireball example, does it fly through the air, and if so, does it fly straight, spiral, or zigzag? Does it simply appear out of nowhere to engulf the target? Does it bounce or roll along the ground?

SOUND

What does the spell sound like? Sound accompanies the casting of many spells, and can range from the tinkling of bells to the rumble of thunder, from echoes of chilling laughter to the crackle and sizzle of energy. Once again, giving just a little thought to this aspect of a spell gives it much more depth, and the sound need not necessarily match the spell. Why not have your fireball sing as it flies through the air?

SMELL

The least important of the descriptive elements in most cases, describing the scent of the spell can make it seem far more real in the mind’s eye. Once again, the scent of the spellcasting, if indeed there is any, can be unique or unexpected. For example, the fireball may well smell of brimstone, but it could just as easily smell of lavender, or anything else.

NAMING THE SPELL

Now you have decided what your spell does, and described it, it is time to give it its all-important name. Even the

Famous Magicians

Archimandius - Wizardry
Arkon - Wizardry
Cascal - Cryptomancy, Wizardry (focus on the Illusion Mode)
Cerene - Elemental Magic (Aquamancy - Ice)
Drax - Necromancy
Enchantress, the - Wizardry (focus on the Influence Mode)
Hotan - Mysticism, Wizardry
Ilse - Witchcraft
Kabros - Cryptomancy
Koraq - Cryptomancy, Wizardry
Magian - Wizardry
Malderon - Wizardry
Miraja - Wizardry (Illusion specific)
Mordante - Invocation (Demonology and Diabolism), Necromancy
Narishna - Necromancy
Nauticus - Elemental Magic (Aeromancy, Aquamancy)
Rodinn - Wizardry
Sassan - Elemental Magic (Pyromancy)
Shaladin - Cryptomancy, Wizardry (focus on spells intended to deceive thieves and protect valuables)
Solimorrion I - Cryptomancy
Sylan - Cryptomancy, Wizardry
Thystram - Cryptomancy, Natural Magic
Viridian - Natural Magic (flora based)
Xanadas - Mysticism, Natural Magic
Zanillo - Wizardry (focus on trickery, deception and entertainment)

most mundane spell can be made exciting when given an impressive title.

Given the eccentricity and egotism of many magicians, it is hardly surprising that even the most banal of cantrips may often bear a flamboyant title. Precious few magicians, having spent weeks or months in toil creating a new spell, would then give their unique creation a humdrum name. Instead, they would make it grandiose, taking pride in their personal achievement.

Giving a newly created spell a good title is satisfying and easy. All spell-titles are composed of one or more of the following components, although two-three components is the optimum:

DESCRIPTOR

The most vital part of any spell name informs of the spell's effects, appearance, or less commonly, results, and in many cases, a truly evocative Descriptor is often all that's needed to make a spell sound fantastical. When describing the spell, try to avoid the most mundane descriptions, and choose those less immediately obvious. For example, while "Fireball" does accurately describe the spell producing the ball of fire, it is hardly flamboyant. Take a second to think of alternate or related words that can be used to describe the same thing; a quick look through a thesaurus can provide all manner of cool alternatives. In this case, such words as Flaming, Blazing, Incendiary, Conflagrating, Scorching, Burning, Searing, and Lambent, as well as Sphere, Orb, and Globe, are also appropriate substitutes for "Fire" and "Ball". "Searing Orb" sounds far more exotic than "Fireball".

CREATOR'S NAME

A common spell-naming convention, especially as regards the more egotistical or famous creators of spells, is that of appending the individual's name to the front of the spell's title. For example, the infamous pyromancer Sassan may very well have created the Searing Orb spell, and named it "Sassan's Searing Orb".

In the sidebar is a brief list of magical luminaries responsible for creating many existing spells, along with their appropriate Orders, although one should not feel restricted to these names; there were a multitude of powerful and creative magicians, so making up a name is always a viable option.

EMBELLISHMENT

Spell creators sometimes added certain extravagant descriptors to their spell titles, particularly if especially proud of a spell, or excessively egotistical. For example, if Sassan was particularly delighted with his Searing Orb spell, he might add such a word as Excellent, Magnificent, Superior, Superlative, Brilliant, or Triumphant, to the spell's title. It might have been named "Sassan's Triumphant Searing Orb" in this case.

SPELL, CANTRIP, OR DWEOMER

Another common spell-naming convention is the actual referral to the spell as being a spell, placed before or after

the main description. For example, Sassan might have named his Fireball spell, "Sassan's Searing Orb Spell" or "The Spell of Searing Orbs". Alternately, he could have chosen to use a different word, such as Cantrip, Dweomer, Enchantment, Charm, Glamour, Weird, or Incantation.

MODE NAME

Adding a direct referral to the type (i.e. Mode) of the spell is also a common spell-naming option. For example, Sassan might have named his Searing Orb spell, "Sassan's Searing Orb Attack", or might have substituted such words as Assault, or Strike. In the case of an Illusion spell, such words as Illusory, Phantasmal, Ephemeral, Deceptive, or False, can just as easily be used, and so on.

SIGNATURE SPELLS

The ability to be truly individual when creating new spells means that it is quite possible for all of a magician's spells to bear some kind of personal trademark or signature, if desired, that makes all their spellcastings instantly recognizable as their work, for better or worse. For example, the spells of Moncarr the Mauve might always feature a particular red hue in some way, irrespective of the spell's appearance or effect. His "Crimson Fist of Justice" spell might resemble a clenched fist of cracking red energy, while his "Invocation of Carnelian Regeneration" might turn the skin of the individual he is healing temporarily red.

A signature need not be a color, nor necessarily even a visual clue. A specific scent, sound, or other theme, is just as appropriate.

Making magic memorable does take imagination, and a little thought, but the result is always worth it, as it will entertain all concerned, enrich the game, and perhaps even garner an additional XP or two from an appreciative GM. Any semi-encephalon can say "I cast a Fireball! A ball of fire flies forth and strikes my target!", but stating something like "I invoke Sassan's Searing Orb! A ball of vivid green flame spirals swiftly through the air, shrieking, the scent of brimstone in its wake!", makes the tired old fireball exciting, and magic as magical as it should be.



CREATIVE COMPENDIA

Maintaining a spellbook is an integral part of playing any spellcasting character in Talislanta, and although the bookkeeping aspect can put some players off, it can be a very involving exercise.

SAMPLE SPELLS

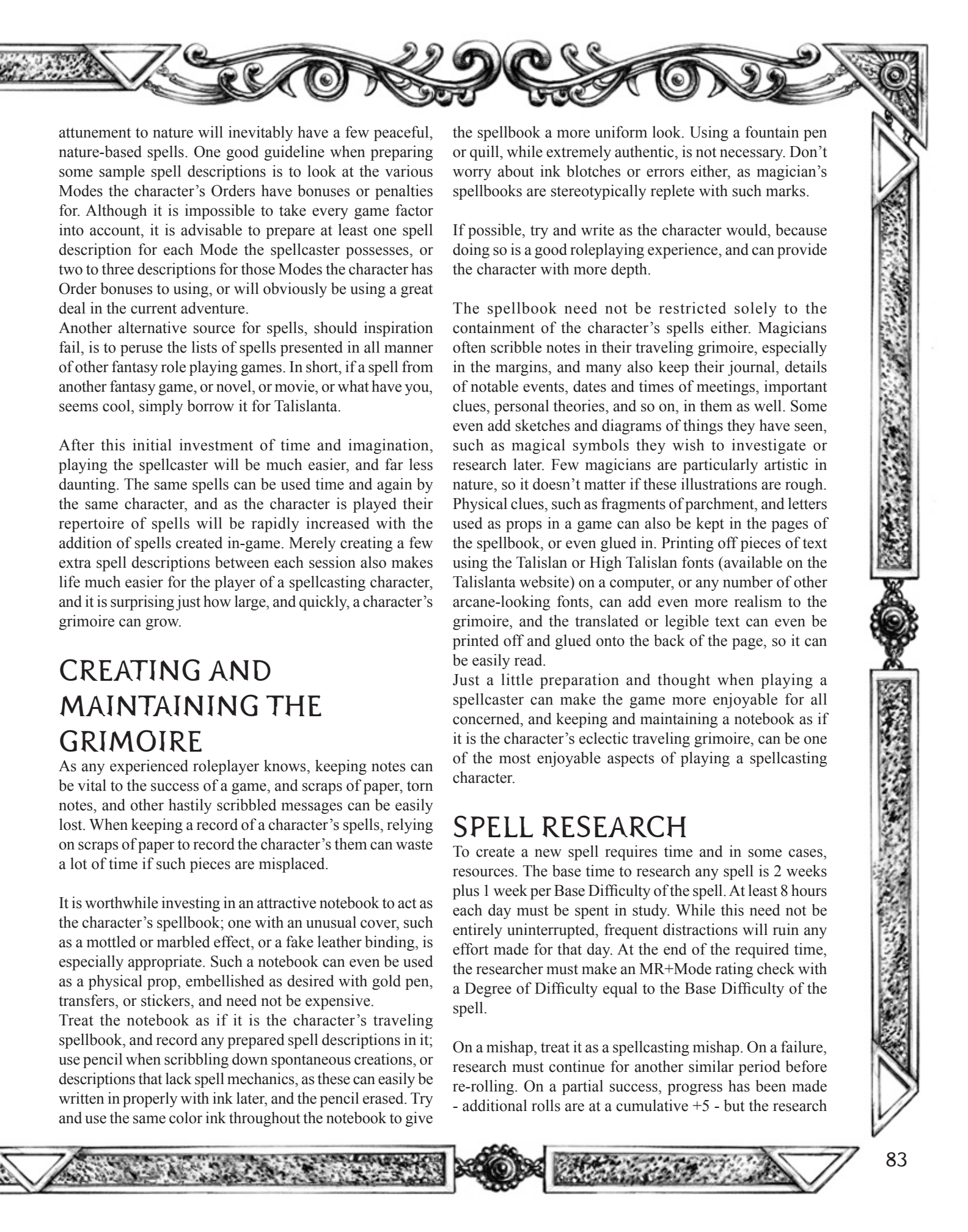
Talislanta presents a variety of sample spells for each Order, and these can always be used when personal inspiration fails, or time is of the essence. Indeed, even though the sample spells have effective Levels, Ranges, etc. already worked out, it is entirely possible to ignore these factors, and simply use the description of the spell, allocating the mechanics as desired. Another way to get more use out of the sample spells is to slightly tweak the description, and give the spell a different name.

PREPARING SPELLS

Although the sample spells can prove their worth several times over, it is infinitely more rewarding to personally create spells. Creating spells in-game can be exciting, but does require some quick thinking and creativity, and can be cause for some players to panic. By spending a little non-gaming time preparing some spells, the entire spellcasting process can be speeded up significantly during play, and the pressure to create imaginative spells on the spur of the moment is notably alleviated.

It is not necessary to prepare a multitude of spells, nor is it necessary to decide on the mechanics of the spell before a game. All that is required is a description of the spell effect, and a name for the spell; the rules can be added in-game thereby ensuring the spell is appropriate to the situation at hand.

When deciding how many spell descriptions it is necessary to prepare, and what kind of spells will be needed, bear in mind the current campaign, the personality of the spellcaster, and the Modes they possess. For example, an action-packed military campaign will require more Attack Mode spell descriptions, while one based on intrigue might require spells of the Reveal and Influence Modes. Similarly, a magician known as a practical joker will have several elaborate Illusion, Conjure, or Transform spells useful for such antics, while one famed for their



attunement to nature will inevitably have a few peaceful, nature-based spells. One good guideline when preparing some sample spell descriptions is to look at the various Modes the character's Orders have bonuses or penalties for. Although it is impossible to take every game factor into account, it is advisable to prepare at least one spell description for each Mode the spellcaster possesses, or two to three descriptions for those Modes the character has Order bonuses to using, or will obviously be using a great deal in the current adventure.

Another alternative source for spells, should inspiration fail, is to peruse the lists of spells presented in all manner of other fantasy role playing games. In short, if a spell from another fantasy game, or novel, or movie, or what have you, seems cool, simply borrow it for Talislanta.

After this initial investment of time and imagination, playing the spellcaster will be much easier, and far less daunting. The same spells can be used time and again by the same character, and as the character is played their repertoire of spells will be rapidly increased with the addition of spells created in-game. Merely creating a few extra spell descriptions between each session also makes life much easier for the player of a spellcasting character, and it is surprising just how large, and quickly, a character's grimoire can grow.

CREATING AND MAINTAINING THE GRIMOIRE

As any experienced roleplayer knows, keeping notes can be vital to the success of a game, and scraps of paper, torn notes, and other hastily scribbled messages can be easily lost. When keeping a record of a character's spells, relying on scraps of paper to record the character's them can waste a lot of time if such pieces are misplaced.

It is worthwhile investing in an attractive notebook to act as the character's spellbook; one with an unusual cover, such as a mottled or marbled effect, or a fake leather binding, is especially appropriate. Such a notebook can even be used as a physical prop, embellished as desired with gold pen, transfers, or stickers, and need not be expensive.

Treat the notebook as if it is the character's traveling spellbook, and record any prepared spell descriptions in it; use pencil when scribbling down spontaneous creations, or descriptions that lack spell mechanics, as these can easily be written in properly with ink later, and the pencil erased. Try and use the same color ink throughout the notebook to give

the spellbook a more uniform look. Using a fountain pen or quill, while extremely authentic, is not necessary. Don't worry about ink blotches or errors either, as magician's spellbooks are stereotypically replete with such marks.

If possible, try and write as the character would, because doing so is a good roleplaying experience, and can provide the character with more depth.

The spellbook need not be restricted solely to the containment of the character's spells either. Magicians often scribble notes in their traveling grimoire, especially in the margins, and many also keep their journal, details of notable events, dates and times of meetings, important clues, personal theories, and so on, in them as well. Some even add sketches and diagrams of things they have seen, such as magical symbols they wish to investigate or research later. Few magicians are particularly artistic in nature, so it doesn't matter if these illustrations are rough. Physical clues, such as fragments of parchment, and letters used as props in a game can also be kept in the pages of the spellbook, or even glued in. Printing off pieces of text using the Talislan or High Talislan fonts (available on the Talislanta website) on a computer, or any number of other arcane-looking fonts, can add even more realism to the grimoire, and the translated or legible text can even be printed off and glued onto the back of the page, so it can be easily read.

Just a little preparation and thought when playing a spellcaster can make the game more enjoyable for all concerned, and keeping and maintaining a notebook as if it is the character's eclectic traveling grimoire, can be one of the most enjoyable aspects of playing a spellcasting character.

SPELL RESEARCH

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

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

must continue for another period. On a full success or better, the magician has the desired spell.

Each Order of magic has a different manner of researching spells.

Cartomancers must spend their research time in contemplation of the Zodar deck. This is done by fortunetelling or gambling with strangers. This requires a fairly reliable flow of individuals (marks) to make any real progress.

Crystalomancers study naturally-growing crystals. By listening to their resonance and observing their arcane refraction they can determine how best to extract the desired properties from the crystals. The required crystals for this must be grown and harvested anew each time a spell research roll is attempted, requiring an Agriculture (crystal) roll with a Degree of Difficulty equal to the Base Difficulty of the spell.

Priests spend their time in prayer to their deity, studying the holy works of the religion, making devotional offerings, burning incense, sacrifices, or whatever else is required. Materials consumed in this process average about 50 gold lumens per week. Sometimes, instead of the devotions a holy quest must be performed instead. This holy quest may be used as an adventure, in which case the usual Spell Research roll may be skipped at the GM's discretion. Holy quests are always uniquely appropriate to the spell sought.

Mystics require inner peace and quiet introspection to develop a new power within themselves. While this costs nothing and requires no materials, each week requires a Meditation roll with a Degree of Difficulty equal to the Base Difficulty of the spell.

Natural magicians must spend their time in the wilderness, far away from the distractions of civilization, and in deep contemplation of their connection to nature. This costs nothing and requires no materials. Each week the natural magician must make a Wilderness Survival check, with a Degree of Difficulty equal to the Base Difficulty of the spell.

Shamans spend their time communing with their totem, burning aromatic herbs, and injecting hallucinogenic drugs. A vision quest is required, where the shaman undergoes a journey in the Dream Realms to acquire the power he or she seeks. The vision quest can be played out as an actual

adventure, in which case the usual Spell Research roll may be skipped at the GM's discretion. Vision quests are always uniquely appropriate to the power for which the shaman is searching.

Witches and warlocks study ancient scrolls, consult with gnorl rhabdomancers and mang trees, peer into pools of noxious substances, and commune with nature. This often requires the witch to journey from place to place, seeking out and piecing together fragments of lost and ancient lore.

Cryptomancers, Elementalists, Necromancers, and Wizards must spend their time studying the written works of their Order. This requires access to a library of at least 10,000 gold lumens value.

ENHANCED SPELLS

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

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

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

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

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



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

CASTING ARCHAEN SPELLS

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



FORGOTTEN LORE

Since the time of the Archaens, many magical and alchemical skills and fields of study have been lost or forgotten. The following is a partial list, a sampling, but it should not be taken as complete. The Talislanta GM is free to create new Archaen skills and lore for the PCs to discover in their adventures.

ALCHEMICAL HYBRIDIZATION

The Archaens delved deeply into the art of creating new species. These creatures, collectively known as neomorphs, were made to be soldiers, concubines, entertainers, laborers, and anything else the Archaens desired. The art of Alchemical Hybridization was their first effort in this field. It was invented during the Second Millennium, referred to by historians as the Archaen Ascension, when certain well-meaning alchemists attempted to create useful hybrids from existing species.

Generally speaking, the earliest experiments proved somewhat discouraging. The convoluted process involved in these operations were both time-consuming and costly, and generally yielded unpredictable results.

The most notable failures occurred in experiments with vertebrate species, when the level of alchemical arcanology proved insufficient for the task at hand. Abominations of the most hideous sort emerged from the vats to wreak havoc upon their creators. The hybridization of plant species yielded greater success, however, and alchemists were able to develop a series of procedures that would later be adapted to the field of botanomancy with even greater results.

Alchemical hybridization was all but abandoned by the middle of the Second Millennium, largely due to the repeated and often fatal results. The practice was later revived by the Torquarans, who applied certain improvements suggested by the dark entities with which they consorted. The development of the essence extractor, a crude device used to drain living creatures of their vital essences, dramatically improved on the earlier methodology; though the moral implications of such

The Essence Extractor

A frightening and cruel device, the essence extractor was designed by a Shaitan with an interest in arcanology. It was this Shaitan who taught the Torquarans how to construct them and use them to improve their hybridization techniques.

The infernal origins of the essence extractor can be seen in every aspect of its design. The restraints on arms, legs, and neck look like grasping claws which tighten cruelly. The tubes each end in a grining, diabolic maw filled with a dozen needle-like teeth, which can then be attached to various parts of the body, depending on what traits are to be extracted.

There are many potential uses for these devices. The essence extractor can be used to acquire any essential trait from a living being... youth, stamina, virility, or possibly even more esoteric essences, such as memories, love, or willpower. A victim drained of his love would forevermore be incapable of feeling that emotion.

If the raw essence is consumed, the imbiber receives that trait for a short while, anything from a few minutes to a few days, depending on how intense the trait was in the original creature. A withered old magician could easily become addicted to the vigor and virility of young victims. (Will roll to resist addiction, with a cumulative -4 penalty.)

Rumors exist that the Shaitan know the process by which the raw essence could be distilled, allowing the imbiber to permanently absorb the essential traits from the victim. Giving this knowledge to the Torquarans was never part of their plan, however.

gruesome practices were distasteful, this was of no concern to the Torquarans. By such means, successful hybrids like the Araq and Banes were created, much to the dismay of those counted the Torquarans' enemies.

Following the fall of Torquaran, all practices associated with Alchemical Hybridization were outlawed and the use of the essence extractor banned. Some few of these fiendish devices are believed to have survived to the present day, however, and may be found buried among the ruins of Torquaran. Though these artifacts are outlawed in most

civilized lands, the Rajans have offered a reward of 200,000 gold lumens for a functioning essence extractor.

The procedure for Alchemical Hybridization is as follows:

Step 1. The two different lifeforms that are to be crossbred are secured to separate tables and connected to an essence extractor by means of a network of glass tubing. The two creatures must possess, between the two of them, all the traits the desired hybrid will have. (i.e. If the hybrid is to have a +6 strength, then at least one of the original creatures must have that.)

Step 2. The essence extractor is activated. The operator and/or assistants monitor the various valves and tubes, regulating which essences should flow into the amberglass-lined receiving vat and which are discarded. The process is quite painful for the two original lifeforms, though they will not die until the last drop of their essence has been drained.

Step 3. After twenty-four hours, a liquid mixture composed of the combined living essences lies in the receiving vat. This fluid bubbles and froths, very much alive and in some way aware. The vat is sealed with paraffin.

Step 4. In two weeks' time the vat may be opened. At this time, make a roll on the Action Table with no modifiers. A result of Failure means the vat contains a nauseating amalgam of the two original creatures, dead.

If the hybrid is alive, make an Alchemical Hybridization roll, with a Degree of Difficulty equal to the desired Ability Level of the hybrid, plus the following modifiers:

- Each point of positive attribute +1
- Each two points of negative attributes -1
- Each plant +0
- Each insect +3
- Each simple animal (no spine) +6
- Each complex animal (with spine) +9
- Two different categories of creature +3

A result of mishap means the hybrid has resulted in something utterly unintended, an abomination. Such results often end with the death of the alchemist or the assistants (whoever opened the vat) and the destruction of the lab as the horrible creature lashes out in pain and madness. Such abominations rarely live more than a few minutes, though there are exceptions.

A result of failure is similar to a mishap, only the abomination is healthy enough to survive. They are often insane, however.

A result of partial success means the creature is mostly as intended, though there are flaws. One or more of the desired attributes is that of the wrong "parent", or the hybrid has a truncated lifespan, or it is insane. The hybrid is not fertile.

A result of full success means the hybrid possesses all the attributes and special abilities desired.

A critical success means the hybrid is everything the alchemist had hoped for, plus some unexpected benefits (such as a mated pair emerging from the vat.)

Cost to Acquire: 20 xp

Training Period: 20 weeks

Attribute Modifier: INT

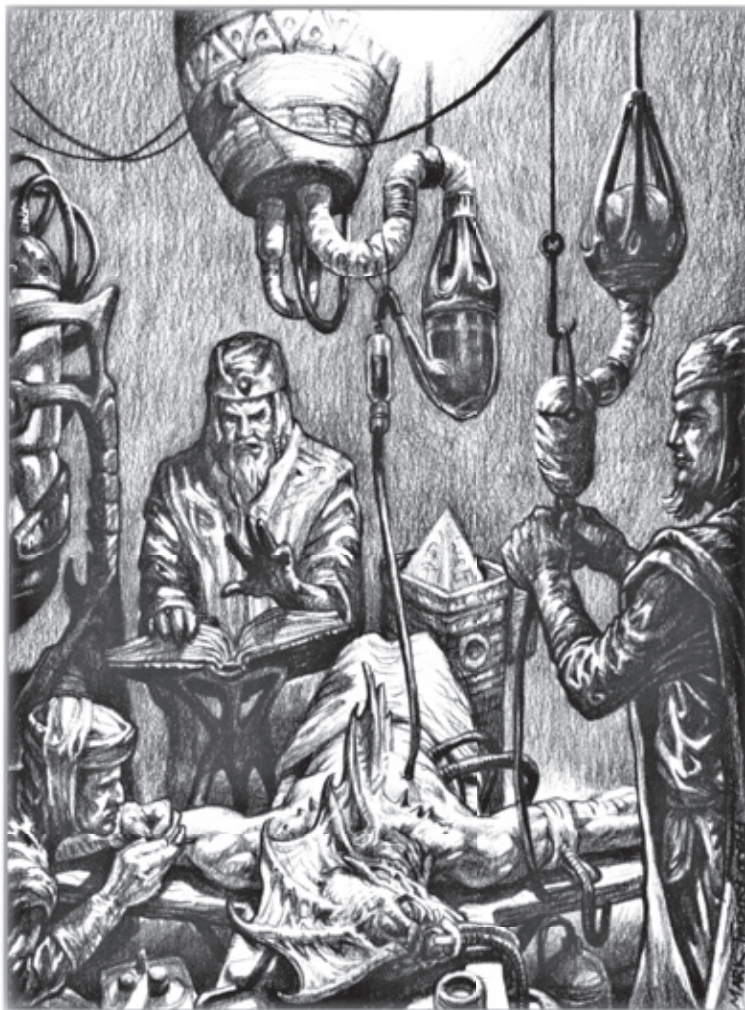
BIOMANCY

Biomancy is a branch of Thaumaturgy that is primarily concerned with the creation of new lifeforms, and to a lesser extent the modification of existing lifeforms. For this reason the student must understand the principles of Thaumaturgy before attempting to study Biomancy. (Biomancy skill cannot exceed Thaumaturgy skill.)

Biomancy used some of the principles of Alchemical Hybridization, but replaced such cruel devices as the essence extractor with more advanced and humane tools, such as the essence accumulator, a sophisticated apparatus integral to the practice of Thaumaturgy.

Practitioners of Biomancy developed the means to analyze existing lifeforms and to determine their precise component parts without harm to the creature. These vital components, the essences, could then be extracted from the aetherium using the essence accumulator, measured to exact specifications, and infused into a biomantic chamber. The end result was a new lifeform created according to the biomancer's designs.

This process was much more reliable than Alchemical Hybridization, and lacked many of the ugly moral questions as well. Using Biomancy the Phandre created new types of plants, animals, and insects, along with neomorphs such as the Bodor, Thiasians, Monads, and others. No longer did the Archans have to engage in dangerous or menial labors



- they had created slaves for that. Hunger became a thing of the past, as edible plants and beasts could be created in abundance.

Not all Archans were convinced that Biomancy was entirely beneficial to civilization, however. Some, such as Rodinn and Koraq, questioned the wisdom of creating new species, claiming that experimentation of this sort could have an adverse effect upon the balance of nature. The Phandre, never ones to dwell overlong upon matters of ethics, regarded such concerns as secondary to matters of profit.

The procedure for Biomancy is as follows:

Step 1. The desired lifeform must be designed, with the seven most important traits calculated to give a Base Difficulty. The Base Difficulty is equal to the starting Ability Level of the lifeform at "birth", plus the following:

Every 2 levels of "growth potential" +1
Each point of positive attribute +1
Each two points of negative attributes -1
Each unique special ability (poison, fast maturing, unique sense, etcetera): +1

For example, a Phandre wished to create a flying draconic steed. He assigns it a starting Ability Level of 2, with a potential max Ability Level of 10 (+4 difficulty). Strength +3, Constitution +2, Speed +7, Int -4, Per +4. All other attributes are 0. He wants it to have the ability form an empathic bond with the owner (+1 difficulty), and to reach full maturity in one year (+1 difficulty). The total Degree of Difficulty is -22.

Step 2. The essential components comprising the desired lifeform must be determined. This is done by means of biomantic analyzer, a handheld device that operates on the principles of thaumaturgy. This requires a Biomancy roll with a Degree of Difficulty equal to the Base Difficulty of the desired lifeform.

Step 3. The essences are gathered and measured using an essence accumulator. This process takes 1 week.

Step 4. The essences are placed in a biomantic chamber. One week later the chamber may be opened. Roll a Biomancy check with the

following results:

On a mishap, the new lifeform is an abomination, as with Alchemical Hybridization, though the creature is rarely insane. On a failure, the new lifeform did not quicken in the chamber, and thus was never alive. On a partial success, the new lifeform lives, but it is flawed in some way... choose one trait at random (an attribute, a special ability, or lifespan) that is much worse than intended. On a full success the lifeform is as intended. On a critical success the lifeform is everything the biomancer intended, plus some unexpected benefits.

Note that Biomancy can also be used to create simulacrum, living duplicates of specific individuals. The procedure is the same as described above, but it is a good deal more complex as every trait must be matched precisely. Follow the steps above, but step 3, gathering and measuring

the essences, takes 2 weeks instead of 1. The Degree of Difficulty has an additional -10 modifier due to the level of precision.

Cost to Acquire: 100 xp
Training Period: 100 weeks
Attribute Modifier: INT

ERYTHRIAN BATTLE MAGIC

Erythrian Battle Magic is a branch of wizardry invented by the Erythrian Warrior-Mages of the Third Millennium. The various skills and spells of this field were developed specifically for use in warfare and were tested on the continent of Altarus. When the sky-city of Erythria fell into the Far Seas, nearly all of this martial lore was lost, and has never been recovered to the present day.

The spells of Battle Magic focus on warfare and generally target large areas, affecting a great number of foes. Against smaller groups or single-targets, Erythrians preferred to conjure lethal hand-held weapons and mighty armor and fight as warriors.

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

Battle Magic requires one free hand with which to gesture (the other may be holding a shield or a weapon), and the guiding words must be shouted at the top of the lungs. A semi-magical effect associated with Battle Magic is that the words spoken during spellcasting reverberate, magnified by the spell's energy, allowing all those within 10 feet per spell level to clearly hear them regardless of distractions or the nearby clamor of battle.

ADVANTAGES

The area and range of most Battle Magic spells is much greater than usual. Area is 10' radius per -1 added difficulty. Range is an additional 100' per -1 added difficulty. Modes that are usually single-target are often 10 foot radius.

Attack spells that have a duration (arcane weapons) and defensive spells such as armor generally have a duration of 5 minutes.

Barriers created with the Defend mode can be made mobile if created in the form of a shield or attached to a physical object, such as a bracer or a siege tower.

LIMITATIONS

In addition to being nearly impossible to hide, Battle Magic is difficult to master. There is a Base Difficulty modifier to all Battle Magic spells, based on how augmented they are, though this added difficulty can be countered with enhancement levels.

MODES

Not available: Transform, Summon

Bonuses: +3 Attack

Penalties: None

Alter Effects: Physical qualities (similar to Wizardry) can be altered, as well as more vague qualities that are useful in warfare such as the CR attribute, morale, leadership ability, etcetera.

ENCHANTMENT

Common Battle Magic enchanted items include:

- ▶ Pommels that create a glowing blade or whip of arcane energy, or bracers that create a glowing shield. (Attack or Defend)
- ▶ Banners that radiate courage to all nearby allies, increasing morale (Alter)
 - ▶ Battering rams that tear down enemy walls with amazing speed (Hex)
- ▶ Floating battle-palanquins (Move)

NEURIAN TECHNOMANCY

The Neurians were the inventors of Technomancy, the field of metaphysics that focused on the use of specialized skills and complex mechanisms rather than spells and magic items. Much of their alien lore was lost during The Great Disaster, when the continent of Simbar broke away from Talislanta and sank into the Aetheric Sea.

Few mono-encaphalons possess the high degree of intelligence necessary to master Neurian Technomancy. If a player character manages to find a way to learn it, he or she must study for 100 weeks and make an INT check at a penalty of -20. On a failure, the student may continue to study for another 20 weeks and roll again. On a partial success, some progress has been made - the student must continue studying for another 20 weeks, but with a +5 on the next roll. On a full success or better, the student has mastered the basics of Neurian Technomancy. On a mishap, the student can never grasp Neurian Technomancy unless his or her intelligence somehow increases.

NEURIAN QUANTIFIER

The Neurian quantifier is a complex device that can be employed to measure almost anything, including size, volume, weight, age, speed, depth or thickness, altitude, and so on. Quantifiers are powered by energy crystals and can only be employed by skilled technomancers. These devices use a standard Neurian unit of measure known as a microchron, an abstract unit of space-time.

Adventuring uses for the quantifier include:

- A mobile lie detector
- Finding secret doors, hidden compartments, and traps
- Discovering the weakest part of a wall or barrier
- A sentry, set to detect movement
- Tracking by scent

In all cases, treat the quantifier as a 5th level Reveal spell for game mechanics.

NEURIAN MATERIALIZER

Materializers were used by Neurians to create temporary tools or spare parts for short-term repairs. The materializer could be commanded to create nearly any substance within its limits. At the center of the sphere is the materialization chamber, 21 inches in height, width, and depth. The most mass it can produce in a single day is 150 lbs. Materialized substances remain for 1 hour before fading, though if the material is placed back into the chamber before the hour has expired, that mass is recycled and does not count against the daily limit.

In addition to all the abilities of Technomancy as described in 4th edition Talislanta, the master of Neurian Technomancy can create automatons and construct and use Neurian tools and devices.

CONSTRUCT AUTOMATON

This is the ability to construct “intelligent” mechanisms, devices that can be programmed to perform specific functions. Most automatons were built with some degree of mobility and designed to resemble stylized humanoid beings; the Parthenians are a prime example of this type. Influenced by the Archaens, the Neurians also created automatons patterned after other types of creatures such as dragons, spiders, steeds, and so forth.

All automatons employ enchanted crystals as a power

source, the level of the crystal determining the maximum level at which the automaton can be built. Enchanted crystals of the required sort are rated at 10 carats per level. Every automaton must be equipped with a sensorium, or “mechanized brain”, of great complexity. Even the most advanced automatons are not capable of emotional responses or original thinking per se; rather, these constructs can only respond within the parameters established within their sensoria. The number of responses that can be programmed into such a device cannot exceed 1 per every 2 levels of the construct. A listing of possible programmed responses includes the following:

► **Motility:** The automaton can move as per the type of creature the automaton is designed to emulate. Generally speaking, an automaton’s speed rating will be 1-4 points lower than the type of creature it had been designed to resemble. Thus an automaton patterned after a creature with a +2 SPD would end up with a SPD between +1 and -2. Nearly all automatons will have this program.

► **Observation:** The automaton is capable of sight and can recognize basic forms and patterns. An automaton with this response can categorize objects into general groups such as humanoids, beasts, conveyances, liquids, solids, and so forth.

► **Speech:** The automaton is programmed to speak a language. If multilingual capabilities are desired, several speech programs must be used.

► **Protection:** The automaton will attack or restrain any creature or object designated by its maker as a foe. The degree of force that is to be used can be moderated as desired. The observation program is necessary for this response.

► **Seek:** The automaton will search for specific creatures, objects, or substances as indicated by its maker. The observation program is a prerequisite for this response. When combined with protection, this program yields the dual function Seek & Destroy, or Seek & Retrieve.

► **Knowledge:** The automaton is programmed to contain knowledge of a specific subject or field, such as history, geography, technomancy, alchemy, and so on. Note that knowledge does not confer comprehension or practical ability, per se. Rather, automatons with this program are

similar to walking encyclopedias. The knowledge contained within such a program can be quite detailed, though again, no ability to apply this information is implied. An automaton can be provided with more than one knowledge program, and a separate program is required for each field or subject. In order to be effective, this program is generally combined with the speech or scribe responses.

► **Scribe:** The automaton is programmed to record information in written form, either on parchment or by more elaborate means.

► **Skill:** The automaton is programmed with a specific skill, usually somewhat narrowly defined. Possible skills include such things as Navigate Ship, Pilot Ship, Load Cargo, Sentinel, Wield Sword, and so on. Automatons cannot learn magic, but they can be programmed to employ enchanted items. Some additional programs may be required to use the skill, such as observation for Navigate Ship, depending on the type of skill being programmed.

Automatons are expensive and time consuming to produce. The following chart indicates the cost in time and materials, including energy crystals, to produce an automaton. To this figure add another 10,000 g.l. and one month's time in order to construct the automaton's sensorium, multiplied by the number of programmed responses desired.

Type	Diff	Time Required	Base Cost
Humanoid	-12	2 months	10,000
Equs	-14	3 months	15,000
Scorpion	-16	4 months	15,000 + 1,000 per foot of body length
Spyder	-16	4 months	15,000 + 1,000 per foot of body length
Dragon	-20	6 months	20,000 + 1,000 per foot of overall body length

Special abilities, such as mechanical wings, venomous attack, web-spinning (using metal wire), or firey breath generally add an additional month and add 25% to 50% to the overall cost.

Cost to Acquire: 100xp

Attribute Modifier: INT

NEURIAN COGNITOR

Cognitors were the greatest achievements of Neurian arcanology. They were said to be automatons with such wide ranging knowledge and skill that they could at times seem to be truly intelligent. They were capable of making informed decisions and even developing new lines of thought regarding any problem set before them.

Beside their vast knowledge and intellect, they were also designed with a sense of curiosity and deep respect for knowledge. This made them ideal mental assistants, record-keepers, and tutors for the Neurian children.

In appearance, cognitors were generally spherical. They had no motility themselves, being intended as stationary devices. They were capable of speech, and could display any image on their metallic surface.

NEURIAN METAPHYSICS

Neurian metaphysics is a field of knowledge that teaches that reality is objective, and can be quantified by the application of superior intellect. For this reason, it is antithetical to the concepts of magic and spellcasting, which teach that reality is entirely subjective and subject to manipulation.

The Neurian concept of duality, which expresses opposing forces in mutually exclusive yet simultaneous terms, is very difficult for mono-encephalons to grasp.

The Neurians claimed to have applied these principles to the Omniverse, enabling them to navigate the Continuum in their dimension-spanning vessels. They created a unique four-dimensional map of the Omniverse and contained it within a crystal pyramid; the Sindaran game of Trivarian is based upon this device, though it is unclear whether modern-day Sindarans are aware of its original applications. The principles of Neurian metaphysics, and the trivarian map, were used to plot the exact location in space and time of nexus points, wormholes, and other phenomena, taking into account the normal fluxes and permutations inherent in the workings of aetherspace.

The great sorcerer and theorist Koraq studied among the Neurians for a time, and found their concepts quite fascinating. In a brief monograph on the subject of Neurian metaphysics, he wrote: "In the development of my theory of quantum magic, I was influenced to a great extent by the

Neurians, whose knowledge of metaphysics far exceeds our own. Conversely, they seem unable to comprehend even the basic tenets of magic, which they regard as an inexact and utterly illogical science.” The Neurians likewise seemed to have been impressed with Koraq, whom they described as “quite intelligent, for a mono-encephalon.”

Mastering Neurian metaphysics provides the following benefits:

- +5 to Technomancy rolls
- +2 to Intelligence
- 25% xp cost reduction to learn Neurian Technomancy
- Can be used in place of any navigation skill in the aetheric sea.

Conversely, mastering these concepts tends to make dealing with magic more difficult: -2 to all spellcasting rolls.

Cost to Acquire: 50xp
Attribute Modifier: INT

SORCERY

This magical field of study was created by the master theoretician Koraq in the forgotten age. It may be thought of as the esoteric “science” of magic. Through the application of the principles of sorcery, Koraq sought to define the basic workings of magic and organize the arcane arts into distinct fields of study. This development lead to the creation of new forms of magic, such as thauamurgy, cryptomancy, and biomancy.

According to Koraq, any spell or magical force can be visualized as a three-dimensional matrix, a pattern that determines its intrinsic powers. Each spell or magical force has its own matrix; its signature is like a fingerprint, with no two exactly alike.

The matrix can be visualized thus:

The temporal axis defines the magic’s effect within time. Modifying this axis can increase or decrease the duration of the spell or magical force. Koraq spent a great deal of effort in an attempt to use this

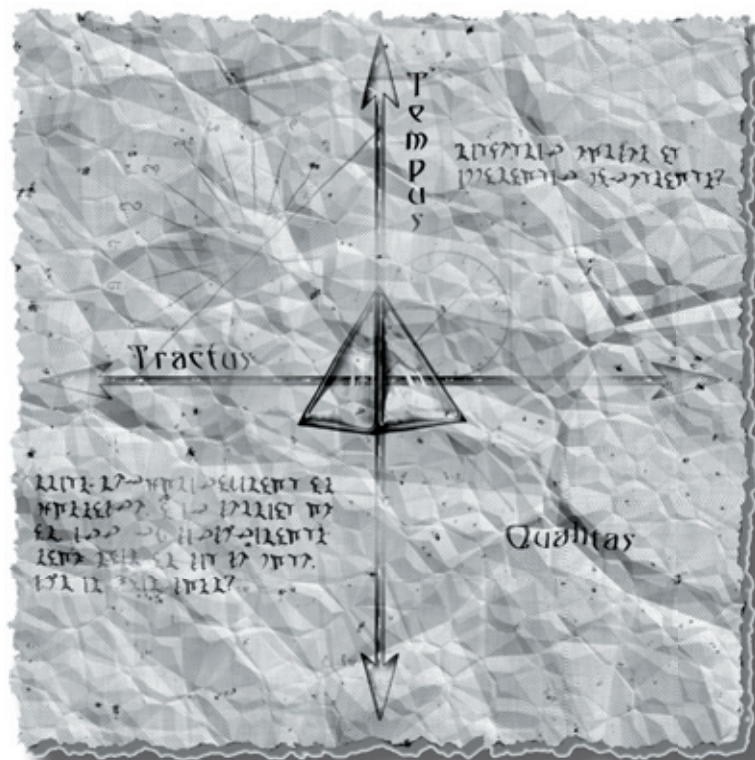
aspect of sorcery to achieve trans-temporalization - time travel - without success.

The spatial axis defines the magic’s effect within space. Modifying this axis can increase or decrease the range or area of effect of a spell or magical force. Spells that are normally touch-only can be made ranged, and spells that normally affect only a single target can work on an area.

The nature axis is actually three axes that, when taken together, define the magic’s nature. This is the most complex axis, but modifying it can change the very nature of the spell, allowing a sorcerer to perform feats beyond the scope of modern Talislantan magic.

It must be noted that Sorcery is meta-magical in nature. It is used to modify spells and magical forces, or to create new spells quickly and reliably.

The spells created this way do not require knowledge of Sorcery to cast. If a sorcerer creates a new Wizardry spell, then any wizard with the appropriate Mode can cast it, once learned.



ADVANTAGES

1) Archaen magic

The master of Sorcery may combine modes to achieve effects that are impossible through modern Talislanta magic. When combining modes, all penalties from both effects are added together, and when casting the magician uses the lowest applicable Mode rating.

For example: Azadam is casting Assassin's Bolt, an Archaen attack spell that combines an Attack effect with an Illusion to numb the area so that the target does not know he has been hit. Azadam has an Attack rating of +7 and an Illusion rating of +4. He must use his Illusion rating when casting Assassin's Bolt, since that is the lowest Mode that applies.

2) Spell creation

Using the principles of sorcery, the magician can create new spells with only a few minutes' effort by visualizing the spell matrix, rather than the long and laborous process of spell research.

If the spell uses only the standard Modes as described in chapter 4 of the Talislanta Handbook, then all that is required is a Sorcery check (using the highest known Sorcery skill, described below) with a penalty equal to -2 for each mode being used plus whatever other penalties apply to the spell, other than spell level.

For example: Azadam has an INT of +4 and his highest Sorcery skill is Tempus at +8. To visualize the spell matrix for a new necromantic Attack Mode spell, he must simply roll 1d20 + 10 (4+8-2). If the spell also has an area of effect of 5 foot radius (-5 added difficulty), and includes a Hex effect (second mode for another -2), then Azadam would have to roll 1d20 + 3 (4+8-2-5-2).

3) Sorcery meta-magic skills

If a new spell uses any of the Sorcery skills to extend duration, range, area, or to change the way the spell works, then the same spell creation rules apply as above, only the sorcerer uses the lowest known Sorcery skill that applies, instead of the highest known.

For example: Azadam has the following Sorcery skills, Tempus at +8, Tractus at +4, and Qualitus at +5. To visualize the spell matrix for a new necromantic Influence Mode spell that instills fear to everyone in a 30 foot radius for an hour,

he is using Tractus to increase the area effect and Tempus to increase the duration. Since his Tractus rating is lower, that is the skill he must use to create the spell matrix.

DISADVANTAGES

Difficult to Learn

Sorcery is a complex field, and even among Koraq's contemporaries few could understand it. In addition, there are no known practitioners of sorcery in modern Talislanta, though certain ancient beings or constructs may possess the knowledge at the GMs discretion.

Even if some means of study is found, the XP cost to increase the sorcery modes is the new rating x5 rather than the usual x2.

SORCERY SKILLS

The sorcery skills can be considered meta-magic - they affect the result of other spells and can be combined with any other order.

Tempus (Temporal axis)

By adjusting the temporal axis of a spell or magical force, the duration increment can be increased or decreased by one step for every additional -3 difficulty added to the spell. This added difficulty applies to the spell creation roll as well as the spellcasting rolls.

Rounds - Minutes - Hours - Days - Months - Indefinite

For example: An Influence spell has a duration that is normally measured in rounds. At a cost of -6 that could be changed to hours, or days at a cost of -9. A spell of Alteration is normally measured in minutes. At a cost of -12 that could be made indefinite, lasting until dispelled.

Difficulty: -10

XP cost: 30 xp

Time Required: 30 weeks

Tractus (Spatial axis)

By adjusting the spatial axis of a spell or magical force, the area or range increment can be increased or decreased by one step for every additional -3 difficulty added to the spell. This added difficulty applies to the spell creation roll as well as the spellcasting rolls.

✧ SORCERY: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER ✧

The Sorcery rules can be complex at first glance, so we will go through the process here, step by step.

Azadam is going to create a new spell. He begins by visualizing the spell matrix for an Attack spell that also invokes fear (Influence). He wants the area effect to be 10 feet radius per -1 difficulty, and the range to be 100 feet per -1 difficulty. He also wants the duration of the fear effect to last for 1 minute per -1 difficulty.

The Attack mode already has an area effect of 1 foot radius per -1 difficulty, but the Influence mode is single-target. Since the two modes are being combined, we count the smaller number. The same goes for range. Again, Influence has a smaller range, so we will count that.

To increase the area effect from single target to 10 foot radius increments is a -6 modifier using Tractus. To increase the range from 5 feet to 100 foot increments is another -6. Increasing the duration of the Fear from 5 rounds to 1 minute increments is another -3.

He sets the range at 100 feet, which is the base range so there is no added difficulty). The area effect to 10 foot radius (for a -1 difficulty). He sets the duration of the fear at 1 minute, which is the base duration.

The total modifier for the spell visualization roll is -20. -15 for the Sorcery skill modifications, -1 for the area effect, and -4 for combining two modes. He must use either his Tempus or his Tractus rating, whichever is lower.

Here is the resulting spell:

Wizardry

Terrorclap (Attack/Influence)

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 100 feet

Area Effect: 10 foot radius

Damage: 1hp per spell level

Base Casting Modifier: -16

Description: When the Terrorclap erupts, all those caught in the area effect must make a Will attribute check at -1 per 2 spell levels or be filled with incapacitating fear for one minute and suffer 1 hp damage per spell level as they injure themselves in their fear. Those who get a partial success take half damage and suffer a -1 on all actions due to the partially disabling fear. On a mishap, the victim will remain in a state of fear until some outside stimulus shocks him or her out of it.

Note that knowledge of Sorcery is not required to cast this spell. Once the spell has been created, any wizard can cast it using the lower of his Attack or Influence Modes.

Touch / Single Target - Feet - 10 Feet - 100 Feet - 500
Feet - Miles - 10 Miles - 100 miles - Unlimited

For example: A barrier using the Defend mode would normally have a radius measured in feet per -1 difficulty. At a cost of -6 additional difficulty, that radius could be changed to hundreds of feet per -1 difficulty. A Reveal spell used to locate someone would normally have a range

measured in miles. At a cost of -9 that would become unlimited range (within the same plane.) To reach other planes, Qualitas would be required.

Difficulty: -14

XP cost: 40 xp

Time Required: 40 weeks

Qualitas (Nature axis)

By adjusting the nature axis of a spell or magical force, the very nature of its effect can be modified. The extent of the modification determines the added difficulty, and is up to the GM to determine. Note that this is the most powerful and potentially game-breaking aspect of Sorcery, and it is suggested that even if PCs manage to acquire knowledge of Sorcery, the Qualitas skill should remain the province of rare and powerful NPCs.

Minor change (-5 difficulty)

- ◆ Making an attack spell ignore or pass through designated creatures or substances
- ◆ Making a barrier permeable to certain things.
- ◆ Using a Ward to protect against a broad category of things such as “magic” or “weapons”
- ◆ Doubling the one aspect (max weight, resistance difficulty, etcetera)

Moderate change (-10 difficulty)

- ◆ Using the Move mode to teleport
- ◆ Using the Summon mode to open portals
- ◆ Multiply one aspect by 4

Major change (-15 difficulty)

- ◆ Using the Heal mode to slow, halt, or even reverse the effects of aging
- ◆ Causing Illusions to be real for all intents and purposes (an illusory bridge would support weight, an illusory person would think for themselves, etcetera)
- ◆ Multiply one aspect by 8

Difficulty: -20

XP cost: 100 xp

Time Required: 100 weeks

CONCERNING NEW AGE TECHNOMANCY

The following are abilities known by everyone who learns the technomancy skill.

1) DESIGN AND BUILD ADVANCED CLOCKWORK MECHANISMS

One of the most important aspects of a technomancer’s ability to design and modify devices or mechanisms (Talisanta p. 104) is their ability to create advanced clockwork mechanisms, including accurate clocks as well as clockwork powered vehicles and prostheses.

They can create clockwork automata capable of performing almost any mundane function, like automatically harvesting fruit or shelling nuts. Creating such devices takes between one day and several months, depending upon the complexity of the device. None of these items are “magical” and they do not count against the limit of seven enchanted items.

Many clockworks are powered by elemental power sources known only to technomancers, although some may rely on springs and require occasional rewinding. Clockworks are capable of limited activity, performing a single task or set of tasks.

Type	Diff	Cost to construct
Simple devices	-2	150 g.l.
Advanced devices	-10	800 g.l.
Complex devices	-15	2,000+ g.l.

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 between one and three days 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 between one and two weeks to construct.

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

2) JURY-RIG MECHANISMS

Technomancers can temporarily fix or modify any mechanism rapidly and easily. However, these repairs or modifications are purely temporary and performing them can result in damage to the device. Jury-rigging a repair requires an unmodified roll and requires 5 minutes, reducing the time required to 5 rounds raises the difficulty of the roll by +3.

Jury-rigging improvements requires the same time, but adds +3 to the difficulty. The technomancer can only improve one characteristic of a device at a time. Such improvements can increase range, speed, rate of fire, damage, or any similar trait. A Partial or Full Success on a jury-rig roll increases the desired feature by 50%, while a Critical Success doubles this feature. A technomancer can only jury-rig an improvement for one characteristic of a device at a time.

In all cases, if a partial success is rolled on a jury-rigging roll, the jury-rigging works as desired, but also damages the device, so undamaged devices must be repaired before they can function again, and already damaged devices suffer further damage (raising the difficulty of all further repairs by +3). Jury-rigging attempts last for three uses or, for devices like vehicles, that operate continuously, one hour on a Partial Success, they work for six uses or three hours on a Full Success, and for a dozen uses or 12 hours, if the character rolls a Critical Success.

Technomancers can also build small jury-rigged clockwork devices from spare parts they find or carry with them. These devices can perform a single, relatively simple function and require only 20 minutes (minus one minute per level of Technomancy skill) to create. These devices take an absolute minimum of five

minutes to create. Typical examples of jury-rigged devices are wind-up noise-makers, wind-up toy carts, burglar alarms, or timers that flip levers, ring bells, or perform similar functions when they go off.

Since these devices are only collections of parts that have been thrown together, they do not work for long. On a Partial Success, jury-rigged devices that perform discrete functions like sounding an alarm work once before failing, while a wind up cart or other device that works continuously runs for 10 minutes. On a Full Success, such devices work twice or for 30 minutes, and on a Critical Success, jury-rigged devices work three times or for up to one hour. Once their duration has run out, the device cannot be repaired, only rebuilt. A Critical Failure destroys the parts, so that they cannot be used in any other device.

3) SABOTAGE MECHANISM

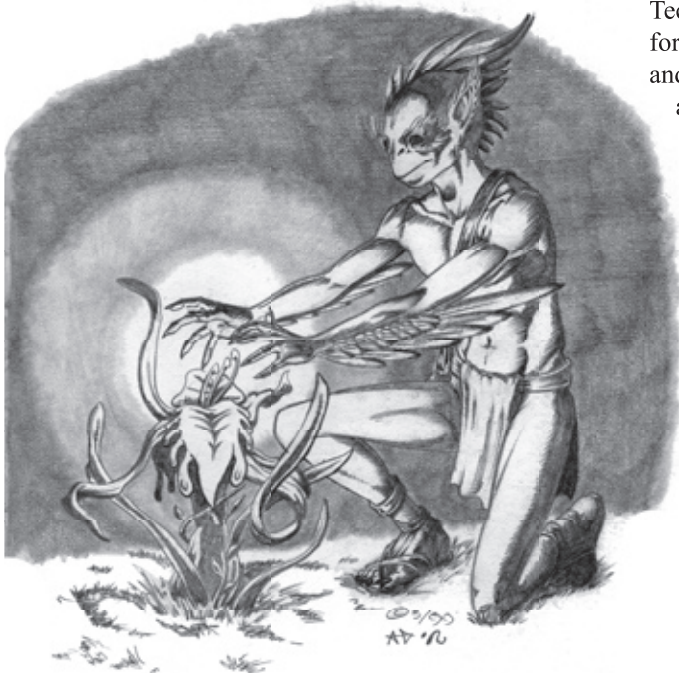
Because of their detailed understanding of all mechanisms, technomancers can render any device inoperative until it is repaired if they can gain access to it for one round and make a successful technomancy roll with a difficulty of between 0 and +3 (depending upon the complexity of the device, more complex devices are easier to disable). If desired, the technomancer can disable a device so that it appears completely functional until used. Doing so requires the technomancer be able to work with the device for at least five rounds. Technomancers can cause a device to work normally for the first one to three times it is used and then fail and require repairs on some subsequent use. Doing so, adds +3 to the difficulty of this roll. For devices like vehicles, which are used continuously, technomancers can design them to fail after between five minutes and five hours of use, but doing so also adds +3 to the difficulty of the technomancy roll.

CONCERNING BOTANOMANCY

The following are abilities known by everyone who learns the botanomancy skill.

1) CREATE HERBAL MIXTURES

The botanomancer can use herbs and plant products to create *medicinal mixtures*, *narcotics*, and plants-based *poisons* as an alchemist of the same skill level.



2) SHAPE PLANTS

Botanomancers can cause living plants to reshape themselves to any desired form. By touching special pressure points, pouring swiftly acting additives on the soil, and applying herbal extracts directly to the plant, botanomancers can reshape plants to any reasonable form. Botanomancers can transform a tree into a sheltering hut or a cluster of sturdy vines into a bridge across a nearby chasm. However, the plant remains a natural plant of its type; botanomancers cannot use this ability to alter a plant's size or substance. When a tree is made into a hut, it bends over, forms its branches into a shelter, and tightly overlaps its leaves to keep out rain. However, it remains a tree. Similarly, when vines are made into a bridge, they remain a group of interwoven living vines.

The difficulty of manipulating flexible plants like vine or ferns is 0, while the difficulty of controlling woody plants like trees is +3. In all cases, the botanomancer must touch the plant to affect it and the transformation takes between 15 and 30 minutes – the more complex the transformation and the less flexible the plant, the longer the transformation takes. Normally, these transformations are temporary and last between one hour and one day; the exact duration is based upon the botanomancer's wishes. Alternately, the botanomancer can make this transformation permanent; doing so adds +5 to the difficulty of the roll and requires the botanomancer to spend at least eight hours working with the plant.

Although *shape plants* can be used to create elaborate snares and traps, it cannot be used as a direct attack, since the plants move far too slowly to be a danger to anyone. This ability is similar to the *influence plants* ability possessed by Green Man Symbionts, except that it is considerably slower, requires the botanomancer to touch the plant, and can only affect a single large plant or a group of closely growing smaller plants (like a small grove of bamboo) at a time.

The soil additives and herbal extracts used to reshape plants are herbal mixtures that any botanomancer can create. These mixtures can be applied to any plant and need not be specially made for specific plants. A standard kit of herbal mixtures that weighs 2 lb. and contains chemicals sufficient to reshape up to a dozen plants. It costs 10 g.l. and can only be used by botanomancers.

3) COMMUNICATE WITH PLANTS

Botanomancers are taught to feel the subtle reactions that plants have to all forms of contact. By carefully touching and examining a plant, a botanomancer can initiate limited degree of communication with it. In addition to this communication being rather inexact, plants only know what their limited senses can perceive. A plant could easily tell the botanomancer about soil conditions or about how long ago and how hard the last rain was. However, asking a tree about a broken or cut branch typically reveals little more than that the branch was broken four days ago, in the morning, by three blows from a hard, sharp object like a sword or ax. Botanomancers can communicate freely with all intelligent or semi-intelligent plants.

CONCERNING THAUMATURGY

Thaumaturgy is considered a divine gift from Jamba, and a powerful gift at that. Its regulation would be incredibly severe, lest it cause untold damage, offend Jamba, or fall into less than worthy hands.

Only the most trustworthy, sane, loyal, and intelligent individuals would even be considered for training as a Thaumaturge, and I'm willing to bet the tests for entrance would be long, arduous, and rigorous in the extreme. Such individuals would be fiercely loyal to Dracarta, and extremely protective of their secrets.

No Thaumaturge would ever be allowed to just leave Dracarta bearing his caduceus, because that's tantamount to a nuclear scientist just wandering off with some weapon's grade nuclear material. Dracarta just wouldn't let it happen, and if a Thaumaturge went AWOL, you can safely rest assured that they'd spare no expense or effort in recovering him (and the secrets of thaumaturgy he carries). Any Thaumaturge found to be conducting unsanctioned or dangerous use of thaumaturgy had better write his will, because the Dracartans would regard it as both sacrilege, a threat to national security, and a possible threat to their reputation.

As for what Thaumaturgy can actually transform, it is essentially limitless. Purity doesn't enter the equation. If it can transform the water of a lake into a solid block (as we know it can), it would have no trouble with anything. Lake water isn't pure. Likewise, neither is air, and we know that can be altered as well. Accidents involving Thaumaturgy

should be horrific indeed, as it liquifies/solidifies/gasifies flesh and bone randomly. The Dracartans take major pains to control its use, and especially safeguard the costly (and all too dangerous) quintessence.

Despite this lethality, it certainly wouldn't be used as a combat weapon. Any stressful situation makes a mishap all that more likely, and you can't afford to take that chance with quintessence. No sane Thaumaturge would dare use it that way, and any insane one would be quickly put down by the authorities.

So, when using Thaumaturgy in your game, consider these simple facts:

- 1) It is VERY strictly controlled.
- 2) Thaumaturges are rigorously selected, and also subject to control.
- 3) It is expensive.
- 4) Misuse (in any shape or form) would not be tolerated.
- 5) It is VERY dangerous and volatile indeed, and if used in combat might pose just as great a threat to its user.

Think of Thaumaturgy and quintessence as Dracarta's equivalent of nuclear capability, but with added religious significance, and you're on the right track.

ADDITIONAL THAUMATURGY ABILITIES

The following are abilities known by everyone who learns the thaumaturgy skill.

1) FORENSIC ANALYSIS

A thaumaturge can use his caduceus to identify various materials. Thaumaturges can determine if a dark red-

brown smudge is Ariane blood, Equis blood, red dye, or barb-berry juice, and will also know approximately how old the stain is. In addition, they can tell if a tiny fragment of cloth is silkcloth, spinifax, or gossamer, and what materials were used to dye it. Thaumaturges can also determine the degree of similarity between two samples. They can tell if a particular bloodstain is blood from a particular person (as long as the thaumaturge has a sample of the person's blood to compare it to), if two pottery shards come from the same pot, or if the ruby set in a ring came from a particular mine.

Using a caduceus in this fashion is more difficult than performing quantitative analysis; the thaumaturge receives a -1 to all action rolls to perform this action. In addition, doing so requires at least one minute. Studying the item for a full hour provides a bonus of +1, and a full day of study increases this bonus to +3. In all cases, a single action roll is made for the entire identification process.

2) COMPLEX ANALYSIS

Thaumaturges can also use their caduceus to determine the properties of various materials, including the uses of a potion, the freezing point of an unknown liquid, or whether or not a powder would explode if exposed to heat. This procedure will also reveal the presence of any spells or enchantments on the item, but it will not reveal the nature or purpose of these spells or enchantments.

Using a caduceus in this fashion is relatively difficult, so the thaumaturge receives a -3 to all actions rolls to perform this action. In addition, doing so requires at least one minute. Studying the item for a full hour provides a bonus of +1, and a full day of study increases this bonus to +3. In all cases, a single action roll is made for the entire identification process.

MORE SAMPLE SPELLS

CARTOMANCY

ALTER

Vengeance of Zar

Base Difficulty -5

5th level base

The Cartomancer draws upon the power of Zar, the dark moon, instilling ill-fortune upon a single enemy in combat so that their weapons seem to miss more frequently. This spell reduces a single targets CR.

The Peddler's Purse

Base Difficulty -3

3rd level base

By drawing the Peddler out of the deck, the Cartomancer can gain insight when speaking with peddlers and traders. This spell allows the Cartomancer to increase either his Haggle or Bargain skill.

Secret of the Archmage

Base Difficulty -5

5th level base

Holding the Wizard and Phandir in his right hand, the Cartomancer speaks a brief incantation, increasing the chances of a targets spells to be successfully cast. This spell increases the MR of a single target for a short time.

ATTACK

The Assassin's Blade

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base, weapon

By drawing the Assassin and throwing it to the ground, the caster brings forth a ghostly dagger that stabs at the target and disappears. The card returns to the deck at the spells end.

Cardsharp

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

The Cartomancer draws a copy of the Mystic from the deck and throws it towards the intended target causing damage when it hits. The card is a copy, so it never really leaves the deck.

Calling Down the Sun

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, Area Effect

With the Greater Sun on the bottom of the deck, the Cartomancer shows it to her enemies, bringing down the light of the greater sun to burn everything within the area of effect.

CONJURE

Warrior's Armament

Base Difficulty -11

1st level base, 5 minute duration

By drawing the Warrior and tapping the card twice, the caster conjures a longsword in her hand.

Traveler's Attire

Base Difficulty -11

1st level base, 5 minute duration

Casting this spell and tapping the Traveler three times will cause a hooded cloak to come into existence around the caster.

Fools Gold

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 minute duration, 5 minute duration

Tapping the Peddler 3 times brings forth a cache of gold coins (up to 100gl per spell level) that lasts for 5 minutes. The coins completely vanish at the end of the spells duration.

DEFEND

Sanctuary of Drome (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -4

1st level base, Sphere 7' radius

Drawing upon the power of Drome, the Cartomancer brings forth an area of protection around himself and those close to him. The barrier has a PR equal to 1/3 the spell level.

Aura of the Zodar (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

When cast, the Cartomancer becomes surrounded by whirling copies of the cards from the Zodar deck. These cards move to block and intercept incoming attacks.

Luck of the Draw (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

The caster is granted luck during combat by drawing Talisandre and keeping it in the palm of their hand. For the duration of the spell, attacks that target the caster seem to always miss their mark.

HEAL

Blessing of the Lesser Sun

Difficulty -5

5th level spell

By touching the Lesser Sun and the Mystic to a wound, the Cartomancer is able to heal minor wounds with a warming light. This spell will heal up to 5 points of damage.

Curse of Phandir (Cause Disease)

Difficulty -10

10th level spell, Causes disease

When the caster touches the intended victim with Phandir they start to blister and swell with an unknown malady that can only be cured with magic or letting it run its course.

Turn of a Friendly Card

Difficulty -10

10th level spell

Drome, placed on a wounded individual's breast fills the target with the nature of the amber moon, soothing wounds and relieving pain. Persons near to death when this spell is cast upon them sometimes claim to have seen visions.

ILLUSION

Signal Flares

Difficulty -13

1st level, Magnitude 3, Motion Added

When the Archon is held high and the incantation spoken aloud, bright flares will shoot towards the sky and slowly float downwards until the spell expires.

Leaving the Scene

Difficulty -10

1st level, Magnitude 3, Complexity 3, Motion added

By clutching the Charlatan to her chest, the caster becomes unseen, allowing them to slip away. If the caster attempts to attack while this spell is active, the spell will cease functioning.

INFLUENCE

Instill Rage

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 1 minute duration

Through the power of Jhang, the Cartomancer can instill violent rage in a target, causing them to lash out at the closest available target, friend or foe. This spell expires after 5 rounds.

Calming of Drome

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 1 minute duration

By bringing forth the light of Drome, the caster is able to calm a target. Powerful versions of this spell have been said to calm even Shan-ya Battle Madness.

Amber Waves

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 1 minute duration

Drawing Drome and placing it face up on a level surface causes a wave of somnolence to descend on all those nearby (5' radius). All those who fail a WIL roll at 1/3 the spells level will immediately fall asleep, Partial Success indicates drowsiness (-5 to all actions), the caster is immune to this spell when they cast it.

MOVE

Flying Objects

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, Area Effect

The Mystic is tapped twice and turned over, allowing the Cartomancer to move any objects around her in a 5' radius.

Prestidigitation

Base Difficulty -4

1st level base, SPD -8

Placing the Rogue and the Charlatan face-to-face in the deck, the caster can move any small object within range to them at SPD -8. A bit of legerdemain is commonly used to prevent observers from noticing the object.

REVEAL

Testing the Truth

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

By drawing upon the Charlatan and tapping it twice, the

Cartomancer has an increased chance to tell if a person around him is lying.

Hand of Destiny

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

Rahastrans use this spell constantly to divine the future. By laying out two cards in front of them and divining their meaning, a skilled Cartomancer can determine his destiny. The higher the spell level, the more accurate and helpful the information the caster can obtain.

Discern the Past

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 minutes

This spell enables the Cartomancer to lay out the Zodar in such a way as to read the subjects past. The caster receives a bonus to action table rolls on things that may concern the subjects past equal to the level of the spell until it expires.

WARD

Protection of the Greater Sun

Difficulty -10

10th level spell

By drawing the Greater Sun and holding it aloft, Cartomancer is protected from the attacks of demons for the duration of the spell.

Wizard's Trump

Difficulty -10

10th level spell

By holding the Wizard and the Archon in his hand, the Cartomancer is protected from Attack mode spells and cannot be harmed by such magics.

CRYPTOMANCY

ALTER

Symbol of Strength

Base Difficulty -5

5th level base

By inscribing the Symbol of Strength onto a designated target, the Cryptomancer can increase the targets physical STR.

Rune of Weakness

Base Difficulty -10

5th level base, Trigger effect

This rune is commonly inscribed on a Cryptomancers clothing, skin or item. When the protected person is physically attacked, the spell triggers and weakens the opponent, lowering their STR.

Sigil of the Waterborne

Base Difficulty -8

3rd level base, 5 Minute duration

Fed up with the lack of his comrades abilities to swim, an old Callidian researched this rune, which saved his comrades life more than once. By marking the target with this Sigil, the caster conveys the ability to swim.

ATTACK

Rune of Blasting

Base Difficulty -11

1st level base, Trigger effect, 5' radius

Usually inscribed upon stones and placed wherever the the Cryptomancer thinks appropriate. The rune will activate when a corporeal creature of any kind steps on it, blasting the rock into many tiny pieces in an upward and outward direction. The creature triggering the rune cannot evade, although other creatures caught in the blast radius can evade as normal.

Sigil of Wounding

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

By tracing this symbol in the air and 'pushing' the glowing sigil towards the intended target, the Cryptomancer can cause a bleeding wound to appear on the victims body.

Rune of Countering

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, Trigger effect

This Rune is placed on a persons body or clothing and is triggered when the person is attacked (either magically or physically as determined when the rune scribed). The attacker suffers damage equal to the level of the rune, after which, the rune fades.

CONJURE

Sigil of the Hidden Blade

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

A Cryptomancer can conjure a weapon by merely tracing this rune on an object. Upon finishing the symbol, the desired weapon will appear in the caster's hand, or in the

case of very large weapons, nearby with the caster in a position to immediately use the weapon. The level of the spell must be great enough to compensate for the mass of the weapon.

Seal of the Forbidden Passage

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 minute duration

When the Cryptomancer draws this Seal upon the surface of a door, the portal will be sealed shut by conjured mortar and remain in that state until the sigil is dispelled or the door is forced open. Higher level spells will cover larger doors, or make smaller doors harder to force open, use the level of the spell as a negative modifier to the STR roll.

Shaladin's Blade

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, Trigger effect

This symbol is commonly sewn into the sleeve of a robe or carved into the face of a ring. When triggered by the wearer, a weapon is conjured into the users hand. Higher level spells are needed for weapons larger than a dagger. It is rumored that a certain Gao-Din captain actually has this rune transcribed on the forecastle deck of his ship, at such a level as to conjure a heavy ballista.

DEFEND

Symbol of Protection (Aura)

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, Trigger effect

Able to be inscribed anywhere on a persons body, this symbol remains dormant until triggered by an attack on the person. When triggered, it will activate, protecting the wearer from damage until the spell expires, at which point the rune fades and must be redone.

Rune of Foreboding (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -9

1st level base, 10 foot x 10 foot area, 2 round duration

This two-part symbol may be inscribed between any two surfaces up to ten feet apart. When activated, the twin Runes create a magical barrier up to 100 square feet in area that emanates a sense of fear and dread in most living creatures. Animal handling, riding and NPC morale checks will be called for at -1 per 3 levels of the spell.

HEAL

Minor Symbol of Healing

Difficulty -10

10th level spell

When inscribed upon a wounded person or creature, this minor version of Symbol of Healing will heal up to 10 points of physical damage as the magic in the symbol regenerates bone, skin and muscle tissues.

Rune of Harm (Harm)

Difficulty -15

10th level spell, Trigger effect

This rune can be inscribed upon an individual and is triggered when the person takes damage from a melee attack. The attacker suffers 10 points of damage from the physical impact, possibly breaking bones or, at the very least, resulting in massive bruising. The rune fades once triggered.

Emergency Sigil

Difficulty -15

10th level spell, Trigger effect

This sigil heals the inscribed individual for 10 points of damage the first time an attack deals damage equal to or greater than 10 points. The sigil fades after brightly illuminating the individual from the inside as the magic takes effect.

MOVE

Rune of Falling

Base Difficulty -10

1st level base, Trigger effect, 1 minute

This rune is triggered when the person upon which it has been inscribed falls more than 10 feet. Upon activation, the affected person immediately starts to fall at a much slower pace, until the spell effect expires. This spell must be cast at a high enough level to lift the target individual.

Higher Ground

Base Difficulty -8

1st level base, SPD -8, 1 minute duration

By tracing this Sigil in the dirt, and stepping within, the Cryptomancer is lifted up as the Sigil becomes a solid 2 foot disc. The caster may then move about at SPD -8 for 1 minute. This spell must be cast at a level that will lift the Cryptomancer.

REVEAL BONUS +3

Symbol of Clarity

Base Difficulty +2

1st level base, Order bonus

Inscribed in the air above a page or other written surface, a Symbol of Clarity will render any form of writings or inscriptions clear and intelligible to the caster. The level of difficulty acts as a penalty to the spell roll when trying to decipher codes, ciphers, badly smudged, distorted or faded writings, language does not matter.

Cryptomantic Cipher (Unique, Conceal)

Base Difficulty -12

1st level base, Order Bonus, Tempus (Minutes – Weeks), 1 week duration, Trigger effect

This symbol can be inscribed upon any written work, when someone without the special code word attempts to read the work the sigil is triggered, rendering the words unintelligible. This effect lasts for 1 week.

Sigil of Scrying

Base Difficulty -9

1st level base, 5 mile range, 5 minute duration

By tracing this sigil on a reflective surface, such as a mirror or in a pool of standing water, the Cryptomancer creates a scrying device. For the duration of the spell, the Cryptomancer can see up to 5 miles away whilst looking into the surface. The Cryptomancer receives a bonus to PER rolls equal to the spells level for the purposes of noticing details of the viewed area.

SUMMON

Summon Sardonicus

Base Difficulty -7

3rd level base, 5 minute duration

When this intricate circle is finished, a Sardonicus will appear in the center to do the summoners bidding. The Sardonicus will return to its place of origin after 5 minutes. This spell does not summon the creature in a bottle and great care should be taken by the magician casting this spell.

Devil's Servant

Base Difficulty -10

1st level base, 10 minute duration

This sigil summons a Servitor Imp when inscribed. The Imp will perform services for the summoner for 10 minutes before returning to the plane of Oblivion.

Banish Sardonicus

Base Difficulty -8

3rd level base, Trigger Effect

Cryptomancers who summon Bottle Imps commonly make use of this spell to rid themselves of the vile creatures. The rune should be inscribed before the summoning and set to be triggered by a specific phrase.

WARD BONUS +3

Demonward

Difficulty -7

10th level, Order bonus

This sigil protects the caster from the attacks of demons for a short time, giving them enough time to prepare a more proper defense, or to escape. This sigil is usually inscribed as a large circle with a trigger, although many modern Cryptomancers use a smaller version that can be inscribed on any surface.

The Masters Defense

Difficulty -7

10th level, Order bonus

This circle is commonly inscribed on the floor or in dirt and keeps the caster protected from the spells of the attack mode. Commonly used by Instructors when they teach offensive spells to their students, some Cryptomancers have learned that it has more practical uses as well.

Safeguard Against Devils

Difficulty -7

10th level, Order bonus

Another common seal used by Cryptomancers, this ward will protect the individual from physical threats by Devils for the duration of this spell. It should be mentioned however, that many devils know at least a bit of magic, and the more powerful entities may be able to counterspell or dispel this seal, or otherwise render it useless.

CRYSTALOMANCY

ALTER

Sharpen with Stone

Base Difficulty -3

3rd level base

By chanting a simple phrase and rubbing a topazine crystal along the blade of a natural weapon, the Crystalomancer can

increase the damage done by the blade. If the blade itself is made of topazine, the Crystalomancer merely needs to speak the incantation and rub the blade with their fingers.

Fortify with Terra's Strength

Base Difficulty -3

3rd level base

While touching a shield or suit of armor made out of natural materials with a topazine crystal, and speaking a short incantation, the Crystalomancer can imbue the item with a temporary increase in the PR.

Sapper's Spell

Base Difficulty -5

5th level base

Through the use of this spell, the Crystalomancer can weaken any stone structure, possibly causing it to collapse under its own weight. The GM should be the final arbitrator for determining the required level, taking into account how structurally sound the structure is in the first place. By assigning a number to the integrity of the structure, the GM can determine how many 'levels' of weakness must be applied to the structure before it collapses (by reducing the assigned number to 0).

DEFEND BONUS +3

Amberite Aura (Aura)

Base Difficulty +2

1st level base, Order bonus

When cast, the Crystalomancers amberite crystal glows with a shimmering golden light that envelops the caster, protecting him from harm. Any attack that tries to penetrate the glow is harmlessly deflected away.

Amberite Wall (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -4

1st level base, Order bonus, Area of effect

This spell allows the Crystalomancer to focus the properties of an amberite crystal to create a 2-dimensional wall of ambient, amber light up to 10 x 10 feet in area. This wall acts in all respects as a physical, clear wall. When the spell's duration expires, the wall merely phases out.

HEAL BONUS +3

Terra's Touch

Difficulty -9

12th level, Order bonus

The Crystalomancer holds an emeralite crystal just above the recipients wounds while casting this spell. This

allows the Crystalomancer to focus the properties of an emeralite crystal to heal up to 12 HP of damage to any living creature.

Wound Maker (Harm)

Difficulty -9

12 level, Order bonus

By reversing the properties of an emeralite crystal, the caster causes horrible, bleeding wounds to appear wherever an enemy is touched with the crystal, causing 12 hp of damage.

Mother's Warmth (Unique)

Difficulty -13

10th level, Tractus (single subject - 10' radius), Order Bonus

Passed down through the generations, this spell causes the casters emeralite crystal to cast a glow in a 10 foot radius around the caster. All those caught within the glow will be healed for 10 points of damage.

ILLUSION

Hidden Portal

Difficulty -10

1st level, Magnitude, Touch, Sound

This spell allows the Crystalomancer to use a prismatic crystal to conceal an opening the size of a door or smaller. The illusion replicates walls or natural surfaces up to the size of a humanoid, making openings or doorways almost impossible to detect, even by touch.

Terra's Concealment

Difficulty -10

1st level, Complexity

By manipulating the properties of a prismatic crystal, the caster is able to blend in with surrounding rocks and earth effectively becoming invisible, as long as they remain stationary, for a short time.

INFLUENCE

Amethyte Persuasion

Base Difficulty -2

2nd level base

This spell allows the caster to focus the properties of amethyte crystal, which will produce a glowing light that can instill a sense of peace and passivity in a single creature. The intended target may resist with a WIL check at -1/2 the level of the spell level.

Terra's Courage

Base Difficulty -2

2nd level base

By manipulating the properties of amethyst crystal, the caster can envelope a creature or being in a glowing light that will push fear out of the target's mind. Gnomekin Priestesses use this to help Protectors when Durne is threatened. The target may resist with a WIL check at $-1/2$ the spell's level if so desired.

MOVE

Azurite Hand

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

This simple spell allows the Crystalomancer to handle distant objects with a beam of bright blue light cast from an azurite crystal. The end of the beam will coalesce into the shape of a hand allowing the caster to grasp objects and perform precise manipulations.

Tunnel Hold

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 foot radius

This spell is used by Crystalomancers to support rock walls and ceilings during a cave-in. A network of glowing blue beams shoots forth from the magician's azurite crystal, supporting everything within a 5 foot radius. It should be noted that the spell must be cast at a level high enough to support the ceiling.

REVEAL

Glassine Eye

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, 2 minute duration, 2 mile range

By placing a glassine crystal in a desired location, the Crystalomancer can use this spell to turn the crystal into a remote Scrying device. As long as the crystal is in range, the caster can see through the Crystalomantic Eye as though he or she were there, with a PER bonus equal to the level of the spell for purposes of seeing hidden things or beings.

Sense of Terra

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 minute duration

This spell gives the caster an infallible sense of depth and direction while underground. As long as the spell is in effect, the Crystalomancer will not become disoriented or

lost, even in total darkness. In addition, the caster receives a bonus to PER rolls equal to the level of the spell.

WARD

Safe Passage

Difficulty -10

10th level

By casting this spell on an umberite crystal and dropping it in a passageway, the Crystalomancer can make it impossible for a certain type of creature to pass through the area for 1 minute. There are actually many different versions of this spell to account for the various creatures that Durne has to fend off – Darklings, Octomorphs, Subterranooids and Drones to name a few.

Earthward

Difficulty -10

10th level

This spell envelops the Crystalomancer with a brown aura that emanates from an umberite crystal. Protecting them from rocks and earth. Originally created for use in areas known to collapse frequently, this spell is also used against Earth Demons.

ELEMENTALISM (AEROMANCY)

ATTACK

Windblast

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5' radius

With this spell, the Aeromancer targets an area, causing winds to lash out from the center pummeling those within the area of effect with loose debris and winds strong enough to tear the skin. Those caught in the area must make a STR roll at $-1/3$ the spell's level to stay standing.

Crackling Fist

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base, weapon

This spell covers the hands of a single being in crackling lightning for a number of rounds equal to the spell level. With a successful attack roll, using the appropriate combat skill, the fists will do damage equal to the spell's level. The lightning does no damage to the recipient of the spell.

Lightning Bolt

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

When cast, the Aeromancers hair will stand on end and lightning will crackle around them as the charge builds, the Aeromancer can then send a bolt of lightning from his fingertips towards a target, doing damage equal to the spell level. This spell ignores the PR of metal armor.

CONJURE BONUS +3

Airflow

Base Difficulty +2

1st level base, Order bonus

This spell brings forth a slight wind that can dissipate noxious gases and mists. Higher level spells can be used to move windships, blow away gases, knock over simple structures, or move debris.

Breathe

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 minute duration

Through the use of this conjuration, an Aeromancer is able to produce breathable air in any environment. 1 cubic foot of air is enough for a single person to breathe for the duration of the spell.

Noxious Cloud

Base Difficulty -8

3rd level base, 5 minute duration

This spell conjures a cloud of noxious gasses and fumes 3 cubic feet in size that emanates from the casters fingertips and coalesces at the desired range. The cloud is not deadly, but it will incapacitate targets within the area of effect. Victims may resist by making a CON check at -1/3 the spells level.

DEFEND

Wall of Air (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 8'x8' area, 10' range

The Aeromancer moves his outstretched hand from left to right, pointing at where the wall will be, and focuses the air in that area to an almost solid state. The wall created is 8 feet high x 8 feet wide, and can be placed anywhere within 10 feet of the caster.

Protective Vortex (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

By swirling the winds around her body, the Aeromancer can create high winds that deflect blows and turn away attacks. Small items around the protected person may be blown away, as will gasses and loose dirt and debris.

Lightning Shield (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

With this spell, the Aeromancer creates a crackling barrier of electrical energy that surrounds them that will shock attackers, forcing them to pull away instinctively, reducing any damage inflicted. Attackers that successfully land a blow will suffer small electrical shocks when coming into contact with the aura and may instinctively drop their weapon (WIL roll at 1/3 the spells level to resist the urge to drop the weapon). Bare fisted individuals may lose some feeling in their hands for a short time.

MOVE BONUS +3

Windflight (Unique)

Base Difficulty -10

1st level base, Order bonus, Qualitas (Minor Change - SPD +0), Tempus (Rounds become Minutes), 10 minute duration

By casting the spell at a level great enough to lift the casters weight, the caster conjures strong winds close to their body, enabling them to fly at SPD +0 (100' per round), for 10 minutes. This spell causes swirling winds that will knock over small items, blow away loose articles, extinguish candles and other small flames, and generally makes a lot of noise. This spell functions on the caster only.

Vortex

Base Difficulty -8

1st level base, Order bonus, 5' radius, SPD-7

This spell creates high winds (SPD -7, 30 feet per round) in a small area that will pick up objects and swirl them around, possibly causing damage to those in within the vortex. When this spell expires, items in the vortex will be slung in whatever direction they were going at the time.

Choke

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, Order bonus, 1 minute duration

By moving the air out of a targets lungs, an Aeromancer can render them unconscious for a period of time. Targets may resist using STR at -1/3 the spells level each round or fall unconscious, even if the roll to resist is successful, the target should suffer penalties to all action table rolls due to choking.

REVEAL

Mists of Obscurement (Conceal)

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, 3 minute duration

This enchantment allows the caster to create billowing clouds of gray mist which obscure vision and dampen sound in the area of effect. Living creatures within the mists suffer a penalty to PER rolls equal to the spells level.

Whispers in the Wind

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

By studying the flow of the air, the Aeromancer is able to visualize things around him in a much more precise way, thus giving the magician a PER bonus equal to the spells level as they can pick up sounds, perceive the channels of air created by people and objects, and feel changes in the airflow as creatures move around.

SUMMON

Summon Minor Elemental

Basic Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 minute duration

Summons a Minor Air Elemental in the form of a tiny imp or sprite, that will perform small tasks for the caster. The Elemental will return to the Elemental Plane after 5 minutes.

Summon Sub-Elemental

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 minute duration

This spell summons a Sub-Elemental of Air in the form of a cloud or mist. Sub-elementals are able to perform more laborious tasks than Minor Elementals, including combat. The Sub-elemental will return to the elemental plane after 5 minutes.

Summon Storm Demon

3rd level base, Difficulty -8

When cast, a ball of lightning is created in front of the caster. From within this ball a Storm demon appears and then steps through onto the material plane. The Demon will do the casters bidding for 5 minutes, at which time it returns to the Demonrealms.

TRANSFORM

Unbreathable Air

Difficulty -10

10th level (Minor Change), 5 minute duration

By stretching her fingers out and speaking a brief incantation, the Aeromancer can turn clean air into an unbreathable state for a period of 5 minutes. Anyone caught within the gas must make a CON roll or fall unconscious. This does not turn the air into any type of gas, it just makes the air unbreathable.

Detoxification

Difficulty -10

10th level (Major Change)

By completing this incantation and physically touching a noxious gas, the Aeromancer is able to quickly dissipate the substance by transforming it into clean, breathable air.

WARD

Immunity to Noxious Gases

Difficulty -10

10th level

When this spell is cast, it creates a bubble around the Aeromancer that will protect them from noxious gases for a period of 1 minute. Normal air may still pass through the bubble.

Slow Fall

Difficulty -10

10th level

Use of this ward protects the recipient by not allowing air to rush at them at a fast rate, which in turn slows them. The recipient will have no control over direction.

ELEMENTALISM (AQUAMANCY)

ATTACK

Ice Blast

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5' radius

With this spell, the Aquamancer sends forth a sliver of ice to the designated area. Upon reaching the area, the ice sliver explodes and shards of ice lash out, injuring those in the area.



Aquamantic Bolt

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

By speaking this incantation and designating a target, the Aquamancer coalesces a bolt of pure elemental water and launches it towards his enemy. Upon impact, the water will hit with such force as to damage the target, as well as soak anything within a few feet.

Ice Blade

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base, weapon

If the Aquamancer happens to lose his weapon, he can call upon this spell to create one for him, condensing the water in the air into an icy blade that encases his hand and juts outward.

CONJURE BONUS +3

Conjure Water

Base Difficulty -2

1st level base, Order bonus, 5 minute duration

This spell conjures fresh water that is suitable for drinking. A suitable receptacle must be provided to hold the water until it is consumed. The water will evaporate as normal when the spell expires.

Sheet of Ice

Base Difficulty -7

1st level base, Order bonus, 10 minute duration

Through the use of this spell, the caster summons a thin layer of ice to coat floors, walls, ceilings and whatever else to cause enemies to slip, slide and fall. Used primarily in defense...or to entertain children. The ice begins to melt normally after 10 minutes.

Light Rain

Base Difficulty -2

1st level base, Order bonus, 5 minute duration

When the magician casts this spell, he causes water to fall from the sky in droplets over the designated area until the spells duration expires. The water is clean and drinkable, as well as cool and refreshing.

DEFEND

Armor of Ice and Snow (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

With this spell the caster conjures ice and snow that will surround the recipients body, fully encasing him without hindering movement, providing protection for 5 rounds. At the spells expiration, the armor falls to the ground and begins to melt normally.

Wall of Ice (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -9

1st level base, 20' Range, 10' x 10' area

This incantation creates a wall of solid ice that stretches 10' long and 10' high that can be used to block off an escape or impede charging enemies. The wall can be created anywhere within 20' of the caster, and will begin to melt

after 5 rounds.

Wall of Water (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -10

1st level base, 30' range, 10' x 10' area

The Sunra make excellent use of this spell, forming water into a translucent, solid wall to block their enemies. At the end of the spells duration, the water returns to normal, pouring onto the ground at great speed. Beings too close to the wall may find themselves wet and struggling to regain their footing (GMs discretion).

MOVE

Water Jet

Base Difficulty -9

1st level base, SPD -8, 1 minute duration

This spell brings forth a jet of water under the feet of the recipient, allowing him to rise and move about for 1 minute. The spell level must be great enough to lift the targets weight. If used underwater, half the weight of the recipient.

Freeze

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 100 foot range

This spell freezes a targets joints, slowing them down. Powerful versions of this spell have been seen to stop opponents completely. Target resists with a STR check vs -1/3 the spells level.

REVEAL

Snow Globe

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 2 mile Range, 2 minute Duration, Scrying

When this spell is cast, a small globe appears in the casters hand, and snow can be seen swirling inside. Through the snow, the caster can see events that occur within 2 miles of his location for 2 minutes.

Snowblind (Conceal)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

With this spell, the caster creates swirling bands of snow in the air, reducing visibility for a short time, making it hard to see things. All those caught within the snow suffer a penalty to PER rolls equal to the spells level.

SUMMON

Summon Aqua Demon

Base Difficulty -7

3rd level base, 5 minute duration

With this spell, the caster can bind a demon into a bit of water for a short time, creating an Aqua Demon that will obey the caster for 5 minutes before returning to the Demonrealm. A similar spell is used by Aquamancers to summon Frost Demons.

Summon Sub-Elemental

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 minute duration

By speaking aloud while pouring a small bit of water on the ground, the caster can summon a Sub-Elemental of water in the form of a small water sprite. The elemental will do the casters bidding, to the best of its ability, for 5 minutes, at which time the Sub-elemental will return to the elemental plane.

Banish Frost Demon

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

A popular spell in L'Haan, when cast, this spell opens a portal behind a Frost demon that will suck it back into the Demonrealm. Care must be taken, as whatever the demon is holding will go to the Demonrealm with it. A similar spell is used to banish Aqua Demons.

TRANSFORM BONUS +3

Purify Water

Difficulty -4

3rd level base (Trivial Change), Order bonus, 5 minute duration

This spell is commonly used to purify salt water for drinking, although it may also be used to protect oneself from any toxic substance that may be present in the water, including parasites and poisons.

Water to Ice

Difficulty -4

3rd level base (Trivial Change), Order bonus, 5 minute duration

By using this spell, Aquamancers can keep drinks cool, entertain guests or surprise foes. This spell causes the targeted water to turn to solid ice for 5 minutes, at the end of which, the ice will melt normally.

Putrefy Water

Difficulty -11

5th level base (Minor Change), Order bonus, 10 minute duration,

Although abhorrent to most Aquamancers, some will employ this spell to cause trouble among their enemies. Through the use of this spell, the Aquamancer can turn clean water into a brackish mass of undrinkable liquid.

WARD

Aquatic Nature (Unique)

Difficulty -16

10th level, Tempus (Minutes become Days), 1 day duration

This spell protects the recipient from damage that might be caused by water. It will also protect the recipient from drowning. Sunra use this spell on occasion to allow land-dwellers to visit areas underwater.

Coldskin (Unique)

Difficulty -16

10th level, Tempus (Minutes become Days), 1 day duration

The Mirin of L'Haan treat guests with this spell to help them shrug off the cold for a short time, guests who stay for a while are sometimes provided with a cloak that has been enchanted with this ward.

ELEMENTALISM (GEOMANCY)

ATTACK

Fists of Granite

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

With this spell, the caster encases his fists with solid rock and can deliver devastating blows at higher levels. While this spell is active, the recipient cannot perform fine manipulations. This stone covering should be considered weightless for the target.

Geomantic Shards

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

This spell sends geomantic shards of stone at a single target within 50' of the caster. Upon impact, the shards

will burst after dealing their damage and litter the ground with small pebbles.

Geomantic Blast

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 foot radius

By targeting an area, the Geomancer can cause the earth in a 5 foot radius to suddenly blast upwards, damaging those within. There is a good chance that powerful versions of this spell will cause those within to loose their footing also (STR check vs -1/3 the spells level).

CONJURE BONUS +3

Conjure Mud

Base Difficulty +2

Order bonus

Using this spell, Geomancers conjure mud for a variety of utility purposes. Higher levels of this spell are usually not needed, but can be used to block off passages, mortar up doors, or make slopes hard to traverse.

Rolling Stone

Base Difficulty -5

5th level base (50 lbs), Order bonus, 3 minute duration

This spell conjures a large round stone that can be pushed down a hill to scatter enemies, or rolled down a passage to block the way. At the spells expiration, the stone turns to dust.

Battering Ram

Base Difficulty -5

3rd level base (30 lbs), Order bonus, 5 minute duration

Through the use of this spell, the Geomancer can conjure a stone battering ram that can be used to bust through doors, gates, and even some walls. At the end of the spells duration, the ram becomes extremely brittle and will crumble into dirt.

DEFEND BONUS +3

Wall of Stone (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, Order bonus, 10' x 10' area, 20' range

When this spell is cast, it creates a wall of solid stone 6 feet high x 6 feet wide, anywhere within 20 feet of the caster. Used throughout the continent as a means to block off would be attackers.

Pebble Shield (Aura)

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, Order bonus, 1 minute duration

This spell causes small pebbles to swirl about the caster, intercepting and deflecting blows that would otherwise deal damage. Those attempting to grapple the protected individual will find themselves assaulted with bits of flying stone and suffer a penalty equal to 1/3 the spells level at such attempts.

MOVE

Earthquake

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 foot radius

The Geomancer causes the ground itself to shake in a 5 foot radius of the targeted area. STR checks vs 1/3 the spells level must be made in order for all those caught within to stay standing. The earthquake lasts for 5 rounds and may knock over items or structures within the area.

Earthwalk (Unique)

Base Difficulty -11

6th level minimum, Qualitas (Minor change)

This spell allows the Geomancer to move through the earth at his normal speed. The spell must be cast at a level high enough to move the geomancers weight, and the weight of carried items. At the spells expiration, if the Geomancer is still inside the earth they may find themselves stuck, being fully encased in earth will most likely lead to a quick end to the caster. This spell can only target the caster.

REVEAL

Earth Sense

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 minute duration

This spell gives the caster an infallible sense of depth and direction while underground. As long as the spell is in effect, the Geomancer will not become disoriented or lost, even in total darkness. In addition, the caster receives a bonus to PER rolls equal to the level of the spell.

Obsidian Sight

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, 2 minute duration, 2 mile range

By placing a piece of obsidian in a desired location, the Geomancer can use this spell to turn the rock into a remote Scrying device. As long as the obsidian is in range, the caster can see through it using Obsidian Sight as though he or she were there, with a PER bonus equal to the level of the spell for purposes of seeing hidden things or beings.

SUMMON

Summon Earth Demon

Base Difficulty -8

3rd level base, 5 minute duration

This spell summons an Earth Demon that will obey the caster for 5 minutes before returning to the Demonrealm. A similar spell is used to summon Sand Demons.

Summon Sub-Elemental

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 minute duration

Upon completion of this spell, the Geomancer brings forth a Sub-Elemental of Earth in the form of a sprite with rocklike skin and crystal wings. The Sub-elemental will return to the elemental plane after 5 minutes.

Banish Earth Demon

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

When cast, this spell opens a portal behind the earth demon which will suck it, and anything it may be holding, back to the Demonrealms. A similar spell is used to banish Sand Demons.

TRANSFORM

Stone Steps

Difficulty -7

5th level base (Minor Change), 3 minute duration

With this spell, the Geomancer can fashion steps out of stone for a variety of reasons, scaling walls, making travel easier, etc. The steps will last for 3 minutes before returning to their previous shape.

Transform Earth to Mud

Difficulty -7

5th level base (Minor Change), 3 minute duration

This spell will soften the targeted earth and rock, changing it to mud for a short time, allowing passage through walls, floors, ceilings, etc. After the spells expiration, the mud will revert back into stone but will retain its new shape if it has been changed. For example, footprints will become permanently embedded in the stone, as will feet, designs etc. There is a similar spell known to most Geomancers that works in reverse.

WARD

Ward vs Stone

Difficulty -10
10th level

This enchantment will provide the recipient with an immunity to stone, stone weapons, rocks and other earthly devices for a short time. While so protected, the skin of the individual will take on a stone-like appearance.

Earth Demon Ward

Difficulty -10
10th level

By casting this spell, the Geomancer can protect himself or another from the attacks of Earth Demons. Geomancers also employ a similar spell to protect themselves from Sand Demons.



ELEMENTALISM (PYROMANCY)

ATTACK BONUS +3

Pyromantic Blast

Base Difficulty -8
1st level base, Order bonus, 10' radius

The Pyromancer sends a ball of raging fire towards an area, when the area is reached the ball explodes, damaging everything within and causing combustibles to ignite.

Pyromantic Bolt

Base Difficulty +2
1st level base, Order bonus

By speaking this short incantation and pointing his finger at a designated target, the Pyromancer can hurl a bolt of elemental fire towards his opponent, inflicting damage and possibly causing combustibles to ignite.

Flaming Sword

Base Difficulty +2
1st level base, Order bonus

A sword of flame extends out of the casters hand, lasting a number of rounds equal to the spell level. The sword will shed light equal to a torch and can be used to ignite combustibles with a touch.

CONJURE BONUS +3

Conjure Smoke

Base Difficulty -5
1st level base, Order bonus, 5 minute duration

When this spell is cast, smoke streams from the casters fingers and moves to the targeted area reducing visibility. All those within the area of effect may suffer a penalty to action table rolls due to smoke inhalation equal to the spells level. At the end of the spells duration the smoke will dissipate normally.

Conjure Fire

Base Difficulty +2
1st level base, Order Bonus

This simple spell conjures 1 cubic foot of elemental fire in the area designated by the caster. The flames will cause combustibles to catch fire, shed light and burn any creature within the area.

Unquenchable Fire (Unique)

Base Difficulty -12

1st level base, Order bonus, Qualitas (Minor change),
Tempus (Minutes become Weeks)

This spell conjures fire that cannot be put out by any normal means and continues burning for 1 week, consuming no fuel. The flames will inflict damage equal to 1/3 the spells level to everything they touch.

DEFEND

Flame Shroud (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

This spell envelops the target in a sheath of actual flames. These flames will burn anyone who attacks the target in melee for 1/3 the spells level in damage.

Wall of Fire (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -9

1st level base, 10' x 10' area, 20' range

When this spell is cast, it creates a wall of flames 10 feet high x 10 feet wide, anywhere within 20 feet of the caster. Used throughout the continent as a means to block off would be attackers. This spell will burn any who touch it for 1/3 the spells level in damage.

MOVE

Smoldering Palanquin

Base Difficulty -11

1st level base, SPD -8, Area 2' radius, 1 minute duration

This spell chars a bit of the ground under and around the caster, turning it into a smoldering, circular palanquin, 4 feet in diameter. The palanquin will support weight according to the level of the spell.

Smoke Tendrils

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 1 minute duration

Upon successfully casting this spell, the Pyromancer exudes tendrils made of smoke that move and twist. These tendrils can be made to grasp, hold and move objects within range.

REVEAL

Smoke Images

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 2 mile range, 2 minute duration

This spell allows the Pyromancer to use the smoke of a fire to scry through any other fire within range. The caster gains a bonus to PER rolls equal to the level of the spell in regards to noticing things otherwise missed.

Smoke the Lens (Conceal)

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 minute duration

By casting this spell on a nearby fire, the caster protects himself and those around him from Scrying devices. Any attempt to scry in the area will result in the Scrying device clouding up with thick smoke.

SUMMON

Summon Pyro Demon

Base Difficulty -7

3rd level base, 5 minute duration

When this spell is cast, a fiery portal will open up from the ground in front of the caster bringing forth a Pyro Demon from the Demonrealms. This Pyro Demon will obey the caster for 5 minutes before returning to the Demonrealms in a puff of smoke and ash.

Summon Sub-Elemental

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 minute duration

This spell summons a Fire Sprite with red skin and flaming wings. The Sprite is a type of Sub-elemental and may be commanded to do small tasks. The Sub-elemental will return to the elemental plane after 5 minutes.

Banish Fire Elemental

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

When cast, this spell banishes an elemental back to the elemental plane. This spell will work on minor elementals and sub-elementals, as they are both elementals.

Transform

Fire Becomes Smoke

Difficulty -5

5th level base (Minor Change)

By speaking this incantation and touching a nearby fire, this spell can be used in many cases to put out dangerous fires, as it instantly turns flames into smoke which will dissipate

normally, quenching any normal fire quickly. Due to the quickness of the change, the caster will take no damage from the fire he touches.

Smoke Becomes Fire

Difficulty -6

5th level base (Minor Change), 2 minute duration

By speaking this incantation and reaching out to touch smoke in the area, the Pyromancer is able to transform the smoke into fire. Potentially a very dangerous spell (especially when used in conjunction with Conjure Smoke) this spell also has utility uses, such as starting campfires, clearing brush etcetera. For the duration of the spell, the fire burns no fuel, after the spell expires, fuel is burnt normally until the fire is put out.

WARD

Ward vs Fire

Difficulty -10

10th level

When this spell is cast, the recipient will feel a coolness in them. This coolness will protect them completely from fire and heat for a short time before dissipating.

Protection from Pyro Demons

Difficulty -10

10th level

By casting this spell, the Pyromancer can protect himself or another from the attacks of Pyro Demons. Pyro Demons can sense this protection, and have been known at times to wait or follow their prey until the ward wears off.

INVOCATION

Deity bonuses have not been added except where specifically stated in the spell description.

ALTER

Aa's Blessing

Base Difficulty -5

5th level base (Broad Alteration)

Warrior-Priests are known to use this spell at every opportunity. With a quick prayer to AA, the Warrior-Priest can bestow a blessing upon a single target, increasing the recipients CR.

Aberon's Curse

Base Difficulty -6

5th level base (Broad Alteration), 2 minute duration

By calling out to Aberon, the priest can channel his dark energies to envelop a single entity. These energies will move and twist around the target, causing a disruption in their spellcasting abilities by reducing their Magic Rating.

Freezing the Joints

Base Difficulty -5

5th level base (Broad Alteration)

This spell creates an icy chill in the joints of the chosen target, making them ache. While so enchanted, the victim will receive a penalty to their SPD attribute due to the pain of the chill in their joints. Priests of Borean have been known to halt their enemies with powerful versions of this spell.

ATTACK

Lance of Light

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

With this simple spell, a Priest of Aa can summon a brilliant shaft of blazing energy which strikes at a single target within 50 feet, doing damage equal to the spells level.

Deaths Touch

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

Rajan Necromancer-Priests use this spell, believing that they are actually guiding the finger of Death himself. Upon casting, a black, shadowy finger appears and is guided by the caster to its target. The victim of this attack will feel a cold, deathly touch as their energy and health are drained away.

Demonblast

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 foot radius

This spell brings forth dozens of demons who flit around doing damage to all within the area of effect. As quickly as they appear, the demons will vanish back to the Demonrealms. The effect of this spell may also cause confusion among the ranks of an enemy (GMs Discretion). A favorite among the Priests of Aberon.

Holy/Unholy Fire (Unique)

Base Difficulty -11

1st level base, Qualitas (Minor Change), Tractus (Feet

– 10 foot radius), 20' radius

With this spell, the Priest blasts an entire area with holy or unholy fire. All those within the area of effect that worship the deity of the caster will remain unharmed. The holy fire will appear as bright flames, while the unholy fire is dark and shadowy. Priests of Aa and Borean will know Holy Fire, whilst the Priests of Aberon and Death will have knowledge of Unholy Fire.

CONJURE

Demon Bile

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, 3 minute duration

With a word of power, the invoker calls forth a greenish slime which oozes out of invisible cracks and holes on a chosen surface. This acidic, slippery substance that clings to anything and is difficult to remove. DEX checks at -1/3 the spell level, and Demon Bile inflicts 1/3 the spells level in damage per round it touches unprotected flesh.

Holy/Unholy Weapon

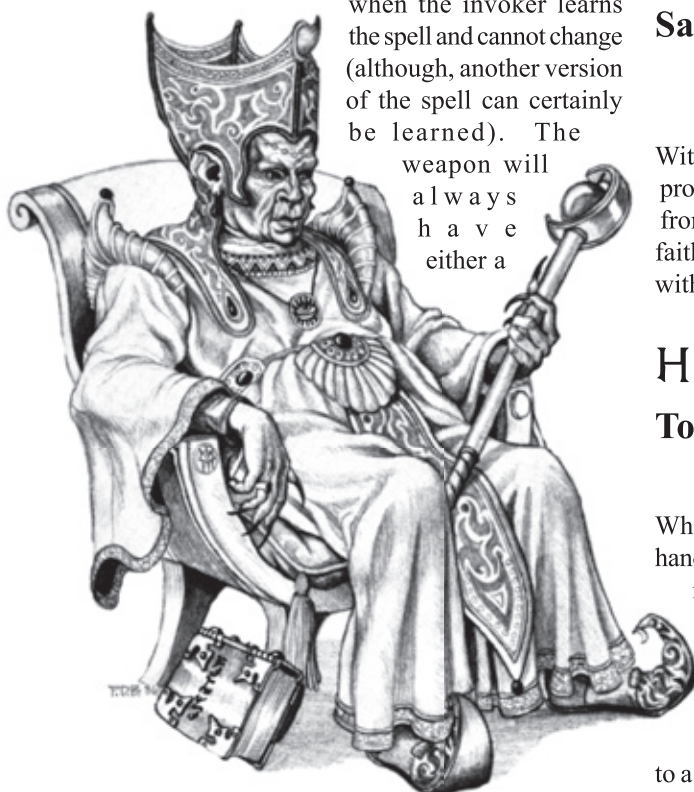
Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

This spell is used by priests who suddenly find themselves without a weapon. The weapon is chosen

when the invoker learns the spell and cannot change (although, another version of the spell can certainly be learned). The

weapon will
always
have
either a



beautiful (Aa, Borean) or vile appearance (Aberon, Death).

Mana from Above

Base Difficulty -10

1st level base, 10 minute duration

This spell conjures enough food to feed 10 man-sized people. The food is bland, tasteless and has the consistency of gruel, although it is filling and healthy. Pilgrims of Aa actually seem to prefer this substance to real food, as they believe that by suffering on their pilgrimage they are showing how strong their faith and love for Aa is. Other cultures use this as a last resort.

DEFEND

Shield of Faith (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

An invoker can call on the protection of his patron deity when he is faced with danger. The Shield of Faith surrounds the caster with a glowing aura that absorbs damage before dissipating. The aura's actual appearance will match that of the casters chosen diety, white for Aa, ice blue for Borean, a black shadowy aura for Death and a glistening black oil-like substance for Aberon.

Sanctuary for the Faithful (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -7

1st level base, Cylinder-shaped 7 feet high with 5 foot radius

With a prayer to their chosen deity, the priest erects a protective area 10 feet in diameter to shield his companions from harm. This spell does not differentiate between the faithful and the non-faithful, this spell will protect anyone within the area of effect.

HEAL

Touch of Aberon (Harm)

Difficulty -10

10th level

When a priest of Aberon casts this spell he infuses his hands with the dark, destructive energies of Aberon himself, inflicting 10 points of damage to anyone he touches.

Breath of Borean (Heal)

Difficulty -10

10th level

With this spell, a priestess of Borean will lean close to a fallen comrade and breath out an ice blue cloud of cold

air. The cloud is a boon from Borean allowing her to heal her fellow being for 10 points of damage.

Faith Healing (Heal)

Difficulty -10

10th level

Calling upon the grace of Aa, the priests hands take on a subtle light. By touching an ally, or by allowing the light to envelope him, the priest can heal damage that has been inflicted.

ILLUSION

Urman's Fog

Difficulty -10

1 base level, 2 levels Stench

This spell creates a black, billowing cloud of fog that reduces vision and brings about nausea to all those within. Victims suffer -1 to all vision related rolls due to the darkness, and -3 to ALL rolls due to nausea.

Aa's Commanding Presence

Difficulty -7

6 levels of Magnitude

This spell creates a large, floating icon of Aa, the all-seeing eye, for all to see. Depending upon the exact look of the eye and the direction in which it is pointing, military commanders and sub-commanders know what orders to give to the troops.

INFLUENCE

Word of Command

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

Allows the caster to compel a single creature to obey a spoken command. The command may only be a single word, and cannot cause harm in and of itself, but it can have some nasty side effects (i.e., compelling someone standing next to a cliff to 'jump')

Conversion

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

Aamanian Priests sometimes use this spell while traveling to simplify dealing with non-believers. The target may resist at -1/2 the spells level, failure indicates a conversion to Aa for the spells duration, a mishap on this roll may extend the belief in Aa's doctrines for a longer period of time.

MOVE

Cool Breeze of the North

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 10 round duration

This spell calls forth a cool breeze that can be commanded by the caster to move objects and lasts for 10 rounds. Others in the area will feel the breeze, depending on the area, this may be welcomed.

Frozen North Wind

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 10 round duration

Mirin Priestess' use this spell to knock down their enemies, and keep them down. A freezing wind comes from the North and will knock down enemies, and unfortunately, anything else in its path. People who are knocked down must make a STR check each round in order to stand back up, due to the continuous force of the wind.

Dark Hands of Aberon

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

By manipulating energies from the Demonrealms, the caster can move objects about with a pair of clawed, demonic hands that resemble those of Night Demons. These hands are capable of fine manipulation, as well as grappling attacks.

REVEAL

The Cold Hard Truth

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base 5 minute duration

Use of this spell will allow a Priestess of Borean to hear the truth from one person that is talking. The Priestess must focus on the person to get the benefits of this spell. Sometimes this may result in a bit of confusion.

Communion

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

Silently praying to her patron deity, an invoker can learn mysteries and uncover secret knowledge. The player may ask a specific question and roll on the Action Table using the spell level as a bonus to the PER roll. The degree of difficulty is determined based on how well concealed or esoteric the information is.

SUMMON

Aberon's Dark Servant

Base Difficulty -7

3rd level base, 5 minute duration

This spell is used extensively by Rasmirin Anarchists to wreak havoc upon the Mirin peoples. Aberon's servants are Night Demons, and will gladly spread destruction at the whim of the summoner.

Banish Night Demon

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

By invoking the name of the priests chosen deity and instructing the Demon to return to their place of origin, the caster may push them backwards into an open portal through sheer force of will. The priesthood of Aa has banishment spells for all creatures of Oblivion and the Demonrealms similar to this spell.

TRANSFORM

Attentive Student

Difficulty -10

10th level (Major Change)

At a touch, the teeth or lips of the target merge, completely preventing speech. This not only prevents the person from speech, but it usually compels those who see it to remain quiet also. At the end of the spells duration, the mouth will return to normal, although the target usually remains a little uncomfortable.

Purify Food

Difficulty -9

5th level (Minor Change), 5 minute duration

By speaking a brief incantation and waving a hand over the meal, the priest may turn poisoned, contaminated, or putrefied food into edible cuisine. The effect lasts for 5 minutes.

WARD

Demonsbane

Difficulty -10

10th level

With this spell, the priest can protect himself from Demons of all sorts for a short period of time. This will allow him to erect a more suitable defense, attack safely, or escape quickly. This spell is usually cast in the form of a prayer or quick symbolic gesture.

Protection from Ice Giants

Difficulty -10

10th level

Used by the Mirin Priests/Priestesses, who always learn this spell as one of their firsts, to great effect in the defense of their homeland, this spell completely negates any damage from Ice Giants for 1 minute.

MYSTICISM

ALTER

Down in all Directions

Base Difficulty -6

5th level base (Broad Alteration), 2 minute duration

Through force of will, the mystic can use this spell to enable herself to scale walls and walk on ceilings with ease. For the duration of the spell, the caster can perceive 'down' as any direction, enabling them, in essence, to fall 'up' to the ceiling, or fall sideways to a wall. At the end of the spells duration, the casters perception will return to normal and will likewise be effected. Treat the bonus from the spell as a skill rating to determine if the caster can change the direction of 'down,' once changed, they will not have to roll again unless they wish to change the direction again.

Tower of Solitude

Base Difficulty -6

5th level base (Broad Alteration), 2 minute duration

By focusing on familiar people and places, the caster erects a tower of Solitude in their mind, allowing them to shrug off urges that they otherwise might not be able to. The Mystic receives a bonus to their WIL score equal to 1/5 the level of the spell.

Skin of Iron

Base Difficulty -3

3rd level base (Specific Alteration)

The Mystic focuses their energy into their own body, strengthening skin and bones. Cast at high enough level, the mystic may be able to actually block blows from weapons without taking any damage. The caster receives a bonus to their PR for the duration of the spell.

DEFENSE

Orb of Peace (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -11

3rd level base, 6' radius, 20' range

By meditating upon inner peace and smooth lines of thought, the mystic can erect an invisible barrier against violence. This barrier will stop anything that tries to enter the protected area. The sphere is centered on anything within twenty feet of the mystic, and has a radius of six feet from that point.

Meditative Focus (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

The Meditative Focus is the key to unlocking the body's inner potentials. With a moment's concentration, the mystic is ready for any incoming attack. Arrows can be knocked from the air, swordblades caught between the palms, even hidden attacks or attacks from behind are sensed and avoided. Nothing can reach the mystic until the Focus wears off, which occurs in 30 seconds or when the aura has been breached.

HEAL

Healing Touch

Difficulty -10

10th level

Through a process of touching certain places on himself or an individual, the Mystic can focus the energies within the recipients body to heal wounds and fatigue with amazing quickness. This spell will heal up to 10 points of damage.

The Forbidden

Touch (Harm)

Difficulty -10

10th level

As part of their training in the lines of energy that flow through the mind and body, mystics also learn of how those lines of energy

can be disrupted with a touch. This is called The Forbidden Touch, and it is taught so that the student will know that it must never be used. By touching a living being in the exact center of his life's energy, that life can be snuffed out. Mandalan fables tell of the mystic warriors who fell to the temptation of this dark path, and the terrible consequences that befell them.

ILLUSION

Deepen Shadows

Difficulty -10

1st level, 3 levels magnitude

Mandalans use this spell to make the shadows around them darker, enhancing their cover so they are harder to spot. As long as the caster remains stationary within the shadow, they are effectively invisible.

Ghostly Prints

Difficulty -10

1st level, Touch, 2 levels of Magnitude

This spell creates footprints that will go out in the direction that the caster wishes. The footprints are can be easily seen and followed to their end. Primarily used as a decoy tactic so that the mystic may escape pursuers.

INFLUENCE BONUS +3

The Listening

Base Difficulty +2

1st level base, Order bonus

The Ariane can hear the target's secrets by simply listening to the quiet murmur of their soul. The target may resist, attempting to keep his secrets, with a Will check at $-\frac{1}{2}$ the spells level. On a failure, the target spills everything. On a mishap result, the target tells all and volunteers additional relevant information. Note that the target can only reveal what he consciously knows.

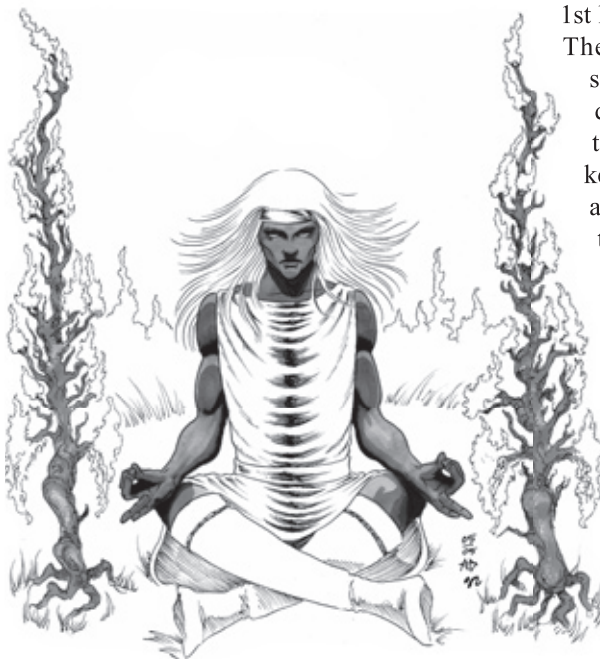
Mandalan Mind

Trick

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, 6 round duration

By speaking a phrase in a



subtle tone of voice, the mystic can slip the thought into the target's mind unnoticed, and possibly make them think it was their own. Possibilities exist such as "You're overcharging us because we're foreigners... that's really unfair." or "No need to check that door, no one could be hiding in there." or "These aren't the slaves you're looking for. Move along." The target may resist with a Will check at $-\frac{1}{2}$ the spells level. On a failure, the target will go along for the duration of the spell. On a mishap, they will continue believing the Mind Trick after the spell duration, unless shown evidence otherwise.

MOVE

Mystic Push

Base Difficulty -10

1st level base, SPD -6 (40 feet per round)

Focusing their inner energies forward through their palms, mystics can use this spell to push an object or person at SPD -6 for 5 rounds. If attempting to push a person they can resist with a STR roll at $-\frac{1}{3}$ the spells level. This spell must be cast at such a level to move the desired objects weight.

Lock/Unlock

Base Difficulty -2

1st level base, Area 1' radius

Through the use of this spell, the Mystic is able to manipulate non-magical locks, either locking or unlocking them. The caster does not need to be able to see the lock, but must know that it is there. This spell will also work on crossbeams, drawbridges and the like as long as the spell is cast at a high enough level to move the weight of the object.

REVEAL BONUS +3

Lifesight

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, 10 minute duration, Order bonus

By meditating and listing to the aetheric echoes, the mystic can discern the approximate location of all living minds within a mile. It is not useful for precise locations of individuals, but will give general indications such as "There are several dozen living beings in the grove ahead" or "We must be passing over a section of the Underground Highway, I can sense travelers below moving north". Vague information is automatic. If details are to be perceived, the mystic adds the spells level to Perception and rolls against a difficulty based on the level of detail desired.

Detect Astral Presence

Base Difficulty +1

1st level base, Order bonus

By focusing her attention on the area around her, the Mystic can detect the presence of Astral creatures in the general vicinity (50 feet). Precise details can be noticed with a PER roll adding the level of the spell to the roll.

SUMMON

Repel Summoning

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

By engaging a spiritform in a mind-to-mind battle, the mystic may banish it from this plane, back to where it originated from. This battle will take a mere moment while the two minds lock and the victor is decided.

Summon Paramane

Base Difficulty -10

6th level base, 5 minute duration

By calling out mentally into the Astral Plane, a Mystic may attempt to locate a Paramane, a helpful spirit who is willing to do worthy deeds. If the Mystic asks the Paramane to do something unworthy, the Paramane may make an opposed WIL roll, Partial Success indicates that the Paramane can refuse, while a Full Success or higher enables to Paramane to return to the Astral Plane.

Astral Travel (Unique)

Difficulty -15

1st level, Qualitas (Moderate Change), 5 minute Duration

This spell allows the Mystic to project his consciousness in astral form, leaving behind the physical body and material possessions. Enchanted items, which have an astral form of sorts, may be brought along into the astral plane. While in astral form, the caster may see clearly for great distances, and will also be able to perceive events transpiring on the material plane, though with somewhat less clarity; PER rolls are necessary to find the caster's way around and notice what is happening on the material plane.

While on the Astral Plane, the caster may attack and be attacked by Astral creatures and beings as normal.

WARD

Pure Thoughts

Difficulty -10
10th level

A Mystic can focus their thoughts internally, clearing their mind of all thoughts that might plague them. This protects them from spells of Influence to a great degree as the mystics thoughts will remain pure and clearly focused.

Protection from Phasms

Difficulty -10
10th level

A handy spell for the Mystic who likes to travel Astrally, this potent spell will render all attacks from a Phasm inert when directed at the protected being.

NATURAL MAGIC

ALTER

Imbue with Nature's Force

Base Difficulty -5
5th level base (Broad Alteration)

When this spell is cast, spirits from the Green World enter the Magicians body. Working together, the casters STR attribute is increased while these spirits remain present. At the end of the spells duration, the spirits will immediately return to the Green World. These spirits may not be commanded to do anything other than grant the magician the benefit of their added strength.

Treeskin

Base Difficulty -5
5th level base (Broad Alteration)

When this spell is cast, the Magicians skin grows a layer of flexible tree bark, increasing their PR without hindering movement. This may also provide a bonus to concealment attempts in natural surroundings at the GMs discretion.

CONJURE

Hidden Spring

Base Difficulty -3
1st level base, 3 minute duration

By kneeling upon the ground and calling to the spirits of underground springs and rivers, the Naturalist can use this spell to bring forth a stream that will last for 3 minutes.

Nature's Sustenance

Base Difficulty -5
1st level base, 5 minute duration

When the Naturalist calls out for aid from the spirits of the Green World, they will bring her berries, nuts and fruits which last for 5 minutes before disappearing. These spirits will not stay, but will flutter away immediately after bringing the Naturalist nourishment.

DEFEND

Swarming Defense (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1
1st level base

When this spell is cast, it summons a swarm of insects that will cover the caster, using their chitinous shells to absorb damage. At the spells duration, the swarm scatters back to the ground and disappears into the surroundings. The insects that appear will be those normally found in the area.

Plant Barrier (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -9
3rd level base, 10 feet x 10 feet

With the use of this spell, the Naturalist can cause trees and thick plants to spring from the ground directly in front of him, erecting a solid wall of vegetation. The vegetation will resemble that found locally within the area.

HEAL BONUS +2

Nature's Boon

Difficulty -8
10th level, Order bonus

By collecting bits of vegetation and lightly rubbing them on the forehead and cheeks of the wounded individual while speaking to the Nature Spirits softly, the magician can heal up to 10 points of damage. The type of vegetation does not matter as the healing energies are coming directly from the Green World.

Infliction of the Slaver's Weakness (Harm)

Difficulty -3
5th level Disease, Order bonus

Through the use of this spell, the Naturalist becomes a carrier of Yellow Tinge for a short time. During this time, the Naturalist can inflict the target with Yellow Tinge merely by touching them. Note that this spell will only work on creatures that can normally contract Yellow Tinge.

Poison Thorn (Harm)

Difficulty -8

10th level Order bonus

By striking the target with a thorn from a poisonous plant, the naturalist can awaken the fragment of a sub-elemental that still lives in it and cause the poison to infect as though the full plant were alive once more. The poison will deal 1hp damage per round for 10 rounds. The target may resist the poison with a Con check at -5.

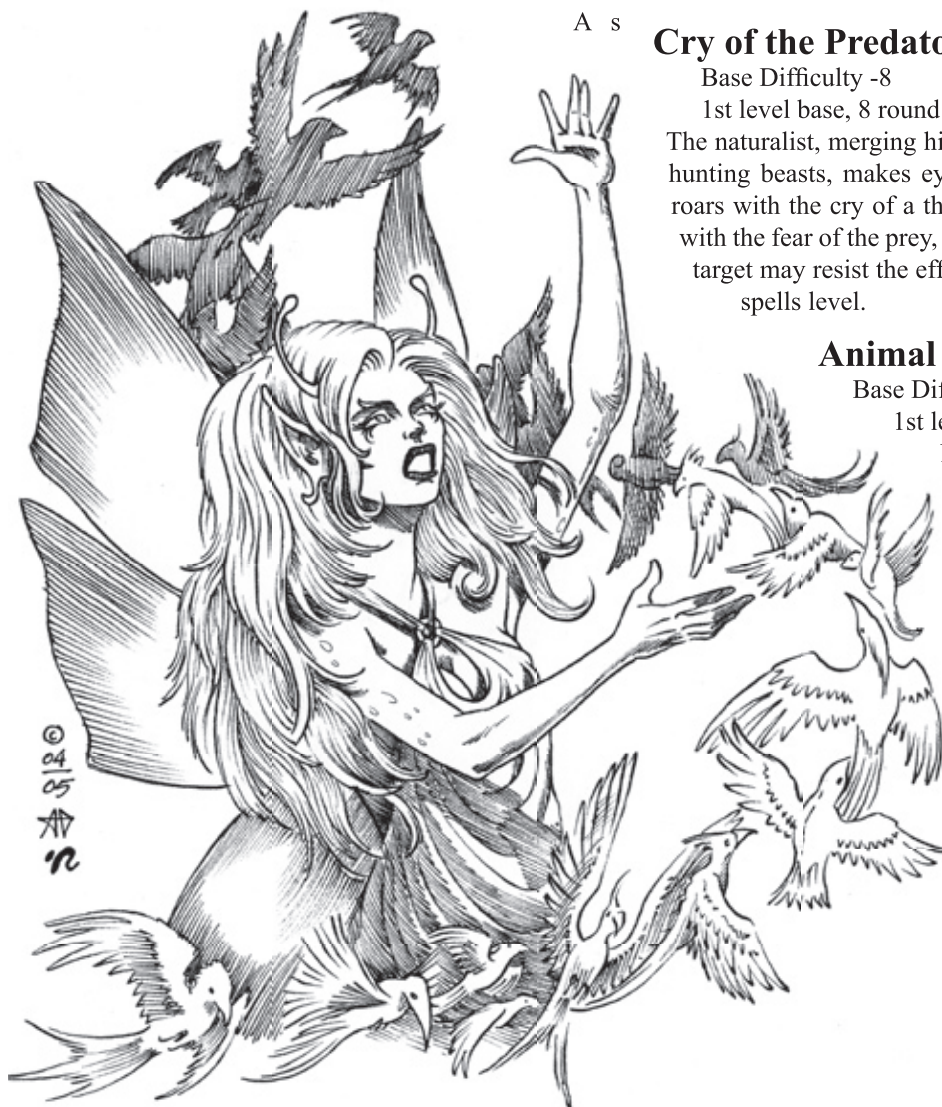
ILLUSION

Passive Camouflage

Difficulty -7

1st level, 1 level of Magnitude, 1 level Complex Elements

A s



long as the recipient of this spell remains still, this spell will cloak them in colors appropriate to their surroundings, effectively hiding them from sight (roll PER at -7 to spot, -4 if actively searching for the recipient). If the target attacks, they will receive +5 to their first attack roll only. This is a minor version of the spell Camouflage found in the Talislanta 4th edition book.

Lost Path

Difficulty -10

1st level, Touch, 2 levels of Complexity

This spell conceals a path through the woods making it look naturally overgrown, thus allowing a fleeing caster to hide their way for a brief amount of time. The Muses of Astar use this spell with surprising effectiveness when fleeing from bands of Imrian Slavers.

Influence

Cry of the Predator

Base Difficulty -8

1st level base, 8 round duration

The naturalist, merging his spirit with those of the great hunting beasts, makes eye contact with the target and roars with the cry of a the predator. The target is filled with the fear of the prey, and flees in a blind panic. The target may resist the effect with a Will roll at -1/2 the spells level.

Animal Friendship

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 1 minute duration

Naturalists can befriend an animal by contacting the sub-elemental that lives within the creature. The Animal Friendship spell is generally short term, long enough for the naturalist to request help from the animal for a minute. The target animal resists with it's ability level against half the spell level.

Animal Bond

(Unique)

Base Difficulty -11

1st level base, Qualitas (Moderate change)

This spell allows the Naturalist to create a

permanent, non-magical bond with any normal creature. As long as the creature is not mistreated, it will stay with the caster as a companion. Only one such bond can be in existence at a time. The target animal resists with it's ability level against half the spell level.

MOVE

Animate Plants

Base Difficulty -8

1st level base, 14 foot area

By singing to the sub-elementals that reside in the grasses, trees, and other plants in the area, the caster can call on them to move their leaves, vines, etc to grasp and hold any number of targets in a 14 foot diameter area. Targets may resist the entanglement with a Dexterity check at -7 due to the area of effect.

Wings of the Avir

Base Difficulty -9

1st level base, 1 minute duration, SPD -8

If Naturalist casts this spell and holds an Avir feather in their outstretched hands, giant Avir wings will seem to sprout from their back. This wings will allow the caster to fly for a short amount of time. This spell must be cast at a level great enough to lift the casters weight.

REVEAL BONUS +2

Find the Path

Base Difficulty +1

1st level base, Order bonus

This spell enables the caster to discern a safe path through an area. Dense areas may need a higher level spell, as will areas protected with Illusions. In urban areas, this spell will receive an additional penalty.

Detect Unnatural

Base Difficulty -8

1st level base, 5 minute duration, 100 foot range, Order Bonus

While this spell is in effect, the caster can sense anything man-made or otherwise not native to the area. Hidden structures, traps, lost objects, and non-natural magic effects. Such items will stand out like a beacon to the naturalist's eyes.

SUMMON

Speak with Nature's Spirit

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, 3 minute duration

Through the use of this spell, the caster summons a spirit of the Green World that can be used for simple tasks. This spirit will appear as a green-skinned sprite with foliage for hair and small gossamer wings. This spell expires after 3 minutes.

Viridian's Silent Messenger

Base Difficulty -10

1st level base, 10 minute duration

When this spell is cast, a minor windling elemental from the Green World is summoned and given a verbal message to deliver. The spirit then whisks off, traveling hundreds of miles in a few minutes due to the properties of the Green World, and delivers it's message to the chosen recipient. Viridian occasionally had difficulties with this spell, as such minor elementals are often of meager intellect, and prone to garbling complicated messages.

WARD

Protection from Vasps

Difficulty -10

10th level

When cast, the Naturalist can place this ward upon a person or area. The person or protected area will remain unmolested by the hunting instincts of the Vasp. Wards for almost any creature found in the various wooded areas of the continent can be found among the indigenous peoples.

Ward vs Plant Demons

Difficulty -10

10th level

While protected with this spell, Plant Demons will not harm the individual and will actually ignore them as if they were not there as long as the protected individual does not directly attack them. If cast on an area, Plant Demons will not be able to enter.

NECROMANCY

ALTER

Weakening the Soul

Base Difficulty -4

3rd level base (Specific Alteration), 2 minute duration

When this spell is cast, the Necromancer reaches into the very soul of the target, weakening it and causing a loss

of energy and resistance to damage. This will wear off shortly, as the spirit of the person regains its strength. Affects Hit Points.

Loss of the Body's Strength

Base Difficulty -6

5th level base (Broad Alteration), 2 minute duration

By reciting this incantation focusing the decaying energies of death into the subject, the Necromancer can reduce the STR of his target for a short time. High levels of this spell can be used to weaken an opponent so much that they cannot move at all and are used in Rajanistan on unwilling sacrifices.

Feeding the Body

Base Difficulty -5

3rd level base (Specific Alteration), 3 minute duration

By drawing on the power and strength of his soul, the Necromancer can temporarily increase a targets Hit Points. Any damage done to the recipient of this spell is subtracted from these additional Hit Points first.

ATTACK

Unwrap the Mortal Coil

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

By use of this spell the Necromancer undoes a bit of the mortality of the target, causing intense pain throughout the victim as they feel their life slip away. The victim will writhe in pain for 1/3 the spells level in rounds unless a WIL roll minus the spells level is successful.

Bone Shards

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 5 foot radius

With the final phrase of this incantation, the Necromancer tosses a bone into the midst of the enemy, whereupon it shatters, inflicting damage to everything within a 5' radius.

Ghost Blade

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

The caster holds forth the femur of a dead warrior bringing forth a ghostly blade with incorporeal qualities. The blade will affect incorporeal creatures, as well as pass through normal materials such as armor and weapons. Enchanted items will function normally against the Ghost Blade, ie enchanted weapons can be used to block, enchanted armor functions normally, etc.

DEFEND

Living Wall (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -7

1st level base, 10 foot x 10 foot area

With this spell, the Necromancer conjures up a mass of living tissue and organs that move and convulse. Anyone seeing this wall close enough to realize what it is, must make a CON roll at -1/3 the spells level or start vomiting uncontrollably.

Death's Shroud (Aura)

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 1 minute duration

After casting this spell, the Necromancer becomes enveloped in a seething black mass of smoke and half-corporeal mist. This mist will protect the caster from harm. This aura will also cause uneasiness in normal animals, which must make a WIL roll or flee if within 10 feet of the protected individual.

HEAL BONUS +3

Necrotic Touch (Harm)

Difficulty -7

10th level, Order Bonus

This spell causes the casters fingertips to excrete an extremely vile poison which causes necrosis in the touched area, killing and rotting the flesh, dealing 1 hp per round for 10 rounds. This is a very painful infliction, the victim will suffer a -4 penalty to all actions until the damage is healed.

Sacrificial Healing

Difficulty -7

10th level, Order Bonus

By drawing the life essence out of a minor Spiritform, the Necromancer can heal wounds. The Spiritform, although sacrificed, does not count towards the experience points that a Necromancer may receive due to Order Advantage.

Drain Life (Unique - Harm)

Difficulty -12

10th level, Qualitas (Minor change), Order Bonus

With this spell, the Necromancer can drain the life essence out of a target, and heal himself. This spell will do 10 hp damage to the target, and heal the caster for 10 hp.

MOVE

Ghostly Manipulation

Base Difficulty -7

1st level base, SPD -7

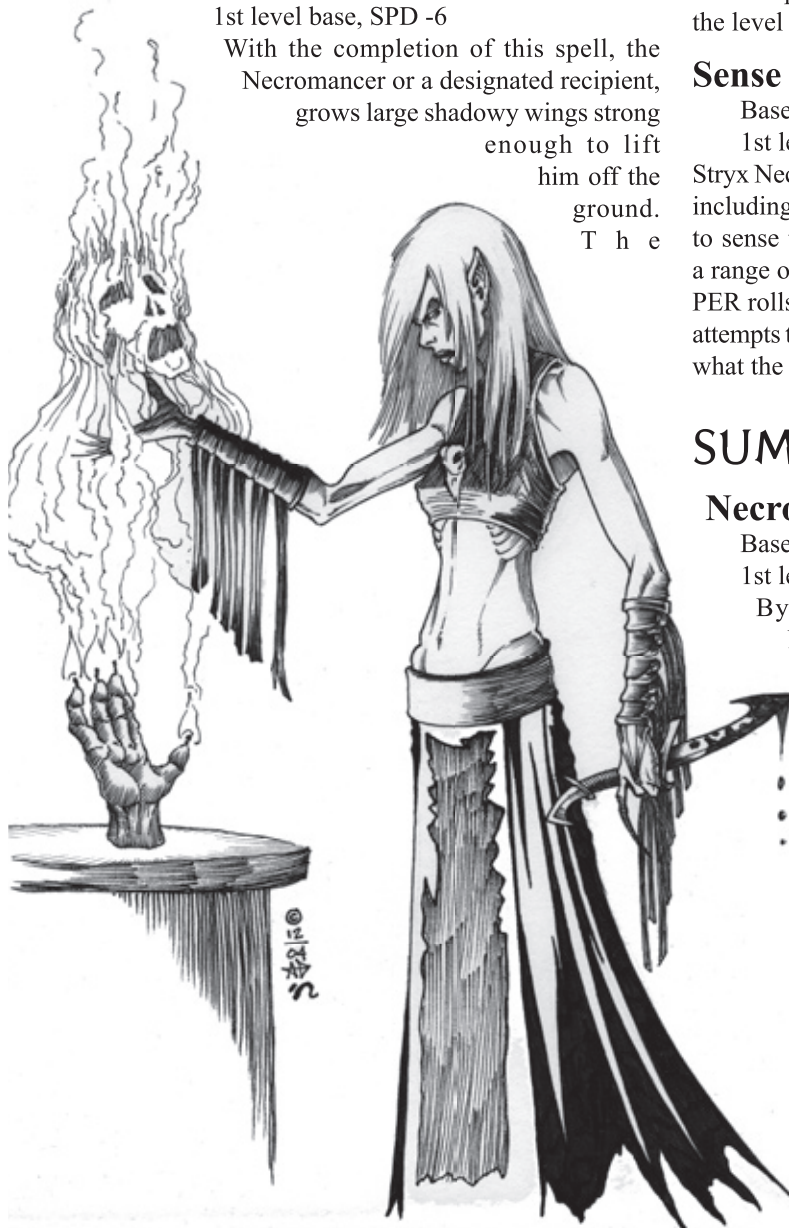
By calling upon the servants of Death, the Necromancer can summon hands of ghostly energy that he can move about for a variety of reasons, including precise or delicate manipulations. This spell must be cast at a level great enough to lift the objects weight.

Shadowflight

Base Difficulty -10

1st level base, SPD -6

With the completion of this spell, the Necromancer or a designated recipient, grows large shadowy wings strong enough to lift him off the ground. T h e



recipient of the spell may fly at a SPD of -6. This spell must be cast at a level great enough to lift the recipients weight.

REVEAL

Darksight

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 minute duration

When this spell is cast, the targets eyes will glow like burning embers. For the duration of this spell, the recipient can see clearly in normal and magical darkness. The effected person will receive a bonus to PER rolls equal to the level of the spell.

Sense Death

Base Difficulty -10

1st level base, 100 foot range, 5 minute duration

Stryx Necromancers use this spell for a variety of purposes, including the finding of food. This spell allows the caster to sense the presence of dead or rotting organisms up to a range of 100 feet, for a period of 5 minutes. A bonus to PER rolls equal to the spells level should be applied to all attempts to locate dead or rotting organisms, or to determine what the detected substance is.

SUMMON BONUS +2

Necrophage Servant

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, Order bonus, 5 minute duration

By opening a portal to the Underworld, the Necromancer is able to summon a Necrophage that will do the Necromancers bidding for 5 minutes. After that time the Necrophage will return to the Underworld.

Summon Spiritform

Base Difficulty -3

1st level base, Order bonus, 5 minute duration

By using this spell, the Necromancer can summon the spirit of a deceased person for any number of various reasons. The spirit will simply manifest within 10 feet of the caster, seemingly coming from nowhere and await instructions. At the end of the spells duration, the spirit will vanish in the same manner that it arrived.

TRANSFORM

Sacrificial Dagger

Difficulty -9

5th level (Minor Change), 5 minute duration

The Necromancer holds a bone in his hand and chants softly. At the end of the incantation, the bone elongates and sharpens, changing into the shape of an ornate dagger resplendent with vile-looking hooks and barbs. This dagger will do DR 6 if used in combat, due to the barbs and hooks.

Bone Claws

Difficulty -10

10th level (Major Change)

This spell transforms the casters fingers into long, bone-like claws (DR4) similar in appearance to those of the Ghast. Unarmed Combat, Da-khar, or the dagger skill can be used in wielding them.

WARD

Safeguard from Shadow

Difficulty -10

10th level

With this spell, the Necromancer exercises their command over the forces of shadow, keeping them from touching him for 1 minute. Note that no shadow of any type will touch the caster for the duration of this spell, including shadows that may be side effects or magical effects of beneficial spells.

Protection from Scrying

Difficulty -10

10th level

By uttering this incantation and dropping an eye into a bag, the Necromancer wards off all spells from the Reveal mode. Anyone attempting to scry upon the caster will see only darkness, in addition, anyone using the Reveal mode to scan an area will not be able to notice the protected individual for the duration of their spell when using the affected sense.

SHAMANISM

ALTER

Viper's Strike

Base Difficulty -5

5th level base (Broad Alteration)

Shamans with the Death's Head Viper totem can increase their SPD for up to a minute by chanting this incantation and shaking a bone rattle. While this spell is active, the recipient will seem to hiss and sway in much the same way as the Death's Head Viper.

Totem's Strength

Base Difficulty -5

5th level base (Broad Alteration)

Shamans with a totem animal known for its strength can become stronger with this spell by tapping into the totem spirits energy. Growing slightly in size as their muscles become infused with the extra strength.

DEFEND

Totem's Protection (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

This spell calls upon the Shamans totem spirit, asking for protection. With a successful casting, the spirit will intercept blows intended for the Shaman for a short time.

Spirit Guardians (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, Cylinder 6 feet high x 5 feet radius

This incantation allows the shaman to call forth a number of ancestral spirits, who will guard and protect anyone within a ten-foot diameter circle around the caster. This barrier will also have an Armor Rating equal to 1/3 the spells level.

HEAL BONUS +2

Totemic Healing

Difficulty -6

8th level, Order bonus

While running the shamans totem back and forth above a wound, the shaman can call upon the totems spirit to heal the wound. This spell will heal up to 8 points of damage to a single creature.

Shamanic Vengeance (Harm)

Difficulty -10

12th level disease, Order bonus

Shamans typically employ this spell when they encounter Aamanian Witchhunters in their land. This spell inflicts the target with a disease that causes an intense burning sensation and horrible blistering. The only way to remove the disease is with magical healing, and until such time, the inflicted will suffer -4 on all action rolls. Targets may resist with a CON check at -4.

Spirits Whispers (Harm)

Difficulty -10

12th level disease, Order bonus

This spell causes a spiritual infection in the target, leading to fevers and auditory hallucinations, usually perceived as 'voices' or 'whispers from the spirits.' Those inflicted with this malady suffer a -4 penalty on all actions that require concentration. Targets may resist with a CON check at -4.

ILLUSION

Distant Drums

Difficulty -10

1st level, 3 levels of Magnitude

With this spell, the shamans creates the sounds of drums off in the distance. Drums are used by many of the tribal cultures of the continent for communication purposes, and this spell can be used by the shaman to create any desired rhythm.

Spirits Light

Difficulty -12

1 level, Motion, 1 level of Magnitude

A Shaman using this spell can conjure the image of a glowing spirit to shed light. The illusory spirit will move at the casters will, will shed light equal to that of a torch, and last for 1 minute.

INFLUENCE

Sleep

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 round duration

The Shaman shakes a rattle made of bone, tosses sand into the air and commands the target to sleep. If the target fails a WIL roll at -1/2 the spells level, they will fall into a deep sleep for 5 rounds. After which, they will continue to sleep normally until awakened or fully rested.

Scare

Base Difficulty -6

1st level, 10 round duration

By casting this spell and targeting an enemy, the caster can cause them to flee in utter terror. The effect lasts for 1 minute, during which time, the target can only think about escaping the Shamans presence. A WIL roll at -1/2 the spells level is used to resist.

MOVE

Spirit Grab

Base Difficulty -10

1st level base, SPD -6

By calling upon a minor spirit, the Shaman is able to move items anywhere within the range of the spell. This spell must be cast at a level great enough to move the objects weight.

Calling the Playful Spirits

Base Difficulty -11

1st level base, 5 foot radius, 1 minute duration

By calling upon many minor spirits, the Shaman is able to move many small items in an area. This is usually used to frighten intruders or cause confusion in the ranks of enemies. This spell must be cast at a level great enough to lift the heaviest desired objects weight.

REVEAL BONUS +2

Casting Bones

Base Difficulty -3

5th level base, Order bonus, 1 minute duration

By casting this spell and throwing small bones to the ground, the Shaman can vaguely interpret what fate has in store for a target. The player should be able to ask a specific question, and the GM should answer as truthfully and as accurately as the spell level and success dictates, the higher the spells level, the more detailed the information, the better the roll, the less cryptic the information will be.

Spirit Track

Base Difficulty -2

1st level base, Order bonus, 5 minute duration

Allows the caster to see the spirit-traces left by the passage of any living creature, spirit or extra-dimensional entity. The age of the tracks can also be determined by this spell. The Shaman's effective PER rating is equal to the spells level while using this spell.

SUMMON

Call Totem Animal

Base Difficulty *

Level dependent upon totem animal, 10 rounds

This spell allows the Shaman to summon a willing animal identical to the chosen totem. A totem animal has the same stats as a normal animal of its type, but will be able to comprehend and converse with the caster on a spiritual (non-verbal) level. The level of the spell must fall in the range of the totem animals ability level, and the animal summoned will be of an ability level equal to the spells level.

Speak with Spirits

Base Difficulty -5

1st level, 5 minute duration

Using ancient magics, the Shaman can summon forth a spirit with which to converse. The spirit may or may not be able to answer questions concerning events that happened after its death, but can be used as a spy. For stats, use those listed for a disembodied spirit.

Dreamquest (Unique)

Difficulty -15

5th level base, Qualitas (Moderate Change), 5 minute Duration

This spell allows the shaman (and others, one additional traveler per 3 spell levels) to enter the Dream Realms. The shaman's totem will act as a guide for the travelers. Care must be taken, however, not to upset the totem guide, as you may end up lost in the Dream Realms and unable to return.

TRANSFORM

Minor Totemic Aspect

Difficulty -10

10th level (Major Change)

Through the use of this incantation, the Shaman can change a single aspect of their form to match that of their totem animal. For instance, a Shaman of the Death's Head Viper might change his teeth to fangs while a Shaman of the Omnivrax Totem might change his fingers into claws.

Slip through the Cracks

Difficulty -9

3rd level (Trivial Change), 7 minute duration

By ingesting particular herbs and narcotics, a Shaman is able to reduce their size enough to become mostly unnoticeable to others. Using this spell, the Druhk of Arim

have been known to infiltrate and escape fortifications in their fight to reclaim their lands.

WARD

Spirit Ward

Difficulty -10

10th level

The Shaman can use this spell to ward of malign spirits that wish to do harm. The spell will also allow the Shaman to protect himself when visiting the dream realms, or other spirit realms.

Spiritual Vexing (Hex)

Difficulty -10

With this potent hex, the Shaman is able to make a target more susceptible to their spiritual attacks. Spiritual attacks, and attacks by spiritual entities, will inflict double the normal damage.

WITCHCRAFT

ALTER

Enfeeblement

Base Difficulty -7

5th level base (Broad Alteration), 2 minute duration

By speaking this ancient curse and touching an individual, the Witch can cause a single victim to suddenly feel exhausted, as if from strenuous activity. The victim will suffer a penalty equal to 1/3 the spells level to all action table rolls involving physical actions.

Aura of Allurement

Base Difficulty -7

3rd level (Specific Alteration), 5 minute duration

Through the use of this enchantment the caster can make a designated subject appear more attractive and alluring. In game terms, the spell adds to the beneficiary's appearance, but does not effect leadership or other facets of the Charisma attribute. Members of the same (or similar) race will usually respond far more favorably to the subject for the duration of the spell.

DEFEND

Eldritch Aura (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

By calling upon long forgotten gods, the Witch may envelope herself in the eldritch energies of those beings. Green fire will swirl about her for the duration of the spell, protecting her from harm.

Eldritch Barrier (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 1 minute duration

By speaking a brief incantation calling upon long forgotten gods, and pointing at an area, a witch can create a wall of eldritch force that lasts for a single minute. This wall will appear as a shimmering barrier that is almost imperceptible at certain angles.

HEAL BONUS +2

Eldritch Healing

Difficulty -8

10th level, Order Bonus

Calling upon the ancient god of healing, a witch can channel the energies of this god into heal herself or others. The recipient of this spell will be healed of 10 points of damage and feel a warming sensation as the energies course through them.

Cause Boils

(Harm)

Difficulty -4

6th level

disease, Order bonus

With this potent curse, the Witch calls upon dark forces that will cause boils and blisters to cover an individuals body with a touch. This affliction is extremely painful and the recipient suffers a -6 to all rolls requiring concentration until a cure has been affected.

ILLUSION

Blurred

Difficulty -9

1st level, Complex Elements, 10 round duration

Witch's may blur the form of a single object or person, obscuring features and movements with this simple illusion. While blurred, the individual will be hard to see and after this spell ends, no one will be able to recognize or describe the target. A favorite of Witches traveling through Aaman.

Step Away

Difficulty -13

1st level, 9 levels of complexity, Motion

With an ancient word the Witch mutters this spell and literally 'steps away,' out of sight from the viewer, effectively becoming invisible. This spell is taught to Witches to help them escape the Witch Hunters from

Aaman with greater efficiency.



INFLUENCE

Obsession

Base Difficulty -5

1st level, 5 rounds

A simple curse, this spell enables the caster to afflict a subject with an overwhelming craving or desire of the caster's choice. For example: the urge to eat or drink to excess, affection for a particular person or creature, a fixation upon obtaining some object of desire, or compulsive behavior of some sort. The subject may resist the spell with a WIL check at $-1/2$ the spells level.

Fear

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 rounds

By reaching into the victims psyche and drawing out their darkest fears, the Witch can cause uncontrollable terror in her victim. If the victim fails a WIL roll at $-1/2$ the spells level, then they will run in terror for the duration of the spell.

MOVE

Eldritch Flight

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 1 minute duration

By reaching into the realms of the Forgotten Gods, the Witch can pull their energies to her while turning in a circle. These Eldritch energies will encircle and lift the target into the air, allowing them to fly at a slow speed for a short time. Note that the spell level must be high enough to allow the energies to lift the weight of the target.

Levitation

Base Difficulty -6

1st level, 1 minute duration

This spell causes the Witch to rise off the ground as if lifted by a wind. This spell is used for various purposes and has always been a favorite of younger practitioners. While levitated, the Witch can turn her attention to other matters, including spellcasting, as long as she remains unmoving. This spell must be cast at a level great enough to lift the caster.

REVEAL BONUS +2

Hide Magic (Conceal)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base, Order bonus, 3 minute duration

This spell allows the caster to disguise any enchanted object, artifact, creature, or being, causing it to appear to be non-magical in nature. A PER roll using the spells level as a negative modifier must be made in order to see through the effect.

Second Sight

Base Difficulty +1

1st level base

By concentrating on her inner self, and speaking softly to the forgotten gods, the witch may see into the future. The player should be able to ask a specific question, and the GM should answer as truthfully and as accurately as the spell level and success dictates, the higher the spells level, the more detailed the information, the better the roll, the less cryptic the information will be.

SUMMON

Jinx

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 minute duration

This spell summons a spiritling to hound a given subject, wreaking all manner of mischief. Until the jinx expires or is removed, the subject will suffer a penalty equal to $1/3$ the spells level on all actions, and will experience numerous minor mishaps and misfortunes at the GM's discretion.

Conscience

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 minute duration

Using this spell, the Witch can summon a minor spirit of conscience to verbally guide, or harass depending upon the targets perception, an individual. By targeting herself, the witch can mingle better in alien cultures, as the spirit will warn her what might be offensive or inadvisable. In game terms, the spirit has the Cultures and Diplomacy skills at a rating equal to its ability level.

Open Witchgate (Unique)

Base Difficulty -13

1st level, Qualitas (Moderate Change), 2 minute duration

By casting this spell on a Witchgate, the caster opens a dimensional portal, enabling them to step through and

reappear at another Witchgate. The second gate must be chosen when the spell is cast and cannot be changed for the duration of the spell. Dhuna covens guard the secret of this spell, as well as the location of the Witchgates, very closely so that the gates will not be destroyed, and so that others cannot use them against the Dhuna.

TRANSFORM

Altered Visage

Difficulty -9

5th level (Minor Change), 5 minute duration

With this spell, the Witch may assume the facial features of any member of the various cultures of man (Cymrillian, Aamanian, Dracartan, Sarista, etc). The Dhuna use this spell to great effectiveness for the purposes of traveling freely as well as other acts of deception.

Shrink

Difficulty -10

5th level (Minor Change), 5 minute duration

By putting a shrinking violet into her mouth and uttering this quick incantation, the Witch is able to reduce her size, or the size of one other creature, dramatically. A Partial Success will reduce the targets size by $\frac{1}{4}$, a full success by $\frac{1}{2}$ and a critical success will reduce them by $\frac{3}{4}$. A similar spell, Enlarge, does the opposite.

WARD BONUS +2

Rumors (Hex)

Difficulty -10

10th level, Order bonus, 3 minute duration

Those inflicted with this spell will only hear the worst things about themselves from their friends mouths, no matter what is actually being said. In addition, while this hex is in effect others will be more likely to notice bad things about the afflicted than they will good things.

Ward against Hexes

Difficulty -10

10th level, Order bonus, 3 minute duration

Due to the nature of certain covens, the Dhuna teach this spell to all of the younger initiates in order to protect them. This spell will ensure that the recipient is untouched by any hex for a period of 3 minutes, although it is commonly used in enchantments.

WIZARDRY

Order bonuses to the modes have not been added for Wizardry due to the individualistic nature of each Wizards specialties.

ALTER

Enhance Weapon

Base Difficulty -3

3rd level base (Specific Alteration)

Upon casting this spell, the Wizard targets a weapon and causes it to glow with blue arcane force. This force increases the DR of the weapon.

Enhance Armor

Base Difficulty -3

3rd level base (Specific Alteration)

This incantation causes the touched armor to shimmer with a silver light, increasing the PR of the Armor.

Arcane Strength

Base Difficulty -5

5th level (Broad Alteration)

With this spell, the Magicians skin starts to glow bright green. The arcane forces present enhance the Magicians STR.

Empowerment (Unique)

Base Difficulty -14

5th level base (Broad Alteration), Tempus (Minutes-weeks), 1 week duration

Utilizing this spell, the Wizard is able to increase his MR for a period lasting 1 full week. For the duration of the spell, the caster will emit a slight silvery glow that emanates from all around him.

ATTACK

Arcane Bolt

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

The caster sends a bolt of arcane force towards the intended target for the sole purpose of causing harm. The color of the bolt is decided upon by the Wizard when they learn the spell and cannot be changed without researching the spell anew. Also, many Wizards will add sound, such as crackling or high pitched whistle to the bolt.

Arcane Blast

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 foot radius

This spell causes a bolt of arcane force to fly towards an area and explode, damaging all within a 5' radius. The color of the bolt is decided upon by the Wizard when they learn the spell and cannot be changed without researching the spell anew. Also, many Wizards will add sound, such as crackling or high pitched whistle to the bolt and a thundering boom or wailing wind to the blast itself.

Arcane Blade

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

A blade of arcane force appears in the casters hands, lasting a number of rounds, and having a DR, equal to the spells level. The color of the blade is decided upon by the Wizard when they learn the spell and cannot be changed without researching the spell anew. Also, many Wizards will add sound, such as humming or crackling to the blade.

CONJURE

Wizard's Rope

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 Minute Duration

Upon completion of this incantation, the Wizard conjures a rope made of sparkling energy that can be used for any of a multitude of purposes. The rope disappears after 5 minutes.

Glittering Cloud

Base Difficulty -2

1st level base, 2 minute duration

With the spell, the Wizard conjures a 1 cubic foot cloud of sparkling glitter that swirls around the area of effect for 2 minutes that will reducing visibility. This cloud will act in all ways as normal glitter, and may be blown about by winds.

DEFEND

Arcane Aura (Aura)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

When cast, the Wizard glows with an amber light and is surrounded by crackling arcane energies, which will shield him from physical and magical attacks that might otherwise do damage.

Wizards Wall (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 1 minute duration

This spell has been used for centuries to block off an escape, or to stop pursuers. By speaking a brief incantation and pointing at an area, the wizard creates a shimmering wall of arcane force that lasts for a single minute.

Honorable Duel (Barrier)

Base Difficulty -7

1st level base, Cylinder 8 feet tall x 4 foot radius

The caster creates a barrier of bright blue force big enough to encompass himself, and his opponent in an 8' circle. This allows both combatants to focus on the duel without having to worry about friends that the other might have.

HEAL

Minor Disruption (Harm)

Difficulty -5

5th level

By disrupting the natural flow of magical energies through a targets body, the Wizard can deal 5 points of damage. This spell causes the Wizards hands to glow bright green until the spell expires, and upon touching the victim, the green energy will course over and through their body as it inflicts the damage.

Healing of the Body's Wounds

Difficulty -10

10th level

When this spell is cast, the Wizards hand glow brightly with a blue light. Upon touching an individual, 10 HP are restored as the targets wounds are healed through the power of arcane forces.

Incitement of the Spinning Sickness

(Cause Disease)

Difficulty -10

10th level disease

Upon casting, the Wizards hands become covered in blue, green and black vortices. When the caster touches the target, the vortexes move up the body from the point of contact and swirl around the victims head. This causes the victim to suddenly become afflicted with Spinning Sickness, luckily for the victim, this disease is not fatal and usually runs its course in a few days.

ILLUSION

Illuminating Globe

Difficulty -11

1st level, 1 minute duration (10 rounds), Magnitude 1, Movement

With a gesture, the caster produces a small globe of light that will move as directed. The globe produces light as a torch, and can be used to blind opponents with a ranged attack roll using the Illusion Mode rating with a -7 aiming modifier.

Lighting the Way

Difficulty -10

1st level, Magnitude 3

Cymrillian Wizards in the employ of the military commonly make use of this spell as a rallying point for troops. The spell brings forth an illusion of a battle standard high above the rallying point.

INFLUENCE

Induce Sleep

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 round duration

When cast, a sparkling cloud will fall around the target, causing them to become drowsy and sleep for 5 rounds. At the end of the duration, the target will remain asleep until awoken normally. WIL save at -1/2 the spells level to resist.

Trance

Base Difficulty -5

1st level base, 5 round duration

Upon casting, the magicians eyes glow with a sparkling blue light, capturing the intended targets attention and sending them into a trance-like state, unable to act for 5 rounds.

MOVE

Subjugating Force

Base Difficulty -7

1st level base, 6 foot radius

Shimmering forces slam down on those within a 6'x6' area. This spell causes those within the area of effect to make a STR roll vs 1/3 the spells level, or fall to their knees.

Arcane Fingers

Base Difficulty -6

1st level base, 1 minute duration (10 rounds)

A glowing hand of green arcane energy appears and moves at the discretion of the caster. The hand can pick up objects and move them slowly around within range.

Arcane Flight

Base Difficulty -7

1st level base, SPD -7

This spell covers the target in a purple glow and allows them to fly for a short period of time, at SPD -7 (30 feet per round). For the duration of this spell, the effected individual will be able to control their movements very precisely and will also be able to hover if so desired. Note that this spell must be cast at a high enough level to lift the targets weight.

REVEAL

Hidden in the Folds (Conceal)

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

When cast, this spell allows the magician to hide an object somewhere on their person, usually within the folds of their robes. The object can be of any size that the magician can usually carry, although weight is not effected.

Seek the Path

Base Difficulty -1

1st level base

Upon casting this spell, the wizards eyes take on an amber glow. This glow allows the caster to pinpoint the direction of any location he has previously visited to great effect.

WARD

Ward vs Magical Attacks

Difficulty -10

10th level

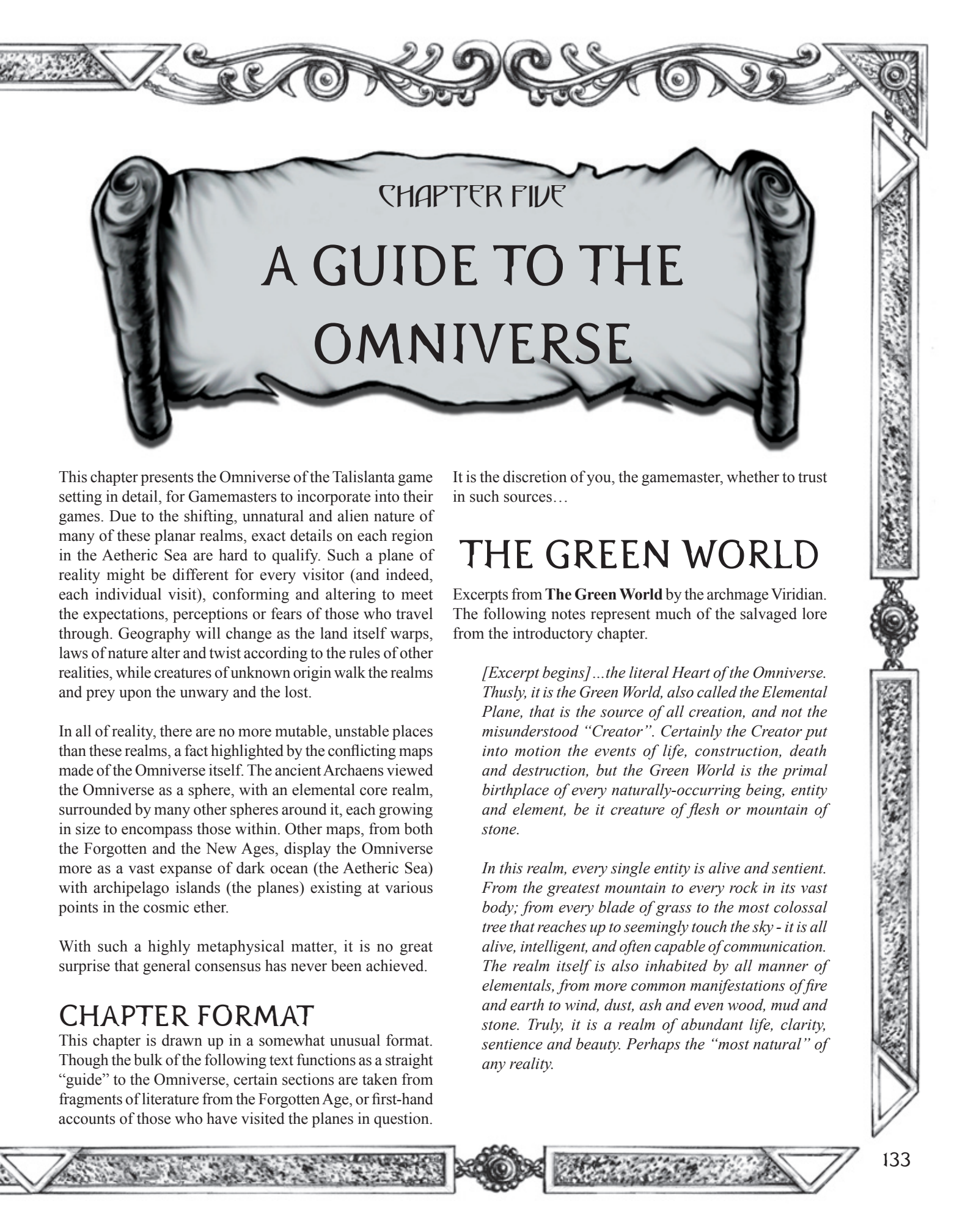
Upon casting this spell, the targets skin starts to shimmer with silver arcane forces that will prevent all damage from Attack Mode spells. If an attack mode targets the individual, the energies will be seen to disperse upon contact.

Ward vs Arrows

Difficulty -10

10th level

This spell, when cast, produces a bright, transparent green shield of energy around the target. Arrows will bounce harmlessly off of the shield most likely fallen broken to the ground.



CHAPTER FIVE

A GUIDE TO THE OMNIVERSE

This chapter presents the Omniverse of the Talislanta game setting in detail, for Gamemasters to incorporate into their games. Due to the shifting, unnatural and alien nature of many of these planar realms, exact details on each region in the Aetheric Sea are hard to qualify. Such a plane of reality might be different for every visitor (and indeed, each individual visit), conforming and altering to meet the expectations, perceptions or fears of those who travel through. Geography will change as the land itself warps, laws of nature alter and twist according to the rules of other realities, while creatures of unknown origin walk the realms and prey upon the unwary and the lost.

In all of reality, there are no more mutable, unstable places than these realms, a fact highlighted by the conflicting maps made of the Omniverse itself. The ancient Archans viewed the Omniverse as a sphere, with an elemental core realm, surrounded by many other spheres around it, each growing in size to encompass those within. Other maps, from both the Forgotten and the New Ages, display the Omniverse more as a vast expanse of dark ocean (the Aetheric Sea) with archipelago islands (the planes) existing at various points in the cosmic ether.

With such a highly metaphysical matter, it is no great surprise that general consensus has never been achieved.

CHAPTER FORMAT

This chapter is drawn up in a somewhat unusual format. Though the bulk of the following text functions as a straight “guide” to the Omniverse, certain sections are taken from fragments of literature from the Forgotten Age, or first-hand accounts of those who have visited the planes in question.

It is the discretion of you, the gamemaster, whether to trust in such sources...

THE GREEN WORLD

Excerpts from **The Green World** by the archmage Viridian. The following notes represent much of the salvaged lore from the introductory chapter.

[Excerpt begins] ...the literal Heart of the Omniverse. Thusly, it is the Green World, also called the Elemental Plane, that is the source of all creation, and not the misunderstood “Creator”. Certainly the Creator put into motion the events of life, construction, death and destruction, but the Green World is the primal birthplace of every naturally-occurring being, entity and element, be it creature of flesh or mountain of stone.

In this realm, every single entity is alive and sentient. From the greatest mountain to every rock in its vast body; from every blade of grass to the most colossal tree that reaches up to seemingly touch the sky - it is all alive, intelligent, and often capable of communication. The realm itself is also inhabited by all manner of elementals, from more common manifestations of fire and earth to wind, dust, ash and even wood, mud and stone. Truly, it is a realm of abundant life, clarity, sentience and beauty. Perhaps the “most natural” of any reality.

THE NATURE OF THE REALM

All the energy of life flows outward from this plane. Every child born and sapling that sprouts from a seed is fuelled by life essence from the Elemental Plane. This we know as fact.

But there is more to the realm than the “mere”, (or should I say “simple”) generation of all life force. In the Passage of Souls, the Green World itself is a literal embodiment of all that is, and all that ever shall be. The life force of every single entity exists within the Green World, somewhere, and could potentially be found. The lives of your unborn children, the pre-echoes of forests that have not been seeded, the life energy that will one day be unleashed in a thunderstorm, or an earthquake, or a worldwide disease...it is all here, somewhere, in some primal form.

That is the true beauty of the Green World. It is also the foundation of its unpredictable nature...[excerpt ends]

GEOGRAPHY OF THE PLANE OF LIFE

[Excerpt begins]...making travel extremely dangerous for mortals, even without the other myriad troubles and threats of the Green World. Indeed, passage through this plane can present numerous difficulties, particularly to those who do not know and obey the local laws of nature.

Walking upon the Green World is a breathtaking (should one even have breath) experience, and to describe the endless variety of the realm is to try and describe the joys and mechanics of life itself. And yet I shall endeavor to explain my own observations as I ventured through the very heartbeat of Creation.

The land of the Elemental Plane is endless in the truest sense of the word, for by its very nature there is no beginning or end, no northern or southern poles, no “edge” where the realm stops and becomes something else. The Green World, like all life, simply is. You can enter by manifesting here, you can leave by vanishing and returning to another plane, but you cannot simply enter by travelling over leagues of distance in the Aetheric Sea.

The landscape is also unique among the Omniverse in that it never warps or alters by some maddening and unknowable whim. In fact, the realm is in such a matter of geographical stasis that one could map it just as one could map Talislanta. However any such map of the Elemental Plane would be doomed to an eventual failure, for it could never be completed and would stretch out forever in every direction. Such an endeavor would not simply be mapping the landscape of all past and present life, but all potential life, in the entire Omniverse.

Perhaps because of the power of the beings here, and the fundamental importance - nay, the vitality - of the plane itself, the Green World has a definite geography and landscape. The lay of the land bows to no strictly natural (or, at least, earthly) law, in that a desert of ash and elemental flame will exist, fuelled by no apparent source, in some cases adjacent to vast ice tundra or verdant tropical jungles. In the Green World, this is simply the natural state of all things. Certainly the edges of the tundra will melt, the edges of the ashen desert will turn to mud, and the edges of the jungles might scorch and burn, but Life exists in all possibilities here. For every forest reduced to stinking ash, there is one that boasts thousands of examples of every species of tree on a million worlds. For every plain of fire that is extinguished by a rainstorm, a field of flame rages and consumes all lands next to it.

Balance. That is the key.

I call this the Dance of the Elements. Various types of being, no matter how conflicting their natures, exist in perfect balance within the Green World...[excerpt ends]

DENIZENS OF THE GREEN WORLD

[Excerpt begins]...makes them so unknowable.

Life Elementals: *Every living being that ever walked the world of Archaeus, indeed, any physical world, was born in the Green World. This equates to the life force - the unformed soul - of every entity in the Omniverse existing in some form within this realm. Travellers can encounter these primal beings, can appear as “echoes” the being they will one day become. In this manner it is possible to converse with beings from other worlds far from Archaeus, or speak with beings that will one day, perhaps in thousands of years, walk*

the surface of Talislanta as living creatures. Unsurprisingly, most of these entities are barely sentient, existing as simple echoes of a life yet un-lived - after all, nothing at this stage of life can truly know its own future. But the potential for life is there nevertheless.

Natural Elementals: *The overwhelming majority of the Green World's population is made up of natural elementals, rather than unformed-life beings and godlike entities. These elementals are the sentient, naturally-occurring creatures that dwell here in their countless infinities. Every rock, pebble, boulder and mountain, every leaf, branch and tree and forest - every part of the Elemental Plane, no matter how humble or grand, is a sentient and reasoning entity (even if not necessarily reasonable by mortal standards).*

The spread of sentience is a curious anomaly here. While a mountain is considered sentient, it is made up of any number of boulders, rock formations and pebbles that all contribute into the entire whole. Each individual stone in the mountain is awake and aware, possessing some intelligence, and the consciousness of these entities merges to form the greater intelligence of the mountain itself. It is, in some way, similar to a hive mind. It becomes the choice of the traveller whether to address the mountain via communication with its individual intelligences, or the greater over-mind. And doing either is no more difficult than simply speaking. No matter the language, no matter the speaker's native tongue, all communication in the Green World flows effortlessly between any traveller and the native entities of the plane. Speech does not alter, but the meaning of the words is understood without fault. Likewise, the psychic "speech" of the elementals is comprehended clearly in the listener's mind, even though various elementals may speak in utterly alien terms, such as through winds of varying intensity or flames of different hue...[Excerpt ends]

[Excerpt begins] *...The nature elementals are random creatures, at least to mortal eyes. They exist in a state of perpetual balance, true, but they are always in motion, always acting, and always trying to further their own influences. Fire elementals burn, ash elementals seek to spread with the destruction of more material, water*

ADVENTURE IDEAS

The Green World Express: Viridian noted that if one translocates from Primus to the Green world, travels one mile, and then returns to Primus, one will appear 100 miles from the starting point. This can be used to cover vast distances, if one is willing to risk the dangers of the Green World.

That Which is Yet to Be: As the Womb of the Omniverse, all that will one day exist can be found in the Green World, if one has perseverance. The Sultan of Zandu may send the player characters to the Green World to find the life of his as-yet unconceived child, to ensure that he will one day have an heir. A terrible disease sweeping Maruk might only be cured by an herb that grows on another world, but can also be found on the elemental plane. A Raj diabolist might travel to the Green World in an attempt to taint the unborn soul of the next Dracartan King.

Opposing the Stain: To gain the trust or assistance of the elementals, the player characters could find themselves pitted against the Stain in pitched battle, or set to guard a particularly sensitive region against Stain intrusion. Perhaps they could even be sent as spies to the Stain homeland, far in the depths of the lower planes.

Border Dispute: The player characters are caught in a "discussion" between two True Elementals, Father Mountain and the the Matron of Morning Sky. They are arguing about their relative merits, and the player characters must struggle to survive the fallout. Eventually the characters are chosen to act as proxies and compete in a series of challenges designed to determine which is more important.

elementals seek to meld into every inch of terrain nearby, saturating the land to the point where any matter becomes water. Some elementals, no matter how sentient they might be, have no inclination to dwell upon pleasantries such as communication. These beings exist as living embodiments of their elements, and many do nothing more than "live out" their purposes. Even the more communicative beings behave much as one might expect - mud elementals, rising from waterlogged mucky ground, are slow in speech and stubborn, refusing to let things go unsaid, or worse, forgotten. Fire elementals frequently possess flashing attention spans, lightning-fast communication and a heady desire to be elsewhere, to spread, to feed upon any source of fuel.

The more elementals of the same type that congregate in the same place, the more likely it is that the landscape will be shaped to suit their natures. Entire regions of this endless realm are given over to volcanic mountain ranges populated by lava, rock, steam and boulder elementals. Elsewhere, endless forests are populated by the living embodiments of trees, plants, flowers and mushrooms of the like few mortals have ever beheld. Different regions possess distinct atmospheres and differences from others, so where one forest might be a verdant and lush woodland in the prime of health, another could be a predator's paradise of a tropical jungle, filled with unformed animal spirits that hunt one another, and still other forests will be little more than a field of bracken, dying trees that yet cling to some kind of life.

These elementals have access to all the knowledge of life itself. While a fire elemental will have little understanding of extinct plantlife and which trees exist on various worlds, but it might know great deal of lore concerning the fires that have raged across Talislanta during the countless millennia. With each element or entity possessing a host of lore regarding their particular influences, truly any questions can be answered in time, if one adamantly seeks the answers within the Green World.

True Elementals: *The highest of the beings in this realm, the True Elementals are the embodied consciousnesses of every natural occurrence. The Old Man of the Sea is ruler of all oceans and great expanses of water, and The Weeping Woman is the ruler of gentle rains. Other True Elementals include Grandfather Earth, The Keeper Buried Secrets, Snowbeard, and The Burning Goddess. The names of each True Elemental seem to be changeable, and matters such as gender and personality are completely variable - though distinct - from one encounter to the next and from each of the other godlike elementals.*

It is my educated belief that these principal entities are formed from the gathered intelligences of every single lesser element that is associated with their overriding influences. If this hypothesis is accurate, every single water elemental, river spirit, puddle elemental and lake spirit is, on some level, dedicating their essence to the overall consciousness of the entity known as the Old Man of the Sea.

Communicating with these vast entities is no easy feat. No simple summoning magic can bring these colossal beings to one's inner sanctum or laboratory. In the Green World, one can approach these enigmatic manifestations of nature by communicating with their lesser elementals and petitioning the True Elemental to manifest through its lesser representative. As the True Elementals are formed from the intelligence and essence of each lesser entity, the more godlike elementals are also aware of what their lower "cousins" experience and can choose to manifest if a traveller or visitor to the Green World phrases his request accordingly. Depending on the personality (and the mood or temper) of the True Elemental in question, a request to speak with the powerful being will need to be worded very carefully, usually laden with a great deal of praise, tales of the times in the traveller's life when he has seen the importance and power of the element the Elemental represents, and often the promise to fulfil one or more favors for the nature spirit.

Another means by which one might encounter these colossal manifestations is by getting caught up in one of their disputes, though such a method is generally far from desirable. The True Elementals are prideful, each considering its own aspect of reality to be the most important, the most vital to the smooth functioning of the worlds of Primus. This vanity often causes disagreement among their number, leading to "border disputes" which manifest as raging storms, avalanches, and similar widespread chaos. Unwary travelers could easily find themselves in mortal danger, either tossed about on the raging elements, or used as pawns in a challenge between these godlike entities. I myself was once... [excerpt ends]

THE STAIN

The written records of the Stain are fragmentary at best. Only a few pages of Viridian's notes survived, and even those were so decayed and illegible that only the most skillful reconstruction was able to reveal the following shards of lore.

[Excerpt begins] *...but unnatural in the extreme. I do not believe these are part of the intended order of the Green World, but are invaders of some kind. The elementals refer to them simply as the Stain.*

They spread across the elemental plane, like a drop

of black ink on parchment, corrupting the land and rendering it useless to the elementals. Where the Stain has been, the Green World is barren of life, wracked by a tangible aura of loss and memory of pain. The stones are silent, the wind is dead. The elementals are incapable of repairing the stained land, though the direct action of a True Elemental can often bring about some kind of healing.

It would seem that their eventual goal, mad though it seems, is the destruction of the Green World entirely. They attack with no discernable pattern or plan, destroying as much land as possible before the elementals can mount any organized resistance and then fading away, only to return elsewhere... **[Excerpt ends]**

[Excerpt begins] *...with tentacles for hair. Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of their appearance is the large, vertical eyeslit in the center of their forehead. When I lead the surviving elementals against the Stain leader, he laughed at me and opened that terrible, black eye. I was bathed in anti-elemental energy, a force of powerful entropy that shattered my warding spells and nearly destroyed me. My counter-stroke, however, drove him back and split that hateful eye...* **[Excerpt ends]**

[Excerpt begins] *...use of anti-elemental energy, and their apparent desire to destroy the very womb of the Omniverse, seems to link the Stain to demonkind itself. However, they are obviously not demons - they act with intelligence and organization, and I have seen some that are obviously younger or older, male and female. Further research is necessary to find out where they come from, and how we can...* **[Excerpt ends]**

REACHING THE GREEN WORLD

The only reliable method of reaching the Elemental Plane is through the use of the spell Viridian's Green World. There are rumors that a Witchgate exists in northern Werewood called the Green Gate, though no one can say where it truly leads.

THE AETHERIC SEA

THE NATURE OF THE REALM

The Aetheric Sea is the swirling source of all reality, an infinite ocean of possibility. The worlds of Primus, of which Archaeus is but one, float amid this sea, each one surrounded by its own Dreamrealm. There are several regions within this sea, and these regions often obey very different rules, and thus are defined as individual planes themselves.

The central region of the Aetheric Sea is known as the Grey Veil. It is here that the infinite worlds of Primus can be found, floating like islands. While most worlds are surrounded by a watery sea, in some cases the aether washes right up to the edges of the land.

The lower reaches of the Aetheric Sea are called the Dark Waters, and it is along these paths that the souls of the dead travel to the Underworld, either on their own or assisted by the servants of death. Here the aether takes the form of twisting rivers along gloomy valleys. Each river originates with one of the worlds of Primus and slowly merges with others, growing deeper and stronger, until it reaches the Shadowriver, in the Cavern of the Underworld.

The upper reaches of the Aetheric Sea are called the Silver Lands. Here reality is entirely up to the whim of the Paramanes, who guide lost travelers and challenge those who would proceed to the higher realms.

THE NATURE OF AETHERIUM

Aetherium is the raw substance of Creation. It can be shaped by thought into any form of matter, energy, or life. It is from the strands of aether that the elementals of the Green World weave what we mortals call 'reality', guided in their activity by the Archons of the Radiance.

A single mortal mind cannot shape aetherium, except in the most limited fashion, i.e. spellcasting and other magical skills. Only the Archons (and their fallen bretheren, the Shaitan) possess the true power of Creation on an individual basis. However, mortals can collectively shape the aether

through the combined power of their dreams, beliefs, and fears. (See the *Dreamrealms*)

Because the Aetheric Sea has not been given form yet, it may be perceived in different ways. Most cultures, when they first encounter it, interpret what they see in terms with which they are most familiar - a vast ocean. Because they perceive it that way, they can interact with the aether in ways in which they are comfortable, using sailing vessels to travel across its surface.

Some cultures perceive it differently. The Neurians saw the aether as a vast, lifeless void filled with stars and galaxies. The Brood saw it as endless depths, an ocean with no surface. By perceiving it differently, they interacted with it differently. Neurians required protective, air-tight clothing before they could expose themselves to the aether. The Brood could literally swim through the aether, in any direction, moving in an undulating motion. Note that an individual cannot choose how to perceive the aether. Perceptions are based on culture and subconscious mental filters.

These conflicting perceptions cause what some scholars refer to as Aberration. Aetheric aberrations occur whenever members of two cultures with very different perceptions of aetheric reality come into contact. When a sailing ship on the Aetheric Sea encounters a Broodwyrms "swimming" through the sky or under the surface, it is an aberration. It is possible that it was a severe aberration that caused the Neurian vessel to crash to Talislanta in the Time Before Time.

TRAVEL IN THE AETHERIC SEA

Cultures with a magical bent, or at least non-technological, usually perceive the astral plane as a vast sea, and navigate it with whatever sailing vessels with which they are familiar. Ships that were designed with the Aetheric Sea in mind are called aetherships, and perform best in the changing, sometimes unpredictable waters of the astral plane. Regular seagoing vessels, flying windships, aerial creatures, and even aquatic creatures can all navigate the aether, with various degrees of facility.

There exist portals in the Aetheric Sea, called Nexuses. These portals can take a wide variety of forms, from electrically-charged whirlpools and free-standing fogbanks to stone arches or even floating land-bridges between two worlds. Nexuses are stable, and they allow swift travel to and from distant portions of the Aetheric Sea.

Another kind of portal are the wyrmmholes. The creatures known as broodwyrms possess the innate ability to manifest these short-lived one-way gateways through the aether, which can last anywhere from a few minutes to several days, depending on the distance over which the wyrmmhole extends. Though wyrmmholes are much more dangerous to use than nexuses, some aetheric explorers can locate them and figure out where they lead, possibly reducing travel times from weeks to hours.

Noteworthy extracts from **The Deceptive Mists: Our Ignorance of Reality**, a series of essays by the incarcerated Cymrillian explorer-scholar Chaladane.

Beyond the edge of the world, the oceans and seas of Archaeus roar out into a formless infinity of blue-grey mist. This point where natural water clashes with eerie, silent mist, marks the end of the Archaeus plane of existence, and the beginning of the Astral Plane, also called the Aetheric Sea and the Grey Veil.

I have been there. I have seen this with my own eyes as I stood upon the deck of my windship, the Twilight Star. I have sailed to the edge of our reality and beyond, into the depths of endless silence. And though I have returned, I cannot deny that the voyage has changed me. You would say the same, had you set eyes upon the border of known reality and infinite nothingness.

In all directions, the bluish, greyish mists cloud the sight and reduce all noise to mere whispers, and though the Aetheric Sea is not a literal body of water, it too possesses its share of ebbs and flows, currents and tides; each of these performs much as their more natural and water-based counterparts, hindering, inconveniencing or aiding those who sail upon the mist itself. Indeed, whether the vessel is seaworthy or skyworthy, the Aethereal Sea can be sailed by windship and waterbound vessel alike. But as the Grey Veil possesses its share of tides and winds, it also has its storms. Aetherstorms can come from nowhere, a wracking maelstrom of roaring wind that can strike a vessel with thick fog that blinds a crew and refuses to disperse in the gusts of air, making sailing a grand trial indeed.

Though an aetherstorm may blow a ship off course, a careful navigator can compensate and return the ship to its original heading. Not so if the ship enters an unknown wyrmmhole or nexus point, not knowing where it may lead. Quite by accident we aboard the

Twilight Star encountered one of these wyrmmholes, a whirling, one-way portal in the aether. Our helmsman saw it too late, and our ship was drawn into the maw before we could begin any evasive action. When we erupted from the far side, we were quite lost, all our carefully-drawn maps useless to us.

Scattered across the endless expanses of the Grey Veil are countless landmasses and realms, each a world unto itself. Our own Archaeus is but one of the infinite worlds within the misty seas, and there are any number of other islands out there in the deep and infinite tides. It is my earnest hope to one day escape my confinement within this "institution of healing" (a poor term for an asylum if ever there was one) and outfit another expedition - a series of expeditions! - in order to chart some of these other realities and make contact with the resident of other worlds.

The mists of the Aetheric Sea conceal these other realms from Archaeus, and in turn our world may be hidden from many others. Some are visible to us as suns and moons of varied color and size. Others are dark as night and cannot 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 countless realms adrift in the aether; a great disk of landmasses surrounding by oceans. And past the great oceans lies the Grey Veil. Sailors can indeed sail off the edge of the world then; just as the legends have always cited.

It is my further belief that the ancient Archaeans knew of many aspects to the Aetheric Sea that remain unknown to us in the present age. While the blue-grey swirling mists are an unconquerable enigma to our modern minds (for those that even believe in the mists, of course), fragments of certain Archaeon lore seem to indicate that the ancient people of Talislanta perceived into the depths of the mists, ventured out in the spirit of discovery, and returned with knowledge of unimaginable origin and now-unknown application.

We are like children in comparison, or worse, like base animals, refusing to look out past our comfortable territories for fear of the unknown. And we would still have the guides, the charts, the maps and the lore we

need to follow in our ancestors' footsteps...if not for the devastating cataclysm, the Great Disaster, which practically annihilated all trace of the travels made by the Archaeon Empire's explorers.

Of all those who live, I am one of the few to possess such knowledge, and yet here I sit, rotting slowly in this cell when I should by rights be standing upon the deck of the Twilight Star and sailing into the misty darkness. Between my admittedly limited experience and the fragments of ancient lore I have managed to piece together, I am convinced that a skilled and dedicated crew could make a great many trips out into the ether and condition themselves to deal with the mental rigours of such voyages. Not to belabour the point any further, but lacking the proper coordinates and skill to navigate through the amorphous mists, a crew is likely to discover nothing more than madness and death through thirst and starvation as their vessel drifts blindly through infinity.

At least, that is the fate of any who do not evade one of the more "active" dangers of the Astral Plane.

THREATS OF THE AETHERIC SEA

A variety of entities seem to make their home within the dark ties of the Grey Veil, either floating along the currents, or nesting among the countless islands, oases, or fragments of forgotten realities that may be found scattered among its depths. Phasms, Erx, disembodied spirits (the Twilight Star encountered many of these poor souls, lost on their way to the Underworld, it seemed) strange vessels from other worlds, terrifying "void dragons" (as my crew named them), and creatures referred to in some texts as "broodwyrms", though from what little I have read of these gigantic demonic beasts, I am relieved beyond words to never have encountered one.

My own experiences give rise to two accounts of danger when sailing the Aetheric Sea, and those are the race that my crew termed the "Reavers" and the phenomenon I have hesitantly called "Nightmare Echoes".

I have not been lazy in my incarceration. Indeed, I have spent much of my time (and pulled in many favors owed to provide me with ancient texts) gathering any scraps of information I could regarding the origin of

the windship pirates that assailed the Twilight Star on several occasions throughout our journey. I cannot be sure, but I believe I have finally shed some light upon the Reavers, exposing their antiquated and ancient vessels to be the last remaining salvage of a now-forgotten race.

THE BARATUS

The Baratus (which means Wild Folk in their own language) are lean and muscular, standing on average around six feet in height. Their skin ranges from grey to dark brown, with eyes the misty blue of the aether itself. Males and females shave their heads except for a topknot which is braided with gemstones, and strips of sinew. The males also wear long, braided moustaches. Their dark skin is often decorated with colorful inks on the face and arms, with clan symbols on chest (for men) or back (for women).

Their appearance is an unusual amalgam of barbaric and early Archaen attire. Their clothing is made of tooled leather, combined with high boots and long cloaks with flaring collars, such as those worn by the Archaens. They commonly hold or wear various enchanted items, amulets, staves, bracers, and such, which they avidly collect.

ANCESTRY

The Baratus are descended from an ancient race of sub-men from Talislanta, similar to the pre-orb Archaens. Originally a race of primitive hunter-gatherers, the Baratus were the dire enemies of the Archaens from the earliest days of the Archaen Empire. The mages eventually succeeded in defeating the Baratan clans, thanks in large part to the invention of the windship (created by the Elandar, ancestors of the modern-day Phantasians.)

The surviving clans were forced to retreat from Talislanta along the land-bridge to the south. There they struggled in the unfamiliar, hostile environment, and learned the art of sea-craft to survive. They were occasionally subject to airborne attacks by Elandar winships, and might eventually have been wiped out if not for a chance event.

One day an Elandar warship lost in a storm made a forced landing in Baratan territories. The sub-men siezed the vessel and tortured the captain and crew to extract the secrets of its operation. Employing the captured windship, the crafty Baratus stealthily captured further windships until they had amassed a sizeable fleet. This they used to harass the Archaen Empire for generations.

Following the Great Disaster, the Baratus disappeared from history - apparently destroyed by the cataclysm. In truth, when the land-bridge was destroyed the Baratus were cast adrift in the Astral Plane, clinging to bits of shattered reality until those who had been airborne at the time could retrieve them. Thus began their new existence, living aboard their ships on the Aetheric Sea.

SOCIETY

The Baratus are loosely tied together by a code of conduct, collectively called the Barat, which means the Wild. This is a set of traditions and customs derived from the practices of the early Baratus tribes, who revered the Gods (elementals) of Earth, Water, Wind, and Fire and found their place in the natural order of things as hunters and warriors. According to the Barat, it is right and fair for the Baratus to hunt and kill in order to survive, just as it is in the animal kingdom.

CUSTOMS

While Baratus society is largely patriarchal, Baratus do not hold any great prejudice against females. Women can and do hold positions of authority as long as they exhibit strength and honor, and are expected to fight and hold their own just well as any man.

Every seven years the Baratus gather at the Grey Sargasso, their floating capitol, for what they call The Clanmeet. Here the clans come together to barter various goods between one another, including ships, stolen merchandise, enchanted and dreamforged items, and slaves taken in raids. During this time children are regularly traded across clan lines, each to be raised apart from his or her original clan. This is not seen as a painful ordeal for the child or parents, but as a rite of passage. Very rarely a child over the age of seven remains with the parents, but the practice is frowned upon. In this way the Baratus keep their bloodlines strong.

MAGIC & RELIGION

Baratus hold a deep respect for the natural order and the laws of nature. Every Baratus ship has at least one Barat-Aka, (which means 'wise one of the wild'), who is the spiritual guide, teacher, historian, and healer for his clan. The Baratus revere the True Elementals as gods, beseeching wind elementals for aid when sailing, fire elementals for warmth and the forging of weapons, earth elementals for food, etcetera. The wise one also leads funerary services, which are simple events with the dead released into the Aetheric Sea along with whatever honorary possessions the clan wishes to give to ensure the soul's safe journey to the Underworld.



The Baratus have no talent for spellcasting, yet they avidly collect enchanted items to make up for this lack; amulets, bracers, torcs, staves, etcetera. Items enchanted to cast spells are most valued, though passive items are also sought.

The Baratus tell stories about the Archaen-devils who drove them from their homeland and destroyed the world, an event they call the Landbreak. In their deepest hearts they have a superstitious dread of the Archaens, though no adult would ever admit to such a weakness.

One particular story, handed down from generation to generation, deals with a figure of nearly religious awe - a legendary leader who is prophesied to come one day and lead the Baratus out of the Aetheric Sea and back to Talislanta. There he will unite the Baratus with their former allies and return Talislanta to its natural state and visit vengeance upon the Archaen-devils.

THE ARTS

While they are not generally interested in art for its own sake, the Baratus do spend a great deal of thought and effort on their facial and body illustrations. Men paint their clan

symbols on their chest, women have their clan symbols painted on their back.

The ink used is made from the fermented blood of bat mantas, and is utterly permanent. If a Baratus betrays his or her clan, the markings are removed either with fire or by being cut away, along with the skin.

In addition, the Baratus have craftsfolk who gather raw materials and other flotsam from the lost bits of reality floating in the aether. A few of these Baratus dare to gather materials from the Dreamrealms themselves, by taking small one- and two-person vessels close to the shores of the Dreamrealms, and using nets and bait to catch whatever random bit of reality happens to come within reach. Often they return with seemingly useless bits of matter, which the craftsfolk use in creative ways. This is very risky, for pseudo-demons and other dangerous phenomena are just as likely to be found as anything useful. Items found this way, or crafted from such materials, are referred to as dreamforged.

The Barat

The Baratus remain close to their primitive roots, and thus the basic tenets of the Barat are those of nature and wild animals. The Baratus respect and honor the natural order, they take care of their own, but they also recognise that the strong survive and sometimes the weak do not. They do not recognise (or even comprehend) such civilized notions as "fighting fair" or honor on the battlefield. Put simply, the Barat states:

- ▲ The word of the Captain is the law of the crew
- ▲ One crew, One blood
- ▲ Baratus, Above all
- ▲ What you kill, You keep

The Barat is not written on any documents, nor sworn in any oaths. It is an oral tradition that binds the Baratus together even while it can be interpreted in many ways. Each captain interprets the Barat slightly differently. In some clans, "One crew, One blood" is meant to mean everyone on a ship should act as brothers and sisters to one another, while in other clans it might mean the crew are honor-bound to take vengeance for any insult or injury to a fellow crewmember.

"What you kill, you keep" is based on the hunter's ethic. Originally, this meant that a kill belongs to the hunter, who has sole rights to the prey. It may also be interpreted to mean "when you kill a man, what was his is now yours". This includes wives or husbands, ships, crew, as well as personal possessions. "Baratus, above all" can mean that Baratus should put the welfare of their own people above anything else, though it can be interpreted more selfishly, and can even be used to support mutiny, if the captain is perceived to be weak.

LANGUAGE

Among themselves the Baratus speak Sign and Baratan, a dialect of Archaen. They also have a basic understanding of the Elder Tongue, through their many dealings with races and beings throughout the Omniverse.

GOVERNMENT

Onboard a vessel, the captain's word is law. Each captain is subservient to the will of the clan leader. As a society, the Baratus are guided by the Council of Captains, where each clan sends a single delegate to speak in the clan leader's name. The delegates are given the honorary title of captain,

though they are forbidden to own a vessel of their own to prevent rivalries.

DEFENSES

The main defenses of the Baratus are their mobility and secrecy. They are scattered throughout the Aetheric Sea, and even their capitol, the Grey Sargasso, is never to be found in the same place twice.

Though the ships of the Baratus are sometimes ancient, and have the appearance of rotting hulks, they are very swift on the aether. Crafty Baratus captains use their mobility to strike with ballistae and catapults without warning and then flee into the mists before the opponents can muster resistance. In this way they will often harry a foe until they can no longer maneuver or protect themselves.

COMMERCE

While raiding is a common practice among the Baratus, they do occasionally engage in trade with those who earn their respect. The Baratus do not respect coins as anything other than precious metals, however. They rely on barter for all their negotiations.

Passive enchanted items (+1 weapon, or boots of stealth, for example) will fetch about five times their normal value in trade, while spellcasting items (wand of fire, or ring of telekinesis for example) are valued even higher. Some of the most prized items are dreamforged weapons and gear, which can possess fantastic properties, though most are simply bizarre in appearance.

WORLDVIEW

While the Baratus are more cosmopolitan than their ancestors, they retain their barbaric heritage and take pride in it. Those who they deem too 'civilized' are regarded as weak, potential prey. Magicians are particularly despised, an emotional amalgam of hate, fear, and jealousy.

Additional extracts from **The Deceptive Mists: Our Ignorance of Reality:**

After our initial encounters with the Batarus, later meetings turned from open assault upon the Twilight Star to guarded meetings and negotiation for charts. We desperately needed those charts to find our way

back to Talislanta. Fortunately, not all Barataus captains were as bloodthirsty as those we encountered first, and we were able to barter a few enchanted items for what we needed.

One of the most amazing sights in our entire journey - and one of the events most often disregarded by my doctors - was the sighting of what the Baratus called the "Grey Sargasso". When we had earned the trust and friendship of one of the Baratus captains, he offered to allow the Twilight Star some repair time at his home docks. We accepted gladly and followed the antiquated windship (which, though rickety and often-repaired, was obviously once a grand vessel and still works efficiently) to what can only be described as a vast graveyard of vessels hanging in the mists. Here, we came to learn, among these hundreds and hundreds of ancient windships - and more recent models obviously captured - they made their "capital city", the Grey Sargasso.

I remember something of the number of patrolling vessels floating through the wreckage. Truly, it was a fleet awesome in its majesty, humbling in its state of erosion and disrepair, and breathtaking in its strange cohesion. Thousands of citizens could be seen on the canted decks and ancient rigging, standing at odd angles and strange perspectives, each deck exerting its own natural gravity, each person on the business of work, trade, and purchasing goods. It is amazing even to recall in my mind's eye; a city hanging in space, constructed from a thousand floating windships lashed together by rope and chain.

Of their actual society, I am ashamed to say that we learned little. The Council of Captains apparently met irregularly, and appeared to make up some form of loose government, with a representative from each of the biggest ships in the fleet. We heard much talk of "The Code", which was explained briefly as the code of conduct each captain could interpret as he wished, as long as he brought prosperity to the Grey Sargasso with his actions. I found myself flickering between impressions that these people were ruthless pirate scavengers with no care for life, and somewhat dashing explorers who craved adventure. I suspect that the truth lies somewhere in the middle, with exceptional captains leading their crews to one extreme or the other.

Dreamforged Items

No system is provided here for the items, objects, and creatures that can be found by skimming the Dreamrealms. The Game Master has free reign to do anything with such items.

Most items found this way are simple detritus - bits of yarn, oddly-shaped glass, a tree branch of some unknown wood, etcetera. These materials are used in creative ways to fashion whatever the Baratus can use, from oil lamps to clothing.

Less common are fabulous and bizarre items - dresses made from spider webs and dewdrops, swords that glisten like oil on water, musical instruments that sound like a human voice, clocks that keep strange time, a fragment of sunlight made solid, or mechanical eyes that blink and watch, but do nothing else. These the Baratus either keep as trophies or trade for other, needed supplies from other clans or outsiders.

Even more rare are those dreamforged items with seemingly miraculous powers. Such items do not follow the normal rules for enchanted items, and might be anything - a talking animal, a brass chain of infinite length, a living vine that bears random magical fruit, a suit of armor that turns the wearer into a legendary hero, or a tiny aethership that can expand and shrink (taking along anything within.) These items are never traded, except within a clan.

Almost without exception, dreamforged items possess an otherworldly air. They were not made by any mundane process, but drawn from the very aether by the power of mortal dreams, and thus do not always follow the expected patterns. Such an item is likely to have many extraneous flourishes and decorations, possibly to the point of making them unrecognizable at first glance.

Their existence did not appear, to my eyes, to be a particularly happy or rewarding one. However, this is hardly surprising considering their lifestyle and location. I doubt any being could enjoy a life of pirating vessels from any number of random realities purely out of a need to survive.

Nightmare Echoes: *Here we come to another theory of mine that will no doubt receive absolute disregard while I live; while in centuries to come it will be regarded as absolute fact. Indeed, I am given to understand from the staff at this institution that my*

Adventure Ideas

Oasis in the Mist: The player characters, sailing upon the shrouded Aetheric Sea, come across an ancient castle atop a rocky island. A flickering light can be seen from the topmost tower. This could be a fragment of a shattered world, a construct of some eccentric wizard, or some free-floating bit of fancy that split off from a Dream or Nightmare Realm.

Baratus Piracy & Negotiation: The Baratus survive through trade and piracy, some individual captains doing more of one or the other. One particularly daring fellow, Captain Sawall, has returned to Talislanta to resume the old sky-pirate trade of his ancestors. He has captured a Phantasian heiress and is holding her for ransom. The player characters have been recruited to bring the money to Sawall, or to rescue the heiress if possible. The question becomes, does she want to be rescued?

Spectral Guard Duty: A Farad wizard, knowing that his end is near and intending to cheat those who have claim on his soul, has gathered a small army of supernatural creatures, constructs, mercenaries, and the player characters to accompany him on his journey to the Underworld. His mausoleum has been specially designed to translate into a spectral ship for those within, and the player characters are to act as captain and officers of the ship, and protect the Farad's soul until it reaches those dark shores.

theory on Nightmare Echoes is a large part of the reason for my incarceration here. I flatter myself by saying that I see a truth they do not, but the following words are only my own conjectures based upon the horrors I now cannot forget.

It is my ardent belief that each world of the prime material plane, Primus, is surrounded by the Aetheric Sea. Of these, Archaeus is but one of perhaps an infinite number. Now, if we take as fact the existence of certain "Dream Realms" surrounding each world, we begin to see a picture emerging as to the nature of aetheric reality. In a sea of endless mist, worlds exist independent of one another, with each realm surrounded a "dream plane" that is made up of all the dreaming imagery of those who live on the world below. The hopes, dreams, wishes and nightmares on an entire world, coalesce into a chaotic reflection of a billion sentient minds.

Now what if that world was destroyed?

What if the realm was wracked by a cataclysm so terrible that it tore the local reality apart and extinguished an entire world? Terrible questions to dwell on, indeed, but not the real question. The real question is: What would remain afterwards?

I have seen this, remember, as you read these words. I saw this happen. At the time I did not understand what I was seeing, but as time has passed my mind has managed to piece the images and concepts together. I saw a world in the Aetheric Sea, crumbling, dissolving, eroding into dissolution. And as the fragments of this destroyed world scattered and dispersed into the endless Grey Veil, I saw what remains of a world once it is annihilated.

The Dreamrealm; twisted, pulsing and swarming with every horrific, pained imagining of the world's last moments. Imagine the terror of every living being as their entire world is destroyed. That fear and sorrow bleeds outward like a spiritual cancer, warping the Dreamrealm forever into a region of pain and suffering.

These Nightmare Echoes are like bubbles of horrific reality which remain in the aether for an indeterminate amount of time and can be entered much like any realm within the Astral Plane. If the one I witnessed was any indication, these tormented storms also seem to spawn terrible creatures that are born naturally suited to life in the Aetheric Sea.

Baratus Skyraider

"For the pride of our ancestors, attack!"

Fierce and proud, you can trace your ancestry back to the Landbreak. The Archaen-devils called your people sub-men, but in your veins flows a blood hotter than the dust in any wizard's cold heart. You sail the Aetheric Seas, between the worlds of normal men, among the stars. Adventure and danger are your meat and drink. One day your people will return to claim your ancestral homelands... but not yet, not yet.

Appearance:

5'9" - 6'3", 150-210 lbs. Skin is grey to dark brown, blue eyes, deep-set eyes. Facial and body paintings in a variety of colors and designs. Head shaves except for a woven topknot, long braided moustache (males), long braids next to each ear (females), lean and muscular build.

+1	+2	+2	+0
STR	DEX	PER	CHA
+1	+1	+0	-1
CON	SPD	WIL	INT
+3	24	+0	
CR	HP	MR	

Skills:

Comba Skill:
<choice of two weapon skills> +2
Acrobatics +2
Appraiser +2
Art (body painting) +3
Stealth +2
Trigger Enchantment +2

Languages:
Elder Tongue, basic
Baratan, native



Special Abilities:

Special skill Trigger Enchantment can be used to activate a magic item that might normally require the use of a Mode skill, such as a Wand of Fire using the Attack Mode. Command word, if any, must still be known.

Equipment:

Thigh-high leather boots, breechcloth, and vest. Cloak or cape with flaring collar or hood. Two weapons of choice (three if crewman). All Baratus will have several enchanted items, a total of 18 levels worth, though no single item can be higher than 6th level enchantment. 200 g.l. value in jewelry, gemstones, and other valuables.

CHOOSE ONE PROFESSION:

Captain: Increase INT by +2 and CHA by +1, add Astromancy +4, Cartography (aetheric) +6, Command +3, Pilot Aethership +5, Tactics +4, may have a vessel at GM'd discretion

Crewman: Increase STR and DEX by +1 each, add Artillerist +4, Brawling +2, Gambling +3, Guard +5, Laborer (rowing and sailing) +4, Pilot Aethership +2, Song (chantys) +2, Weapon skill of choice +4

Wise One: Increase CHA by +3 and Int by +2, add Oratory +4, Doctrines (Animism) +5, History +8, Healer +6

Gatherer: Increase PER by +1 and CHA by +2, add Salvager +5, Appraiser +4, Artificer +3, Survival (dreamrealms) +3, and two of the following: Merchant +3, Armorer +3, Weaponer +3

PRIMUS

THE NATURE OF THE REALM

The worlds of Primus float like an endless series of islands upon the Aetheric Sea, each one shrouded in the grey-blue mists and enclosed by its own Dream Realm. Some are worlds of wonder and magic, while others are gripped in the cold hand of science. Some are primitive worlds of ruthless butchery, others are centers of learning and philosophy. The entirety of mortal life exists throughout the plane.

There is a function of consanguinity among the worlds of Primus, such that those that are physically near are similar in many ways. Thus one is most likely to find worlds of magic near similarly magic-bound worlds, and science-bound worlds near others of the same type. Worlds tend to be near others in the same cultural stages as well. It is very unusual for aetheric travelers to encounter worlds of greatly different nature, except when nexus points or wormholes are involved.

While wormholes are unpredictable and difficult to detect, nexus points are much more stable and can be used repeatedly. A nexus point can whisk travelers across vast distances of the Aetheric Sea. A few worlds of Primus act as gathering points for these, drawing them as a magnet draws iron, becoming gathering points for aetheric travelers, dimensional anomalies, and more. These worlds become the focus of dimensional energies and crossroads among the worlds. Archaeus, the world of Talislanta, is one such. Among the lower and upper planes, the Midnight Realm and the Silver Republic respectively are similar crossroads for travelers.

The worlds of Primus are divided by scholars and mystics into three regions, defined by their spiritual nature. Those worlds nearest the higher currents are collectively, if inaccurately, known as the Upper Planes. In these worlds, the mortal societies are based on justice and equality. Selfishness and hate are viewed as undesirable qualities, while compassion and love are held in the highest regard. Those worlds nearest the deep currents are called the Lower Planes or Hells. Among these worlds, the mortal societies are filled with corruption. The strong rule the weak. Cruelty and selfishness are not only accepted as normal, but viewed as signs of personal strength, while compassion and mercy are seen as weaknesses.

THE DREAM REALMS

Excerpt from **Our Phantasian Dream** by the Zandir Philosopher Entocsio.

"But how can you even guide us in a world of dreams?"

Marcuriol chuckled as our eyes fluttered closed, and said "If you step back far enough, perhaps they're all dream worlds. The only differences may be in the length of the dream and the strength of the dreamer. Perhaps we call reality that which is dreamed the longest, that's all."

We awoke, Kara, Damien, and I, in a crystal chamber like and yet unlike the one in which we had lain our heads. The light seemed to have an ethereal quality to it, and our movements, when we arose from the couches, were languid and somehow idealized, as though we didn't so much move as realize a new position.


"Welcome to the Dream Realm, Entocsio." [excerpt ends]

THE NATURE OF THE REALM

Each world of Primus is surrounded by a region of the aether collectively known as the Dream Realms. Each Dream Realm is created by the collective dreams, nightmares, hopes, fears, and religions of the mortals who live on that world. The Dream Realms are all linked, forming one vast dreamscape for all of Primus.

This ability of mortals to create new realities through their dreams and faiths is the same power, in miniature, through which the Archons create the worlds of Primus. However, no single mortal mind can shape the aether, except in the most limited manner i.e. spellcasting. It requires the collected thoughts of many people to have such an effect.

Ancient scholars once divided the Dream Realm into two distinct planes - the Dream Dimension and the Nightmare Dimension, though Koraq referred to them both as the 'Realm of the Mind'. Recent discoveries by Phantasians, combined with the traditions of mystics and shamans,



shows that the two are really the same place, divided along a metaphysical line of perception. The dream-traveler can easily slide from one aspect to the other with an incautious thought. One's reality there is often a reflection of the self - a living rorschach.

REACHING THE DREAM REALMS

There are many ways to enter the Dream Realms. Every night the inhabitants of the world travel there, at once experiencing and creating their Dream Realm. Such experiences are without much risk, as it is only the mind, not the body or the spirit that travels. Nightstalkers, astral vampires, and similar creatures still pose a threat to any dreamer, however.

Another method to enter the Dream Realms is by imbibing certain dream essences, sold in Cabal Magicus by Phantasian dream merchants. These dream essences come in a variety of colors, mixtures, and opacities, the type of which determines the precise nature of the dream. These essences can be very addictive, and wealthy Talisnantans have been known to completely forsake the "real" world for the living fantasies of the Dream Realms this way.

The Phantasian dream essence method of journeying to the Dream Realms is more dangerous than normal dreaming, as both the mind and the spirit travel there, and damage taken in such a dream can manifest on the physical body. In addition, it is rare but not unknown for an irrational or emotional dreamer to evoke unintended phenomenae even while under the guiding influence of dream essence.

Excerpt from **Our Phantasian Dream**

Kara and I watched as Damien walked closer to the mirror. "Hellina" he whispered as the vision came clear. Beyond the arch was a scene of carnal celebration, a dozen bodies entangled in the candlelight. Our Phantasian guide, Marcuriol, went on about the pleasures of the Crimson House. "This is a favorite spot for many dreamwalkers. Here you can experience your innermost fantasies and desires with no guilt, no shame, and no risk." He winked.

I had known Damien and Kara for a long time. Their love had always been tempestuous, for they are a hot-blooded folk, and I began to get an inkling of where this was leading. I moved to pull Damien back from the arch, trying to interpose my not-insubstantial girth between Kara and what lay beyond, but she'd heard... she'd seen. "Hellina?" she said in her most dangerous

whisper. "You said you never thought of her that way... you wretch!"

Enraptured by the woman he saw in the room, Damien was oblivious to everything else. He was stepping forward, loosening his clothing. Marcuriol paled when he saw the air darken and swirl around Kara. "Madame, please, remain calm. This is nothing but a dream! There is no need for jealousy here... it's not real!" But she was beyond hearing, and when I glanced back at what was happening, so was I.

Something terrible was manifesting. The wall behind Kara rippled with darkness and then fell away, revealing a ravaged and terrible landscape similar to that through which we had passed to arrive at the Crimson House, but twisted and evil-looking now, bent by her thoughts of jealousy and rage. Marcuriol ran forward to Kara, perhaps intending to calm her, or knock some sense into her. I knew Kara better than he, however, and was already backing down the corridor.

Something monstrous was rising behind Kara. Six-limbed it was, covered with green scales and fur. It casually knocked the Phantasian back down the corridor, then stepped around Kara, who was watching everything with a wide-eyed fury. The beast stepped through the arch through which Damien had passed. I could hear the gasps of delight and moans of pleasure suddenly turning to screams of terror and cries of pain.

I turned, and fled the dream that had turned into a nightmare...[excerpt ends]

Shamanic drugs and mystic meditative techniques can also be used to travel to the Dream Realms, though each has their own risks. Shamans have their totem to guide them, a dream creature which guides the shaman and his or her companions through the visions they experience. Mystics require no drugs, but once in the Dream Realms must rely on their own self control to keep their thoughts and emotions in check.

The last way to enter the Dream Realms is the most fraught with peril. Physically entering, either via dimensional spell, witchgate, or winship / aethership. This requires passing through one of the myriad gateways to the Dream Realms, guarded by the Onir. The Onir do not allow easy entrance. One must either present a desperate need for entrance, or

else bargain for it, usually by promising some service in return. Such service is usually closely tied to the affairs of the Dream Realms.

The traveler who physically enters a Dream Realm may interact with the world and inhabitants just as any other dreamer, only without the easy escape of waking up. A physical traveler can easily be killed or trapped there forever. Some will still pursue this method of dream-travel despite the dangers for a number of reasons. They may not have access to dream essence, or the restrictions of dream essence may not allow them to go where they need to be. They might not have a friendly shaman or mystic to take them there. Also, traveling physically is the only way to bring anything back from the Dream Realm.

THE CRYSTAL SPHERE

Deep within the Dream Realms exists a barrier, a crystal sphere of such size that it appears as a vast wall that extends to infinity as far as the eye can see. Beyond this barrier exists the realms created by the faiths of the mortal world. Each religion shapes its own heavens and hells, its own Gods, and these things manifest in the Dream Realm.

Some scholars believe that when a mortal dies, the mind and spirit separate. The spirit travels to the Underworld while the mind travels to whatever eternal reward is expected in life, in the crystal sphere within the Dream Realms.

It must be noted that even though the deities of the crystal sphere are created from the faith of their worshippers, they are just as real as any living creature or spirit and as powerful as any Archon or other Power. It is a fallacy to believe that anything that originates in the Dream Dimension is any less real than something born on Primus.

LANDS OF NEVERMORE

Beyond the crystal sphere, at the torn and ragged outer edges of the Dream Realms, there exist the Lands of Nevermore, a place of vanishing myth and half-remembered legends. Those things which mortals have all but forgotten linger here, slowly fading, forgetting what they once were.

It is a sad and lonely land, where the breeze wanders along empty halls, stirring ancient tapestries to long-lost heroes. Monuments and colossi lay in the dust, lit by the light of a fading sun, forever setting, with nightfall just around the corner.

The figments and dream-wraiths here are lost and pathetic

things, barely aware of themselves, much less their surroundings. Long forgotten kings lead fading armies against enemies no living soul can recall. Heroes re-enact their mighty deeds on grey stages for an empty audience.

Here too can be found the Forgotten Gods - sleeping, nearly faceless deities who have lost their worshippers, their altars crumbled to ruin. They barely recall themselves, only dimly remembering the glory of their earlier existence. Though only a tiny fragment of their former selves, these entities are still powerful in terms of mortal might, and a traveler here should be wary.

DREAMWEAVER & NOMAN

The ruler of the Dream Realms is an entity known among all races and cultures as Dreamweaver. He is a madcap fool, a lunatic with a wild gleam in his mismatched eyes. To Dreamweaver, every moment is a celebration of insanity, where logic holds no sway. His dress is always extravagant, his gangly limbs always seeming to be on the verge of self-entanglement, and his speech a staccato of rapid-fire questions, unrelated observations, and imperial degrees which must be followed by all within range of his voice.

Conversely, Noman is a dark and brooding creature. Wrapped in shadow and gloom, they very air trembles in fear at his approach, and no mortal can stand his terrifying stare for long. It is said that Noman has a cruel and twisted sense of humor. He is likely to take anything said in the darkest and most literal sense for his sense.

Despite the widely different natures of these two beings, they are, in fact, one and the same. Like the realm which he rules, Dreamweaver has two aspects. If one encounters either aspect, a careless word or careful phrasing can cause him to shift to the other extreme. Amusing Noman can bring forth the Dreamweaver, and failing to keep Dreamweaver entertained can summon Noman in his place.

Dreamweaver/Noman has avatars that rule each Dreamrealm and guide the flow of dreams whenever he is not directly involved. These are the entities known as Visions, or Apparitions.

Visions, the avatars of Dreamweaver often manifest as creatures of great beauty, the exact nature of which depends on the race and species of the viewer. The Phantasians see a lovely woman dressed in long, flowing robes. The Muses of Astar see an androgynous form, while the Thaeciens see a handsome minstrel whose songs reveal aspects of the future.

Adventure Ideas

- **Cure for the Unreal:** Several citizens have fallen ill from an unknown plague that is spreading rapidly. The Phantasian library holds the key... it is a disease from the Dream Dimension, created by Noman. Only a mission to the Dreamrealm can find the cure, but can the player characters convince the sandmen to release it?

- **Long Walk Home:** A plea from a child in a dream sends the player characters on a journey to the Dreamlands to find her and lead her back to the waking world. How did she get trapped there in the first place? Could Dreamweaver have done it as a prank? Is the little girl even real? What about her playpal in the Dreamrealm, who resents the player characters leading her away?

- **Talent Search:** Performers from all over the land, comedic actors, jugglers, and motley fools have been vanishing. Investigation reveals that sandmen have been taking them bodily to the Dreamrealm while they slumber. Why are these people being taken, and can the player characters convince Dreamweaver to release them?

Apparitions, the avatars of Noman, take great delight in manifesting as the darkest, most deeply-buried fears of the viewer. They know every nightmare a mortal has experienced, and use that knowledge to its fullest extent when attempting to instill terror.

DENIZENS OF THE DREAMREALMS

Excerpt from *Compendium of Dreams* by the Phantasian astromancer Laslovian.

While there would appear to be a bewildering array of creatures in the Dreamrealms, in fact there are only a handful.

By far the most numerous are the creatures known as figments, who are the performers, props, and scenery on the stages of our nighttime fancy. Figments physically take the form of whatever is required in a dream. In most cases they will appear quite real, though they do have a tendency to act in bizarre ways, even when they are supposed to be inanimate. Truly, anything and anyone one encounters in the Dreamrealms could be a figment.

The dark counterpart to figments are the dreaded barbed

horrors, malicious little creatures who are the very embodiment of terror. Rather than take the form of nightmarish things, however, they latch onto the dreamer and infect him or her with terrible hallucinations. The fear generated by the dreamer feeds the barbed horror, and in some cases they can become truly attached to the mind, like a lamprey, continuing to infect the mind even when awake.

Scholars have catalogued the barbed horror, bat mantas, fiends, nightstalkers, and other entities of the Nightmare Dimension as pseudo-demons, though the similarity to true demons is superficial. They are the creations of Noman, apparitions, and the collective fears and horrific fantasies of mortal minds.

Fewer in number than the figments, but no less important to the functioning of the Dream Dimension are the beings known as Sandmen. They take the form of shriveled, gnomelike beings dressed in hooded robes. It is their responsibility to conduct each dreamer to the dreamscape through the use of the magical material known as dreamdust. Sandmen are generally ill-tempered and full of complaints, grumbling or muttering about one thing or another.

Standing at the myriad waypoints, arches, portals, and gates of the Dreamlands are the mighty Onir, who protect those portals from unauthorized passage. They stand ten feet in height and bear fabulously ornamental (yet effective) weapons. Their aethereal bodies are caparisoned in glistening, enchanted armor, wearing great helms with full faceplates.

It is also possible to encounter mythical beings, legendary figures, and even deities that have become real in the Dreamrealms due to the combined belief of the mortals of Primus. While rare, these things should be avoided at all costs, Dreamrealm or Nightmare Dimension, for they can be as powerful as they are unpredictable.

One might also encounter fellow travelers. These include natural dreamers, dream-travelers (such as those using Phantasian dream-essence or astral travelers), or those physically in the Dreamrealms, known as dreamwalkers. However, it is rare for two natural dreamers to meet because the figments and sandmen take pains to prevent one from interfering with another.

One last type of entity one might encounter are known as Dreamwraiths. These are the minds of mortals who have become trapped in the Dream Dimension by one means or another. They vary widely in nature, and can cloak themselves in the fabric of dreams. It can be difficult to tell a Dreamwraith from a fellow traveler in the Dreamlands.

DREAMWRAITH

A dreamwraith is the result of a mortal mind being trapped in the Dreamlands. This most often occurs when a dream-traveler's physical body is slain while the mind is journeying. Because it has no mortal soul, they are weak, phantasmal beings, easily dispersed by even the slightest magical force. (Any spell that directly targets a dreamwraith will disperse it for 1 hour per spell level.) For this reason, malevolent dreamwraiths seek out non-spellcasters for their attentions.

Over time a dreamwraith will fade, losing cohesion and form as it slowly forgets who it once was. Eventually it will fade away entirely, like a lost memory. Dreamwraiths generally fade at a rate of one month per point of their mental strength, which is the sum total of their INT, WIL, and CHA values.

Most dreamwraiths are desperate to prevent this, and the only way is to absorb some mental strength from a mortal mind. To do so, the dreamwraith must appear to the dream traveler and interact with him or her, inserting itself into their consciousness. The interaction can take any form (dream lover, mysterious oracle, lost family member, etc.), but must take place over several days. If the dreamer accepts this interaction, he or she temporarily loses one point from their highest attribute between INT, WIL, or CHA. This will sustain the dreamwraith for an extra month, and the dreamer will recover the lost mental strength in the same period - unless the dreamwraith continues its parasitic activity. If any of those three attributes falls to -5, the victim falls into a coma, locked into the Dream Dimension. If they continue to dwindle to -7, death follows. Some dreamwraiths will switch hosts on a regular basis, trying to give each one some value in exchange for the borrowed strength.

In its natural state, a dreamwraith appears as a faint, vaporous version of the physical body it once possessed. When appearing to a dreamer, it will cloak itself in illusion, reading the mind of the target to determine what form will have the greatest impact.

Dreamwraiths share many similarities with disembodied spirits, but there is a difference. The soul is the force of

life, and it has power. Dreamwraiths are only the mind and memories of the mortal, and thus they have no power other than that which they are given.

Laslovian, the famed Phantasian astromancer and author of the Compendium of Dreams, wrote about a dreamwraith with whom he had an extended relationship:

In life she was called Soharia. She died from an overdose of dream essence a few hundred years before I was born. I was young and inexperienced, and I loved her with an intensity that I have never known since. She first came to me in a dream, a most enjoyable experience, and when she left I ached to find her again. This set me on my quest for a deeper understanding of the Dreamrealms.

Eventually I found her in her dream-castle on the edges of Neverwhen Forest. It had been years, but my love for her had only grown in the interim. I learned much from Soharia in the months that followed - she tutored me on the Dreamrealms and lost Phantasian lore, and from her I also learned what love is, and about sacrifice.

After nearly a year, she finally forced me to leave, saying that if I stayed I would surely die. I did not listen, and returned to the Dreamlands again and again, finding her wherever she went. The last time, all I found was a note, left for me in an enchanted crystal. She told me she could not bear to be the cause of my doom, and had gone into the Lands of Nevermore, to forget herself.

Though she is gone now, she will live forever in my dreams.

Size: as in life (unless using illusion)

Attributes:

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

* These attributes are the same as possessed in life

Ability Level: 5+

Attacks/Damage: None

Special Abilities: Drain mental strength, Immune to physical damage, Cast permanent illusions in the Dreamrealms, Telepathy

Armor: None

Hit Points: 1 per level

THE SILVER LANDS

Excerpt from **The Seven Paths to Knowledge** by Solimorrion I.

...by unknown means. He simply gestured and we were other than where we had been. I looked around, noticing that we were now floating over a roiling, spumescent sea. The angry wind snatched at the water, tossing it about like a child with a disappointing toy.

"Observe." was all my guide said, and as soon as the word was uttered, my vision was drawn to the next challenge taking place. Two sad little boats were caught in the rough sea, their tattered sails quivering wetly. In each boat struggled a passenger.

"Cultural enemies." my guide intoned by way of explanation.

As I watched, the nature of the challenge became readily apparent. Neither boat alone was going to be enough to survive these furious waters, but if the two worked together they might make it. Sure enough, once they saw each other they exchanged a few wordless

Adventure Ideas

The Search for Xanadas: The Xanadasian savants have sent the players on an odyssey through the upper planes to locate their missing mentor. It is believed that he resides in one of the realities of the Silver Lands. The player characters will have to overcome numerous challenges before they are allowed access, and once there they must deal with whatever has kept the ancient sage away from Talislanta for so long. Is he held against his will, or has he forgotten about his promise to return? Does he even want to return at this time?

Substitute Guardian Angels: The player characters come across a wounded Paramane, Ra'leia. She explains that she was struck down while performing her duties as a guardian, and will require weeks to recover. She does not know what attacked her. Her charge, a mandalan savant, is now making his way to the Silver Lands. Ra'leia requests that the player characters follow and protect the mandalan in her stead. What attacked Ra'leia? Why is the mandalan going to the Silver Lands now? What danger threatens him that requires such protection?

shouts and paddled together. However, when they got close enough to see one another clearly, both drew back in alarm, the woman drawing a dagger and the man readying a spell...[excerpt ends]

THE NATURE OF THE REALM

The uppermost regions of the Astral Plane, far from even the "upper planes" of Primus, are referred to as the Silver Lands, or the Silver Sphere, or simply Nirvana as it is known to the Mandalans. It is a place of peaceful contemplation, of self-purification, and of testing.

Here the spirits known as Paramanes forge the metal of their selves into an even purer form, divesting themselves of any remaining trace of mortal impurities left over from their former lives. They seek greater enlightenment and eventual acceptance to the higher planes through the performance of worthy deeds - protecting and guiding lost travelers, acting as a guardian angel to those who serve a higher purpose, and testing, teaching, and challenging those mortal petitioners who would seek enlightenment among the higher realms.

The traveler in the Silver Lands can never know what to expect, for the very terrain changes each time one passes through it. One time the traveler might pole down a slow-moving river, passing moral quandries along the way. Another time it could be a wind-swept tundra with various villages at war with one another. Another time it could be a dense forest, or a vast mountain range, or a chain of islands on the Aetheric Sea.

Regardless of the terrain, the traveler is always faced with challenges. These challenges are of the spiritual rather than physical variety, posing moral dilemmas or demonstrating universal truths about right and wrong. The Paramanes create these tests, which are intended not only to challenge but to teach. These tests are tailored to fit the individuals, to shed light on their past choices and to force them to question their own assumptions.

Excerpt from **The Seven Paths to Knowledge** by Solimorrion I.

...land was unkind, meager with both food and water. The man and woman were wary of one

another still, having no common language and each having nothing but their racism and bigotry on which to judge the other. Despite this, however, each shared what little sustenance they found, and after a few weeks had learned a few words of the other's tongue.

Observing their failing health, I worriedly asked "How long will this one challenge go on?" "That is up to them." was his enigmatic reply.[excerpt ends]

DENIZENS OF THE SILVER LANDS

The worlds of the Silver Lands are as varied as those of Primus, and virtually any creature or civilization can be found there. These are the fluid realities created by the Paramanes for the purposes of testing. Unlike the worlds of Primus, however, these tend to be simple worlds, sometimes only a few miles across, with two-dimensional cultures intentionally set up to act out morality plays for the purpose of challenges. The size, depth, and level of detail are all determined by the Paramane in charge.

Excerpt from **The Book of Mysteries** by Hotan.

...so it would appear that the Paramanes, while considered lesser spirit entities elsewhere, are granted nearly divine powers of Creation in the Silver Sphere. I do not believe these are inherent abilities, but rather powers that come with their assigned role.

In addition to the Paramanes themselves, a traveler here may encounter other explorers from Primus. Those that come to the Silver Lands are often pilgrims seeking enlightenment, knowledge, or to gain access to the Golden Towers that lie beyond the Silver Lands. They are usually well-intentioned (at least by their own definitions), but it is not unknown for some to come with malicious intent.[excerpt ends]

THE GOLDEN TOWERS

Excerpt from **The Ariane Chronicles**, by Hotan

As I traveled northward through the Silver Lands, the nature of the realm gradually underwent a most peculiar shift. Nights become less dark, and shorter. Day by day the light changed, becoming less a phenomenon of the sun overhead and more a feature of the land itself. When at last there was no more night, no more shadows, and all around me was a peaceful golden light, I knew I had arrived.[excerpt ends]

A great cyclopean city, perhaps the greatest city in all the Omniverse, the Golden Towers stretch out seemingly to infinity. Referred to as the Golden Sphere in some ancient texts, this region is also known as the Golden Towers, the Eternal Citadel, or as the City Atop the World. Here the immense towers glitter in eternal daylight, and their pearlescent gates are formed of transcendent glory.

A soft golden light comes from everywhere, directionless, casting no shadows. Sparkling causeways of amber arch over the crystal boulevards far below. Sculptures of light decorate the plazas, and gardens with plants from across the Omniverse decorate the parks. Yet despite the grand majesty, the vast spaces of the Golden Towers are largely unoccupied. It is one of the great mysteries of the Omniverse.

NATURE OF THE REALM

Every event, from the rise of kingdoms to the fall of a leaf, is recorded somewhere. Every child's cry, every foul deed, every noble speech, all are preserved for eternity. Nothing is ever truly forgotten. This is the purpose of the Golden Sphere, the preservation of all history, from the first act of Creation to the final darkness.

Here the Paramanes known as the Illuminus, or simply the Watchers, manually record every event in the Omniverse. Just as the Eternal Citadel is seemingly infinite, so too are the Illuminus themselves. The Eternal Records, also called the Memory of Creation (or Notebook of the Gods, according to one Zandir wit) store the tomes and scrolls of the Illuminus for all eternity.

Adventure Ideas

Quest for the Absolom: A rare plant, the Absolom, is said to only grow in the Gardens of Serenity. According to legend, the one who consumes its bloom will be absolved of all crimes, the slate wiped clean, the soul made pure.

The Record of Lost Days: Everything that has ever happened is recorded by the Watchers in their Scriptorium. Although few outsiders have ever successfully entered and asked a question of the Watchers, Seraphs come and go from the Scriptorium freely. Most remember their former lives, and bringing a loved one or making an offer of service to a close friend or family member might tempt them to memorize a small fragment of knowledge that they can repeat once the characters have performed the promised service.

The Fountain of Silver Fire: At the Gateless Barrier, on the very edge of The Radiance, legend speaks of a fountain that is periodically alight with brilliant, liquid, silver fire. If captured in a vessel of amberglass and then consumed it is said to induce true visions of the future.

city. Seraphs are the most human-like of all, often acting much as they did in their previous life.

Excerpt from **A Sorcerer's Guide**, by the mad mage Sechi

An individual who travels to the Golden Sphere may be able to locate the amber castle of the Illuminus, and may even be able to get past the giant Golden Paramanes who serve as Guardians of the Eternal Records. Once inside, an individual could conceivably discover which of the Thousand Golden Halls leads to the Scriptorium, where the Illuminus reside. Those fortunate enough to have come this far may ask a single question and receive an answer, for the fact that they continue to exist after violating the Illuminus' Sanctum is proof that they are indeed among the most worthy of individuals.[excerpt ends]

PLACES OF NOTE

DENIZENS OF THE GOLDEN TOWERS

All of the residents of the City Atop the World are Paramanes, spirits who seek to purify themselves through service and one day ascend to the ranks of the Archons and serve the Creator directly. While these spirits are universally good of intent and purpose, they are also unique individuals, and they are not perfect, though such is their goal.

First among these are the Illuminus, also called the Watchers. Dressed in robes of golden cloth, their hooded faces are a hazy nimbus of amber light within which can be seen the vague outlines of their mortal features.

Next are the Guardians, winged Paramanes who resemble golden-skinned giants over twenty feet in height. Each is attired in golden armor and weapons in the style they wore in life. Though girded in the accoutrements of war, their features are calm and placid, and their eyes radiate an inner peace. The Guardians serve as sentinels, protecting the Eternal Citadel from access by unauthorized entities.

Finally there are the messengers, the Seraphs, benign spirits who most often appear as winged mortals in flowing yellow robes of a silk-like material. They can be seen throughout the Golden Towers, delivering materials, blank pages, and messages from one Watcher to another, and maintaining the

Lucent Harbor: Along the southern coast of the Eternal Citadel is a once-thriving harbor. Facing out across the Sea of Tranquility, the harbor is as beautiful as the rest of the realm, yet the hundred docks lie largely unused. The denizens of the city do not require trade. The existence of Lucent Harbor suggests that the City Atop the World was a thriving center of civilization and trade in an earlier age.

Sea of Tranquility: South of the Golden Towers, the Sea of Tranquility is ablaze with sparkling olive-hued light. The green waters shimmer, and some say that if one stares into the depths long enough, visions of the future begin to manifest.

Blue Cliffs: Overlooking Lucent Harbor, the Blue Cliffs rise three thousand feet into the air. The stone is veined with aquamarine, which gives the cliffside its cerulean appearance. The face of the cliff is carved with an ancient stairway called the Azure Walk, which shows the wear of untold feet long ago.

The Gateless Barrier: The two northernmost towers watch over the last outpost of the Golden Sphere. At the base of the towers stand two titanic monoliths in the shape of golden archons. The space between them appears to be some sort of radiant liquid, like a pool of shining light turned on its side. The only entities that have ever entered or emerged are Archons, intent upon their own concerns. Beyond the

Gateless Barrier is the Radiance, home of the Creator.

Gardens of Serenity: At the center of the Golden Towers is a garden where the Illuminus go to take their ease, resting from their labors in the Scriptorium. The Gardens of Serenity are barred to all others, watched over by ever-vigilant golden Guardians.

The Thousand Halls: A term used to refer to the possibly infinite chambers, galleries, and rotundas that fill the towers of the Eternal Citadel. It is said that one of these halls leads to the Scriptorium, where the Illuminus scribe their tomes.

The Scriptorium: A vast lyceum, the Scriptorium is a multi-dimensional space that enfolds all of the Omniverse within its walls, allowing the Illuminus to perceive everything that happens. Here the Watchers sit on massive golden podiums and record everything for the Eternal Records.

The Amber Castle: The home of the Eternal Records, and protected by a hundred of the most potent Guardians in the Golden Sphere, the Amber Castle sits atop the Blue Cliffs. From its parapets the defenders can see for miles across the towers and halls of the Eternal Citadel.

THE RADIANCE

Excerpt from **The Omnival**, holy book of the Aamanians

...and lo, the seventh door was opened, and there revealed was Aa the Omniscient, Aa the Omnipotent, creator of the world, the radiance from which all others draw light...[excerpt ends]

Excerpt from Song of the Mother, of the Gnomekin

...And so Terra decided to have a family. First she gave birth to the mountains and the valleys, and She loved them and cherished them as they grew. Seasons passed and turned into years, then turned into history. But Terra saw that her land was empty and unchanging so gave birth to the animals and the plants, which she loved and nurtured, crying over their hurts and rejoicing in their freedom. Again, seasons turned and Terra wanted to enlarge her family, and so she gave birth to the Gnomekin, to be the tenders and caregivers of all that had gone before...[excerpt ends]

Excerpt from **The Book of Blood**, holy book of the Kang

...Zoriah and the reptile Beast did clash then, blade against claw, a struggle of titans that burned the land and shook the heavens. For days the battle raged in glory, and blood filled the seas. In the end, Zoriah stood alone upon the crimson field of valor, the vanquished Beast at his feet.

When His gaze fell, he saw where his blood had spilled there rose a people, who are the Kang, and they looked up at him in fear and respect for what he had done.

"Give us food" they cried, their eyes upon the Beast. Zoriah spat upon those, and said "You who are of my blood, cry out like babes at suck? Fight, spawn, and take what you will from the world. Those with glory and honor may come to stand at my side..."[excerpt ends]

Excerpt from **The Book of Borean**, holy book of the Mirin

...but the Mirin did not heed the signs from Borean, holy father of all, and were cast out from the sky. "Dwell upon the ground now, my children. Struggle against these challenges, and one day you will rise upon my breath again." [excerpt ends]

No one knows what lies beyond the Radiance. Most religions agree that it is here that the Creator resides, guiding the Omniverse through his avatars, the Archons. Each religion, however, describes the Creator in different, mutually exclusive ways.

In Talislanta, the Creator is worshipped by the Mogroth, Gryphs, Aeriads, Sindarans, Sunra, Cymrilians, Sawila, Jaka, and many others. Other religions believe the world and their people were created by other deities, though the diplomatic agree that this could be a matter of semantics. Some even go so far as to suppose that the Creator takes different forms and attitudes for each culture, though this is regarded as heresy by most.

Further confusing the issue is the Crystal Sphere, home of the reigning gods and set in the borders of the dreamscape. Some point to this as evidence that these deities came into existence after the mortal minds that believe in them, and only the Creator is a true God. Clerics and priests offer a variety of heated arguments, pointing out that their deity is the creator.

THE UNDERWORLD

Excerpt from **Talking To My Shadow** by the Mad Philosopher Hasheen.

My shadow started talking to me on the night of the ghost moon. I ignored it for as long as I could, presuming it to be a figment of the k'talla, but it was persistent, and soon I found myself replying. My shadow offered to tell me about the land of the dead. The study of the realm beyond the black river had been my lifelong obsession, and it was the reason I had begun partaking of the mystical vision-inducing drug k'talla. On several occasions I had said I would give my soul to know all about the Underworld. It appears something was listening...[excerpt ends]

THE NATURE OF THE REALM

The Land of the Dead. The Shadowlands. The Underworld. This is the realm of Death; a stygian world of darkness and eerie gloom. In place of a sky there is a yawning, abyssal cavern roof that appears to stretch into infinity. The ever-present winds moan across the landscape, and whisps of fog skirt the edges of vision like furtive ghosts.

The Underworld is comprised of the collective graveyards, blood-soaked battlefields, tombs, and mausoleums of every world. Any land that is "given over to the dead" becomes part of the vast, grey landscape in much the same manner as those possessions buried with the dead are translated over to the spirit world.

Throughout the Underworld are the infinite branches of the Shadowriver, a slow-moving body of black water. Sounds echo strangely upon these fog-shrouded waters, often distorting voices into hollow, mournful mockeries of themselves. The Shadowriver has tributaries that reach to every world of Primus, and it is by these aetheric waterways that most souls reach the Underworld.

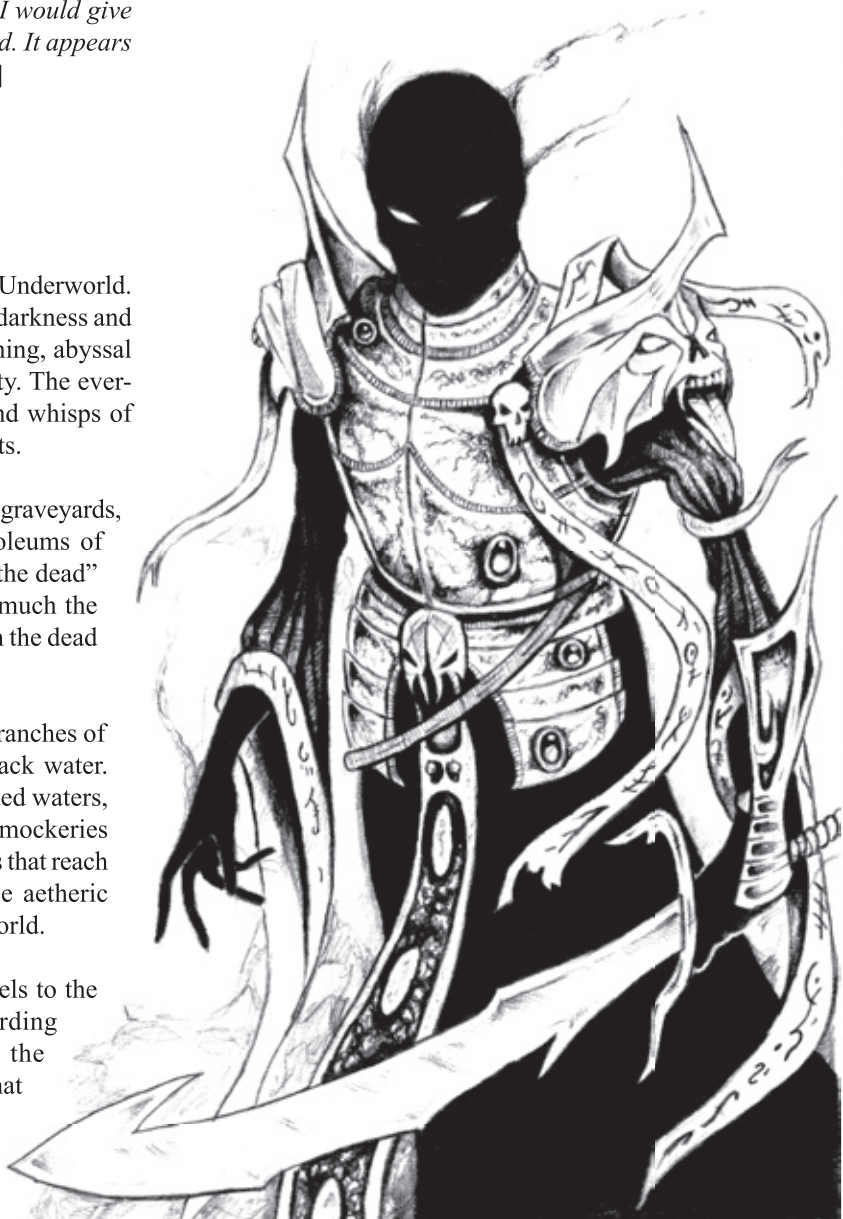
When a mortal dies on Primus, the soul travels to the Underworld. Those that were buried according to their cultural rituals find their way to the Underworld relatively easily, while those that died without such preparation have a rougher time, often caught by reapers, soul-traders, or astral predators.

DENIZENS OF THE UNDERWORLD

Excerpt from **Talking To My Shadow** by the Mad Philosopher Hasheen.

My shadow spoke to me again tonight. It told me about those dark things that dwell in the land of the dead. Things that move like the living, but do not live. Creatures that deal in mortal souls like merchants haggling over coin, anguished souls, hungry corpses that walk like men, and nightmares given flesh.

I think I am going mad.[excerpt ends]



By far the most common inhabitant of the Underworld are the shadowfolk - the Ebonites, shadowwights, wraiths, and disembodied spirits who comprise the vast citizenry of Death's realm. In the city of Ebon and elsewhere, the shadowfolk "live their lives" so to speak, as they did before they died. They come in as many types as do mortals, including traders, scholars, laborers, and craftsmen.

There are two types of currency among the shadowfolk. Soulmarks are dark grey coins of seemingly infinite variety. They come from the coins that are buried with the dead on the worlds of Primus. Soulmarks are paid by the spirits of the dead to the Ferryman in exchange for swift and relatively safe passage over the Shadowriver. The other currency is more rare and precious; the soulstone. Soulstones are each hand-crafted from a black diamond and imbued with a mortal soul. In the Underworld, Death allows some of his loyal Shadowizards to take one soul each year for this purpose, though Reapers and other denizens of the lower planes take far more than this.

Among shadowfolk society, there is a social stigma based on the nature of one's afterlife. At the bottom rung of the social ladder are the shadowwights. Cursed by Death to exist as cold, nonmaterial shadows, shadowwights are generally outcasts in the Underworld. Of slightly better status are wraiths - shadowwights who became so when their physical body was slain by a shadowwight. Among the shadowfolk, wraiths are often shunned or used for manual labor.

Above the shadowwights and wraiths are the disembodied spirits, souls who simply refuse to pass on to their destiny. Because they are not dismayed by light, they can occasionally gain favor by performing services in the Lands of the Quick (the phrase used to describe the living worlds). Disembodied spirits must be forever on guard against astral predators, soul-traders, and the like, as well as Necromanes and other direct servants of Death who would force the spirit to face Destiny.

At the top of shadowfolk society are the Ebonites, who also comprise the majority. These are the souls who were specifically chosen by Death to become what they are instead of continuing on to their next incarnation. Great infamy or acts of heroism, no one can say what might draw Death's attention. Some petition Death for this state, while others offer their services to Death in exchange for the life of a loved one. However they became what they are, Ebonites are the dominant form in the Underworld.

Some shadowfolk serve as Death's Hands. They comprise

the armies of Death, those who patrol the Shadowriver and its byways to protect the souls of the dead on their journeys, marshal against invasions, demonic or otherwise, into the Underworld, or seek out Reapers and other soul-stealers for justice.

Some Ebonites take to the Shadowriver and serve Fate, the avatar of Destiny. These are the Ferryman, who pilot barges and rafts up and down the dark waters, assisting souls on their way. Some ferryman treat this as a moneymaking opportunity, charging each soul as much as they can. The souls who received a ceremony upon death will have coins, weapons, or at the very least some cloth wrappings with which to trade. Even the most altruistic ferryman will require two coins, "soulmarks", the bare minimum payment by the decree of Fate.

Those shadowfolk who rebel against Death's will are called Reapers. These are those dark entities that steal souls, interfere with the flow of spirits to the Underworld, and harbor or assist fugitives from Death. Among the Reapers are pirates on the rivers of death, capturing souls on their journey to the Underworld, soul-stealing murderers on Primus, even tradesmen who offer dark services in exchange for the soul of the mortal bargainer.

The final category of denizens of the Underworld are collectively known as Haunts. Mad spirits, mindless shadowwraiths, ghastrs, necrophages, and even animals who have become shadowforms (such as shadowcats, darkhounds, shadowmanes, and more) all inhabit the regions of the Underworld called the Haunted Lands, beyond the borders of civilization. These creatures exist outside of Death's plan, coming to the Underworld in response to their own unknowable urges.

Excerpt from **Talking To My Shadow** by the Mad Philosopher Hasheen.

My shadow whispers to me all the time now. I keep candles and lamps lit all around me at night to drive the shadows back, but when I fall asleep, I awaken to darkness and again hear its words.

It told me tonight of the origin of Ghastrs, where they came from, why they exist. As I write these words on this parchment, I can hear its voice again, and I know I am losing my mind. The shadowy world of Victaria, near the Underworld to begin with, lost to cataclysm, the souls of the dying, screaming... their souls torn from them, but not dead. No, not dead. Their anguished

Adventure Ideas

Roots of the Family Tree: One of the player characters' great-grandfather contacts him/her from the land of the dead. This ancestor, a disembodied spirit who has resided in Ebon for a century as a chronicler, has made it his hobby to keep an eye on his descendants. He demands filial duty from the player character, to set aright a series of wrongs that have been committed against himself and his family. This includes avenging his own murder.

Salvage Yard of the Gods: A Phantasian hires the player characters to accompany him to a distant land and recover as much salvage as possible from an ancient battlefield. The Phantasian believes that arcanomantic battle-wagons, clockwork dragons, and other titanic weapons of war lie scattered on this forgotten battlefield. What he doesn't reveal is that their destination is the Underworld, and this battlefield became part of the land of the dead long ago, when its blood-soaked fields were abandoned by the living. Now it is the home of dead haunts, and the ancient weapons of war have themselves acquired a preternatural hunger for destruction.

One Final Service: One of the player characters' begins having dreams of how one of his departed friends or loved ones (or perhaps a deceased player character) has been captured by Reavers, who will soon foully bind the soul into a soulstone. The only way to avoid this are to travel to the Underworld and either free the captive soul or pay a high ransom. In return, the soul can either go on to its final reward, or perhaps return to Earth as a disembodied spirit or perhaps even an Ebonite.

pleas for mercy giving rise to nightmares, echoes of nightmares, ghosts imbued with a lust for, a facination with, an affinity for death. The mortal souls, trapped in their own nightmares given flesh, mad, craving death... death, the release...[excerpt ends]

These are the last words written by Hasheen before his death by suicide.

PLACES OF DARKNESS

Ebon: The principle city of the Underworld, known as the City of Shadows. It straddles the delta of the Shadowriver where it meets the Sea of Lost Souls. Said to be as old as the Underworld itself, Ebon is a place as dark and cold as the grave, its ancient stone structures worn and pitted with

age. Yet despite appearances, the city is an important center of trade, and is frequented by merchants from across the lower planes. Few outsiders stay for long, however, as the place exudes an aura of sadness, decay, and death.

Within the black-stoned walls of Ebon dwell more than half of the shadowfolk of the Underworld. Here craftsmen create new shadow-items from the raw materials brought in by the Ferrymen and those mortal souls who managed to reach Ebon with their deathly possessions intact.

The government of Ebon is ruled by a council of thirteen shadowizards of great power, called the Ebon Cabal. The Cabal rules on all matters of the shadowfolk population, sets official policy regarding political or trade relations with other realms, and oversees all that transpires within the city walls.

Note that all the constructions and physical objects in Ebon (and the rest of the Underworld) are solid and real to aetheric beings. While a spirit or Ebonite might pass through most walls on Primus, they must use doors in the Underworld. In other realms, particularly in the lower planes, architects mix grave-dust with their mortar and other building materials, which likeways makes them impervious to aetheric passage.

The Forever Road: West of Ebon lies this ancient causeway, built and maintained by crews of wraiths. The Forever Road winds its way through a silent landscape of desolate hills, shadowed vales, and dry riverbeds. Here souls from across the Omniverse can be seen walking slowly towards the Halls of the Dead.

The Forever Road is patrolled by the Death's Hands, sworn to protect travelers from the haunts and reapers who would prey upon them. The field commander of the Death's Hands, a Necromane, also frequently inspects the conditions of the road and those who tread upon it.

Death's Citadel: The center of the Underworld, this monolithic structure defies the imagination. Vast towers rise into the chasm of the sky, merging with the very roof of the Underworld. Eerie false lights can be seen to flicker up and down the flying buttresses and turrets. The whole castle is surrounded by a moat of black flame which absorbs light, shedding a burning cold that is deadly to both spirit and flesh.

Within the great hall of the Citadel, Death itself holds court over the procession of souls, who then pass on into the Halls of the Dead, which leads to the gateway to the next world.

Omnus: The realm of occult knowledge, this vast library lies somewhere within Death's Citadel. Endless rows of tomes span as far as the eye can see, creating a maddening maze. It is said that everything that has ever been written and then lost to the ages can be found here, though the task of locating any particular work can be the labor of a lifetime.

Omnus is protected from intruders by the Gates of Eternity, nine magical portals through which one may only pass by speaking a single unflinching truth about oneself. Statements such as "I am male" or "I was born the son of Astrimas" do not qualify. A statement such as "I have wasted much of my life in the pursuit of possessions; things that will never fill the empty hole left from the loss of my family" would open one of the Gates, if true. Coming up with nine absolute truths about oneself is a daunting task for all but the most introspective and self-honest individuals. Rumors have circulated for millenia that nine keys exist which allow easy entry to Omnus, though no one has claimed to have seen them.

Omnus is governed by Destiny, also called the *Author of Fate*. Often portrayed as a grey-robed spectre. In one hand he bears a staff, and beneath the other he holds a massive, iron-bound grimoire. Each living being has a page in that book, upon which is written all that will occur in that individual's life, including the exact moment of death.

Some claim that if one succeeds in passing the nine gates, the Author of Fate can be petitioned to impart knowledge of the future, though few dare to learn the secrets of Destiny.

Moonshadow, Dirvengal, and Blackbridge: Outposts of civilization, these towns are smaller and less imposing than ancient Ebon. There is a larger percentage of wraiths and spirits, and even a few shadowwights among the Ebonites here. Those of low caste or otherwise out of favor can find a place here.

SHADOWWRAITH

When a mortal is slain by a shadowwight, with all his or her physical form absorbed, Shadowwraiths, or simply Wraiths, are the result. Visually, Wraiths are almost indistinguishable

from Shadowwights, but since they were not directly cursed by Death itself, lack the aura of doom that most Shadowwights project.

As do all shadowforms, Wraiths have an aversion to sunlight, and sustain damage from any magical illumination. Like a Shadowwight, they can drain a living mortal of corporeality (and thus become corporeal themselves for a time), but do not hunger for it in the same way.

In the Underworld, Wraiths are among the lowest caste, barely tolerated and often used for menial tasks or slave labor. Only the Shadowwights, cursed by Death, are lower.

Size: 6'6" - 7'6", weightless

Attributes: As in life

Ability Level: 1+

Attacks/Damage: Touch - DR 6 + Ability Level (drains substance of similar creatures; lasts ten minutes per hit point; completely drained victims become Wraiths)

Special Abilities: Immune to all weapons while in spectral form, may be slain by silver or magical weapons when corporeal, dismayed by strong light (-5 to all actions), dispersed by magical light (1hp damage per spell level).

Armor: None

Hit Points: As per drained hit points when corporeal, or 1hp per Ability Level when spectral

THE DEMONREALMS

Excerpt from **The Midnight Realm**, by Markans'teph of Xanadas

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.

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, and downwards to the Demonrealms. Here, the entities known as demons break down the essence so that it may pass on into the Void. [excerpt ends]



rushing glaciers are but a sampling of what a traveler can expect.

When dealing with any sizable chunk of land, gravity appears to align with the surface upon which one stands. It is possible to leap from one land to another, however, as this gravity fades quickly, allowing one to drift great distances. Due to the ever-shifting nature of the region, however, an attribute check (either Intelligence or Dexterity, whichever is lower) is required, at a Degree of Difficulty of -5, in order to land at the chosen target.

Earth and rock demons are the most common types encountered here. They drift randomly through the sky, looking like nothing more than a boulder (earth) or small mountain (rock) among thousands of others. When one encounters something solid, it reacts with savagery, tearing it to pieces. Earth demons can sometimes be seen drifting through the sky in numbers ranging from a dozen to uncountable hordes, while rock demons tend to be seen in smaller groups, ranging from single specimens up to a score.

Other types of demons can be found here, including lava, iron, muck, slime, dust, plant, and aqua.

Perhaps the most dangerous and confusing of all the planes, the Demonrealms is a region of pure destruction and chaos. Here the anti-elementals, commonly referred to as demons, rage in an orgy of destruction against everything that passes. Travel here is fraught with peril, for not only must the demons be avoided, the terrain itself is in turmoil. Heaving continents thrust into a poisonous sky, mountains crash, and seas of putrescence give way to swirling firestorms.

Though the Demonrealms are in constant turmoil, there are six regions that seem to be permanent features of the plane.

Landsfall: This region is perhaps one of the most disorienting areas of the Demonrealms, and it is generally the point of entry for those foolish enough to travel here. A black, starless sky exists in all directions, scattered with floating chunks of land that drift or speed past one another. Up and down seem to have no meaning, and the lack of any stable landmark makes it all but impossible to maintain one's orientation.

The lands vary widely in both size and nature. A drifting mountain range could collide with a fragment of a jungle-covered continent, while a river without a bed flows along nearby. Burning forests, hailstorms of shattered rock, and

Demonwind: If the traveler successfully navigates Landsfall, the nature of the sky begins to change. Clouds appear, and distant thunder reverberates across whatever lands remain. Soon the winds begin, black and purple lightning crashes across the sky, and the lands begin to be torn apart by the greatest hurricane in the Omniverse, the Demonwind.

The howling winds make any verbal communication impossible, and visibility is generally reduced to a few feet, if that. Random bits of material, ranging from small rocks, trees, and chunks of ice to boulders the size of a castle, fly through the air faster than arrows, maiming or killing the unprotected traveler.

As if the Demonwind itself was not deadly enough, wind and storm demons patrol this region as well, seeking out anything that is resisting the destruction. Also found here are demons of ice, frost, and lightning, as well as demons of madness and chaos.

Three regions lay below the Demonwind. These are the The Pyre, the Rotting Sea, and the Deadwoods. The traveler who survives passage through Landsfall and the Demonwind will eventually fall into one of these three.

The Pyre: A vast sea of flame, covered by poisonous green and yellow gasses, the Pyre stretches as far as the eye can see in the eastern Demonrealms. Material rains down from the howling Demonwind above while the greedy flames leap as if to catch each bit. The unprotected traveler will be incinerated in seconds (10hp damage per round.)

The heat here is beyond anything that can be imagined, and even magic can only protect the traveler to an extent. Spells and items of protection will take 10hp damage every round, while a Ward against fire will reduce the damage taken to 1hp per round. To make matters worse, any traveler in the Pyre will undoubtedly attract the attention of its denizens; demons of fire, lava, and smoke, who eagerly destroy anything they can find.

At the center of this titanic inferno is a vortex of magma and fire, a swirling gyre that draws everything into its voracious maw. The gyre does not collapse as one descends, however. It becomes a spinning tunnel of intense anti-elemental flame, and if the traveler is extremely well-protected, it is possible to survive the descent as long as the walls are not touched. The gyre extends for an almost limitless distance, right to the edge of the Riven Lands that surround the isolated realm of Oblivion, located far below the Pyre.

The Deadwoods: Between the Pyre to the east and the Rotting Sea in the west lies a vast tumble of black and grey roots stretching out as far as the eye can see. It is as if untold millions of trees were uprooted and set into the ground upside-down. The evil-looking roots reach up from the ground like blackened, skeletal fingers. These are the roots of the Deadwood trees, found throughout the Omniverse.

If the traveler in the Demonrealms digs down, he or she will find that the roots seem to go on forever, forming a maze of black-wooden tunnels. In theory, one could use this route as a way to escape the Demonrealms back to Primus, for these roots must all eventually reach the Deadwood trees there. It is no simple journey, however, as one would have to contend with the Plant Demons that infest this region.

In practice, any descent through the Deadwoods eventually leads down to a vertical tunnel that debouches into an upside-down version of the Deadwoods. The traveler is hanging upside down, clinging to a "roof" of black roots, the distant, barely visible world of Oblivion far below. A few of the longest roots reach down to the Riven Lands surrounding the Lower Gate in the great Barrier Wall around Oblivion.

The Rotting Sea: A churning, noxious ocean of fetid seawater, putrescent effluvia, and corpses, the Rotting Sea is where the corpses of the dead fall in the Demonrealms. Far overhead the rumble of the Demonwinds can be heard, but the air here is still, filled with a steamy mist that seems to coat the throat and lungs with slime.

Any traveler here must make a CON attribute check (difficulty -5) every hour, failure indicating the contraction of a terrible disease (level 15.) If the traveler is actually in the water, make this check every minute. The immediate effects of immersion range from simple nausea to severe poisoning.

In addition to the bodily fluids, bone fragments, any other bits of biomatter, the Rotting Sea is also home to demons of water, mist, slime, and most horrible of all, plague, all eager to turn any traveler into yet another corpse to add to the Sea.

Far in the west, at the very edges of the Demonrealms, is the Scourge Falls. Here the Rotting Sea ends, spilling over into the final abyss. The water disperses as it descends, turning into a fine mist, revealing the distant world of Oblivion far, far below.

OBLIVION

Excerpt from **The Black Grimoire**, by Mordante

In the distance a tiny pinprick in reality can be seen. Once noticed, however, it draws the eye like a tongue to a missing tooth, seeming to grow larger the more one stares at it. A hole in the Omniverse, a void from which nothing can escape. The Void, towards which everything must some day go.

Yet despite the irresistible pull of the Void, one visible structure stands athwart the stream of shattered reality. A small flat world, oval in configuration, dominated on one end by a fragment of a once-mighty mountain range. This is Oblivion, traditional place of banishment in the Omniverse. At the top of that mountain is a city of brass, within which are bound the Shaitan. [excerpt ends]

THE NATURE OF THE REALM

Oblivion, referred to in some texts as a separate plane of the Omniverse, is just a small world, hardly larger than most kingdoms of Primus. It exists on the border between the Demonrealms and the Void, held there by the constant efforts of its inhabitants, the Shaitan and their creations, the race of Devilkind.

Demons, who by their very nature are enraged at the indomitable existence of Oblivion, floating there where nothing should exist, are forever assaulting it, falling from the sky to attack again and again. Thus the devils must be eternally vigilant against both the pull of the Void as well as frenzied demonic attacks.

The sky over Oblivion is the most unusual in the Omniverse. There are no sun or stars, no moons. There is only a sky divided down the middle, flaming bright on one side and murky with mist on the other. The dividing line is a thick black field. This is the underside of the Demonrealms, the Pyre, the Rotting Sea, and the Deadwoods between. The sky rotates slowly, alternately shedding light and darkness in a diurnal cycle.

If one looks away from the sky, over the edge of Oblivion, one can see the darkness at the end of reality. The Void sits there, relentless, insatiable, drawing all towards the ultimate



doom. The demons refer to their environs as demonward (up) and doomward (down). This is also the origin of the phrase “caught between demon and doom.”

DENIZENS OF OBLIVION

Oblivion is a realm ruled by strictest hierarchy. Except for Diabolus, the absolute ruler of Oblivion, every inhabitant serves its superiors, and everything except the lowliest servitor imps is served by beings of lesser power and status than itself. Regardless of their power, all devils are bound by the letter of any oath they swear. However, they are only bound by the exact wording of their oath - most take great delight in twisting the meaning and intent of any oath or contract to better suit their meaning.

The minor devils are the lowest ranking beings that inhabit Oblivion. Found both here and in lesser numbers throughout the lower planes and beyond, they are created to be menial servants, crafters, and to perform all manner of lowly but necessary duties. Most are too dim witted to object to such an existence, but the more intelligent varieties are filled with a hatred for all superior beings and attempt to twist their orders in such a way that allows them to do as little work as possible.

Above them are the lesser devils like the bottle imps and gargoyles. Most are relatively intelligent and are cunning, if devious servants who work as advisors, scribes, messengers, as well as the lower grades of guards and mercenaries. Many are literate and a few know the rudiments of magic. Any who excel at their duties are given minor devils as servants and targets of abuse.

While both minor and lesser devils are smaller than most members of the archaic races, greater devils are almost always considerably larger. They are all highly intelligent, frightfully strong, and all are skilled at magic. These are the spies, diplomats, personal bodyguards, and warriors of Oblivion. Any of these beings is well more than a match for any but the most highly skilled and magically talented archaic wizard. Many command dozens or hundreds of lower-ranking devils.

The highest-ranking devils are the powerful and proud arch-devils, mighty beings who are second only to the god-like Shaitan in power. As both the personal servants and the avatars of the Shaitan they serve, arch-devils often wield considerable power and many control large palaces with staffs of hundreds of servants. Despite their great power, they are also the Shaitans' most closely bound servants.

Adventure Ideas

For Services Rendered: A crafty and powerful group of mortals could possibly visit Oblivion and earn a position there by assisting one of the arch-devils in some way (although they better carefully consider any contract or oath they agree to). Although the Shaitan never entertain visitors, arch-devils are always seeking an opportunity to gain advantage over one another or attempt, in some small way, to reduce the hold the Shaitan have over them.

A Small Chip of Stone: Even a small fragment of the unholy obsidian used in the making of the towers of the Shaitan is said to hold great power. Among other uses it will allow mortals to become immortal beings like the dread Black Savants. Many wizards will pay almost any price for even a piece the size of a grape. The problem is acquiring one. Fortunately, many Shaitan enjoy having mortals and other beings rarely found on the lower planes as servants and playthings. The problem is then finding a way to leave this tower.

As the avatars of the Shaitan, they are burdened by the fact that the Shaitan that created them can use any of their senses any time they choose, allowing the Shaitan to spy on their every activity and directly experience the rest of the Omniverse.

The arch-devils must bow down before the Shaitan, but most do so out of fear and not respect or loyalty. Although legend says there were originally thirteen Shaitan, only twelve remain. These mighty beings isolate themselves from the masses of Oblivion, preferring to dwell in isolated splendor, served only by their most trusted arch-devils and one or two dozen other servants. They issue order to the rest of Oblivion through their arch-devils.

Diabolus is the leader of the Shaitan and the absolute ruler of Oblivion. Legends say that Diabolus and the thirteen original Shaitan once dwelled among the higher planes as the companions of the gods, but that they were cast out by the gods for their devious and scheming ways. They were consigned to Oblivion, bound by unbreakable oaths from ever leaving this small and isolated realm.

Under the cunning leadership of Diabolus, the Shaitan soon found a way to circumvent the terms of this oath. Although the oath prohibited them from ever leaving Oblivion, it did not restrict them from sending others in their stead. To maintain their influence in the rest of the Omniverse, the

Shaitan created the many species of devils to serve as their avatars, surrogates, and slaves. So, while devils are a common sight in the lower realms and are not infrequently summoned by daring or foolish magicians, Shaitan remain forever trapped within the confines of Oblivion.

PLACES OF NOTE

The land of Oblivion is divided into nine kingdoms, each ruled by an arch-devil (avatars of the greatest Shaitan.) At one time there were thirteen, but the politics of this land occasionally lead to one arch-devil absorbing the lands and power of another.

The Barrier Wall: Oblivion is surrounded on all sides by the Barrier Wall, an immense stone and brass structure that stands many thousand feet in height and is guarded by diabolic sentries. Two pairs of great iron and brass portals, called the Ebon Gates, allow passage 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 extends around the Lower Gates and that leads directly to the difficult and deadly paths to the Demonrealms of the Pyre and the Deadwood. In the Riven Lands, near the gates to Oblivion, vast armies of devils wage an endless war against mindless hordes of demons who seek to invade and conquer this realm.

The Towers of the Shaitan: Standing only slightly less high than the Barrier Wall, these thirteen huge edifices are all at least 1,000 yards tall. The tower of Diabolus stands at the exact center of Oblivion, while the remaining twelve towers are scattered around the land. The broken stump of the thirteenth tower stands as a mute testament to the terrible retribution to its owner's ancient betrayal. From the outside, each tower is a narrow and almost featureless obsidian rectangle inlaid with huge brass glyphs from some unknown language. However, the interiors are lavishly luxuriant, filled with all manner of luxuries and diversions for the twisted tastes of the Shaitan.

The Castles of the Arch-Devils: Although far less tall and elegant than the stark towers of the Shaitan, these castles are huge structures, the largest covers several square miles. Filled with seemingly endless passageways and tens of thousands of rooms, the smallest of these massive fortresses are 20 stories tall and extend an additional 10 stories

underground. However, many of these rooms are either empty or sparsely decorated for furnishing that the arch-devils living there may never see.

All nine castles are relatively similar in overall design. They are looming and terrible structures made from equal mixtures of polished brass and black basalt and are lavishly decorated with images of torment and suffering. Visitors who have returned from these castles often wonder if the arch-devils build such massive structures for no reason except a desire to conceal the fact that they are as much the slaves of the Shaitan as the most pathetic servitor imp.

The Devil Warrens: The devils' love of hierarchy and order extends even to the construction of their slums. The masses of minor devils and lesser devils who make up the majority of Oblivion's population and toil endlessly in its mines, soul forges, and ironworks live in the vast devil warrens that encircle each of the castles of the arch-devils. These lowly devils dwell in nearly identical cubical dwellings that are all cast of solid brass. These dwellings are all built on identical charcoal grey stone streets. The design of all of these dwellings are brutally simple - devils are grouped by type and size and all dwelling for the same type of devil are externally identical.

THE VOID

The end of every phrase

The quiet after noise

The night at the end of all our days

The darkness that destroys

- Quote from **The Darkness That Destroys**, by Zamphir the Zandir minstrel

The Void is the dark hole at the end of the Omniverse. An all-consuming blackness through which everything eventually passes. Within the darkness there is no matter, no energy, no life.

When things have passed their time on Primus, they appear to die, or decay, or simply be worn away in the process of entropy. This is the effect of mortal perception. What is happening is these things are being drawn out of Primus, to drift into the Demonrealms where it is broken down, and then on to the Void where it is consumed.

Minds and souls do not pass into the Void, as a rule. When

THE VOID IN MODERN CULTURE

A source of fear and dread to most Talislantans, the Void is represented in tragedies and dark tales, either as a shadowed corner of the stage or a black object which the actors completely ignore, such as an onyx wineglass or a black coat on a hanger. In this way the authors and playwrights convey a subtle note of eventual doom. "Skip the void" is a common phrase among entertainers, meaning to perform well and pay no attention to the symbolic darkness.

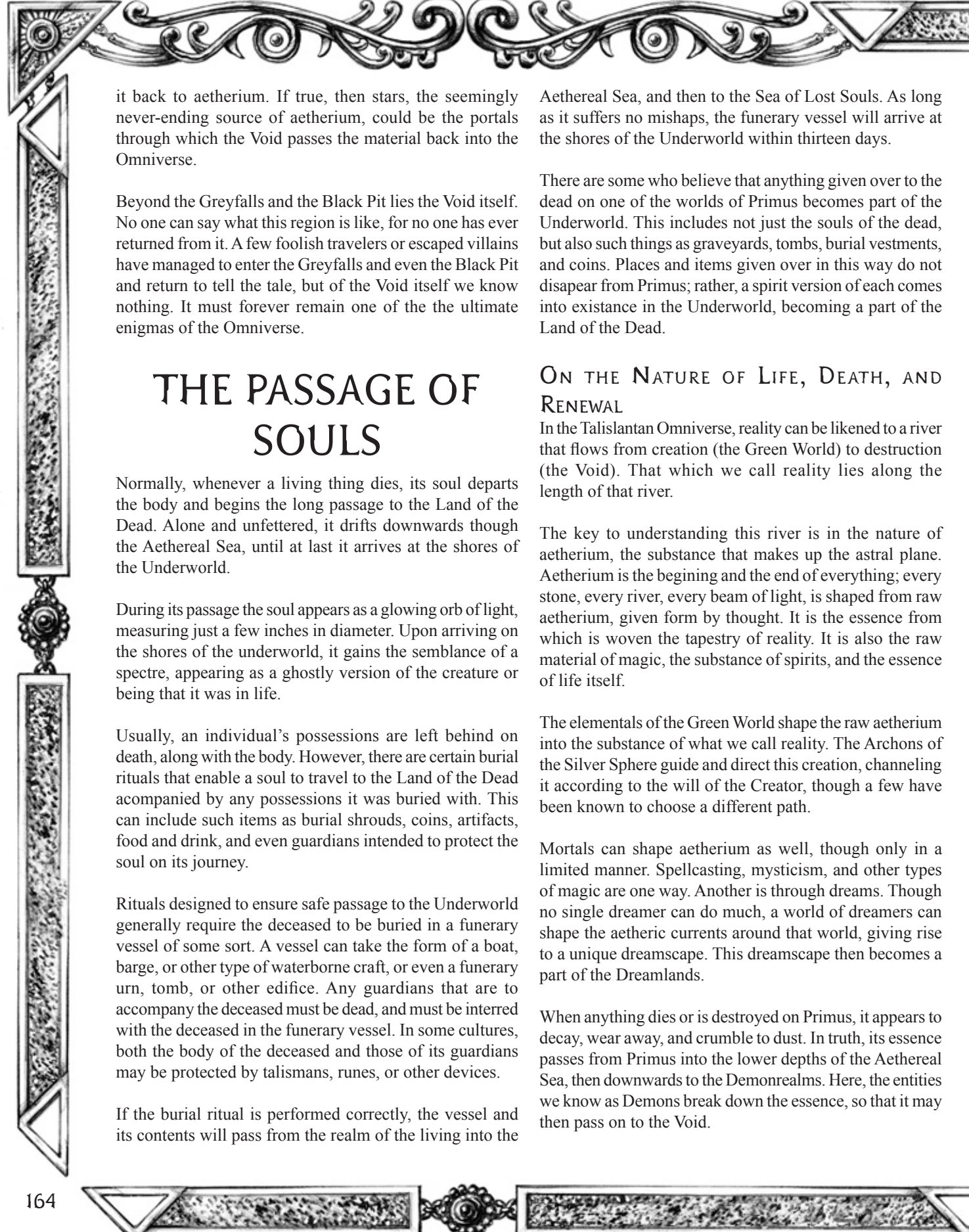
As a mortal dies, the soul (the life essence) drifts down the Dark Waters to the Underworld. The mind (the thoughts and memories) drifts into the Dreamrealm and to the Crystal Sphere for whatever heavenly reward or damnation their belief promises. The physical body is all that passes on to the Void.

As one drifts into the Void, three distinct layers are passed. The first is called the Greyfalls, a realm of fog and smoke, dust and sand. There is no sense of up or down, no sense of movement. Time itself comes to a halt in the Greyfalls. Dwelling here amid the dregs of the Omniverse are Void Demons, creatures that seek out whatever fragments of reality have escaped their bretheren in the Demonrealms. It is a matter of some dispute among philosophers of metaphysics whether these are true demons or rather manifestations of the Void.

Deeper, past the Greyfalls, lies the utter darkness of the Black Pit. Here is the final dissolution of all that has ever existed. All the matter and energy that was created in the Green World, existed in Primus, and was shattered in the Demonrealms comes here to be dissolved into nothingness. A traveler here, assuming he or she still lives, will find it intensely cold and difficult to think (-5 to all rolls.) Flames will not burn, and even magical light is reduced to one-fifth its normal brightness. All forms of energy are quelled, even magic (divide the spell level by five, round down.)

Within this undisturbed blackness, things move. They swarm and writhe in mindless motion. These are the Void Monsters, personifications of the final doom. They have no physical form here, though appear as a mass of writhing tentacles if they appear on other planes. These entities act as the final agents of entropy, annihilating the particulate matter that rains down from the Greyfalls above.

Some philosophers have suggested that perhaps the void monsters actually unmake that which they annihilate, turning



it back to aetherium. If true, then stars, the seemingly never-ending source of aetherium, could be the portals through which the Void passes the material back into the Omniverse.

Beyond the Greyfalls and the Black Pit lies the Void itself. No one can say what this region is like, for no one has ever returned from it. A few foolish travelers or escaped villains have managed to enter the Greyfalls and even the Black Pit and return to tell the tale, but of the Void itself we know nothing. It must forever remain one of the ultimate enigmas of the Omniverse.

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 though 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 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.

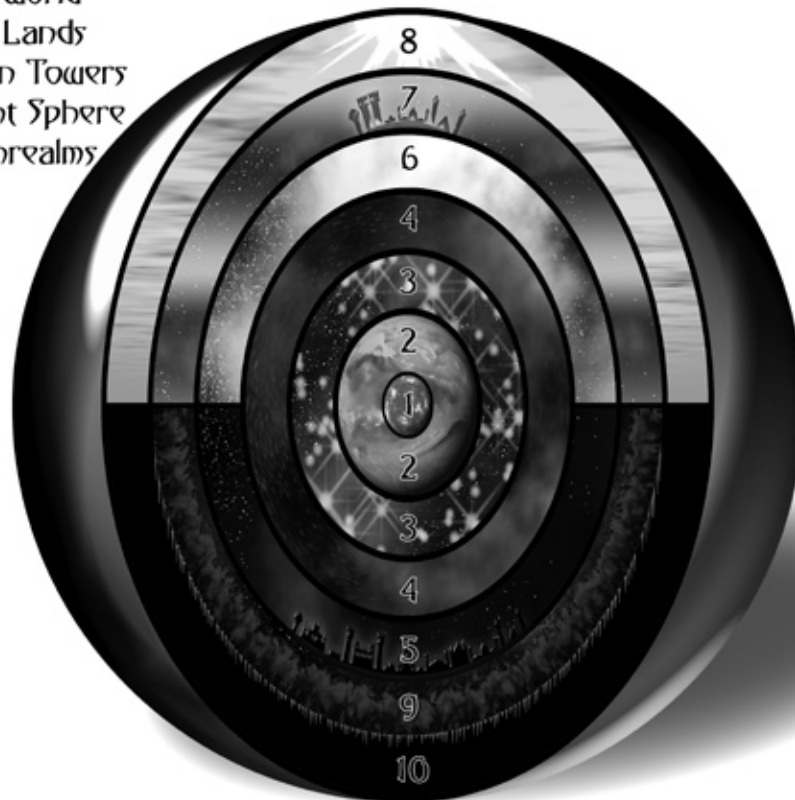
The elementals of the Green World shape the raw aetherium into the substance of what we call reality. The Archons of the Silver Sphere guide and direct this creation, channeling it according to the will of the Creator, though a few have been known to choose a different path.

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.

1. The Green World
2. Primus
3. The Dream Realms
4. Astral Plane
5. The Underworld
6. The Silver Lands
7. The Golden Towers
8. The Radiant Sphere
9. The Demonrealms
10. The Void



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