## Kitántla'al

## "The One That Will Be Directed(?)"

Kitántla'al is of an unknown substance and the essence of Hnálla. The deeper nature of this great demon has eluded scolars at least partly because it is impossible, not to say undesirable, to summon it to any plane other than its own. This is due to both its nature as a supremely disinterested, enigmatic and inscrutable being, its vast size, and to its incompatibility with the processes of life itself. in the "Tale of long wanderings" there is an account of a party of Stability priests and their entourage who became lost between the worlds and who, by various accidents and encounters with other demonic races, were brought within site of this most massive of the servants of the gods.

The unknown author of the tale reported that "A portal was opened in the wall and we beheld what the navigator said was a restricted view of the body of the great demon. It seemed to us to be like a great coral, of the sort sold in markets of many sea ports. Its colour was pink fading to white with complex whorls and curlicues which traced their way along the uncountable branching and re-branchings of its infinite divisions. We were told that no entity other than the mighty and eternal Gods could exist on a plane where Kitántla'al dwelt and that the image was the result of magical viewing.

"After explaining this, the navigator caused the view to change so that it appeared to us that we stood now many times closer to the awesome servant of Stability and we could make out tiny golden shapes moving this way and that among the branches. Our guides called these the \*Ch'tk'tk\*, in imitation of the sounds they make, and said that they were the size of a small Sró. Through lengthy negotiations and bartering we obtained from the captain of our vessel the means by which these servant demons of Kitántla'al could be summoned and compelled to perform their particular functions. Although we bought this information in return for an arduous and cruel task in the mines wherein they had found us, yet we judged ourselves blessed when once again we found ourselves in the Emperor's Library in Tumissa, where our sorry tale had begun so long before."

What the task was in the mines is unknown as it is one of three sequences within his story – along with the identity of himself and his companions – that the author never revealed. It is likely from the context, however, that the Emperor mentioned was Dharumesh Mss I, who reigned from 1501 to 1543 A.P. and that the author was a senior official of the library.

Although Kitántla'al can not be summoned physically into our world, its breath can, bringing with it the power of CESSATION. Those who would do so should be of no less than the 15th circle, and aided by a number of priest of no less than 9th, and with a total number of not less than three.

Each participant must be clothed as if for the coldest of weather on the highest mountain peak in the uttermost north of the world. No patch of skin must be exposed to the coming of this mighty being's breath. All must also be blindfolded and, despite the difficulty it creates, ears must also be protected from the bite of frost. No known magic will protect against the coldness in the demon's breath, the only hope is to be found in the brevity with with the mighty one carries out its work.

The summoning consists of a chant. Each participant in the ritual takes turns in singing one each line at a time, so that the words circle the space into which the Breath of Kitántla'al is to be drawn. The chant is long and requires a complex pattern of notes which will almost certainly

require female voices as well as male, although castrato will of course suffice. The song should be begun at midnight and must completed before daybreak, thus it is not possible to summon Kitántla'al in high summer. [Note: the song itself appears to be lost, but its length may be judged by this limitation]. Any mistake at this point risks removal to the demon's home plane for all, the risk increasing as the chant continues.

It will be seen that each line of the song ends in a partial word, which is completed on the next line. As such, each participant must be able to hear and quickly complete the word fragment sung by the previous. This necessitates that he must be able to hear the priest or priestess who sings immediately before. No other limitation on the size of the area into which the breath is drawn is known, nor does any preparation need to be made of that area.

As the second-last verse is begun, the Breath will begin to gather within the polygon delimited by the priests, and to an unknown height and depth. At this point, all those involved must have their clothing tightly closed in order to protect them from the deadly cold of this demon's exhalations.

The last verse must be sung in unison by all there present, taking 5 Sivél, at the end of which the gateway to the demon's plane will close and heat return gradually as natural conditions allow.

Once the last verse is reached, should any individual make a mistake in their singing, then they too will be affected by the demon's breath.

After completion, the ritual-makers may withdraw a few paces and remove their protection immediately, however a minute or more should be left before entering the affected area.

Those present will find the area touched by the Breath of Kitántla'al greatly changed.

In essence, the effect of the demon's breath is to end all processes, physical, mental, and magical, of whatever sort or scale. Even the strongest wind will cease for the duration of the final verse of the chant. Those processes which rely on some outside source may begin again once the breath is withdrawn but generally the effect will bring irrevocable devastation.

All living things will be transformed into brittle statues of themselves, as will many non-living things. A mace swing will suffice to shatter a warrior or a wooden door or an iron bracket. All liquids will be solid lumps down to their foundations, able to support the heaviest of beasts, legions, or siege engines. Frost as thick as a man's forearm will cover almost the whole space. The breath permeates the area contained in the ritual so that even a sealed space will offer no protection. It is said that the effect's depth and height are 'in proportion to the size of the area'.

The summoners are to be cautioned to beware of unexpected pools of moisture from the demon's breath. These will be seen bubbling and emitting thick clouds of steam for a few moments after the its withdrawal. It is wise generally not to touch anything that has felt the cold breath with bare skin, but these pools must be avoided completely lest the reckless lose a hand or foot, shattered into crystalline fragments.

As living matter thaws it will be found to be totally dead, with its structure disrupted but usable as food if needed.

## The Ch'tk'tk

These minor demons serve Kitántla'al. They appear to use their powers of RESTORATION, and EXPULSION to keep the great one's physical body clean, although of what is unknown.

They may be summoned simply by any priest of the 8th circle or above using the Dodecahedron of Entreaty, providing that, in addition to the ten ideograms of Stability [note: now obscure] the two symbols below are inscribed on the tuning faces. [Note: sadly, yet again, the transcriber of the extant copy was unequipped with the special coloured inks probably required for these glyphs. He left a space for them but seems never to have completed the work].

The beings themselves somewhat resemble shaggy dri-ants, but of great size. They may be commanded to restore any broken item to its original state, although they can not return life to a corpse, or to remove all alien particles – dirt, sand, liquid, even concreted stone and parasites – from around or within an object or creature. They appear to be quite unable to comprehend any form of limitation on the applications of their powers and will, for example, to remove food from stomachs and waste from bowels. These processes are carried out with alarming speed using the long fibres which emanate from the demons' many joints.

Finally, the demons' ability to restore objects appears to extend to sending them back to their plane of origin. This is probably how the author of the Tale of Long Wandering and his companions were returned to Tumissa, but again it is important to note that the demons heed no guidance on this matter. If they are requested to restore an object they will both repair and return it to its natural plane, sometimes to the chagrin of a scholar who was unaware of the alienness of the archæological specimen he was attempting to study!