Re: Continuing & reviving Tekumel (was Re: Frothing rant and utter d

Posted by: "Thomas Worthington" thomas@outsourceconsultancy.co.uk t\_w\_worthington

Fri Jan 18, 2008 10:20 am (PST)

On Thu, 17 Jan 2008 17:47:23 -0000, joe piz <pizzij@yahoo. com> wrote:

>

> Ok, for this week's assignment, every list member will produce a one

> page entry to be included in the Book of Crystal Bindings. Due the

> 18th. Get to work. No peeking.

Right - here's a first draft of my attempt. Not vastly happy with the

names and perhaps it's TOO like an Ebon Binding entry but I'm not

convinced that the Stability demons will be inherently different in nature

to the Change ones (in much the way that the gods do not seem of

inherently different natures).

Tla'tana - ``The Rod''

Tla'tan is of an unknown substance and the essence of Dra. 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 plain

other than Its own. This is due to both its nature as a supremely

disinterested, enigmatic and inscrutable being and its vast size. 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 sight of this most massive of the servants

of the gods.

The unknown author of the tale reported that ``It emits an aura of

life, yet to the eye is like unto a constructed thing. Within its

coral-like body could be glimpsed what our guides called the

\*Ch'tk'tk\*, apparently in imitation of the sounds they make. Through

lengthy negotiations and bartering we obtained from the captain of our

vessel the means by which these servant demons could be summoned and

compelled to perform their particular function for us. Although we had

bought this information in return for an arduous and cruel task in the

mines of O'lek Shem (note: not otherwise known), yet we judged

ourselves blessed when once again we found ourselves in the Emperor's

Library in Tumissa, where this sorry tale had begun so many years

before.''

What the task was in the mines is unknown as it is one of three

sections of 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 AP and that the author was a senior official

of the library.

Although Tla'tana can not be summoned physically into our world, Its

breath can, bringing with it Its power of GLACIATION. 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 10th, with a total number 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 with the ritual, ears must also be protected from the bite of

frost.

The summoning consists of a chant, each line of which is sung by one

of the participants in order around the space into which the breath of

Tla'tana is to be drawn. This chant is long and requires a complex

pattern of notes which will almost certainly require female voices as

well as male. The song should be begun at midnight and must completed

before daybreak, thus it is not possible to summon Tla'tana 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 plain 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 and thus by the next singer.

As such, each participant must be able to hear and quickly pick up

the refrain from 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 a great 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 and in fact

is a charm to prevent the direct touch of the fearsome cold which has

the power to overcome any clothing. If the summoners have done all

correctly then, as they sing the last line of the last verse, the

coldness will pass and the demon will withdraw from the world once

more. Should any make a mistake at this point in their singing, then

they too, but they alone, will be affected by the demon's breath.

On removing their blindfolds, those present will find the area within

their circle greatly changed. 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. Only volumes so tightly closed that no air may enter or escape

will offer protection, and then only if their walls are such that the

hottest summer day would not penetrate them.

The summoners are to be cautioned to beware of 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

not to touch anything that has felt the cold breath with bare skin,

but these pools must be avoided completely lest the reckless augment

the number of crystalline statues created. Once these pools are gone,

the area may be entered carefully.

As the living matter thaws it will be found to be totally dead, with

its structure disrupted but usable as food if needed.

The summoning of this demon is very stressful and drains all present

of their vigor, the lead priest most of all. As such it is normal for

those who perform this summoning to age visibly. Should this cause

the lead priest to actually die during the ritual it will spell

doom for all involved.

The Ch'tk'tk

These minor demons serve Tla'tana. The appear to use their powers of

RESTORATION, and EXPULSION to keep the great one's physical body

clean, although of what is not clear.

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 this 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). A particular Dodecahedron will

function but once to summon one of these demons, and thus the

summoning is expensive if not arduous (it will be removed by the demon

when it leaves).

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, IF all the parts

are to hand. They will not perform a partial repair.

Alternatively, they may be requested to remove all traces of

alien particles - dirt, sand, 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 plain 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 plain of origin, sometimes

to the surprise of a scholar who was unaware of the nature of the

archaeological specimen he was attempting to study!

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