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The Magazine of Science-Fiction Gaming

US \$3.50

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Nature Spirits

By Mark L. Chaffe



There are bad runs, and there are really bad runs—this one was disastrous. The shaman, Asks-Many-Questions, encountered only misfortune. One bad break lead to another, and now he was preparing to leave the Aztechnology VTOL at an altitude of 10,000 feet. The security goon hefted him out the door, and Many-Questions began his long descent. His first thought was that the next time Vision-Seeker suggested he learn a song, he would listen. His mentor had once tried to teach him to fly, but at the time, Many-Questions had been more interested in spirits. Now he was about to join those spirits in the next world.

Wait, he thought, perhaps a spirit could save me. He was, of course, in the domain of Wind, but none of the more-well-known spirits (like Storm or Mist) were present. A less studied conjuror would have been lost, but Many-Questions knew who to call upon.

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elcome to *Talking Eagle's Spirit Guide*, the foremost reference to the habits and powers of nature spirits in

North America. We're uploading parts of the text in an effort to bridge the gap of knowledge which exists between those fortunate enough to have an experienced shaman to guide them and those who are spoken to by the spirits without a mentor to turn to. The Sysop asked me to keep the initial file small, so we're only going to upload the entries for about a dozen of the more common nature spirits other than those included in *The Manual of Practical Thaumaturgy* <a.k.a. *The Grimoire* (Sysop)>. As well, we will be including Eagle's up-to-the-nanosecond comments on the spirits that are in the manual, and his wonderful overview of spirit domains. More will be added later if we generate enough interest. Happy conjuring.

Mycroft Pym Th.D.

Arctic

Type: Spirit of Land.

Domain: The Arctic Spirit is native to the frozen wastelands and may be conjured from any land where the topsoil never thaws (i.e., permafrost). This includes very high mountaintops as well as certain lands above the Arctic and below the Antarctic circles. For example, Antarctica is suitable, but the majority of Canada is too mild.

Appearance: Arctic Spirits do not normally take a visible form, but, rather, they choose to manifest as a sudden drop in temperature and a crispness in the air. If compelled to further manifest, they appear as beautiful men or women formed of snow and ice.

Eagle's Comments: The Arctic Spirit is a very difficult one to work with. Several people have reported to me that this spirit is actively hostile toward most forms of animal life—including mankind. There are also unconfirmed reports which suggest that the humanoid manifestations are sufficiently cold that contact with them immediately causes severe frostbites. Extreme caution is advised when dealing with these spirits.

Powers: Accident, Binding, Concealment, Confusion, Guard, Immunity, Movement.

Beach/Island

Type: Spirit of Land.

Domain: Any sandy area with a moderate climate is within the domain of this

spirit. Tropical islands and beaches are within the domain of this spirit (while sandy areas with extremely high temperatures, like the Sahara are the domain of Desert Spirits).

Appearance: These spirits will normally manifest as constantly moving ripples in the sand or small mounds of sand. Serious researchers view with skepticism the reports of little men and women in colorful swimwear with surfboards.

Eagle's Comments: These spirits can be very trying if there is a sense of urgency in what you are doing because of their relaxed, unhurried disposition. I attribute this characteristic to the ease with which this environment can sustain life. The spirits of less hospitable environments seem to be the ones with the greatest sense of urgency.

Powers: Accident, Concealment, Guard, Movement, Search.

Cave

Type: Spirit of Land.

Domain: Naturally occurring underground structures like caves, tunnels and fissures.

Appearance: Cave Spirits manifest as areas of deep shadow with voices that seem to echo from far away. Their more humanoid forms appear as stone faces rising out from the cave or tunnel walls.

Eagle's Comments: While not quite as indifferent to humans as the Mountain or Desert spirits, the Cave Spirit takes little interest in human affairs. This trait may inhibit the success of its Search ability if you are seeking objects from the civilized world. The Search power is most successful with moderately worked mineral objects, and is somewhat adept at locating plant or animal matter. A Cave Spirit is completely unable to distinguish between two machines of a similar size.

Powers: Accident, Concealment, Confusion, Fear, Guard, Search.

Hail

Type: Spirit of Wind.

Domain: Any area where hail is currently falling—if you're getting hit, you're in the right place.

Appearance: Hail Spirits may appear as patches of ice or small gray clouds. They may also assume a roughly manlike shape formed of icy slush.

Eagle's Comments: You will find this spirit to be reluctant to use its powers of Guard and Immunity to benefit



anyone other than the shaman who summoned it. The Hail Spirit delights in its ability to cause damage, but it is not actually hostile. It would appear that knocking things down is this spirit's idea of fun. It seems to have little or no awareness of how such action could be harmful to others.

Powers: Accident, Concealment, Confusion, Guard, Immunity.

Jungle

Type: Spirit of Land.

Domain: Areas rich in vegetation with a tropical climate. This spirit is closely related to the Forest Spirit, the principle difference between their domains being one of temperature and of the general type of vegetation growing there.

Appearance: The Jungle Spirit will first be perceivable by an area of complete silence around the summoner. Then, the spirit will manifest as a rustling of leaves and other movements in the flora. If the shaman orders the spirit to manifest further, it will appear as a human form composed of soft, green, vegetable matter.

Eagle's Comments: Jungle Spirits are extremely adverse to taking on their humanoid forms. It appears that they generally seek to avoid human contact and feel exposed when in their more substantial form. It should be noted, however, that they do not feel threatened by most shamans (whom they perceive as part of the jungle itself). If required to take a humanoid form, the spirit is only comfortable if alone with shamans or engaged in physical combat with the shaman's enemies.

Powers: Accident, Concealment, Confusion, Fear, Search.

Market

Type: Spirit of Man.

Domain: Market Spirits are found in places of open commerce (where people gather to shop or find entertainment); they are also present within the corridors of enclosed malls. While a Market Spirit may be found in a bar or an electronics store, it will not be present in places of private

business (areas that are closed to the general public such as offices or clinics)—these are occupied by Hearth spirits.

Appearance: The Market Spirit generally manifests as a small merchant, often with a rather large girth.

Eagle's Comments: A most gregarious spirit and one prone to talking quickly (often in street jargon). This spirit is one of the most adept I have ever encountered at distinguishing between man-made artifacts. While it may have difficulty finding a particular example of a thing with its Search power, it has no trouble locating generic items or specific brands. A Market Spirit could, for instance, locate a motorcycle or a red Yamaha Rapiere, but it would not be able to find a bike by means of its license plate number.

Powers: Accident, Confusion, Guard, Movement.

Sky

Type: Spirit of Wind.

Domain: You are within this spirit's domain when you are separated from the ground—such as when you are flying (in a plane or by spell) or falling (with a parachute or unaided).

Appearance: The Sky Spirit will manifest as a slight breeze. When it speaks, its voice seems quiet and distant—like a wind moving over reeds in a pond. It may also assume the more substantial form of a whirlwind or tornado.

Eagle's Comments: The Sky Spirit is the least predictable of all the spirits I have encountered. Personalities and dispositions vary widely from one conjuring to the next. The spirit's personality appears to correlate (to some extent) with the direction the wind is blowing, air temperature and humidity. Further research is necessary before I would be confident enough to venture a guess as to the actual relationship.

Powers: Accident, Confusion, Guard, Immunity, Movement.

Snow

Type: Spirit of Wind.

Domain: Any area that is covered with at least half an inch of snow, or where snow is currently falling, will have a Snow Spirit present.

Appearance: Snow Spirits typically manifest as little flurries of snow hanging in the air. There have been reports of manifestations in the form of snowmen wearing battered top hats, smoking corn cob pipes and having features of coal; however, these reports remain questionable.

Eagle's Comments: Snow Spirits are generally fun loving and mischievous. They enjoy the company of humans and have a well-developed sense of play. One of my colleagues reports them as exhibiting a small degree of malice or spitefulness. It should be observed, however, that she has an unusually strong dislike for the winter, and this may be influencing her relationship with the spirit.

Powers: Accident, Concealment, Confusion, Guard, Immunity, Movement.

Transport

Type: Spirit of Man.

Domain: This is the spirit of any vessel or vehicle which is intended to be used as a dwelling while in transit. Suitable examples are cruise ships, submarines and slow passenger trains; campers are not included as they are only intended to be lived in while at rest.

Appearance: A Transportation Spirit will manifest as a small human dressed as part of the vehicle's crew.

Eagle's Comments: These spirits are extremely solicitous and will make an extra effort to assist the summoning shaman. They are also gifted with a good ability to distinguish between objects of technology, especially anything that might be considered normal equipment for their vessel. They are even able to find lost luggage on occasion.

Powers: Accident, Alienation, Concealment, Confusion, Guard, Search.

Special Power: A Transport Spirit may increase the speed of its vessel. The vehicle's speed may be improved by 10% times the force rating of the spirit to a maximum of double.

Tunnel

Type: Spirit of Man.

Domain: A Tunnel Spirit will be present in narrow, manmade, underground structures, such as sewers or subway tunnels.

Appearance: This spirit typically manifests as a small mound of dirt or a puddle of stale water.

Eagle's Comments: "Dreary," "unkempt," and "confining" are the words that spring to mind when describing the impressions generated by these spirits. While not actually reluctant to help, a Tunnel Spirit would prefer to be left alone.

Powers: Accident, Confusion, Fear, Guard, Movement.

DOMAINS

Some students are confused by the concept of domains. So I am going to take a moment to clarify how they operate. It is obviously possible to be physically in two or more domains at the same time. To illustrate—if you are standing on a beach with one foot on the shore (Beach/Island Spirit) and one foot in the water (Lake or Sea Spirit), you are physically in contact with both domains at once. Furthermore, if it began to rain, you would also be in the domain of a Rain Spirit. However, for the purposes of conjuring, none of this matters in the least.

When you conjure a spirit you are reaching out with your mind and soul to the astral realm where the spirit exists. In order to bridge this gap you must decide to which realm you are calling. It is impossible to stretch your consciousness sufficiently to reach two realms at the same time. It is also beyond the powers of a shaman to embrace the different qualities of two realms in a way that would allow for the summoning of a spirit that was of both realms. Please, just take my word for it; I visit the cells and the graves of those who have tried to extend their reach each time I get up the urge to make an attempt.

Another point of confusion for some lies in knowing exactly where certain spirits can be found. To clarify this, I am going to list definitions of the domains for City, Hearth and Field Spirits, and comment on Spirits of Wind in general.

City: All open and/or public areas of a city, town or village are appropriate for summoning a City Spirit. Anything that is paved and that is lacking a roof is part of the city spirit's domain. This includes streets, fairgrounds, airports and stadiums. Since the City Spirit will also appear on interstate highways, I find that I have begun to consider this spirit more as a spirit of "road" than of "city".

Hearth: The Hearth Spirit is found in any building or man-made structure that is private or semiprivate in nature. Specifically, this includes homes, offices and hotels.

Field: Field Spirits dwell in agricultural areas controlled by man, such as farms and hothouses.

Wind: Most Spirits of Wind are associated with a particular meteorological phenomena (rain, snow or hail); they may be summoned from any area that is exposed to that

specific weather. Note that, generally, the shaman will physically be in the domain of some other spirit at the same time. This means that the summoner must focus his awareness away from the undesired realm and concentrate upon being in the realm of the Wind Spirit he wishes to summon.

ADDENDUM

I have found through my work with spirits that certain discrepancies exist between material in the current edition of *The Manual of Practical Thaumaturgy* and results obtained in actual practice. These differences are catalogued below for your reference. It is recommended that you test these results yourself, rather than taking the my word for it—or even that of the excellent researchers who compose *The Grimoire*.

City Spirit: Several of my colleagues claim to have successfully conjured City Spirits with the power of Movement. These experiments have generally been conducted on empty stretches of road and have been used for the benefit of land vehicles. This may indicate that the power is only present in some of these spirits or that the power can only

be used to benefit a vehicle. If the later is the case, then I advise caution in invoking this ability while in an area of heavy traffic or with difficult terrain. Remember, Movement only makes you travel faster—it does not improve your ability to react to obstacles.

Storm Spirit: I have personally summoned Storm Spirits which have been capable of causing accidents to occur on wet and slippery terrain. While my results may be explained by other researchers as fortunate coincidences, reliable repetition makes such an explanation unlikely. I have also noted that a Storm Spirit conjured during a nonelectrical storm lacks the power of Electrical Projection as well as that of Fear.

Forest Spirit: Several of my colleagues (as well as myself) have been able to summon a Forest Spirit and command it to exercise the power of Search. .

IMMUNITY

Immunity is a new power that bears a strong resemblance to Guard. It is most commonly found possessed by Water or Wind. A few Spirits of Land are known to exhibit it as well, but there remain no documented cases of a Spirit of Man



possessing this power. Whereas Guard protects the recipient from accidents within the Spirit's domain, Immunity protects from inevitable sources of harm. For example, a Desert Spirit may use Immunity to protect the shaman from heatstroke or dehydration, while a River Spirit could invoke Immunity to keep a shaman safe from undercurrents and hypothermia. Immunity offers no protection from chance happenings such as falling objects or lightning (although a Rain Spirit could shield you from the inevitable fall of the rain itself). The Spirit is also unable to protect the recipient from unnatural occurrences (e.g., attacks from other nature spirits, being held underwater, etc.). In basic *Shadowrun* the following spirits have the Immunity power: Desert, Lake, River, Sea and Swamp.

Game Information

Name	B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R	Attacks
Arctic	F+1	Fx2	F+1	F	F	F	F	F	FS3
Beach	F+2	(F-1)x2	F-1	F	F	F	F	F	FM3
Cave	F+4	(F-2)x2	F+3	F	F	F	F	F-2	FS3
City	F+3	(F+1)x3	F	F	F	F	F	F+2	(F-1)M2
Desert	F+2	Fx2	F+2	F	F	F	F	F+1	(F-2)S3
Field	F	Fx2	F+1	F	F	F	F	F	(F-1)M2
Forest	F+3	Fx2	F+2	F	F	F	F	F	FM3
Hail	F	(F+3)x3	F-1	F	F	F	F	F+1	(F-1)M2
Hearth	F	(F-1)x2	F-2	F	F	F	F	F-1	(F-1)M2
Jungle	F+3	Fx2	F+1	F	F	F	F	F	FM3
Lake	F+1	Fx2	F-1	F	F	F	F	F-2	(F-1)M3
Market	F+3	(F+2)x3	F	F	F	F	F	F+2	(F-1)M2
Mist	F-2	(F+2)X3	F-3	F	F	F	F	F+2	(F-3)M1
Mountain	F+5	(F-3)x2	F+5	F	F	F	F	F-2	FS4
Prairie	F+2	(F-1)x2	F+2	F	F	F	F	F	FM3
River	F+1	(F+2)x3	F	F	F	F	F	F+2	FM3
Sea	F+3	Fx2	F	F	F	F	F	F-1	FS3
Sky	F-2	(F+3)x4	F-3	F	F	F	F	F+3	(F-2)M2
Snow	F	(F+1)x4	F-2	F	F	F	F	F+1	(F-2)M2
Storm	F-1	(F+3)x4	F-2	F	F	F	F	F+2	(F-2)M2
Swamp	F+2	(F-1)x2	F+1	F	F	F	F	F-2	(F-1)M3
Transport	F+2	(F+2)x3	F+2	F	F	F	F	F+1	(F-1)M2
Tunnel	F+3	Fx3	F+2	F	F	F	F	F	(F-1)M2

This chart shows the typical statistics for the manifest forms of all the nature spirits from *Shadowrun* as well as this article. Those spirits that are able to assume a manlike form may substitute their Strength for the number derived from Force as the Power Value in melee combat. Q

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