

THE HUNTER
THE STONES
THE SPIRITS
THE TRIBE

"Our Storyteller taught us that the Stone Tooth Tribe was born of the Rock. For many years our ancestors fed on pebbles and boulders before the Great Sprit fashioned the plants and animals that we feed on today. From dust we came and to dust we shall return."

"There are patterns in the cliffs and on boulders which the Storyteller taught us are the birthmarks of our ancestors. On Spirit Days we dress these clefts and marks with flowers, and paint them with clay and ochre."

"When I became a Hunter, I had to recite the names of all of my ancestors and I had to climb The Pinnacle and spend three nights and three days atop its terrifying height. When I returned I was looked upon as a Hunter of the Rock, a Hunter of the Stone Tooth People, a Hunter of the Tribe. Finally my family prepared to welcome me into their Clan Our Clan Spirit is Fire Foot - the Horse Spirit and he tested me severely. With help from my Clan Folk I had to steal the tail-hairs of a wild horse identified as sacred by the Storyteller. Three hairs cost me a broken nose and two black eyes - but I was at last a Hunter of the Clan alongside my Kin. The hard won hair I braided with horse hide as a fillet for my pony-tail."

"Fire Foot has granted me his powers of speed and quickness that I may hunt for the Tribe and bring honour upon my Clan. My Kin have taught me many things; they have imparted to me knowledge of the seasons, of the trail, of the forests and the hills, they have taught me how to pitch a camp and strike it in the morning, how to fish for bream in the rivers, how to make a spear, a blade, a bow, boots, clothes and everything else I may need. They taught me the way of spirits and the duties of a Hunter. Finally I learnt an extra skill since each Hunter must strive to outdo his Kinsmen in one activity. My talent is for jumping and leaping. My father knows well the art of healing wounds with herbs, while my brother-in-law knows the courses and ways of the local rivers and is an excellent swimmer."

"My Clan call me Two Tongues because they find my laughter strange. They say it sounds like two people laughing at once! My wife was formerly a member of the Cave Bear Clan, but she has been given a warm welcome by Fire Foot and by my Kinsmen. She is called Sweet Sun (the Great Spirit bless her)."

"Before I leave you for the hunt, I will show you my Kit, for I made all of it with my own hands. I wear a tunic of deerskin under a jacket of fox fur. My leggings are also of fox fur and my boots are of sealskin and bison hide. I carry fur mittens and a shelter of seasoned willow wood staves that will support a tent skin made of wild cattle (auroch). I have two spears, one tipped with a good flint blade, the other tipped with a serrated bone blade. The flint spear is heavy and deadly; the bone spear is lighter and can be thrown a long way. My backpack is made of auroch hide and covered with a thatch of bound reeds to keep the rain off. This soft leather pouch here contains my tools. If I open it out you can see my flint-scraper, a hole-borer, a flint-slicer, a flint-sparker, a flint axe and a chopper. In this other pouch I keep sinew thread and a bone needle (my most treasured possession). This pouch also keeps my sphagnum moss dry - I will use that as tinder to start a fire out on the trail."

"You've already seen the band for my pony-tail. But around my neck I wear a hare's foot, which gives me the power to leap and jump as I do. Every skill and talent must have a physical correlation for it to work. The Storyteller calls this 'magic' but for my Kinsmen it is just the way of things."

"My uncle is calling me. We are ready for the trail. We are expecting snow today, and that will mask the sounds of our movement from the deer. And we are expecting to meet the Spirit of the Yellow Forest (the Great Spirit bless us). Join us! I will show you the way..."

Sample file

THE HUNTER

You are a Hunter: a man or woman of the Tribe who explores the world and who encounters dangerous spirits and wild animals on a daily basis. You are strong, proud and committed to supporting the Tribe. Without it you would be utterly alone in the world. Are Hunters all men? No. Most are, but often many hands are needed for this valuable job, or Clans find they lack enough men to serve as Hunters. What is the counter-part to the Hunter? It is the Firekeeper. Many women are Firekeepers, collecting firewood and tinder, keeping the Clan fire burning, cooking food, preparing meat, tanning hides and making clothes. Crippled hunters often become Firekeepers.

To create the character of your Hunter in more detail, first select a Clan and receive a Clan Talent, then select an Extra Talent. After this you select a name from the Name Options List and finally create the Hunter's Wealth.

CLAN

Your Tribe is made-up of maybe a hundred men, women and children. These tribal members live in related groups called Clans, and every Clan reveres the guardian spirit (or 'totem') of an animal that watches over its members. Clans have their own customs and rituals based on their guardian spirit. The most important power is the Hunter's Blessing, bestowed on every Hunter of the Clan by the guardian spirit. This blessing allows him to kill an animal for food, and serves as a prayer that he can recite to appease the spirit of the dead animal and stop it from seeking revenge. The guardian spirit also teaches its Hunters a special Clan Talent. The Talent is often an ability or power possessed by the animal itself. Select a Clan from the following list:

THE CAVE BEAR CLAN

Members of this Clan are often strong and heavily built. The men have hairy bodies and grow long beards. The Clan Spirit is called Strong Paw. Clan Talent is *Immensely Strong*.

THE HORSE CLAN

Members of this Clan are tall and fast on their feet. Men and women both have long ponytails. The Clan Spirit is called Fire Foot. Clan Talent is *Fast Runner*.

THE BISON CLAN

Members of this Clan are extremely hardy. The hunters of the clan tend to be heavy as they frequently gorge themselves on any meat they cannot carry back from the hunt. The Clan Spirit is called Stone Hoof. Clan gift is *Endurance*.

THE WOLF CLAN

The men of this Clan are surly and watchful. Men and women grow their hair long and they file their canine teeth to points. The Clan Spirit is called Howler. Clan Talent is *Tracker*.

THE RHINO CLAN

The Rhino Clan members are blunt and direct; both men and women wear their hair in a topknot. The Clan Spirit is called Rumble. Clan Talent is *Ignore Pain*.

THE RED DEER CLAN

Members of this Clan are quiet and relaxed people, often colouring their faces and bodies red with ochre. The Clan Spirit is called Tanglehorn. Clan Talent is *Stealthy*.

TALENTS

Besides gaining a Talent from the Clan spirit, the Clan members also teach the Hunter-to-be a useful Talent. The Hunter's player chooses this Extra Talent. Select one from:

- Animal Habits
- Archery
- Calm Spirit
- Climbing
- Disable
- Endurance
- Fast Runner
- Fire Making
- Healing Herbs
- Hunt (specify animal)
- Identify Spirit
- Leaping
- River Skills
- Sense the Invisible
- Throwing

TALENT AND FOCUS

Note that Talents aren't just skills or learned abilities, they fall somewhere between magic and skill. Everything in this world is semi-magical; it is pervasive and ubiquitous. To utilize a Talent, the Hunter must have on him a magical correspondence or Focus. Clan Talents, for example, are always bone, ivory, stone or woodcarvings of the Clan's Guardian Spirit. If he loses this Focus then he can no longer use his Talent. He must fashion another, which takes him a moderate amount of time, making the loss inconvenient but not catastrophic. Another person's focus can be used only as a source of raw materials to create your own version. Only a focus that you have made with your own hands will work for you. The Foci are described within the Talent descriptions.

TALENT DESCRIPTIONS

Animal Habits - You can detect the mood of an animal, perhaps giving you a clue to its intentions. You know how animals behave in specific circumstances. Focus is a Tattoo (see below)

Archery - You have a great aim and can hit targets with your arrows at great distances and with some accuracy. Arrows, even those with flint tips, are nowhere as lethal as

spears, however, and best for shooting birds, goats and baby deer. Focus for this Talent is a collection of bird feathers, which are used for the arrow flights.

Calm Spirit - Many spirits are hostile to Hunters and their Kin, but you can try to appease a spirit with words or magical techniques. Focus is a Tattoo (see below).

Climbing - You can climb cliffs, rocks, trees (or anything else) like a mountain goat! Difficult terrain such as boulder-strewn gully's, steep rock-covered hillsides and any other hard going can also be negotiated without the nasty injuries associated with them. Focus is a pair of goatskin boots.

Disable - Whether you are using a flint axe, spear, stick or fist, if you can hit someone or something, you can usually knock them down and disable them for a time. Focus is a leather bracelet decorated with bison bone.

Endurance - You can walk without stopping to rest for days at a time. After the first day draw one Sunstone to be able to continue for another day. After the second day draw two Sunstones, and so on. If an Earthstone is drawn the character is treated as if he is under the Sleep curse until he has slept for a full day. Focus for Bison Clan members is a pair of bison-hide boots.

Fast Runner - You can sprint at high speed to escape or to pursue an animal. Focus for Horse Clan Members is a carving of Fire Foot.

Fire Making - You are adept at starting a fire with the barest of materials - a little dry moss or bundle of dry twigs and grass, and a flint sparker. It takes, on average, half an hour. Make a draw of stones to determine whether this is done faster or slower (refer to the Creating Goods rules for that). Focus is a small-carved figurine in wood, ivory or soft rock of the Earth Goddess.

Healing Herbs - Many plants have medicinal effects, some are able to stop bleeding, reduce swelling, act as a poison antidote, reduce fevers, cure stomach ills and so on. You know when and where they can be found and you know how to prepare and administer them. Focus is the very herbs you are preparing.

Hunt (specify animal) - Most Hunters are generalists, hunting whatever comes their way. Someone with this Talent is adept at bringing down and killing a particular species of animal in spear combat. A bonus stone may be drawn during each 'turn' in the attack (as with other Talents) but only in direct spear combat, not archery or a thrown spear attack. The player must specify the prey animal when this Talent is chosen, and it cannot later be changed. The Talent only adds to draws involving that particular species.

Choose from: Birds, Hyena, Red Deer, Cave Bear, Horse, Wild Cat, Wolf, Auroch, Bison, Reindeer, Mammoth, Mountain Goat, Rhino, Wolf and Cave Lion. Focus is a necklace of at least half a dozen teeth from a lion, wolf, and cave bear or hyena.

Identify Spirit - Faced with magic or the obvious existence of a spirit - you can identify what type of magic or spirit it is, which may help you deal with it. You have knowledge of different spirit types. Focus is a Tattoo (see below).

Ignore Pain - Pain caused by injuries can put a Hunter in shock or stun him for a few vital moments, but you usually shrug off pain and keep on going until disabled or killed. Focus for Rhino Clan Members is a carving of Rumble.

Immensely Strong - You are stronger than most people. Focus for Cave Bear Clan Members is a carving of Strong Paw.

Leaping - You can jump higher and farther than most people. Focus is a Hare's Foot.

River Skills - You are familiar with the courses and ways of local rivers, you know how to cross them safely, how to fish and how to swim. Focus is a necklace of pretty seashells.

Sense the Invisible - You can sense the existence of spirits, of malign powers and the magic of Storytellers. You get a 'feeling' rather than complete understanding of the powers at work. For that you need Identify Spirit. Focus is a Tattoo (see below).

Stealthy - You are an expert at hiding and sneaking around, especially in the forests or in the darkness. Focus for Red Deer Clan Members is a carving of Tanglehorn.

Throwing - You are able to throw spears with great accuracy and over long distances. Focus is a spear caster, a shaped length of antler ending in an animal carving. The spear fits in a notch at the end, and the Talent allows the Hunter to swing the caster out and propel the spear using its leverage.

Tracker - You are better than most people at locating human and animal tracks and following them across country. You also know how to interpret tracks to estimate speed, number and type of prey. Focus for Wolf Clan Members is a carving of Howler.

THE TATOO FOCUS

Some Talents, in particular those relating to spirits, have no physical Focus. Instead the Storyteller of the Tribe tattoos a design onto the Hunter's skin, which serves the same purpose. The design may incorporate zigzags, parallel lines or spirals, and it acts as a link between the Hunter and the Spirit World. Tattoos are usually on the arms, chest and face.

NAME OPTIONS LIST

The Hunter needs a name. Rather than let player's create fantasy names that would be inappropriate the beginning player should pick a name from the list below, or create a name in the same style.

Hidden Moon, Long Shadow, Sun Face, Archer, Tale Teller, Sweetlove, Tall Man, First Born, Second Sister, Hammerhand, Sky, Mist, Wanderer, Lionheart, Whisperer, Mighty Hand, Faith, Trueheart, Seeker, Heather, Thorn, Holly, Berry, Midnight, Many Miracles, Greenblood, Big Laugh, Strong Bone, Spearshaker, Faithful, Thunder.