In the Balance 2.0

An Expansion for *Talisman* "Revised" 4th Edition (4ER)
by J.C. Hendee, July 2010

PURPOSE

In the Balance was developed with three basic goals in mind:

1. Provide slight thematic and mechanics based opportunity for Neutral characters to be more than the Alignment of "no alignment."
2. Balance Alignment inequities in the standard cards within inherent limits where they could pertain to Neutral Alignment.
3. Add varied new card features, mechanics, and card interactivity.

INVENTORY

If any components are missing, notify the owner of the distribution point through which you acquired this package. If that is not possible, then notify J.C. directly. You should not have paid anything for this package, including being required to provide information in order to download it. If that is not the case, please notify J.C. so that this violation can be addressed.

- 104 Adventure cards (some images count for more than one card):
  - 29 Enemy cards
  - 13 Event cards
  - 13 Follower cards
  - 19 Object cards
  - 11 Magic Object cards
  - 11 Place cards
  - 8 Stranger cards
- 14 optional Adventure 'replacements' for standard cards in the base game or commercial expansions.
- 1 Adventure card back.
- 3 Alignment card fronts, including the new Neutral card.

- 1 Alignment new card back.
- 47 Purchase cards (some images count for more than one card).
- 5 optional Purchase 'replacements' for standard cards in the base game or commercial expansions.
- 28 Spell cards.
- 6 Character cards.
- 1 Reference Card & Back
- This manual.

MAKING YOUR EXPANSION COMPONENTS

Use any method preferred for printing and assembling cards and other components. Visit Talisman Island to learn about options.

All card images that end in x2, x3, etc. are intended to printed that many times. All card images without any ending number should be printed one. Of course you are free to print as many as you wish, but you may face some minor game imbalances if you do so with Adventure and Spell cards.

If your Spell deck is already at a 100+ cards, it is recommended that print all *ITB* Spell cards twice. Otherwise, they might not come up often enough for a small special consideration in involving ITB Spell subtypes. [See "Spell Card Subtypes" later in this document.]

The most popular method is to print card fronts on standard photo paper (semi-gloss to gloss) and card backs on the same or on plain or photo cardstock for thickness. Trim fronts and backs separately, ignore rounding of corners, and slip them into "Mini USA Game Card Sleeves". Print extra card backs to put behind commercial cards in sleeves if you prefer that fan and commercial cards are indistinguishable in your decks.

Card sleeves can be found in the game accessories section of the Fantasy Flight Games or other locations such as Mayday Games. Note that sleeve thickness varies, affecting the height of decks and/or sleeve durability. Sleeves from Mayday are thinner (~40 microns), while those from FFG are thicker (~100 microns).

For Character and like-sized cards, you may wish to contact Jon New through TalismanIsland.com. Sleeves for these are rare but might be found. However, such cards are large enough for adhering fronts to backs directly. You may wish to use heavier stock for both fronts and backs on these.

"Replacement" Cards

In this package's expanded folders you will find a few subfolders labeled "Replacements." These contain images not part of the *ITB* expansion. They are alternatives to replace standard cards with ones that…

1. more closely match *ITB* mechanics,
2. are "retroactive" and bring back mechanics from past *Talisman* editions,
3. contain new alternative mechanics for additional variety in play, or
4. two or more of the above.

Some replacement card files have names that begin with same term(s) but end differently. If you look at the "Mule" cards in the "Replacements" subfolder inside the "Adventure" card folder, you will find a good example. Cards like these offer multiple versions with different appeal. They are choices to meet differing preferences among players groups in replacing a standard card of the same title.

Multiple versions of replacement cards should not be used in the same deck, nor should replacements be mixed with stan-

dard cards of the same title. They are incompatible with each other. If you use any of these replacements, choose one version that suits your preference best. Use it to replace all instances of the standard card of the same title. Cross-check Adventure card replacements with those under Purchase cards so that you are using the same version in both types of cards.

Printing the Graphics

The best option is to prepare a layout of 16 card fronts and/or backs (for Adventure sized cards) and save the layout to a PDF or large graphic to take to your local copy/print shop. Be sure you maintain the original 300ppi resolution for best quality.

Always do a test print before producing all of cards. Different printers produce lighter, darker, or even shifted color compared to your computer's screen. Adjust output by using a graphics program that allows changing the Gamma and/or master Curve(s) setting for the full print layout of images; *never apply adjustments directly to the original card images*. Avoid adjustments by Contrast and Brightness, as these will produce inaccurate and erratic results that do not uniformly adjust hue, saturation, and lightness.

NEW TERMINOLOGY

ITB cards introduce new terminology, especially new "subtypes" among the standard 7 types of Adventure cards. There is one special new reference to Strength and/or Craft encountered on some cards.

"Natural" Strength/Craft

All players should be familiar with "Current" Craft/Strength vs. [Starting] Craft/Strength "value":

- "Current" refers to the values listed on the Character cards plus all tokens/cones earned and modifiers or bonuses from other cards gained such as Followers, Magic Objects, etc. In most cases, the term "Current" is omitted, and simple reference to Craft or Strength implies this same meaning.
- [Starting] Strength/Craft "value" refers to Strength/Craft listed on the Character without adding tokens/cones or other modifiers of any kind.

But there is also an unnamed type of Strength/Craft rating that has popped up occasionally for which *ITB* has a term.

"Natural" Strength/Craft is referenced on some *ITB* cards. It refers to [Starting] Strength/Craft "value" plus all acquired tokens/cones—*and that is all*. No modifiers of Followers and Magic Objects are counted. Most cases cards using this new term include the notation "starting value + tokens" to help remind you of this.

SUBTYPES AND SUB-SUBTYPES

All players are familiar with these concepts, whether consciously aware of it or not. When you look at Object cards and see some that have the terms *Armour* or *Weapon* in the description area … yes, these are card "subtypes."

Subtypes (and Sub-subtypes) indicate that a card follows all rules related to its type (Object, Follower, etc.) listed in the card's midbar but also follow some special rules and considerations for its subtype. *ITB* uses additional new subtypes and some sub-subtypes as well, which can affect new card interactions.

For example, some Event cards indicate which subtypes of Follower cards they affect, or even refer to Followers by a key word in their card titles. For the most part, card interaction is what new subtypes are for.

Many cards in *ITB* use such references in a way that you won't even need to know any definitions for new subtypes. But some subtypes require more understanding.

Interpreting Commercial Cards by new Subtypes

Before looking at the new *ITB* subtypes (next), there are three ways to deal with them when mixing these cards with commercial or other fan cards:

1. Ignore them!

Ignore the new *ITB* (sub-)subtypes and play the *ITB* cards by the game's official rules and standards. Pay attention to only special notes on the cards themselves or references to other *ITB* cards as needed in a minimal fashion. It's not going to cause any real problems. But honestly, if you are interested in fan made cards, you're already of a mindset to step beyond the base game's standards.

2. *ITB* Cards Only

Deal with commercial cards by the standard rules and only apply special subtype considerations herein to *ITB* cards. It will rarely produce complications, and such that occur will be minor. (Or certainly no more than what's been seen in commercial cards that have now spawned FAQs.) This option has been tested by multiple groups and worked out fine.

3. Interpret Commercial Cards by new Subtypes.

This is not as hard as it seems. You are already interpreting *Weapon*, *Armour*, and possibly *Trinket* subtypes by special considerations. In looking at other fan cards you may have even seen other new subtypes. You will see more pop up in future commercial expansions. Once you familiarize yourself with interpreting new subtype terms, you will easily interpret which commercial cards belong to them. Most are obvious by a commercial card's title, picture, and description of its use. You will quickly narrow down its potential *ITB* subtype to one; or maybe two, and then make your own call.

A printable reference for commercial cards has been included (see the "Reference" subfolder) for tableside use during a game. Take a look at it during or after you read through the *ITB* subtype definitions and rules. This lists all commercial cards found in the base game that can be considered part of one (or two) *ITB* subtypes. Within a couple of games, you will be classifying any commercial card on the fly… if you play by the *spirit* of a high fantasy game as well as crunching numbers.

if you can't classify a card, then don't; it's exempt from effect by another card that came up, and you go on with the game. Don't get bogged down. **In other words, play the game as you please, including this expansion.**

Enemies

Ætheric…
is an otherworldly entity from the ethereal / divine layers of existence, usually in relation to one of the three Alignments.

Faerie...
    is for creatures and forces from this parallel realm between the *Ætheric* and the worldly realm of the Land (the board). This is also the partial origin for "Balance" (Neutral) among the Powers of the Alignments.

Giant...
    is any humanoid creature of great size that needs this additional term to group it with the standard Enemy-Monster called "Giant." This is for proper interaction with some ITB cards.

Magical...
    is a creature permanently created by, or continually maintained by, an act of magic. Contrary to pop-culture notions, they are not to be confused with the *Ætheric* (divine) nor those of *Faerie*. Among commercial cards, all Constructs and Elementals are *Magical* (as well). How else would they be wandering about?

Undead...
    are physical, mental, and/or spiritual beings that exist as a negative aspect of the living. True undead must feed upon Life (not blood, only a medium of transference) to maintain their existence or functionality. Common spirits, zombies, animated skeletons, etc., which do not need to feed, are not true undead. At present, there are no *Undead* in *ITB*.

    NOTE: The "Vampire" as an Enemy (which drains Life) is a commercial example, as are the characters of the "Vampire" and the "Ghoul."

Events

Ætheric, Faerie, & Magical...
    as for Enemy Cards.

Natural...
    are events of Nature and the wilds.

Weather...
    are atmospheric events usually widespread, and hence separated from *Natural*.

Worldly...
    is anything related to the mundane realm of society, culture, and the Land's populace.

Followers and Strangers

These can have both a subtype and a subsubtype. Most are for card interaction with Events, Places, and some other Strangers. The subtype is listed in the midbar after a hyphen. Any needed extra (sub-)subtype is in the description area. The subtype in the midbar is the persona's "Form" while any other subtype in the description area is its general "Origin" in society or the Land. Not all cards have both.

Some Strangers and Places do not have a specified Origin and are exempt from effects that would influence them by such. They are considered outside of social and worldly classification. The commercial "Witch" is an example of a Stranger without an Origin. The *ITB* version of the "Necromancer" Follower also has no Origin subtype.

These dual classifications do not take as much thought as it may seem. They are mostly just for card interactions, but they also force players (hence characters) to occasionally deal with Followers as living beings instead of collected prosthetics that are harder to lose than Magic Objects.

NOTE: If and when you choose to interpret commercial cards in these ways, the Form should be obvious (look at the illustration). If the Origin isn't obvious, skip it and don't get bogged down.

The Forms

Animal...
    is mainly any Object-carrying or riding Followers but also Enemy-Animals taken as Followers. They are easily indentified by their illustrations.

Human & Humanoid...

rarely need be distinguished, one from the other; when needed, it is noted explicitly on other cards affecting them. Commercial card illustrations show which belong to these subtypes.

Spirit...

is one typically without true physical form, be it Mental or Spiritual, even if and when it can take physical action. All djinn, efriti (efreets), marid, etc. are such. The "Poltergeist" is the prime commercial example, as are any Enemy-Spirit taken as a Follower.

The Origins

Faerie...

[as for Enemies, but] are beings in the mundane world (the Land) that are still kin of, or originate from, this otherwhere attached to the world.

Noble...

is one from the top social castes including any interpreted as royalty or a few that server in royally appointed positions (such as a "Champion"). At present, there are no Noble cards in *ITB*, but commercial cards mentioned can be affected by other *ITB* cards that reference *Nobles*. More Noble cards will be coming in a future small expansion from J.C.

Rural...

indicates a persona from villages, hamlets, or settled areas outside of Urban locations.

Urban...

is for those from cities, castles, strongholds, and religious centers, or similar extensive settlements though not necessarily always Human by Form.

Wilderness...

classifies any from uncivilized or wild areas generally outside the influence (if not the presence) of civilization. Many such are also *Faerie* by subtype.

Objects & Magic Objects

Adornment...

is an Object that must be worn (carried) by the character itself for it to gain/use their benefits. Adornments carried by a Follower or in *Baggage* do not give their benefits to the character. Some count against Object Limit while others do not count; those that do not have notations that say so.

If a notation isn't present, assume the *Adornment* counts against Object Limit. This is typically because it is bulky, weighty, or (sometimes) powerful. The "Crown of Solomon" and "Magic Ring" are commercial card examples. All commercial *Adornment*-like Objects (as yet) are potent ones that count against Object Limit.

Baggage...

lets a character carry extra Objects above their Object Limit without need of a Follower. Some carry Objects limited by estimated size while others do not. If they have a "size" limit for what they can carry, notations on the card help you figure it out. Some without Object size limitation have minor penalties for the character using them to carry extra Objects.

NOTE: *Baggage* Objects can be carried by a Follower, but if so
1. the *Baggage* itself cannot carry extra Objects, and
2. it counts as an Object against that Follower's Object Limit.

One *Baggage* can be stuff inside of a second one, but if so
1. the stuffed in *Baggage* cannot carry Objects, and
2. it counts against the Object Limit of the containing *Baggage*.

Baggage can only carry Objects when on a character.

Documents...

are a special case. The first such carrid by a character does not count against

Object Limit. Any more *Documents* beyond the first do count against Object Limit.

Documents are not modern paper but parchment, which cracks and breaks if (un)folded too often. Because of this, they are rolled and hence awkward to carry without damaging them.

NOTE: a rolled up document is not a "scroll." A scroll is a type of prepared text—like a book, folio, bound sheaf, etc—but with its "pages" arranged in a continuous form. Any "paper" pages must be adhered to a parchment or papyrus backing, those often these backing materials are written upon directly. Sometimes certain thin but strong frabric is used instead. A true scroll as required parts and attributes like other forms of texts.

NOTE: There are special Baggage Objects to found among the *ITB* Purchase cards that change the burdens of carrying more than one *Document*.

Any *Document* (or its container) to be used in encounters with Enemies or other characters must be carried by the character.

Resources...

need not be carried by the character to use them. They can be carried in *Baggage* or by a Follower and are still accessible because they aren't used in, or applied to, imminent encounters. The "Raft" and the "Orb of Knowledge" are standard commercial examples.

NOTE: All Talismans are *Resources*; their mere presence protects the character and all it has when passing through the Valley of Fire.

Tools...

like *Weapons* or a "Shield," are handheld Objects. They must be on the character (not in *Baggage* or on a Follower) to be used during an encounter. To wield a *Tool* with a *Weapon,* a character must sacrifice use of a "Shield" or second *Weapon*. (A charac-

ter does not magically grow a third hand in combat because it has three handheld Objects available to it.)

Trinkets...

were introduced in the *Highlands* expansion, though aside from the term, these are nothing new. Fan expansion creators have been making such Objects *and* Magic Objects for 20+ years. These are Objects that do not count against a character's Object Limit at any time, typically because they are small enough to fit in the character's gold pouch. As yet, there are no official rules for whether or not they must be carried by the character in order to be used during encounters. *ITB* assumes the character must carry them; after all, they don't count against the character's Object Limit.

Weapon, Two-Handed

...requires both hands to use. Contrary to rules lawyers and a lack of rulings for such in *Talisman*, a character only has two hands, thereby it can wield only two handheld Objects in any direct encounter, such as combat. Typically this is a *Weapon* and a "Shield." The *Weapon, Two-Handed* requires sacrificing use of any other handheld Objects.

This subtype is not new and existed in past *Talisman* editions. There are no true examples among 4ER cards so far, though indeed the "Holy Lance" should have been one all the way back to 2E.

Places

Challenges...

are locations for micro-adventures where you may *choose* to face a "challenge" for possible gain. Most have 2 phases where you roll to see what lurks in the location and then roll for any gains after any encounter is successfully completed. The only similar commercial card is the "Cave," which

by its mechanics is not a true Challenge. A replacement for it can be found in this expansion that transforms it to match like *ITB* cards.

Obstacles...

are something that must be overcome for a character to proceed with its current or next turn. Unlike the two commercial examples—the "Maze" and "Marsh"—the *ITB* Place-Obstacles are...

1. overcome by tests against Strength and/or Craft, and
2. do not count against cards drawn on their space and thereby do not clog up the board.

You will find replacements for the Maze and Marsh in this expansion to make them match the more interesting (less annoying) *ITB* Place-Obstacle card mechanics.

Rural, Urban, & Wilderness...

as for Followers.

PURCHASE CARDS: PRICES AND LOCATIONS

You will note additional features on *ITB* Purchase cards. Each has a gold coin and number in the lower left corner. This is the Cost in gold to purchase the Object, Follower, or (oh, yes) Magic Object.

Next to the coin are Locations—spaces, space personas, and/or Adventure cards—where the Purchase card can be acquired. These should be considered *in addition to* any locations in the commercial game where such could be acquired.

This approach was considered easier than patching boards or cards, or using a reference card for prices and locations. Some locations for purchase should be obvious, such as most metal *Weapons* and *Armour* being available through the "Blacksmith"

(Village). Others may take some time to get familiar with.

It is strongly suggested that all players new to *ITB* be allowed to browse the new Purchase cards before a game. Give them a chance to learn what new goodies are available and where.

SPELL CARD SUBTYPES

You will note these in the midbar of all *ITB* Spell cards. They are for a couple minor mechanics related to all true mages and theurges. These are usually characters with the Special Ability to always have 1 Spell, but there are exceptions.

Spell subtypes can be ignored and no complications will arise from doing so. However, if you wish to use them, there are only two considerations.

All true mages and theurges can have an "emphasis" linked to one Spell subtype. Any such character when drawing a Spell may choose to discard one and draw another if the first drawn is not from its emphasis. (See the included character cards for examples.) The following commercial and *ITB* characters belong to the following subtype emphases. These should help you classify other characters as needed.

Conjury, the Spiritual [not Religious] path, includes: Dark Cultist, *ITB* Conjuror.

Thaumaturgy, the Physical Path, includes: Sage, *ITB* Thaumaturge.

Sorcery, the Mental Path, includes: Sorceress, *ITB* Sorcerer.

Theurgy, the Theurgical/Religious Path, includes: Druid, Priest, Prophetess, *ITB* Verdant Priest.

About the "Wizard"

Whether using the pop-culture interpretation of an over-gunned mage, or the traditional meaning of a hodge-podge, hedge practitioner, the Wizard does not have an emphasis. He may not use the emphasis redraw ability.

About the Warlock

Due to the Warlock's elevated spell abilities, he should be treated the same as for the Wizard. However, if you wish him to have an emphasis (and over-gun him even more), then it should be Conjury.

About the "Monk" and similar Characters

The Monk is obviously of a Theurgy or a religious emphasis. Though he does not always have 1 Spell, when he can gain a spell, you may wish to allow him the emphasis redraw option if he does not draw a Theurgy Spell. This same option can be applied to other such characters of obvious religious orientation by their title and or abilities.

HAVE QUESTIONS?

There are two possibilities for answers:

1. You and your group come up with your own preferred answer. After all, this isn't an official expansion, and most fan expansions do bend the official rules at least a little. It's your game; you decided how to play it.
2. Go to NobleDead.com, use the "Contact" form, and send J.C. a query. State the expansion to which your query pertains and tell him the problem. The site's staff will forward your note to him, and he will get back to you as quickly as possible. Remember to include a valid email address, which will not be used for any purpose other than to contact you concerning your query.

You may also use this avenue of contact to report any potential errors in the contents of this expansion. Corrections can be made as needed, and J.C. would appreciate the note.