

# TALISMAN TALES

## A STORY ELEMENTS DECK FOR TALISMAN “REVISED” 4<sup>TH</sup> EDITION

by J.C. Hendee, November 2011, [www.FantasticDiversions.com](http://www.FantasticDiversions.com)



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### Card Template

The frame of the card back matching the game’s standard cards was taken from templates made available through Jon New of [Talisman Island](http://TalismanIsland.com) with the gracious assistance of [Fantasy Flight Games](http://FantasyFlightGames.com). All other aspects of the card template are the original design of J.C. Hendee and may not be (re)used in part or whole in any way other than for printing this material for personal home use.

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## Introduction

*Talisman Tales* is an autonomous story elements deck for *Talisman* 4ER. It requires no physical integration with other game components and can be easily used or not from one game to the next. It is designed to provide:

- Additional benefits, deficits, and surprises during play.
- Minimal card placement on the board, or when so placed, cards do not count against cards drawn from standard decks.
- A choice-based trigger for drawing cards that is streamlined for easy execution.
- Activity-based play executed in tandem with seeking the game's standard goal(s).
- Character-oriented moments in the "tale" of their triumph or downfall.

## The Card Types

There are four card types: Legends, Special Abilities, Tasks, and Fortunes. Each has a different realm of influence on you (your Character) when drawn by opportunity and choice at the end of your turn.

### Legends...

are the most dangerous but smallest count of the card types. Some are played on the main board and have an order number like Adventure cards. That number may not always be what you would expect. Other Legends are not encountered directly but placed beside the main board (or you can place them on the Crown of Command temporarily, so they are more visible to all). They are open to the first player to encounter them by the card's instructions.

*If placed on a draw space*, they do not count against cards drawn. *If placed on a non-draw space*, they are encountered there like an Adventure card according to the standard rules.



When you successfully encounter a Legend, you do not take it as a trophy; you *gain* its "reward" listed on the card plus then number of Fate points listed in the card's bottom left corner.

### Special Abilities...

are the most sought type by players. When drawn, they may be discarded or kept according to later rules and pending activation. Some are similar to (but vary slightly from) those found on Character cards.



If you keep one upon drawing it, then it is considered "inactive." You must "activate" it according to requirements on the card before it can be used. Requirements and/or costs to activate are balanced against analyzed benefits, deficits, and chance of use. Cost units to activate will vary, and more than one unit type may be listed from which to choose. Cost unit types relate to what is appropriate for the specific Special Ability versus a generic unit.

Requiring activation to use these add-on Special Abilities controls build up of cheap "super-heroes" that unbalance the game. Additional power and advantage must be earned, not simply found or bought.

Where a space or space type is required to activate, a new rule allows easier control of movement in reaching that space. This is indicated by the term "**seek**" on any card. [See the "Seek Rule."]

### Tasks...

give you a chance to *do* something for gain while continuing normal play. As in the example to the right, a "**seek**" is often present to make it easier to complete without relying on random or magical movement. [See the "Seek Rule."]



Reward for completion is based on the value of what you accomplish and not the

difficulty involved. A Task's desirability depends heavily upon when and where it is drawn, as well as your current needs and status.

Some Task cards turn into an Adventure card (sub)type at certain points during their steps to completion or upon being drawn. If this is so, the (sub)type is listed in the card's midbar. Card instructions indicate when the card transforms; if not, the card assumes its (sub)type status when drawn.

If the card has conditions for when it transforms, at such a time, and until the Task is completed, the card is treated like an Adventure card of that (sub)type where all standard game rules apply. This includes the possibility of another Character taking / stealing the transformed card in standard game play according to the card's transformed (sub)type. For example, if a Task becomes an Object, you could be forced to drop it like an Object, or even have it taken from you by another player. Another player acquiring the transformed card could then complete the rest of the task to gain its reward... and you're out of luck!

*A Task that does not transform—which does not have a (sub)type in its midbar—cannot be stolen by any means.*

## Fortunes...

are the most common card types. They are twists and turns along your journey. Unlike draws from other decks, Fortune effects are often more directly linked to what happened to you in the turn you just completed.

The example shown is drawn on a "Hills" space (see "The Card Backs" for why). Hence this fortunate occurrence could only happen to you when you just finished a turn in the "Hills."

Not all the tides of Fortunes are beneficial. Their effects vary from good to bad to those that depend on your current status, attributes, actions, etc.



## The Card Backs

Unlike standard decks, *Tales* card backs differ from one to the next by title and illustration. They indicate a board space (or even an Adventure card (sub)type in future expansions). Some card fronts appear more than once in the deck but with different card backs; particular *Tales* cards might be encountered in different places or situations.



The back of the deck's top card indicates either where (space type or name) or why (some other encounter) this card may be drawn at the end of the current player's turn. If you finish a turn on the matching space or have encountered what is on the card's back, you *may* draw the top card. The draw is optional unless a particular card instructs you to draw another one. Hence there is no need for reference materials to indicate when the top card *may* be drawn. The necessary condition is always there on the deck's top card.

There are card backs in the starter deck for almost all draw space types. There are also three special card backs:

- "Any Draw Space" *may* be drawn upon completing a turn on any space *on the main board* where Adventure cards are drawn.
- "Non-Draw Space" *may* be drawn upon completing a turn on any space *on the main board* where Adventure cards are *not* drawn.
- "Home" *may* be drawn upon completing a turn on the "Starting Space" listed on your Character card.

## About Expansion or "Realm" Boards

The *Tales* deck is designed to offer new opportunities on the main board of the game's Land. Expansion boards (commonly called "Realm" boards by players of previous *Talisman* editions) typically expand one space on that main board. Hence expansion boards are not really other "regions"; they are sub-regions, or realms, at best. They have their own special opportunities

and therefore are generally excluded from access to the *Tales* deck. *However...*

If your land on a specifically named space or space type on a Realm board that matches the top *Tales* card's back, then you may draw that card.

#### For Example

- You land on the "Hills" in the Highlands.
- If the top *Tales* card is for the "Hills," then you *may* draw that card.
- If the top *Tales* card is for "Any Draw Space" or a card type encountered during your turn there, you **cannot** draw that card.

Only a *Tales* card specifically matching a Realm's space name *may* be drawn outside the main board. And there are very few of these.

## Creating Your Deck

The included Starter\_Deck.pdf is for printing at home or through your local copy/print shop. You should print the cards on stiff photo paper or photo cardstock if possible. Standard printer paper or cardstock can be used, but clarity of print will suffer, and printer "paper" is very thinner than photo paper and flimsy for making cards.

## Printing the Card Sheets

Always do a test print of one page, or part of a page, to make sure the output is suitable. Print quality varies from one printer to the next, including those at a copy/print shop. All home printers, and certainly commercial machines, are capable of adjusting print output. Check your printer's settings and/or preferences in the interface that pops up when you print. Due to variations among controls offered by various printer interfaces, there are only general recommendations that can be made. For adjusting inadequate test print results:

1. Use "Gamma" adjustment first, if available; this will shift all colors uniformly, though it may lighten blacks as well.
2. As an additional or alternative to "Gamma," look for the availability to adjust by "Curve"; this will uniformly allow lightening or darkening of the middle range of color and contrast without radically changing the darkest and lightest areas of cards.

3. Use "Lightness/Darkness" options as a last resort, for this will affect quality more radically than the other two options.

Print another test and check your results for personal satisfaction. Remember or save your settings so that you can match them for any future *Tales* expansion packs.

## Cutting the Card Sheets

There are two types of crop/cut marks on your printed sheets: black and red. There are two methods for cutting your cards with these.

Always light score along lines indicated by crop/cut marks first without cutting all the way through. This way, as you begin cutting away the unneeded parts of a sheet, including some crop marks, you will know where to make the rest of your cuts.

### Method 1: Fully cut backs and fronts

In this approach, you separate all card fronts and backs by cutting along all lines between both black *and* red crop marks. Be careful to keep card fronts (left) and backs (right) together in their proper pairs. If you mismatch fronts and backs, the deck will not work right during play.

### Method 2: Foldable backs and fronts

In this approach, you do a final cut only along lines between the black crop marks. Do not cut through scores between red crop marks. You will end up with finished pieces where a card's front and back are one piece. Fold along the score in each piece (from the red crop scoring) so the back and front make one card.

## Making the Cards

You will need card sleeves for this as the best option. Some groups have used the folded method and then a glue stick to adhere the folded card into one unit; results have varied based on skill.

If using sleeves, always use ones that are clear on both sides. Do not use sleeves with pre-print art backs, as you will need to see the deck's card backs for it to be played properly.

You will need at least 50 sleeves for the starter deck.

Card sleeves come in two thickness: light (about 40 microns) and heavy (80 to 100 microns). Typically, if the thickness is not listed for a product, the heavy ones are priced the same as the light ones but come in packs of half the count.

Durability testing over years of play in various games using card sleeves have shown that heavy sleeves do not make much difference. Save yourself some money and double the sleeves you get for the price by using the lighter ones. Even if one tears or breaks over time, they are half the price to replace.

Card sleeve size is also an issue. At most game accessory vendors, if you search for sleeves by a game's name (such as *Talisman*, in this case), you may find more than one size recommended. This indicates a loose or tight fit by the sizes presented, which will be very close to one another. The slightly smaller size is the tighter fit. A tight fit makes for a more manageable deck, including during shuffling while a loose fit is easier to sleeve homemade or commercially made cards.

[MayDay Games](#) (or they products through Amazon and other vendors) has always been the source of choice for many players who frequent [FantasticDiversions.com](#). They offer competitive prices, savings on bulk orders, and their card accessories are found in many game shops across the USA. Of course you should buy from whatever source you prefer.

## Rules of Play

### Preparation

1. Shuffle the *Tales* deck and place it conveniently near the board. Placement near the Adventure deck is best, so that as players access those cards, they will repeatedly note the top card on the *Tales* deck.
2. Once all other game preparations are complete, including selection of Characters, and before the first turn:
  - a. Remove the top card without looking at its front.

- b. Slide that card under the deck, face down; do not place it into the *Tales* discard pile.

3. The actual top card with its back displaying where/why it is drawn is revealed as a surprise to all before the game begins.

### Accessing the *Tales* Deck

1. The top *Tales* card back indicates where and/or what you must encounter to draw it.
2. If you finish a turn in which you encountered what is on the card's back, then you **may** draw that card. ***Draw is optional and not required.***
3. Look at the card's front, determine its type as listed in the middle bar (Legend, Special Ability, Task, or Fortune), and follow the rules by card type to take action upon it.
4. Some card types have the option to discard them immediately if you do not wish to encounter them.

### Drawing a "Legend" card

1. You must put a Legend into play; it cannot be discarded unless its instructions say otherwise. Read it aloud to all players, as many Legends affect everyone in the game.
2. Review how and where it is placed.
  - a. If it is placed on your current space, then you must encounter it immediately.
  - b. If it is placed on another Character's current space, that Character does *not* encounter the Legend during your turn.
3. Legend cards do not count against cards drawn on any board space.
4. Your turn ends.

### Drawing a "Special Ability" card

1. Declare aloud that it is a Special Ability [SA] and privately review its use and activation requirements. No other player may look at it for any reason by any means.
2. Choose whether to keep or discard it.
  - a. You may have 1 inactivate SA *by choice* at any time; some special conditions may lead to you having more than one. Any SA you have already activated does not count against this limit.



- b. If you wish to keep a newly drawn SA, you must discard all other *inactivate* SA cards that you already have.
3. Place the inactivate SA face down next to your Character card. No other player may look at it for any reason by any means. The only time other players will learn its nature is when/if you later “activate” or discard it.
  - a. If the cost to activate is in trophy points, discarding that cost does not count for gaining Craft or Strength. Extra points above the cost that are discards are also lost and cannot be claimed later.
  - b. To avoid losing extra trophy points in paying for activation, you can wait until you have enough for a Strength or Craft as well. You then fulfill any other criteria to activate the SA and, at that time, excess extra trophy points that would be lost can be combined with extra trophy points for a Craft or Strength point.
  - c. When you complete an SA’s activate requirements, turn the card face up to indicate it is one you can now use. It no longer counts against you if and when you draw another inactivate SA card.
4. Your turn ends.

### Drawing a “Task” Card

1. Declare aloud that it is a Task and privately review its instructions and reward.
2. Choose whether to keep or discard it *unless* the card’s instructions say you must accept the Task. Either way, if you accept it, you must complete it.
3. If you accept the Task, place the card face up next to your Character card.
  - a. Until completed, you may not accept another Task *by choice*, though you can have more than one if another Task forces you to take it. If you later draw another Task while you already have one, discard the one just drawn unless it says you must accept it.
  - b. Once a Task is complete and its reward is gained, discard the Task card.
4. Your turn ends.

### Drawing a “Fortune” card

1. You must encounter a Fortune; it cannot be discarded unless its instructions say otherwise.
2. Read the card aloud so that all players know what is happening.
3. Execute the card’s instructions and note instructions that affect you during a following or future turn.
4. Discard the Fortune unless its instructions indicate otherwise.
5. Your turn ends.

### The “Seek” Rule

This rule applies to any *Tales* card instruction that includes the key word “**seek**.” It assists in more easily completing some card requirements in a controlled fashion vs. random or magical movement. It most commonly occurs in the “activate” conditions of Special Ability cards and instructions for completing a Task, though it may be found on a few Legend and Fortune cards as well. Here is how a **Seek** works in modifying only rolled movement.

1. Note any destination board space or Adventure card mentioned in your *Tales* card instructions. If that instruction includes the term “*seek*,” you *may* use the **Seek** rule to get to that destination.
2. When you are ready to *seek* that destination, declare so aloud at the end of your current turn.
3. On your next turn, move toward that destination by the shortest, most direct route; you cannot change your mind on a turn following the one in which you declare a **Seek**.
4. Roll the movement die or dice normally. Unless the *Tales* card says otherwise, you may apply modifiers to your result based on Special Abilities, Spells, Followers, Objects, etc.
5. If your total movement result is equal to, or greater than, the number of spaces to your declared destination, you *must* stop short on that destination.
6. If you use the **Seek** rule to reach a destination required by a *Tales* card,

- a. you do not encounter choice options at that destination space or card; you may only complete the *Tales* card's instructions at that destination, but...
- b. you do encounter all non-choice instructions on a space or card that is the destination of your *seek*.

## Twists of Fate

At times it may seem the top *Tales* card is beyond reach or interest of any player. The following standard and optional rules allow the deck's top card to rotate a little more often.

- **When you *gain* a Fate during any turn, including that of another player, you may discard the top *Tales* card; you may not look at it first.**

The following additional conditions may be used if your group feels the *Tales* deck is not rotating enough; all players must agree upon these options before a game begins.

- ❑ **When you *replenish* one or more Fate during your turn, you may discard the top *Tales* card; you may not look at it first before deciding.**
- ❑ **When you use a Fate during your turn, you may discard the top *Tales* card; you may not look at it first before deciding.**

## Death and *Tales* Cards

Sooner or later, a Character that has gained and kept *Tales* cards will die. When this happens, whether that Character is allowed to resurrect or a new one must be drawn, all *Tales* cards connected to it are discarded, including activate Special Abilities.

Special Abilities claimed out of the *Tales* deck are additional; the only Special Abilities that a Character retains upon resurrection are the one's written on its card. The *Tales* deck should not be used to allow a Character to resurrect with more options than are on its card, nor should a newly drawn Character "inheritance" for transfer of *Tales* cards original gained by the deceased.

## Examples of Play

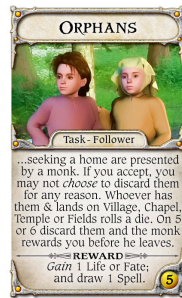
### Special Ability: "Fields Magic"

- You have drawn and kept this card. Its cost to activate must be paid while in the Fields. Its activate instructions include the word "*seek*."
- At the end of your turn, you declare that you will *seek* a "Fields" space on your next turn. Other players will realize you are up to something but not know what, since your inactivate Special Ability is not revealed yet.
- You have declared a *seek* for a space appearing more than once in the Outer Region; you must move towards the *nearest* "Fields" by the shortest and most direct route.
- You are 3 spaces from the nearest Fields and roll 4 for movement. Since you declared a *seek*, you must stop short on that Fields. You may not move that last 4<sup>th</sup> space, even if something you wish to encounter has appeared on that space during the round since your last turn.
- You must resolve any required encounters there, such as drawing Adventure cards if necessary. You cannot exercise any options of choice (including from Special Abilities you already have), such as being able to draw extra cards or discard to draw another. You may exercise options of choice from cards, such as visiting a Place or Stranger offering goods or services, etc.
- Once all required actions are complete, you may fulfill the rest of the requirements to activate "Fields Magic," such as discarding 2 Craft trophy points or 1 Spell.
- You then turn "Fields Magic" face up next to your Character card, and all other players learn the new ability you have gained.
- Your turn ends immediately activating a new Special Ability.



## Task: “Orphans”

- You draw this Task and, upon reading it, see there is no mention of a “seek” for completing it. You will have to use random or magical movement in order to find one of the listed spaces upon which this task can be completed. Your turn ends upon completing a Task.



## Legend: “The Narihkt Fay”

- She has been drawn and placed beside the board. This Legend can be faced and overcome by any player upon meeting special conditions listed on the card.
- No “seek” is mentioned in the card’s instructions about how to first encounter her, so all players must watch for an opportunity of chance to fulfill that part of this Legend during normal movement.
- By normal movement, you manage to land on a Woods space and must first fulfill all requirements for that space, such as drawing and encountering Adventure cards. If you intend to search and face this Fay, you cannot execute any other options of choice.
- You roll 2 dice and manage to roll below your total Craft, so you find her. You manage to defeat her in Psychic Combat, so you take her card, and she becomes a temporary Follower (as listed in the card’s midbar) until you fulfill conditions for claiming the listed reward.
- The last part of the card’s instructions does include the term “seek,” so you may use the **Seek** rule to reach the Forest in order to discard her and claim the “Reward.” Hopefully no one steals her from you along the way through a Special Ability and then claims that reward instead of you.



## Questions and Errata

If you have any questions, or you discover something that seems amiss, please do feel free to submit them through the “Contact” page at [FantasticDiversions.com](http://FantasticDiversions.com). The basic rules are set and have been developed in conjunction with feedback from play testing by three international groups, but refinements can be addressed.