



THE WAKING STONES

BY LYNNE HARDY



Pelgrane Press



CREDITS

**13TH AGE MONTHLY
CREATIVE EDITOR
AND DEVELOPER**
Rob Heinsoo

LAYOUT
Chris Huth

WRITING
Lynne Hardy

**13TH AGE MONTHLY
CONCEPT**
Rob Heinsoo and Simon Rogers

ADDITIONAL WRITING
Rob Heinsoo

COVER & INTERIOR ART
Rich Longmore

**13TH AGE MONTHLY
PUBLISHERS**
Simon Rogers and Cathriona Tobin

COPYEDITING
Christopher Smith Adair

EDITING
Christopher Smith Adair

**13TH AGE IS A FANTASY ROLEPLAYING GAME BY
ROB HEINSOO, JONATHAN TWEET, LEE MOYER, & AARON MCCONNELL**

©2015 Pelgrane Press Ltd. All rights reserved. Published by Pelgrane Press Ltd. under license from Fire Opal Media, Inc.
■ **Product Identity:** The following items are hereby identified as Product Identity, as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e), and are not Open Content: All trademarks, registered trademarks, proper names (characters, icons, place names, new deities, etc.), dialogue, banter and comments from Lynne and Rob, plots, story elements, locations, characters, artwork, and trade dress. (Elements that have previously been designated as Open Game Content are not included in this declaration.)

■ **Open Content:** Except for material designated as Product Identity (see above), the game mechanics of this Fire Opal Media game product are Open Game Content, as defined in the Open Gaming License version 1.0a Section 1(d). No portion of this work other than the material designated as Open Game Content may be reproduced in any form without written permission. ■ *13th Age Monthly* is published by Pelgrane Press Ltd. under the Open Game License version 1.0a Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. *13th Age* is a trademark of Fire Opal Media, Inc. ©2015 Pelgrane Press Ltd. All rights reserved.

www.pelgranepress.com

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use," "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document. Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors: Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

13th Age. Copyright 2013, Fire Opal Media, Inc.; Authors: Rob Heinsoo, Jonathan Tweet, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.

13th Age Bestiary. Copyright 2014, Fire Opal Media, Inc. and Pelgrane Press Ltd; Authors: Ryven Cedrylle, Rob Heinsoo, Kenneth Hite, Kevin Kulp, ASH LAW, Cal Moore, Steve Townshend, Rob Watkins, Rob Wieland.

13 True Ways. Copyright 2014, Fire Opal Media, Inc.; Authors: Rob Heinsoo, Jonathan Tweet, Robin D. Laws, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.

The Waking Stones. Copyright 2015, Pelgrane Press Ltd.; Authors: Lynne Hardy, Rob Heinsoo.

Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook. Copyright 2009, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.

Castles & Crusades. Copyright 2004, Troll Lord Games; Authors: Davis Chenault, Mac Golden.

THE WAKING STONES

Spend too much time studying the great stone monoliths and you're sure to spot an ear or an eye or the hint of an elbow, natural contours that have randomly folded themselves into the stone. Randomness is one explanation, anyway. It may not be correct.

The remains of previous ages lie scattered across the world like the bones of long-dead creatures. Some of them, of course, are the bones of long-dead creatures, cut down in the conflicts that shape each passing generation. Others are the subject of garbled myths and half-recalled truths, their original identity and purpose obscured by the weight of time and the vagaries of mortal and immortal memory.

And still others, at the center of our tale, are not the bones of long-dead creatures, but the stone creatures themselves, resting in shapes that can't be distinguished from normal monoliths (if in fact there is such a thing as a "normal" monolith in your campaign!).

THE OLD STONE TRUTH

In a few wild, forgotten places, hidden beneath shady forest canopies or blankets of moss, or exposed to the elements on wide, windswept moors, stand great circles and long avenues of stones, their pockmarked surfaces testament to their incredible age. No one is sure who built these stone monuments—or why—but there they remain, watching the seasons roll over them year after year, generation after generation.

Anyone paying attention may realize that some of the stones sometimes move. But then, it's a magical world. There is any number of druids, cultists, and wizards who find powerful uses for circles and avenues of stones, and there are stranger things than rocks that occasionally turn up in new configurations or that seem to have increased in number over the years.

Odds are that most of these stones are exactly what they look like: timeworn monuments of forgotten powers. But a few are sleepers, ancient stone beings who call themselves the taranar. Few others use that name, so we'll also refer to them as the stone people. They are giant living humanoid beings of stone and quartz who fold their humanoid selves within chunks of dead rock when they slumber.

The stone people sleep through the eons, waking periodically to discover what each new age or century has to offer, but usually returning to sleep so quickly that no one recognizes them for what they are. But this is the 13th age! All the world's ancient powers are waking and realizing that this is the time they've been waiting for, the moment when everything will come to a head, when the world will be remade, or destroyed, or set upon a new cycle.

The stone people are stirring, and when they go back to sleep, folding back into rock, it may be for only a season, or a week, or a night.

CAMPAIGN OPTIONS

Who are the stone people? Who *were* they? What will they care about now that they are waking? Below are a few suggestions for use in your campaigns. Take the elements which appeal to you or that fit into your current campaign. If multiple stories appeal to you, it's entirely possible that there are different types of stone people, created in different eras by different icons or gods.

The Displaced: The strange monoliths were once a race of rock-born humanoids who lived on the edges of the civilized world. According to their own legends, they were among the first creatures to walk the earth, formed from its very bones long before the dwarves ever thought of tunneling into the depths in search of treasure.

By dint of their location, the taranar fell into being defenders of the borderlands, fighting against numerous enemies to keep the neighboring "softskins" safe. But their fight was never ending; over time, their civilization grew weak and they, themselves, grew desperately weary. Eventually, they were pushed out of their homelands and forced to live a nomadic life—always moving, never settling. They called to the icons for help, for some respite from their sorrows in payment for their services against the forces of chaos and villainy. One of the icons of the time answered their call and sent them into a magical sleep from which they periodically awaken, on the anniversary of their enchantment, to see if they can return home. Until now, they have remained disappointed. But a world with 13 icons is more or less what they've been waiting for. It's up to you whether the icon who originally "blessed" the taranar with sleep still remembers the act or is happy with the taranar's apparent choice of a homeland.

Dereliction of Duty: Another version of this legend records that the stone people were not accidental guardians of the wild places, but were charged with their protection by an icon, though the stone people themselves no longer remember *who*. It may have been a former High Druid, or even a lost icon not known in this current age—one with a particular dislike of giants and dragons, the taranar's oldest and bitterest foes.

Once noble and fearless, as time drifted on their dedication began to waver and, either through cowardice, apathy, or coercion, the stone people deserted their duties and allowed the hinterlands under their stewardship to fall to their enemies. Fearing the wrath of their former patron, they fled. They could not, however, outrun their fate and were turned to solid, unthinking stone by the icon they had betrayed. Their repeated wakings are a bittersweet time of joy at experiencing true life once more, tinged with deep regret as they ponder the consequences of their original sins. Perhaps one day they will be able to seek forgiveness—they certainly hope so.

Vessels: The stone creatures were never truly living beings in their own right. Instead, they are merely vehicles used by the consciousnesses of incorporeal beings which make their home on a distant star. When the star passes over the stones in its slow journey across the heavens, the beings (the actual taranar)

migrate into their rocky avatars, activating the crystalline nerve networks deep within the stone and bringing them, however briefly, to “life.”

For a set period (dictated by the rate of the star’s passage through the sky), the taranar revel in a form wholly different to their normal intangible existence. Once the star passes too far away, the beings are drawn back to their home and must wait until the star’s alignment once again permits them to indulge in a physical reality.

Alternatively, this particular version of events may be incorporated with *Dereliction of Duty*, in that the taranar’s fate was to be banished to a distant star instead of being put to sleep. There, they exist as beings of pure thought who can do little else but reflect on their wrongdoing until their prison brings them back in range of their true forms. Their brief reclaiming of their original bodies serves to further underline the degree of their treachery by reminding them exactly what it is they’ve sacrificed.

If you’re using anything like the timeline *ASH LAW* is using in the current Organized Play campaigns, you’ve already got comets of prophecy and meteorites of destruction in play. Stellar or cometary taranar would fit in perfectly.

Fully Charged: In this version, the stone people are a secret the Archmage has kept, mostly.

Stories of guardians fleeing their homes and being sent to sleep or banished to distant stars is stuff and nonsense, at least as far as some of the more learned inhabitants of *Horizon* are concerned. According to them, the sleep/wake cycle of the taranar is perfectly natural, and, while it may be governed by a celestial body, it has nothing whatsoever to do with spiritual possession.

The stones, like every other creature, require a source of energy to remain active. Being a siliceous life form, the wizards argue, means that the source of that energy is unlikely to be run of the mill. Current theories range from receiving power from some as-yet-unidentified celestial body when its wanderings bring it close enough to charge up the crystals in the stones to the creatures tapping into the system of ley lines that crisscross the world to supply their needs. This would certainly explain why standing stones tend to be found along the paths of the lines and why those lines outside the Empire have a tendency to be weaker than those governed by the Archmage. Both theories also help to explain the stones’ unusual orientation (either facing the star or the flow of energy along the lines).

Wherever their sustenance comes from, the stones are limited to a set period of activity before they run out of energy and must return to their dormant state. Those in the celestial camp insist this is because the star has moved on and can no longer provide nourishment for its “children.” Those who prefer the ley line theory believe that the stones slowly recharge themselves in readiness for the next time they awaken.

Hibernation: Certain creatures go into a very deep sleep during the coldest times of the year in order to survive. Softskins don’t have a monopoly on such a system, and the taranar regularly fall into a state of torpor that looks very much like hibernation for extended periods of time. This may be in accordance with the rise and fall of magic in the world, or follow some overarching cycle that only the taranar are truly aware of, if only subconsciously.



Druidic Allies: Over the centuries, followers of the High Druid have become comfortable in the ancient stone avenues and circles of menhirs, thinking of them as natural terrain instead of as the creations of previous empires. The taranar are part of the reason for the stones’ easy acceptance by druidic magic. Now that there is a powerful High Druid within the Empire, the stone people are going to be her strongest allies, regardless of their original origins. It’s an advantage the Empire never saw coming.

Burying the Hatchet: The truth behind the taranar is dark. Most of the great stone avenues of the north are carved with the symbol of a double axe. These stones are part of a closely guarded secret, held between the Emperor, the Dwarf King, and the Elf Queen: the other stories presented above are rumors spread to hide the truth once the stone people begin to wake. The taranar’s activation is, in fact, tied to the appearance of the Orc Lord. Just as the first Orc Lord was a construct of the elves, so the stone people are a construct of the dwarves, made originally to fight alongside the Orc Lord, to whom they swore an oath of fealty. Now that the Orc Lord has returned, the three icons are deeply concerned, particularly as there are reports of the stones beginning to stir. Do they harbor a grudge against the dwarves as great as that the Orc Lord holds for the Elf Queen? Or are they going to pick a new target?

TARANAR

Their true nature forgotten by all but a few, these slumbering megaliths dot the landscape awaiting the day they will fully awaken once and for all.

The taranar are, according to most of the above alternate descriptions of their history, humanoid creatures composed of living rock and crystal. However, if you prefer the theory that they are stone shells occasionally used by an animating consciousness or dwarven fabrications from an age long past, then treat the following creature types as [CONSTRUCT] rather than [HUMANOID].

SPECIAL ABILITIES FOR ALL TARANAR

All-rock (resist weapons and negative energy 16+): All taranar are resistant to physical damage as a result of their stony nature. If an assailant fails to make a natural roll of 16+ when using a weapon against a taranar, the attacker deals only half damage. The resistance also applies to negative energy damage, which tends to fizzle ineffectively against the ancient stones.

Lightning flare: As a last ditch defense, when a taranar is reduced to between 1 and 10 hp, it can discharge its remaining stored energy as a counterattack (no attack roll required) against the character who delivered the telling blow, dealing 1d6 lightning damage per level of the taranar. The taranar immediately returns to its immobile rock form and cannot take any further role in the battle. It will then remain torpid unless destroyed or the cycle turns full circle and the conditions for it to wake are met again (providing they can be). Such severely damaged creatures reawaken as broken taranar, regardless of what they were before.

Thick-skinned: Being made of stone has its benefits. The taranar are immune to almost all effects—they cannot be dazed, weakened, confused, or made vulnerable to anything beyond those energies they are already vulnerable to (fire and cold; see below). Taranar are also immune to ongoing damage.

CRACKING UP

Taranar are big and tough. But even big, tough creatures have a weakness (or, at least, you really have to hope they do if you don't want to get squashed). For the stone people, their two main fears are fire and ice. This may stem from their clashes with their ancient foes the frost and fire giants, or it may be due to the actions of those who, over the centuries, have used heat and cold to smash their bodies into manageable fragments.

As a result, the taranar are vulnerable to fire *and* cold energy, both of which play havoc with their physiology—so much so that a hit from a fire attack followed immediately (either in the current or subsequent round) by a hit from a cold attack will cause double cold damage, irrespective of whether a critical (normally 18+) has been rolled. If a critical is rolled, triple the damage inflicted.

ICONIC POWERS

Centuries of existence as free-standing monoliths have exposed the taranar to many of the world's most powerful magical traditions. There's something about a circle or avenue of standing stones that inspires druids, cultists, chaos magicians, and wizards to get a ritual going.

Part of the taranar's remarkable success at hiding through the ages comes from the fact that they don't wake up just because someone is using their stone as an altar for a goblin sacrifice or a ritual of rebirth. But sleeping through centuries of ritual magic doesn't mean that the taranar have been unaffected by the experience. It's possible that a taranar could have acquired lingering magical abilities.

You can use the following special abilities in at least five ways:

- 1: As a consequence of a story connection between a taranar and its location in the world, obviously exposed for a long period of time to magicians associated with an icon.
- 2: As a reaction to a PC's use of an icon advantage, particularly as a possible complication of an icon advantage used when the taranar are in play or in the story.
- 3: To cast the taranar as heroes or villains relative to the player characters' intentions.
- 4: As lower impact nastier specials in battles that seem overly easy on the PCs.
- 5: In combination with each other, since it's entirely possible that the magic of more than one icon has shaped a stone!

Archmage (The Flying Stones): In sympathy with the magic that keeps Horizon aloft, a taranar influenced by the Archmage's magic can fly until the end of a battle after it has either scored or suffered a critical hit. The flight isn't quick or agile. More like empowered levitation, about what you'd expect from an airborne monolith.

Diabolist (The Stones Are Red): Roll a random demon ability (core 13th Age book, page 209). The taranar will use that ability once this battle, and once only.

Elf Queen (Repose): Roll a normal save when dropped to 0 hit points. If the save succeeds, the taranar only drops to 1 hit point and teleports somewhere far away to sleep for a while. And then it wakes up. And remembers everything. . . .

High Druid (The Call): The first time the escalation die reaches 5+, another taranar surfaces in the battle, called up from hidden slumber.

Lich King (Simple Fear): The taranar has the *fear* ability, affecting creatures at or beneath the fear threshold for its level indicated on the DIY monster tables on pages 254–255 of the core rulebook.

Orc Lord (Savagery): -2 to all defenses. +2 to all attacks.

The Three (Fight the Claw): Taranar are usually enemies of the dragons. Exposure to their magic has taught the taranar to use the escalation die whenever it is odd.

TARANAR HUNTER

Proof, if it were needed, that you really don't want to get between a rock and a hard place.

Large 4th level spoiler [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +4

Vulnerability: cold, fire

Fists of stone +9 vs. AC (2 attacks)—14 damage

Natural even hit: The target takes 7 lightning damage from the electrical energy released on impact by the taranar's integral crystals.

R: Lightning strike +8 vs. PD (one nearby or faraway enemy)—21 lightning damage

Natural 16+: The taranar smashes its fists together to generate a fearsome bolt of lightning that also dazes the target (save ends).

Miss: The target is dazed until the end of their next turn.

Nastier Specials

Shard burst: When reduced to 0 hp the taranar hunter explodes in a shower of rock splinters, causing 10 damage to anyone it is engaged with and 1d3 other nearby enemies.

AC 21
PD 19 HP 88
MD 14

TARANAR BUGLER

Some stones are riddled with holes, marking them out in local superstition as something special. If you blow through them, you can make a sound eerily like a hunting horn if you have the breath for it. And while taranar don't breath as such, only a fool wouldn't expect them to know how to blow their own trumpet, which they use in an almost bard-like manner to call the thunder from the heavens and the stones of the earth to do their bidding.

Large 5th level caster [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +6

Vulnerability: cold, fire

Rock smash +8 vs. AC—18 damage

Natural odd hit: The target takes 9 lightning damage released by the taranar's all-pervading crystalline components on contact.

R: Call to the storm +9 vs. PD (1d6 nearby enemies)—30 thunder damage, and the target is weakened until the end of their next turn

Limited use: 1/battle, when the escalation die is 3+.

R: Song of summoned stones +11 vs. PD (one nearby enemy)—27 damage

Natural even hit: The summoned stones attacking the target fall from above, dazing them (save ends).

Natural odd hit: The summoned stones attacking the target roll into them, hampering them (save ends).

Natural 18+: Once per battle, the taranar bugler can cause the stones it summons to coalesce into animated conglomerates, whose number is *determined by the escalation die +1*. The conglomerates take their turns immediately after the bugler when they first appear and each round thereafter.

Miss: 9 damage.

AC 21
PD 16 HP 104
MD 19

TARANAR CORYPHÉE

Legend states that many stone circles are the calcified remains of dancers. Legend has no idea just how accurate it is.

Large 3rd level blocker [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +5

Vulnerability: cold, fire

Sparking clogs +7 vs. AC (2 attacks)—10 damage

Natural even hit: The target takes 5 lightning damage from the electrical discharge caused by the impact of crystal-laced stone feet on their person.

C: Stoneshoe shuffle +8 vs. PD (1d4 nearby enemies)—18 damage

Natural roll over target's Dexterity: The target is hampered as the localized earth tremors generated by the dancing stones causes them to struggle to maintain their balance (save ends).

Limited use: The coryphée can use this ability only when the escalation die is even.

AC 20
PD 18 HP 66
MD 13



CONGLOMERATE

Assembled by the bugler's clarion call, these shifting, clattering collections of rubble fight mindlessly until they are destroyed (or the battle ends). While they are resistant to weapons and immune to most effects like their summoners, they are not actually living taranar.

2nd level mook [CONSTRUCT]

Initiative: +2

Vulnerability: cold, fire

Pebble dash +7 vs. AC (2 attacks)—3 damage

Nastier Specials

Rock pile: Once per battle the conglomerate can launch itself at a nearby enemy as a hail of rubble.

C: Throwing stones +6 vs. PD (one nearby enemy)—7 damage and the conglomerate teleports to become adjacent to the target.

AC 18

PD 16

MD 12

HP 8 (mook)

Mook: Kill one conglomerate mook for every 8 damage you deal to the mob.

BROKEN TARANAR

Even broken stones can break the softskins.

Large 4th level troop [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +3

Vulnerability: cold, fire

Boulder blow +9 vs. AC—21 damage

Miss: 7 damage.

Nastier Specials

Rolling stone: Once per round, if the broken taranar misses its target with a natural even roll, it can immediately pop free, move to engage a nearby enemy it was not engaged with, and attack. If it misses that enemy, it cannot attempt another attack until its next turn.

AC 20

PD 18

MD 14

HP 76

TARANAR AVALANCHE

When the stone folk are broken in body, mind, and soul, all that remains is a huge avalanche of rage, simultaneously growing but tearing itself apart. This never happened in previous ages, so the taranar themselves may be shocked when a taranar avalanche wrenches itself out of the ground and charges.

Huge 6th level wrecker [ELEMENTAL]

Initiative: +11

Vulnerability: cold, fire

Crashing & smashing +12 vs. AC (1d4 attacks)—25 damage

Natural odd hit or miss: The taranar avalanche deals damage to itself equal to 1d6 per point on the escalation die; damage is not reduced by the *all-rock* ability.

Miss: 10 damage.

No lightning flare ability. Taranar avalanches are too far gone.

AC 20

PD 19

MD 18

HP 200

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The hooks below hinge upon choices you've made for the taranar's origins and intentions.

Paying Your Dues—The High Druid has discovered the existence of the taranar and knows their next awakening is imminent. Whether they were once guardians of the wild places or not doesn't matter to her—she wants to recruit them to her cause before anyone else has a chance of intervening. She has hired the adventurers (either directly or through her intermediaries) to approach the oldest and largest of the waking circles as her envoys and negotiators. If the taranar did betray a previous High Druid, then her bargaining chip is simple: release from their punishment in return for services rendered. (It would also be somewhat ironic if the adventurers were paying off their own debt to the High Druid when undertaking this mission.) To complicate matters further, it would appear that the Dwarf King has sent his own representatives in an attempt to recruit the taranar as part of his ongoing battle with the giants on his doorstep. . . .

The Restless Earth—Tremors and minor quakes are being felt in a region not normally known for such geological activity, and a village has recently been destroyed. Some locals claim that the stones have taken to their feet in order to punish them, but they're being very tight-lipped about why they would want to do so. Are the taranar seeking vengeance for their treatment at the hands of the villagers (either through superstition or plundering them for stone), or are the locals hiding an even greater secret? Just what rites have they been performing up at the circle? (Or is the problem that the old ways have not been properly observed?)

Heart of Stone—The megalithic monuments in the lands around the Abyss are disappearing. Rangers report that shortly before they vanish, crude graffiti in the shape of a hand appears daubed onto the monoliths in what may (or may not) be blood. There are also rumors of an army of stone warriors massing in the Red Wastes. But who has recruited the taranar—the Diabolist or the Crusader? Or is someone else trying to implicate one or the other of the two in order to provoke a reaction? An important question that no one seems to be asking—yet—is how whoever is behind the gambit is controlling the stones. There is, of course, always the possibility that the taranar are willing volunteers in the fight, but what have they been promised in return for facing down (or standing beside) creatures who wield one of the few forces they fear?

Settling an Argument—The wizards of Horizon are always on the lookout for ways to prove their own pet theories (or discredit the claims of their rivals). One such has decided to put an end to the speculation regarding the taranar once and for all and has recruited the adventurers to go and fetch one for him. However, it had better be in good condition and still alive/awake by the time they get it back to the floating city if they expect to get paid for their troubles. An additional wrinkle may be that the stones have yet to wake when the adventurers set out on their quest. Just how do you tell a taranar from a conveniently weathered piece of rock anyway? (Hint: It's either *ridiculously difficult* or requires icon advantages!)

Power Down—One of the Archmage's wards is failing. Located right on the edge of the Dragon Empire in disputed/hostile territory, it is essential to discover what the problem is if the Empire's safety is to be maintained. Has the Archmage unwittingly built a hibernating taranar circle into this particular ley energy harvesting node—one that is now waking up and moving on? Has a troupe of taranar decided that the ley lines in the area will make the perfect spot to replenish themselves during their coming sleep, stealing the node's power in the process? Or, in a more sinister turn, has someone sent the taranar to put the Empire (and the hard-pressed Archmage) at a disadvantage? Regardless, the matter cannot be left unattended.

A Merry Dance—A friend or associate of the adventurers has failed to meet up with them as agreed, leaving them a bit shorthanded for whatever it is they had planned. It's not like their companion to leave people in the lurch, and their absence bears investigating. The last known sighting of the person was while they were on their way to their hometown—an industrious place of dedicated, sober smiths and artisans. Journeying there reveals that things have certainly changed of late. Everyone seems to have decamped into the hills to a stone circle high on a crag overlooking the town, where they are engaged in some fairly serious merrymaking. It's possible this is just some age-old local celebration that's got a little out of hand this year, but what if something more ominous is going on? Could the taranar (or some other meddling agency) have discovered a way for them to escape their stony bodies? And if they have, how do you put them back where they belong?