

Zhouyi: The Magic of Harmony

Knacks: Curses, Earth (Kun), Fire (Li), Heaven (Chien), Lake (Tui), Mountain (Ken), Thunder (Chen), Water (Kan), Wind (Sun)

Apprentice: Trigrams

Adept: Hexagrams

Master: Harmonious Effect

In ancient times, the great dragons showed the people of Cathay how to tap into the magic of the world around them and channel its power using simple combinations of broken and unbroken lines inscribed into Talismans. This was not another Bargain; the magic was given freely to humans so they could protect themselves from other supernatural threats. The Wall of Fire is the ultimate manifestation of this power.

Talismanic magic is based on the principles of geomancy. Any object that is going to serve as a Talisman must be newly crafted, as used objects have already absorbed the energy of the world around them and cannot contain such power. Any inanimate object is suitable, so long as it is durable enough to survive being inscribed or etched with the lines of the Trigram or Hexagram. It is not necessary that a Zhouyi user be a master of a second craft, though they generally show facility with at least one of the following creative **Knacks**: Blacksmith, Calligraphy, Carpenter, Ceramics, Cobbler, Cooper, Fletcher, Glassblower, Jeweler, Knotwork, Mason, Paper Maker, Sail Maker, Sculpting, Shipwright, Spinner, or Tailor.

The power to craft Talismans does not always pass along bloodlines; sometimes, the child of two ungifted parents will spontaneously manifest the ability and be accepted at a school. Although students come from all over Cathay, most of these schools are located in Han Hua, with the largest located in the city of Jing Du. It is extremely rare for any of these schools to accept a non-Cathayan student.

Apprentice Degree

As an Apprentice, the Sorcerer may spend a Drama Die and roll Wits + **Knack** to create a Talisman inscribed with a Trigram. This Trigram may invoke either of the effects specified under **Direction** in the **Knack** list below. The TN required to create the Trigram is also specified on that list.

Trigrams created by an Apprentice last for one month, plus one additional month for every Raise taken on the roll to create the Trigram.

Adept Degree

At this level of Mastery, the Sorcerer may create a Talisman that has any two of the abilities of the Trigrams. To create a Hexagram, the Sorcerer must spend a Drama Die and make two rolls to create the Trigram enchantments that form the Hexagram. This is the same as creating two Trigrams, except that only one Drama Die is required, and the second roll requires two Raises. If either roll is failed, the Talisman is ruined. As an Adept, the Sorcerer may invoke either of the effects specified under **Body Part** on the **Knack** list below, as well as the **Direction** effects.

An Adept's Hexagram cannot combine the powers of two different Trigrams. Thus, a Hexagram created by an Adept may combine one of the **Direction** effects of Thunder with one of the **Body Part** effects, or even both of the **Direction** effects or **Body Part** effects but it could not combine a Thunder effect with an Earth effect. Talismans created by an Adept persist for as long as the item exists, but lose all power when their creator dies.

Master Degree

Upon becoming a Master of Zhouyi, a Sorcerer may create Hexagrams that combine effects from two different Trigrams, and may add effects specified under the **Animal** and **Attribute** sections of the Knack list below.

A Master's Trigrams and Hexagrams retain their power for as long as the item exists, regardless of whether or not the Master lives.

Sorcerous Knacks

Curses: Because Talismans are so powerful, their creators often put curses on them to keep them from being used by the wrong people. Carrying a cursed Talisman gives the carrier the Cursed Background at a Rank of 1, 2, or 3 for as long as the Talisman is carried. Using a cursed Talisman gives the user the Cursed Background permanently.

To create a cursed Talisman, the Zhouyi Sorcerer must spend one additional Drama Die for each Rank of the Cursed Background he wishes to instill in the Talisman, and roll Resolve + Curses against a TN equal to $5 + 10$ per Rank of the Cursed Background he wishes to instill in the Talisman. If this roll fails, the Talisman is not ruined, but the Sorcerer gains the Cursed Background with a Rank equal to the Rank he was attempting to instill in the Talisman. No Sorcerer can create a cursed Talisman whose Rank is greater than his mastery Level.

Earth (Kun)

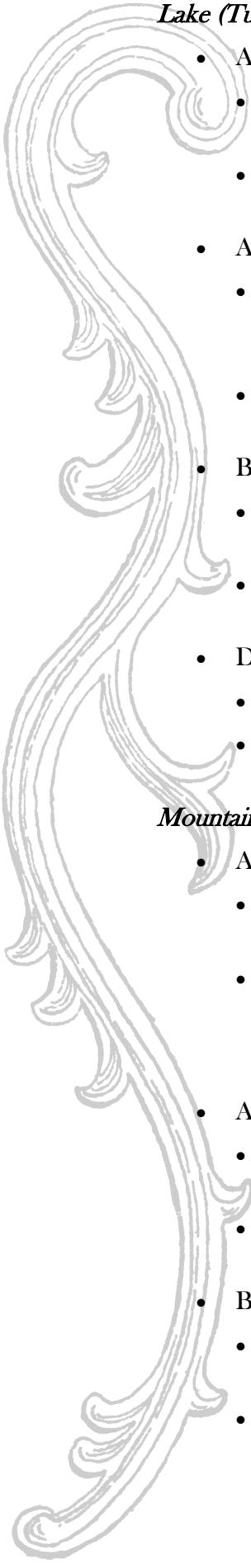
- Attribute: Receptivity
 - The Talisman allows its user to grow crops in even the most unfertile or rocky soil as if it were the finest land on Terra (TN 25), or
 - The Talisman allows its user to learn more quickly by example. At the end of each Story, the user gains one extra Experience Point that may be used to learn or improve any Knack or Skill he saw used by someone else during the story (TN 35).
- Animal: Ox
 - The Talisman turns into a full-sized, living ox. If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed, and vice versa (TN 30), or
 - The Talisman allows its user to control oxen. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of $5 + 5$ for each ox he wishes to control (TN 20).
- Body Part: Stomach
 - The Talisman creates enough food to fill its user's belly three times per day (TN 30), or
 - The Talisman renders its user immune to any ingested poison, including alcohol and afyam (TN 40).
- Direction: North
 - On command, the Talisman points due north (TN 20), or
 - If the Trigram is etched onto a ranged weapon, its Range is doubled whenever being fired or thrown within 20 degrees of true north (TN 30).

Fire (Li)

- Attribute: Fire
 - The Talisman can be used to set any object it touches on fire, doing 1k1 damage (TN 30), or
 - The Talisman renders its user completely immune to natural fire (TN 40).
- Animal: Pheasant
 - The Talisman turns into a full-sized, living pheasant. If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed, and vice versa (TN 20), or
 - The Talisman allows its user to control pheasants. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for each pheasant he wishes to control (TN 15).
- Body Part: Eye
 - The Talisman gives its user a bonus on visual perception equivalent to the Keen Senses Advantage (TN 25), or
 - The Talisman acts as an eye for its user, allowing him to see through it as if it were his own eye unless the area has been magically darkened (TN 35).
- Direction: East
 - On command, the Talisman points due east (TN 20), or
 - If the Trigram is etched onto a ranged weapon, its Range is doubled whenever being fired or thrown within 20 degrees of true east (TN 30).

Heaven (Chien)

- Attribute: Creativity
 - The Talisman acts as a good luck charm for creating inventions, adding an extra Kept Die (+1k1) on Invention rolls (TN 30), or
 - The Talisman inspires its user to devise creative strategies. The user may modify his Personal Results roll by 1 (up or down) during Mass Combat situations (TN 35).
- Animal: Horse
 - The Talisman turns into a full-sized, living horse. If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed, and vice versa (TN 35), or
 - The Talisman allows its user to control horses. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for each horse he wishes to control (TN 25).
- Body Part: Head
 - The Talisman protects the user's head, doubling the number of Raises that must be called to hit him there (TN 30), or
 - The Talisman grants one spark of inspiration per Story, as if the user had the Creative Virtue (TN 45).
- Direction: South
 - On command, the Talisman points due south (TN 20), or
 - If the Trigram is etched onto a ranged weapon, its Range is doubled whenever being fired or thrown within 20 degrees of true south (TN 30).



Lake (Tui)

- Attribute: Pleasure
 - The Talisman radiates happiness and contentment, granting the user a bonus of one Unkept Die (+1k0) on Charm attempts (TN 20), or
 - The Talisman causes a house it is kept in to be filled with joy, granting everyone in that house a bonus of one Kept Die (+1k1) on Charm attempts (TN 35).
- Animal: Sheep
 - The Talisman turns into a full-sized, living sheep. If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed, and vice versa. However, the user may gather milk or wool from the animal without damaging the Talisman (TN 30), or
 - The Talisman allows its user to control sheep. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for each sheep he wishes to control (TN 15).
- Body Part: Mouth
 - The Talisman amplifies the user's voice, allowing it to be heard by everyone within one mile—whether he wants them to or not (TN 20), or
 - The Talisman acts as a surrogate mouth for the user, allowing him to speak through it from virtually any distance (TN 30).
- Direction: Southeast
 - On command, the Talisman points due southeast (TN 20), or
 - If the Trigram is etched onto a ranged weapon, its Range is doubled whenever being fired or thrown within 20 degrees of true southeast (TN 30).

Mountain (Ken)

- Attribute: Stillness
 - The Talisman allows its user to sleep comfortably, no matter how hard the bed or ground on which he lies (TN 20), or
 - Once per Story, the Talisman allows its user to freeze one person or thing in its current place for 1k1 Phases. The frozen entity cannot move or be moved, nor can it be damaged in any way. The target must be within line of sight of the user. The user may use this effect on himself (TN 45).
- Animal: Dog
 - The Talisman turns into a full-sized, living dog. If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed, and vice versa (TN 35), or
 - The Talisman allows its user to control dogs. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for each dog he wishes to control (TN 25).
- Body Part: Hand
 - The Talisman aids the user's hand in gripping things, as if he had the Firm Grip Advantage (TN 30), or
 - If the Talisman is in the shape of a hand, it can hold things for its user, keeping as firm a grip as if a character with the Firm Grip Advantage (TN 40).

- Direction: Northwest
 - On command, the Talisman points due northwest (TN 20), or
 - If the Trigram is etched onto a ranged weapon, its Range is doubled whenever being fired or thrown within 20 degrees of true northwest (TN 30).

Thunder (Chen)

- Attribute: Movement
 - Once per Act, the Talisman allows its user to roll and keep one extra Action Die (TN 40), or
 - The Talisman grants its user one extra Kept Die (+1k1) to any rolls he makes during chases (TN 20).
- Animal: Dragon
 - The Talisman turns into a full-sized statue of a dragon, which may move in subtle ways when no one is watching it (TN 55), or
 - The Talisman protects its user's dreams from being plagued by dragons. The User may roll his Panache against a TN equal to ten times his Rank in the Dragon Dreams Background. If he succeeds, he does not have any Dragon Dreams that night (TN 30).
- Body Part: Foot
 - The Talisman allows its user to keep one extra Die (+0k1) to all Footwork, Running, or Kick rolls (TN 25), or
 - The Talisman gives its user a +5 bonus to his TN to be hit while using Footwork to determine his Passive Defense (TN 35).
- Direction: Northeast
 - On command, the Talisman points due northeast (TN 20), or
 - If the Trigram is etched onto a ranged weapon, its Range is doubled whenever being fired or thrown within 20 degrees of true northeast (TN 30).

Water (Kan)

- Attribute: Water
 - The Talisman allows its user to breathe underwater (TN 25), or
 - Once per day, the Talisman creates enough water to sustain one person for 24 hours (TN 20).
- Animal: Boar
 - The Talisman turns into a full-sized, living boar. If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed, and vice versa (TN 35), or
 - The Talisman allows its user to control boars. The user must make a Resolve roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for each boar he wishes to control (TN 25).
- Body Part: Ear
 - The Talisman gives its user a bonus on auditory perception equivalent to the Keen Senses Advantage (TN 25), or

- The Talisman acts as an ear, allowing the user to hear through it. Although distance is not a factor per se, the place where the user wants to hear must be familiar or specific (i.e., around a corner or through a door). If the area has been magically dampened, the user cannot hear (TN 35).

- **Direction: West**

- On command, the Talisman points due west (TN 20), or
- If the Trigram is etched onto a ranged weapon, its **Range** is doubled whenever being fired or thrown within 20 degrees of true west (TN 30).

Wind (Sun)

- **Attribute: Regeneration**
- Once per Scene per person, the Talisman can remove all of the user's **Flesh Wounds** (TN 30), or
- Once per Story, the Talisman can remove all poison or disease from the user's body, or reattach a severed body part. (TN 60).
- **Animal: Rooster**
- The Talisman turns into a full-sized, living rooster. If the animal is slain, the Talisman will be destroyed, and vice versa (TN 20), or
- The Talisman allows its user to control roosters. The user must make a **Resolve** roll against a TN of 5 + 5 for each rooster he wishes to control (TN 15).
- **Body Part: Thigh**
- The Talisman allows its user to keep one additional die (+0k1) on **Lifting** or **Leaping** rolls he makes (TN 20), or
- Once per day, the Talisman will allow its user to take only one **Dramatic Wound** regardless of the amount by which he failed a **Wound Check** (TN 40).
- **Direction: Southwest**
- On command, the Talisman points due southwest (TN 20), or
- If the Trigram is etched onto a ranged weapon, its **Range** is doubled whenever being fired or thrown within 20 degrees of true southwest (TN 30).

Game Master's Notes

Zhouyi is not only responsible for the creation of the Fire Wall, it is responsible for the creation of the Barrier. A sufficiently skilled Zhouyi Sorcerer could create a Talisman capable of repairing breaches in the Barrier, or strengthening the Barrier overall. However, this level of skill requires the total commitment of Masters willing to partake of yellow lotus to boost their power even further and ultimately give their lives to create such a Talisman.

The Fire Wall once burned with brilliant white flames; however, enough of the Talismans that created and sustain it have been destroyed that it has fallen down the spectrum through violet, blue, and green to its current (ordinary) orange-yellow. Should the remaining Talismans be destroyed, it would fade from orange to red, and finally collapse when the last Talisman ceased to exist. Sorcerers with the proper knowledge could create Talismans to replace those that have been destroyed, but such knowledge has been lost for centuries.