

Gunslingers and Gamblers

Silver Bullets #9 - The Talisman



FJGaming

The Talisman

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Introduction

The Talisman is collection of plot hooks for use in the Gunslingers and Gamblers role-playing game. These scenarios all center on a sacred talisman that was once owned by a powerful Pawnee war chief. Whether he knows it or not, the owner of the talisman can summon forth the spirit of this long dead warrior. While having the ghost of Still Waters as an ally seems like a good thing at first, the characters soon find out that that owning the talisman bears with it a terrible price.

The Talisman

This finely crafted turquoise amulet is hung from a leather cord and adorned with many beads and feathers. The necklace once included pieces of gold and silver, but these have long since been stolen. This sacred token was worn in battle countless times by a Pawnee warrior known as Still Waters. The restless soul of the Pawnee brave now resides inside the token itself. Anyone who wears the amulet can summon forth the ghost of Still Waters.

Any time the wearer cries aloud for help or otherwise indicates need (and really means it) the long dead war chief will physically appear. Still Waters will aid the owner of the talisman as best he can, though he solves most problems by bashing someone with a club. If there is no immediately obvious threat, the spirit warrior will simply stand there with a menacing scowl until instructed to do something. Still Waters has no knowledge of the white man or his strange ways. He seems to be able to understand some words of English, though he will only speak in Pawnee. The spirit won't be summoned for just anything and he has a habit of failing to show up just when someone needs him most.

The great war chief known as Still Waters was born in the area now referred to as the

Sample file



The Talisman

Dakota Territories. He was among those Pawnee who fought against the Lakota in an unsuccessful war. After falling in battle, his sacred talisman was stolen from him and taken by Lakota warriors as a trophy. Even the oldest of the Sioux wise men cannot say what happened to the sacred talisman of Still Waters. It resided with the Lakota Sioux for a time but was eventually lost. Some say that it was traded to the Dakota, others believe that it ended up in the hands of the Cree. One story holds that it was given to an American military commander as a gesture of peace.

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Still Waters - Angry Spirit of the Talisman

Still Waters is a bloodthirsty maniac who longs for battle. His heart is empty and cold, filled only with a desire to inflict pain. He hates being a servant to the talisman's owners and seeks the opportunity to turn against them or take over their bodies. Until then the Pawnee warrior is satisfied with the small pleasures he is allowed during the short times when he is flesh again.

Traits: Fighting 5, Shooting 4, Grit 5/5*, Reflexes 4, Riding 3, Notice 3, Nerve 3, Jawing 2, Luck 2, Survival 2, Crafting 2.

Quirks: Harbinger, Mean as a Rattler, Poor English.

Belongings: War club (+2/-1, +0 defense, 2h), Tomahawk (+1/+1, +0 defense, 1h), Shield (+1/+0, +2 defense, 1h), Bow (+0/+1/+0, ammo 1, SS, 2h), buckskins, buffalo robe.

*Still Waters cannot die. No matter how grievously he is injured, the worst that will happen to him is that he will be down for ten minutes and then back up again at full health. Even if body parts are severed or his body burnt he will miraculously reappear intact and okay ten minutes later.

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Traits: Animal Handling (riding), Fighting, Shooting, Influence, Will, Grit(toughness+40), Speed(initiative), Perception, Survival

Drama: 2

Flaws: Harbinger, Mean as a Rattler, Poor English

Belongings: War club (M, 2/10, 1h), Shield (L, 2/5, all attacks against wielder -10 to hit), Bow (L, 10/100, 1, SS), Tomahawk (M, 2/10, 1h), buckskins, buffalo robe

Role-playing Hints: Still Waters will spill blood at the slightest opportunity. When mystically summoned and told to hunt someone down he acts relentlessly. He can run day and night without tiring. He will steal horses and ride them to death. He will use his knowledge of the wilderness and his natural cunning to ambush targets. Still Waters relishes in hand to hand

combat and will often come at a foe seeming to appear from thin air. He says little and walks without a sound. The only noise he makes is a fierce war cry. While he is a slave to the talisman, Still Waters has the same emotions and dark desires he had in life. He can often be distracted from his missions by the desire to torture, rape and mutilate his victims, as well as any bystanders who happen near.

Getting the Talisman

There are a number of interesting ways that a player character might find himself in the possession of the sacred talisman. Remember that the object itself displays no unusual properties and to many it appears as just another piece of "injun junk."

A few ideas for introducing the talisman are listed below;

- The trinket is given to a character as a token of thanks.
- A half-breed scout bets it in a poker game.
- The amulet is found on the frozen corpse of an Indian medicine man.
- The characters are forced to take shelter from a storm. Hiding away in a cave, the group discovers the talisman among a variety of Indian religious artifacts.
- A trader offers the talisman alongside other Indian goods such as pelts, beads and scalps.

Plot Hooks and Adventures

Any adventure that revolves around the talisman will likely start off the same as any mundane storyline. The supernatural element arises after the talisman finds its way into the hands of a player character or a major NPC.

Below are a few ideas for stories involving the talisman;

- A character begins to abuse the power of the talisman and soon grows out of control.
- The spirit inside the talisman learns to come out on its own. Havoc erupts as the bloodthirsty Pawnee's hatred of the Sioux and their allies surfaces. Still Waters begins coming out when he has not been summoned to take his