

The Riverwalkers

Spirit Farewell of Walker Misen Hapro

I was once like you, bright and full of wonder, always looking for what was beyond the next horizon. I can still remember the sunset on my first night as I set out on my own. I had only been traveling for a few hours before I made camp north of Welss; the cool breeze carrying the crisp mountain air down into the lowlands. I had taken up a nice spot just south of a clearing; I had done my research, you never camp out in the open, too easy for random passersby's to see and make prey of you while you sleep. I was relaxing by the fire watching the embers glow as they floated into the air, when I heard a sound. I turned to look into the woods but I could see nothing, well other than the firelight dancing and making shadows which was far worse than not seeing anything, it kind of felt like monsters everywhere. You never really notice all the creepy sounds of the night until you are far beyond the reaches of a building with walls, and a city guard to come running should you cry out for help. I doused the fire, grabbed my spear, and lied still in the dark. What were they? I could hear footsteps and odd voices, high pitched and foreign. I remember hearing rumors a few weeks back about Gnoll packs in the hills toward the mountains but I never thought I would run into anything this soon. Out of nowhere they came from the darkness, damn they were sneaky and fast, there were three of them. I jabbed at one of them with my spear, and it must have been a good hit because he ran yelping; but my victory was short. There was a sharp pain in the middle of my back but it only lasted for a second. I think I remember falling to the ground, it is all kind of fuzzy; i do remember getting very cold as I lied in the on the ground. I was had gotten so dark, the sounds of the forest began to fade as though I was moving away from them. My last few breaths were shallow, I could feel it all slipping away; and then i saw it.

At first it was a pale light in the distance coming toward me, I knew what this meant, I had heard the stories tons of times growing up about going into the light. Really was this it, 6 hours as an adventure and I should meet my fate, go figure. As the light got closer, it began to take an odd shape, I must truly be done, I think the light turned into a person. And with that, as i slipped away I felt a hand grab me and pull.

My next memory was waking up, startled from a slumber, I was in the forest and beside me a weathered old man holding my hand and chanting, and stopped and spoke,

"I was pretty sure you were a goner for sure at first, the fates must have shined on you that I might find you. It was not easy but I made sure you got back safely."

All I could stutter out was the obvious, "But, but I died."

"That you did boy that you did. Again fate must have a plan for you. You are still young and unhardened and your spirit is weak. Like I said it was not easy but I managed to guide you back."

"I owe you my life. Perhaps I should have never left home. I don't know what i had hoped to prove by setting out seeking adventure." I took to my feet and it was strange dying and yet feeling better than ever.

He smirked, "Perhaps you left because you needed to find the moment where you found yourself. I see in you the spark, the gift for life, and now that you have felt the river, I think you too know where you belong. If you are willing, I would teach you to guide those that die back to

this plane just as I have done for you. My time is short but I wish to bring one last gifted soul into our flock before I rest.”

I never even questioned him. Tharst or at least that is the name he went by would teach me the ways of the river and its power. He was a wise teacher though as the months moved on he would be more like a father than just a mentor. We would spend the first few months traveling, from small town to large city, everywhere we went he found the sick and gave them comfort. We would find those that mourned the loss of a loved one and give the peace by having a few last moments to say the farewells they had not the time to in life. We spent six months traveling and helping who we could; along the way I meet many of the order and we shared stories, it would seem that many of us had a similar introduction to the Walkers. We had all died and drifted into the river, only to be pulled back to life. In the time of our travels I had learned much and I had begun to develop the gifts as the order called them. Tharst told me one day, we had to travel to a small town on the far side of the Shield Mountains in the north of Tesh. He never said why only have we had to go, little did i know this would be our last journey. In our last few days before we arrived I could sense his vitality was fading, he was growing weak fast. We arrived late in the day and we went to a small house on the edge of town, it looked as though it had been abandoned for years.

“Ah, this old place has not changed at all in the ten years I have been gone.” Tharst rasped as he stumbled into the home.

It was small and modest just a single room with an old stove in the center. He made his way to the bed and asked me come sit by his side.

“You have come far in our time together, but you have grown in ways you have not even realized. This will be our last journey together, in the morning I want you do as i have shown you and give me my farewell.”

By dawn Tharst had passed, and I gave him the burial he deserved. I did as he had asked and gave his spirit its final farewell. It was Tharst last lesson.

“You are ready now to take up where I have left off, walk the rivers, be the light, and bring purity to this land.”

It was once spoken that if you want to go in peace, find one that walks along the banks of the river. I never knew what that meant till one day I found one...

It was once spoken that if you needed to speak to one that has passed go to those that walk the banks of the dark river. I never understood that until I needed one...

The Riverwalkers are those that you never hope that you need but will be glad they are there once you do need them. The Walkers, as some call them, are the guardians of the path one walks once your spirit leaves your body. They are called to guide the fallen to the banks of the river. If their spirit is strong enough they will latch on to the walker and follow them back into the living world. If your spirit is not strong enough, the walker will lay you peacefully down into your final home.

You may also call on a Novice Walker when you wish to speak to a fallen spirit. The Order has been given the gift of calling upon the fallen and speaking with them. They reach into

the river and call upon the fallen spirits... I have watched this ... and this was one thing that you will never forget seeing. The Walkers eyes take on an onyx hue and if the spirit wishes to speak it will use the Walker to carry its voice. It is also said that those of higher ranks within the Walkers may contact spirits much older than you and I.

Though the peace can be felt through the Walker, Do not mistake this peace for weakness. They may guide you to the river... but the Order has also been tasked with keeping the waters of the river pure and unpolluted. Things that prevent a spirit from reaching its final resting place set the Walkers into a non peaceful state; you never want to see what happens when the Walkers reach the state of purification that leads ultimately to another's demise. The state of purification is a ritual war for the Walkers and this ritual is not taken lightly by the Walker that must carry out the task.

I have seen the ritual of purification....it was for me, my body and soul that entered the River....as I became a Riverwalker.

As I was purified, the waves crashed over my body, leaving the marks of the river across my skin. Now I am one of them, one that walks the banks of the River.

I now understand the calling of the Walkers. I know that my calling is to walk with the spirits. I know that my calling is to help bring peace to those spirits that are leaving the world. I am also charged with guiding those spirits that are not ready to rest. The waters have given me the ability to place those spirits back into the shell that is there body. As I work harder, as my steps take me farther into my calling, I find it easier to bring those spirits home.

I have also heard stories of groups of Walkers joining together to ensure some return from the engulfing sleep. They bind together... They reach out... and give their all to ensure the spirit is returned to its body. No matter how weak it may be. They are able to bring the spirit home.

I know that I am here to stop those that wish to take power from the fallen. I am here to stop those that wish to raise the dead to do their bidding. I have given my word, my very essence, to ensure all those that walk the world are allowed to journey to my banks. For that I will give my last breath to bring peace to those that are shackled by undeath.

For now... I walk... I walk along the banks of the river... waiting... watching... protecting... those that cannot...

Walkers Oath

Those that walk the path do so hand in hand with the flow of both the River and life. The Walkers are often misunderstood by those outside the faith, taken for healers and pacifists, but the truth is far from these. A Walker is devoted to life, but the natural cycle and flow of the spirit world is their primary concern. Now does this mean bad men don't deserve to die? By no means, though if by your hand you are tasked to ensure they make it to the River so that even if

they do not return, their spirits rest in the right place.

Order Abilities

1	Improved Resurrection
2	Spirit Anchor x 3/reset
3	Speak with Spirits x 1/reset
4	Field Resurrection
5	Untaintable
6	Resist Shadow x 3/reset
7	Linked Resurrection
8	Magic Life x 2/reset
9	Contact Ancient Dead x 1/reset
10	Mass Resurrection

Improved Resurrection

This ability increases the character's mastery of the arts of *Resurrection* far beyond what can simply be learned. The character gains a +2 Bonus to their *Contested Roll*; additionally once they reach rank 10 the time to perform a *Resurrection* is reduced by up to 5 minutes.

Field Resurrection

This ability allows the character to act as a Life Well for the purposes of resurrection. Dead characters can sense the player just like a Life Well.

Linked Resurrection

This ability allows the character and others to join their skill of *Resurrection* together for a more powerful effect. This can be used with any number of Riverwalkers and can include up to 1 Non-Riverwalker. The total number of ranks of *Resurrection* is added together, however only one character who is leading the resurrection can gain the benefits of Improved Resurrection, all others only add their purchased skill ranks.

Mass Resurrection

This ability allows the character to attempt to resurrect a number of targets at one time, equal to the character's purchased ranks of *Resurrection*. This ability can be used in conjunction with other *Resurrection* powers and abilities

Magic Life

This ability allows the character to deliver with a packet a "Magic Life", this functions as the spell.

Contact Ancient Dead

This ability works much like *Speak with Spirits*; however, the character can reach much further into the River. The character can awaken a spirit that has been permanently dead for up to 150 years per character level times their skill level in *Knowledge (Cycle)*.

Spirit Anchor

This ability allows the character to keep a target's spirit from fleeing their body to seek the River. If the target is currently in their *Bleed Out* count, they will instantly be set to 0 *Body Points* and be stabilized. However, if the target is in their *Death* count, it will restart their count.

Speak with Spirits

This ability allows the character to contact a person that has been permanently dead for up to 50 years. For this ability to work, the character must know the target's name. This requires a *Marshal* and 10 minutes of concentration.

Resist Shadow

This ability allows the character to *Resist Shadow* effects and spells.

Untaintable

This ability makes the character *Immune* to effects that trap a spirit as well as effects that create undead.