



## TALISMAN: - DIA -

*Bracer, Front: I must always avoid the others' gaze, as if I were unworthy of returning it.*

Under mounds of snow, under thickets of leaves, under fields of poppy, there do my people dwell. The Children of Man are not alone in looking down upon us, and never have we forged an alliance to fight back against them. I am here of my own will, I speak for none but myself and I see the suspicion in the eyes of those around me. But I will hide no longer. Witness me.

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We should have known we couldn't run away forever. At last the Children of Man have found us, and now I see our shameful deeds with my own eyes. Some of our own have forged an alliance, indeed; not with those who are oppressed, but with our very enemy. They pledged to build the halls of this Labyrinth in exchange for a meagre truce, before the very end. Just laying my palms on these empty walls is enough to feel the marks left by the nails of my brethren. From fugitives they turned to slaves, but I did not. I do not. Can I alone atone for the shame of many? There is only one way to know: I must stop running.

*Bracer, Back: Until I can look another in the eye, until I can see them and be seen, I must not confess to the infamy of my own people.*

## TALISMAN: - NO -

*Bracer, Front: I must grab onto the others when I address them, as if to keep them from deserting duty.*

My people were the first to watch over the Highlands, when all others were too young to name themselves. Even the Children of Man. We are as ancient as the land we protect, and thus we stand guard from high above. Our watch is eternal. Deathless. Yet when our Sages sang to summon the enemies of Man, it was in vain. Instead of many armies, all I shall lead inside the Labyrinth are two lone heroes.

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If the Sages' song echoes with such urgency, it is because we hear it growing ever weaker with each season. The Children of Man live brief lives: We watched them crawl like worms from the top of the Highlands. Yet their teetering baby steps were enough to lead them into our homes, and death crawled in after them. Unfathomable and cruel. So we are left to pay for everyone's indolence, after so many derided us for being slow to anger, for we never found hurry in the passage of centuries. Now we watch as the eyes of our loved ones close forever. None have suffered more than us. None more than us deserve revenge.

*Bracer, Back: Until I have no strength left to drag the others through this quest, I must show them no mercy, and I must not reveal the price my people paid.*

## TALISMAN: - TE -

*Bracer, Front: I must watch the others' steps and always stand between them, as if to keep them apart.*

The home of my people lies in the depths of the Crystal Lake, far away from the warmth of the sun. So secluded from the rest of the world that when the Children of Man came to tear it away from us, no one outside was any wiser. Even our laments went unheard. We are the sole witnesses to our ruin, and only one among us can take it upon themselves to save everyone else. This is who I am.

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The story of our suffering is nothing but a lie. My people never cared about the world outside the Lake, and the Children of Man never even passed it by. Fearful of the envy of less-fortunate peoples, we have spread tall tales about our grave predicament, so that none would seek shelter among us. I am not here by my own will, nor am I here for honest ends: I was chosen by my people to give more substance to this trickery. When this is all over, even if our quest were to fail, I would still have a safe haven to return to.

*Bracer, Back: Until all hope of seeing my home again abandons me, I must not let the others learn the truth about my people's deception.*

